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Fourth report on the activities of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (1st January, 1955 until the end of April, 1956)

Report

1.

The Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration which was created at Brussels in December, 1951 is now in its fifth year. The present report seeks to give a short summary of its activities from the 1st January, 1955 to the end of April, 1956.

Movements

In the year 1955, 120,442 European migrants were assisted by I. C. E. M. to resettle in overseas countries. The number of persons moved in the first four months of 1956 amounts to 39,813, thus bringing the total number of persons assisted since the beginning of the Committee's operations to 446,680. A breakdown by origin and destination of the migrants moved under ICEM auspices shows that Italy has become the leading emigration country, with 148,808 migrants, followed by Germany with 141,466, Austria 39,305, Greece with 34,397, and the Netherlands with 32,151.

Of the migrants moved in 1955 and in the first four months of 1956 the majority (71,913) went to Australia. Other major immigration countries were the U. S. A. with 30,094, Argentina with 18,531, Canada with 10,541, Brazil with 10,981, Venezuela with 6,183, and Uruguay with 3,464. Two tables showing the breakdown of ICEM move merits from the beginning of ICEM activities to date are attached herewith

From the attached tables it will be observed that assisted emigration from Italy and Greece has shown a progressive increase, while movements from Germany have declined steadily. Of t h e ' other emigration countries, movements from Austria increased sharply in 1955 as a result of a greatly expanded migration to Australia and of the implementation of the U. S. Relief Act. Movements from the Netherlands have likewise increased, mainly on account of the assistance given by the Committee to Dutch migrants leaving for Australia.

As far as overseas immigration countries are concerned, the outstanding fact is the growing predominance of Australia, which has received almost one-third of all migrants moved by the Committee since its formation. On the other hand, emigration to Canada with the Committee's assistance fell very sharply, and movements to Latin American countries showed a slight decline. Ah exception to this trend is Uruguay, where a new immigration programme for the reunion of families resulted in additional movements to this country in 1955.

The explanations of these migration trends have to be sought in t h e policies of the major immigration countries, in the political and economic situation of some of them, more particularly in Latin America, and in the changes which have come about in the European economy. The most striking fact in recent years has been the general improvement of economic conditions in Europe and the achievement of full employment in some of the countries which in previous years were considered as over-populated.

In spite of this favourable situation, the countries from which most of ICEM assisted migrants depart are conscious of the necessity of maintaining an active emigration programme, though in varying degrees, and have a substantial emigration potential available. This is particularly true of Italy, Greece and the Netherlands, and to a lesser extent of Austria and Germany. These countries, however, are anxious to encourage the emigration of those categories of persons which are less easy to absorb in theirjmternal labour market and which do not always correspond with the categories required by the immigration countries. While, in previous years, the Committee could rely in most instances on t h e availability of migrants to fill migration opportunities which existed, in future it will have to pay increased attention to the reconciling of needs in emigration with those of immigration countries. Hence the growing importance of what have been called " Migration Services ".

Migration Services

When the Committee was first established the needs that seemed most important to its founders were for a transport organisation to provide the ships and aircraft needed to move migrants together which operational funds to meet the cost of transport. It soon became evident, however, that when the back-log of visaed refugees and family reunion cases had been moved, as is the case at present, migration opportunities would have to be actively sought and promoted.

The services required to stimulate the flow of migration and to ensure that it is to the social and economic advantage of the sending and receiving countries and of the migrants themselves may be classified into three groups.

The first group includes services designed to improve methods of documentation and selection and to) ensure efficient embarkation and reception. In some countries ICEM takes care of these services directly while in other countries it assists the Government offices responsible for these activities. In general, it can be said that almost all migrants moved under ICEM auspices have the benefit of selection, documentation, embarkation and reception services.

The second group includes services designed to seek and assess working opportunities in immigration countries and to place emigrants in them. Such placement services have been started and are being developed mainly in some Latin American countries and in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, while new projects to ascertain the general and specific demand for immigrant labour are being carried out in Latin America in co-operation with Member States and with other international organisations.

The third group includes services designed to improve the qualifications of persons who wish to migrate. Such services consist of information and orientation regarding the immigration countries, language training, both prior to the departure of migrants and during t h e voyage, and vocational training. In this connection I. C. E. M. has :

1. prepared information folders on different immigration countries which are being widely distributed among candidates for migration in Europe;
2. developed a new language training system making use of modern visual media which will permit candidates for migration to acquire at least a basic knowledge of the language of their respective countries of destination, even in those centres where specialised instructors are not available;
3. assisted the Italian and the Greek Governments in organising vocational training courses specially designed for candidates for migration.

Plans for 1956

In the light of past experience, and in view of the fact that movement targets at the beginning of each year had necessarily to be reduced either for financial or operational reasons, the movement target for 1956 has been established at the conservative figure of 125,900 persons. This target seems to be realistic both in the light of the opportunities existing in overseas immigration countries and of the availability of migrants in European emigration countries. In this connection a short review of the situation of the European countries as far as migration is concerned will be of interest for the Council of Europe.

In Austria, the emigration potential is mainly composed of foreign and ethnic German refugees, although there are a certain number of Austrian citizens who wish to migrate, if suitable opportunities are available. The Austrian Government is particularly concerned with the influx of new refugees from countries behind the Iron Curtain and is interested in continuing international assistance for the integration and resettlement of these

refugees. The major emigration programme from Austria during 1956 will be to the U. S. A. under the Refugee Relief Act, to Australia and New Zealand, while limited movements are beginning to the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

In Germany, the expansion of the economy and the reduction of unemployment has limited the types of potential migrants available. Certain categories of the German population, however, particularly among the refugee groups, are still by way of regarding migration as a suitable solution for their future. In these circumstances the major resettlement schemes from Germany in 1956 will be the Refugee Relief Programme to the U. S. A. and some movements to Australia.

The economic situation in Greece where 37 % of the population is classifiable as indigent emphasises the need for continued large-scale emigration. The Greek Delegate at t h e Fourth Session of the Migration Committee declared t h a t the rate of migration from Greece would be approximately 20,000 persons per year, half of whom will have to be internationally assisted. Encouraging prospects for 1956 are the maintenance of the migration programme from Greece to Australia at a high level, the completion of the Refugee Relief Programme to the U. S. A. and the possible increase of movements to Canada, Latin America and to the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

In Italy the situation is still characterised by a high number of unemployed and under-employed, and the Italian Government in the frame of its ten-year development plan is pursuing an active policy to increase and assist emigration. Movements from Italy under the Committee's auspices have been fairly stable throughout 1955 and the first months of 1956 and are expected to continue at the same rate towards Latin America, Australia and the U. S. A. An additional outlet is opening in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland where movements from Italy started in the last part of 1955 and should now progressively increase.

In the Netherlands the need for migration arises from the pressure of a rapidly increasing population in a territory which has exploited its natural resources to the full. In spite of the fact that at present there is full employment in the Netherlands, the Dutch Government follows an active policy of encouraging and assisting migration.

The main migration programme with the Committee's assistance in 1956 will continue to be directed towards Australia, while movements to New Zealand and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland are expected to gain momentum.

In view of the above considerations and in the light of the movements carried out in the first four months of 1956 the Committee is confident of being able to meet the target set by the Council for the current year.

Financing

In order to meet that target the Committee at the beginning of the year had to find additional funds to the extent of approximately 3 million dollars. At its Third Session the Council of I. C. E. M. appointed a working party of experts to assist the Director in formulating proposals for placing the longer-term finances of the Committee on such a basis as would enable it to fulfil its task. The Working Party met in Washington in December, 1955 and recommended that a special fund of 3 million dollars be established, of which $300,000 would be a contingency reserve, the fund to be constituted by additional contributions from Member Governments.

The Council at its Fourth Session agreed to establish this special fund for 1956, as recommended, and requested the Director to submit at the next session of the Council his detailed proposals concerning the methods of financing of the Committee in 1957 and subsequent years. During the Fourth Session 13 Governments pledged contributions to this special fund for 1956 amounting to a total of approximately 2,400,000 dollars. In addition, five Governments indicated that they would also make a contribution to the Special Fund, which amount is being negotiated.

Political debate on the future of the Committee

During the Fourth Session of the Council the basic political and economic issues of the problem of international migration were discussed in the light of the changes that have taken place in the economic situation both in Europe and overseas since the establishment of the Committee. The debate was begun on the initiative of the Delegate of the U. S. A., who reminded the Council that when the Committee had begun operations in 1952 the problem of European migration had not needed a particular effort of interpretation. The burden of over-population on the war-shattered economies of certain European countries had been a problem that clearly called for international action. Since then, however, great changes have taken place in the level of

economic prosperity of various European countries. In that situation various questions had arisen which called for an answer. Had the European situation improved to an extent where international assistance was no longer needed? What had been the changes in the problems which migration could help to solve? Had the problems become less crucial and more longterm in character and did they require action of a different but perhaps more enduring kind? Could the results achieved by the Committee not be equally well attained on a bilateral basis?

The Delegate of the U. S. A. made it clear that he did not intend to suggest that I. C. E. M. was no longer necessary but that he believed that there was a need for all the members of the Council to re-appraise the situation and find the terms in which to interpret it to their Governments, in view of the evolution which had taken place between 1952 and 1956.

Almost all the delegates took part in the debate, fully explaining t h e migration policy being followed by their respective Governments. In the first place, they were unanimous in considering international migration still necessary for political, economic and social reasons. It was the opinion of the majority of the Council that migration represents an international political issue of the highest order. It is an important element in the strengthening of the defence of the free world through the fostering of international co-operation and the development of a fruitful interchange of people. The Delegate for Australia, for instance, emphasised the role of migration in strengthening countries which belong to the Western community but lay outside the continent of Europe. The intake of more than one million migrants after the war had, in fact, reinforced Australia's position as a bastion of the free world.

Secondly, many of the delegates urged t h a t migration should be maintained even in times of economic prosperity, both as a safetyvalve against possible recessions and as a precautionary measure against the long-term effects of demographic trends. This particular issue was made clear by the Delegate of the Netherlands, who emphasised that without assisted emigration his country would not be able to cope with the problem of a high-rate general increase within a limited space and would even have a net immigration balance oving to the high rate of Dutchmen returning from colonial territories.

Some delegates expressed the opinion t h a t migration, in times of relative economic prosperity, could be effected under better conditions and t h a t it would be unwise to dismantle an international migration machinery which would be hard to rebuild when an emergency situation arose again. They went so far as to maintain that a period of world-wide economic prosperity ought to see the maximun development of migration. This is the more true as the need for migration is not based solely on the employment situation existing at a given moment in a given country or on any other purely economical factors. Social and demographic factors have also to be taken into account.

Thirdly, the delegates all agreed that continuing international assistance is a prominent and essential feature of modern migration, as unilateral or bilateral action had proved inadequate. Such assistance was necessary, in order to reconcile the sometimes diverging interests of emigration and immigration countries— and to allow the development of migratory movements which would not otherwise take place. Representatives of sympathising countries subscribed to these views, although they saw their own country's role as different from t h a t of emigration and immigration countries, as was pointed out by the Delegate of France. They stressed the humanitarian and qualitative aspects of migration which they believed could be safeguarded by international co-operation.

Finally, most delegates expressed their views on what t h e future tasks of t h e Committee should be. In addition to the provision of transport, they pointed out the importance of providing services for all the aspects of the migration process and of giving assistance to Governments in the field of land settlement. The future tasks of t h e Committee were summamouvements rised in conclusion by the Delegate of Greece who listed them as follows :

1. to ensure the co-ordination of transport and financial assistance to migrants;
2. to assist the Governments of emigration and immigration countries in their migration plans;
3. To study the economic, demographic and labour problems of migration;
4. to seek new outlets for migrants;
5. to ensure that emigration possibilities coincide with available transport facilities ;
6. to maintain and improve the social conditions of emigration.

Membership

All the countries who are members of I. C. E. M. have ratified the constitution with the exception of Luxembourg and Uruguay which have not yet been able to complete the necessary parliamentary procedure for ratification. In addition, two new countries, Spain and the Union of South Africa, have expressed their interest in the activities of the Committee and have started negotiations with a view to becoming Members. The Council has authorised the Director to carry out these negotiations and to start migration movements from Spain and towards the Union of South Africa in the event of these two Governments finally deciding to join the Committee.

The Union of South Africa has, subsequently, formally applied for membership. This application will be submitted to the next Session of the Council.

MIGRATION PROGRAMME

TABLE I - Countries of Emigration

COUNTRY	1952	1953	1954	1955	1.1/30.4.56	CUMULATIVE Total
Austria	11,028	5,532	6,412	12,321	4,012	39,305
Germany	37,954	40,325	34,921	21,888	6,378	141,466
Greece	489	4,096	11,775	14,056	3,981	34,397
Italy (incl. Trieste	12,314	22,332	53,995	45,852	14,405	148,898
Netherlands	10,062	2,296	1,275	12,701	5,817	32,151
Shanghaï/ Hong-Kong	969	3,267	1,451	594	589	6,870
Others	4,848	9,686	11,398	13,030	4,631	43,593
TOTAL	77,664	87,534	121,227	120,442	39,813	446,680

TABLE II - Countries of Immigration

COUNTRY	1952	1953	1954	1955	1.1/30.4.56	CUMULATIVE Total
Argentina	470	9,023	29,309	15,208	3,323	57,333
Australia	15,547	13,327	37,773	53,773	18,140	138,560
Brazil	9,784	12,718	16,353	8,919	2,062	49,836
Canada	8,671	36,928	21,294	8,865	1,676	77,434
Chile	1,327	776	814	1,033	167	4,117
Israel	762	2,389	1,037	1,220	619	6,027
New Zealand	—	—	—	—	636	636
Rhodesia et Nyasaland	—	—	—	—	552	552
U. S. A.	38,125	6,367	7,233	20,521	9,573	81,819
Uruguay	46	116	360	2,790	674	3,986
Venezuela	1,490	3,922	5,307	4,973	1,710	17,402
Others	1,442	1,968	1,747	3,140	681	8,978
TOTAL	77,664	87,534	121,227	120,442	39,813	446,680