

Notes and Brief Reports

International Social Security Association Meeting

The Thirteenth General Meeting of the International Social Security Association, held in London May 12-23, 1958, marked an important stage in the development of the organization. Founded in 1927, the International Social Security Association includes among its members all types of organizations administering social security programs. Membership was initially concentrated among sickness or other mutual insurance funds in Western Europe but has increasingly come to include Government agencies administering social security programs and to draw its membership from all parts of the world. In early 1958, the Association had 148 member institutions in 60 countries. Together they administered social insurance programs covering more than 320 million persons. The number had been increased significantly during 1957, when the Social Security Administration¹ of the United States of America and the Ministry of Social Security of the Russian Federal Soviet Socialist Republic (Soviet Russia proper) joined the Association.

The primary purpose of the International Social Security Association is to encourage the interchange of information and experience among persons and agencies administering social security programs. To this end it encourages or arranges for the preparation of technical reports and studies.

General meetings are held once every 3 years. The Association has also established a number of permanent committees, which meet at more frequent intervals. The committees are organized in part around branches of social security—reflecting the fact that many of the member institutions administer only one branch—and in part around special technical problems or interests. There are seven permanent committees. They are the

Medico-Social Committee, the Committee on Mutual Benefit Societies, the Committee on Unemployment Insurance, the Committee on Family Allowances, the Committee of Actuaries and Statisticians, the Committee on Prevention of Occupational Risks, and the Committee on Organization and Methods. The last three were fully organized for the first time at the May meeting.

The International Social Security Association is supported in part by membership fees and in part by the International Labor Organization, which also provides the secretariat for the organization. There is thus the basis for close collaboration between the Association and the International Labor Organization. The latter organization represents governments and employer and employee organizations and, as part of its general interest in matters affecting labor, is concerned with broad policy questions relating to social security. The International Social Security Association furnishes the opportunity for persons directly concerned with the administration of social security programs to get together for discussion of common problems and objectives.

The agenda of the Thirteenth General Meeting included, as have most recent general meetings, a report and discussion of recent developments in social security. The report² covered the period from 1955 to 1957 and included detailed information for 74 countries, based both on published information and special reports. At the meeting, representatives of many countries gave additional information or background with respect to developments in their countries. The period 1955-58 was marked by intensive legislative activity affecting social security in many countries. Coverage was extended under some systems, benefits improved or at least raised to reflect increases in prices or wage levels in others, and numerous administrative improvements and consolidations undertaken.

² This report and others submitted to the meeting will be revised and subsequently published and thus become available for general reference purposes.

The second major report related to old-age insurance, on the agenda as a subject for discussion for the first time. The report was in two parts; the section covering the Americas, Asia, and Oceania was prepared by Robert J. Myers, of the Social Security Administration. On the basis of replies to an inquiry sent out in 1957, the two reporters summarized the major characteristics of the old-age insurance systems of most of the countries having such programs. In the course of the discussion, a number of countries presented further detail or commented on the reasons their legislation took the form it did. It was suggested that at future general meetings the agenda might include fairly specific topics, such as the advantages and disadvantages of a retirement test or the problems of determining the proper minimum retirement ages for men and women, and give an opportunity for more discussion of the rationale behind different methods of dealing with common problems.

The third major report related to sickness insurance. A vast amount of monographic material provided the basis for an attempt to make comparative analyses of the trends in medical costs and sickness insurance expenditures in different countries. In spite of the serious technical difficulties in such comparisons, it seems clear that the trend of medical and particularly hospital costs has been upward in countries at various stages of economic development and with quite different methods of paying for medical care. The report cites as contributing factors the increasing importance of chronic disease and the use of new diagnostic and therapeutic techniques and new drugs and medicines.

It was apparent that much more detailed information about medical care expenditures and medical benefits under sickness insurance programs is needed, and plans were made for a joint study to be conducted by the Permanent Committee of Actuaries and Statisticians and the Permanent Medico-Social Committee of the Association. Any work in this field is to be coordinated with related studies that are being made by the World Health Organization.

The meeting also received and

¹ The Social Security Administration was represented at the London meeting by William L. Mitchell, Deputy Commissioner, Ida C. Merriam, Director of Program Research, and Robert J. Myers, Chief Actuary.

heard brief summaries of several reports prepared by some of the Permanent Committees—on unemployment insurance in the building industry, on administrative problems of unemployment insurance for agricultural workers, on the role of the child in relation to entitlement to family allowances, on the criteria used in the evaluation of invalidity, and on mutual benefit societies.

The discussions at the meeting were all on a professional and technical level, with social security administrators from all parts of the world showing a desire to learn from one another's experience. The importance of international cooperation in the social security field was expressed in a resolution proposed by the delegate from Czechoslovakia and adopted unanimously on the final day of the conference. The resolution instructs the governing body of the International Social Security Association to develop concrete suggestions for facilitating contacts between experts and direct exchange of experience among organizations administering social security programs. It also calls on all member organizations to strengthen this mutual cooperation "and thus assist in achieving the best possible results in improving social security throughout the world."

State and Local Government Employment Under OASDI, July-December 1957*

About 800,000 employees of State and local governments were brought under old-age, survivors, and disability insurance in the second half of 1957, raising the total coverage to 3 million as of the end of year. The number newly covered during this

* Prepared by Dorothy McCamman, Division of Program Research, Office of the Commissioner, from estimates developed in the Division of Program Analysis, Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance. More detailed data by State and type of government appear in a quarterly statistical report, *State and Local Government Employment Covered by Old-Age and Survivors Insurance under Section 218 of the Social Security Act* (Division of Program Analysis, Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance).

period exceeded the coverage added during any comparable period in the 7 years that elective coverage has been available.

The estimates in the accompanying table—though labeled "as of October 1957"—include about 630,000 newly covered employees who would not normally have been counted in covered employment as of October. These employees were covered under modifications that were signed in the second half of 1957 and processed for statistical purposes after the first week of October, the normal cutoff date. This deviation from the usual cutoff date makes it possible to present major new developments in coverage, State by State. Of the 800,000 covered during July-December, about 700,000 are included in the "October" figures. The estimates indicate that more than half of all State and local employees were covered by the Federal program at that time.

Rough estimates of State and local government employment covered under old-age, survivors, and disability insurance through voluntary agreements, by State, as of October 1957

[Continental United States]

State	Number ¹	Approximate percent of all State and local government employment ²	State	Number ¹	Approximate percent of all State and local government employment ²
Total ³	2,905,800	56	Montana	21,000	87
Alabama	80,400	94	Nebraska	56,300	104
Arizona	32,000	97	Nevada	7,700	7
Arkansas	28,300	59	New Hampshire	18,800	89
California	35,700	7	New Jersey	149,000	92
Colorado	17,600	30	New Mexico	13,400	47
Connecticut	10,100	15	New York	428,500	74
Delaware	11,900	89	North Carolina	107,500	93
District of Columbia ⁴			North Dakota	14,100	54
Florida	50,200	40	Ohio ⁵		71
Georgia	51,000	51	Oklahoma	57,900	92
Idaho	16,800	74	Oregon	58,800	
Illinois	11,400	4	Pennsylvania	222,000	78
Indiana	111,300	86	Rhode Island	10,300	43
Iowa	97,700	101	South Carolina	58,500	91
Kansas	74,900	96	South Dakota	24,300	88
Kentucky	46,600	62	Tennessee	61,200	64
Louisiana	28,100	27	Texas	125,100	49
Maine	6,900	22	Utah	30,100	98
Maryland	48,900	62	Vermont	7,900	59
Massachusetts	300	(⁶)	Virginia	100,800	96
Michigan	200,300	81	Washington	80,300	80
Minnesota	27,200	24	West Virginia	46,100	91
Mississippi	55,000	89	Wisconsin	71,700	55
Missouri	84,500	72	Wyoming	13,700	98

¹ Estimates of employment for which coverage has been approved, regardless of effective dates. Includes, in addition to employment shown in wage reports, data on employees recently covered but not yet represented in tabulated wage reports.

² Approximate percent of all State and local government employment (other than that under compulsory old-age, survivors, and disability insurance coverage) that is actually covered. Based on data from the Bureau of the Census for total State and local government employment as of October 1956 (latest available). Where the percentage exceeds 100,

It is not now possible to make estimates of the number in each State who have dual coverage.¹ Of the total of 3 million State and local employees covered as of the end of 1957, perhaps 1¼ million had the joint protection of old-age, survivors, and disability insurance and a State or local retirement system. The great majority of the employees brought under the program during the last half of 1957 were already members of retirement systems. Most of them were covered under the 1956 and 1957 amendments to the Social Security Act that permit specified States to divide retirement systems in such a way as to provide old-age, survivors, and disability insurance coverage for only those members who wish to be covered. Others in the

¹ For estimates of dual coverage as of April 1957, see Research and Statistics Note No. 28—1957 (Aug. 26, 1957); for January 1957 estimates, see the *Bulletin*, July 1957, page 17.

the excess is due primarily to changes in employment levels between the reference period for old-age, survivors, and disability insurance and October 1956 (the Census period), and should be taken as 100.

³ Includes 700 employees of interstate instrumentalities not distributed by State.

⁴ Not included in statutory definition of State for purposes of agreement.

⁵ Less than 0.5 percent.

⁶ No agreement.

Source: Division of Program Analysis, Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance.