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~~INFORMATION MEMO~~

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Closer co-ordination of social security systems
applicable to wage-earners in the EEC
and their families who move within the Community.

The Commission has just adopted and submitted to the Council a proposal for a regulation co-ordinating the social security systems, applicable to wage-earners in the EEC and their families who move within the Community.

The proposal completely recasts Regulation No. 3 concerning social security for migrant workers, which has been in force since 1 January 1959, and consolidates the amending regulations adopted subsequently, including those concerning particular categories of workers. The new regulation covers all workers who move from one Community country to another: workers who go and take up employment in another Community country and transfer their residence to that country, frontier workers, seasonal workers, temporary workers, seafarers, workers temporarily resident in another Member State, and people who work in several countries.

In undertaking this general revision of the provisions adopted in pursuance of Article 51, the Commission has sought to introduce all the improvements that are at present feasible, in view of the wide disparities that exist between the national social security systems, in order to guarantee for all classes of migrant workers and their dependants full protection.

The most important of the proposed improvements concern family allowances, unemployment benefit and payments in respect of invalidity, old age and death.

Thus the members of the family who do not accompany the worker to the country where he is employed will in future receive the family allowances provided by the legislation of their country of residence. In particular cases where families receive higher allowances by virtue of bilateral conventions, they will receive an additional payment to bring the allowance up to the amount previously paid them.

Regulation No. 3 deals only with family allowances in the strict sense, but the new provisions will ensure that families also receive other payments (such as the "single wage" allowance for young couples in France, and payments for the spouse and parents in Italy, if the legislation of the country of residence provides for such payments.

If the Commission's proposal is adopted, full unemployment benefit will henceforth be paid at the rate obtaining in the country where the unemployed person registers at an employment bureau, and for as long as is laid down by the legislation of that country, as is at present the case for frontier workers.

Not only unemployed frontier workers, as at present, but all unemployed persons will be entitled to medical care and family allowances whatever the Community country where they reside.

If the legislation of the country of residence provides for a minimum pension, this shall be guaranteed to anyone who fulfils the necessary conditions, periods of insurance completed in different countries of the Community being added together for this purpose.

Furthermore the rules for calculating pensions have been altered so as to ensure that rights acquired in different member countries are not lost, but the pension may not exceed the highest pension that the applicant could have claimed had his working life been spent in one Member State only.

Certain pensions which at the present time cannot be paid abroad will be so paid in future.

Finally, the proposed regulation provides for workers', farmers' and employers' organizations to be represented on the Administrative Committee for the Social Security of Migrant Workers in an advisory capacity.

Since Regulation No. 3 came into force the number of persons benefiting from Community provisions relating to social security has increased each year, as has also the total amount paid out. A recent estimate suggests that in 1964 almost two million people received about 50 million units of account as a result of these Community regulations.