

**Question for written answer E-000875/2016/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Instrumentalisation of educational establishments by the Catalan political authorities

The President of Societat Civil Catalana, Rafael Arenas, wrote to the Catalan Education Minister, Irene Rigau, on 7 January 2016 urging her to remove all party political and exclusionary symbols from approved public educational establishments on the grounds that they represent inadmissible political interference. He also protested at the use of textbooks with a politically tendentious message in Catalan state schools, the implementation of nationalist educational projects, and institutional pressure on teaching staff. These actions could be in breach of cultural and linguistic diversity and freedom of thought, fundamental rights that are enshrined in the EU Charter (Articles 22 and 10 respectively).

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?
2. Does the Commission take the general view that educational establishments should not be instrumentalised by the political authorities?
3. Will the Commission set up specific programmes to encourage and support the Member States in providing politically neutral education that promotes respect for diversity and fosters critical thinking among pupils?