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Simplification of frontier formalities

Report[1]
Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights
Rapporteur: Mr Hermod LANNUNG, Denmark

1. 1959 - 11th Session - Second part

A. I . Draft Recommendation

The Assembly,

Noting what has been accomplished by the Council of Europe in regard to the simplification of frontier formalities;

Recognising that the Special Committee of Senior Officials for t h e Simplification of Frontier Form a lities , set up at the Assembly's request by Resolution (56) 22 of the Committee of Ministers, has played a decisive part in this matter;

Considering, however, that many questions such as the accession of a larger number of States to the Europe an Agreement on Regulations governing the Movement of Persons, the abolition of customs documents for the temporary import of motor vehicles by the five Member States which have not so far taken this step , the abolition of customs documents for the temporary import of motor coaches, the standardisation of motor registration papers , the delays at airports and travel facilities for refugees and stateless persons, have still not been settled;

Whereas only action by the Special Committee , which is capable of bringing the necessary political influence and technical coordination to bear , can lead to a speedy solution of these problems;

Whereas the funds available to the said Special Committee are inadequate,

Recommends that the Committee of Ministers take the necessary steps to facilitate theworking of the Special Committee and, in particula r , authorise it to hold at least three meetings during the 1960 Financial Year.

B. I I . Explanatory Memorandum by M. Hermod LANNUNG

1.

1. I have frequently stressed the satisfactory results obtained in t h e field of the simplification of frontier formalities by the Special Committee of Senior Officials of which M. Pintonis Chairman (see the appended t a b l e) . Suffice it to mention that in a period of two years this Committee has been instrumental in securing the adoption of the following texts :

European Agreement on Regulations governing the Movement of Persons between Member States of t h e Council of Europe ;

Customs Concessions and Spot Checks for Travellers (Resolution (57) 18 of the Committee of Ministers);

Abolition of Passenger Manifests for Intra - European Flights and Abolition of Embarkation and Landing Cards (Resolution (5 7) 1 9) ;

Travel facilities for Refugees (Resolution (58) 5 of the Committee of Ministers);

European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees.

2. For a fuller understanding of the progress made by the Special Committee , it should be remembered that it held its first meeting at the beginning of 1957. So far only eight meetings have been held. How is that in so short a time the Special Committee has had so many notable successes to record ? Undoubtedly the chief reason lies in the circumstance that the Committee was placed under the chairmanship of a political personality , as was done a t Messina. The perseverance and outstanding ability with which M. Pinton has guided its labours have likewise been decisive. And the fact that the Assembly has taken a special interest in the subject has contributed towards inducing Member Governments to adopt the Committee's proposals.

3. Despite the satisfactory outcome of the Committee's work to date , it must be admitted that much still remains to be done, in facilitating travel across frontiers . That is why Assembly Recommendation 192 advocates an extension to other Member States of the European Agreement on Regulations governig the Movement of Persons , the abolition of customs documents for the temporary importation of motor vehicles by the five Member States which have not yet taken this action , the abolitionof customs documents for the temporary importation of motor coaches and several other measures to reduce the number of administrative documents required at airports . Many other questions could be added , such as collective passports , travel facilities for stateless persons and the problems raised by the inspection of international insurance "green ' cards ". But since the beginning of this year it has been apparent that the Committee of Ministers are not granting the Special Committee the necessary funds. This was proved when the vote was taken on the 1959 Budget , which provides for only a single meeting of the Special Committee during the present year. It should therefore be urged upon the Committee of Ministers that they bear in mind the importance attached by the Assembly to the simplification of frontier formalities and thus to the work of the Special Committee . Consequently, the Committee proposes that are commendation be addressed to the Ministers asking for sufficient funds to allow at least three meetings of the Special Committee to be held in 1960. Such is the main purpose of the draft recomm endation above.

Measures — other than bilateral action — taken by Member States towate simplification of frontier formalities for nationals of other Member States

	'European agreement' on regulations governing the movement of persons between Member States of the Council of Europe[2]	Customs concessions and spot checks for travellers	Air Traffic (Resolution (57) 19 of the Committee of Ministers	Motor Vehicles Total abolition ustoms documents for private cars	Travel facilities for refugees (Res. (58) 5 of the Committee of Ministers)	European Agreement on the abolition of visas for refugees		
			Abolition of passenger manifests for intra-European flights	Abolition of embarkation and landing cards		Free issue of visas pending ratification of the European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas	Accession to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and issue of standard travel documents	
Date and place of signature or commitment	**13.XII.1957**	**16.XI.1957**			**See Consultative Assembly Recommendation 84 (1955), Section C).**			**20.IV.1959**
Conditions governing entry into force	3 ratifications	Merely a recommendation to Member Governments					20.IV.1959	
Date of entry into force	1.1.1958							
Austria	30.V.1958	yes	yes	1.VIII.1957	Free issue subject to reciprocity by host country	oui		
Belgium	13.XII.1957		yes	yes	1.IV.1958	Party to European Agreeme of 20.IV.1959	20.IV.1959	
Denmark	not signed[3]		yes		1.IV.1958	Free issue to needy persons	yes	
France	13.XII.1957	New regulations in force since 1st October 1957[4]	yes		30.III.1958	Party to European Agremente. of 20.IV.1959	20.IV.1959	

2. See European Treaty Series №. 25.
3. Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland have reciprocally agreed to dispense with passports for their own nationals.
4. Regulations in conformity with paragraph 2 of Resolution (57) 18.

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Date and place of signature or commitment	**13.XII.1957**	**16.XI.1957**			**See Consultative Assembly Recommendation 84 (1955), Section C).**			**20.IV.1959**
Federal Republic of Germany	30.V.1958	New regulations in force since 1st October 1957[5]	yes	yes	1.I.1958	Abolition of visas	yes	
Greece	13.XII.1957[6]							
Iceland	non signé							
Ireland	not signed						yes	
Italy	13.XII.1957				15.X.1958	Free issue		
Luxembourg			yes	yes	1.IV.1958	Free issue	yes	
Netherlands	not signed		yes	yes	1.IV.1958	Free issue	yes	
Norway	not signed[7]		yes		15.IV.1958	Free issue	Norway is a Party to tho 1951 Convention; the issue of standard travel documents will be introduced later	
Sweden	not signed[8]		yes		1.1.1958	Free issue	yes	

2. See European Treaty Series №. 25.
5. Regulations in conformity with paragraph 2 of Resolution (57) 18.
6. Greece has availed herself of the option in Article 7, whereby the said European Agreement need not be immediately implemented. However, si has been granting administrative facilities to nationals of the other Contracting States since 15.4.59.
7. Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland have reciprocally agreed to dispense with passports for their own nationals.

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Date and place of signature or commitment	**13.XII.1957**	**16.XI.1957**			**See Consultative Assembly Recommendation 84 (1955), Section C).**			**20.IV.1959**
Turkey	not signed		yes					
United Kingdom	not signed		yes			Free issue for certain categories of refugees	yes	

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