Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 790 (1983)[1]

Migration within the Nordic countries

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its Recommendations 712 (1973), on the integration of migrant workers in the society of their host countries, 799 (1977), on the political rights and position of aliens, 841 (1978), on second generation migrants, 903 (1980), on the right of aliens to vote and stand in local authority elections, 915 (1981), on the situation of migrant workers in the host countries, and 951 (1982), on voting rights of nationals of Council of Europe member states ;

2. Considering that migrant workers have made an important contribution to economic expansion in the migration countries over the last twenty years, and believing that the economy of many countries will continue to require their assistance in the future and that there is a humanitarian duty to improve their situation and foster the development of harmonious relations between the local and foreign populations ;

3. Convinced of the need to give due importance to the situation of migrants in the formulation of national policies, and emphasising that the presence of migrant workers also contributes to a cultural enrichment, as the Assembly has already pointed out in Resolution 631 (1976), on the integration of migrants in society as regards education and culture ;

4. Expressing its appreciation of the achievement of a high level of co-operation between the various Nordic countries in the field of the protection of migrants and co-ordination of the related policies, based on the 1954 Agreement on a common Nordic labour market, which has been renewed but hardly altered in 1982 ;

5. Noting that today more than 190,000 Finns live in Sweden, that one out of ten Finnish children is born in Sweden, and that the forecasts show that in 1990 every third child born in Sweden will be of foreign origin ;

6. Noting that about 90% of the emigration from Finland since the Second World War has been to Sweden, but that this flow is now reversing and more Finns re-emigrate to Finland than emigrate to Sweden ;

7. Recalling that in Sweden, since 1976, immigrants from all countries have been able to take part in local elections if they have been resident in Sweden for at least three years, and that recently Denmark and Norway have introduced similar legislation ;

8. Stressing that many conventions and agreements of the Council of Europe are open for ratification by European non-member states,

9. Expresses the hope that the Government and Parliament of Finland will give further consideration to the possibility of ratifying a number of conventions and agreements of the Council of Europe which are open for ratification by European non-member states, in particular those of importance to migrant workers ;

10. Draws the attention of governments in host countries as well as emigration countries to the following points, which have been highlighted by the Nordic experience :

10.1. the need to complement agreements on free movement of labour by agreements on equal rights to pay, pensions and welfare payments between migrants and host country citizens ;

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1. Assembly debate on 25 January 1983 (22nd Sitting) (see Doc. 4999, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography). Text adopted by the Assembly on 25 January 1983 (22nd Sitting).

10.2. the need to co-ordinate labour and social security policies for immigrants in one country with those for re-immigrants in their country of origin, including the establishment, if necessary, of bilateral agreements ;

10.3. the need to co-ordinate labour market policies in host and emigrant countries, not least as regards information in both directions about the real economic situation in both countries ;

10.4. the need to channel migration as much as possible through the appropriate labour offices, in order both to protect emigrants' rights and to enable governments to implement their own labour policies ;

10.5. the need to implement policies that allow a good social integration of second and third generations of immigrants, including proper schooling and education which will fit them for all levels of work in the host country.