



European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WORKING DOCUMENTS

English Edition

1985-86

24 February 1986

SERIES A

DOCUMENT A 2-220/85

REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Women's Rights
on child-care infrastructures

Rapporteur : Mrs G. PEUS

WG(VS1)/3006E

PE 102.507/fin.
Or. De.

On 15 April 1985 the President of the European Parliament referred two motions for resolutions concerning child care to the Committee on Women's Rights as the committee responsible and the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment for its opinion (Docs. 2-18/85 and 2-19/85).

At its meeting of 26/27 June 1985 the Committee on Women's Rights appointed Mrs PEUS rapporteur.

The committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 16/17 December 1985 and 28/29 January 1986. At the latter meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole by 10 votes to none with five abstentions.

The following took part in the vote : Mrs LENZ, chairman; Mrs PEUS (deputizing for Mrs de Backer-van Ocken), rapporteur; Mrs d'ANCONA (deputizing for Mrs Crawley), Mrs BRAUN-MOSER, Miss BROOKES (deputizing for Mrs Daly), Mrs van den HEUVEL, Mrs LARIVE, Mrs MAIJ-WEGGEN, Mr NEWMAN, Ms QUIN (deputizing for Mrs Lizin), Mrs van ROOY, Mr SAKELLARIOU (deputizing for Mrs Salisch), Mrs SQUARCIALUPI (deputizing for Mrs Trupia), Ms TONGUE and Mr VISSER (deputizing for Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul).

The Committee on Social Affairs and Employment has not delivered an opinion.

The report was tabled on 14 February 1986.

The deadline for tabling amendments to this report will be indicated in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

C O N T E N T S

A. MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION	5
B. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	10
ANNEX I : Motion for a resolution Doc. B 2-18/85	24
ANNEX II: Motion for a resolution Doc. B 2-19/85	25

The Committee on Women's Rights hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement :

A

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on child-care infrastructures

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Council Directive 76/207/EEC of 9 February 1976 on equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment and promotion (OJ No. L 39, 14.2.1976),
- having regard to the amended proposal for a Council directive on parental leave and leave for family reasons of 15 November 1984 (COM(84) 631 final),
- having regard to the report on the situation of women in Europe (Doc. 1-1229/83),
- having regard to the resolutions of the European Parliament of 11 February 1981 and 17 January 1984 on the situation of women in Europe (OJ No. C 50, 9.3.1981 and OJ No. C 46, 20.2.1984),
- having regard to the Le Roux report on behalf of the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, on maternity, parental leave and pre-school facilities of 5 July 1983 (No. 14, Doc. 1-1229/83/C),
- having regard to the Council of Europe's study on pre-school education in Western Europe, 1981,
- having regard to the Commission report entitled 'Exposé sur l'Evolution Sociale 1983',
- having regard to the study by Camille Pichault on 'Community-run day care facilities and services for children under the age of three in the European Communities' (Doc. C-1784/83),
- having regard to the final report of the seminar on parental leave and child care held on 26 and 27 March 1985 in Rome,
- having regard to the working documents on parental leave in preparation for the seminar on public child-care facilities and parental leave in March 1985 in Rome,
- having regard to the Commission's study on nursery schools in Europe,
- having regard to the country-by-country reports on the employment of women in Spain, Greece and Portugal, published by the Commission of the European Communities in 1982,
- having regard to the study entitled 'Coping with everyday life in families with children and working parents' produced by the Institut für Sozialforschung und Sozialwissenschaft e.V., Saarbrücken, in January 1983,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Ms Tongue on the taxation of workplace nurseries in the United Kingdom (Doc. B 2-19/85),
 - having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Ms Tongue on equal access to child care facilities (Doc. B 2-18/85),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Women's Rights on child care infrastructures (Doc. A 2-220/85),
- A. whereas there are approximately 10 million children in the European Community entitled to care and education,
 - B. whereas an increasing number of children grow up in one-parent families,
 - C. whereas it is the objective of policies for families with young children to give all children equal access to child care including those from ethnic minority families and those with disabilities,
 - D. whereas despite the huge increase in the number of working women in the Community, particularly mothers of young children, over the past few years, women are still concentrated in part-time, temporary and low-paid employment - and one reason for this is the lack of proper policies and services, including parental leave and child care,
 - E. whereas child care must cater for the very varied living conditions, needs and aspirations of families,
 - F. whereas it is the objective of policies directed at parents with young children to create conditions, through employment legislation and other means, to enable them to make a free choice as regards the division of their time between family and professional duties,
 - G. whereas one of the fundamental features of child-care centres is that they provide nursery education for all children; and whereas this education can offset inequalities experienced by certain socially and culturally disadvantaged groups, giving them a basic level of equality of opportunity,
 - H. whereas research on child-care facilities proves that early education has a beneficial effect on the educational development of the child, offering children - even very young children - experiences and opportunities to supplement those at home - not only through mixing with other children and adults but through participating in group and collaborative activities, fostering social abilities, and gaining access to particular resources and skills that most private homes do not have access to,
 - I. whereas responsibility for caring for and bringing up children should not fall solely on the mother but should be shared by both parents,
 - J. whereas the demand for more child-care facilities must be seen in the context not only of children's requirements but also of equal opportunities for workers of both sexes on the labour market,
 - K. whereas the fundamental purpose of child-care facilities is to provide children with healthy psychological, physical and social development from a very early age,

L. regretting that until now there has been a lack of political will in the majority of Member States to assume governmental responsibility in the field of child care, resulting in uneven and haphazard provision of child-care facilities, thus denying women equal treatment within the provisions of Directive 76/207/EEC,

1. Regrets that because of the obstinacy of one Member State the Council still has not adopted the directive on parental leave;

Calls on the Commission :

2. - to support the Member States in collecting all relevant statistics relating to child care;
3. - to exchange at Community level the lessons learned as regards the advantages and disadvantages of the various child-care facilities,
4. - jointly to investigate and coordinate improvements;
5. - to support a Community-wide programme of research and development which will, inter alia, assess the development and improvement of the various child-care facilities, including the quantity and quality of the facilities available;
6. - to draw up proposals for a draft directive on equal access to child care;

Calls upon the Member States:

7. - to make available, in cooperation with the statistics offices, reliable figures on the number of children under three years of age, the number of families in which both parents work, the number of one-parent families and under-privileged families and the number of parents who take parental leave;
8. - to draw up, at local, regional and national level, reliable interdisciplinary studies on the need for public and private child-care facilities and on the preference of parents for specific forms of child care;
9. - to collaborate closely, in all investigations, with representatives of family and women's organizations, employees' representatives and local and regional authorities;
10. - to produce statistics on the training, pay and status of the staff of various types of child-care facilities;
11. - to develop the network of different public and private child-care facilities so that all children whose parents so wish can be accommodated in one of the forms of pre-school establishment from birth;
12. - to give priority to anti-racist child-care facilities, which are equally accessible to all children, black or white or mother-tongue-speaking, and which reflect a range of cultural needs and diverse family styles;

13. - to give priority to developing child-care facilities which are equally accessible to all children, including those with disabilities, so that adequate resources to meet those disabilities are available within each facility, and to discourage segregated facilities for children with disabilities or other special needs;
14. - to give priority in setting up child-care facilities to residential districts in which there is a high proportion of working parents, foreign workers and low-income families; to locate child-care facilities primarily in residential districts, both in rural and in urban areas, and in particular in districts with low-income families or high concentrations of working women; and to give due regard to the need to ensure minimum standards, both in the voluntary and private sector, as well as in the state sector, in respect of child-staff ratios, staff qualifications, space, equipment and remuneration and benefits for employees;
15. - to refrain from the taxing of workplace nurseries;
16. - to recognize that some parents prefer child-minding arrangements to group care, and to acknowledge these preferences by developing sponsored child-minding schemes, within the context of local and regional planning for child care, and providing that minimum standards, including employment rights, are met;
17. - to attach importance to cooperation between educationalists, the child-care centres and the children's parents;
18. - also to involve parents in both educational and administrative decision-making of such centres;
19. - to make the opening hours of the child-care facilities correspond to the working hours of parents in employment, including shiftwork;
20. - to provide recreation centres and/or round-the-clock centres in health resorts if child-care facilities are closed during the holidays for excessively long periods that do not correspond with the requirements of families;
21. - to involve experts such as psychologists, social education workers and doctors in the training of pre-school teachers;
22. - to plan and develop research programmes in conjunction with teachers and other practitioners, and to disseminate information and solicit opinions on research from parents and a wider public;
23. - to encourage a diversity of child care, within the context of local and regional planning and distribution of resources, and providing that minimum standards are observed;
24. - to ensure that all programmes and policies providing child-care facilities are positively anti-sexist in orientation and content;

25. Calls on EC Member States to ratify Article 3 of the ILO Convention No. 156 which provides as follows : 'With a view to creating effective equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers, each Member shall make it an aim of national policy to enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities;
26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission and the governments of the twelve Member States.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTThe present situation with regard to child care

Difficulties arise even in connection with data which are very easy to compile such as population trends, marital status and vocational status, insofar as these data are available. They are not compiled at the same time in every country. The very incomplete data on the number of children under three years of age whose parents are both in employment, the number of children of under three years of age in one-parent families, the number of children whose mothers would like to work but cannot because they are looking after children and the number of children in under-privileged families are not really known and are in some cases under-estimated.

Even the data on the need for child care facilities, the number of child care facilities and the number of children cared for by them are extremely fragmentary. In general, the assumption is that there is a very great need for child-care facilities in the countries of the European Community. The following figures emerge when the data actually available on the need for child care facilities are assembled :

In Belgium +35% of children under three years of age need day care. These are children whose mother and father are both working.

In France it is assumed that between 52 and 70% of all children under three years of age require child care, on the basis of the number of children whose mother and father are both working, children from one-parent families, orphans and children from poor families (Pichault, p. 43).

The Frenchman Sullerot assumes, in a very exhaustive analysis, that only a little over half of the children of mothers who are assumed to be unable to look after their children themselves are cared for by the community : the others were being cared for by grandmothers, neighbours and unregistered child minders (Les Equipements et Services Collectifs de Garde). The following statistics are available on the number of child-care facilities available and the number of places :

Extract from the Commission's report entitled 'EXPOSE SUR L'EVOLUTION SOCIALE' 1983, p. 125

Number of establishments - number of places

	Date of inf.		Number of establishments	Number of places	Total number of places by country
Germany	1981	Day nurseries	1 325	26 098	26 098
Belgium (accord. to the replies given by CTF)	1980	State-run day nurseries	308)14 100	(
		Privately-run day nurs.	216)	(
		Family-run day nurseries	78	1 710	(66 424
		Child-minders	6 566	19 471	(
		Pre-school	?	31 143	(
Denmark	1982	State-run day nurseries	617	21 337	(
		Family-run day nurs.	18 410	39 310	(68 231
		Pre-school	?	7 584	(
France	1980	State-run day nurseries	1 006	30 251	(
		Privately-run day nurs.	147	7 389	(
		Workplace day nurseries	222	11 771	(703 324
		Family-run day nurseries	554	34 129	(
		Child-minders	226 500	340 000(est)	(
		Pre-school	?	259 784	(
Greece	1981	State-run day nurseries	48	3 111	(
		Privately-run day nurs.	15	1 320	(
		Workplace day nurseries	20	329	(7 129
		Child-minders	135	2 169	(
		Pre-school	4	200	(
Ireland	1982	Privately-run day nurs.	?	(13 000?)	(13 000?)
Italy	1980	State-run day nurs.	1 614/1 810	78 404	(79 921
		Privately-run day nurs.	43 81	1 517	(
Luxembourg	1981	State-run day nurseries	15	492	(
		Privately-run day nurseries	10	+450	(
		Workplace day nurseries	12	+350	(2 592
		Child-minders	?	+1 300	(

	Date of inf.	Number of establishments	Number of places	Total number of places by country	
Netherlands (answers given by Government)	1980	Privately-run day nurseries	126	1 168	(1 568
		Pre-school	31	400	(
United Kingdom	1980	State-run day nurseries	613	28 400	(
		Privately-run day nurseries	734	19 900	(
		Workplace day nurseries	72	2 100	(174 400
		Child-minders	39 500	93 000	(
		Pre-school	?	25 000	(
TOTAL (accuracy not guaranteed)				1 142 700	

Observations

- BELGIUM : - Workplace day nurseries are entered under privately-run day nurseries. These are principally hospital and university day nurseries.
- In 1980 the available statistics do not make any distinction between day nurseries and pre-school establishments.
- DENMARK : - The concept of family-run day nurseries does not seem to correspond to the definition used in other countries.
- FRANCE : - 67 small day nurseries, each with between 12 and 15 places (total : 1 255 places) are included in (community) day nurseries. The number of places with child-minders has been estimated on the basis of 1.5 children per child-minder.
- GREECE : - Children of up to five and a half years of age.
- UNITED KINGDOM : - Children of up to five years of age except for pre-school establishments (only England).

In addition, some sketchy information can be drawn from the country-by-country reports on women's employment published by the Commission of the European Communities in 1982 for various countries. According to those reports the number of State-run and privately-run day nurseries and nursery schools in Greece is very limited and badly distributed between the regions. The buildings still fail to meet the needs of children of that age. In Portugal the number of day nurseries trebled between 1970 and 1980 but 23 000 day nurseries are still required for the whole country and the autonomous regions. The regional distribution of the nursery schools is very poor.

According to the Commission's study 'Les Equipements et Services Collectifs de Garde des Jeunes Enfants de 0 à 3 Ans dans la Communauté Européenne', in the Federal Republic of Germany (1977) 3% of children under three years old were looked after in public or state-supervised child-care facilities, while the figure was 9.5% in Belgium (1975), 37% in Denmark (1981), 0.4% in Greece (1981), 35% in France (1980), 3.9% in Italy (1980), 2.7% in Luxembourg (1981) and 0.86% in the Netherlands (1981). The figures received for Ireland do not include private facilities, which account for the majority of children. In the United Kingdom the figure was 5.8% of 0-5 year olds, with no indication of year (Commission study, p. 55).

In her study, Camille Pichault says that it can be assumed, though with no guarantee of accuracy, that in the Community countries 10% of children of under three years of age are in the care of State-run or State-supervised child care services and establishments (Pichault, p. 56). In Spain, 9.75% of children between two and three years of age were looked after in day nurseries in 1980/81 and 80% of children between four and five years of age in nursery schools. As a whole, 45.52% of children under six years of age were looked after in child-care establishments (report on the employment of women in Spain published by the Commission in 1982).

According to OECD statistics from 1972 (quoted on p. 18 of the 1981 Council of Europe study 'Pre-school education in Western Europe'), the figures for participation in pre-school education were as follows :

Belgium :	88% of 3 year olds,	96% of 4 year olds	and 100% of 5 year olds;
France :	15% of 2 year olds,	55% of 3 year olds,	84% of 4 year olds and 100% of 5 year olds;
Netherlands :	80% of 4 year olds	and 94% of 5 year olds;	
United Kingdom :	1% of 2 year olds,	4% of 3 year olds	and 30% of 4 year olds;
Denmark :	34% of 3 year olds,	34% of 4 year olds	and 34% of 5 year olds.

There are, in addition, very few research results and analyses available on the quality and short-comings of the various child care facilities.

There are, moreover, very few reliable data on the preferences of parents for particular forms of child care. It should be borne in mind in this connection that not enough efforts are made to provide parents with proper information. According to a survey carried out by Sullerot, there are great differences between the various countries. According to that survey, German, British and Italian parents prefer day nurseries, Belgian, Luxembourgish, Dutch and Greek parents prefer household employees and Danish parents prefer an authorized child-minder. However, German parents in fact leave their children in the care of a household employee whilst the majority of French parents who favour that solution leave their children in the care of a tried and tested child-minder (Pichault, p. 12). The result of a Belgian survey in 1979 in which mothers who leave their children in the care of a child-minder or child-care establishment as well as mothers who look after their children themselves were interviewed, a clear preference for care by a child-minder

(42.7%) or grandparents (30.2%) was shown over day nurseries (14.7%) and crèches and playschools (12.3%). No distinction was made, however, according to the age of the child (Pichault, p. 48).

According to a document entitled 'Europeans and their children' a random sample survey in the countries of the European Community, published by the Commission of the European Communities in Brussels, October 1979, a total of 43% of parents nowadays prefer crèches and a total of 28% prefer household employees. Country by country, the percentage of parents in favour of the crèche were as follows : Belgium 23%, Denmark 21%, Germany 36%, France 27%, Ireland 21%, Italy 65%, Luxembourg 23%, the Netherlands 25% and the United Kingdom 50%. The percentages of parents in favour of household employees were as follows : Belgium, 33%, Denmark 31%, Germany 30%, France 36%, Ireland 58%, Italy 19%, Luxembourg 37%, the Netherlands 28% and the United Kingdom 25%.

When asked what option the parents had chosen, a total of 22% of the parents cited the crèche and 17% household employees. The following picture emerges for the various countries :

Belgium :	day nursery	10%	household employees	12%
Denmark :	"	22%	"	27%
Germany :	"	21%	"	25%
France :	"	11%	"	14%
Ireland :	"	12%	"	29%
Italy :	"	26%	"	15%
Luxembourg :	Figures too small to be reckoned in percentages			
The Netherlands :	day nursery	10%	household employees	16%
The United Kingdom :	"	40%	"	13%

The surveys are often biased by those who have carried them out or commissioned them. Quite often two surveys within the same country will reach contradictory conclusions. According to one survey there are too few places in day nurseries whilst according to the other day nurseries are not used to full capacity.

There is also little information as to the opinion of specialists in this field. In Belgium the psychologist Michel reaches the conclusion that no option should be dismissed from the outset as they all have serious shortcomings. In the Netherlands experts think it best for young children to be brought up at home by their own mother and prefer children to be cared for in other families rather than in community-run day nurseries (Pichault, p. 51).

The Frenchman, Sullerot, considers that it is too early to put two-year old children in pre-school establishments, as doctors have found that putting children of under twelve months in a day nursery creates problems. (Pichault, p. 52).

In addition, innovations and pilot projects in the field of child care have not yet been the subject of any scientific research or even of critical assessment. The innovations are based essentially on parental initiatives, for example 'guest parents' in the Netherlands, 'mothers help mothers' in Luxembourg, university day nurseries run in conjunction with parents and associations of mothers who work part time (play groups) in Belgium and unofficial day nurseries set up by parents' associations in France (Pichault, p. 71).

The unavailable or only very incomplete data must be collected in all Community countries for a given decade in accordance with the same criteria and at the same time instead of scattered over many years. Surveys must be carried out at regular, jointly agreed intervals. They should be carried out by groups consisting of representatives of several disciplines (demographers, pre-school teachers, sociologists, persons from the medical field, technical experts, teachers and psychologists) who have different philosophies of life and are drawn from both sexes. They should seek the advice of employees' representatives, representatives of family associations and women's organizations and local authorities (see Pichault, p. 123).

The following reasons are given for the demand for more child-care facilities :

- the sharp increase in the number of married women at work; according to the incomplete figures available, 50% of mothers of very young children in Denmark, and 40% in Italy, go out to work, and 70% of young mothers with a child under six in France (Commission study);
- the trend away from the extended family and towards the nuclear family;
- the number of one-parent families; 2.4% of children in France are born into one-parent families and 10.9% of those under a year old live in these circumstances, while in Italy, one-parent families accounted for 13.5% of all families in 1980 (Commission study, p. 2);
- the number of natural children in the Community of Ten increased from 196 000 in 1960 to 288 000 in 1982;
- educational reasons : complementing the domestic upbringing of children by carefully planned learning experiences in contact with other children is regarded as beneficial;
- equal opportunities for women : Article 3 of Convention No. 156 which was drawn up by the International Labour Office in 1981 and has not yet been ratified by any of the Community Member States, provides as follows :

'With a view to creating effective equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers, each Member shall make it an aim of national policy to enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities.' (quoted by Pichault, pp. 17 and 18).

Types of child-care

Policies must seek to offer alternatives and create a range of possibilities. Mothers who wish to look after their children themselves should enjoy a measure of the state support provided for mothers who choose to go out to work.

Some of the various arrangements in operation in the Member States are set out below.

Parental Leave

National provisions on parental leave and leave for family reasons are very different from one Member State to another. This can jeopardize the harmonious functioning of the common market. For this reason the Commission of the European Communities submitted a proposal for a Council directive on parental leave and leave for family reasons in December 1983. In November 1984 an amended version was submitted. Under Article 4 of that directive parental leave shall be granted to enable any entitled person to stay at home to look after the child concerned. Parental leave is especially intended for families in which both parents are working and for parents bringing up children on their own. Under the proposal for a directive parental leave shall be for a minimum period of three months per worker and child. The Member States may extend the leave, especially in the case of single-parent families and families with disabled children. There is also the possibility of part-time leave by agreement between the employee and the employer. The leave can be taken up to the time when the child reaches the age of two years and in the case of adoption until he or she has reached the age of 5 years. Both parents cannot take parental leave at the same time. The right to leave cannot be transferred from one parent to the other. The question of remuneration is left to the Member States.

The directive is intended to help to make employment and family duties compatible with one another and to improve equal opportunities for women in the field of employment. In the Commission's view, the sharing of family responsibilities between parents is an essential part of specific strategies designed to increase equality on the labour market. The directive is also intended to help to give working parents with children more alternative kinds of child care and also to encourage fathers parental leave instead of transferring their right. Critics of the principle that the right cannot be transferred claim, however, that this principle makes parental leave unnecessarily inflexible and that it does not take account of the different circumstances, needs and wishes of individual mothers and fathers (see Working Document on parental leave and child care in preparation for the corresponding seminar in 1985, p. 9).

The principle that the right could not be transferred caused astonishment at the seminar on parental leave and child care. Giving the whole period available to the parents would make it much easier for the mother to return to work, whilst experience in Sweden shows that fathers often prefer to reduce the leave to a short period and get to know their child better (report on the seminar on parental leave and child care, p. 8). In Sweden, where parental leave is relatively well-established, it has taken several years before take-up rates among working fathers reached the present level of 13% (proposal for a Council directive on parental leave and leave for family reasons, p. 4) : experience gained in other countries also shows that fathers are rather disinclined to take such leave for cultural or economic reasons. The Commission takes the view that parental leave can also offer an opportunity to provide valuable work experience for young people. For this reason the replacement of workers on leave by unemployed young people should be encouraged.

There are no complete data on the precise arrangements for parental leave in the various Member States.

In Belgium, under a new law adopted in January 1985 (Law on the revival of the economy) workers can take leave for a period of 6 to 12 months for various reasons, inter alia to look after a child. The leave can be taken as full or

part-time leave. The rules form part of a programme to increase employment. A worker whose job is filled by an unemployed person has the right to the payment of the corresponding unemployment benefit (Working Document for the seminar on State-run child care facilities and parental leave, March 1985).

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the 4 months' parental leave following maternity leave will be extended in 1986 to 6 months or 10-12 months, with payment of an allowance and a limited guarantee of a return to previous employment. This was introduced in Italy in 1977. According to information from the Ministry of Employment, however, only a few employees can afford such leave, because in the private sector the allowance is only 30% of previous pay. In the public sector the allowance is equal to full pay for the first month. The government does not state whether greater use is made of parental leave than in the private sector.

In France all public sector employees and women in private undertakings with more than 100 employees can take a maximum of two years' unpaid leave to look after their children. The contract of employment is suspended during such leave but not terminated. Since 1978 the father can take parental leave if the mother waives her right to do so (report of the inquiry into the situation of women carried out by the European Parliament, Topic No. 14, Parental leave and pre-school facilities).

In Denmark, in addition to the existing fourteen-week maternity leave, all workers in the private and public sector are entitled to a further ten weeks' leave which may be taken up by both parents. As in the case of the existing maternity leave, social security benefits of 90% of earnings are paid (Working Document for the Rome seminar).

In Greece, under a law adopted in October 1984 in two-parent families both mother and father have the right to three months' leave each. A parent looking after a child in a one-parent family has the right to six months which can be taken at any time until the child is two and a half years of age.

In Italy, women working in the public and private sector can take leave following maternity leave for a maximum of six months until the child reaches one year of age. They receive a payment of 30% of their normal wage from the sickness insurance fund. Employees in the public sector have the right to their full salary in the first month and two-thirds of it during the second month of leave. The right to return to previous employment is guaranteed. Since 1977 the father can also take parental leave but only instead of the mother and provided that she signs a declaration to the effect that she waives her right thereto (Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women, Topic No. 14).

Luxembourg has clearly indicated its preference for parental leave over other forms of care.

In Portugal a period of unpaid leave of between six months and two years can be taken. The period can also lead to the withdrawal of social security benefits, which are paid again after the period of leave. The leave can be taken by father or mother on the same conditions.

Care by grandmothers or other close relatives

Nearly half the children of working mothers are still looked after by their grandmothers. Financial considerations also play a part in this. It would be wrong to assume from this, however, that such arrangements come about as a

last resort (research report on the child-minding pilot scheme in the Federal Republic of Germany, p. 171). According to a study carried out by Fock the proportion of children looked after by grandparents varies widely from one Community country to another (Luxembourg 78%, Italy 69%, Belgium 63%, Netherlands 35% and France 20%).

Self-help parents' groups

These may exist for various purposes, such as baby-sitting pools, monitoring rotas for playgrounds or the fitting-out of cellars or attics as play areas.

'Rent-a-granny' service

A family's address is entered in a card index on payment of a registration fee. As and when the need arises, a 'grandmother' who will look after the children may be contacted by telephone.

Supervised playgrounds and children's playgroups

Activity playgrounds, building playgrounds and adventure playgrounds all exist. Pre-school playgroups are very widespread in the United Kingdom and Denmark. They are often organized on a neighbourhood basis. Parents are involved as supervisors as much as possible. Pre-school playgroups in the UK are run jointly by parents and primary school teachers (ratio of adults to children is 1:8). In Denmark most playgrounds coming under the Youth Department have a trained playleader.

The ideas behind supervised playgrounds vary widely. They are mainly concerned with the development of independence, initiative, critical skills, creativity, the ability to come to grips with the real world, social behaviour and communication skills.

Mobile playgrounds, which set up at the same place once or twice a week on a regular basis, and play clubs, which organize afternoon sessions in pubs or schools, are peripatetic provisions, part of the purpose of which is to secure improvements in play equipment and play areas.

Child-minders (referred to as 'family day care' in most countries)

A child-minder looks after between one and three children of working mothers in her own home during the day. She receives a monthly payment from the parents to cover expenses and a monthly fee from the state. She should have children of her own and look after a maximum of three children under the age of three or four under the age of ten.

In the Federal Republic of Germany child-minders are insured for accidents and civil liability; they receive a contribution towards sickness insurance costs, an introductory course and on-going further training.

In Denmark child-minding is a recognized occupation. Child-minders are entitled to a pension, sickness insurance, continuing salary payments during pregnancy and child allowances.

Advocates of the child-minding system argue, inter alia, that this kind of child-care is particularly close to the child's main pattern of living, especially with regard to the limited number of children per child-minder. This kind of day care is not based on a specialized professional institution, but offers a natural environment. It offers a greater opportunity for cooperation between child-minders and parents.

Critics believe that child-minding carries the risk of reaffirming women's role as professional mothers; in looking after four children, a child-minder would be unable to participate in life outside the home, and more child-minding might lead to fewer crèches and day nurseries being provided. Parents often express concern about their child becoming too attached to the child-minder. Overall, the arrangement has proved its worth. Child-minders regard looking after children as a worthwhile job. According to the research on the child-minding pilot scheme in the Federal Republic of Germany, 80% of the parents surveyed said that they would opt for their child-minder again. Most parents regard child-minders as committed, helpful and suitable in the context of their child's upbringing. After the end of the pilot scheme, only 2.6% of the parents surveyed said that they would have preferred to take their child to a crèche; 20% would have liked to have an even more personal form of day care, provided by a grandmother or other close relative (p. 167).

The preparatory and on-going practical training of child-minders is very important. The training programme must be tailored to the women's circumstances. They should only have a relatively short period of introductory training and practical problems should be tackled in detail as and when they occur. This fits in with the view expressed in the interim research report on the German Youth Institute's 1982 pilot scheme on counselling in connection with foster-children, which states that group work with foster-parents is an excellent way of equipping them to handle their role and of providing them with help and support in crisis situations before they reach the stage of turning to the Youth Department for help. Family day care should be supported by national and local authorities in all the Member States - this is already the case in Denmark - in the same way as crèches, kindergartens and children's free-time centres.

Crèches for very small children

Institutional care is said to offer the following advantages :

- ease of control with regard to cleanliness and appropriateness of the surroundings;
- those looking after the children are better qualified;
- children have the opportunity to gain social experience with a range of different people at an early age;
- more material available for playing and better play facilities.

The counter-arguments advanced include the following :

- communal care of a number of babies and small children hampers their development. Since the children make the same claims for attention at the same time, sufficient attention cannot be given to the individual needs of each child. There is the risk of a loss of individuality.

Ecole maternelle, nursery schools, kindergartens

There are considerable differences in the educational element involved in the various pre-school facilities.

At the école maternelle, qualified teachers provide a uniform, centrally planned pre-school education; few private facilities are available.

The nursery school is only one of several types of pre-school provision. Playgroups are also important for the 3-6 year old age group. The Pre-School Playgroups Association coordinates groups and runs training courses for playgroup organizers, who are frequently the parents themselves. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in their children's development. The number of children in playgroups has increased to the point where it equals the number of children in other pre-school facilities.

In the Federal Republic of Germany 75% of kindergartens are run by private groups such as the Catholic Caritas association.

In the Netherlands 30% of kindergartens are run by the Protestant Church and 35% by the Catholic Church.

In both countries the private kindergarten system is organized on the basis of staff with recognized qualifications. In Italy there are also many facilities run by the Church.

Assessment of non-parental child care

The research report on the child-minding pilot scheme includes the following statement in its conclusions : 'In terms of its effects on babies and small children, qualified family day care is equivalent to care by their own mother. The children involved in the pilot scheme were not disadvantaged in any way, by comparison with similar children looked after by their own mothers, with regard to their socio-emotional development, mother-child relationships, cooperation with their peers, independence and intellectual development. In one area they were more advanced : they had more social confidence and were less timid. Half-day working by the mother combined with half-day non-parental care is often particularly suitable for a child's personal development.'

French and Danish studies (referred to by Süsmuth, pp. 64-65) refers specifically to the risks involved if there are frequent changes in the personnel providing care or if different types of care are used simultaneously and also if the surroundings provide insufficient affective and cognitive stimulation for children. The following factors are highlighted as being essential for the satisfactory development of children in non-parental care :

- parental maturity and competence;
- sound affective parent-child relationship;
- safety and security in the parental home and at the child-minder's;
- positive relationship between the family and the child-minder;
- continuous care by a limited number of people;
- maintenance of a regular routine by the parents;
- gradual shift from the parental home to non-parental care, accompanied by the parents;
- continuous medical, psychological and educational care.

According to Commission document 484/84 'Partage des responsabilités professionnelles familiales et sociales' the role which society should play in the field of child care is interpreted in very different ways. Some people take the view that society has an important function to perform in ensuring that all children have equal opportunities and guaranteeing equal treatment for workers of both sexes who have family duties to fulfil. Other people consider that this is a field in which interference by the public authorities or the State must be very limited because it is primarily up to the parents to take responsibility for their own children (p. 5). The Commission takes the

view that as far as children from three to six years of age are concerned the consensus of opinion is that child-care facilities are apt. The only criticisms which are made are academic and concern the variety of teaching staff, the status of the establishments and how they fit into the overall education plan, education for very young children, the training, status and financing of staff and the adjustment of their opening hours to the working hours of parents in employment. The debate is still very heated on the subject of child care for children under three years of age. The interpretation of the role of the family and especially of the mother varies considerably according to religious beliefs and political views.

The tone of the statements made by European Ministers for Social Affairs who met in 1980 and 1981 within the OECD and the Council of Europe was very moderate and very cautious. At the OECD conference of 10 to 12 March 1980 on small children they said that the family provides the best framework for the care and upbringing of children because it is to some extent a 'natural' framework. The ministers added that the problem which had to be overcome was that of the degree of tolerance which the public authorities were willing to show towards the different needs and circumstances of families.

At the second conference, which was organized by the Council of Europe from 20 to 22 May 1981, the ministers said that since the demands of everyday life were becoming more complex, it could be seen that a great number of people wanted and needed a wide range of very different facilities and measures to be made available. The ministers then emphasized once more that the objective of family policy is to create conditions in which parents can make a free choice as to the division of their time between family and working life.

Very great differences of interpretation arise from the fact that in some cases the government is supposed to guarantee a sufficient number of places for all children whose parents wish them to be put into day care, whilst in other cases they are supposed only to help parents who have no other option.

The question of what the best solution is is therefore still open. Parents believe that in addition to simple supervision and care the educational and social function is of increasing importance in a child-care establishment. Parents insist that the quality of the facilities should be given absolute priority. Of the families interviewed for a study entitled 'Families with children and working parents, Saarbrücken January 1983, none took their children to a day nursery. These parents have a reservations about day nurseries on principle; they claim that the children do not receive regular attention and lack the presence of the person to whom they can relate and trust (p. 32).

The following statement is made in the conclusions of the Council of Europe's study on pre-school education, on p. 66 : 'The main achievement of this research is probably that it has helped to define realistic objectives for pre-school education, which can play an important part in encouraging learning by socially disadvantaged children. The opportunities for compensating for social disadvantages, however, should not be overestimated. The limited resources available can best be put to use in complementing and reinforcing the parents' role, and not in seeking to replace them, because the potential impact of institutional pre-school education is outweighed by that of the home environment.'

Requirements for the expansion and improvement of pre-school education

- The number of pre-school facilities should be increased in all the Member States so that all children, irrespective of their social backgrounds, have the opportunity to attend a pre-school facility from three years onwards, at the latest;
- enough places should be made available for schoolchildren to ensure that all children who are otherwise not adequately cared for during the day can be looked after;
- places should be made available for immigrant children to the same extent as for local children, to encourage integration and eliminate social barriers;
- the provision of new facilities should be planned in such a way that residential areas with particularly needy families are given priority;
- there must be a marked improvement in the training of pre-school and kindergarten teachers;
- training should not be concerned exclusively with the pre-school age group; students should have the opportunity to gain practical experience in both the pre-school and primary sectors;
- other professional groups, such as doctors and social workers, should be involved in the training programme;
- the results of current research in the field of child development and the effectiveness of teaching methods should be made available to pre-school teachers to a greater extent;
- the proportion of trained teachers, in relation to the number of employees in the pre-school sector, should be increased;
- all pre-school teachers should have more opportunities for further training;
- in 1974 99% of those working with small children in the Federal Republic of Germany were women; greater efforts should be made to employ men as teachers and teachers' assistants;
- the level of training, pay and working conditions for pre-school teachers should be the same as for primary teachers;
- the position of child-minders in the system of child-care provision must be re-thought and regulated accordingly;
- some establishments need to be better equipped and have a more stimulating environment;
- groups must be reduced in size in many establishments;
- working with parents is particularly important (e.g. provision of books, monthly kindergarten bulletins, occasional home visits, private discussions in the case of problem children, parents' evenings to discuss problems and social events such as barbecues, summer and Christmas parties);
- teachers must be particularly well-qualified for working with parents;

- better staffing and reduced working-time in groups so that all staff have set times available for preparation and follow-up work;
- charges must be set at levels that do not rule out access for poorer families (when charges for using children's day centres in Berlin were abolished, they were inundated with children from deprived families);
- more research into all aspects of pre-school education; the Council of Europe has called for improved scientific methods in evaluating projects, new types of demonstration and the dissemination of research findings among parents, teachers and the public at large;
- new kinds of cooperation between researchers, administrators working in this field and teachers with regard to innovations based on research.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

DOCUMENT B 2-18/85

tabled by Ms TONGUE, Mr ELLIOTT, Ms QUIN, Mrs van den HEUVEL, Mrs d'ANCONA, Mr FORD, Mr NEWMAN, Mrs SALISCH, Mrs VAYSSADE and Mrs VAN HEMELDONCK pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure on equal access to child-care facilities

The European Parliament,

- A. having regard to the report on the situation of women in Europe (Doc. 1-229/83),
- B. having regard to its resolutions of 11 February 1981 and 17 January 1984 on the situation of women in Europe,
- C. having regard to Action 7 of the 1982-85 Action Programme on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women,
- D. having regard to Council Directive 76/207/EEC of 9th February, 1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training, promotion and working conditions,
- E. noting the report V/1784/83-EN on Day Care facilities and Services for Children under the age of 3 in the European Communities which clearly illustrates the haphazard and inadequate provision of facilities for the under three's,
- F. having regard to the disparities between Member States in national provision in child care facilities great enough to affect the compatible functioning of the EEC,
- G. given that equal treatment for male and female workers constitutes one of the objectives of the European Communities (Council Directive 76/207/EEC), and that women to suffer inequality in seeking access to the Labour market because they do not have equal access to adequate childcare provision in all EEC Countries,
- H. convinced that public provision of childcare facilities for the under five's is necessary to guarantee real equality between men and women,
- I. whereas it is appropriate to remedy this by an approximation of laws towards the most advanced provisions in the terms of Article 117 and 118 of the Treaty of Rome and conditions such as will improve the standard of living and working conditions of the Labour force and ensure the full implementation of Council Directive 76/207/EEC,
1. Calls on the Commission to draw up proposals for a framework Directive calling on Member States to acknowledge their responsibilities in the field of childcare and to make the necessary statutory provisions to ensure adequate childcare provision in all EEC Countries;
2. Instructs its President to forward this Resolution to the Commission, Council of Ministers and the Governments of each Member State.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

DOCUMENT B 2-19/85

tabled by Ms TONGUE, Mr ELLIOTT, Ms QUIN, Mr FORD, Mrs van den HEUVEL, Mrs d'ANCONA, Mrs SALISCH, Mrs VAYSSADE, Mr NEWMAN and Mrs VAN HEMELDONCK

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

on the taxation of workplace nurseries by the United Kingdom Government

The European Parliament,

- A. having the regard to the report on the situation of women in Europe (Doc. 1-229/83),
- B. having regard to its resolutions of 11 February 1981 and 17 January 1984 on the situation of women in Europe,
- C. having regard to the EEC Commission's Memorandum on Income Taxation and Equal Treatment for Men and Women (COM(84) 695 final),
- D. having regard to Action 6 of the New Community Action Programme on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women which states as its aim the need to revise income tax systems which have an indirect adverse effect on women's employment,
- E. whereas the Government of the United Kingdom is pursuing a policy of taxing parents whose childcare costs are subsidised by their employers through the provision of nursery facilities (workplace nurseries),
- F. whereas such a practice is unknown in other EEC Member States,
- G. recognises that the policy of the United Kingdom Government runs contrary to the EEC's whole action programme on the promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women, having as it does a severely adverse affect on Women's employment,
 1. Calls on the Commission to advise the United Kingdom Government that it is in contravention of EEC laws and recommendations on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women;
 2. Calls on the Commission to insist that the United Kingdom Government reverses its policy of a tax on workplace nurseries;
 3. Calls on the commission to insist that the United Kingdom Government withdraws all tax demands already issued with respect to workplace nurseries;
 4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the Government of the United Kingdom.

