

# Frequently Asked Questions about UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations



Sector for External Relations and Cooperation  
Division of Relations with National Commissions and New Partnerships  
Section for UNESCO Clubs and New Partnerships



“ Since Wars begin  
in the minds of Men,  
it is in the minds of Men  
that the defences of Peace  
must be constructed. ”

*(Preamble of the UNESCO Constitution)*

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# WHAT IS UNESCO?

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, was established on 16 November 1945. It has its headquarters in Paris, France and has 55 Field Offices worldwide. As of August 2003, there are 189 Member States, and 6 Associate Members.

address Internet : <http://www.unesco.org>

## 1. What are UNESCO Clubs, Centres, Associations?

- ❑ UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations\* are groups of people of all ages, from all walks of life, and from all over the world, who share a firm belief in the ideals of UNESCO as spelled out in its Constitution and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- ❑ Most are grouped in regional and international networks and are involved in global issues that affect local situations. The Clubs' actions are based on sharing, solidarity and exchange, with projects in all of UNESCO's priority areas and reflecting national policy objectives.

## 2. When was the first UNESCO Club founded? How many Clubs are there now?

- ❑ The UNESCO Clubs movement grew up spontaneously following the creation of UNESCO – a popular movement for world peace to support a new Organization and a symbol of the enthusiasm and idealism of its founders.  
The first UNESCO Club was set up in Japan – in Sendai-City on 19 July 1947, even before this country became a member of UNESCO.
- ❑ In November 1949, Mr. Jaime Terres-Bodet, then Director-General of UNESCO, launched an appeal for the creation of UNESCO Clubs in secondary schools and universities. Following that appeal, the UNESCO Clubs movement gradually spread throughout the world. In 2001, there were more than 5,000 clubs\* in more than 120 countries.



*\*The term UNESCO Club is the one most frequently used, although several countries choose to call them UNESCO associations, centres, circles, or friends of UNESCO. They all refer to the same type of entity.*

### 3. What is the relationship between UNESCO Clubs and UNESCO?

❑ Although UNESCO allows its name to be used by the Clubs, there is no official link between the Organization and these associations, which are the responsibility of the National Commission for UNESCO in their country.

❑ The National Commissions provide a link between each Member State and UNESCO and act in an advisory, executive and information capacity to their own governments and to UNESCO.

❑ UNESCO's rule has always been to respect the Clubs' freedom. It therefore refuses to become unduly involved in their establishment and development. It does, however, try to help them by providing intellectual, material or financial assistance, as appropriate.



### 4. What are the aims of UNESCO Clubs?

❑ The aims of UNESCO Clubs are those of the Organization itself, as proclaimed in its Constitution: "to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations."

### 5. What are the main functions of UNESCO Clubs?

❑ UNESCO Clubs have three main functions: training, dissemination of information and action. Action is the essential condition for the existence of a UNESCO Club – the other functions do not take on their full value unless they lead to action.

### 6. What is the structure of a UNESCO Club?

❑ Originally, Clubs were mainly for young people; nowadays, adult and mixed Clubs (which bring together young people and adults) are becoming much more frequent. A major feature of the Club movement is the great flexibility of its structures.

❑ National Commissions have encouraged the creation of National Federations, which co-ordinate the work of individual Clubs, propose common activities and guidelines for Clubs in the same country, provide them with documentation and encourage contacts with Clubs and similar bodies abroad.



## 7. What kind of activities are organized by UNESCO Clubs?

- ❑ The following list gives a few examples of activities carried out by UNESCO Clubs. While the activities are varied, depending on, among other things, the age and interests of the Club's members, the environment in which it is located, its financial resources and means of action, they all share two common characteristics – their non-profit-making nature and their fidelity to the spirit of UNESCO.
  - Study of basic documents: Constitution of UNESCO, the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, etc.
  - Participation in the International Years proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly and UNESCO
  - Promotion of literacy, environmental conservation, preservation of cultural heritage
  - Organization of work and study camps
  - Production of periodical newsletters or information documents
  - Translation and/or adaptation into national and local languages of basic texts and documents of UNESCO and the United Nations



## 8. What is the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA)? What is its role?

- ❑ The First World Congress of UNESCO Clubs met at UNESCO Headquarters in April 1978 and unanimously adopted the principle of establishing a World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA).
- ❑ The Federation was officially founded in July 1981, and its General Secretariat is located in Paris, France. Its Executive Board has a President and ten members, two for each geographical region defined by UNESCO. The Federation provides general co-ordination services and encourages active co-operation among National Federations through interregional and sub-regional programmes.



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Centres and Associations (WFUCA)  
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## 9. I would like to participate in the UNESCO Club movement in my country. What should I do?

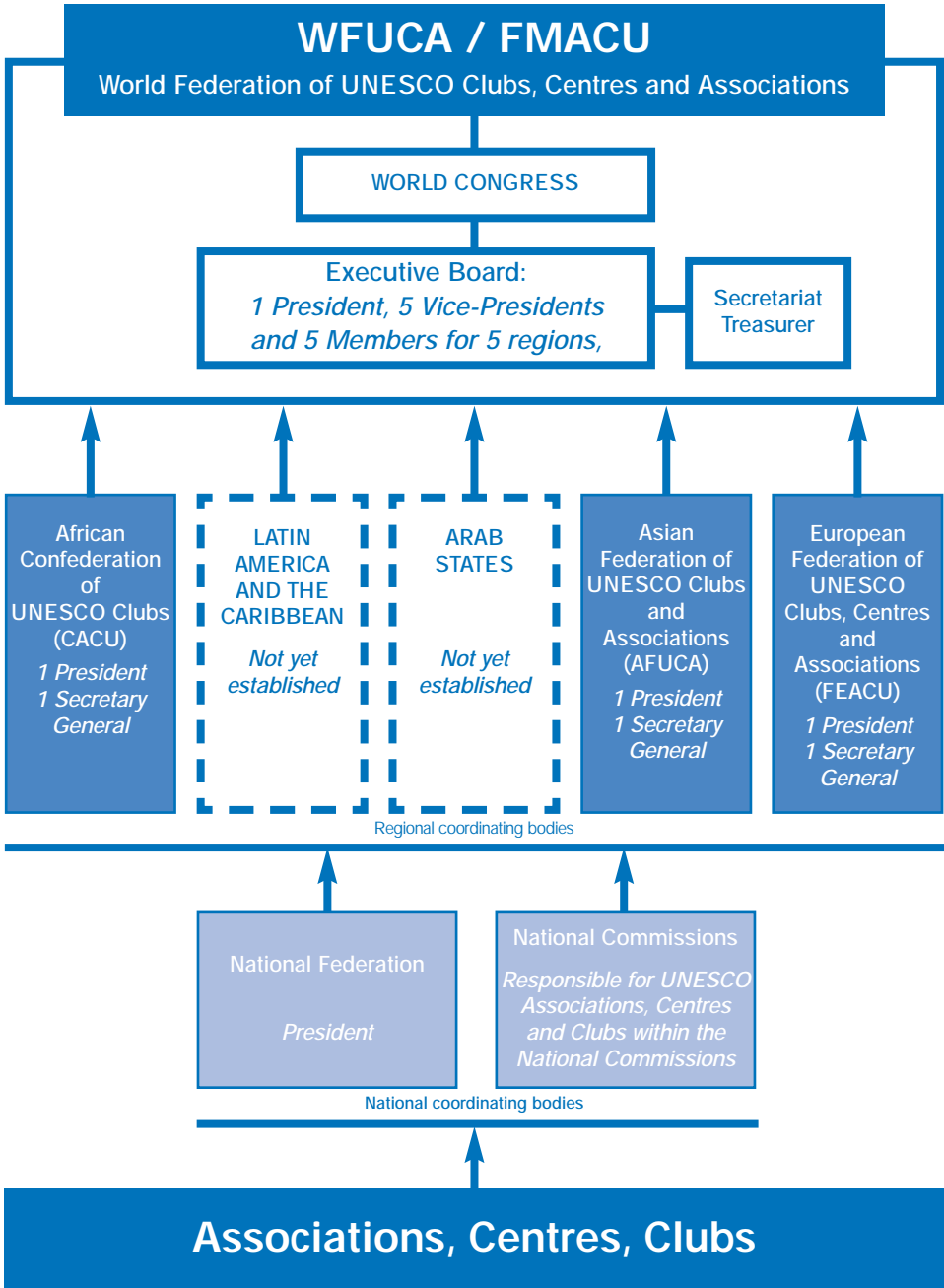
- ❑ The first step is to contact the National Commission for UNESCO or the National Federation in your country to see if any Clubs already exist and to find out about their activities. If no UNESCO Club exists, the National Commission will give you the information you need to help set one up.
- ❑ In principal and for a better management, each Club should be affiliated to the National Federation or coordinating body and be known to the National Commission for UNESCO of their respective country.

## 10. Who is responsible for UNESCO Clubs in the UNESCO Secretariat?

- ❑ The Division of Relations with National Commissions and New Partnerships (ERC/NCP), Sector for External Relations and Co-operation, is responsible for the relations with the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA) and its member Federations.
- ❑ For further information please contact:
  - Section for UNESCO Clubs and  
New Partnerships (ERC/NCP/PTS)
  - Tel.: (33-1) 45.68.18.80/ 45. 68. 15.81
  - Fax: (33-1) 45.68.55.40
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[www.unesco.org/communities/clubs](http://www.unesco.org/communities/clubs)
- ❑ The following documents are available from the UNESCO Secretariat:
  - *UNESCO Clubs Manual* ( end 2003),
  - *International Directory of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations,*
  - *Directory of National Commissions for UNESCO*
  - *Brochure Partnership with UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations,*
  - *Frequently Asked Questions about UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations.*



# GLOBAL VIEW OF THE UNESCO CLUBS' MOVEMENT





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