

**Question for written answer E-002536/2023/rev.1
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)

Subject: Severe shortage of nursery places

Parents in Greece face yet another year of uncertainty and the ever-growing problems linked to pre-school education.

The government has admitted severe childcare shortages as places at day nurseries cover just 14% of current needs. Announcements about new places that are to be funded by the Recovery Fund do not hide the fact that if and when these places are created, the majority of babies (58%) will still not get a place and that the funds will subsidise private nurseries, paying for their facilities with taxpayers' money.

In view of this:

1. How can the Commission respond to the urgent calls for no child to be denied a place at nursery, for attendance to be completely free of charge, for the recruitment of permanent staff with all required specialisms and for the establishment and expansion of modern public nurseries so as to provide care to all children, without anyone being excluded?
2. What does it have to say about the fact that through a policy of commercialisation, the EU and national governments are fostering a fragmented hodgepodge of substandard pre-school education services such as the 'Dadades sto spiti' programme, which poses serious problems and risks, depriving children of the necessary foundations for their all-round psychosocial development.
3. What does it have to say about the fact that it subsidises private pre-school education establishments through unacceptable procedures such as the issuing of vouchers, including through a lottery process, under NSRF-style programmes, leading parents into a situation of permanent uncertainty and economic hardship while cruelly depriving them of their dignity?

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