



Brussels, 5 August 2022

**Note for the attention of Mr. Johannes Hahn,
Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources**

Subject: Outsourcing of the Wilson day nursery

All the staff unions of the European Commission, united in the Common Front, have been informed of the outsourcing of the Wilson day nursery in circumstances that are unacceptable and disrespectful for both staff and parents.

It is clear that, whatever the issue; the OIB continues to show the greatest contempt for any dialogue with the staff and their representatives. This attitude is in total contradiction with your commitment to social dialogue, which you confirm to us at each of our meetings.

The Common Front is firmly opposed to such an EXTERNALISATION as well as to this method of unilateral decision-making power used in defiance of any SOCIAL DIALOGUE with the staff and its representatives.

Indeed, the Common Front has always been committed to preserving the services of the Institution.

Yet, on Friday 13 May 2022, our colleagues, Contract Agents educators, were presented with a fait accompli regarding the externalisation of part of the day nurseries, without any consultation or dialogue. Moreover, telling them outright, at the same meeting, that they will be transferred to the European Schools, is synonymous with total contempt for them!

Nevertheless, the expertise and professionalism of our colleagues are an asset for the proper functioning and sustainability of our services. Our colleagues cannot be replaced by staff who are not trained in our specific environment.

During this meeting, however, several main reasons were given to staff, without any document or explanation to grasp the justifications behind this abrupt outsourcing decided by the OIB, and even ex post.

The OIB confined itself to referring generically to the lack of statutory staff and the intensive use of structural agency staff to replace colleagues on sick leave, to the increased demand for childcare facilities for the next school year (2022-2023) and to the difficulties in recruiting new educators as contract agents...

The OIB has not proposed any alternative solution to resolve the difficulties raised, no reflection on the causes of our colleagues' sick leaves, no implementation of measures to remedy them. No request has been made to DG HR to initiate a real dialogue with staff representation in order to set up specialised and adapted selection procedures for these profiles as applied in 2005 and 2008 ...

The OIB decided purely and simply to proceed with this outsourcing.

As usual, the OIB manages its files by using each staff member as a mere pawn to be exploited at will... all the more so when it comes to our CA FGII colleagues.

The fundamental question we need to ask and expect an answer to is: *"How have the childcare facilities been managed throughout the years to lead to such a situation?"*

Nonetheless, since 2004, following the enlargement of the EU, we have constantly called on the administration to remedy the request of parents and future parents to be able to entrust their children to a quality educational service requiring qualified and experienced colleagues together with the necessary infrastructures.

Moreover, the choice of the external company, Esedra, to provide childcare for our children also raises questions: its contract was not extended by the European Parliament given the problems voiced by parents. Should the Commission staff and their children be entitled to less care from its administration knowing that the bond of trust with this external company is already breached?

How can the OIB ignore and not respond to such legitimate questions from our colleagues?

For the OIB, the dialogue is reduced, at most, to a few ex post explanations provided to try to justify decisions already taken and which can no longer be called into question.

Furthermore, it is inconceivable that the European Institutions, and in particular the European Commission, do not demonstrate any concern for the working conditions and well-being of educational staff and for the monitoring of the well-being of the children of its staff.

Trust is broken between our fellow educators, the parents and the administration! Managing through trust has become a bland and cold slogan in their eyes.

Our children, future European citizens, who will soon take over to continue building the future of the European Union, must have a high standard of service. In the same way, their educators must also be respected and listened to in their requests and in the improvement of their working conditions, notably in terms of the balance between professional and private life as well as their quality of life at work.

This decision will have negative consequences:

1. Concerning our colleagues :
 - An increase in psychosocial risk factors -already present with staff at the end of their rope- following the imposition of a decision without consulting the first parties concerned, putting them in a state of total insecurity, thus generating a mental burden, a loss of bearings and unnecessary stress
 - A deep demotivation of the teams
 - Precarious jobs
 - Loss of a professional meaning linked to the assignment to the European Schools
2. Concerning parents and children:
 - Some educators did not know the name of the child in care
 - Absence of communication between the company and the parents
 - Problem in following up the pedagogical project
 - Unsuitable structures for day care centres
3. Concerning the outsourcing project :
 - The knowledge and know-how will be displaced elsewhere without benefiting from the same resources and without any guarantee of the sustainability of the Institution's jobs and services
 - The management on site will have no room for manoeuvre
 - Opening hours will be restricted
 - The precariousness of staff and the loss of the function

Yet the administration preaches for "*an institution of value and respect for the staff*" but in view of the situation, our colleagues, educators and parents, are the forgotten ones of the story !

It is urgent to maintain a quality educational service!

Based on the above, the Common Front requests:

- 1. An urgent meeting with DG HR, associating the delegation of representatives of the nurseries and day-care centres in order to find a solution to :**
 - Listen to these colleagues
 - Improve their working conditions
 - Assess the psychosocial risk factors and propose a prevention and action plan
 - Create new posts
 - Stop any outsourcing that makes these specific jobs (nurseries and day care centres) more precarious

- 2. To be provided with the full study which led the OIB to take this decision** (in order to best prepare for the above-mentioned meeting and to address the concerns of our colleagues and parents)
 - The budget analysis
 - The analysis of professional risks including psychosocial risk factors
 - The staffing table as well as the turnover of the structural interim staff
 - The request for childcare places for the forthcoming school year

C. Sebastiani / R. Trujillo

Alliance
(*signé*)

E. Lieber

Generation 2004
(*signé*)

N. Mavraganis

USF
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