Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 267
26 August 1954

Third Report on the work of the Brussels Treaty Organisation from September, 1953 to September, 1954

Report

1. SECTION A - INTRODUCTION

1.1. Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the Brussels Treaty Organisation

In the Introduction to the second report on the work of the Brussels Treaty Organisation transmitted to the Fifth Ordinary Session of the Consultative Assembly in September, 1953, the Secretary-General outlined the methods of international cooperation applied in the framework of the Brussels Treaty Organisation and laid particular stress on tho existing arrangements for co-ordinating the work of tho Brussels Treaty committees and the activities of the other international organisations and specialised agencies.

In studying the most practical means of improving and developing cooperation with the Council of Europe, the Brussels Treaty Organisation has examined during the past months the Programme of Work contained in the Special Message of the Committee of Ministers to the first part of the Sixth Session of the Consultative Assembly.

Certain of the technical problems in this Programme have been, or are being, studied by the Brussels Treaty committees, and the results of their work are communicated to the Council. Examples are the systematic examination of the ratification and application of International Labour Conventions, the employment of the older worker, and a number of problems which can be grouped under the heading of harmonisation of social legislation and practice.

In other cases, it is proposed to extend to the Council of Europe certain activities of the Brussels Treaty Organisation, as has already been done in the case of the Cultural Identity Card. Further examples include the development amongst civil servants of Member States of a better knowledge of the principles followed and the methods used in central and local government, publication of booklets and pamphlets on such subjects as adult education, the organisation of youth movements and services, etc. and co-operation in the sphere of the educational film. In the social field this category of question includes the. Multilateral Convention on Social Security; although it seems that the Council of Europe experts believe that the Convention cannot yet be extended in its, entirety, it has apparently been agreed that something might be done in regard to the short-term benefits covered by the Convention such as sickness allowances and unemployment benefits:

In all such activities, the experience of the Brussels Treaty Organisation is at the disposal of the Council of Europe, both by means of the presence in many cases of the same delegates at meetings of both organisations, and by direct contact between the two Secretariats-General.

In yet other cases, the Council of Europe countries participate in activities undertaken by the Brussels Treaty Organisation. The outstanding example of this is the study of university' problems, in which all the other members of the Council of Europe have been invited to take part.

A fourt h and final category of questions comprises those dealt with by the larger organisation but in which the Brussels Treaty Organisation has a particular interest, such as the European Code of Social Security, equivalence of diplomas, etc. These questions will continue to be followed closely by the Brussels Treaty Organisation.

2. SECTION B - SOCIAL CO-OPERATION

2.1. Social Policy in General

2.1.1. International Labour Conventions

The systematic study of the application of the Conventions adopted by the International Labour Conference has continued; new ratifications by the Five in 1953 totalled 10.

2.1.2. Social Security

2.1.2.1. Application of Conventions

The Administrative Arrangement describing the machinery for applying the Multilateral Convention has now been signed by the Ministers responsible for social security in each country.

Difficulties encountered in the interpretation and execution of the multilateral and bilateral social security conventions as between the Five continue to be studied. Overlapping benefits, and the right of a worker to opt for the benefit scheme of his choice, are among the problems that have been examined.

2.1.2.2. Military service and mobilisation

The Multilateral Convention covering social security problems that arise when a national of one of the five countries performs his military service in another is now being drafted.

2.1.2.3. Increasing costs of sickness and invalidity benefits

This question continues to be studied, with particular reference to the methods used in each country to control the demand on, and the use of, medical and pharmaceutical services. The administration and functioning of the services concerned, together with certain statistical data, are also under examination.

2.1.2.4. Social security for international transport workers

As a result of preliminary studies of this problem, it has been agreed that it can best be dealt with by one of the larger international organisations, and proposals to this effect are being examined.

2.1.2.5. Other subjects

The study of social security for ' artistes ' has now been completed.

The problem of social security legislation in relation to proprietary medicines is still under consideration.

2.1.3. Manpower

2.1.3.1. Exchanges of manpower and employment of foreign workers

The scheme for exchanges of manpower between the five countries by cooperation between their employment services continues to function and is reviewed at regular intervals.

Problems of employment of foreign workers are under study, in particular the pos-, sibilities of employment for the families of foreign workers.

It has been decided to examine the basic principles of the policies on foreign manpower adopted by the Brussels Treaty countries, as well as the ways in which these policies are applied and their results.

2.1.3.2. Statistics

The working party of statistical experts has continued its comparison of average earnings in a limited number of industries in the five countries. Statistical methods for evaluating family budgets are being examined, and an agreed method of international classification of items of expenditure is being communicated to the I.L.O. for information. Other aspects of statistical methods used in the five countries, including statistics of employment and unemployment, continue to be examined.

2.1.3.3. Vocational training

Regular exchanges of information take place between the Five on developments in general policy, organisation and finance, training methods and placing.

2.1.3.4. Industrial safety and health

Progress lias been made in studying the standardisation of labelling of injurious products for use in agriculture by the completion of a first list of such substances and proposals for their labelling.

2.1.3.5. Publication of reports

Certain reports on joint studies undertaken by the social committees have been placed at the disposal of the I.L.O. and specialised institutions. These studies include : youth employment services, part-time employment of women, employment of older workers, organisation and operation of labour inspection services.

2.1.3.6. Other subjects

The subject of the human approach in employment services has been discussed.

The following subjects arc under study :

– Welfar e services for women and young workers.

– Employmen t services for intellectual workers and managerial personnel.

– Th e social welfare of apprentices.

Exchanges of views have taken place on a number of subjects under discussion in other international organisations.

2.2. Public Health

2.2.1. Pharmaceutical products

The expert sub-committee on this subject is considering what can be done to standardise drugs and dressings which are essential for the needs of the civil population in wartime. As a first step, a common list of essential drugs has been agreed, and working parties are now considering how these can' be standardised.

2.2.2. Health control of foodstuffs

An expert sub-committee is studying certain specific subjects connected with the health control of foodstuffs. These include the addition of colouring matter, and a preliminary list of permitted synthetic colouring matters has been drawn up; itis planned to- prepare a similar list for preservatives. The use of pesticides and weed-killers in the growing of fruit and vegetables is also being considered.

2.2.3. Public Health aspects of civil defence

LWorking parties have continued their study of these questions, and the conclusions reached so far have been transmitted to Governments. The future programme of work covers matters of an organisational nature such as hospital arrangements, recruitment and training of personnel, .etc.

2.2.4. Other subjects

The study of problems arising from the 1953 flood disasters has been completed.

The following subjects are under study:

– Medical - aspects of rehabilitation of the tuberculous.

– Possibilit y of as system of reimbursement for medical treatment given ' b y one country to nationals of one of the other four

– Publi c health aspects of poliomyelitis

– TTularaemi a in Western. Europe.

– Roden t control.

– Recruitmen t of medical and other health personnel for Government departments.

– Expenditure on medicines within social security schemes.

– Comparativ e prices of drugs.

2.3. Rehabilitation and Resettlement of the Disabled

2.3.1. Rehabilitation of those suffering from the after-effects of poliomyelitis

Study of this question has been completed for the time being, and certain conclusions have been reached as regards methods of rehabilitation in the five countries, research, equipment and personnel, etc.

2.3.2. Rehabilitation and resettlement of the tuberculous, paraplegics, and epileptics

The Committee has completed a preliminary study of the question of suitable work for former tubercular patients. The problem will be examined again when certain medical aspects have received further consideration.

Study of the methods of medical treatment and rehabilitation of paraplegics in the five countries has been completed, and the Committee is now studying the social aspects of such rehabilitation, in particular vocational guidance and re-employment.

The Committee is preparing recommendations on the rehabilitation of epileptics.

2.3.3. Training of medical auxiliaries employed in rehabilitation

À syste m for exchanges of medical auxiliaries is now operating between the five countries.

2.3.4. Artificial limbs and orthopaedic appliances

Progress has been made in preparing a summary of the "General principles for the rehabilitation of amputees" for the information of the services concerned in the fivo countries.

Standardisation and simplification of artificial limbs, the design of such limbs for driving motor vehicles, and the abolition of customs duties on the import of artificial limbs are also under study.

2.3.5. Other subjects

— Sheltere d employment, particularly sheltered workshops.

— Educatio n of handicapped children.

— Rehabilitatio n of patients affected by cardiac rheumatism.

— Condition s to be complied with by disabled persons for obtaining driving licences.

— Rehabilitation of.the mentally deficient.

— Publicit y for facilitating rehabilitation and resettlement.

3. SECTION C - CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

3.1. Education

3.1.1. Teachers' Brochure

The teachers' brochure ' ' The Civilisation of Western Europe and the School" .'Was published in January, 1954 simultaneously in French, English and Dutch. The first part of this booklet sets out and examines the principles underlying Western European civilisation; the second part makes suggestions for their practical application in teaching.

3.1.2. Teachers' courses

A new cycle of courses, concerned with specialised education, began in 1952 with a course in the United Kingdom on the education of the young worker.

The 1953 course was held in France. Its subject was the teaching of rural science in schools and in further education. Subjects discussed included programmes of study for the final year .classes, further education courses in rural science fqr young people who are already working in agriculture, teacher training, and methods and manuals.

The 1954 course will be held in the autumn and will deal with the training of apprentices.

3.1.3. University education

A stud y of plans made in the five countries for the reorganisation of higher education and an enquiry into present-day university problems have been undertaken under the auspices of the Cultural Committee. A meeting of vice-chancellors, university teachers and administrators of the five countries, to which other member States of the Council of Europe were invited to send observers, took place in the autumn of 1953. After an extensive and factual study of a number of university problems, the meeting drew up a series of recommendations which could serve as guiding principles in reorganising or extending university education. These recommendations show that there is a considerable measure of agreement on policy among university authorities of the different countries. The problems studied included the maintenance of a true balance between general culture an specialised teaching, selection of students to attend university courses, assistance to students by grants and loans, interchange of university staffs, and post-graduate study abroad.

This meeting recommended that a conference of all Rectors and Vice-Chancellors of the universities of the five countries should be convened in 1955, to which the other ten Council of Europe countries are sending Rectors or imi-versity representatives as observers. In the meantime, a further meeting of experts is to be held in 1954 to prepare the Rectors' Conference.

3.2. Youth

3.2.1. Courses and meetings

These are held each year under the auspices of the Brussels Treaty Organisation. The 1954 programme includes :

– a summer youth camp in Prance for 66 young people of under 17 from the five countries ;

– a n organised tour of Luxembourg in July for technical students, during which a number of industrial establishments were visited ;

– a course on physical education but-side school, to be held in France in the autum.

3.2.2. Collective Passports

Agreement has now been reached for the inclusion of stateless young people on the uniform collective passports for young people issued under the Brussels Treaty scheme.

3.2.3. Theatrical productions by young people

As the result of a course held in 1952, an exhibition was assembled which is now touring the five countries.. It has already been shown in Belgium, Luxembourg, France and the Netherlands; it will shortly be shown in the United Kingdom.

3.2.4. Exchanges of young workers

A specialist working group has been set up to facilitate exchanges of young workers as between the Five. Various practical measures have been adopted to simplify and speed up arrangements for these exchanges.

3.2.5. School Party Travel

A short course on this subject was held in Franco at the end of 1953, at which a general review was made of problems of school party travel between the five countries. A number of recommendations were formulated concerning reception centres, transport facilities, training of party leaders, etc. A working party is to study the question of school-linking for the international exchange of groups of pupils.

3.2.6. Other subjects

Other subjects now under study by the Youth Sub-Committee include :

– ltrave l grants, for youth leaders;

– collectio n of young people's songs;

– completio n of series of travel guides for young people;

– campin g regulations.

3.3. Films

3.3.1. Joint film production

Plans for the joint production of a second film by the Brussels Treaty Organisation are under consideration.

A cheme for production of a series of educational films is in operation. A series of five films on specific aspects of physical geography, for use in teaching the subject in schools, is being produced ; the subjects have been agreed internationally, so that each country will be able to make use of those produced elsewhere.

3.3.2. Children's films

A conference on this subject was held in 1954 in London. A definition of a children's film was agreed for use in international exchanges; the problem of customs duties on such films was examined and recommendations made for their abolition; an outline scheme for co-operation in the production of children's films between the five countries was adopted; exchanges of views were held on problems of production and distribution.

3.3.3. Continuing activities

— Regula r exchanges of information on non-commercial film production;

— Exchang e and purchase of cultural and educational films;

— Screenin g of films available for exchange.

3.3.4. Other subjects

— Method s of distribution, and use of, educational and cultural films;

— Importatio n of non-commercial films;

— Glossar y of cinema terms.

3.4. Television

The Cultural Committee has decided to limit its work in this connection to the subject of educational television, as it does not feel that action in other fields could lead to practical results.

A meeting was held in Belgium in the spring of 1954 to define the role of television in education and the programme requirements of educational experts. Certain provisional conclusions were reached, but the question clearly requires further study in the light of the rapid development of this medium. In this respect the Brussels Treaty Organisation is awaiting the results of the recent Unesco Seminar on television.

3.5. Government officials

The 1954 course for Government officials was held in the Netherlands. The subject was "The interaction of Government and Society", illustrated in three specific fields :

– th e re-drawing of farm boundaries involving ownership of land ;

– administrativ e machinery for the fixing and alteration of wages ;

– th e administrative application of a policy of industrialisation.

The course was attended by 18 senior Government officials of the five countries.

3.6. Cultural Identity Card

The Council of Europe Cultural Identity Card replaced that of the Brussels Treaty Organisation on 1st June, 1954.