



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**Medium-Term Strategy
2002 – 2007
for the Europe Region**

**Contributing to peace and human development
in an era of globalization
through education, the sciences, culture and communication**

**Preliminary text
(Subject to further consultations)**

**Prepared in the light of the discussions held during the
Director-General's Consultation of the National Commissions for UNESCO
of the Europe Region
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Introduction

1. *UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy 2002-2007 (document 31 C/4)* provides for the formulation of regional and sub-regional strategies in close collaboration with all stakeholders (31 C/4 para.32). By its resolution 31 C/1.III, para.10, the General Conference invited the Director-General to ensure the « early preparation of regional and subregional strategies within the framework of the Medium-Term Strategy ».

2. An initial draft of the strategy for the Europe region was discussed by participants in the regional meeting of National Commissions, held from 16 to 18 June 2002 in Budapest, Hungary. It was agreed that the Strategy should be based on the following aspects:

- what can UNESCO do in Europe,
- what can UNESCO do with Europe,
- what can UNESCO do for Europe ?

and vice versa:

- what can Europe do in UNESCO,
- what can Europe do with UNESCO,
- what can Europe do for UNESCO?

I. The setting : developments and challenges in the Europe region

3. UNESCO's Europe region includes North America and the European landmass enclosed by the Atlantic and the Urals, including Israel. Countries of the Europe region share in a broadly similar democratic framework. Many have been strong advocates of the market economy - often in combination with social security and other protection mechanisms. The world's highest average rates of literacy are found in the Europe region and the quality of education overall is high. Countries of the Europe region are considered to be among the primary contributors to and beneficiaries from the processes of globalization.

4. Nevertheless, the Europe region contains a diversity of situations and, indeed, some extreme contrasts. The hallmark of the post-World War II period for Western Europe has been the successful process of European integration which is extending today to the Central and Eastern part of the region. Today the entire continent is braced for an expansion of this integration process to the Eastern part of the European region.

5. A large part of the Europe Region faces a dual challenge: confronting the changes induced by globalization and technological change while also moving away from central planning economies to more open, democratic, free market-oriented systems. As a result, many countries are undergoing profound social transformation with the greater part of the population seeing a decline in livelihoods and an increase in differentiation and social instability.

6. Wealthier states of the Europe region are also confronted with new challenges and particular aspects of social change, often related to the impact of globalisation. Protection of environment, reinforcement of social cohesion, fight against violence and exclusion, integration of immigrant and minority groups, multiculturalism and communitarianism are among these challenges.

7. For the past years, countries of the European region have become central actors in international development cooperation – by providing the lion's share of the world's official

development assistance and by providing home to corporations and private sector actors that bring foreign direct investment to developing countries. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe saw itself ever more as a partner of the developing world, through channels like UNESCO and other multilateral agencies, than as principal beneficiary. Other international, regional and non-governmental organizations such as the European Union, OECD, OSCE, or the Council of Europe became active players. Some of them have considerably larger technical and financial means at their disposal to satisfy individual country or regional needs, but UNESCO's comparative advantage is impartial status and global coverage. There is a need for strengthening existing cooperation between UNESCO and these European organizations - based on clarification and acknowledgement of their respective strengths.

8. Such partnerships will also cover inter-regional cooperation and international cooperation, building upon the wide range of experience and reservoir of expertise and "know how" available in the region, which could be shared with others. Joint initiatives and projects in fields of common interest which could be beneficial to both Europe and other regions will also be encouraged. In this context, the project for an Arab-Euro strategy on "*Learning to live together*"¹ as agreed at the most recent meetings of National Commissions from both regions, is an example of such inter-regional cooperation. It also provides for linkages to other international organizations such as ALECSO and the Council of Europe.

9. Likewise, UNESCO's role as an intellectual forum and a normative and standard-setting organization has been highly relevant for Europe, especially also in the debate on the ethical dimensions of science. European stakeholders also look to UNESCO as regards the promotion of cultural diversity, the struggle for equality and human rights, the fight against exclusion, the reinforcement of social cohesion, education for peace and tolerance, conflict prevention and conflict resolutions, and the protection of minorities and vulnerable groups.

10. The UNESCO Medium-term Strategy, 31 C/4 - the framework for the present document - gives overall strategic objectives covering education, science, culture and communication, as well as two cross-cutting themes: poverty eradication, and the contribution of information and communication technologies in building knowledge societies. UNESCO's pursuit of these objectives - in the Europe region and with the Europe region - will require an increased emphasis on:

- inter- and intra-regional networking
- partnership with Member States (and with empowered National Commissions)
- partnership with international organizations (especially with other UN agencies)
- partnership with regional organizations (including Council of Europe, European Union, OSCE, Stability Pact for South-East Europe)
- partnership with nationally and regionally-based NGOs, civil society and private-sector organizations
- cross-sectoral work among UNESCO Headquarters sectors and bureaux
- effective co-ordination between UNESCO Headquarters, field offices, institutes and centres
- decentralization of UNESCO's programmes
- monitoring and evaluation of UNESCO's programmes

1. Summarized as an Annex to this document.

II. EDUCATION

11. The strategy in the education sector is to concentrate on the EFA challenges, including critical citizenship and democracy, quality of education, human rights education, youth, excluded and vulnerable groups, lifelong learning, education for tolerance as part of a more systematic effort to address the issue of inclusion. UNESCO's three strategic objectives in education form the point of departure for planning at the regional level: promoting education as a universal right; improving the quality of education; promoting innovation and knowledge sharing.

Promoting Education for All (EFA) in the Europe region

12. EFA is a priority for Europe as well as for other regions. UNESCO will continue to encourage Member States to ensure timely completion of national EFA plans and creation of national forums bringing together politic-makers, parliamentarians, practitioners and other civil society stakeholders. UNESCO will also make use of extrabudgetary resources provided by European countries to assist developing countries in preparing their EFA national plans, and will make full use of the experience and potential of the entire education sector, and in particular the International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP) in this context.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *EFA national plans prepared for countries of the Europe region (in the context of existing sectoral plans/strategies);*
- ↳ *Education Committees of Parliaments committed to EFA;*
- ↳ *National forums on basic education operational.*

Focusing on quality education

13. The Regional Framework for Action in Europe and North America adopted by the Conference on Education for All in Europe and North America (Warsaw, Poland, 2000) confirmed the need for redefinition of education (to include the quality of education, the knowledge, skills and understanding for personal development and responsible citizenship); support to groups excluded from the educational system (including learners with special needs); science and technology education. In Eastern Europe decreasing levels of public funding may well have a negative impact on the educational system over the long-term. Likewise, problems of quality and non-discrimination are emerging in Central and Eastern European countries.

14. Countries of the Balkan and Caucasian sub-regions are particularly in need of assistance in building strategies to address the consequences for education of recent conflicts and economic decline – including inadequate school infrastructure, temporary emigration of qualified experts or brain drain, inadequacy of teacher training, collapsed education administration, significant gaps in schooling due to war conditions, financial crisis, ethnicization of curricula and textbooks, lack of adaptation of technical and vocational education to radically reorientated economies.

15. In Western Europe, where universal education is generally assumed, there is concern at the quality of education available to a large number of children - in particular children of immigrants and minority groups. Truancy and violence are common problems, with many

young people entering the labour market without the appropriate level of education or skills. How to prevent the exclusion of young people from education and training – with the associated problems of alienation and violent behaviour – is a preoccupation for education authorities throughout the region.

16. The long-term social impact of these trends may have an effect on the stability and harmony of increasingly multicultural societies. The Regional Framework for Action highlights the importance of lifelong learning, contributing to « learning to live together », education for democratic citizenship, human rights education, education of minorities, and of targeted efforts to address exclusion as well as the teaching of languages (multilingualism). The research into curriculum content carried out by the International Bureau of Education (IBE), as well as the thematic activities devised in the context of the Associated Schools Network Project (ASP) could play a key role in promoting young people's intercultural awareness and understanding of development issues.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Recommendations of Regional Framework for Action for Europe and North America implemented (and reviewed in Dakar Monitoring Report);*
- ↳ *Civics and human rights education established in educational systems;*
- ↳ *Culturally balanced curricula and textbooks introduced in countries in transition, especially countries emerging from conflicts;*
- ↳ *The place of science and technology education strengthened.*

Lifelong learning for EFA

17. Lifelong learning is a central concern for education in the whole Europe region and a pillar for development of EFA in the region. UNESCO will play a key role in addressing this concern, which is reflected in major policy statements, in particular the EU Memorandum on lifelong learning, based on a broad societal debate and consensus, but also on similar dialogues held in other non-EU countries of the region. The realization of the Dakar goals in the Europe region is intimately linked to the acquisition of fundamental skills and competencies for lifelong learning. The aim is not simply access, but access with quality and equity. What key competencies are needed for lifelong learning and knowledge societies in construction will form the core of the EFA agenda in many countries in the Europe region, including countries in transition.

18. Throughout its action in favour of lifelong learning, UNESCO will pay special attention to the challenges and needs of emerging multicultural societies in the context of globalization and to the special needs of countries in transition, which create a standing demand for learning for critical citizenship and democracy.

19. The action of UNESCO will build on several converging initiatives in favour of lifelong learning, including the EU Memorandum, the project on indicators of quality lifelong learning (EU and the Council of Europe), and the OECD work on lifelong learning, literacy skills and key competencies. UNESCO, acting mainly through the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE, Hamburg) will further develop existing inter-agency cooperation on lifelong learning with the EU, OECD, the World Bank, NGOs, CSOs and the private sector.

20. Besides policy dialogue, UNESCO will encourage the development of indicators of quality on lifelong learning and strengthen its cooperation for the development of a

framework on key competencies. A particular focus will be given to education and training of youth, the excluded and vulnerable groups. A special attention will be given to migrant and refugee populations, with the aim to prevent exclusion, alienation and violence. In this context, UNESCO and its partners within Europe will promote studies concerning the issue of inclusion in a broad sense, addressing in particular the issue of equity, access to basic learning services and participation in learning opportunity by all segments of the society, with an emphasis on the most vulnerable groups including migrants and refugees. Attention will be given to the development of evidence-based policy making, based on comparative and competitive assessment of the performance of formal education systems in various countries, including key determinants for achievement such as social background and socio-economic conditions, building on the experience of the OECD-led studies such as PISA and TIMS.

21. In developing lifelong education for EFA, UNESCO will give special to actions related to addressing gender imbalance, integrating learners with special needs and creating conditions for the poorest and most vulnerable groups to reach excellence. It will encourage the creation of national forums on basic education based on the ongoing initiatives in several countries under the aegis of their respective National Commissions for UNESCO. These forums will perform the twin tasks of promoting Dakar follow-up on the national scene and organizing and channelling the cooperation with other countries and regions. The results of these forums will be disseminated as part of the overall process of the EFA follow-up, with the aim of drawing the attention of policy-makers and public opinion in these countries.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Increased awareness of the importance of lifelong learning for EFA in the Europe region, in particular in favour of youth, vulnerable and excluded populations.*
- ↳ *Promotion of comprehensive lifelong learning policy frameworks*
- ↳ *Development of indicators of quality lifelong learning*
- ↳ *Promotion of education for peace, post-conflict, citizenship and democracy as an integral part of lifelong learning*
- ↳ *Increased inter- and cross-regional exchange on lifelong learning in favour of developing countries, countries in transition, post-conflict countries and other groups benefiting from UNESCO's mainstreaming approach (Africa, least developed countries, women and youth)*

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

22. The Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (Seoul, 1999) promulgated the concept of 'technical and vocational education and training for all as a lifelong process' and described how young people may develop the competencies and skills to fulfil their aspirations, contribute to sustainable development and live as responsible citizens in pluralistic societies. With the recent establishment of the UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC) in Bonn, managing a world-wide network of 205 Centres in 136 countries, UNESCO has a unique institutional platform for cooperation in TVET - within Europe and with other regions. Through the operations of UNEVOC, the Organization will serve as a clearing house for services and knowledge management, support the sharing of best practices and promote inter-agency cooperation, including with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the European Training

Foundation (ETF), the World Bank and regional development banks as well as OECD and the EU with respect to life-long learning in general. UNESCO will also work to improve contacts between TVET policy-makers, employers organizations, education and training providers, students, trainees, adult learners and other customer groups.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Technical and vocational training integrated within educational systems in all countries;*
- ↳ *Existing normative instruments - Convention on Technical and Vocational Education (1989); Revised Recommendation Concerning Technical and Vocational Education (2001) and Recommendations from the Seoul Congress fully implemented;*
- ↳ *Best and innovative practices in TEVT shared within the Europe region and with other regions.*

Higher Education

23. UNESCO's strategic priorities in higher education are based on the outcomes of the **World Conference on Higher Education** (Paris, 1998), in particular the agreed Framework for Action, which in the Europe region, is supplemented by the recommendations from the Palermo European Regional Forum (Palermo, 1997). In this context, and taking into account planned measures to establish by the year 2010 the European Higher Education Area, UNESCO will :

- support the modernization, diversification and development of higher education (at the level of the individual institution and of the system);
- contribute to increased academic mobility, especially through implementation of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention (the Lisbon Convention);
- encourage Member States to improve the status of higher education personnel and their professional development;
- contribute to the transfer of knowledge and expertise in research and policy-making, especially through the operation of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme;
- through the activities carried out by UNESCO- CEPES, promote reform and innovations in higher education (at the system and institutional level) in the region, especially in countries in transition.

24. UNESCO's main partners in its higher education programmes will be national authorities, individual higher education institutions, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and OECD – as well as the European University Association (EUA) and other non-governmental organizations based in the region. In order to maintain a required broad range of activities, especially those of UNESCO-CEPES, regular funding needs to be supplemented from extrabudgetary sources. Potential contributions could be individual Member States as well as the European Commission, the World Bank and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Quality of higher education enhanced through modernisation of institutional management, international cooperation and staff training and development;*
- ↳ *Assistance provided in the context of creation of the European Higher Education Area;*

↳ *Recommendations of World Conference on Higher Education - and Palermo European Forum - implemented.*

25. The **use of ICTs in education** will be a key element in UNESCO's strategy for the Europe Region where differences among countries in this field – and hence the digital divide - are substantial: countries with highly developed education systems are making use of advanced pedagogical approaches and newest ICTs, while others are only beginning to have widespread access to these tools. Drawing on the initial activities of the Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), UNESCO will be challenged to help alleviate a growing gap in educational development and delivery systems, especially by assisting the European countries of the CIS, Baltic and the South-East, Central and Eastern Europe countries. This will also be a major focus for the World Summit on the Information Society (2003 and 2005).

26. The 'e-Europe Action Plan', adopted at the 2000 European Council in Lisbon, sets out the objectives and timelines, among others through the use of digital tools in education and training. The European Commission's 'e-Learning: Designing Tomorrow's Education' initiative sets out principles, objectives and lines of action for e-learning. To expand e-learning initiatives and to make them a cooperative activity throughout the Europe region will require interdisciplinary work and intersectoral contributions. Emphasis will be placed on the dissemination of research results in ICT-induced changing dynamics of the teaching-learning process and its impact on content and teacher-learner interaction, in particular as regards distance education and teacher training and development. To ensure the free flow of, and equitable access to knowledge, information, data and best practices on ICT application in education, UNESCO will seek to:

- integrate ICTs into the educational systems of all countries in the region, including the diversification of curricula and review of teaching and learning methods;
- increase the professional skills of teachers and trainers in using ICTs;
- stimulate the development, adaptation and sharing of innovative pedagogical methods that integrate the use of technology within broader cross-curriculum approaches;
- stimulate networking at all levels of the education system, including life-long learning, and across all areas of the curriculum.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *ICTs introduced in education (including the training of educational personnel, pedagogical methods adapted, and relevant content prepared*
- ↳ *National e-learning policies and plans formulated;*
- ↳ *National e-learning capacities strengthened as an effective delivery system at all levels of education;*
- ↳ *Public access to information, knowledge, data and best practices ensured for educational purposes.*

Partnerships in Education

27. UNESCO's partners will include other United Nations agencies and programmes, the European Union, the Council of Europe, other intergovernmental organizations such as OECD, and regional bodies such as OSCE and the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe. They will also include NGOs, civil society and the private sector. UNESCO will take further steps

to realize the full value of the presence in the region of its institutes and centers in education – reflecting the concentration of educational innovation as a whole. These institutes and centers will have a key role to play in promoting intra-and inter-regional networking, among teaching, administrative and research staff.

28. Much of the cooperation in education currently underway within the Europe region and with other regions takes place without UNESCO's direct involvement. In order to enhance UNESCO's contribution, consideration will be given to the creation of new mechanisms for cross-regional dialogue on education. A European Education Forum, for example, which would bring together European education specialists with their counterparts from other regions, could also help foster a cross-regional thematic dialogue on education outside the established cooperation for development frameworks.

III. NATURAL SCIENCES

29. The diversity of cultures and historical traditions in Europe can be regarded as one of the region's great strengths. It also has significance for scientific development in all countries of the region. The diversity of environmental conditions across Europe must also be acknowledged. This coupled with differing approaches to sustainable development has emerged as a source of unbalance between countries. The region as a whole shows relatively high levels of scientific development, with scientific knowledge being considered as a driving force for socio-economic and cultural development. Science is considered to be a priority area for cooperation in most countries of the region.

30. Science can make a significant contribution to constructive dialogue between cultures and civilizations and can support regional cohesion. The implementation of the planned Common European Research Area will encourage convergence of scientific activities undertaken in the various countries of the region and is expected to hasten political and socio-economic integration. Success in this context will require effective coordination at regional and national levels of science policy, innovation and science–society dialogue, as well as in the development of institutional and human capacities in science and engineering.

31. During the last decade most, if not all, transition countries have experienced a marked decline in their overall science capacity, following the profound economic recession and the conflicts which have taken place in South-East Europe. The level of governmental funding allocated to scientific R&D has been steadily declining and in certain cases the GERD/GDP (Gross Expenditure on Research and Development/Gross Domestic Product) ratio has become critically low. Moreover, R&D as a priority is disappearing from national agendas in the majority of European countries, including the countries of the European Union where state investment in research is also declining.

32. UNESCO's medium-term objectives for its work in science, in the Europe region as much as anywhere else, are based on the recommendations of the **World Conference on Science** (1999), convened jointly by UNESCO and the International Council for Science (ICSU). The Conference proposed a new relationship between science and society, and encouraged the development of a science that better responds to society's needs and expectations. It also recognized that all regions need to increase substantially the number of scientific researchers by attracting more young people, and by expanding participation by women in scientific professions.

33. The countries of the European Region, with their substantial scientific resources and pedagogical expertise, are key partners in the implementation of UNESCO's programmes in favour of developing countries. UNESCO's role will be to facilitate knowledge-sharing and the exchange of experiences and best practices at regional and international level. The ethics of science and technology is also a major concern : almost all European countries are involved in, and exposed to, scientific and technological innovations; their consequences and ethical dimensions have been addressed in this region more than others. This experience can be harnessed by UNESCO for application on an international scale in the context of the **World Commission on Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST)**; the **International Bioethics Committee**, and the **Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee**.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Existing normative instruments implemented (including the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome);*
- ↳ *Existing regional networks strengthened –facilitating exchange of information and best practices in scientific matters, especially those with significance to human security.*

Science policy and innovation in Europe

34. UNESCO will encourage harmonization of national science policies drawing attention to the potential benefits for European integration. The Organization will strongly advocate the creation and development of a Common European Research Area and will facilitate regional debate on a common European science policy among high-level officials and representatives of scientific communities. Special attention will be devoted to promoting the involvement of young scientists and women in science and technology through the creation of more favourable conditions for their scientific careers, their participation in research projects and scientific events, as well as in the elaboration and implementation of science and technology policies at national and regional levels. UNESCO will seek cooperation with other relevant bodies in carrying out case studies on aspects of science policy of relevance to specific countries or groups of countries and will encourage an evidence-based approach in national science planning. It will facilitate improved networking among organizations and institutions working in the field of science policies at regional, sub-regional and national levels. Public participation in scientific decision-making will be promoted. Cooperation with the private sector, whose investment in R&D, in many countries, exceeds that spent by governments, will be expanded.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Recommendations concerning the harmonization of science policy at national and sub-regional levels addressed to national governments and to the Council of Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS);*
- ↳ *Levels of participation by young people and women in science policy formulation increased;*
- ↳ *Levels of participation by young people and women in science sector employment increased.*

Capacity building in the basic sciences and engineering

35. UNESCO will seek to enhance and promote science education at all levels and in both formal and informal settings. Cooperation between research and educational institutions will

be fostered through the exchange of expertise in science curricula design at all levels of education, with a view to their improvement and their being made more effective and attractive for students of different levels of education. Particular attention will be paid to the Central, Eastern and Southeast European Countries. Capacity building will be fostered in the management of research and innovation processes in countries in transition through the intensive training and retraining of scientists and engineers, as well as the elaboration of teaching and learning packages for university students and for young researchers and engineers, especially young women. Priority will also be given to the creation and development of regional and sub-regional cooperative networks of research institutions, universities, professional associations and individual scientists, to facilitate the sharing of research facilities and scientific information and knowledge.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Human and institutional capacities enhanced;*
- ↳ *Existing networks and cooperative programmes for exchanges and sharing of scientific knowledge between scholars, researchers, and science educators strengthened;*
- ↳ *The role of ICTs in scientific exchange and cooperation, including through virtual universities, enhanced;*
- ↳ *Capacity of scientists and journalists to communicate on science and technology enhanced, - contributing to a richer and more enlightened public debate on science-related issues.*

Science for sustainable development

36. The quest for sustainable development will remain a central guiding principle of the Organization's activities in both the natural as well as the social and human sciences.' UNESCO can be the champion for stimulating and engaging the sciences in support of sustainable development, especially through capacity building, knowledge sharing and the promotion of international and regional cooperation. The four intergovernmental science programmes - **International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP), International Hydrological Programme (IHP), Man and the Biosphere (MAB) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)** - offer an appropriate framework for involvement in follow-up to the **World Summit on Sustainable Development** (Johannesburg, 2002). Furthermore, in line with the recommendations of the World Conference on Science, activities will be developed that seek to validate traditional and local knowledge of the indigenous people in respect to natural resources management and bring it into play with modern scientific knowledge, whilst protecting the rights of owners of that knowledge.

37. Water resources is a priority for UNESCO's current biennial programme - 2002-2003. Medium-term objectives for the Europe region are to enhance technical cooperation, particularly in South East Europe and the Danube basin, and also to promote links with other regions, by mobilizing IHP National Committees and other European water organizations. Topics that will be emphasized are ecohydrology, urban water management, climatic change effects on the hydrological cycle and drought mitigation in the SEE countries, and land subsidence in the Balkans. The Organization will also work to encourage full implementation by countries of the region of the Helsinki Convention on International Waters and the Convention on Groundwater Protection.

38. Through the MAB programme, UNESCO will seek to define a common strategy on biodiversity conservation and integrated ecosystem management, building on existing biosphere reserves, improving their functioning and promoting new sites, especially transboundary biosphere reserves. Countries in Central and East Europe will be the focus of attempts to integrate local and regional ecosystem management in sustainable development. Work in earth sciences and natural hazards will be led by ICGP, with the sharing of geoscientific knowledge and techniques providing basic data and guidelines to sustainable development of the Earth's surface.

39. Regional objectives in ocean research and related scientific services, through the IOC, include development of the global ocean observing system (GOOS), in the Black Sea (Black Sea GOOS), in the Mediterranean (MedGOOS) and in the Adriatic (CAOS Programme). UNESCO will encourage cooperation and exchange between research institutions and marine agencies, in order to strengthen local capacity across the region.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Knowledge base improved and scientific methodologies developed in support of sustainable natural resources management;*
- ↳ *Policy-relevant and application-oriented sound science developed, with a measurable impact on the formulation of scientific and resource policies of Member States;*
- ↳ *Interdisciplinary project on the Volga River and Caspian Sea basin implemented, to demonstrate ecosystem study and management.*

Reconstruction of scientific cooperation in the South-Eastern European Countries (SEEC)

40. The countries of South-East Europe have experienced almost a decade of socio-economic and political turbulence, leading in some cases to military conflict. Action is urgently needed to help in restoring scientific and socio-economic cooperation – to expand academic and professional links with other European countries, and thereby to contribute to peaceful integration in the region as a whole. Following the Ministerial Round Table (October 2001) and the High-level Meeting on SEE (April 2002), UNESCO's action will focus on the creation and development of cooperative scientific networks in different fields of basic and applied science and their linkage with pan-European networks, the design and implementation of electronic communication networks for dissemination and sharing scientific knowledge, and on the capacity building in science and technology necessary to bring about socio-economic and cultural development of South-Eastern Europe.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Scientific capacity of the SEEC countries increased;*
- ↳ *Involvement by South-East European countries in pan-European scientific cooperation strengthened;*
- ↳ *Involvement by SEE countries in pan-European scientific socio-economic and political integration strengthened.*

Partnerships in science

41. Success in the European arena in science requires the Organization to enter into dynamic relationships with a range of partners. Likely partnerships in the area of science are

the European Union (Parliament and Commission), the Council of Europe, OECD, regional NGOs such as the European Association for the Promotion of Science and Technology (Euroscience), the Association of European Academies (ALLEA), the International Association of Academies and Sciences (IAAS), the European Science Foundation (ESF) and Academia Europaea, the NATO Scientific Council as well as national academies and research institutions, and national universities. UNESCO programmes in scientific capacity-building can also be supported from among the many internationally known research and teaching institutions located in the Europe region.

IV. SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES

42. While countries of the Europe region show great variation in their economic and social structures, all now face similar challenges in managing rapid and profound social change. In many cases, established social and political institutions have been unable to adapt to accelerating processes of science and technology, and their influence in the economy.

43. The military conflicts which re-appeared in Europe at the end of the twentieth century (for example, in the former Yugoslavia and Chechnya) threaten peace and development in the region. Such conflicts will be not resolved by military means, or as a result of political settlement alone. UNESCO must re-double its efforts to encourage respect for universal human rights and freedoms – including by means of cross-sectoral collaboration in human rights education.

44. There are further challenges arising from the management of diversity and pluralism, including:-

- the prevention and resolution of conflicts between minority and majority populations
- large-scale migration and displacement of people, especially from minority cultural and ethnic groups
- demographic changes, resulting from falling birth rates and the progressive ageing of populations

45. The ethical dimensions of advances in **science and technology** are of concern to UNESCO work in the natural sciences and social human sciences equally. Building upon the work of the **World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST)**, the **International Bioethics Committee**, and the **Intergovernmental Committee for Bioethics**, UNESCO will encourage awareness of these issues among policy-makers and support broadened civil society debate.

46. The focus for UNESCO's action will be:

- creation and operation of national, sub-regional or regional forum-type mechanisms to discuss issues of accelerated social change and ethics, involving highest possible experts and policy-makers;
- development of practical applications in the form of standard setting, policy advice, model solutions/best practices, which should be widely circulated;
- establishment of networks among researchers focusing on different aspects of common problems and challenges in line with the MOST approach;

- support to capacity-building through support to social science researchers in transition countries; and for creation of pan-European networks for researchers to foster joint research and financial support;
- encouragement to governments, especially in countries of transition, to develop concepts and strategies drawing on social science advice, including aspects of good governance, human rights, tolerance, non-discrimination, empowerment of women, social partnership of the governmental and non-governmental sector.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *National, sub-regional and regional fora established and active to address topical social problems;*
- ↳ *Research networks established among national and regional institutions and teams to address challenges of management of social transformation in the various sub-regions;*
- ↳ *Civil society debate on topical issues (including management of social change) expanded, lowering in the process social and cultural tensions;*

Partnerships in social and human sciences

47. UNESCO's partners will include the professional associations which are traditionally strong in many countries of the region – for example, the International Social Sciences Council – as well as relevant multi-lateral agencies such as OHCHR, OSCE and UNDP (CCS, CCA and UWDAF processes) and the World Bank (for the PRSP process).

V. CULTURE

48. UNESCO is the only organization of the United Nations system with culture as a central part of its mandate. Its medium-term strategy for the Europe region builds on wide recognition of its action in this field, notably the outcomes of the **World Commission on Culture and Development**, and its report *Our Creative Diversity*, the conclusions of the **Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies** (Stockholm 1998) as well as the **Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity**.

49. The Europe region is characterized by a strong sense of unity and identity, together with cultural diversity. The Declaration on Cultural Diversity may therefore serve as a major point of orientation and departure for intercultural dialogue in the region. In many Eastern European countries, in particular transition countries, culture is a major factor of identity due to accelerated social change. As disparities in social conditions are growing, there is a danger of cultural destabilization. Countries are faced with brain drain, collapse of cultural institutions and industries, a lack of modern management of cultural institutions, the impoverishment of culture professionals, the heritage of a denigrated « popular » culture in the former society and the loss of traditions.

50. UNESCO's implementation of the Action Plan of the Declaration on Cultural Diversity, and co-ordination of the **United Nations Dialogue Among Civilizations** programme, will encourage reflection on differing cultural traditions and their influence on social cohesion. UNESCO will seek to promote a positive valuation of difference and consensus on shared underlying values. The project for an **Arab-Euro Dialogue**, initiated by National Commissions of the Arab States and Europe regions, will address similar issues.

51. Capacity-building in the area of normative action will be encouraged to ensure improved protection of cultural heritage, in its tangible and intangible forms thus contributing to the protection of the region's cultural diversity.

52. UNESCO's Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity provides a new channel for co-operation in the development of creative industries through capacity-building and interregional cooperation. The Global Alliance seeks to support diversity by strengthening local cultural industries and preventing piracy. For some countries in the region, cultural industries represent a burgeoning sector of the economy, while in others – in Eastern Europe,

for example – established cultural institutions have declined as a consequence of economic disruption. UNESCO can help in re-building professional capacity and in integrating internationally accepted management practices – including ICT support. In the area of cultural heritage, the ongoing privatization of cultural properties constitutes yet another threat to cultural heritage, and historical districts (urban and rural) are threatened by uncontrolled development. At the same time, culture can become, if adequately sustained, a major unifying topic and a motor for general development processes in transition countries. It has an equally important role to play in addressing the different problems arising from economic regeneration – including the privatization of cultural properties and the distortion or destruction of historic buildings by unregulated commercial development.

53. Planned activity in the culture sector will include:-

- support for implementation by Member States of existing normative instruments relating to tangible and intangible heritage, and encouragement of additional national measures and legislations where appropriate
- support to institutional capacity-building, including staff training and development
- support to intra- and inter-regional exchange and co-operation regarding culture and development, in particular in the area of cultural goods and services
- pursuit of additional legal protection for the rights of artists and creators
- preparation of a Draft Recommendation on Multilingualism in Cyberspace
- cross-sectoral collaboration to support improved educational content regarding creativity, heritage and inter-cultural dialogue

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *International conventions and other agreements ratified and operational in all countries of the region;*
- ↳ *National legislation reviewed and strengthened in transition countries in particular with regard to heritage protection;*
- ↳ *Regional fora created and developed for co-operation and exchange in the protection and promotion of tangible and intangible cultural heritage;*
- ↳ *Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity supported by a majority of countries in the region*
- ↳ *Heritage education fostering intercultural dialogue incorporated into formal education provision in majority of countries in the region.*

Partnerships in Culture

54. UNESCO will partner with universities, academies and specialized institutes and pursue closer links with other multi-lateral bodies having an interest in cultural issues – the Council of Europe and European, OSCE, IOM, UNDP, WIPO and UNCTAD. It will also look for synergy with the many programmes initiated by local, national and regional bodies in relation to cultural diversity and pluralism.

VI. Communication and Information

55. Though the prevailing level of application of ICTs is relatively high in the region as a whole, there are significant differences between Western and Eastern/South Eastern and

Central Europe and individual countries in terms of economic, social and institutional development, access to ICTs and information in general as well as conditions in which the media operate. In a context of changing patterns of media ownership, a high priority will continue to be given in the Europe region to the promotion of freedom of expression and independence of the media. While Western European nations enjoy advanced ICT applications in education or scientific research, newly independent states and countries in transition to democracy in Eastern Europe do not present a standard level of ICT infrastructure such as the Internet and networking, especially in rural areas. Special attention should therefore be paid to the Central and Eastern Countries, and notably those affected by conflicts, which adversely affect their socio-economic transformation and their transition towards democracy.

Access to information and ICT capacity building

56. Intra-regional cooperation is essential to contribute to ICT capacity building and bridging the “digital divide” especially in countries in transition. While addressing the challenges facing the sector globally, efforts will focus in particular on building cooperative links between West and Eastern Europe for the exchange of expertise among ICT institutions and universities. In this context, priority will be given to the development and strengthening of institutional and human capacities in ICTs through the promotion and improvement of distance learning and training at all levels of national educational systems. The countries in transition and the Baltic States will be accorded particular attention in mobilizing international support. Intra-regional collaborative pilot projects and experiments will also be initiated or pursued in such fields as virtual libraries, virtual learning communities and laboratories, multipurpose community telecentres and digitization of the cultural heritage especially in the framework of the “Memory of the World” programme. Partnerships will be developed to build a public domain information base.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *Regional networks for exchange and co-operation in information management established and operational;*
- ↳ *Regional networks (and a Regional Academy) for exchange and co-operation in distance education established and operational;*
- ↳ *Partnerships and collaborative projects developed or reinforced in such fields as telematics applications for scientific research.*

Europe in the information society

57. In a global environment marked by rapid developments of information and communication technologies, international intellectual cooperation is essential to formulate and agree upon globally shared ethical, cultural and societal values for ensuring equitable access to information for all. The strategy aims at fostering international and regional reflections on issues related to the information society such as access to quality contents and information in the public domain; ensuring freedom of expression in the use of ICTs; promoting multilingualism and universal access to cyberspace; ethical, legal and societal consequences of ICT developments. Action will involve cooperating closely with Member States and all partners in the region, IGO (such as the European Union), NGOs and engaging civil society and the private sector.

58. In preparation of the **World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)** (Geneva, 2003; Tunis, 2005) UNESCO will consult Members States including through National Commissions and intergovernmental bodies such as the **Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All (IFAP) Programme**, professional communities and civil society. To contribute to the Declaration of Principles and for the Plan of Action that the Summit is expected to adopt, the Organization is holding a series of regional pre-conferences, thematic consultations and forums for discussions on the regional specificities and challenges of the information society in the areas of education, science, culture and communication (including the Regional Pre-Conference for Europe on “Information Cultures and Information Interests” Mainz (Germany), June 2002, and the international symposium on “Freedom of Expression in the Information Society” Paris (France), November 2002).

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *National and regional policy fora established and operational on ethical, legal and sociocultural aspects of the information society;*
- ↳ *All major stakeholders involved in identifying and defining a common vision, guiding principles and guidelines for the development of an information society;*
- ↳ *Statistical data on current usage of ICT including key indicators on economic and social impact of ICTs, developed and made available to policy-makers and researchers.*

Media and freedom of expression

59. UNESCO supported some of the first encounters between media professionals from Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe and North America. The European seminar on promoting independent and pluralistic media (Sofia, 1997) focused on Eastern and Central Europe and the urgency of the situation in many of the countries in transition. The Sofia Declaration focuses on ensuring the free flow of news and information and the abolition of arbitrary restrictions on newsprint, transmitter systems and ICTs. It also emphasizes the vital importance of protection of journalists and securing their right to pursue their professional endeavor.

60. UNESCO will encourage European and international partnerships in strengthening independent and pluralistic media, capacity-building and policy formulation in communication media, cultural diversity and linguistic pluralism in media, and editorially independent public service broadcasting throughout the region. Efforts to promote freedom of expression, media and democracy will focus on (i) developing legal and policy framework, including measures to promote free access to information and the development of editorially independent public service broadcasting; (ii) encouraging dialogue and exchanges among media professionals, government officials, parliamentarians, and other non-media actors on the role of the media and the benefits of professional and independent media systems; (iii) strengthening the media in reconciliation and peace building processes which will entail facilitating access of population to non-partisan information and supporting capacity building in this area and dialogue among media professionals; and (iv) promoting effective use of ICTs in gathering, processing and providing news and information. Special attention will be given to gender mainstreaming into programs and projects and to improving access to information for youth with a view to ensuring their full participation in society.

Expected outcomes:

- ↳ *National media legislation reviewed and enhanced (including removal of restrictions on access to information and establishment of monitoring mechanisms for editorial independence);*
- ↳ *Training of media professionals enhanced (including awareness of gender issues and human rights); networking and professional exchange among media professionals strengthened (including the establishment of independent and representative journalist associations);*
- ↳ *Access of population to non- partisan information facilitated and research in key areas of media in conflict areas and exchange of information encouraged;*
- ↳ *Media capacities in conflict and post conflict sub-regions enhanced through financial and technical support;*
- ↳ *Technical capacity in broadcasting enhanced, especially in Eastern, Central European countries.*

Partnership in communication and information

61. Likely partners are:

- national and regional media networks (including professional associations)
- multilateral agencies supporting the development of communication and information infrastructure (including the European Broadcasting Union and International Telecommunications Union)
- nationally and regionally based NGOs
- universities and other research and teaching institutions

VII. Mobilising Civil Society

62. UNESCO's medium-term strategy for Europe, as for other regions, includes an expansion of outreach to existing and new civil society partners. The mobilisation of these groups is essential to ensure enhanced visibility for UNESCO and the optimal impact of its programmes.

63. In conformity with para. 37 of the Medium-Term Strategy (31 C/4 approved), National Commissions should play a central role in this process at country level so as to coordinate appropriate partners such as NGOs, the Associated Schools Network, the UNESCO Clubs Movement, Parliamentarians and the private sector.

Annex

Arab-Europe Strategy, *Learning to Live Together*

as adopted by the National Commissions of the Arab States
(4-8 June 2002, Rabat)

and the National Commissions of the Europe Region
(14-18 June 2002, Budapest)

Outline Strategy

Framework: UNESCO's Medium Term Strategy 2002-2007 (31 C/4 approved)

- in particular the following **strategic objectives**:-

- *Promoting education as a fundamental right*
- *Improving the quality of education*
- *Promoting experimentation, innovation and the diffusion and sharing of information*
- *Safeguarding cultural diversity and encouraging dialogue among cultures and civilizations*

and relevant strategic sub-objectives.

Within the cross-cutting theme on information and communication technologies, the following strategic objective:-

- *Enhancing learning opportunities through access to diversified contents and delivery systems.*

The Arab-Europe inter-regional strategy includes the following elements:-

- i) **inter-agency co-operation** with regional intergovernmental organizations active in this field, such as ALECSO, the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Council of Europe, the European Union and OSCE.
- ii) **mobilization of civil society through National Commissions** and International or regional NGOs
- iii) **mechanism for the implementation** of priority projects, including the establishment of in-house as well as inter-agency co-ordination and provision of matching funds.

Expected outcomes include:

- i) wide dissemination and promotion of the Delors Report (Report of the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century) and the results of the 46th session of the ICE within Ministries of Education, teacher training institutions and curriculum development centres, and organization of exchanges between practitioners and policy-makers; networking of teacher-training institutions of both regions

- ii) Support to Member States and their National Commissions for youth exchange, notably through twinning arrangements between schools from both regions participating in the ASP;
- iii) Comparative analysis of curricula and school textbooks in several countries of both regions, and publication of a special issue of the Journal *Prospects* on the Euro-Arab dialogue;
- iv) Preparation of a revised version of the Practical Guide for human rights education and education for tolerance and dialogue among cultures and civilizations, complemented by a selection of best practices for Learning to Live Together and Education for Citizenship in co-operation with the Council of Europe and ALECSO;
- v) In support of the Plan Arabia, establishment of a network of higher education institutions specializing in teaching and research on the cultural diversity of the Arab World (including those from regions other than the Arab States and Europe);
- vi) Encouraging inter-university co-operation between the two regions, notably through joint research projects (e.g. in the field of image studies) and participation in the UNESCO Chairs network (in all Major programmes);
- vii) Support to cultural festivals, exhibition and cultural information seminars that develop and foster the Arab-Europe Dialogue;
- viii) Demonstration of the impact of ICT-based alternative delivery systems through pilot projects such as multilingual UNESCO Education Servers for Human Rights and Democracy; making use of the evaluation of the existing server in the Europe region (Sarajevo) for the establishment of similar services for the Arab States region.
- ix) Collection of best practices for dissemination of knowledge on the other region in the media through workshops organized in collaboration with journalists and their professional associations, contests and encouraging co-operation and exchange between media of the two regions.