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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
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Opinion of O.E.E.C. on Recommendations 84 and 85 of the Consultative assembly concerning the simplification of frontier formalities and of formalities at airports

Communication
Committee of Ministers

1. Letter from the Chair man-in-office of the Ministers' Deputies to the President of the Consultative Assembly

Strasbourg, 4th October 1956

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, for the information of the Assembly, the Opinion of 0. E. E. C, dated 6th September 1956, on Assembly Recommendations 84 and 85 which were transmitted to that organisation by the Committee of Ministers on 22nd December last. The report contains a covering letter, a memorandum and a note by the Secretary-General of 0. E. E. C. concerning the work done by that organisation on the questions mentioned in Assembly Recommendations 84 and 85, as well as the texts of three recommendations from the Council of 0. E. E. C. to Member Governments, intended to give effect to the Assembly Recommendations.

The texts adopted by the Council of 0. E. E. C. cover a wide field, and the Committee of Ministers has noted with satisfaction that they very largely meet the wishes of the Assembly. In some cases they go even further, but here they have met with certain reservations on the part of some member countries.

The Committee of Ministers has agreed to continue its examination, from the political standpoint, of the whole problem of tourism and the simplification of frontier formalities raised in the various Assembly recommendations, in the light of the Opinion of 0. E. E. C. and the proposal submitted by M. Hermod Lannung, Chairman of the Assembly Sub-committee on Frontier Formalities, on 26th September 1956, at the 41st Meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Signed : BOMBASSEI FHASCANI DE VETTOR

Chairman-in-office of the Ministers' Deputies

Monsieur F. DEHOUSSE,

President of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe

Strasbourg

2. Letter from the Secretary-General ofO. E. E. C. to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe

Paris, 6th September 1956

Sir,

On 22nd December last you transmitted to me Recommendations 84 and 85 of the Consultative Assembly, together with a request from the Committee of Ministers that they be submitted to the Council of 0. E. E. C. for its advice. As I advised you in my letter of 13th January last, the Council considered these Recommendations at a meeting held on that date, and I was instructed to transmit to you my memorandum, also of 13th January, setting out the work carried out by the Organisation up to that date, witt .regared to the various matters raised in the Assembly's Recommendations 84 and 85.

Since that date, the Organisation has continued to study closely various problems connected with tourism and has attempted to find adequate solutions to these problems. In particular, on the 23rd February last, I submitted the attached memorandum, Document C(56)51, to our Council, meeting at ministerial level. The Council took note of this paper, adopted the conclusions referred to in its final paragraph and gave instructions to the Tourism Committee to submit specific proposals for dealing with the problems raised in my memorandum.

Acting on these instructions, our Tourism Committee submitted various Reports to the Council, which discussed them on 27th July, and adopted the following Recommendations :

C(56)131 (Final) Recommendation of the Council concerning the Simplification of Formalities required in the matter of Passports for Crossing a Frontier.

C(56)132(Final) Recommendation of the Council concerning the International Circulation of Private Road Vehicles

C(56)'134(Final) Recommendation of the Council concerning the Abolition of the Embarkation and Landing Cards required for Air and Sea Transport.

These Recommendations cover a wide field and I must add that their adoption was subject to reservations on particular points by certain member countries.

In conclusion, I am instructed to send the attached Report which—together with the Council Recommendations referred to above and attached to the Report—constitute the advice of 0. E. E. C. as requested by your Committee of Ministers, on Recommendations 84 and 85 of the Consultative Assembly.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Signed : René SERGENT.

3. Memorandum by the Secretary-General of O. E. E. C on the work of the Organisation, concerning questions relating to tourism raised in Recommendations 84 and 85 of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe

3.1. RECOMMENDATION 84

PASSPORTS - (Section A of Recommendation 84)

1. On. 29th June 1955, the Council adopted Recommendation C(55)149(Final), requesting member countries to

1.1. simplify as far as possible the formalities required for the delivery of passports; and

1.2. reduce the fees charged for the granting of passports to as low a level as possible, having regard to the cost of issue and distribution ";

and to report to the Organisation by 30th April 1956, on the measures they had been able to take in implementation of this Recommendation.

2. Taking account of the information so furnished, the Tourism Committee submitted a further report to the Council on this question. The Council considered this Report on the 27th July 1956, and adopted a Recommendation, C(56)131(Final), a copy of which is attached hereto as Annex I. In adopting this

Recommendation, the Council took note that France, Iceland, Turkey and the United Kingdom made reservations with regard to the possibility of complying in full with the provisions of this Recommendation; and also, that action by the Netherlands Government on this Recommendation would only be taken after their memorandum concerning the introduction of a uniform travel document had been studied by the Council of Europe. The Netherlands' reservation only applies to the entry of tourists possessing identity cards.

3. It will be noted that this Recommendation refers to the possibility of increasing the period of validity of individual passports to five years and, as was recommended in C(55)149(Final), to reducing the fees charged for the granting of passports to as low a level as possible, having regard to the cost of issue and distribution. It will be seen that this Recommendation covers the ground referred to in Section A of Assembly Recommendation 84 and indeed makes provision for certain additional action. It will also be noted that the Tourism Committee is instructed to report to the Council by 31st March 1957 on the measures that member countries have taken or expect to take in order to implement the provisions of this Recommendation.

VISAS - (Section B of Recommendation 84)

4. The question of the abolition of entry visas as between member countries has been under consideration in 0. E. E. C. since the end of 1949, and, as a result of the work done in this field, entry visas for tourist purposes have been abolished in almost all cases. On 30th June 1956, visas were still required only in the reciprocal relations between the following countries :

5. Portuga l and France, Iceland, Norway Turkey Italy (in this case, however, visas are granted free of charge) Greece and Ireland

6. It is hoped that these remaining visas will be abolished as a result of the Recommendation C(55)149(Final), which recommended that " the Governments of member countries take the necessary measures to abolish the formality of entry visas as soon as possible in all cases where this formality is still required for nationals of other member countries; such measures should not be made dependent on the granting, by these countries, of a minimum foreign currency allowance to their nationals wishing to travel abroad as tourists ".

7. With regard to Canada and the United States, the position is as follows :

– àwit h the exception of Austria, Iceland, Portugal and Turkey, all Member States have abolished entry visas unilaterally for nationals of Canada;

– wit h the exception of Iceland and Turkey, all Member States have abolished visas unilaterally for nationals of the United States.

8. 0. E. E. C. has not discussed the abolition of visas in relations between member countries and those countries other than Canada and the United States which are not Members of 0. E. E. C.

MOTOR VEHICLES - (Section C of Recommendation 84)

9. The difficulties experienced by motoring tourists at frontier points have been under consideration in various international organisations for some considerable time. And some progress has been achieved under the aegis of the Economic Commission for Europe, as is illustrated by the recent ECE proposal for the special " triptyque for a single visit ", which has secured a wide measure of support. In recent months the Tourism Committee of 0. E. E. C. has reviewed the present state of affairs and, in the light of the Directive which it received from our Ministerial Council in February last, has recently submitted certain proposals designed to facilitate the international circulation of tourists' motor cars.

10. At its meeting on July 27th last, the Council considered this report by the Tourism Committee and adopted Recommendation C(56)132(Final), copy of which is attached hereto as Annex II. As will be seen, this Recommendation agrees that the objective to be achieved in the future should be the abolition of all customs documents at present required for the temporary importation of tourists' motor cars, where such tourists are resident in a member country and wish to make a temporary stay in the territory of another member country. As a first step towards achieving this objective, the Tourism Committee is instructed to examine whether member countries could allow the temporary passage of tourists' cars into their territory on presentation of the national registration card of such vehicles and to report, not later than 30th June 1957, on the technical aspects of this question and the problems involved.

11. In addition to this long-term objective, the Council has also proposed certain immediate measures, which take account of the progress already achieved under the aegis of E. C. E. at Geneva and at the same time seek to avoid duplication of work at technical level in the customs field. Thus, member countries are enjoined, where they have not already done so, to adopt, as soon as possible, the " triptyque for a single visit " facilities, as proposed by E. C. E. at Geneva. And, secondly, it is recommended that Governments of member countries should give their representatives on E. C. E. instructions to ensure that the Commission's discussions for the adoption of the " car passport "—which will be resumed in the autumn—should be brought to a success-full conclusion and that consideration should be given by the Commission to a new proposal that tourists should be enabled to obtain the necessary customs documents for their motor cars, valid for more than one country, with the same minimum of expense and formality as now obtains in the case of a " triptyque for a single visit ".

12. It should be noted that in accepting this Recommendation, certain member countries expressed their doubts as to the feasibility, in practical operation, of the motor passport proposal.

INSPECTION OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS - (Section D of Recommendation 84)

13. This question was considered by the Council on the 27th July as part of the general question of the simplification of passport formalities. As will be seen from Recommendation C(56)131(Final) (attached hereto as Annex I), the Council recommends member countries " to reduce to a minimum the formalities concerning the frontier controls of the identity documents of tourists from other countries, in particular those from neighbouring member countries. " The Tourism Committee is instructed to report j to the Council by 31st March 1957 on the i measures taken by member countries to imple- , ment this proposal.

3.2. RECOMMENDATION 85

AIRPORT FORMALITIES

14. The question of airport formalities has been considered by the Tourism Committee, but, as most of the points raised are of a technical nature, which are handled by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (I. C. A. 0.), as regards air transport, and the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (I. U. 0. T. 0.), as regards tourism, the Committee did not feel that the subject was properly within its competence. In the course of its work, however, the Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that embarkation and landing cards for air and sea passengers are still maintained, though they have in large measure been abolished for passengers travelling by train; as this distinction no longer appears to be justified, the Committee submitted a report to the Council proposing their abolition. The Council took note of this proposal and adopted Recommendation C(56)134(Final) thereon. This text, copy of which is attached hereto as Annex III, recommends the abolition of these cards for a trial period up to the 31st December 1957; and it should be noted that it was adopted subject to reservations on the part of a number of countries, which indicated that they proposed to maintain their existing arrangements.

PASSENGER SERVICE CHARGES

15. This Recommendation was considered by the Tourism Committee, but there seems little prospect at the present time of obtaining unanimity for the abolition of these dues or for their inclusion in the published fare. The Executive Committee will shortly reconsider the Tourism Committee's report.

4. Memorandum by the Secretary-General of O. E. E. C. on certain obstacles to tourism in Europe

ORGANISATION FOR EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Paris, 24th February 1956

C (56) 51

Scale 1

COUNCIL

Since 1949, international tourism lias more than doubled. The Tourism Committee of 0. E. E. C, set up seven years ago, can claim credit in no small measure for this most desirable development. At the instance of the Committee, a joint publicity campaign has been carried out over the last six years in the United States; certain customs facilities have been granted to tourists; considerable progress has been made in the abolition of visas, and in reducing the cost and formalities attaching to the issue of passports; and the minimum tourist allocations granted by member countries have been progressively increased to S 200 for each person per annum.

Nevertheless, the progress achieved cannot be considered complete. Apart from the ceiling on tourist allocations, tourists are still encountering various obstacles, the effects of which become more serious as tourism develops.

Energetic action must be taken in order to simplify as far as possible the administrative formalities of all kinds which are still imposed at frontiers (customs, police, insurance, etc.) and to improve the material installations at certain frontier posts.

The Tourism Committee has felt obliged to deal with these problems and has included on its agenda the study of the following questions :

a. temporary importation of motor cars, motor cycles, auto-cycles and pleasure craft;

b. international movement of hired cars, supplied with or without driver;

c. possibilities of abolishing individual passports.

In general, the discussions which have taken place so far with a view to concerted action have not gone beyond technical level, and the rapid progress whicb might have been expected has not been made. It therefore seems advisable that the Council, using its authority, should give fresh impetus to this work of the Tourism Committee by requiring it to make every effort to secure a rapid and substantial reduction of the obstacles in question.

Moreover, studies of the same type are being carried out under the auspices of various international bodies, and as yet it has not been possible to establish adequate liaison between them.

It seems desirable, in order to avoid dispersal of effort, that the work of these organisations should be co-ordinated as far as possible in the best interests of the tourists. Governments of the countries which are members of these various institutions should endeavour, through their representatives, to promote such co-ordination of the action and possibilities of each body.

The Council is invited :

– àt o recognise the importance of the problems referred to above;

– to request the Tourism Committee to submit to the Council a report containing specific proposals designed to solve these problems in time for the benefit to be felt during the 1956 tourist season;

– to instruct the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to maintain the closest possible liaison with E. C. E. and the Council of Europe.

4.1. ANNEXE I

ORGANISATION FOR EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Paris, 4th September 1956

C (56) 131 (Final)

Scale 1

COUNCIL - Recommendation of the Council concerning the simplification of formalities required in the matter of passports for crossing frontiers - (Adopted by the Council at its 336th Meeting on 27th July 1956)

The Council

Having regard to Article 13 (c) of the Convention for European Economic Co-operation of 16th April 1948;

Having regard to the Recommendation of the Council of 29th September 1955, concerning facilities to be granted in the matter of Visas and passports [C (55) 149 (Final)];

Considering that, at its meeting on 29th February 1956, the Council instructed the Tourism Committee to submit a report containing specific proposals to solve—among others—the problems associated with the crossing of frontiers between member countries, in time for the benefit to be felt during the 1956 tourist season [C/M (56) 11, Item 82 (e)];

Having regard to the Report of the Tourism Committee of 20th June 1956, concerning facilities to be granted to tourists in the matter of passports for crossing frontiers between member countries [C (56) 131];

Considering that, in order to increase and promote tourism in~Europe, member countries should take steps to abolish to the greatest extent possible the obstacles that hamper the free movement of nationals of member countries;

Considering that, in this field, member countries should in future seek ways and means of limiting to a maximum extent the fees and duties charged on the issue of a passport,

I. Recommends :

a. The Governments of member countries :

1. to consider the possibility of increasing the period of validity of individual passports, issued by their administrations to five years;

2. taking account of the measures already taken in accordance with paragraph 2 of the Recommendation of the Council of 29th September 1955, referred to above, to give further consideration to the reduction of the fees charged for the granting of passports to as low a level as possible, having regard to the cost of issue and distribution. In taking these measures, member countries should not suspend any more liberal arrangements which they have already established;

b. Those Member Governments whose administrations issue identity cards to consider t h e possibility of standardising these cards and changing their form so t h a t they can be used for international travel, according to a specimen to be drawn up by the Tourism Committee;

c. The Government of each member country :

1. to admit on its territory the nationals of other member countries on presentation of an official document that establishes their identity and nationality and may be used by those persons for re-entry into the country the authorities of which have issued the document in question;

2. without waiting until such measures become effective, to enter into or, where appropriate, to continue negotiations with other member countries with a view to concluding bilateral or multilateral agreements, or to take unilaterally met measures of an administrative nature as will admit on the territory of the country concerned tourists who are nationals of other member countries upon presentation of their identity cards ;

3. apart from the aforementioned measures, to reduce to a minimum the formalities concerning the frontier controls of the identity documents of tourists from other countries, in particular those from neighbouring member countries;

II. Instructs the Tourism Committee :

a. to report to the Council by 31st March 1957 on the measures that member countries have taken or expect to take in order to implement the provisions of Section I of this Recommendation;

b. to draw up at its next session a specimen of the identity card to which reference is made in Section I of this Recommendation.

4.2. ANNEXE II

ORGANISATION FOR EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Paris, 4th September 1956

C (56) 132 (Final)

Scale 1

COUNCIL - Recommendation of the Council concerning the international circulation of private road vehicles - (Adopted by the Council at its 336th Meeting on 27th July 1956)

The Council,

Having regard to Article 13 (c) of the Convention for European Economic Co-operation of 16th April 1948;

Considering that, at its meeting on 29th February 1956, the Council instructed the Tourism Committee to submit to it a report containing specific proposals to solve—among others— the problem of the temporary importation of private road vehicles in time for the benefits to be felt during the 1956 tourist season [C/M (56), 11, Item 82 («)];

Having regard to the Report by the Tourism Committee of 19 th June 1956, on Measures to Facilitate Frontier Crossings by Motoring Tourists [C (56) 132];

Considering that it is desirable to facilitate the development of international tourism by simplifying the customs formalities applied to the circulation of tourist motor vehicles;

Considering that the work done in this field by the Economic Commission for Europe (E. C. E.) has already enabled progress to be made, and recognising that it is desirable for member countries to introduce, as a matter of urgency, the temporary importation permit known as the " triplyque for a single visit " mentioned in Resolution No. 2, adopted on 13th January 1956, by the Group of Customs Experts of the Inland Transport Committee of E. C. E.;

Considering that, independent of this measure, there would be considerable benefit for motoring tourists if the adoption of the " car passport "could be agreed on—and if those tourists who wished to visit several countries could obtain all the documents needed for the temporary importation of their vehicles with the minimum of expense and formality,

I. Recommends that :

1. The Governments of those member countries which have not yet agreed to accept the temporary importation permit, recommended for adoption by E. C. E. and known as the " triptyque for a single visit " should take steps t o grant this facility as soon as possible;

2. The Governments of member countries give their representatives on E. C. E. instructions to ensure t h a t :

   a. the Commission's discussions for the adoption of the " car passport " should be brought to a successful conclusion; and that

   b. consideration should be given by the Commission, in the course of its work, to the possibility of enabling tourists to obtain the necessary customs documents for their motor cars, valid for more than one country, with the same minimum of expense and formality as in the case of a " triply que for a single visit ";

II. Decides :

The Tourism Committee shall consider the results achieved in the implementation of the Recommendations in Section I and shall report to the Council thereon not later than on 31st March 1957;

III. Considers that the objective to be achieved in the future, in connection with the purposes of this Recommendation, should be the abolition of all customs documents required for the temporary importation of private road vehicles owned by tourists resident in the territory of one member country and making a temporary stay in the territory of another member country;

IV. Instructs accordingly the Tourism Committee to countries examine whether member could allow the temporary passage of tourists' private road vehicles into their territory on presentation of the national registration card of such vehicles.

The study shall deal with the technical aspects of this question and the problems involved, and it shall be conducted in such a way as to allow a full report to be submitted to the Council not later than 30th June 1957.

4.3. ANNEXE III

ORGANISATION FOR EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Paris, 4th September 1956

C (56) 134 (Final)

Scale 1

COUNCIL - Recommendation of the Council concerning the abolition of the embarkation and landing cards required for air and sea transport - (Adopted by the Council at its 336th Meeting, on 27th July 1956)

The Council,

Having regard to Article 13 (c) of the Convention for European Economic Co-operation of 16th April 1948;

Having regard to the Report of the Tourism Committee of 22nd June 1956, concerning the Embarkation and Landing Cards required of Air and Sea Passengers [C (56) 134];

Being desirous of affording every facility for international passenger traffic by air and sea,

Recommends the Governments of those member countries where embarkation or landing cards are required of air and sea passengers on departure and on arrival to take all the necessary steps to abolish such cards as soon as possible.