

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1980 - 1981

28 November 1980

DOCUMENT 1-648/80

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mrs WIECZOREK-ZEUL, Mr BALFE, Mrs HOFF,
Mrs WEBER, Mr KAVANAGH, Mrs SALISCH, Mrs CLWYD,
Mr WALTER, Mr VON DER VRING, Mr WETTIG, Mr AFRE'
and Mr VIEHOFF

on behalf of the Socialist Group

pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation of children in the European Community
and in the potential Member States Greece, Spain and
Portugal

Annex

Form and content of the study

A comprehensive Commission study of the situation of children must cover the following areas:

1. Social situation of children

(a) Health

- comparison of health care provisions (to what extent entrenched in legislation? how much utilized?), both ante- and post-natal;
- comparison of puerperal and infant mortality, with an analysis of their causes;
- comparison of child mortality (describing causes), especially deaths resulting from road accidents, allowing for differences in statistical methods;
- comparison of figures for handicapped children and the origins of their handicaps (birth/illness/accident) and a comparison of rehabilitation facilities (i.e. a comparison of policies towards handicapped children and young people);
- comparison of frequency and extent of ill-treatment of children.

(b) Housing

- where they live (town, country);
- how do they live (position of housing, surroundings, space available, separate rooms for children, etc.)

(c) Family situation

- comparison of family situation in economic (financial) terms;
- comparison of internal family structures (united families; number of siblings, contact with grandparents and other relatives);
- comparison of division of work and time within the family

(d) Upbringing outside the family

- comparison of infant care facilities (nurseries, crèches, pre-school, neighbours, grandparents);
- comparison of form and content of institutional infant care and infant education facilities;
- comparison of school systems (daily, weekly and annual school hours, length of compulsory education and average length of school education);

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the affirmation by the Member States of the European Community in Article 117 of the EEC Treaty of their desire to promote improved working conditions and an improved standard of living for workers, calls upon the Commission to draw up a comprehensive study of the situation of children in the Member States of the European Community and in the potential Member States Greece, Spain and Portugal, with proposals for the improvement of living standards,
- the social, legal and economic situation of children in the countries of the Community and in Greece, Spain and Portugal reflects the political, social, economic and legal problems of individual Member States and in particular some of their poorer regions. If the desire to ensure the harmonious development of Europe by reducing the differences existing between the various regions and the backwardness of the less favoured regions (EEC Treaty, preamble) is to be taken seriously, the European Community must give careful thought to the situation of children who are particularly badly affected by regional disparities (for example, child mortality is far higher in the poorer regions of Europe than in the major population centres). But it must also make comprehensive proposals for practical improvements to the situation of children,

calls therefore on the Commission to submit proposals to the European Parliament within a year for action under the following headings:

1. Proposals for the best possible medical facilities for children, in order to bring about drastic reductions in infant and child mortality;
2. Draft directive to prohibit child labour, taking account of the need to protect children from exploitation;
3. Proposals for employment and social arrangements to reflect the need and desire to work and the necessity and joy of bringing up children, i.e. a draft directive providing for longer periods of maternity and paternity leave, and proposals for an across-the-board reduction in working hours as desired by many European parents (according to the Commission's study 'The Europeans and their children', 1979, p. 30);
4. Proposals for the integration of immigrant children in their host countries; specific proposals to enable the differing cultural heritages of home country and host country to enrich the lives of these children rather than deprive them of any cultural identity.

Execution of the study

As the Commission already includes a separate chapter on family affairs in its annual report on the social situation, recording new bills and acts relating to family law, it must have a good deal of data which it could rapidly collate. Where studies have already been written on subjects under consideration, the results should be incorporated in the overall study on the situation of children (e.g. the study on pre-school education in the European Community); other studies should be updated and then incorporated (e.g. the 1966 comparative survey of youth labour laws in the Member States). The major items of legislation affecting children (civil law, labour law, criminal law, health care, etc.) should be tabulated in an Annex so that differences in the legal status of children in the countries of the European Community and the potential new members may be discerned at a glance.

