

# Education *and* Travellers



IRISH TRAVELLER MOVEMENT (ITM)

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

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# **PREFACE**

**THIS PUBLICATION is the outcome of a long process of reflection, discussion and analysis by the Irish Traveller Movement's working group on education. During this process the group examined the situation of Travellers in relation to educational provision but also looked at the educational system as a whole. The insights arrived at are seen as relevant not only for Travellers but for the whole population as well. Indeed if the educational system is to bring about greater equality it is essential that it is intercultural and anti-racist.**

**The highlight of the preparatory phase was the national seminar on the theme "Travellers and Education" (11th October 1992) which was attended by Travellers and Traveller groups from around the country. This seminar, opened by the Minister of Education, provided an opportunity for a very constructive exchange of ideas, and the principles and recommendations contained in this document were unanimously adopted.**

**The seminar itself was organised in such a way as to maximise the involvement and participation of all the participants especially the Travellers present. Central to the day were workshops which resulted in creative feedback to the large group of ITM members.**

**This document however, is intended primarily for policy makers, administrators, teachers and other professionals**

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involved in the provision of education. It was drawn up in the context of a national debate on the reform of the Irish educational system with the aim of influencing future policy decisions. Another more popular version is in the process of being produced.

The ITM working group wishes to thank the Combat Poverty Agency, the Parish Team for Travelling People, the DTEDG, and the Holy Faith Sisters Education desk for their support towards this seminar and the production of this document, to John Byrne for the cartoons he created for the occasion, and to Davnet Mc Greal for typing the document. The views expressed are those of the ITM and do not necessarily reflect those of the Combat Poverty Agency or others who contributed to this publication.

**The following are members of the ITM Education Working Group:**

**Madeline Clarke, Bernie McMahon, Maire Mac Aonghusa, John O Connell, Maurice Hurley, Emer Berry, Winnie McDonagh, P. J. McDonagh, Paddy McDonagh, Mary Sheehy, Fran McVeigh, Julieanne Joyce, Patricia Lahiffe, Máirín Kenny, Deirdre Wadding, Brigid O Flanagan.**

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# INTRODUCTION

*What  
is  
meant  
by  
education?*

**EDUCATION IS the concern of this document. In it the term education is used in a broad sense and includes:- social, cultural, intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual development. The Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) wishes to address all those agencies of the state or voluntary sector which set out to supplement or extend the education provided by the family/community.**

**This document sets out principles and recommendations which apply to the education of all, but particularly to the education of Travellers. They are intended to apply to formal education as provided in institutions such as colleges, schools and training centres; and to informal education as provided in youth and community work and other community based projects.**

**Schooling is by far the most universal form of educational provision for all, including Travellers, and therefore it features primarily in this document.**

# IRISH TRAVELLERS

*Who are Travellers?*

TRAVELLERS ARE a distinct nomadic ethnic group within Irish society. Historically Travellers were commercial nomads, recognised both by themselves and by sedentary society as having a distinct identity. Despite assimilationist policies the Traveller identity persists though many now live in houses, either by choice or because of force of circumstances. As pride in their identity strengthens, many Travellers claim the right to continue or resume the nomadic lifestyle. This unique culture is an integral part of the heritage that should be known to all. This nomadic/sedentary mix is to be found in most countries in Europe, as is the racist treatment meted out to Travellers and Gypsies.

*Travellers' culture and the educational system: is there a conflict?*

TRAVELLERS EDUCATE their children at home and in their community for the life of a Traveller, and have cultural values relating to children and young people which can come into conflict with the formal system. Traveller culture is no more static than any other, and the impact of the formal educational system is causing changes: for instance, Traveller culture traditionally included children as part of the economic and social unit - in the act of sending them to school parents and society have introduced into that culture the idea of a separate 'life as a child', with economic and social costs. Travellers have had to make several adaptations in order to gain access to the benefits of schooling. There are many ways in which the school system could become more flexible so as to cater for the needs of Travellers in appropriate ways.

*Recent  
Trends*

**INCREASINGLY TRAVELLERS** are sending their children to school. Young Travellers and adults are also availing of new educational opportunities created by the voluntary sector such as special courses organised for Traveller women. When Travellers send their children to school they want them to do well alongside their sedentary peers, and to emerge with specific skills.

*Travellers'  
experience  
of schooling*

**HOWEVER, PARTLY** because things developed without overall monitoring and evaluation, Travellers' experience of schooling is very mixed. Some schools welcome them while others do not (some even refuse to enrol them); and Travellers often talk of situations where their children are marked out and isolated. As a result of such negative practices the then National Co-ordinator for Traveller education drew up a set of guidelines for the administration of special classes (cf. Appendix 1).

*Poor  
Results*

**SOME TEACHERS** do recognise Traveller culture and include it in their class work, but many do not. But whether Traveller children enjoy school or not, most parents, children and teachers are very disappointed with their educational achievement. This and the often erratic attendance levels, challenge any assessment of success of Traveller education based on counts of provision and enrolment alone.

*Relevance of  
education  
for  
Travellers?*

**MANY TRAVELLERS** now question the relevance and value of the education offered to them. It is essential for the Department of Education and other relevant agencies to invest the time, expertise and finance needed to ensure that the quality and suitability of educational provision for Irish Travellers meets their needs. In a multicultural



society it is also essential that the education system is truly intercultural and anti-racist and committed to equal opportunity for everyone.

Education  
as  
liberation

*The pedagogy of the oppressed, as a humanist and libertarian pedagogy, has two distinct stages. In the first, the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation. In the second stage, in which the reality of oppression has already been transformed, this pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy of all in the process of permanent liberation.*

Paulo Freire,  
Pedagogy of the Oppressed,  
Penguin Books, N.Y. 1972, page 31.

# EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

*Equal  
opportunity  
and  
education*

MEMBERS OF the ITM believe that schools and other educational institutions have a role in social change. Educators play an important part in either maintaining the status quo or in forwarding the process of change in society's values and practices, whether for good or ill. Schools are social institutions in themselves; schools which are anti-racist in relation to enrolment and integration, where Travellers and sedentary children alike find all cultures in our society included and celebrated, give children that experience both for now and to take with them into the world of adult life. Besides, such schools are themselves part of our social fabric, challenging those parents who might want things less equal. We believe there is an urgent need to implement the principles and recommendations set out in this document in order to bring about equal opportunities for Travellers and to help all students develop cross-cultural understanding. In this context we call for the realisation of the aspirations set out in the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (cf. Appendix 2).

*A holistic  
approach*

FOR THESE changes to be effective and long-lasting it is crucial that educational reform be approached in a holistic manner. This means looking at the schools and other educational institutions in their totality and not just as their constituent elements in isolation. A holistic approach overcomes the limitations of reforming one element, such as curriculum materials, without also reforming other elements, such as teacher training.

*Intercultural  
and  
anti-racist*

INTERCULTURAL AND anti-racist teaching materials are ineffective in the hands of teachers or trainers who lack the skills or have negative attitudes towards Travellers and other ethnic groups. Such tutors are unlikely to use multiethnic materials or if they do, may use them in a detrimental way. It is an essential requirement that staff at all levels of the education system receive pre and in-service training in intercultural and anti-racist practice. Staff development programmes are essential, therefore, and must involve administrations, councillors, and other ancillary members involved in the educational system. Such staff development should be systematic, comprehensive, ongoing and mandatory.

*Resources  
and  
structures*

LIKEWISE, THE effectiveness of enlightened and skilled teachers is greatly reduced if they do not have access to appropriate teaching materials or they do not receive adequate support from administrators or their colleagues. That is why the "hidden curriculum" and the environment within the schools or other such institutions must also be the focus for change. It is essential therefore that colleges, schools and other educational institutions should have policies and procedures which promote cross-cultural understanding and foster positive interactions among students, teachers, trainers and other members of staff.

# MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

## *Cultural Diversity*

THIS DOCUMENT is based on the belief that ethnic pluralism is a positive feature within a multicultural society. It can enrich a nation and increase the ways in which citizens can perceive situations and solve problems. It provides individuals and groups with opportunities to experience and learn from other cultures and to function in cross-cultural situations.

## *European Integration*

AS IRISH society becomes more integrated into the European community and as our cross-cultural interactions increase we believe that these guidelines in relation to education become all the more relevant. While the primary focus is on the interaction between Travellers and the sedentary population in the education process, we believe that the principles and recommendations contained in this document have implications which can benefit other groups as well.

# PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Principle 1 : The principle of equality must be applied to ensure that Travellers shall have equal access to all forms of education.*

## Recommendations:

- 1.1 The Irish government must now respond to the challenges arising from its ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, (cf. Appendix 3), act on the EC Resolution of the Council and Ministers of Education for school provision for Gypsy and Traveller children (cf. Appendix 4), honour Bunreacht na hEireann - Article 42, (cf. Appendix 5), and apply rule number 10 of the Rules for National Schools which states that:

*"No child may be refused admission to a national school on account of the social position of its parents, nor may any pupil be kept apart from the other pupils on the ground of social distinction."*

In particular it must recognise the specific application of the terms of these instruments to Irish Travellers. All forms of education provision should provide equal access for Travellers. Penalties should be imposed for refusal to enrol Travellers where vacancies exist.

- 1.2 Integrated education should be pursued in line with current trends in education. The government should implement the recommendations on integration as stated in the INTO document "Travellers in Education" (No.7.3 - 7.14).

- 1.3. All schools with special classes and other support facilities should have a plan outlining steps towards full integration. Where separate provision exists, all opportunities for integration should be used e.g. drama, music, physical education, art, religion and exchange programmes.

*Principle 2: The principle of anti-discrimination must inform all education provision.*

#### **Recommendations:**

- 2.1 The Irish government should introduce anti-discrimination legislation which specifically protects Travellers.
- 2.2 The Irish government should act on the relevant recommendation contained in the European Parliament report on racism and Xenophobia (cf. Appendix 6).
- 2.3 Training in anti-racism should be an obligatory and basic component in the pre-service and in-service training of all teachers and other professionals involved in educational provision.
- 2.4 Participants in all sectors of the system should be educated in anti-racist principles and practices, including examination of treatment of Travellers in Irish society.

**Principle 3 :    *The principle of affirmative action must be applied to Travellers in education and to education as a whole, to ensure:***

- that they are enabled to overcome the disadvantage they experience,***
- that their educational needs are met,***
- that the providing agencies are equipped for this process.***

**Recommendations:**

- 3.1    Adequate funding should be committed to ensuring that economic disadvantage is no barrier to education.**
- 3.2    Staffing and funding should be increased to ensure that educational provision for all is truly anti-discriminatory and intercultural.**
- 3.3    Those denied the right to basic living facilities should be offered support services to enable them to participate with dignity in the educational process.**
- 3.4    Neither schools nor pupils should be penalised by reductions in funding or personnel as a result of moving from special to integrated provision.**
- 3.5    The Department of Education should commit resources to developing and monitoring specialist innovative initiatives which address specific requirements of Travellers.**

- 3.6 Funding specifically for Traveller support teacher services should be increased to the level necessary to ensure that those with special needs can gain fully from all educational opportunities.
- 3.7 Short-stay enrolment in educational institutions must be catered for.
- 3.8 School records need to be requested and transferred as a matter of policy between schools. Computerised systems should be developed to aid this.
- 3.9 Adult and continuing education and training processes for Travellers need to take account of Traveller nomadism, in their orientation, timing, content and delivery.
- 3.10 In areas where there is a large number of Traveller families a comprehensive and flexible home/school liaison scheme should be introduced in addition to the existing support teacher service.
- 3.11 Those providing education in both formal and informal settings, must adopt a policy of positively encouraging Travellers to pursue education to the full.
- 3.12 Efforts should be made to create the conditions necessary for Travellers to train as professionals, and to develop new roles for Travellers as educators within the educational system. Travellers taking on these new roles need appropriate training at all levels but in particular, initially, at the pre-school, primary, and continuing education levels. This means that qualifications may need to be waived in some instances for entry to teacher training programmes.



**Principle 4:      *The principle of respecting cultural diversity and multiethnicity must inform all educational provision.***

**Recommendations:**

- 4.1    All educational provision, ranging from fully integrated to fully separate, should be intercultural.**
- 4.2    Educational institutions should have policies and practices to ensure that the educational environment respects cultural diversity and enhances multiethnic harmony.**
- 4.3    Teachers, trainers, counsellors, and other professionals, should undergo relevant training in interculturalism, including an understanding of nomadism, at pre-service and in-service stages.**
- 4.4    Personnel providing education should recognise and positively affirm the culture, religious ethos and ethnic identity of Travellers.**
- 4.5    Curricula, programmes and materials should be intercultural and anti-racist, and include positive treatment of Travellers.**

**Principle 5:**     *The principle of respecting democracy demands that Travellers and Traveller support groups must be consulted about the form and content of education for Travellers and about the treatment of Travellers in all educational materials and programmes.*

**Recommendations:**

- 5.1** Agencies such as the Department of Education, religious bodies, diocesan and other management authorities, teachers' unions, youth organisations, and parents' organisations should find ways to include Travellers at all levels of planning and administration from national to local e.g. from National Council for Curriculum and Assessment to Boards of Management.
- 5.2** Provision for children with special learning needs should be determined through consultation between parents or guardians, professionals and school authorities, and should be reviewed at least annually.
- 5.3** Learning needs should be assessed using culturally appropriate measures, to be developed professionally through the Department of Education.
- 5.4** Travellers involved in policy discussions need to be resourced and facilitated to ensure their maximum participation. Care should be taken to avoid tokenism.

Principle 6: *The principle of free choice which is recognised in Article 42.2 of Bunreacht na hEireann must guide all interventions in regard to education.*

### **Recommendations:**

- 6.1 Travellers should have access to information and opportunities where they can develop and explore their options and responsibilities in relation to education.
- 6.2 Parents' ability to provide alternative education for their children should be recognised and assessed according to culturally respectful criteria.
- 6.3 Youth services, as a form of out-of-school education based on the voluntary involvement of young people, should ensure that these principles are incorporated into the various activities undertaken.

# CONCLUSION

IN THIS document the ITM calls for a radical overhaul of the education system in order to ensure that Travellers can benefit from it. The social inequality experienced by Travellers is reflected in and maintained by the educational system at present.

This document sets out to provide some key principles which should inform the educational system. These principles were drawn up on the basis of extensive experience of working with Travellers and in dialogue between Travellers and settled people. While these principles are aimed specifically at improving the education system for the benefit of Travellers, they are also aimed at the wider population.

A central thread going through the document is the importance given to interculturalism and anti-racism in educational provision. This is what provides the foundation for the various principles and recommendations contained in it. It is also the basis for viewing the role of education in bringing about change in the context of European integration.

The ITM is well aware that while education can make an enormous contribution to social change it is simplistic to expect education to solve all the problems which Travellers experience. In its analysis of these problems the ITM acknowledges the multidimensional nature of these problems. It also acknowledges how these problems are intertwined and have to be tackled in a number of different ways simultaneously. For instance, school attendance is often determined by the availability of suitable accommodation and access to basic facilities. Likewise access to educational opportunities can be blocked by racism. In addressing this it is important that racism is not simply reduced to prejudice, and the attitudinal change required for the reduction of prejudice needs to be complemented by the legislative changes which tackle institutional racism.

Finally, this document is presented not as the last word, in relation to Travellers and education, but as a contribution which is intended to stimulate reflection, discussion and debate among settled people (educators, policy makers and administrators), and Travellers about the kind of education system which can best serve the needs of Irish society. In the context of widespread inequality and injustice in our society it is hoped that this document will point in the right direction where solutions can be found.

# **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

## **MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION**

**MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION** provides a useful overview and framework for creating an educational environment in which people from a range of diverse groups can experience educational equality. However, there is a need for more specific concepts, such as anti-racism and ethnicity to address the educational needs of Travellers.

We prefer to use the term intercultural education in order to go beyond some of the shortcomings which have been identified in relation to multicultural education as it developed in Britain and the USA in recent years.

## **INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION**

**INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION** implies an education that promotes interaction and understanding among and between different cultures and ethnic groups on the assumption that ethnic diversity can enrich society.

- (a) Intercultural education goes beyond ethnic studies. It is understood to include studying ethnic cultures and experiences but also involves making institutional changes so that Travellers and members of other ethnic minority groups have equal educational opportunities.
- (b) Intercultural education is designed for all participants in the learning situation regardless of whether it is ethnically mixed or not.
- (c) Intercultural education focuses on ethnic and cultural realities but also acknowledges that individual and institutional racism can be a major cause of the problems experienced by ethnic minorities in the education process.

## **'RACE'**

**THERE IS only one human race! In sociology 'race' is no longer accepted as a scientific term i.e. it cannot be used to describe biologically distinct groups of persons with supposedly unchanging characteristics. Scientific research into the biology of 'race' has shown that genetic differences between individuals within a so-called 'racial' group can be greater than those between individuals from supposedly different 'racial' groups.**

## **RACISM**

**RACISM IS a set of beliefs, ideologies and social processes that discriminate against others on the basis of their supposed membership of a 'racial' or ethnic group. The term is used to describe:**

- a) doctrines which justify notions of superiority and inferiority on the basis of real or imaginary biological differences (usually skin colour),**
- b) attitudes and practices which produce discrimination.**

## **ETHNIC GROUP**

**AN ETHNIC group is a group of people sharing a collective identity based on a sense of a common history. Ethnic groups possess their own culture, customs, norms, beliefs and traditions. Other relevant characteristics shared in common could be language, geographical origin, ancestors, literature, religion and the experience of being oppressed. An ethnic group can be a minority or a majority group within a larger community. Boundary maintenance is observed between members and non-members. Ethnicity is a cultural phenomenon.**

## ASSIMILATION

THE TERM assimilation or absorption is used to describe a process designed to reduce cultural or ethnic differences in society. The assimilationist assumes that when ethnic minorities experience equality in society that their ethnicity and its associated primordial attachments will disappear.

Assimilationists argue that ethnic groups promote group rights over individual rights and that individual rights are paramount in a democratic society. Ethnicity, from this perspective, is viewed as promoting division, conflict and polarization in society. Therefore, assimilationist policies set out to promote the participation of minorities in mainstream society and its institutions without making any adjustments to these institutions. If some adjustments are made these are seen as interim provisions in the assimilationist process.

In other words minorities are expected to adjust to these institutions and not the other way around. Modernization is assumed to contribute to the assimilationist process by making ethnicity obsolete.

## INTEGRATION

THE TERM integration is often used to mean the same thing as assimilation. However, in this document the term is not used in this way, rather it is used to refer to a process whereby minority groups are enabled to overcome social exclusion and marginalisation. Therefore, integration, in this sense, involves not the disappearance of ethnic identities but the acceptance of cultural diversity and the achievement of equal status among ethnic groups.

The rationale for this, is based, firstly, on the historical fact that modernization has not eliminated ethnic identities. Secondly, it is based on a belief that asserting group difference can be liberating and empowering for the group itself and enriching for society as a whole. In



order for this to happen it is important that group difference is understood not as deviance from a norm which stigmatises a minority group but as a relationship. A relational understanding of difference avoids the pitfall of focusing on minorities as 'different' and focuses instead on all groups as different. Difference, therefore, is not so much about the attributes of a specific group, but how different groups relate and interact.

## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **NATIONAL CO-ORDINATOR'S GUIDELINES FOR TRAVELLER EDUCATION**

In 1989 the National Co-ordinator for Traveller Education proposed the following guidelines for the administration of special classes. These guidelines have been accepted by many of the groups involved in Traveller education and it is understood that they may be the basis for forthcoming guidelines from the Department of Education :

1. That the special classes be located in the mainstream schools.
2. That there should not be :
  - (a) Separate entrances for Traveller children
  - (b) Separate play times for Traveller children
  - (c) Separate play areas for Traveller children
3. That a policy of integration be included in the school plan.
4. That the special class should aim to provide mainly for the following groups.
  - (a) Transient pupils
  - (b) Late starters
  - (c) Children whose parents enrol them in special classes.
5. (a) That pupils' continued enrolment in special classes be reviewed annually with a view to ensuring that the placement continues to meet their individual needs.
  - (b) That his/her review should involve the class teacher, parents, principal teacher and school inspector.

- (c) That if parents do not respond to the advice being offered by the school, the visiting teacher for Travellers should be consulted.
  - (d) That in the absence of a visiting teacher service for Travellers, the relevant statutory worker should be consulted. This person is usually a social worker for Travellers employed by the local authority.
6. That records should be kept of a pupil's progress by the class teachers.
  7. That the local inspector should be fully informed of the progress of integration practices and the curriculum of the special classes.
  8. That in circumstances where there is a wide age range of pupils requiring special education provision and only one special class available, the following placement options should be considered :
    - (a) The junior age range of children should be fully integrated leaving the special class for the senior age group.
    - (b) All the children should be integrated and the special class teacher should operate a withdrawal service.
  9. In single sex schools Traveller special classes should apply the same rule. If, for example, there is only one special class in an area and the class is being operated in the local girls' primary school, then the option of sharing the special class teacher between two schools on a withdrawal basis should be considered. The time spent in either school would depend on the numbers enrolled in the school and the needs of the pupils. The purpose of these arrangements is to ensure that older Traveller boys (for example) are not the only male group attending an all female school.
  10. In the event of the special class teacher being absent from school, the same method of dealing with this situation in the mainstream school should be applied to the special provision.

## APPENDIX 2

### PROGRAMME FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS (PESP) 1991

The Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP) report outlines the features of an overall strategy in education which aims "to provide the opportunity for all to develop their educational potential to the full" in the context of the government commitment "to the attainment of a society based on principles of equality and equal opportunity".

The PESP document states that the overall strategy will be achieved by :

- Providing a broad-based education for all ability levels during the compulsory cycle of education (6 - 15 year olds).
- Encouraging and facilitating pupils to continue in full-time education during the post-compulsory period (16 - 18 year olds) by providing a range of education/training programmes suited to their abilities and aptitudes".

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on the 20th of November 1989.

#### **Article 18 :**

"States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parties have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents, or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern".

#### **Article 27, No. 1 :**

"States Parties recognise the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development".

#### **Article 28 :**

Acknowledges ..... "the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity ....."

#### **Article 29 (c) :**

"States Parties agree that the education of the child be directed to: the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values".

#### **Article 30:**

" In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous populations exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess or practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language".

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **EC Resolution of the Council and the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council of 22 May 1989**

#### **on school provision for Gypsy and Traveller children (89/C153/02)**

#### **THE COUNCIL AND THE MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,**

Having regard to the resolution of the Council and of the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, of 9 February 1976 (1) comprising an action programme in the field of education,

Considering that on 24 May 1984 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation of Gypsies in the Community (2) in which it recommended in particular that the governments of the Member States coordinate their approach and called on the Commission to draw up programmes to be subsidized from Community funds aimed at improving the situation of Gypsies without destroying their separate identity,

Considering that Gypsies and Travellers currently form a population group of over one million persons in the Community and that their culture and language have formed part of the Community's cultural and linguistic heritage for over 500 years,

Considering that the present situation is disturbing in general, and in particular with regard to schooling, that only 30 to 40% of Gypsy or Traveller children attend school with any regularity, that half of them have never been to school, that a very small percentage attend secondary school and beyond, that the level of educational skills, especially reading and writing, bears little relationship to the presumed length of schooling, and that the illiteracy rate among adults is frequently over 50% and in some places 80% or more,

Considering that over 500, 000 children are involved and that this number must constantly be revised upwards on account of the high proportion of young people in Gypsy and Traveller communities, half of whom are under 16 years of age,

Considering that schooling, in particular by providing the means of adapting to a changing environment and achieving personal and professional autonomy, is a key factor in the cultural, social and economic future of Gypsy and Traveller communities, that parents are aware of this fact and their desire for schooling for their children is increasing,

Noting the results and recommendations of studies carried out on behalf of the Commission on the schooling of Gypsy and Traveller children in the 12 Member States of the Community and the guidelines emerging from the summary report, consultations of Gypsy and Traveller representatives and discussions between experts and representatives of the Ministries of Education,

#### HEREBY ADOPT THIS RESOLUTION :

The Council and the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, will strive to promote a set of measures concerning school provision for Gypsy and Traveller children aimed, without prejudice to any steps already taken by Member States to cope with specific situations which they face in this area, at developing a global structural approach helping to overcome the major obstacles to the access of Gypsy and Traveller children to schooling.

These measures will aim at:

- promoting innovatory initiatives,
- proposing and supporting positive and appropriate measures,
- ensuring that achievements are interrelated,
- widely disseminating the lessons learned,
- promoting exchanges of experiences.



## **1. At Member State level**

Within their constitutional and financial limits and the limits of their own specific national policies and structures, the Member States will make every effort to promote:

### **(a) structures**

- support for educational establishments, providing them with the necessary facilities for catering for Gypsy and Traveller children,
- support for teachers, pupils, and parents.

### **(b) teaching methods and teaching materials:**

- experiments with distance teaching, which is better adapted to the nomadic way of life,
- the development of forms of educational follow up,
- measures to facilitate transition between schooling and continuing educational training,
- consideration for the history, culture and language of Gypsies and Travellers,
- use of new electronic and video methods,
- teaching materials for educational establishments involved in the schooling of Gypsy and Traveller children;

### **(c) recruitment and initial and continuing training of teachers:**

- adequate and additional training for teachers working with Gypsy and Traveller children,
- the training and employment of teachers of Gypsy or Traveller origin wherever possible;

(d) information and research:

- increased provision of documentation and information to school, teachers and parents,
- encouragement of research on the culture, history and language of Gypsies and Travellers;

(e) consultation and coordination: promotion of social-mindedness among the population:

- appointment of trained staff to carry out coordination tasks,
- the encouragement of liaison groups bringing together parents, teachers, representatives of local authorities and school administrations,
- designation where necessary of a State authority or authorities involved in the schooling of Gypsy and Traveller children in States with a large number of Gypsies and Travellers to assist in coordination of the necessary measures including, where appropriate, those relating to the training of teachers, documentation and the production of teaching material.

## **2. At Community level**

- 2.1 Community involvement in this field is useful for encouraging national initiatives concerning the exchange of experience and for promoting innovatory pilot schemes.
- 2.2 Organisation of exchanges of views and experience by means of meetings at Community level of the various partners concerned and more particularly of representatives of Gypsies and Travellers, young Gypsies and teachers.
- 2.3. The Commission will continuously document, promote, coordinate and assess all the measures at Community level with the assistance of an outside body if necessary.

- 2.4. The Commission will ensure that these measures fit in with the other Community measures already planned in the field of education. It will ensure in particular that these activities are compatible with other Community activities such as those of the European Social Fund and with those of other international organizations, especially the Council of Europe.
- 2.5. A report on the implementation of the measures provided for in this resolution will be submitted to the Council, the European Parliament and the Education Committee by the Commission before 31 December 1993.

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **BUNREACT NA hEIREANN - FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS**

#### **EDUCATION**

##### **Article 42.**

1. The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the Family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children.
2. Parents shall be free to provide this education in their homes or in private schools or in schools recognised or established by the State.
3. 1\* The State shall not oblige parents in violation of their conscience and lawful preference to send their children to schools established by the State, or to any particular type of school designated by the State.  
  
2\* The State shall, however, as guardian of the common good, require in view of actual conditions that the children receive a certain minimum education, moral, intellectual and social.

4. The State shall provide for free primary education and shall endeavour to supplement and give reasonable aid to private and corporate educational initiative, and, when the public good requires it, provide other educational facilities or institutions with due regard, however, for the rights of parents, especially in the matter of religious and moral formation.

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA**

**(Doc. A3-195/90) -**

**which was adopted by the European Parliament in October 1990.**

**Recommendation 21 :** That all its educational, training and youth exchange programmes as well as teacher training programmes promote a European and non-discriminatory dimension; that it set up special training programmes to encourage the learning of minority languages and an appreciation of minority cultures as well as exchanges of young people from disadvantaged regions and minority communities, with special action programmes for Gypsies and other itinerant communities.

**Recommendation 23 :** That the development of teaching materials for schools and instructional programmes for those working with children and young people be promoted to provide instruction on racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism in the Community.

## APPENDIX 7

### Traveller Population and Education Facilities by County

County	Traveller Population (Families)	Visiting Teacher	No.Special Class/Resource Teachers	No. Preschools
Carlow	41	None	6	1
Cavan	45	None	4	1
Clare	85	None	7	1
Cork	307	Yes	14	4
Donegal	58	None	1	1
Dublin	869	Yes	36	14
Galway	410	Yes	16	7
Kerry	164	Yes	10	0
Kildare	47	None	3	1
Kilkenny	50	None	1	1
Laois	62	None	2	1
Leitrim	21	None	0	0
Limerick	197	Yes	12	2
Longford	112	None	4	1
Louth	96	None	3	0
Mayo	100	None	4	3
Meath	125	None	3	2
Monaghan	55	None	2	0
Offaly	99	None	2	2
Roscommon	44	None	4	0
Sligo	39	None	1	0
Tipperary	140	None	8	1
Waterford	101	None	3	2
Westmeath	102	None	3	0
Wexford	116	Yes	4	2
Wicklow	57	None	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3542</b>		<b>154</b>	<b>49</b>

Sources: Sixth Report of Committee to monitor the implementation  
of Government Policy on Travelling People (Report for 1990)

Department of Education List