

SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL
European Secretariat

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1. Workcamp programme :

Most branches have made particular efforts this spring to recruit and train leaders at special courses, in some cases with a limited attendance by volunteers from other branches. More Easter workcamps than usual were organised; not enough volunteers were recruited to fill them completely - at least as regards the quota for male volunteers.

The summer programme as planned shows a slide overall increase over 1964. The greatest expansion is in the Austrian programme, with the Norwegian branch also arranging more camps than usual (partly as a response to the added demand for workcamp places in Norway since KIA is no longer operating). The Swiss branch has also planned more camps than in the recent past, and the Belgian expect a modest increase in their programme : both these branches have new Secretaries since last autumn. The German branch still is concentrating on the quality of camps rather than any increase in number. The Italian branch, while giving priority attention to work in South Italy (Montillo), is also planning activities in the north, where local members were able to assist. The programme in the Netherlands will probably be about the same as last year. The French and British programmes will probably increase in proportion to the overall expansion. It is hoped that the Spanish and Danish SCI representatives will at least maintain the comparatively high volunteer recruitment rate established last year. There will be no camps in Greece.

There is some concern that the number of male volunteers recruited in advance will not be sufficient to fill the camp places available : on the other hand, the number of offers from female volunteers will probably exceed the number of places available. The Clearing House hopes to be able to give advance information to the branches which will enable them to adjust recruitment to meet the needs of the programme as they become apparent in the office.

2. Long-term service :

Many branches in Europe show increasing interest in sending LTVs abroad (See working paper no.5). The Asian branches' and groups' desire to send more LTVs to Europe and to improve the quality of their programmes is better understood and appreciated than it was last year. The need for better international cooperation has been expressed on all sides, as well as the need of most branches and groups for greater financial resources to increase the exchange of LTVs.

3. East-West programme :

Only the East Germans (FDJ) have agreed to a joint workcamp in the tradition type with SCI this year. The CYO (USSR) is not able to cooperate with us this summer, although a letter from "Sputnik", which acts in close collaboration with the CYO and is beginning to concern itself with work camping, shows that further cooperation with SCI may be expected. The Czechs and Hungarians have invited us to send groups of volunteers to their international workcamps, as was done last year, and the Bulgarian and Rumanians are expected to do the same. The Poles have increased the number of workcamps to be held in Poland this summer, but have not yet indicated whether they are prepared to hold a joint camp with SCI or whether they will invite us to send a group of volunteers to take part in one of their own international camps. The Poles (OKWOM) are organising a seminar concerned with voluntary service in the autumn of 1965 ("Problems of Leadership in Integrating Volunteers of Widely Differing Backgrounds"), possibly in cooperation with the Coordination Committee.

In Yugoslavia, it is expected that the Swiss branch, which has not taken over organisational responsibility, will arrange a joint camp with the Esperantists and maintain relations with the UYY.

It is hoped that more Eastern European volunteers than in the past will be able to take part in SCI camps in Western Europe this year.

In view of the general trend in those countries in Eastern Europe where SCI has organised joint camps in the past, the IC is asked to consider in what ways SCI can best cooperate with governmental organisations in those countries in future.

In Algeria, it is hoped that BITEJ members, Jeunesse FLN and SCI will be cooperating in two or three summer workcamps, which are particularly encouraged as part of the programme of the Festival of Youth which take place in Algeria this year.

4. Concluding note :

The size of the workcamp programme in Europe is increasing satisfactorily, but there is a feeling that more could be done to improve the quality of camps. This is particularly the case where the proportion of new volunteers on camps is high, as a consequence of fast increase in the size of the programme plus the tendency of young volunteers to accept work-camping as a pleasant and valuable experience which, however, does not necessarily entail regular support for SCI activities. This should be taken into consideration in elaborating the Development Plan.

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