

Αριθμ. πρωτ.....**745**.....

Athens, 25 September 2020.....

To
the European Qualification Framework
(EQF) Advisory Group

Dear Sir/Madame,

The education provided by the private sector in Greece for about 80 years, with the exception of 2014-2016, is governed by a regime of qualitative and administrative supervisory mandate with the aim to protect public interest and Education as a social good. The will of the Greek state found expression in the Constitution of 1975 that explicitly stipulates that the education provided by both public and private schools is a public good and should consequently be supervised by the state.

Unfortunately, the legislative initiatives taken by the Greek government over the last months led to deliberately weakening of public schools and to the transformation of private schools from educational institutions to mere private businesses. Law 4713/2020, which was recently adopted by the Ministry of Education, in the context of the Government's strategy, includes provisions whose implementation **raises the issue of equal treatment** of pupils, boys and girls, of both Greek and European schools **while at the same time it is likely to call into question the legality of the issued diplomas.**

In this way, the 2014 directive delivered by the European Commission within the framework of the match between the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European one (EQF) in order for the Greek government to take measures to safeguard the quality of the work and services offered by private education and training providers and the legitimacy in the process of diplomas issuing by private education bodies, is being questioned.

We believe that the new situation in the field of private education that threatens the legality and credibility of the diplomas provided by private schools, not only raises the question of equal treatment of Greek students but threatens European students as well since thousand of graduates from our country's private schools want to and seek study abroad in European universities and are looking for jobs in the European labour market. This situation is likely to raise the issue of how the match between the Greek Qualifications Framework and the European one could be controlled. It is certainly no coincidence the fact that some of the Greek mass media in an attempt to voice the Government's intentions and report on developments, have recently demanded, through their articles, the abolition of EOPPEP, the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance, a statutory body whose role is to supervise the match of the Qualifications Framework and certifies private education structures. Apart from the question of equal treatment and the legality of diplomas, this Law affects the second pillar of the European directives as well, namely, safeguarding and ensuring the quality of the provided educational services.

It should be noted that, apart from the serious corruption risk in the educational procedures, the challenging of the diploma's legality and the sharp decline in the quality of the provided educational services, this law introduces provisions that affect the heart of the European Social Model and the fundamental human and labour rights of private teachers. Measures that provide for the unsubstantiated termination of employment contracts, the detrimental change of work and pay conditions, the

forced "consensus" of the worker and for evaluation procedures, which are not accredited by the State, undermine teachers' status and affect their

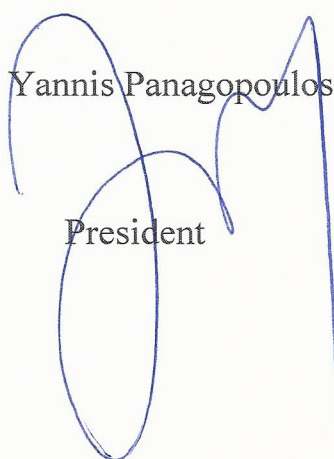
decency and autonomy. In addition, they raise fears of a violation of the procedures that lead to obtaining a school leaving certificate or a diploma. We must bear in mind that thousands of illegal diplomas have been issued by private education providers over the period 2005-2015 while the holders of these diplomas have used these diplomas as a qualification for recruitment in the public sector and this in sensitive areas of the public domain.

It is internationally recognized that the risk of deteriorating education's quality is particularly great, especially in countries like Greece that have been severely hit by the economic and financial crisis with their supervisory bodies being weaker. We ask you to intervene in order to halt Greek education's slide, to help reformulating the guidelines and directives that the European Commission delivered to the Greek government in 2014 in order to improve the match between Qualifications Frameworks and protect equal treatment of all students both in Greece and Europe as well as the credibility and legality of diplomas issued by private institutions in Greece.

It goes without saying that we are willing to present to you in person all the afore mentioned based on concrete evidence.

With our best regards

Yannis Panagopoulos
President



Thanasis Danousis
Deputy General Secretary

