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REPORT

on tackling early school leaving
(2011/2088(INI))

Committee on Culture and Education

Rapporteur: Mary Honeyball

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on tackling early school leaving (2011/2088(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Article 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular Articles 23, 28 and 29 thereof,
- having regard to Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning¹,
- having regard to the Commission Communication on equity and efficiency in European education and training systems (COM(2006)0481),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Youth on the Move: An initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union’ (COM(2010)0477),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Tackling early school leaving: A key contribution to the Europe 2020 Agenda’ (COM(2011)0018),
- having regard to the Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving (COM(2011)0019),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Early Childhood Education and Care: Providing all our children with the best start for the world of tomorrow’ (COM(2011)0066),
- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020’ (COM(2011)0173),
- having regard to the Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st century: an agenda for European cooperation on schools²,
- having regard to the Council Conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for

¹ OJ L 327, 24.11.2006, p. 45.

² OJ C 319, 13.12.2008, p. 20.

European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020')¹,

- having regard to the Council Conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the education of children with a migrant background²,
 - having regard to Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the social dimension of education and training³,
 - having regard to its resolution of 1 February 2007 on educational discrimination against young women and girls⁴,
 - having regard to its resolution of 16 January 2008 entitled 'Towards an EU strategy on the rights of the child'⁵,
 - having regard to its resolution of 23 September 2008 on improving the quality of teacher education⁶,
 - having regard to its resolution of 18 May 2010 on key competences for a changing world: implementation of the education and training 2010 work programme⁷,
 - having regard to its resolution of 18 May 2010 on an EU Strategy for Youth - Investing and Empowering⁸,
 - having regard to its resolution of 9 March 2011 on the EU strategy on Roma inclusion⁹,
 - having regard to its resolution of 12 May 2011 on early years learning in the European Union¹⁰,
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Culture and Education and the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A7-0363/2011),
- A. whereas young people, if they are to participate fully in society and achieve self-fulfilment as individuals and citizens, must possess a broad spectrum of knowledge and skills essential for their intellectual and social development, including the ability to communicate effectively, work in teams, solve problems and critically evaluate information,

B. whereas for young people education promotes values such as personal development, better

¹ OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

² OJ C 301, 11.12.2009, p. 5.

³ OJ C 135, 26.5.2010, p. 2.

⁴ OJ C 250E, 25.11.2007, p. 102.

⁵ OJ C 41E, 19.2.2009, p. 24.

⁶ OJ C 8 E, 14.1.2010, p. 12.

⁷ OJ C 161E, 31.5.2011, p. 8.

⁸ OJ C 161E, 31.5.2011, p. 21.

⁹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0092.

¹⁰ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0231.

social integration and a greater sense of responsibility and initiative,

- C. whereas rates of early school leaving (ESL) vary across EU Member States, as well as between towns and regions and between the socio-economic categories of their inhabitants, and are influenced by a range of complex factors,
- D. whereas one of the five Europe 2020 headline targets is to reduce the proportion of early school leavers to less than 10 % and to increase the share of the younger generation with a degree or diploma or equivalent level of education to at least 40 %,
- E. whereas the 10 % target was agreed by Member States in 2003, but only seven of them have managed to reach this benchmark, and whereas in 2009 the average ESL rate stood at 14.4 %,
- F. whereas, despite the steady decline in ESL rates in the last decade, most Member States still have a fragmented and inadequately coordinated approach to tackling the problem,
- G. whereas 24.1 % of all 15-year olds in the Member States are low performers in reading literacy,
- H. whereas reading is a basic tool for all young people, indispensable to making progress in any school subject and to becoming integrated into the world of work, understanding and analysing information, communicating correctly and participating in cultural activities, and whereas specific measures should therefore be taken to remedy deficiencies in reading skills,
- I. whereas ESL has severe consequences for the EU's social cohesion, and not just for economic growth, the European skills base and social stability, as it damages the career prospects, health and well-being of young people, a low level of education also being a key cause of poverty and negative health outcomes,
- J. whereas ESL is a fundamental contributing factor to unemployment, poverty and social exclusion,

Characteristics of ESL

1. Emphasises that the foundations for a child's future educational path and well-being are laid in the early years of childhood and can help to instil the idea of lifelong learning, and that early childhood is a time when receptiveness, language learning and the ability to form social contacts – attributes that will be essential in tomorrow's society – should be encouraged so as to facilitate the child's integration into both school and society from an early age, thus combating ESL; reiterates the call contained in its resolution on early years learning in the EU for the development of a European framework for early childhood education and care services from as early an age as possible, particularly through the development of free public crèche and day-care facilities;
2. Notes that ESL is particularly pronounced among children from poor and disadvantaged backgrounds and children from migrant families and is frequently linked to poverty and social exclusion;

3. Proposes that linguistic support should be provided for students from a migrant background;
4. Stresses, in that connection, that steps must be taken to enable Roma children and children with no identity papers to attend school;
5. Notes that among Roma children 20 % are not enrolled in school at all and 30 % are early school leavers; emphasises that although ESL is more common among boys than girls, traditional Roma communities are a special case, in that, owing to the custom of early marriages, ESL is more frequent among young girls and happens at an earlier age (around 12-13 years) than for boys (around 14-15 years); points out that in the case of traditional Roma communities there is a need for additional positive measures to overcome the ESL which results from these harmful traditional practices;
6. Notes that ineffective work-life balance policies increase the prevalence of ESL and academic failure in general and that there is a need to step up efforts to improve such policies;
7. Notes the existence of an intergenerational cycle, i.e. the strong tendency for children of early school leavers to become early school leavers themselves; stresses that family structure has a significant influence on children's ability and motivation to succeed at school;
8. Notes that, with regard to early childhood care, the role of the family and of close relationships between children and parents during the early years of life are of vital importance for ensuring proper integration at school;
9. Warns of the impact of specific learning difficulties and related problems, which increase the risk of the children affected leaving school;
10. Encourages the Member States to provide extracurricular and out-of-school activities for pupils with learning difficulties, to enable them to develop the key skills clearly needed on the labour market;
11. Points out that ESL can have a detrimental effect on access to high-quality lifelong learning;
12. Draws attention, in this regard, to the OECD's PISA studies, which show that students in educational systems with a lesser degree of vertical and horizontal differentiation are less likely to repeat a year or to be expelled; highlights the OECD's finding that students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds suffer most from having to repeat a school year or from being expelled;
13. Highlights the OECD's finding that early selection of students for different educational pathways increases socio-economic inequality in terms of educational opportunities without effecting any improvement in average performance in the educational systems in question;
14. Draws attention, in this regard, to the OECD's finding that the comparative performance

of school systems in the PISA studies is negatively affected by the practices of moving students from one school to another on account of poor results, behavioural problems or specific learning difficulties and of streaming students in all subjects on the basis of ability;

15. Points out in this regard that, according to the OECD, socio-economically disadvantaged students are often at a double disadvantage because they attend schools affected by various types of socio-economic disadvantage and in which there are fewer and less well-qualified teachers;

The need for a personalised approach

16. States that equality of opportunities and choice in education, and access to high-quality education for individuals from all social, ethnic and religious backgrounds, regardless of gender or disability, is vital for creating a fairer, more equal and inclusive society that is vibrant, innovative and cohesive; stresses the role played by public services in that regard;
17. States that school education is one of the best ways of giving everyone an equal chance of success and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills which enable them to become integrated into the world of work, thus breaking the inter-generational cycle; calls for the educational support on offer to be better coordinated and made more accessible and for the provision of social services and family support to be extended;
18. Calls for a personalised and inclusive approach to education, beginning with early school education and care, which includes targeted support for individuals at risk of ESL where necessary, particularly for children and young people suffering from a disability;
19. Calls for greater efforts to be made to ensure that this personalised approach specifically benefits those pupils suffering from learning difficulties caused by dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, attention deficit or hyperactivity, for example;
20. Notes that problems leading to ESL often have their roots outside school and that these must be identified and addressed;
21. Suggests that secondary and vocational schools provide counselling staff, separate from teaching staff, so that students with problems can talk them through in confidence; stresses that staff providing counselling must have appropriate training and, with that aim in view, have facilities for ongoing training in specific skills;
22. Encourages an early response to emerging learning difficulties, and suggests that efficient early-warning mechanisms and follow-up procedures be put in place to prevent problems from worsening; points out that, in order to achieve this, multilateral communication and closer cooperation between schools and parents and community leaders are crucial, as are local support networks with the involvement, if necessary, of school mediators;
23. Considers that parental advisory services should be offered, in view of the influence that the family has on the educational and social development of pupils;
24. Stresses that a frequent reason for failure among children and young people is that school

curricula are ill-suited to the needs of children's lives and their socially-conditioned interests; points out that an excessively rigid and uniform education system makes it hard to individualise school work and difficult to link education with everyday needs;

25. Advocates better careers guidance and high-quality work-experience schemes, as well as cultural and educational visits and exchanges, organised by schools, including exposure to entrepreneurialism, in order to demystify the world of work, thereby ensuring that students are in a position to make informed career choices; stresses that careers guidance counsellors must receive appropriate and ongoing training so that they can proactively engage with potential early school leavers;
26. Recognises the need for clear-cut policies to integrate students with sensory disabilities in ordinary schools, and calls on the Member States to abandon policies based on separate special education;
27. Reiterates the crucial role played by the voluntary sector in promoting social integration, and calls on Member States to make the widest possible use of the European Voluntary Service as a factor in personal, educational and professional development;
28. Recommends that mentoring schemes be set up in schools to provide pupils with exposure to former pupils in particular in order to exchange views on possible study and career options;
29. Recognises that year repetition can stigmatise low achievers and does not necessarily lead to better results; stresses that limiting year repetition in Member States where it is widely practised and replacing it with individual flexible support is a more effective way to tackle ESL;
30. Points out that information and communication technologies (ICT) can have positive effects under structured teaching conditions and can encourage motivation and learning; suggests that Member States promote and enhance pupils' access to ITC from their first years at school and set up training programmes for teachers;
31. Notes that social and financial pressures on disadvantaged families can force students to leave school early in order to enter the labour market and supplement family resources; calls on Member States to consider introducing a system of means-tested financial support for those who need it in order to combat this problem; calls on the Member States to provide financial support for parents who devote time and love to bringing up young children and provide future benefits to society by investing in a human capital whose value is often underestimated;
32. Suggests that other redistributive measures be introduced, such as the provision of free school meals, school books and essential sports equipment, to reduce the impact of social inequality while also combating the risks of stigmatisation these pupils face;
33. Points out that additional support should be offered to persons with disabilities, in order to reduce the risk of their leaving school early and ensure that they obtain a proper qualification;

34. Emphasises the crucial importance of state education systems of the highest quality, where learning is free and accessible to everyone and takes place in a safe and enabling environment;
35. Calls for special efforts to be made to prevent and address bullying and violence at school;
36. Recalls the importance of increasing the number of pupils finishing the first part of secondary education, thereby promoting the achievement of basic competence;

Shared responsibility

37. Emphasises that there are many actors who can take steps to prevent children from leaving school prematurely; points out that these include not only parents and all those involved in education, but also public authorities, at both national and local level, and calls for closer cooperation between all these actors, together with local health and social services; notes that a 'joined-up' approach can be effective in helping the individuals concerned to overcome multiple barriers to educational achievement and employment; in this connection, stresses the importance of student grants which enable children from disadvantaged backgrounds to enjoy the same opportunities as others;
38. Encourages Member States to take measures to counter the stereotypes held by people from the most disadvantaged socio-cultural backgrounds, which steer them at an early stage towards short vocational training courses, despite their children's educational achievements;
39. Suggests that ESL strategies should take as their starting point an analysis, to be led by relevant authorities at local and regional level, of the main reasons behind ESL, encompassing different groups of pupils, schools, regions and municipalities;
40. Stresses the need to strengthen the special relationship between *parents* and children, since it is vital to children's development and future stability and their smooth progress through school; stresses that looking after young children represents an added value for society and makes it possible to cut costs related to juvenile delinquency, crime, depression and other problems caused by the loss of stability which leads children to drop out of school;
41. Stresses that young people, including early school leavers themselves, must be involved in discussions about the design and implementation of ESL policies and programmes; notes that active participation of students, for example via student councils, can motivate them by enhancing their feeling of being 'included' in debates revolving around the issue of their own academic success;
42. Stresses the need for a detailed examination of the effectiveness of current national strategies as a possible source of information for an exchange of experiences and best practices between Member States;
43. Suggests that Member States should make parents responsible for their children's education until the latter reach their 18th birthday, thus extending compulsory school attendance by two years from the child's 16th to his or her 18th birthday or up to the end

of secondary education;

44. Recognises that mapping the interventions provided in Member States by different actors can be difficult, but should be encouraged with the aim of exchanging good practices; stresses the need for better EU-wide coordination between these various services, as well as better coordination within Member States between national, regional and local authorities;
45. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to create and develop policies that would make for early identification of those most likely to be affected by ESL;
46. Notes that the targeted provision of high-quality early childhood education and care by highly trained professionals leads to a reduction in ESL;
47. Encourages Member States to invest in teacher training and qualified staff for both pre-school and compulsory education, and regularly to review and update educational systems and programmes for the continuous development of teachers' skills; stresses the importance of children entering a school environment from an early age and suggests that teaching assistants be employed in schools to work with struggling pupils and to assist teachers in their work, along with auxiliary staff to help disabled pupils in their schooling in standard educational establishments or in those that cater for their disability;
48. Stresses the fundamental importance of supplementary remedial teaching in assisting pupils with learning difficulties and of encouragement and support for pupils who feel let down and abandoned by their schools and families; urges the Member States to invest in training and social assistance for parents who decide to stay home and look after young children;
49. Reminds Member States of their obligation to submit national action plans, and calls on the Commission to present a survey, assessment and evaluation of these action plans to Parliament within one year;
50. Emphasises that positive relationships between teachers and students are vital in engaging young people in the process of learning; therefore encourages Member States to invest in appropriate training for teachers to ensure they have the skills to engage with and motivate their students;
51. Calls on teacher training institutions to draw up programmes for the continuous development of teachers' skills, incorporating work with the 'at risk' group of pupils, who have a high level of absenteeism and a lack of motivation to learn, into pedagogical, psychological and methodological activities, and to make more methodological manuals available to teachers and parents;
52. Points to the need to use educational interaction therapy in order to address the causes and symptoms of children's learning difficulties, with the help of educational and teaching resources, the aim being to eliminate educational failure and its consequences;
53. Recognises that teachers need the social skills and time required to recognise and support different learning styles, as well as the freedom and space to adopt different teaching and

learning methods in agreement with students;

54. Notes that students must be made aware as early as possible of the range of career options open to them and suggests that schools and universities forge partnerships with local authorities, organisations and associations, enabling pupils to meet professionals from different fields and also to learn more about entrepreneurship;
55. Highlights the importance of appropriate class and group sizes and a stimulating and inclusive learning environment for young people;
56. Points out, further, that frequent changes in class teachers, the use of a two-shift school system and poor timetabling also have an adverse effect on students' ability to learn effectively and encourage a negative attitude to compulsory schooling;

Diverse learning approaches

57. Recognises the universal entitlement to lifelong learning, which includes not only formal but also non-formal and informal learning;
58. Calls on Member States and regional governments with powers in the area of education to recognise and validate knowledge acquired in a non-formal and informal way, thereby facilitating peoples' return to the education system;
59. Recognises the benefits of sport, cultural activities, volunteering and active citizenship in providing a forum for non-formal education and lifelong learning;
60. Stresses the importance of varied educational pathways for schoolchildren, combining general and vocational training, and is convinced that it is a judicious blend of the two, based on a pupil's age and strengths, that offers them the best chance of securing a high-quality job; points out, in this respect, that it is important to promote bridges between the education system and the world of work, as well as between training systems; stresses, further, the importance of opportunities to learn a second European language, in order to facilitate youth on the move and to motivate young people to develop interests and perspectives outside their own narrow environment;
61. Emphasises the added value of initiatives and programmes intended for parents that enable them to take a lifelong-learning approach to improving their education and so strengthen teaching and learning at home with their children;
62. Calls for school resources to be updated to exploit the potential benefits of digitised teaching methods and for attention to be paid to qualifications such as language proficiency or digital literacy, which are necessary for the jobs of tomorrow;
63. Calls on Member States to take account of the requirements of the labour market and to take steps to raise the status of vocational qualifications, while also strengthening cooperation between vocational institutions and businesses, so that the former are seen as a viable option for students of all abilities;
64. Stresses that the principle of 'learning to learn' should be at the heart of all school

curricula; notes that active teaching methods are crucial to engaging more young people in the process of learning and encouraging them to expand their knowledge, and recommends the incorporation of new technological applications, such as those offered by the Internet of Things, with a view to increasing motivation and output;

65. Stresses the importance of developing and supporting activities outside the education system; considers that access for all to extra-curricular activities, be these sports, cultural or simply leisure activities, can reduce rates of truancy and ESL and are very important for the children's development;
66. Emphasises that extra-curricular activities should be developed within schools, as this helps to create a 'positive' image of the school environment; acknowledges that giving pupils more incentives to go to school is a way of preventing ESL;
67. Recognises the role that youth organisations play in preventing ESL by offering non-formal education, which provides young people with important competences, a sense of responsibility and increased self-esteem;
68. Recognises that in all EU Member States adequate levels of literacy and numeracy are rarely reached by all school students, which contributes to ESL; emphasises that Member States should, as a matter of urgency, set targets to ensure that all pupils leave primary school with the ability to read, write and perform arithmetic at an appropriate level for their age; takes the view, moreover, that Member States should also establish literacy and numeracy schemes to allow students who have missed out on these essential skills during their formal education to catch up as quickly as possible;

Second-chance solutions

69. Calls on Member States to find ways of reintegrating early school leavers into the school system by implementing suitable programmes, such as 'second-chance' schools, which provide a suitable learning environment that enables young people to rediscover confidence in themselves and in their capacity to learn;
70. Notes that in order to ensure that these reintegration measures reach out to those most in need appropriate arrangements should be made to identify and monitor the pupils concerned, raise awareness and measure outcomes;
71. Stresses that the highest reintegration rates are achieved by programmes which address the individual needs of early school leavers; calls on educational institutions to respect the needs and rights of individuals in developing programmes for them;
72. Emphasises the need to organise activities at local level to encourage people to return to school and to promote a positive environment for people who left school early and intend to return;
73. Notes that very few evaluations have been carried out of the various reintegration measures in Member States; calls, therefore, on Member States to monitor and assess their reintegration programmes and to set targets for improvement;

74. Stresses the need to analyse the phenomenon of repeating a school year and its impact on ESL rates, highlighting the importance of individual programmes for individual pupils;
75. Urges Member States to set up more second-chance schools, strengthening the content of their curricula and their material and technical equipment and boosting the capacity of the teaching staff available, given that these schools are emerging as an important tool for the reintegration of individuals who have slipped through the net of the formal educational system;

Education system and employment

76. Notes that a reduction in ESL to no more than 10 %, meeting the EU 2020 headline target, would have an effect in reducing youth unemployment and in improving the employment rate, since currently 52 % of school leavers are unemployed and, according to academic estimates, the number of jobs available for low-skilled or unskilled labour will decline even further in the coming years; points out that reducing the ESL rate by only 1 % could boost the number of qualified potential employees by 500 000;
77. Takes the view that ESL translates into missed opportunities for young people and a loss of social and economic potential for the EU as a whole; emphasises the fact that, in addition to the impact of current demographic changes, European countries cannot afford this enormous waste of talent, and stresses that this trend should be seen against the background of a labour market and a level of EU competitiveness that will both tend to favour holders of higher education qualifications; points out that improving educational attainment will thus help to reverse this trend in that higher skill levels will make for 'smart growth' and that tackling one of the main risk factors involved in unemployment and poverty will pave the way to 'inclusive growth';
78. Highlights the link between ESL and youth unemployment; notes that more than half of early school leavers in the EU were unemployed in 2009 and that ESL can lead to an overdependence on precarious jobs, as well as exacerbating the problem of structural unemployment in the broader population;
79. Notes that early school leavers are less likely to be actively involved in social and economic entrepreneurialism, which has negative consequences for the economy and society;
80. Stresses the importance of combating ESL, not least in view of demographic trends in the EU;
81. Notes that the long-term economic and social effects of ESL create a significant risk of poverty and that combating ESL is a way to prevent social exclusion among young people; therefore considers reducing the number of early school leavers to be a key measure in reaching the target, under strategies at both national and European level, of lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty, and urges the Member States not to reduce the statutory school-leaving age;
82. Calls on employers, where possible, to encourage young workers who have not gained higher secondary education qualifications to become qualified, by introducing in-house

policies enabling staff to combine study with work; notes, in that connection, the need to promote the participation of learners in the Leonardo da Vinci programme;

83. Calls, therefore, on the Member States to draw up policies as quickly as possible with a view to creating new jobs based on new skills;
84. Stresses the need to adapt education systems to meet the requirements of the labour market; points out that in a situation where it will be rare, in future, to spend one's entire working life in a single sector, pupils need to acquire a broad range of abilities, such as creativity, creative thinking, general skills and the ability to adapt quickly and flexibly to changing conditions and requirements;
85. Urges Member States, assisted by the Commission, to act effectively to record the phenomenon of NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and tackle it;
86. Proposes expanding the scope for taking company traineeships in parallel with continuing school education;
87. Emphasises that the Member States should further improve their education and training systems in order to better match the needs of the individual with those of the labour market, including by tackling the problems of basic skills (literacy and numeracy), promoting vocational education and training and taking measures to ease the transition between education and the labour market;
88. Notes that boys more often leave school early and that we are at risk of creating a lower class of young, unemployed men with little or no education and poor chances of becoming a part of the labour market and society in general; urges the Member States to pay special attention to boys who have difficulties adapting to the school environment and not to lower the compulsory school-leaving age;
89. Bearing in mind that instances of short-lived and insecure employment are higher among persons with little education, calls on the Commission to ensure that efforts to enable early school leavers to return to the labour market invariably go hand in hand with additional training programmes to improve their future employment prospects;
90. Points out that investment in retraining and in the modernisation of vocational training courses is essential in order to help early school leavers integrate into the labour market;
91. Highlights the need to upgrade the skills provided in technical vocational training and more effectively to match the specialisations offered with labour market requirements, since linking education and employment is an integral part of tackling ESL;
92. Considers that, to combat ESL, education policies must be linked to policies aimed at promoting economic recovery and hence at creating permanent jobs and averting any dropping-out of education, short-lived and insecure employment and a speeding-up of the brain drain;
93. Recommends that training in NITC (new information and communication technologies), as well as in language technologies, should begin at an early age, given that these are

particularly useful means of communication which young people have the ability to master quickly;

EU policies

94. Welcomes the Commission proposal for a Council recommendation on policies to reduce ESL, which proposes a framework for comprehensive policies in this area, an analysis of the underlying reasons for ESL at national and local level in each Member State, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the existing measures and the integration of the prevention, intervention and compensation measures to combat this phenomenon;
95. Believes that, while respecting the principle of subsidiarity, a European framework for comprehensive strategies to tackle ESL could provide a useful guide for Member States in ascertaining the correct approach to upgrading existing policies and developing their National Reform Programmes;
96. Warns that the possible public spending cuts in the education sector on account of the economic crisis and the budgetary austerity policies being implemented in Member States will have adverse effects, in that they will further increase the numbers of early school leavers in the EU;
97. Stresses that investing more money in combating ESL can have the long-term effect of preventing young people from becoming dependent on social security;
98. Advocates, in the context of the 2012 EU budget, the proposed 'Pilot Project on Youth' with the objective of providing a guarantee to integrate young people, and in particular early school leavers, into the labour market;
99. Advocates the targeted, efficient and coherent deployment of the Structural Funds, especially the European Social Fund, with a view to the full implementation of the Youth strategies, in particular for early school leavers, in order to promote social inclusion under specific programmes in each Member State, ensure high-quality education for all and prevent ESL and truancy;
100. Notes that the nature of the problem of ESL varies from country to country and also within regions and that there is therefore no 'one-size-fits-all' solution to it;
101. Welcomes and endorses the plans announced by the Council regarding the social 'mapping' of early school leavers through the compilation of data from all the Member States; calls on the Commission to support this initiative;
102. Urges the Member States to carry out an in-depth analysis of the problem of ESL, while taking due account of data protection requirements, in order to identify the root causes at national, regional and local level;
103. Notes, however, that in order to analyse the fundamental reasons for ESL more comprehensive, consistent and coherent data from Member States is needed;
104. Calls for more funds and improved accessibility for the EU's Lifelong Learning

Programme, which increases pupils' and teachers' mobility, enhances the exchange of best practices and contributes to improving teaching and learning methods; calls for more effective use to be made of the finance provided by the EU's Structural Funds to implement measures for preventing non-attendance at school;

105. Stresses the importance of the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme and its four sub-programmes, Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig, with Comenius in particular playing a key role in combating the problem of ESL;

106. Calls on the Commission to promote the visibility of the Comenius action programme on individual pupil mobility, which can contribute to reducing ESL;

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107. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Introduction

Early school leaving (ESL) is a complex phenomenon and a huge challenge facing Europe. Consequently the EU has begun putting in place numerous measures and tools to better support Member States in developing efficient and effective national policies to tackle it. They include the Commission Communication on Tackling Early School Leaving, a new proposal for a Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving, and the Commission's flagship initiative 'Youth on the Move'.

The Europe 2020 Strategy, in addition, outlines six headline targets for Member States, one of which is to reduce ESL to 10 % by 2020. This 10 % target was previously agreed by Member States in 2003, however only seven of them managed to reach the benchmark. In 2009 the rate of ESL for all 18 to 24-year-olds in Europe stood at 14.4 %.

Most EU countries have made at least some progress in reducing the number of young people leaving school early or with low qualifications, and there has been a noticeable and positive change in how they approach early school leaving; yet this report argues that far more needs to be done

Who are 'early school leavers'?

In order to identify those who already fall into the category of 'early school leavers' and those who are potential school leavers, it is imperative to define early school leaving. However, there is no single overarching definition of the term that can be easily applied to all EU Member States, organisations and individuals. The Commission, in its Communication on Tackling Early School Leaving, refers to early school leavers as individuals between the age of 18 and 24 who have left education and training with only lower secondary education or less. For the purpose of consistency and clarity, the Commission's definition of the term will be applied throughout this report.

There is no such a thing as a typical early school leaver, nor is there a standard predictor for those people who are more likely to drop out early. Early school leavers are a diverse group, and not all of them leave school early for negative reasons. Nevertheless, this report notes that there are some groups that are considered to be more at risk than others.

Low achievement is one predictor of ESL. In the early years of schooling, differences in the educational achievements of pupils are less pronounced. However, as these differences become more marked in the later stages of their education, those who are struggling become in some cases increasingly less motivated to stay in school. Pupils with a strong academic record, by contrast, tend to stay in school regardless of outside factors or circumstances.

Importantly, underachievement cannot be viewed in isolation, as it is inextricably linked to other factors such as poverty, abuse and family background. Studies have shown for instance that the students of parents who are low-qualified, or who have a low-skilled job, are more likely to become early school leavers. Where the family unit provides a stable environment in which children can grow, learn and develop, students have a far greater probability of continuing on in school. Conversely, where families do not encourage young people and do not support their learning, ESL

becomes more likely.

There are other discernable commonalities amongst early school leavers, such as regional disparities in rates of ESL and rural-urban divides. ESL rates are also much higher among ethnic minority and immigrant populations, particularly the Roma. What is more, ESL has been shown to be a gendered phenomenon, with girls far less likely to leave school early than boys (rates are 13 % and 17 % respectively).

The consequences of early school leaving

The social and economic implications of high rates of ESL are stark. ESL negatively impacts on economic growth, driving economic and social instability. Interventions to harness the energy and develop the skills of young people are therefore crucial for the future economic and social development of Member States. It is thought that reducing the share of early school leavers across Europe by just 1 % would create nearly half a million additional qualified young people each year.

It has been shown that the lifetime earnings of those who leave school without an upper secondary education are considerably lower than those who leave school with one. Educational qualifications (or a lack of them), are a notable predictor of poverty. Since early school leavers finish school with fewer skills than those who stay on, they have considerably fewer options when it comes to entering the labour market and often end up taking low-paid, precarious jobs, with little possibility for development. Therefore preventing ESL has the potential to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty, and to improve overall economic growth.

ESL also has more immediate interdependent societal consequences, as it is associated with higher rates of antisocial behaviour, teenage pregnancy and drug abuse.

This report recognises that there is no simple ‘cure all’ solution to the problem of early school leaving. It is a complex issue which must be tackled by a range of interventions and initiatives. No one single measure will be effective unless it is complemented by other measures.

The need for a personalised approach

A variety of agents may be called upon or compelled to address ESL, but it is likely that it will be viewed differently by the student, their school teachers, their parents, and others who take an interest. This report stresses that the perspective and best interest of the student should take priority when measures to combat ESL are determined.

Interventions must be sensitive to the complexity of an individual’s needs. Many youngsters choose to leave mainstream education for personal reasons such as bullying at school, whilst others may be suffering from social problems such as drug addiction or homelessness. This report recommends that every secondary school sets up a counselling service, to enable students with personal problems to talk them through and to find solutions. Schools not only have an educative role; they also have a duty to provide pastoral care. Recognising this supportive function can be a key step towards addressing ESL.

In addition to coping with personal difficulties, the world of work can prove to be a daunting prospect for students. This report therefore recommends that student-centred support networks be set

up to provide career guidance and advice, including goal setting, job training and career counselling. This will not only demystify the world of work for students, but will motivate them to set goals and to work towards achieving them. One good practice example comes from the UK, where the highly successful Connexions Service was set up in 2001. The aim of this organisation, which combines youth services and a careers service, is to provide personalised advice and support for young people. It has introduced a range of innovations in its approach to young people, notably widespread use of online services.

This report makes clear that the process of reintegrating disillusioned young people back into education must start as early as possible. Truancy, behavioural problems and other issues have to be addressed as soon as they arise. Such difficulties cannot be underestimated or ignored.

School reforms

In some cases, young people decide to withdraw from the education system because they do not consider the curriculum to be responsive or relevant to their lives. Every student is unique and not all respond to the same teaching methods. Consequently this report calls for schools to move away from traditional testing, where the future prospects of an individual depends on their performance on one day, and to try to find ways of assessing pupils on a continuous basis.

It is clear that not all young people are attracted by the more traditional academic subjects and qualifications, and those who lack an interest in the traditional school curriculum have been shown to be at greater risk of dropping out. To combat this, Member States should take steps to innovate and diversify the national curriculum by extending the variety of educational options open to pupils. Structural reforms are important for giving young people the skills and training that they need to make a smooth transition into the world of work. These include problem solving, critically evaluating information, and communicating effectively. One option, which has already been piloted in Spain, is to encourage stronger links and partnership agreements between schools and local companies. Schemes like this, which offer students a taste of working life, can also give them a sense of direction and motivate them to work harder.

It is crucial that schools encourage students' mobility between the different educational streams, be it academic, vocational and so on. Offering students a wider choice at school is not only important for increasing their motivation to stay on, but also for providing them with the broad spectrum of knowledge and essential skills necessary for finding employment later. The Rapporteur believes that the principle of 'learning to learn' should be at the heart of all school policies and curricula.

Another recommendation is for schools to work towards improving pupil-teacher ratios, particularly when it comes to pupils of a lower educational ability. Small class sizes for students with special educational needs or behavioural problems can have a positive impact on rates of ESL. They often require the use of teaching assistants, who work alongside classroom teachers. Teaching assistants have become extremely popular in several EU Member States, since they allow greater attention to be devoted to pupils who need extra help, leaving time free for classroom teachers to work with other pupils.

Finally, as the Rapporteur has also stressed in her report on Early Years Learning in the EU, the provision of high-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) services for children aged 0-6 is a vital component in tackling ESL. Children's early learning lays the foundation for their

successful lifelong learning and investment in ECEC services brings greater returns than investment at any other stage of education.

Links with parents and with the community

Schools are not the only bodies with responsibility for implementing policies and programmes to prevent ESL. This report argues that responsibility also extends to the local community. There needs to be clear links between social and welfare services, NGOs, private organisations, schools and parents, as well as intersection between national policies and local, small-scale approaches. Establishing a network made up of actors from different areas of the community will make it easier for individuals to overcome multiple barriers to education. Parents, particularly of children with disabilities, should also be recognised as skilled partners who can work with teachers. All parents should be allowed to play a fully collaborative role in their child's schooling.

In the UK, the voluntary and community sector has been particularly successful in raising the attainment of young people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. Local interventions often use innovative and alternative methods to motivate disengaged youth, such as through music, drama, dance and sport.

'Second chance' solutions

For those who leave school early, a system is required for reintegrating them back into the education system. Encouraging Member States to set up 'second chance' or 'alternative' schools is one solution. These must be sensitive to the needs of individuals, many of whom will have dropped out in their younger years after becoming disillusioned with the education system. They must also be flexible, allowing individuals to fit their education commitments around their work and family responsibilities.

While preventing ESL in the first place is far more effective in the long term, second chance solutions must nonetheless remain an integral part of Member States' strategies for dealing with ESL.

14.7.2011

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

for the Committee on Culture and Education

on tackling early school leaving
(2011/2088(INI))

Rapporteur: Nadja Hirsch

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Culture and Education, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Regrets that the percentage of early school leavers in the EU currently stands at 14.4 % and that 17.4 % of these have only completed primary school; notes that reducing early school leaving has been a target for the EU and Member States for many years but not sufficient progress has been made, with rates for early school leaving above 30 % in some Member States; notes the tremendous divergence in the percentage of early school leavers in the various Member States and the difficulty of drawing comparisons in terms of relevant contextual factors – such as migratory movements and levels of education in the family – between different regions and Member States; points out that these children are most often from low-education backgrounds or socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and are more often boys than girls; calls therefore for a stronger commitment from Member States and for closer monitoring on the part of the Commission in order to make sure that Member States are creating and implementing strategies to reduce early school leaving; warns that the possible public spending cuts in the education sector on account of the economic crisis and the budgetary austerity policies being implemented in Member States will have adverse effects in that they will further increase the numbers of early school leavers in the EU;
2. Notes that among the Roma children 20 % are not enrolled in school at all and 30 % are early school leavers; underlines that although early school leaving (ESL) is more common among boys than girls, there is a special situation in the case of the traditional Roma communities, where owing to the custom of early marriages, the school drop-out of young

girls is more frequent; this ESL of young Roma girls happens at an earlier age (around 12-13 years) in comparison with boys (around 14-15 years); in the case of traditional Roma communities there is a need for supplementary positive measures in order to overcome ESL resulting from these harmful traditional practices;

3. Points out also that it is vital to bring down unemployment in the EU by meeting new occupational requirements and encouraging the recruitment of new blood to replace the old;
4. Takes the view that early school leaving translates into missed opportunities for young people and a loss of social and economic potential for the EU as a whole; highlights the fact that, in addition to current demographic changes, European countries cannot afford the enormous waste of talent, and stresses that this should be seen in the light of the fact that the labour market and Europe's level of competitiveness will both tend to favour holders of higher education qualifications; improving educational attainment will thus help to achieve the aim in that higher skill levels will make for 'smart growth', and tackling one of the main risk factors involved in unemployment and poverty will pave the way to 'inclusive growth';
5. Notes that a reduction to no more than 10 %, fulfilling the EU 2020 headline target would have an effect in reducing youth unemployment and in improving the employment rate, since currently 52 % of school leavers are unemployed and, according to academic estimations, the number of jobs available for low-skilled or unskilled labour will decline even further in the coming years; points out that reducing the early school leaving rate by only 1% could boost the number of qualified potential employees by 500 000;
6. Stresses that investing more money in combating early school leaving can have the long-term effect of preventing young people from becoming dependent on social security;
7. Stresses the importance of combating early school leaving, not least in view of demographic trends in the EU;
8. Notes that the long-term economic and social effects of early school leaving lead to a significant risk of poverty and that fighting early school leaving is a way to prevent social exclusion among young people; therefore considers lowering the number of early school leavers to be a key measure in reaching the target, in strategies at both national and European level, of lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty, and urges the Member States not to reduce the upper age limit for compulsory education;
9. Calls, therefore, on the Member States to draw up policies as quickly as possible with a view to establishing new jobs based on new skills;
10. Stresses the need to adapt education systems to meet the requirements of the labour market; points out that in a situation where it will be rare, in future, to spend one's entire working life in a single sector, pupils need to acquire a broad range of abilities, such as creativity, creative thinking, general skills and the ability to adapt quickly and flexibly to changing conditions and requirements;
11. Considers that the Commission should present to Parliament in a year's time, and on the

basis of accurate indicators, a survey, assessment and evaluation of national reform programmes, as well as the results of monitoring the developments at different education levels across Member States, specifying the means established to tackle unemployment, such as apprenticeship, work-study programmes, professional mentoring, etc, and including employment projections by sector and skill level, and should also submit regular progress reports; urges the Commission to conduct research into the influence of the respective national school systems on the early leaving rate; calls for the assessment to be based on the specific national, regional, and local features of early school leaving;

12. Believes that, while respecting the principle of subsidiarity, a European framework for comprehensive strategies to tackle early school leaving could provide a useful guide for Member States in ascertaining the correct approach to upgrading existing policies and developing their National Reform Programmes;
13. Notes that the problem of early school leaving varies from country to country and also within regions, and that there is therefore no 'one size fits all' solution to it;
14. Stresses the importance, in order to combat early school leaving effectively, of exchange of experience and best practice at national and European level; therefore urges the Commission to encourage cooperation between the Member States and to support their strategies through the exchange of experience, expertise and good practices; supports the Council Recommendation which suggests a common European framework for effective and efficient policies against early school leaving, including the idea that Member States should adopt comprehensive national strategies against early school leaving by 2012;
15. Urges the Member States to carry out an in-depth analysis of the problem of early school leaving, while taking due account of data protection, in order to identify the root causes at national, regional and local level, and to develop appropriate packages of measures for prevention, intervention and compensation, including specialised establishments or school support services for recognised disabilities; believes that strategies to tackle early school leaving must be based on an analysis of the specific national, regional, and local dimensions of the phenomenon and that these data should serve to focus research on the reasons for the exceptionally high drop-out rates among given categories of pupils and in the regions, localities, and schools most affected;
16. Recalls that comprehensive strategies to combat school leaving should comprise a mix of policies, coordination among different policy sectors and integration of measures into all policies concerning young people and children;
17. Calls on the Member States to organise programmes to tackle addictions and social pathologies and prevention programmes to deal with the correlation between family situation and early school leaving;
18. Urges Member States, assisted by the Commission, to act effectively to record the phenomenon of NEET and tackle it;
19. Advocates flexible, needs-based forms of learning at schools and stresses that this challenge must be addressed in particular by primary schools and in the early years of secondary schooling by means of early intervention, stronger bonds to be fostered with

schools, and other measures; takes the view that teaching staff, educational psychologists, educational social workers and all relevant stakeholders should be qualified for this purpose and benefit from a high standard of training throughout their careers so as to enable them to reorient their practice and hence gear it to the new requirements and to be actively involved in the planning, organising, performing and evaluating of strategies to help people who are at risk of early school leaving or those who have already dropped out; therefore points out that education and vocational training institutions must exchange experiences and tried and tested practice and develop effective means of support for pupils in danger of dropping out;

20. Proposes expanding the possibility of company traineeships in parallel with continuing school education;
21. Believes that in a lifelong learning context, the role of the family should be considered to be as vital as that of teachers;
22. Calls for actors outside school to set up networks so as to enable schools to support pupils more effectively and tackle the problems that put children in difficulty;
23. Emphasises that the Member States should further improve their education and training systems in order to better match the needs of the individual and those of the labour market, including by tackling the problems of basic skills (literacy and numeracy), promoting vocational education and training and measures to ease the transition between education and the labour market;
24. Encourages the Member States to provide extracurricular and out-of-school activities for pupils with learning difficulties to develop key skills in view of the clear need for these skills in the labour market;
25. Stresses that it must be ensured that decisions concerning education policy are taken at national, regional or local level;
26. Notes that all children have equal dignity from the point of view of learning and have the right to a basic education; stresses therefore that pupils' personal situations, e.g. gender, family circumstances, minority or migrant background, a disability and their own learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia) must be taken into account and that these pupils must be given targeted encouragement and educational assistance adapted to their specific needs from the outset, in order to avoid the reproduction of social exclusion and the risk of poverty by enhancing their chances for entering the labour market; stresses that children with no identity papers must be enabled to attend school; recognises that reforms in the fields of integration policy and education policy respectively cannot be considered as separate; proposes, against this background, desegregation policies to change the social make-up of 'disadvantaged' schools and supports forms of positive discrimination such as priority education zones and programmes providing targeted support for schools in disadvantaged areas; also points out that, as many studies show, educational establishments which have greater problems as regards coexistence and integration among pupils also have higher drop-out rates and therefore advocates the need for an inclusive school climate; notes, furthermore, that ineffective policies on work-life balance increase the instances of early school leaving and academic failure in general and

that it is necessary to intensify efforts to improve work-life balance policies;

27. Draws attention, in this regard, to the OECD's PISA studies which establish that students in educational systems with a lesser degree of vertical and horizontal differentiation are less likely to repeat a year or to be expelled; highlights the OECD's finding that students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds suffer most from having to repeat a school year or from being expelled; highlights the OECD's finding that early selection of students for different educational pathways increases socio-economic inequality in terms of educational opportunities without effecting any improvement in average performance in the educational systems in question;
28. Draws attention, in this regard, to the OECD's finding that the comparative performance of school systems in the PISA studies is negatively affected by the practices of moving students from one school to another on account of poor results, behavioural problems or specific learning difficulties and of streaming students in all subjects on the basis of ability;
29. Points out in this regard that, according to the OECD, socio-economically disadvantaged students are often at a double disadvantage because they attend schools affected by various types of social-economic disadvantage, in which there are fewer and less well-qualified teachers;
30. Notes that boys more often leave school early and that we are at risk of creating a lower class of young, unemployed men with little or no education and poor chances of becoming a part of the labour market and society in general; urges the Member States to give special attention to boys who have difficulties adapting to the school environment and discourages Member States from lowering the compulsory school age;
31. Stresses that the highest re-integration rates are achieved by programmes addressing the individual needs of early school leavers; calls on the institutions to respect the needs and rights of the individuals in developing programmes for them;
32. Stresses the need to bear in mind that more boys than girls leave school early, and that more measures therefore need to be put in place for boys in this regard, in order to improve their chances on the labour market;
33. Urges that special individual careers advice be given to early school leavers to facilitate their entry into the world of work, and that they be enabled by means of specially tailored measures to obtain work-related skills and qualifications, as well as to develop social competencies later in order to improve their employment possibilities and social inclusion and benefit from retraining opportunities and course equivalence arrangements; stresses that pupils from undocumented families must have the right to attend school;
34. Emphasises the need to organise activities at local level to encourage people to return to school and to promote a positive environment for people who left school early and intend to return;
35. Bearing in mind that instances of short-lived and insecure employment are higher among persons with little education, calls on the Commission to ensure that efforts to enable early

school leavers to return to the labour market invariably go hand in hand with additional training programmes to improve their future employment prospects;

36. Points out that investment in retraining and in the modernisation of vocational training courses is essential in order to help early school leavers integrate into the labour market;
37. Highlights the need for members of the educational community, in collaboration with pupils' parents and academic specialists, to take action and launch initiatives with a view to drastically reducing intimidation, violence and social and race-based racism at school, which lead to the marginalisation of pupils, thereby creating the conditions for early school leaving;
38. Urges Member States to spread the institution of second-chance schools, both strengthening the content of their curricula and their material and technical equipment, and boosting the capacity of the teaching staff available, given that these schools are emerging as an important tool for the reintegration of persons who have slipped through the meshes of the formal educational system;
39. Highlights the need to upgrade the skills provided in technical vocational training and more effectively to match the specialisations offered with labour market requirements, since linking education and employment is an integral part of tackling early school leaving;
40. Notes that an effective policy to tackle the phenomenon of early school leaving should include all levels of education, be followed up and be drawn up on the basis of local, regional, social and individual criteria in three areas, namely prevention, intervention and compensation;
41. Advocates in the context of the 2012 EU budget the proposed 'Pilot Project on Youth' with the objective of a guarantee to integrate young people, and in particular early school leavers, into the labour market;
42. Stresses the need to analyse the phenomenon of repeating a school year and its impact on leaving school early, highlighting the importance of individual programmes for individual pupils;
43. Considers that, to combat early school leaving, education policies must be linked to policies aimed at promoting economic recovery and hence at creating permanent jobs and averting any dropping-out of education, short-lived and insecure employment, and acceleration of the brain drain;
44. Advocates the targeted, efficient and coherent deployment of the Structural Funds, especially the European Social Fund, for the full implementation of the Youth strategies, in particular for early school leavers to promote social inclusion under specific programmes in each Member State, in order to ensure quality education for all and to avoid early-school leaving and truancy;
45. Recommends that training in NITC (new information and communications technologies), as well as in language technologies, should begin at an early age, given that these are

particularly useful means of communication which young people have the ability to master quickly;

46. Stresses that also early school leavers should be given access to EU funds and mobility programmes regardless of their status as 'out of formal education'; calls on the Commission and the Member States to monitor whether these programmes are also taken up by early school leavers and the organisations working with them;

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	13.7.2011
Result of final vote	+: 46 -: 3 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Regina Bastos, Edit Bauer, Pervenche Berès, Mara Bizzotto, Philippe Boulland, David Casa, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Derek Roland Clark, Sergio Gaetano Cofferati, Marije Cornelissen, Karima Delli, Proinsias De Rossa, Frank Engel, Sari Essayah, Ilda Figueiredo, Thomas Händel, Roger Helmer, Nadja Hirsch, Stephen Hughes, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Martin Kastler, Ádám Kósa, Patrick Le Hyaric, Olle Ludvigsson, Elizabeth Lynne, Thomas Mann, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Csaba Öry, Siiri Oviir, Rovana Plumb, Sylvana Rapti, Licia Ronzulli, Elisabeth Schroedter, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska, Jutta Steinruck, Traian Ungureanu
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Georges Bach, Raffaele Baldassarre, Jürgen Creutzmann, Kinga Göncz, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Antigoni Papadopoulou, Evelyn Regner, Emilie Turunen, Peter van Dalen, Cecilia Wikström
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Ashley Fox, Marit Paulsen

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	5.10.2011
Result of final vote	+: 24 -: 1 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Magdi Cristiano Allam, Maria Badia i Cutchet, Zoltán Bagó, Malika Benarab-Attou, Lothar Bisky, Jean-Marie Cavada, Silvia Costa, Santiago Fisas Ayxela, Mary Honeyball, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Morten Løkkegaard, Marek Henryk Migalski, Katarína Neveďalová, Doris Pack, Chrysoula Paliadeli, Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid, Marietje Schaake, Marco Scurria, Hannu Takkula, Sampo Terho, László Tőkés, Helga Trüpel, Sabine Verheyen, Milan Zver
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Ivo Belet, Nessa Childers, Seán Kelly, Iosif Matula
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Jacky Hénin