

REPORT **on the** **ORT ACTIVITIES**

JULY 1, - OCTOBER 31, 1948

**Submitted to the meeting of the
Executive of the WORLD ORT UNION
PARIS, November 18th - 19th 1948**

ORT UNION

PARIS

GENEVA

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B U L G A R I A

During the period July to October, the Bulgarian ORT was faced with the following major tasks :

- I Arrangements in connection with the end of the school year
- II Holiday arrangements for ORT trainees
- III Preparation of the new school year
- IV Recruitment of new pupils

I. End of the School Year

a. Vocational Courses for Adults

As early as June, some of the vocational courses for adults came to an end. In Sofia, 232 pupils terminated their training and 73 interrupted it for holidays.

The following trainees have graduated :

Electro technics	18	graduates (5 did not pass)
Machine shop	16	"
Radio technics	14	" (2 " " ")
Motor winding	24	" (4 " " ")
Dressmaking	48	" (2 " " ")
Tool manufacturing	13	"
Electric transmission lines	33	

In addition, another group who prepared their emigration to Israel concluded their training in evening courses for machine locksmithing (22 graduates).

In Plovdiv, the following training workshops existed until the end of the reporting period ; 2 dressmaking workshops for women and girls with 55 pupils and final examinations in November, and a six-month training workshop for metal work with 43 young and adult pupils.

b. Secondary School for Machine Shop Work and Electro Technics in Sofia

The most characteristic feature of the month of October was the pressure for emigration to Israel amongst Bulgarian Jewry. Until the end of the period under report, some 4000 persons of all age groups have emigrated, and this number will have been increased by the end of November. Obviously, this emigration is bound to have repercussions on the number of our pupils. Until now we have lost 60 trainees. This loss is balanced by the great afflux of candidates which we have not been able to admit at the beginning of the school year ; accordingly, the enrolment figures in our school have so far not been influenced by this trend.

87 out of last year's 107 pupils passed their term examinations, the remaining 20 failed. A subsequent examination reduced the number of failments to 15. At the end of the school year, a concluding ceremony was held in the course of which the best pupils were awarded prices. Apart from former and present pupils and their parents, the following guests were officially present : The entire ORT managment under the leadership of President Pardoff and Vice-President Arié ; Mr. Grünberg, Advisor to the Ministerial Council, ORT collaborators Wagenstein, Haravanoff, Aruetti, and others, Mr. Baruch, President of the Jewish Community, representatives of the Ministry of

Industry and Trades, of the Jewish Consistory, the Jewish co-operative societies, the representative of the AJDC, Mr. Levy and Mrs. Levy, as well as representatives of other trade schools in Sofia and of the Jewish Primary School.

c. Children's workshops

Training in children's workshops ended somewhat earlier with the beginning vacations in Jewish primary schools.

In Sofia, 413 children concluded their training in the 5 types of children's workshops, notably 115 in the 7 training units for sewing and embroidery (22 other pupils failed in their final examinations), 88 in 5 units for cardboard work (6 did not pass), 25 in the 2 locksmithing units (6 failed), 11 in the radio training workshop (1 did not pass), 101 in the 7 joinery groups (38 failed).

In Plovdiv, training came to an end in 3 children's workshops for sewing and embroidery with a total of 74 graduates and in 3 children's workshops for wood work with 81 graduates. 10 pupils were unable to pass the examination.

It has already been said on former occasions, trainees in children's workshops chose their branch according to their interests and wishes. In the course of last school year, they were provided with the necessary knowledge to pursue their studies in a more advanced course in the coming year. The 16 best graduates received special certificates by virtue of which they can enter the ORT Secondary Trade School without passing entrance examinations, and are given preferential treatment in other ways (scholarships, etc.) Those of the graduates who emigrate to Israel have acquired skills in our children's workshops which will facilitate their incorporation into practical work in Palestine.

II. Vacation Period

The President of the Bulgarian ORT, Mr. Pardoff, was kind enough to place a villa near Sofia at ORT's disposal for its vacation activities on behalf of the trainees. AJDC and various Bulgarian organizations lent their help by providing 5 tents and the furniture. In this well-equipped camp, 2 groups of 50 ORT trainees each were given the opportunity to pass a month of their holidays out of town. AJDC and UNAC supplied food in addition to normal rations, thus helping the pupils to 5 good meals a day. Several excursions into the mountains were undertaken and enthusiastically welcomed by all.

III. Preparation of the School Building for the New School Year

The former school year had hardly come to an end, when preparations were started for new class-rooms and workshops to accommodate all candidates for the 4 first grade sections. Additional construction work provided 3 class-rooms and 2 workshops for casting and forging.

Since labour is momentarily scarce and since the work had to be done with all possible speed, ORT pupils volunteered to participate and advance construction work. They lent a hand in ground work, sorting of building materials and preparation of teaching accessories, as well as in the equipping of the workshops and other tasks. 200 trainees took part in this work, i.e. all those who were not busy otherwise. Arrangements were made for the most eager of these voluntary workers to spend some time in the vacation colony. At present our building activities are getting much help from the municipal building administration, so that ORT school might have the necessary premises ready at the beginning of the new school year.

Another voluntary activity on the part of the pupils was the manufacture of posters and models for teaching which was done under the supervision of instructors Tschakaroff, Kristoff and others. The construction work was supervised by a special committee of the Bulgarian ORT consisting of Messrs. Grünberg, Wagenstein, Levy and Seliktar. Assistant director 'idi is supervising the work on behalf of the school.

Much has been done to perfect the equipment of our training workshops and classrooms, thanks to a recent shipment of 4 lathes of modern construction, numerous measuring apparatuses and other tools.

IV. Recruitment of New Candidates and Beginning of the Second School Year

Even before the holidays, the Bulgarian ORT undertook a vast propaganda drive for the recruitment of new pupils. Interested parties were allowed to assist at special demonstration lessons, and each prospective pupil or his parents were allowed to spend a day in a workshop or classroom, to see how ORT is training its pupils.

It should be mentioned, that there has latterly been a tendency on part of our pupils and graduates to emigrate to Israel. We hope to give precise information on this question in our next report.

As has already been stated, 92 pupils of the ORT College in Sofia have passed their term examinations and were promoted to a superior grade. Accordingly, the second school year begins with 3 grades of 30-32 pupils each. Admission exams for beginners brought in 103 new pupils in the 4 sections of the first-grade. Among the newly admitted pupils are 6 girls. There are sections for electrotechnics, locksmithing, heat treatment of metals (casting and forging), and machine tool work. 36 new pupils were admitted to evening classes and 31 to the two-year training in tool manufacture.

In addition, new recruitment for evening classes for adults is in progress for the following vocations: Electrotechnics, wireless, motor winding, machine tool work, sewing, carpet weaving, etc. Enrolment has already reached a good figure, and training will begin when a sufficient number of students has been admitted.

As a result of negotiations carried on with the Ministries of Education and Labour, the following two units have been set up with our Sofia school:

- 1) A technical school with evening classes for 30 students and 26 hours of instruction per week, and
- 2) A two-year school for graduates of secondary schools with 30 students and 33 hours of instruction per week. This school will turn out so-called "graduate technicians".

Both institutions are subsidized by the above-mentioned Ministries with 1 million Leva a year. Work began on September 15, 1948.

The children's workshops will be opened in two or three weeks only, since they depend on the school to which they are attached, who must first ascertain the interests and talents of the pupils.

Remarkable Initiatives of the Sofia ORT School

1) The ORT School's Technical Office

Amongst the most interesting events of this period was the collaboration between the ORT school, and the Jewish co-operatives (for optics, metal work, tailoring, wood work, etc.) which are organized and supported by the AJDC Constructive Committee. In accordance with Mr. Grünberg, director of this committee, a technical office was set up in the ORT school to provide

technical assistance for the Jewish Co-operatives at a moment's notice. The approximately 30 Jewish Co-operatives have welcomed this step with great satisfaction, since none of them has the necessary experts ; they are heading for a crisis every time that some technical problem like rationalization, increase of output, introduction of new jobs, etc. calls for expert advice. The technical office has already been given numerous tasks. For instance, the Jewish Co-operative for metal work "Oswoboschdenie" placed orders for machine drawings for the modernization of their old machine tools. Even Government enterprises turn to this office for help, as happened in the case of the Government-owned factory "Baterie" which ordered some drawings for their production. These and many other jobs have already been carried out, and the results are highly appreciated. The office has also done considerable work for the organization of technical training by correspondence in Bulgaria, on an order by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. In this office, 3 of the best ORT graduates, Messrs. Aladschem, Eszkenazy and Niego , are at work, with the assistance of the ORT instructors Kristoff and Hara ; the work is supervised by the school director Engineer R. Goldstein.

2) Preparation of Syllabi for the New School Year.

The introduction of modern teaching methods in the Sofia ORT school forced the ORT administration and management of the school to elaborate special syllabi, manuals, summaries and other teaching accessories. In order to achieve this, an editing office was set up in the ORT school, in accordance with a decision of the ORT administration. This office is directed by ORT Vice-President Arié and the school director Engineer R. Goldstein.

This office selects the specialists for the compilation of the new syllabi, etc. Its first task was the compilation of a pocket manual for electro technics and metal work, which has already proved of great value in the school. In accordance with decisions reached during Dr. Syngalowski's visit to Sofia and in close collaboration with the Geneva Central Office of the ORT Union, this office is now editing an illustrated technical dictionary in 6 languages. This dictionary will list the most important technical terminological terms which a pupil is likely to see during his 5 years of apprenticeship. The languages in question are Ivrit, German, Bulgarian, Russian, French and English, that is to say languages which are either taught at school or are necessary for emigrants to Israel. Part of the dictionary is already complete and has been used with great success. The office employs two of the best ORT graduates, Mr. Anri Benbassad and Miss Mary Baruch, who are doing a splendid job compiling the dictionaries.

3. Preparation of Samples for the New York ORT Exhibition

The Geneva Central Office requested us to show products of our institutions at the New York ORT Exhibition.

During the period under report, preparatory work for this exhibition constituted an important part of our activities, as we were eager to show all ORT friends what is taught and done in the ORT institutions of Bulgaria.

Amongst the samples executed by our various sections were the following : Models of charts by virtue of which the pupil himself can control his progress. (The pupil checks his knowledge with the help of a chart showing tools on one side, the names of these tools on the other side. Beside each

name there is an electric plug in which the pupil inserts a wire, at the same time touching the tool to be named with a rod. If the correct name has been given, a bulb is lighted and a bell is rung). Such charts are in use in almost all Sofia workshops, and serve to encourage the pupil to look for the right answer, and in most cases pupils refuse to leave the chart until they know all the answers. Other exhibits are charts showing the manufacture of models for exercise, as well as models of the first machine tools to be invented, such as the first wooden lathe as designed by Leonardo da Vinci in the sixteenth century. These models show the technical development and the origin of our modern tools.

Another series of exhibits demonstrate the productive work of the Sofia ORT pupils. Particularly interesting are the kilims manufactured in the workshops of the Bulgarian ORT, bearing either Jewish national designs or pictures of ORT's work in the world ; there are also some Persian rugs which constitute the normal produce of Bulgaria's carpet weaving industry. Together with exhibits of other sections, the shipment for the New York Exhibition weighs over 600 kgs.

During the period under report we have received additional shipments from the Women's American ORT, containing among other things approximately one ton of valuable clothing material which was distributed among the various training workshops whose pupils made clothes for themselves and for their destitute comrades.

TRAINING UNITS AND PUPILS OF THE B U L G A R I A N O R T
1. VII. 1948 - 31. X. 1948

T O W N	Number of training units		Number of Pupils 1.7.48	New admissi- ons after 1. VII. 48	Graduates	Departures		Status 31.X.48	Frequentation 1.7.48-31.X.48
	1.7.48	31.X.48				before graduation			
SOFIA	24*)	26	800	295	92	232	771	1.095	
LOVDIV	5	5	211	63	—	21	253	274	
TOTAL	29	31	1.011	358	92	253	1.024	1.369	

) Erroneously given as 34 in last report.

FREQUENTATION OF PUPILS TRAINED BY THE B U L G A R I A N O R T FROM JULY TILL NOVEMBER 1948

Listed according to Trades

METAL WORK (Machine shop, locksmithing, technicians).....	364
WOOD WORK.....	352
ELECTRICITY (Electrotechnics, Radiotechnics).....	238
NEEDLE TRADES (Dressmaking).....	207
CRADBOARD AND BOOK-BINDING.....	193
INDUSTRIAL ART (Kellim).....	15
TOTAL.....	1.369