

E-4050/07

WRITTEN QUESTION by Proinsias De Rossa (PSE) to the Commission (2.8.2007)

Subject: Educational provision in developing countries

In the context of the commitment given to the European Parliament during the adoption of Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 establishing a financial instrument for development cooperation¹, could the Commission outline what progress it is making towards achieving by 2009 the 20 % benchmark for the key MDG sectors of basic education and secondary education and basic health?

Could it outline what steps it is taking to ensure that the developing-country strategy papers prioritise education provision?

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Answer given by Ms Ferrero-Waldner on behalf of the Commission (9.10.2007)

The Commission has already expressed on several occasions its firm commitment to the achievement of the 20% benchmark for basic education, secondary education and basic health. In particular the Commissioner responsible for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy did so during an exchange of views with the Development Committee on 17 July 2007.

The Commission has also stated that a precise reporting will be done at the occasion of the Mid-Term-Review of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) which will start in 2009. In the meantime, at Parliament's request, the Commission has communicated to Parliament a preliminary codification, done on the basis of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) codes, of its priority and non focal sectors for financing reflected in the Country Strategy Papers and Multiannual Indicative Programmes (MIPs).

A more detailed view on the achievement of the benchmark will appear when the Commission sends to the DCI Committee the Annual Action Programmes (AAPs) for each country and region pursuant to comitology procedures, this information being made available to the Parliament under its traditional scrutiny power (*droit de regard*).

The country strategy papers recently approved under the programming exercise show the importance that the Commission attaches to education, in particular primary education for poor populations in developing countries. The first MIPs and Annual Action Programmes currently being analyzed by the DCI Committee and the Parliament confirm in a more detailed way the Commission's commitment in this respect.

¹ OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p. 41.