

Dear builders of the future of my son:

Pleased to meet you, my name is Arantxa. I am a European mother who would like her son Lucas, now five years old, to be a happy citizen of the world, prepared to exploit his diversity and, if necessary, choose a place to live, knowing that he will be able to adapt. This idea of a borderless continent is not new, is it?

Beautiful ideas need to be moulded, tested, discussed and agreed in order to be turned into tangible actions. I think that the IPPIE project, involving parents in plurilingual and intercultural education, and helping them to develop as citizens of the world, is essential to the idea of a borderless Europe and has already gone a long way in this direction - but it has still has an important stretch to go.

In this stretch you, the builders of the future of my son and of all the other children in Europe, you, who make the decisions about budgets, about the education programmes... you politicians – and many of you are parents, too - have the last word. Now it is up to you to make it a reality.

From my point of view as a parent who knows that neither their own language nor their own way to live is the only one, this project filled me with enthusiasm from the very first moment they told me about it. I do not wish to be a simple observer of my child's education, who – you can calculate – will spend 12,675 hours of his first 16 years at school. This is more than 500 fundamental days of his childhood and adolescence, the period in which he will develop as a person. I am in no doubt. I do not want to spend 13 years on the other side of my son's school fence. I think that the education of our future citizens should be teamwork, and that the team should be made up of mothers and fathers, of the whole society.

Moreover, I wish there were no fences, not only the fences that divide the school from the family, urging parents to stay well-behaved on the other side, without “interfering” in the education of their children, but also the fences that divide the school from the world outside. I would like school to be part of this world, a plurilingual and multicultural world.

Last, but not least, I wish there was none of those intangible and yet solid as iron and cement fences that separate families with different geographical origins, different languages and cultures in many schools.

In my son's class there are children whose families come from seven different countries. Twenty-five children and five different mother tongues. Five ways to understand the world. In

my opinion this is a great source of wealth, a resource, like the involvement of parents, of which we should take advantage.

The team members of the IPPIE project not only passed their enthusiasm on to me as a mother, but they also persuaded me that this approach is both feasible and the best one for my son. I would like it to be implemented in his school and this will be possible only with their help.

Thanks in advance for helping to build a better world for my son, starting with its foundations, his education.

Best wishes,

Arantxa García de Sola