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Work of the International Labour Organisation in relation to Europe

Report

1.

In 1951 the International Labour Office submitted to the Council of Europe a memorandum entitled " Activites of the International labour Organisation in relatios to Europe[1]; this memorandum was brought up to date in 1952[2]. In response to a further request from the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, the Office has prepared the present memorandum which contains information on the activities of the I. L. 0 . in 1952- 1953.

2. Introduction

During 1952-1953 the International Labour Organisation has actively pursued its work in the social field, by means, principally, of two kinds of action; it has continued to determine and promote the implementation of international labour standards, on the one hand, and it has provided technical assistance to States requesting it, on the other.

The International Labour Conference, at its 36th Session in Juno 1953, advanced the work of the Organisation as regards determining international labour standards b y adopting two new Recommendations which are being incorporated in the International Labour Code, namely the Recommendation concerning the minimum age of admission to work underground in coal mines and the Recommendation concerning the protection of the health of workers in places of employment. The Conference also held a first discussion on proposed regulations concerning holidays with pay, and a second discussion on this question will beheld next year with a view to the adoption of an international instrument.

Concurrently with its legislative and pre-legislative action, the I. L. 0 . has substantially increased this year its technical assistance to Member States, in order to help them transform into a social reality the international standards already laid down.

Within the framework of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance of the United Nations and Specialised Agencies, the essential aim of which is to enable the underdeveloped countries to benefit from the experience of the highly industrialised nations, the I. L. 0. has considerably expanded its activities in 1953. In order to do so it has availed itself of the services of a number of experts, some of whom come from European countries. In fact, 140 European experts have been engaged on technical assistance projects[3].

In addition, fellowships have been awarded to nationals of under-developed countries so that they may go to study in the more industrialised countries, particularly in Europe[4].

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1. Reproduced in extenso by the Council of Europe on 30th August 1951.
2. See 4 th Session, 1952 : Doc. 37
3. They include nationals of Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.
4. A total of 319 fellowships has been awarded to date by the I.L.O. for study in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Some Member States of the Council of Europe have themselves benefited directly from the technical assistance granted by the I. L. 0. ; details of assistance provided to Greece, Italy and Turkey are given further on. The Yugoslav technical assistance project, already mentioned in the memorandum, submitted to the Council of Europe in 1952, is in full operation this year.

As part of its ordinary programme, the I. L. 0 . has undertaken a new form of technical assistance of particular significance for Europe; this is the assistance given b y the I. L. 0 . to the European Coal and Steel Community with a view to helping the High Authority to fulfil the functions entrusted to it in the social field. Since November 1952, I. L. 0. officials have been advising the High Authority on questions of social security, occupational classification, occupational safety, conditions of work and general administration.

All the activities of the I. L. 0 . are, to some extent, of importance for Europe. The object of this memorandum, however, is to indicate, in broad outline, the activities of the I. L. 0 . in 1952-1953 of special interest to the European countries. These activities cover, in particular, the following subjects: ratification of international labour Conventions, social security, social problems in raising labour productivity, manpower, wages, industrial relations, occupational safety and health, labour problems in transport, conditions of employment in some occupations and of certain types of workers, organisation and functioning of national labour departments.

3. Ratification of conventions

The progress achieved in the field of international labour standards may be judged by the number of ratifications of Conventions registered this year; as of 12 August 1953 69 ratifications had been registered since the preparation of the previous memorandum on the activities of the International Labour Organisation in relation to Europe, bringing the present total to 1,380.

A number of these ratifications were registered by Member States of the Council of Europe: Italy ratified 28 Conventions, France and the United Kingdom four each, Belgium three and Norway one.

A certain number of Conventions are about to be ratified: so far as the Member States of the Council of Europe are concerned, the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg has recommended to Parliament the ratification of 24 Conventions ; the Netherlands Parliament has approved the ratification of 10 Conventions; the ratification of one Convention has been approved by the Belgian Parliament and six others have been submitted for its approval; the French Parliament has approved the ratification of one Convention and seven others have been submitted for its approval; the ratification of three Conventions has been approved by the Norwegian Parliament and one other has been submitted for its approval; the United Kingdom Parliament has approved the ratification of two Conventions and two others have been submitted for its approval; the ratification of two Conventions has been approved by the Parliament of Sweden; the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany has approved the ratification of one Convention and one other has been submitted for its approval.

It is hardly necessary to stress the importance for the States Members of the I. L. 0 . , and particularly for the European States which, on the whole, have already attained a relatively high level of social development, of ratifying as many international labour Conventions as possible; by so doing, these States not only have the possibility of developing their national social policy but they also have an interest, if they are to maintain the standard of living of their own populations, in promoting the observance of international standards of social policy adopted with a view to improving the conditions of workers throughout the world.

It should be noted, moreover, that the ratification of international labour Conventions constitutes a means of harmonising national activities in the social field. This aspect of the question has not escaped the Committee on Social Questions of the Council of Europe which has indicated its interest on several occasions in the ratification of international labour Conventions. At the Fourth Session of the Consultative Assembly the Vice-Chairman of the Committee suggested that the members of the Committee should urge their Governments to ratify these Conventions. Subsequently he requested the Secretariat- General to invite the Director-General of the I. L. 0 . to indicate the Conventions which are vital to the interests of labour and require immediate ratification.

In reply to this request the Director- General of the I. L. 0. on 9 February 1953 addressed a letter to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe in which he stated, inter alia, that while it was difficult to assess the relative importance of the various Conventions, the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference had thought fit, since the conclusion of hostilities, to include in the legislative programme of the Organisation a number of questions which they regarded as particularly urgent in relation either to the aims and principles of the Organisation itself or to the present-day problems of Governments, employers and

workers, and in the light of these considerations the Director-General indicated the following Conventions: No. 81, Labour Inspection, 1947; No. 87, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948; No. 88, Employment Service, 1948; No. 94, Labour Clauses (Public Contracts), 1949; No. 97, Migration for Employment (Revised), 1949; No. 98, Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949; No. 102, Minimum Standards of Social Security, 1952.

The Committee on Social Questions of the Council of Europe requested its Vice- Chairman to prepare a draft resolution on this question for consideration at a future session of the Committee.

4. Social Security

By the adoption of the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention at the 35th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 1952, the I. L. 0 . made its most significant contribution to the creation and improvement of international standards in the social security field. The Convention is both the culmination of international regulative work extending over some thirty years and an expression of the new conception of social solidarity that is called " social security". Moreover, the Convention is addressed to all States Members of the Organisation, in that it is adapted to their different national capacities.

It has aroused keen interest in many countries, but especially in Europe, where Governments are actively considering whether and to what extent, they can ratify it. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has expressed the view that this Convention might be taken as the basis for the drafting of a specifically European Code of Social Security. The Consultative Assembly, for its part, has accepted this view, adding, however, that the Code should contain more generous provisions and should in any case incorporate all the essential provisions of the Convention.

The question of the European Code has been referred by the Committee of Ministers to its Committee of Experts on Social Security, which, in turn, has entrusted to the International Labour Office the preparation, with the fullest collaboration of the Governments, of the technical report on which the Expert Committee's further deliberations will be based.

When the European Interim Agreements relating to Social Security (the final texts of which were established by the Council of Europe with the assistance of the I. L. 0. in 1952) come into operation, the Council of Europe will have played an important part in the application of the fundamental principle of the equality of treatment of nationals of its Members in the domain of social security. After an interval of experience with these agreements, it may be expected that they will be revised in the direction of strengthening the protection of migrants.

In the meantime the International Labour Office has been lending its services to the implementation or development of other agreements, affecting only a section of the Council's membership. Thus the Rhine Boatmen (Social Security) Agreement, drawn up under the auspices of the I. L. 0., has been ratified by all the Contracting countries (Belgium, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland) and it came into force on 1st June, 1953. The administrative arrangements, drawn up at the request of the Governments concerned and of the Central Commission for Rhine Navigation on the basis of a draft prepared by the I. L. 0 . , were adopted unanimously and came into force on the same date. The Office is also co-operating actively with the European Coal and Steel Community in the preparation of a social security agreement intended to guarantee the maximum protection of the social security rights of workers, particularly miners, moving from one country to another within the Community.

In view of the great development of social security in Europe, the continent of its origin, the general research work of the International Office on this subject is of particular interest to Europe. This is true, especially perhaps, in the case of the study of the cost of social security in 24 countries, the first results of which were published in the International Labour Review of June 1952 and March 1953 and were arrived at by the most active cooperation of governments. It is also true of the study of miners' pensions which is in course of completion. Finally, the help which the Office affords to the International Social Security Association in promoting the improvement of social security administration enables the Association to render services which are appreciated quite as much in Europe as in other countries.

5. Social problems in raising, labour productivity

The I. L. 0 . has continued its efforts this year to promote higher productivity and an equitable distribution of the advantages resulting therefrom.

Many of the problems involved in raising productivity are common to a wide range of industries. These problems were examined by a Meeting of Experts on Productivity in Manufacturing Industries which was held in Geneva in December 1952. This meeting, which included experts having special knowledge of the points of view of employers and workers, as well as government experts, unanimously adopted a comprehensive set of conclusions on practical methods of increasing productivity in manufacturing industries[5]. With a view to ensuring that these conclusions will receive the widest possible circulation among all whose encouragement and co-operation can contribute to the raising of productivity, the Governing Body of the Office authorised their communication to the Governments of the Slates Members of the Organisation with the request that they be brought to the attention of employers' and workers' organisations, productivity centres and other interested bodies. The conclusions were also communicated to the International Labour Conference at its 36th Session in June 1953, to the International Committee of Scientific Management, and to intergovernmental organisations concerned with raising productivity.

A report on problems of increasing productivity in manufacturing industries, paying special attention to human factors affecting productivity, is in course of preparation b y the Office.

The Director-General of the I. L. 0., in his report to the 36th Session of the International Labour Conference, included a chapter entitled " Productivity and Welfare[6]", drawing attention to conditions which need to be fulfilled if higher productivity is in fact to promote economic and social welfare; the Director-General recommended, in particular, the fullest possible consultation and co-operation between employers and workers in the application of measures to raise productivity, a fair distribution of the benefits of higher productivity, and effective action to ensure that higher productivity does not lead to unemployment and is not sought by means involving a deterioration in conditions of work. A valuable exchange of views on these questions took place at the Conference.

Problems of productivity in particular industries have continued to engage the attention of the I. L. 0 . Questions of productivity have been placed on the agenda of forthcoming sessions of the Building, Civil Engineering and Public Works Committee and of the Coal Mines Committee of the I. L. 0 . and reports on these questions have been prepared by the International Labour Office. As noted further on, a meeting of experts on payment by results in the construction industry was held in Geneva in July 1953.

6. Manpower

In the manpower field new steps have been taken to meet needs arising in Europe. Thus, important technical assistance as regards manpower has been given by the I. L. 0 . to the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community; co-operation between the I. L. 0 . and the 0 . E. E. C. has continued and is being directed towards projects of practical value. Equally practical work on migration problems has been carried out with other international organisations; and technical assistance has been provided direct to some European Governments.

During the first half of 1953 the I. L. 0 . gave extensive technical assistance to the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community as regards vocational training, occupational classification, and mobility and movements of labour between the Member States of the Community. This assistance took various forms, such as technical advice given during numerous working parties and conferences; the preparation of studies submitted to working parties (for instance, on the establishment of a common employment market for skilled workers); the formulation of questionnaires for communication to the Member States of the Community; the provision of technical documentation; and the preparation of a seminar to be held in the Netherlands and in the Federal Republic of Germany in October 1953 to study the vocational training of applicants for employment in coal mines.

The I. L. 0 . has participated in all the meetings of the 0. E. E. C. Manpower Committee held this year. It has presented proposals for the convening of conferences on two important questions which are, moreover, related to the programme of the 0 . E. E. C.'s European Productivity Agency, i. e., instructor training and the selection of candidates for vocational training. The 0. E. E. C. Manpower Committee has approved these proposals and is submitting them to the European Productivity Agency. The I. L. 0. has also presented to the 0. E. E. C. Manpower Committee proposals for a j o b analysis programme which would form the basis of

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5. These conclusions have been published in the International Labour Review, Vol. LXVII, No. 'i, April 1953, pp. 318-337.
6. World Labour Report 1953, pp. 62 if.

measures to promote maximum utilisation of manpower. This programme has been approved by the Committee. Moreover, the I. L. 0. has made available to the 0. E. E. C. the services of two of its experts on manpower to carry out a survey of manpower problems in the Member States of the 0 . E. E. C.

As recommended by the Naples Migration Conference (October, 1951), the I. L. 0. is pursuing its action in the field of international migration standards with a view to their development as regards medical selection of migrants and accomodation and welfare of migrants on board ship.

The International Labour Office has undertaken the compilation of immigration regulations in force in European countries and in overseas countries receiving European migrants. It is also preparing a series of guides to living and working conditions in immigration countries for the use of persons and organisations responsible for providing information to would-be European emigrants. The guide concerning conditions in Brazil has already appeared. Guides to the Argentine, Chile, Uruguay and Venezuela are in an advanced stage of preparation. The Office has continued to publish its periodical "Migration", latterly as a supplement to its fornightly publication Industry and Labour.

The I. L. 0 . has continued to provide certain European countries with technical assistance in the field of migration. In Italy, for instance, in accordance with the terms of an agreement providing for joint technical assistance by the I. L. 0 . and the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (I. C. E. M.) in the pre-selection of Italian migrants, one I. L. 0. principal expert and two I. C. E. M. experts are at present collaborating with the competent Italian authorities in this field. Similarly, an I. L. 0. expert was sent to Greece to recommend priorities in the framing of migration policy and the organisation of governmental emigration services. An I. L. 0 . migration expert was sent to Brazil to carry out a comprehensive survey and has prepared a report containing an analysis of immigration opportunities and needs, an outline of the major obstacles of migration to Brazil and a series of detailed recommendations for governmental action on immigration questions. This report is at present beingconsidered by the Brazilian Government. An I. L. 0. vocational selection expert has been providing technical assistance to the Brazilian Selection Mission in Italy since the beginning of 1953, in co-operation with the competent Italian authorities. Two further I. L. 0. experts are to go to Brazil to determine foreign manpower needs in Brazilian industry.

In the manpower field, I. L. 0. technical assistance activities in Europe are not confined to migration problems: in Italy the I. L. 0 . is assisting in the establishment of instructor training sections in metal working trades at the existing training centre in Genoa and in the establishment of a new centre in Naples for the training of instructors and adult workers in five building trades; an I. L. 0. expert is assisting in developing a national organisation for the introduction of training within industry methods in Italy. In Greece, a mission of I. L. 0 . experts has continued its work in connection with the administration and supervision of vocational education, vocational guidance, and the study of school programmes and teaching material; a report on apprenticeship, prepared by an expert concerning his mission in 1952, has been submitted to the Greek Government. In Turkey, 11 fellowships are being awarded this year for the training in power-house operation of technical personnel. The Yugoslav technical assistance project in the field of vocational training is in full operation. This year, 35 instructors (foreign foremen and technicians) have been or will be sent to Yugoslavia; 90 Yugoslav trainees (technicians, skilled workers and foremen) have already been placed abroad and a further 88 are to be sent abroad for training. The total number of Yugoslav trainees to date is 267.

As regards employment services, an I. L. 0 . expert has assisted the Greek Government to prepare a survey of the needs of its employment service as well as of the administrative and operational relationship of its employment Service to the payment of unemployment benefits. The report of this expert was submitted to the Greek Government at the end of 1952. With a view to facilitating the implementation of the recommendations in this report, the Chief of the Employment Section in the Greek Social Insurance Department has been awarded a six months' fellowship for the study of employment service organisation in Belgium and France.

7. Wages

The International Labour Office has continued its study of questions of wage policy and of the methods of wage determination which are applied in different countries.

A meeting of experts on problems connected with the application of systems of payment by results in the construction indust ry was held in July 1953; this was a follow up to the meeting of experts on payment by results held under the auspices of the I. L. 0. in 1951. The experts participating in the 1953 meeting were drawn from Government, employers' and workers' circles in six European countries which have had extensive experience with systems of payment by results in the construction industry. The conclusions of this meeting of experts will be submitted in October 1953 to the I. L. 0 . Building, Civil Engineering and Public Works Committee.

The I. L. 0. has also continued to pay attention to problems connected with the guaranteed wage: this subject was included in the agenda of the meeting of the I. L. 0. Textiles Committee held in February, 1953. Moreover, a report entitled " Methods of Facilitating the Progressive Application in the Construction Industry of the Principle of the Guaranteed Wage, including Methods of Eliminating Temporary Stoppages in Plant Operations and in Employment " has been prepared for the October 1953 Session of the I. L. 0. Building, Civil Engineering and Public Works Committee.

8. Industrial relations

The memorandum submitted to the Council of Europe in 1952 drew attention to the fact that the I. L. 0 . had set up machinery for the examination of complaints concerning the violation of trade union rights. The Committee on Freedom of Association set up b y the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and consisting of Government, employers' and workers' representatives is responsible for carrying out a preliminary examination of all complaints submitted by Governments, or employers' or workers' organisations before they may be referred to the Fact-Finding and Conciliation Commission on Freedom of Association. The functions of the Committee are to consider for recommendation to the Governing Body whether cases are worthy of examination by the Governing Body and, where so determined affirmatively by the Governing Body, to attempt to secure the consent of the governments concerned for such cases to be referred to the Fact-Finding and Conciliation Commission. Up to the present 75 complaints have come before the Committee; on 52 of these the Governing Body has reached final conclusions and a further 23 cases are in varying stages of consideration. No complaint concerning a Member State of the Council of Europe has been retained for further examination.

It may be pointed out here, in connection with a related sphere of activity, that the Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labour, set up jointly by the I. L. 0 . and the United Nations, concluded its work in May 1953. The report of the Committee contains its conclusions concerning allegations made against a certain number of governments, including the governments of some European countries, who were accused of having set up systems of forced labour; the report is to be examined by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

9. Occupational Safety and Health

As seated above, the International Labour Conference adopted unanimously this year a Recommendation concerning the protection of the health of workers in places of employment. This Recommendation provides, in particular, that national laws or regulations should contain special provisions concerning medical examinations in respect of workers employed in occupations involving special risks to their health; it suggests that the notification of cases and suspected cases of occupational disease should be obligatory; it recommends that first aid and emergency treatment in case of accident, occupational disease, poisoning or indisposition should be provided in places of employment. The Conference also adopted resolutions concerning the establishment of an international list and national lists of notifiable occupational diseases and concerning the training of physicians qualified in occupational health.

The I. L. 0 . has been paying attention to measures for the prevention and suppression of dust in mining, tunnelling and quarrying. A meeting of experts on this question was held in December 1952, and a recommendation of the experts to the effect that the Office should act as a centre for the collection and distribution of information concerning the prevention and suppression of dust has been adopted by the Governing Body of the I. L. 0.

In the field of occupational safety, the Office has collaborated with the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community in a meeting on safety in mines and in steelworks. In agreement with the High Authority the Office is going ahead with the study of practical measures to be taken in this field. Moreover, the Subcommittee on Industrial Safety and Health of the Social Committee of the Brussels Treaty Organisation has agreed, on the proposal of the I. L. 0 . , to the principle of simplified classification of dangerous substances and has further agreed to recommend to the Social Committee of the Brussels Treaty Organisation the adoption of the five danger symbols proposed b y the I. L. 0 ., corresponding to the categories in its suggested classification. The Social Committee of the Brussels Treaty Organisation will consider this recommendation at its next Session.

During 1952-1953 the Office has published a considerable amount of material on occupational safety and health, including the. record of proceedings of the Third International Conference of Experts on Pneumoconiosis, a Catalogue of Occupational Safety and Health Films and a study entitled Safety in Coal Mines. At the request of the Inland Transport Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe the Office is preparing for publication a study on coupling and other accidents on shunting yards.

10. Labour problems in European Transport

During the past year the I. L. 0. has dealt with three interesting problems concerning European transport. At the request of the Inland Transport Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe, the I. L. 0. Inland Transport Committee drew up, in 1951, clauses concerning conditions of employment to be included in the standard set of rules for the commercial transport of passengers and goods by road in international traffic in Europe. After several discussions on this subject with the competent bodies of the United Nations, an appendix to the standard set of rules, containing the clauses or conditions of employment in an amended form, was adopted in May 1953 b y the E. C. E. Working Party on the Improvement and Development of the Transport of Passengers and Goods by Road, in collaboration with the 1. L. 0. The Subcommittee on Road Transport of the E. C. E. Inland Transport Committee decided that the draft agreement which includes these clauses should be communicated to the Governments and that the Governments should be asked to forward their comments thereon by 30 September 1953. A meeting of the Subcommittee is to be held in December to finalise the text, after which it is intended that the text shall be opened for signature.

As stated above, the agreement concerning social security for Rhine Boatmen, as well as the administrative arrangements for the application of this agreement, came into force on 1 June 1953. As regards the other agreement concerning conditions of employment of Rhine Boatmen, which was drafted by the Special Tripartite Conference concerning Rhine Boatmen held under the auspices of the International Labour Office in 1949 and approved by the Conference of Governments in Paris on 27 July 1950, in view of the difficulties in the way of its ratification the Director-General of the I. L. 0. has been authorised to enter into contact with the Governments concerned with a view to the calling of a further session of the Special Tripartite Conference and, subsequently, of the Conference of Governments concerning Rhine Boatmen.

Finally, in pursuance of a request of the International Transport Workers' Federation, the Governing Body is examining at present the possibility of convening a tripartite conference to consider working conditions in the North Sea and Channel ports.

11. Conditions of Employment in some occupations and of certain types of workers

At its 36th Session in June 1953 the International Labour Conference adopted a Recommendation concerning the minimum age of admission to work underground in coal mines. The Recommendation fixes this minimum age at 18 years, with certain exceptions, and it stipulates that in no case should young persons under 16 years of age be employed underground in coal mines.

As regards labour problems in agriculture, the Permanent Agricultural Committee held its fourth session in 1953. This advisory body of the International Labour Office discussed vocational training in agriculture, employment of children and young persons in agriculture and the contribution of the I. L. 0. to international action in respect of land reform. As a result of its discussions, various concrete proposals were presented to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, which decided to communicate to the States Members of the Organisation those concerning vocational training in agriculture and the employment of children and youngpersons in agriculture, as well as a resolution concerning international co-operation in the field of vocational training in agriculture.

The I. L. 0. Advisory Committee on Salaried Employees and Professional Workers has, up to the present, been paying detailed attention to the problem of the rights of performers in broadcasting, television and the mechanical reproduction of sounds. At its third session, to be held at the beginning of 1954, it will consider the problem of unemployment among salaried employees and salaried professional workers, as well as conditions of employment of teaching staff.

12. Organisation and working of national labour departments

The International Labour Conference dealt with this question at its 36th Session in June 1953 and approved, in this connection, various observations and conclusions relating to the reason for a national department of labour, its functions, the general principles relating to its operation, questions of its organisation and staffing,

public relations, and the handling of international questions by national labour departments. These observations and conclusions are of special interest to the European countries in view of the degree of cooperation existing between the Ministries of Labour of the States Members of the Brussels Treaty Organisation and of the Scandinavian countries, as well as of the proposals directed towards closer co-operation between the Ministries of Labour of its Member States at present under consideration by the Council of Europe.

13. Co-operation between the I. L. O. and the european organisations

Details have been given above of the co-operation maintained by the I. L. 0 . during 1952-1953 with the main regional intergovernmental organisations in Europe. As regards the Council of Europe, the î. L. 0 . , in pursuance of the agreement concluded between the two organisations, has continued to keep the Council informed concerning its main activities. The "Memorandum on the Activities of the International Labour Organisation in relation to Europe" is issued by the Council for the information of its Members. On the occasion of the last memorandum the Consultative Assembly stated that it was convinced that a continuation of this practice in the future would provide a valuable link between the I. L. 0. and the Council of Europe and would "help co-ordinate the activities of the two organisations in the fields of common interest in such a way as to enable the Council of Europe to benefit fully from the experience and technical facilities of the International Labour Organisation while avoiding any duplication of efforts". The Assembly, at the same time, stated that it "envisages a gradual but considerable expansion of the activities of the Council of Europe in the social field. It is convinced that this will lead to a growing need for co-operation with the International Labour Organisation, and it welcomes any measures whereby such co-operation may be rendered as effective as possible".

The Council of Europe, for its part, communicated to the I. L. 0. a memorandum by its Secretai'iat-General on the role of the Council of Europe in the social field. The Governing Body of the International Labour Office, acknowledging the receipt of this memorandum, made a number of observations. It stated that the International Labour Organisation attached great interest to the questions contained in the memorandum, but that in view of the short time which the Governing Body had had at its disposal to examine the question, it wished to study it in greater detail at its next session. At the same time it reaffirmed the importance attached by the I. L. 0 . to the avoidance of unnecessary duplication between international and regional action and its willingness to give all possible assistance in securing on a regional basis a larger measure of common approach than could be secured on a wider international basis, in so far as that was thought practicable and desirable by the countries concerned. The Governing Body indicated the willingness of the International Labour Organisation to apply in a spirit of collaboration Article 3, paragraph 2, of the agreement between the Council of Europe and the International Labour Organisation, which provides that "whenever the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe deems it necessary to hold a European regional meeting of a tripartite character to deal with matters of interest to the Council of Europe which are within the sphere of action of the International Labour Organisation, it shall propose to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, in accordance with Article 2 of this agreement, that the latter convene such a meeting". Finally the Governing Body drew the attention of the Council of Europe to the fact that the Governing Body of the I. L. 0. may have proposals to put forward for action by the I. L. 0 . in regard to questions referred to in the memorandum of the Secretariat- General of the Council of Europe on the role of the Council in the social field.

These observations were communicated to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, and the Council will no doubt bear them in mind when examining the memorandum of the Secretariat-General on the role of the Council in the social field; any further observations which the Governing Body of the I. L. 0. may make on this question will also be communicated to the Council of Europe.

The working arrangements between the I. L. 0 . and the 0. E. E. C. have been in effect for a number of years. Mention has been made above of the I. L. O.'s participation in the 0. E. E. C.'s activities in the field of manpower. The I. L. 0. and the 0. E. E. C. are both concerned with problems of raising productivity; there have been consultations between the two organisations on the development of their activities in this respect, and the I. L. 0 . will follow with interest the work of the European Productivity Agency, set up this year by the 0. E. E. C.

The I. L. 0. has participated in all the meetings of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on matters of common interest, and has followed closely the activities of this body, with which excellent co-operation has been established.

The Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community came into force in 1952. A formal agreement has been concluded between the I. L. 0 . and the Community, and entered into force, on an experimental basis, on 16 July 1953. This agreement provides for mutual consultation between the two organisations, for reciprocal representation at meetings on matters of common interest and for the exchange of documents and information between the two bodies. It stipulates, in addition, that, whenever desirable for the development of its activities, the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community may ask the International Labour Organisation for technical assistance on matters within the sphere of the International Labour Organisation, including, for instance, the improvement of living and working conditions of the labour force in the coal and steel industries, wages policy, vocational training, re-employment of workers displaced by the evolution of the market or b y technical transformations, industrial safety, social security and labour statistics, and on any other questions of common interest to the two organisations. It will have been noted above that this kind of technical assistance, which is continually increasing, was already being provided even before the agrément had officially entered into force.

The work of the Brussels Treaty Organisation has, for a long time, also extended into the social field, and is thus of interest to the I. L. 0. Arrangements have been made for regular contact to be maintained between the secretariat of the Brussels Treaty Organisation and the I. L. 0 . The Brussels Treaty Organisation, just as the Northern Council, has paid attention to the question of ratification of international labour Conventions. As has already been pointed out, working relations have also been maintained this year with the Central Commission for Rhine Navigation and with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration.

All these arrangements are in accordance with the principles concerning relations between the I. L. 0 . and regional organisations laid down b y the Governing Body of the International Labour Office in 1950. On that occasion, the Governing Body stated, in particular, that "while maintaining at all times (its) universal character and remaining—subject to the obligation to co-operate with the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security—outside political controversies between nations or groups of nations, the I. L. 0. is at the disposal of all States Members to give them whatever assistance they may require, either severally or through regional organisations of which they are members, in implementing, in the light of the world standards evolved through the I. L. 0., the objectives for which the I. L. 0. itself exists"[7].

In view of the fact that social problems are being paid more and more attention by the European intergovernmental organisations, it would seem essential, if waste and duplication of efforts are to be avoided and the maximum use thus made of the limited financial and human resources available, to strengthen the co-ordination between international and regional action. Such is the purpose of the collaboration aimed at between the I. L. 0. and the European agencies. Only b y combining their efforts and harmonising their activities will the I. L. 0 . and the various European organisation's be in the best position to deal with the specifically regional social problems; their action, thus strengthened, cannot fail to prove speedier and more effective.

7. Minutes of the 113th Session of the Governing Body p. 144.