

Resolution on migrants' children left behind in the country of origin

2009/2547(RSP) - 12/03/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 10 March 2009, the European Parliament adopted by 579 votes to 21 with 13 abstentions, a resolution tabled by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs on migrant children left behind in the country of origin. Parliament recalls that in 2008 almost 350 000 children had at least one parent who was working abroad, and nearly 126 000 were affected by the migration of both parents. Whilst migration can have a positive impact on households in the sending country through remittances, for the children left behind by parents working in another Member State, there are also possible negative aspects including the risk of general lack of care as regards physical and mental health.

Parliament calls on the Commission to undertake a study to assess the extent of the phenomenon of migrants' children left in the country of origin at the European level and to collect EU-wide data on this phenomenon.

It calls on Member States to do the following:

- take steps to improve the situation of the children left by their parents in the country of origin and ensure their normal development in terms of education and social life;
- set up cooperation mechanisms to prevent the detrimental effects on families, especially children, of living apart and of the distances they have to bridge;
- better inform migrants about their rights and the rights of their family members concerning free movement and about the information available at national and European level on living abroad and the terms and conditions of working in another Member State;
- Members want the Commission and Member States actively to involve the social partners and the NGOs in actions targeting the improvement of migrants' children.