

**Question for written answer E-005378/2020**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)**

**Subject:** Measures to meet justified student demands

Since the beginning of the school year, thousands of students have been organising sit-ins and taking to the streets to demand safe schools and educational facilities and freedom from fear of jeopardising the health of all. However, the authorities have failed to take the necessary action, shifting the responsibility onto the public and appealing to the civic spirit of each individual, merely requiring the wearing of masks, which is insufficient unless accompanied by suitable social distancing measures. This requires a decisive reduction in the number of pupils per class and the appointment of many more teachers.

According to student protesters and parents' associations, there is a shortfall of 20 000 teachers and insufficient permanent cleaning staff. Pupils are also crowding onto public transport services, which are struggling to cope with woefully insufficient vehicles and capacity. The government and civil society are expressing fears that these student movements are a 'health time bomb', while at the same time legislation is being adopted allowing 25-27 pupils to be crammed into prefabricated classrooms.

The Greek Government and the EU bear a heavy responsibility for this unacceptable situation. Months down the road, schools are still woefully unprepared.

What view does the Commission take of pupil demands for:

1. A reduction in class sizes to 15 pupils per room and efforts by the Education Ministry and the regional and local authorities to provide suitable teaching premises?
2. The immediate recruitment of permanent teaching staff, all necessary remedial measures to ensure social distancing in classrooms and the recruitment of a sufficient number of permanent cleaning staff to meet the additional challenges posed by the pandemic?
3. The provision of safe and frequent pupil transport services free of charge?