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# Working Documents

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18 February 1983

DOCUMENT 1-1196/82

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs  
and Employment

on family policy in the European Community

Rapporteur: Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI



At its sitting of 26 October 1979, the European Parliament referred the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr LENZ and others (Doc. 1-443/79) pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment.

At its meeting of 18 December 1979 the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment appointed Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI rapporteur.

At its sittings of 20 June 1980 and 14 April 1981 the European Parliament referred the following motions for resolutions to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment as the committee responsible:

- the motion for a resolution pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure tabled by Mrs GAIOTTI DE BIASE and others on the programme of research into problems associated with maternity (Doc. 1-261/80),
- the motion for a resolution pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure tabled by Mr VIÉ on a European Year of the Family (Doc. 1-68/82).

The latter motion for a resolution was also referred to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport for its opinion.

At its meetings of 16 July 1980 and 23 June 1982 the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment decided to give their views on the two above-mentioned motions for resolutions in the report drawn up by Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI on the basis of the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr LENZ and others.

The committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 1/2 December 1980, 13/14 May 1981, 25/26 May 1981, 23/24 June 1982 and 30 November/1 December 1982 and adopted it at its meeting of 17/18 January 1983 by 16 votes with 5 abstentions.

The following took part in the vote: Mr Peters, acting chairman; Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti, rapporteur; Mr Abens (deputizing for Mr Charzat), Mr Barbagli, Mr Brok, Mr Calvez, Mr Chanterie, Mr Dalsass (deputizing for Mr McCartin), Mr Duport, Mr Eisma, Mr Estgen, Mr Ghergo, Mrs Maij-Weggen, Mr Van Minnen, Mr T. Nielsen, Mr Patterson, Mr Spencer (deputizing for Mr David Nicholson), Mrs Squarcialupi (deputizing for Mr Ceravolo), Mr J.D. Taylor, (deputizing for Mr Simpson), Mr Tuckman and Mr Wawrzik (deputizing for Mr Papaefstratiou).

The explanatory statement will be submitted orally.

The opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport is attached.

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The Committee on Social Affairs and Employment hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on family policy in the European Community

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motions for resolutions by Mr LENZ and others on family policy in the European Community (1-443/79), by Mrs GAIOTTI DE BIASE and others on problems associated with maternity (Doc. 1-261/80) and by Mr VIE on a European Year of the Family (Doc. 1-68/82),
  - having regard to Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
  - having regard to the Treaty establishing the Community and the objectives assigned to it, in particular Article 2 thereof which provides that the Community shall have as its task 'to promote an accelerated raising of the standard of living', an aim which has a direct bearing on the situation of families in the Community,
  - having regard to Article 235 of the EEC Treaty,
  - having regard to the own-initiative report of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and the opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport (Doc. 1-1196/82),
- A. whereas the family is an effective, educational, cultural and social unit which uses and consumes goods and services and is an evolving entity,
- B. whereas the structure of the family within European society is now changing, a different role is being played by women in society and within the family and there is a growing number of one-parent and de facto families and, in particular, many single, widowed, separated or divorced women are heads of families,

- C. whereas the family, in addition to providing the best environment for the development of the couple and of children, plays an important role in maintaining social balance and progress,
- D. whereas the principal aim of family policies must be to assure the development of all members of the family, especially children,
- E. whereas it is convinced that
  - (a) society has a duty to guarantee the family the necessary material facilities and environment for its members to fulfil their personal and social duties,
  - (b) in practice, the needs of the family should come within the purview of different policies: economic, social, consumer, environmental and health policies and policies relating to recreation and leisure, childhood, the disabled, and migrant workers,
  - (c) the overall decline in population in the Community calls - as was asserted by President Thorn - for measures to enable couples wishing to have children to provide a home for them and to educate them,

1. Considers that:

- (a) many political choices have repercussions on the family and therefore all relevant policy sectors should take into account their implications for the family,
- (b) by virtue of its powers under the Treaties the European Community can no longer ignore the needs of the family when formulating its policies,
- (c) family policy should therefore become an integral part of all Community policies;

2. Appreciates the efforts which the Commission has so far made to assist the family, for example in relation to the campaign against poverty, the settlement of migrant workers and their families and the social and educational integration of the disabled, but points out that, because of the modest

resources available, these measures are too limited in scope for the purposes of a comprehensive family policy adapted to the requirements of modern society;

3. Notes, moreover, that since 1969 the Commission has realized the need to devote a chapter of its annual report on the development of the social situation in the Community to matters relating to the family;
4. Considers it desirable, in the context of medium to long-term estimates for social expenditure and its financing, that the annual reports containing details of net payments to different family categories should indicate that
  - (a) these categories relate to the situation as regards income, the number of children etc. in families where one partner is in paid employment or both partners are in paid employment,
  - (b) these categories also relate to the situation as regards income and the number of children in one-parent families,
  - (c) these categories also take account of families comprising handicapped persons or families caring for handicapped children,
  - (d) they also include families comprising elderly persons,
  - (e) these categories also relate to immigrants,
  - (f) and that priority should be given to the comparison of net incomes and that gross income and non-financial assistance should also be taken into account;
5. Therefore considers it essential to introduce a comprehensive Community family policy directed primarily at two objectives:
  - (a) firstly, the policy must clearly identify and take account of those aspects of Community economic, social and cultural policy which relate to the family,
  - (b) secondly, it must encourage the adoption by the Member States of policies designed to strengthen the position of the family and, where appropriate, harmonize these policies at Community level;

6. Proposes that, pending the definition of a global policy of this kind, the Commission should in an initial phase draw up an action programme for the years 1983-1988 which gives priority to:

- (a) the inclusion in the budget of an appropriation for the launching of a family policy programme,
- (b) the institutionalization of the dialogue with the European organizations representing families in the Community,
- (c) the organization of seminars involving the social partners, family organizations and political representatives with a view to establishing the requisite guidelines and practical measures for achieving greater harmonization between economic and social life and family life and greater compatibility between family and occupational commitments, taking account in particular of the effects on the family of the reduction in working time and of the introduction of new technologies,
- (d) the implementation of the family measures enumerated in the European Parliament's resolution of 11 February 1981<sup>1</sup>, particularly those concerning health protection for women and maternity and parental leave,
- (e) the implementation of a coordinated research programme (where appropriate in cooperation with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin) relating to:
  - sex education for young people and adults and the activities of family advisory centres,
  - childhood and changes in the relationship between the generations, between parents and children and between men and women, taking account of the development both of society in general and of the structure of the family in particular,
  - demographic forecasts of the population of Europe, indicating the social parameters which influence or which derive from these forecasts,
  - the role and involvement of parents, children and teachers in all the education systems of the Member States,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 50 of 9.3.1981, p. 35 et seq.

- ways of promoting new measures (cooperatives providing various services, voluntary schemes, involvement by users in decisions concerning social services) designed to promote a harmonious development of the family and of its relations with society as a whole,
  - the influence of the mass media on family behaviour,
- (f) a further increase in assistance from the Social Fund so that it can increasingly become the instrument of a comprehensive social policy which covers all family problems;

7. Asks in general that, when selecting and implementing the relevant measures in all sectors under its jurisdiction, the Commission take account of the problems and implications of family needs and responsibilities and devote particular attention to:

(a) certain less-favoured families

- families of migrant workers,
- families which include a disabled person,
- single-parent and de facto families,
- families whose earnings are below subsistence level,
- families comprising elderly persons,

(b) asks the Commission to pay especial attention to differing legal provisions in the Member States, and the possible consequent need for Community action, in the following areas:

- the laws on adoption,
- the laws on custody of children where partners are separated or divorced,
- the rights of access to children by one divorced or separated spouse where custody has been awarded to the other.

(c) family businesses;

8. With regard to the families of migrant workers, places particular emphasis on the improvement of reception facilities, the integration of their children into school life, measures to familiarize them with the host country, and

compliance with the 1977 Directive which became binding in all the Community Member States on 2 August 1981<sup>1</sup>;

9. With regard to families which include a disabled person, hopes that the recently adopted action programme in this field will make a valid contribution to improving the psychological, social and material position of young disabled persons, whose families have to bear a heavy burden of responsibility;
10. With regard to single-parent families, asks that steps be taken to ensure that they do not suffer discrimination and that they receive additional support when needed;
11. With regard to families whose earnings are below subsistence level, requests the Commission as soon as possible to extend the survey carried out as part of its programme to combat poverty<sup>2</sup> to include Greece and the applicant countries and confirms the need to introduce proper measures at European level to eliminate this unacceptable situation;
12. With regard to families comprising elderly persons, stresses the need to implement the demands made in its resolution of 18 February 1982<sup>3</sup>, taking account also of the conclusions of the UNO General Assembly concerning the elderly;
13. Takes the view that the proposals designed to promote small and medium-sized undertakings and cooperatives should place particular emphasis on family businesses which, particularly in the crisis now facing the Community, are an important facet of the modern social and economic structure; refers in this context to the paragraphs of the resolution of 11 February 1981 (on the position of women in the European Community) which are concerned with the legal position of women employed in family businesses;
14. Calls for the introduction of a family allowance for certain poorer families to enable one of the parents to devote him or herself entirely to bringing up the children during the first three years of life and to retain pension rights during this period;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. L 199 of 6.8.1977, p. 32

<sup>2</sup> OJ No. C 292 of 8.11.1982, p. 47

<sup>3</sup> OJ No. C 66 of 15.3.1982, p. 71

15. Calls for family policy measures to enable men and women to participate equally in the education of their children while at the same time continuing with their chosen way of life - an essential requirement for good family relations;
16. Asks
- that, despite the difficulties of the present period of crisis, policies providing for collective accommodation and facilities on a local basis - mini-crèches, day nurseries, nursery schools - be continued, while encouraging the exploration of new possibilities for child care,
  - that unmarried couples should not be penalized as regards social benefits because of their unmarried status,
  - that policies concerning social assistance for deprived children be reviewed in all countries, taking account first and foremost of the interests of the child rather than the rights conferred upon its natural parents by the laws of nature;
17. Also requests the Commission to investigate the impact of tax provisions and the granting of social benefits, particularly family allowances, in the various Member States on the structure and economic situation of families;
18. Deplores the fact that the social services provided for families are facing a crisis in the Community either because of escalating costs or because of cuts in social expenditure and notes that until now the financial consequences have been borne largely by those who are faced with the daily problem of caring for a family;
19. Also urges the Member States, when setting up services to help the family, to take account of the way in which society is now changing and in particular of the current transformation in the role of the couple and in the role of women;
20. Instructs its Committee on Social Affairs and Employment to organize by 1984 a fact-finding survey among the organizations representing family interests in the Community in order to define in greater detail the objectives and priorities of a comprehensive family policy at European level;
21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission and to the governments of the Member States.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOCUMENT 1-443/79)

tabled by Mrs LENZ, Mrs SCHLEICHER, Mrs RABBETHGE, Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI, Mrs BOOT, Mrs MAIJ-WEGGEN, Mr PÜRSTEN, Mr PÖTTERING, Mr NORDLOHNE, Mr MERTENS, Mr HOFFMANN, Mr ALBER, Mr RINSCHÉ, Mr von BISMARCK and Mr NOTENBOOM on behalf of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group)

pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure

on family policy in the European Community

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the debate of 19 January 1979 following the oral question with debate tabled by the EPP Group (Doc. 530/78),
- concerned by the numerous problems facing the family today:
  - profound changes in the family environment, such as industrialization, urbanization, exposure to a surfeit of information;
  - the falling birth rate, one or two being the most common number of children per family in most EEC countries;
  - the effect of divorce on the duration of marriages;
  - increased life expectancy,
- taking into account
  - the changing view of the role of the family and the duties and possibilities of husband and wife,
  - the improvement in the level of training and education and, as its corollary, the professional activity of men and women,
  - the increasingly comparable social situation of families in the EEC as a result of migrant workers, commuters, trade and tourism,

1. Invites the Commission, in view of the importance of the role of the family in a free and democratic society and in order to face up to the problems that constitute an ever-increasing threat to young people,
  - to devote a far greater measure of support and solidarity at European level to the interests and activities of the family;
  - to submit a report
    - (a) describing the social situation of the family in the EEC (including income, social insurance, housing),
    - (b) and detailing its action in this area;
  - to formulate specific proposals and ideas aimed at guaranteeing a socially comparable standard of living for all families in the EEC;
  - to entrust a department with the coordination of matters relating to the family;
2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council of the European Communities.

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mrs GAIOTTI DE BIASE, Mrs CARETONI ROMAGNOLI, Mrs SQUARCIALUPI, Mrs CHOURAQUI, Mr CLINTON, Mrs PRUVOT, Mr TRAVAGLINI and Mrs CINCIARI RODANO

pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure

on the programme of research into problems associated with maternity

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty establishing the Community and to the objectives specified in the preamble and Article 2 thereof,
- whereas the radical changes that have occurred, especially as a result of the development of and the degree of economic integration in European society, have had a profound effect on general attitudes towards the problem of maternity, both as regards the practical experience acquired and in terms of cultural values,
- whereas the contradictions that so gravely affect the relationship between man and wife, between the mother and her child and between the family and society call for a fully committed political response,
- whereas the scientific revolution we are now witnessing is paving the way for a new phase in the industrial revolution; whereas the attendant technological and economic changes will inevitably affect the organization of society, the quality of life and the established mores of every nation; whereas these social and cultural effects must be anticipated and regulated in no lesser degree than the technological and economic effects if we are to remain the masters of our destiny and build a world based on humanitarian principles; whereas this makes the possession of sufficient knowledge and the right skills essential,
- having regard to the historic responsibilities of the advanced industrial societies in relation to other societies which are induced by circumstances to imitate their institutions and patterns of behaviour,

- whereas the joint declaration of 5 April 1977 commits Parliament to ensuring respect for human rights and hence also to promoting the rights of women; whereas, moreover, these rights are bound to be denied unless the responsibilities that women have had to bear alone and unaided for centuries past are shared,
- having regard to the statements made by Mr Jenkins to the European Parliament on 12 February 1980 on the proposals for Community research projects in the social sector,

1. Calls on the Commission to implement a comprehensive programme of combined multi-disciplinary research projects based on the following objectives:

- (a) coordination and development of current research within the Community into matters relating to conception, and to new forms of contraception - for both men and women - with particular reference to natural methods of contraception and to the effectiveness and the physiological and psychological counter-indications of those forms now practised,
- (b) coordination and development of demographic projections of the growth of the European population, taking account of the social parameters that influence population growth,
- (c) coordination and development of research into the problems of childhood, into the changes taking place in the relationship between the generations and between mother and child and father and child, taking account both of developments and difficulties in the social services and of changing cultural values,
- (d) coordination and development of studies and research work relating to the sexual education of young people and adults, and of the advisory services made available to married couples and families,

and to report to Parliament on the results achieved;

2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission of the European Communities.

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOCUMENT 1-68/82)

tabled by Mr VIE

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

on a European Year of the Family

The European Parliament,

- whereas the fall in the marriage and birth rate is reaching alarming proportions in most Community countries,
  - whereas this phenomenon not only could lead in the short term to a substantial weakening of the European Community, or indeed its disappearance as a partner of the world's major powers, but is also the sign of a crisis of civilization,
  - whereas the Treaties provide sufficient evidence of the priority they attach to human rights and freedom in the construction of Europe,
  - whereas the family - whatever form it may have taken in the past or may take in the future - is still the most favourable environment for inculcating the notions of freedom and responsibility and hence for the education of men and women,
  - whereas, although it is the responsibility of the Member States alone to legislate in this field, in the light of national circumstances and requirements, it is nevertheless true that the Community countries as a whole have a common cultural heritage as regards the family which is strong enough to be regarded as one of the most important factors in the construction of a united Europe,
1. Calls on the Commission to propose that the governments of the Member States organize a European Year of the Family within the next three years;

2. The year of the Family will be devoted to a detailed study of family problems and the role of the family within an overall economic and social policy in the various Community countries, involving all the political, philosophical, cultural, religious and social authorities;
3. When this work is completed, a report will be made to Parliament on the conclusions which have been drawn and on priority guidelines which could be proposed to facilitate the construction of a European social area, incorporating the family as a key element;
4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission of the European Communities.

Draftsman of the opinion : Mr J. VANDEMEULEBROUCKE

The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport has been asked to deliver an opinion to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment on programmes of research into problems associated with maternity (Doc. 1-261/80).

At its meeting of 23.06.81 the committee appointed Mr Vandemeulebroucke draftsman. It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 18 and 19 October 1982 and adopted it unanimously.

The following took part in the vote: Mr BEUMER, chairman, Mr HAHN, vice-chairman, Mr VANDEMEULEBROUCKE (draftsman and deputizing for Mr BØGH), Mr BEYER DE RYKE, Miss BROOKES, Mrs GAIOTTI DE BIASE, Mr GEROKOSTOPOULOS, Mr PATTERSON (deputizing for Mr COTTRELL), Mrs PRUVOT (deputizing for Mr GAWRONSKI), Mr SIMMONDS and Mrs VIEHOFF.

1. Economic and social developments have greatly influenced attitudes to the family in general and maternity in particular. They have had a profound effect on the relationship between man and wife and between mother and child, frequently subjecting them to conflicting pressures.

In this connection it is very important that attention be drawn to the need for domestic responsibilities, which for centuries were borne by the woman alone in her role as a mother, to be shared, since failure to achieve this is to deny the woman her rights as acknowledged in the present social context. Even women who have completed many years of study and are in the process of building a career are frequently unaided in bearing the responsibilities arising from maternity and are hence faced with the initial choice of partially or totally abandoning their careers or shouldering an excessive burden. A comprehensive programme of information on changing cultural values relating to the allocation of domestic responsibilities would clearly be of great value and should be based on research into the scope for adjusting the ratio between domestic and professional activity. In this connection, attention must also be drawn to the risk of increasing institutionalization: the family welfare services provided cannot and must not replace natural family bonds.

Reference should also be made to the granting of leave for family reasons, in particular maternity leave. Such leave allows the young mother to fully recover her strength and to care for the infant during the first months of its life. While the act of caring for the child embodies the role traditionally assigned to the mother alone, this need not necessarily be the case, as evidenced in Sweden, where parents are given an element of choice in the taking of leave for family reasons. It would be highly desirable for such a scheme to be included among future proposals for the achievement of harmonization.

To conclude on this theme, it must be stressed that the option of part-time work should be offered to both women and men wherever possible in order to satisfy the new scale of values which governs, or should govern, the relationship between man and wife and between mother and child. In many areas of professional activity, part-time work may be carried out without

detriment to the results achieved. In introducing a programme of guidance and harmonization, Member States should be urged to remove all unnecessary provisions restricting part-time work.

Both in school and post-school education and in adult education attention should be drawn to the problems of maternity in order to re-direct the traditional division of roles towards shared family responsibilities.

2. The Committee on Social Affairs and employment rightly draws attention to the need to coordinate and develop current research into new forms of contraception for men and women with reference to their effectiveness and counter-indications. Priority must be given to the protection of health, as specified in the resolution on the position of women.

3. In conclusion, reference must be made in general terms to the urgent need for such measures. A whole series of social changes are following in the wake of the technological revolution; 'the quality of life' referred to in the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase and others (Doc. 1-261/80) has for a long time been in jeopardy, while the situation of the woman has already suffered from a conflict between her position in society on the one hand and the responsibilities of maternity on the other. The necessary decisions and measures must be taken as soon as possible in order to achieve a reallocation of the responsibilities traditionally assigned to the mother, thereby allowing women freely to opt for maternity without endangering their acknowledged place in society.