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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport

on the education of the children of migrant workers

Rapporteur: Mrs P.J. VIEHOFF

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On 12 January 1981 a motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-773/80) on the education of the children of migrant workers tabled by Mrs Cinciari Rodano, Mr Ceravolo and Mr Papapietro pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure was referred to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport.

At its meeting of 24 February 1981 the committee appointed Mrs Viehoff rapporteur.

The motion for a resolution contained in the draft report was considered by the committee at its meeting of 23 June 1981 and was adopted at the same meeting by 9 votes with 2 abstentions.

Present: Mr Hahn, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mrs Viehoff, rapporteur; Mr Arfé, Mr Beyer de Ryke, Mrs Buchan, Miss De Valera (deputizing for Mrs Weiss), Mr Hutton, Mr Papapietro, Mr Patterson, Mr Schwencke and Mr Vandemeulebroucke (deputizing for Mr Bøgh).

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The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the education of the children of migrant workers

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Cinciari Rodano, Mr Ceravolo and Mr Papapietro (Doc. 1-773/80) pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1612/68 of 15 October 1968 on the freedom of movement of workers within the Community and in particular to Article 12¹ thereof,
 - having regard to the Council Directive of 25 July 1977 on the education of the children of migrant workers²,
 - having regard to the resolution embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the Commission proposal to the Council for a directive on the education of the children of migrant workers³,
 - having regard to the report by the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport (Doc. 1-329/81),
1. Deplores the fact that the Council Directive of 25 July 1977 on the education of the children of migrant workers has still not been implemented in all the Member States of the Community;
 2. Calls on those Member States which have shown a considerable delay in implementing the directive to take measures to bring their

1 OJ No. L 257 of 19 October 1968

2 OJ No. L 199 of 6 August 1977, p.32

3 OJ No. C 280 of 8 December 1975, p. 48

statutory and administrative provisions into line with the provisions of the directive as soon as possible;

3. Endorses the action taken by the European Commission to promote the education of migrant workers' children in the Community and urges the Commission to set up pilot projects in conjunction with the national authorities with a view to establishing the best possible conditions for the implementation of suitable teaching methods and for the training of teachers;
4. Considers that when the Council directive comes into force in July 1981, the role of the European Social Fund should be extended, in particular to take account of the accession of Greece;
5. Takes the view that the field of application of the directive should be extended to cover the children of migrant workers from non-member countries so as to eliminate any difference in treatment between them and the children of migrant workers from Member States of the Community, and that the directive should also encompass nursery school education;
6. Takes note of the provision in the Council Directive which requires the Commission to submit a report to the Council one year after the entry into force of the directive;

Asks for a report to be submitted to the European Parliament at the same time;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission of the European Communities and to the governments of the Member States.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The most important Community instrument for promoting the education of the children of migrant workers from other Member States of the Community is the Council directive which lays down the measures which the Member States must take to provide education both in their national language and in the language of the country of origin.

Consideration for the specific circumstances and language abilities of the children concerned when integrating them into the education system of the host country is of great importance both for migrant workers and for the host country itself.

Under the terms of the Treaty of Rome, which aims to establish freedom of movement not only of goods, services and capital but also of individuals, integration into the education system of the host country along these lines is a logical consequence of the common market. Without measures to ensure the education of migrant workers' children, the freedom of movement of workers would be severely impeded and the principles of equal treatment of individuals in the Member States made largely meaningless. This is therefore a problem which is closely connected with the establishment of the free market. Even before the aforementioned directive was adopted, the problem of catering for the educational needs of foreign children had been recognized by the Community in the Council regulation of 15 October 1968 and various action programmes in the field of education for migrant workers' children had been undertaken.

The Council directive of July 1977, which is to enter into force in July 1981, lays down statutory measures to be taken by the Member States to provide education suited to the specific needs of the children concerned.

It is therefore regrettable that a considerable delay has arisen in the implementation of this directive. Some Member States have thus far failed to take the necessary measures. These countries should therefore be urged to fulfil their obligations under the directive very soon in order to prevent the difficulties occasioned by the delay from becoming more serious and thus to improve the prospects for the children of migrant workers who, in this period of recession and unemployment, are already faced with serious social, economic and cultural problems.

That being so, it is unfortunate that this problem has not been included on the agenda for the meeting of the Ministers of Education in July 1981. If this matter had been placed before the Ministers, pressure could have been exerted on the governments of those Member States which have as yet done too little towards fulfilling their obligations under the directive.

The directive applies solely to children who under the laws of the Member State, are obliged to attend school, are dependents of a worker who is a national of another Member State and who are resident on the territory of the Member State where the said worker is or has been gainfully employed. In view of the large number of migrant workers from non-member countries who are confronted with the same or even more serious problems, the principles of the directive must be extended to cover them also.

Admittedly, the Council has stated that there must be no difference in treatment between nationals of Member States and nationals of non-member countries but priority at Community level should be given to establishing a legally binding instrument providing those concerned with personal right of redress against any infringements of their acquired rights.

Furthermore, consideration should be given to the possibility of encouraging the Member States to take similar measures in respect of nursery education since it has emerged that education at this age has an important part to play in easing the adjustment of children to their new environment and that children at nursery level show a particular facility in learning a second language alongside their mother tongue. It has been shown that children who have attended nursery school achieve far better results when they reach primary school than those who have not and that the education gap between them and local children is very narrow, thus enabling them to continue their studies on the same level as the latter.

Consequently, the pilot projects must be continued, the initiative for which must be taken by the Commission in conjunction with the national authorities of the Member States. These projects are very useful since they make it possible to gather data concerning the reception of foreign children, the teaching of languages through the mother tongue and the language of the host country, the training and preparation of teaching

staff, teaching material and the further adjustment of the children concerned to the social and cultural environment of the host country in general.

These data from the Member States can then be compared at Community level and information and experience exchanged, an exercise which will undoubtedly contribute to the attainment of the aims of the directive.

Finally, reference should be made to the important role played by the European Social Fund in financing pilot projects, training teaching staff, improving teaching methods and providing vocational training for migrant workers and their families. Since the Social Fund has been unable to meet the full demand, when the directive comes into force in July 1981 the role of the European Social Fund will have to be extended. The activities which are already underway under the Fund will have to be extended, and, in particular, attention will have to be directed to the position of workers and their families from Greece as a new Member State as well as in other Member States and in Greece itself, where measures are needed to facilitate the return of Greek children and their re-integration into their original environment.

Motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-773/80) tabled by Mrs Cinciari Rodano, Mr Ceravolo and Mr Papapietro pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure on the education of the children of migrant workers

The European Parliament,

- whereas Article 17 of Regulation 1916/68 defining the rules on the free movement of workers provides that workers from another Member State of the Community should be entitled to education, vocational training and retraining under the same conditions as the workers of the host state,
- whereas on 25 July 1977 the Council adopted a directive on the education of the children of migrant workers from other Community states in the individual national school systems and on measures to ensure tuition in the language and culture of their country of origin,
- whereas Article 4 of that directive stipulates that Member States shall take the measures necessary to comply with the directive within a period of four years, but no action has yet been taken although the deadline expires in one year's time,
- whereas on 23 May 1980 Mrs CINCIARI RODANO and others tabled an oral question to the Commission on the progress made to date in implementing the directive and on ensuring observance by the Member States of the 1981 deadline,
- noting the Commission's written reply (H-194/80) and in particular the following three serious statements made by it:
 - the Commission noted that as of November 1979 few Member States had taken further steps to improve the education of migrant workers' children ;
 - it affirmed that it did not yet have sufficiently reliable statistics on the irregular school attendance of foreign children ;
 - it expressed concern at this urgent and serious problem which, unless actually resolved, could become a 'time-bomb that we shall later never succeed in getting under control' ;
- confirming the vital importance of a real rather than a marginal adjustment of the educational system to the major phenomenon of migration throughout the Community, and aware that multilingualism and mutual knowledge of each other's national cultures are essential to the future of Europe ,

1. Requests the Commission to remedy forthwith the lamentable shortage of specific statistical information on the situation of school-age children and on the educational structures in immigration areas by studying the following questions:
 - what are the absolute and percentage figures for migrant workers' children in the various states (or regions which have their own school legislation) as regards attendance at kindergarten, compulsory education, secondary education of various kinds and at various levels and vocational training school ;
 - how many migrant workers' children actually take advantage of the compulsory tuition in their language and culture of origin and how many of them follow analogous courses on a voluntary basis ;
 - are there any major disparities between migrants' children and the local population as regards the numbers who attend courses leading to an educational qualification, repeat classes, leave school early or obtain access to secondary education and vocational training ;
 - what curricula have been planned and what measures have been adopted as regards text books and teaching and auxiliary material designed specifically for teaching the language and culture of the country of origin ;
 - to what extent has such tuition been allocated to mothertongue teachers from the culture of the country of origin or to teachers from the host country ;
 - what means are available to teachers to update the general and specific subjects relating to the migrants' culture of origin ;
2. Hopes, in view also of the imminent enlargement of the Community, that appropriate agreements will offer the children of workers from third countries the same status as regards their national language and culture within the educational structures of immigration areas, and considers it necessary to ensure that no discrimination arises or remains vis à vis these children ;
3. Deplores the prolonged inertia of the Council of Ministers of Education ;
4. Requests the Commission to take the necessary steps to demonstrate the urgent and important nature of these problems and to put the following recommendations before the Member States :

- tuition in the language and culture of the country of origin of migrant workers' children must be given as part of the normal timetable and school curriculum, accompanied by general provisions for multilingual education at Community level, at suitable times and by suitable methods, which means abandoning the widespread tendency to consider such tuition as a marginal and unusual feature of school education ;
- this tuition must be given by teachers from the country of origin ;
- this tuition must begin at kindergarten level ;
- the children of migrant workers must not enter the school system of the host country in separate educational institutions or in institutions which have little contact with the local school ;
- a comparative study must be made of the practice of assigning migrant workers' children to special classes and schools for backward or difficult children, as a direct and indirect result of their linguistic and cultural difficulties ;
- steps must be taken forthwith to ensure the equivalence of all educational qualifications in the various Community countries ;
- the Member States must consult each other and jointly study the question of migrant workers joining trade unions and parent-teacher associations.

