Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 712 (1973)[1]

Integration of migrant workers with the society of their host countries

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that peaceful migrations in Europe have in recent years assumed unprecedented proportions, resulting in the presence of over 6 million foreign workers in Western European immigration countries ;

2. Believing that migrant workers have contributed substantially to the rapid economic growth of the immigration countries over the last twenty years, but that most, despite the length of their stay, have remained on the fringe of society in their host countries ;

3. Considering that the economy of many Western European countries will continue in the future to need migrant workers, and that it is a humanitarian duty to improve their situation so as to encourage harmonious relations between them and the indigenous population ;

4. Considering that the problems stemming from the presence of large numbers of migrant workers were made amply clear in the resolution adopted by the Conference of European Ministers of Labour in 1972 ;

5. Believing that the competent authorities of the emigration countries should, in cooperation with the appropriate authorities in the immigration countries, take a more active interest in the departure and return of their nationals, supplying them with fuller information on the problems of living abroad ;

6. Considering that the governments of the immigration countries should develop and improve an integration policy aimed at equal treatment for indigenous and foreign workers, particularly with regard to housing, welfare, employment and promotion prospects, with an emphasis on abolishing preferences based on nationality of the host country wherever possible ;

7. Considering that migrant workers' cultural traditions should be preserved so as to enable them to retain their roots and to return home more easily if they wish to do so ;

8. Considering that migration frequently helps to accentuate existing differences between immigration and emigration countries in the industrial field, and that an effort of European solidarity is required in order to counteract the economic causes of migration by developing regions affected by unemployment or under-employment,

9. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of immigration countries among Council of Europe member States :

to adopt a policy for improving the situation of migrant workers and for integrating them more easily and quickly with the society of their host countries ;

to promote economic development in emigration countries, especially in overpopulated regions, with a view to making migratory flows more regular and better balanced ;

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1. Assembly debate on 26 September 1973 (11th Sitting) (see Doc. 3332, report of the Committee on Population and Refugees). Text adopted by the Assembly on 26 September 1973 (11th Sitting).

to implement the proposals made under (i) and (ii) along the lines indicated in the Appendix.

Appendix APPENDIX

I. Measures to improve the situation of migrant workers and facilitate their integration with the society of their host countries

A. In the social and economic field

1. Establishment of information and advice centres or Europa Centres, as proposed by the Assembly in Resolution 418 (1969), so as to enable foreign workers to settle in more easily and familiarise themselves more quickly with their living and working environment ;

2. Supply to each migrant worker on, or preferably before, his arrival in the host country, of a booklet in his own language outlining problems which may arise in connection with his employment contract and the main questions of relevance to his stay in a particular region ;

3. Regular inspections to determine whether migrant workers' accommodation complies with statutory health requirements, in accordance with Resolution (69) 8 of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers ;

4. Authorisation for permanent migrant workers to be joined by their families after twelve months, and suitable measures to ensure the provision, for this purpose, of housing considered adequate in the areas where they are employed ;

5. Provision of the same opportunities for migrant workers as for indigenous workers to complete their vocational training, particularly through the provision of grants ;

6. Conclusion of multilateral or bilateral agreements, and particularly ratification of the European Convention on Social Security, concluded within the Council of Europe and signed on 14 December 1972, with a view to ensuring that migrant workers retain the social insurance rights to which they may have become entitled, and that insurance (contribution, employment, residence etc.) periods are taken into account should they move to another Council of Europe member State or return to the emigration country.

B. In the fields of culture and education

1. Provision, wherever possible, of regular information for migrant workers, particularly through the mass media, and of continuous education for their children of school age, about the culture of their home country ;

2. Preparation of special school curricula enabling migrant workers' children to continue their schooling as soon as they arrive in the host country, and provision of similar vocational training facilities to those available to nationals ;

3. Provision for migrant workers of the same opportunities as provided for the indigenous population to worship in accordance with their religion.

C. In the field of information

Improvement, by means of regular use of the mass media, of the indigenous population's attitude to migrant workers and their families, stressing the immigration country society's interest in welcoming foreign workers and integrating them into their communities without discrimination.

D. In the field of institutions

1. Implementation of the resolutions on migrant workers already approved by the Committee of Ministers, and adoption at the earliest opportunity of the draft European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers, drawn up in the Council of Europe ;

2. Establishment of central or regional boards, composed of representatives of the authorities, trade unions, employers and migrant workers themselves, to investigate and implement measures designed to facilitate the integration of foreigners in the society of their host countries ;

3. Guarantees that the interests of migrant workers will be respected in collective contracts, and that they will be eligible to become members of works committees and other bodies in which workers are represented ;

4. Preparation of legislation enabling migrant workers, on arrival in the host country, to attend language courses during working hours at their employers' expense ;

5. Implementation of measures required to prevent discrimination between indigenous and migrant workers in the event of dismissals due to economic recession ;

6. Granting to migrant workers after five years' uninterrupted residence of a work and residence permit of unlimited duration which cannot be withdrawn except in exceptional circumstances ;

7. Giving migrant workers the chance to acquire die nationality of the immigration country after an uninterrupted stay at most of seven years ;

8. Consideration of persons working for more than 8 months of the year in an immigration country as non-seasonal workers ;

9. Intensification of investigations concerning the employment of illegal immigrants with fines or prison sentences for offending employers and persons responsible for organising the clandestine entry of such persons into immigration countries.

E. In the field of civil and political rights

1. Introduction of the measures necessary for setting up municipal immigrants' advisory councils, elected by immigrants on the basis of proportional representation of nationalities ;

2. Granting to migrant workers after five years the right to vote and to stand for election in municipal affairs, provided they have lived in the municipality concerned for the previous three years.

II. Measures to make migratory flows more regular and better balanced

1. Incentives to national industries to make the investments necessary to create employment in overpopulated regions of the emigration countries, together with guarantees against part of the investment risk and State loans at preferential rates ;

2. Introduction of a special tax payable by employers according to the number of migrant workers, and to be used :

to cover part of the additional expenditure incurred by the State in the social field owing to migration ;

to help finance school books for migrant workers' children and Europa Centres, as proposed by the Assembly in Resolution 418 (1969) ;

3. Regular consultations with governmental authorities in the emigration countries concerning the departure, stay and return of migrant workers ;

4. Preparation, in collaboration with governmental authorities in the emigration countries, of a medium-term and longterm migration policy taking into account industrial and economic development trends in the various regions of Europe.