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Tolerance Square, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris (France).

The Intergovernmental Council and the Scientific Steering Committee

The MOST programme is directed by an Intergovernmental Council (IGC) and an independent Scientific Steering Committee.

The Intergovernmental Council is composed of 35 Member States of UNESCO, elected by the General Conference. The Council convenes every two years and establishes the priority areas to be researched, decides on overall policy and funding questions, and handles the relations with governmental authorities.

Members of the Intergovernmental Council of MOST 2002-2003 (as decided during the 5th IGC Session, March 2001):

Albania, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Haïti, Indonesia, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Uganda, Zimbabwe.

The Scientific Steering Committee is an independent group of social scientists of international standing, which decides on the scientific questions, project evaluation, ethical and professional concerns and thematic development.

WEBSITES

<http://www.unesco.org/most/igc.htm>

<http://www.unesco.org/most/ssc.htm>

THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (IGC)

The Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Council took place at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 14-17 March 2001. The report and recommendations are fully available online in English, French and Spanish at <http://www.unesco.org/most/igc01re.htm>

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List of Member countries 2000-2001:

Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Finland, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Spain, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda.

Bureau of the Fourth Session of the IGC (February 1999)

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List of Member countries 1998-1999:

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List of Member countries 1995-1997:

Angola, Australia, Austria, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Jamaica, Japan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Morocco, Mexico, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Togo, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

List of Member countries 1993-1995:

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The eighth session of the SSC was held from 12 to 13 March 2001.

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JOINT SESSION OF THE SSC AND THE IGC

During the debate which followed the report on SSC sessions, many speakers took the floor to comment on the work of the Secretariat. They called for:

- simplified documents;
- more accessible results;
- better information strategies;
- a strategy to promote interaction and reciprocity between researchers and decision-makers.

In addition, suggestions were made with a view to recasting general working methods:

- longer-term projects, better able to impact on policy-making;
- refocusing of projects in their socio-economic, political and cultural context and consideration of the lack of resources of certain research networks in relation to the conceptual framework associated with globalization and the use of the new information and communication technologies;
- definition of relevance criteria enabling researchers and decision-makers to cooperate more closely;
- establishment of a three-way dialogue between decision-makers, social scientists and researchers in the natural sciences;
- refocusing of current problems in their regional and transnational urban aspects;
- development of a language common to scientists, decision-makers and civil society in order to strengthen the interdisciplinary and participatory approach;
- use of consultants and researchers concerned with links between research and policy-making in order to disseminate knowledge of best practices worldwide, taking into account the different regional political programmes;
- adoption of a cross-cutting approach for poverty eradication projects in order to include therein the concepts of sustainable development, social justice and environmental preservation.

NLC meetings and symposia

- An international symposium on the “Social Sciences in the Arab Region” took place from 18-22 November in Marrakech, organized jointly by the French and Moroccan National Liaison Committees for MOST, with the participation of social scientists from the Arab countries, from Maghreb and Mashrek. The meeting aimed at taking stock of the social sciences in the region and the role that the social sciences play in society. A proposal was addressed to MOST to support the establishment of a regional association for the social sciences in the Arab region. Another concrete proposal was made to create a database of ongoing research in the Arab region. This database would help to improve regional cooperation. It was emphasized in several presentations that social science research communities in the region lack autonomy, professional training in the new methods and theories of research, as well as training in the use of up-to-date research software.

- A sub-regional meeting of the MOST National Liaison Committees (NLC) of five North African countries (Algeria, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Mauritania, and Tunisia) took place in Tunis on 5 and 6 October 2001. It was organized by the UNESCO regional office in Tunis and the MOST NLC of Tunisia, with the participation of the State Secretariat for Scientific Research of Tunisia represented by the Centre for Social and Economic Research (CERES).

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In order to ensure a bottom-up flow of information within the programme, MOST National Liaison Committees have been established in the Member States of UNESCO. They function as nodes of the MOST programme at the country levels, and include social scientists, representatives from science policy bodies and various categories of users.

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The objectives of the meeting were:

- The creation of a NLC network in the Maghreb.
- The identification of priorities for research/action.
- The discussion of a common programme framework for the five NLCs in the Maghreb.

• THE MOST National Committee in the Netherlands organized an expert meeting from 22 to 23 November 2001, in the Hague, assessing the theoretical dimensions and modus operandi of the Programme, and making recommendations towards the second phase of MOST (2002-09).

The main issues discussed were:

- clustering paradigms for MOST thematic projects, such as sustainability, social cohesion, democratic regulation;
- research-policy linkages, which are to adopt a more complex theoretical framework, involving the institutional contexts and power relations/conflicts of interest in which knowledge and public policy relations take place;
- the operational framework;
- strategies for programme development.

The debates were structured around papers on the concept of social transformations, multiculturalism, sustainability and water security.

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The MOST Programme encourages Member States to establish National Liaison Committees (NLCs) to spur cooperation between researchers, decision-makers and the Programme Secretariat.

Member States are free to establish the structure and composition of a MOST National Liaison Committee according to their own priorities. Liaison Committees are generally constituted with the support of UNESCO National Commissions, in conformity with Resolution 13.11 of the 28th General Conference. Alternatively, any institution with responsibility for scientific policy, such as a national research council, may host a liaison committee.

The composition of NLCs may include social science researchers based in universities or other research institutions and representatives of bodies co-ordinating research funding and of research-user groups such as governments, the private sector, trade unions, professional associations, NGOs or community based organizations.

The Committees serve the following functions:

- identify and motivate national institutions concerned with social science research related to the principle thematic interests of the MOST Programme, with particular emphasis on involving younger generations of researchers and university teachers.
- regularly disseminate information about MOST Programme activities sent by the MOST Secretariat to National Commissions.
- constitute a permanent forum to facilitate the flow of information between UNESCO-MOST and interested national institutions.
- assist the constitution of national research networks.
- assist in obtaining funding for groups participating in MOST projects from national bodies such as national research councils, or appropriate government Ministries (Research, Education, Science and Technology, Social Development, Foreign Affairs etc.).

OTHER PARTNERS

Major international and regional social science organizations and professional bodies are another important category of MOST partners. They provide scientific input to the programme.

AASSREC Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils

ARCM Asian Research Centre for Migration, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University

The Averroès Foundation

CEDEJ Centre égyptien d'Etudes et de Documentation Economiques, Juridiques et Sociales

CEMCI Centro de Estudios Municipales y de Cooperación Internacional

CityNet The Regional Network of Local Authorities for the Management of Human Settlements

CLACSO Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales

CNRS Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique

CODESRIA Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa - Conseil pour le développement de la recherche en sciences sociales en Afrique

CRER Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick, Coventry

DDC Direction du Développement et de la Coopération Suisse (SDC)

EHESS École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales

ETHNIC-L is an interactive list of organized groups, associations and centres interested in promoting research on ethnicity, nationalism, migration and related problems. Members share information in order to support liaison and cooperation between their groups.

EUMENESS The European and Mediterranean Network of the Social Sciences

FLACSO Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales

GEMDEV Groupement d'intérêt scientifique Économie mondiale, Tiers-Monde, Développement

GENIE Global-Problematic Education Network Initiative

ICSSD International Committee for Social Science Information and Documentation

IFLA International Federation of Landscape Architects

ILANUD Instituto Latinoamericano de Naciones Unidas sobre las Drogas

Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology Russian Academy of Sciences

IPA International Association for the Child's Right to Play

IRD (formerly ORSTOM) Institut français de recherche pour le développement

IREC Institut de Recherche sur l'Environnement Construit (Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne)

IRMC Institut de Recherche sur le Maghreb Contemporain

ISA International Sociological Association

IsoCaRP International Society of City and Regional Planners

ISSC/CISS International Social Science Council / Conseil International des Sciences Sociales (More information on ISSC members and other International Social Sciences Associations can also be found at: <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~fredr/sites.htm>)

ITESO Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente, Mexico

Metropolis International Migration & Multicultural Studies Program University of Wollongong, Australia

MUNICIPIA Multilingual Urban Network for the Integration of City Planners and Involved local Actors (site in German)

NARC National Addiction Research Centre (India)

RED&S Réseau Européen Droit et Société

Global Security and Cooperation Program of the Social Science Research Council.

SOLAGRAL

Together Foundation

UIA International Union of Architects/Union Internationale des Architectes

UIM Unión Iberoamericana de Municipalistas

UNU/IAS Institute of Advanced Studies (United Nations University)

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24	International Project on City Words
27	Growing Up in Cities Project (GUIC)
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