

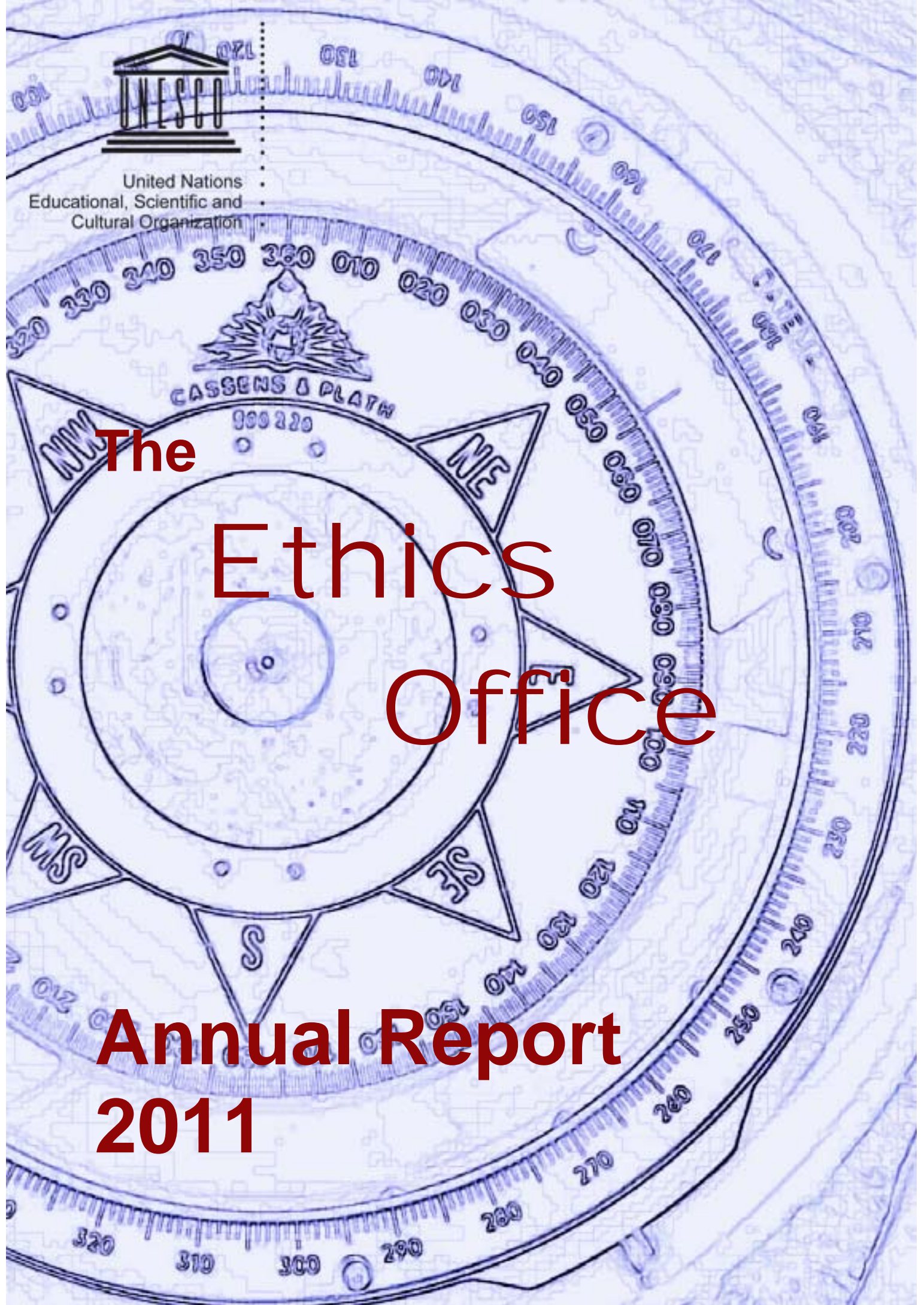


United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

The

# Ethics Office

Annual Report  
2011



## Mission Statement

The Ethics Office is responsible for providing confidential advice on ethics and standards of conduct to the Organization and all its employees. It promotes ethical awareness through training, communication, policy development and liaison; and aims to resolve allegations of unethical behaviour or wrongdoing.

The Ethics Office is independent from all Programme Sectors, Support Sectors and other Central Services, and reports directly to the Director-General. In the event that the Director-General is the subject of an allegation, the Ethics Office will refer the case to the UNESCO Oversight Advisory Committee.

The Office is headed by the Ethics Advisor, Mr Jean-Paul Proulx.

<b>Ethics related issues under the mandate of the UNESCO Ethics Office</b>
<b>Conflicts of interest</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Honours, Gifts and Remuneration</li><li>• Favouritism</li><li>• Outside Employment and Activities</li><li>• Use of Privileged Information</li><li>• Use of UNESCO Property and Assets</li><li>• Financial Disclosure Programme</li></ul>
<b>Anti-discrimination</b>
<b>Anti-harassment policy</b> For cases of both moral and sexual harassment
<b>Abuse of power or authority</b>
<b>Anti-retaliation policy</b> Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct or cooperating with a duly authorized audit or investigation

# Table of Contents

<b>Message from Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Message from Jean-Paul Proulx, UNESCO Ethics Advisor .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Part 1: Introduction and Definition of Ethics .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Part 2: Activities and Operations .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Part 3: Case Summaries .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Part 4: Issues Raised in 2010: Action Taken .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Part 5: Priorities Going Forward .....</b>	<b>21</b>



**Message from Irina Bokova,  
Director-General of UNESCO**



UNESCO has a unique mandate to support States in creating the conditions for lasting peace and sustainable development. Taking this noble task forward is a privilege that requires the utmost integrity and professionalism of every member of staff. This is why building a culture of ethics at the workplace lies at the heart of my vision for UNESCO. This is essential for the well-being of all staff, in Headquarters and in the field. It is vital also for the effectiveness of our work.

This is especially true at a time of financial difficulties. Current circumstances call for the greatest professionalism from us all.

The engagement and goodwill of every member of staff are core ingredients for navigating the Organization through difficult times. Each of us has responsibilities to ourselves, our colleagues and the mandate of UNESCO. We must stand together and help each other as we build a sharper and more effective Organization.

The Ethics Office is here to help. Established two years ago, the Office is making a powerful impact across the Organization by sensitizing all colleagues to take ethical considerations into account in their daily work. The training provided by the Office extends throughout Headquarters and the field. Since 2010, some 1924 members of staff have been trained, and this will continue.

The Ethics Office maintains also an open door policy to address requests for advice and other issues raised by any member of staff. This is crucial to enhance confidence and accountability for everyone, regardless of status or grades in the Organization. Such requests have increased since the creation of the Office, with most concerning requests for advice and guidance on ethics-related issues. This is a sign that we are all increasingly sensitive to the ethical considerations of our own conduct and the need to address them professionally. With regard to other grievances from employees, including informal or formal complaints, the Ethics Office is establishing a strong track record of supporting staff and acting when necessary, with my full backing. Acting is essential, and this Annual Report lists a few anonymous examples to illustrate.

The Office will launch in 2012 a Declaration of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme in order to raise awareness about potential and real conflicts of interest between employees' professional obligations and their private interests, and to manage these better when they occur. Reputation is among the most precious assets of an intellectual organization like UNESCO. I am determined to do everything to preserve and to strengthen it.

All of this shows that we are making strong headway to create a culture of ethics at the heart of this Organization. This is essential as we move through a process of reform. UNESCO is strong and respected when each and every member of its staff feels strong and respected. We must all review our conduct on a continual basis. Integrity, professionalism and respect for diversity must continue to guide our behaviour at all times. Ethics is our shared responsibility.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Irina Bokova". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Irina Bokova

**Message from Jean-Paul Proulx,  
Ethics Advisor of UNESCO**

The Ethics Office has been operational now for over two years. A lot of ground has been covered since its inception. Our goal remains unchanged: establishing an ethical culture at the heart of UNESCO. To help us make progress towards this goal, we have been particularly pleased by the support of the UNESCO staff, the staff associations, and the UNESCO leadership. This can only be attained in the Organization if we pool our efforts together and appreciate the benefits of having a work environment which respects ethical values.

With the support of the Ethics Officer, we have managed to deliver, in 2011, the training on ethics to 1315 employees (regardless of their contractual status), including 565 employees in UNESCO Field Offices and 183 employees in Category I Institutes. Furthermore, 153 employees have received the training “Positive and productive workplaces to strengthen UNESCO by keeping us free of harassment.” These training workshops have allowed us to better understand the expectations of UNESCO employees in terms of ethics. The workshops are also an opportunity for the Ethics Office to remind employees not only of their rights, but also of their obligations to the Organization and what UNESCO expects from them. We are under the impression that all the UNESCO personnel who have participated in the training workshops have come out with a better understanding of what is an ethical organization and their role in developing it.

Some people will argue that there is still a need for improvement. I agree with them. Nevertheless, I am of the opinion that the ethical situation in an organization cannot be changed over a night. I am convinced that evolution is better than revolution. Indeed there is still a long road ahead, but together, we can be proud of what we have achieved thus far. It gives us energy and motivation to continue along the same path.

I would like to thank the staff in the Ethics Office, who have again worked hard to meet the Office’s objectives and best serve the interests of UNESCO employees and the Organization. Without their continued support, commitment, and talent, the Ethics Office would have not been able to progress on its mandate and achieve its overarching goal of establishing an ethical culture. I am very grateful for their professionalism and dedication.



Jean-Paul Proulx

## Introduction and Definition of Ethics

What is Ethics?

Many people employ the word ethics only to misuse, or even abuse, it. Yes, its usage is becoming more commonplace, but it is not necessarily gaining in significance in the workplace. Indeed, many people are capable only of deploring its absence. In their eyes, ethics is defined by its breaches, its failures, and its abuse.

Ethics is one of those terms that everyone seems to draw on, without understanding its significance, its requirements, or its impact.

For some people, ethics means they deserve to be selected for a post; or the obligation for the Organization to award them a promotion; or that is unethical that their supervisor would supposedly know less than they do.

Everyone has their own idea about ethics.

Many people tend to equate ethics with their feelings. They think that ethics is merely based on how a person feels about an issue. One reason for this view is that we all possess strong beliefs about ethical issues, and are often in disagreement with others about them. But being ethical is clearly not a matter of simply following our feelings. A person who follows his or her feelings may actually deviate from being ethical. If one thinks about their feelings, they might end up thinking about their own selfish interests, instead of ethical standards.

Nor should one identify ethics with religion. It is true, most religions have an ethical component, translated through the promotion of values and ethical standards. But how would this affect atheists? If ethics is confined to religion, then ethics would apply only to religious people. Besides, what happens when religions differ? Therefore, ethics cannot be confined to religion, nor is it the same as religion.

And while a large part of law is based on ethical principles, the two domains are separate. Being ethical is not the same as abiding by the law. The law should actually put in writing the moral principles of a society, and often incorporates ethical standards to which most citizens subscribe to. But laws, like feelings, can deviate from what is ethical, as they reflect what societies might consider what is appropriate

### 3 Ethical Core Values

#### **Integrity**

Integrity is a core value in all aspects of our professional and personal life. Integrity includes, but is not limited to:

- loyalty; impartiality; fairness; honesty

#### **Professionalism**

High-standards of professionalism are required to fulfill our duties at UNESCO. We should:

- show pride in our work
- demonstrate the highest standards of competence
- be conscientious and efficient in meeting goals and commitments
- be motivated by professional objectives rather than personal concerns

#### **Respect for diversity**

We take pride in the diversity of our colleagues, which brings together people from varied backgrounds, cultures and experiences. We should embrace this diversity, and view it as an advantage. We should:

- work constructively with people from all backgrounds
- examine our assumptions and avoid stereotypes
- show no discrimination against any individual or group

during a specific period. We know that laws can be totally unethical. There are indeed various examples of laws that deviate from what is ethical in history. Conversely, there are things we should do, even though they are not legally required. Ethical people often do less than is permitted by the law and more than is required. Besides, the motivation of respecting the law is not to be sanctioned. The approach is negative, focused on what is forbidden: the law defines what we should not do.

Being ethical is not the same as following what society accepts. In many societies, most people accept standards that should be considered ethical. But standards of behavior in society can deviate from what is ethical. There are examples in history of morally corrupt societies. Besides, if being ethical means doing what others accept, then we would have to find out what society accepts, to know what is ethical. And, what if there is no agreement on what others accept? The lack of social consensus on many issues makes it impossible to equate ethics with whatever society accepts. This disparity shows how ethical views of different societies can contrast when all of humanity weighs in. If being ethical was doing whatever society accepts, one would have to find an agreement on issues which does not, in fact, exist.

Then, what is ethics?

At its simplest, ethics is a system of moral principles. It affects how people make decisions and lead their lives. It refers to well-founded standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually in terms of rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues.

Ethics is also concerned with what is good for individuals and society. It should help us to know how to live a respectful life, making use of the language of right and wrong, to define our rights and responsibilities.

A proper foundation of ethics requires a standard of value to which all goals and actions can be compared to. This standard is our own lives, and the happiness which makes them livable. This is our ultimate standard of value, the goal in which an ethical person must always strive for. It is arrived at by an examination of human nature, and recognizing their peculiar needs.

Ethics is about our culture. It relies on common values. Like mentalities, a culture does not change, but it evolves, slowly.

If there are some breaches, some failures, ethics should not only be referred to in terms of conflicts, fraud or abuse. Ethics should inspire us. Doing what is good or right should definitely be more inspiring than not doing what is forbidden.

Ethics is about the day to day choices we make constantly. It must take into account our relations with others, and recognize their importance not only to our physical survival, but to our well-being and happiness. It must recognize that our lives are an end in themselves.

Ethics is applicable everywhere, especially in our workplace where we dedicate so much of our time.



### Activities and Operations

The Ethics Office plays an important preventative advisory role by providing guidance and confidential advice to all members of UNESCO personnel on ethics related concerns, in order to reflect the values, principles and standards of conduct of the Organization. The core of the workload of the Ethics Office is taken by requests for advice and managing informal and formal allegations of harassment and conflicts of interest. By accomplishing this part of its mandate, the Ethics Office can play an important role in risk management assessment.

In addition to responding to requests and managing allegations, the Ethics Office develops and implements ethics-related policies, and delivers training workshops on ethics and ethics-related concerns.

### Communication and Training

The underlying objective of establishing an ethical culture in UNESCO is still an on-going commitment for the Ethics Office. An ethical culture cannot be instilled in people's minds overnight.

The Ethics Office training workshops raise awareness on the UNESCO rules and regulations, promote UNESCO's moral values, and provide guidelines on the procedures and services at the disposal of UNESCO personnel to identify and manage unethical situations.

Furthermore, the Ethics Advisor and the Ethics Officer deliver the training workshops in person, both at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, and in Field Offices and Institutes. It is important for members of the Ethics Office to deliver the training in person as it is an opportunity to take the ethical temperature in UNESCO offices around the world, and to understand and best respond to the needs of the employees. For example, the Ethics Office has the knowledge and ability to address UNESCO-specific questions from personnel during the training session, which is often highlighted in the evaluations of the participants following a workshop.

*"The fact the Ethics Office came from Headquarters in person to deliver the training shows that Headquarters do care about us in the field" (Staff member, UNESCO Accra Office; Ghana; 2011)*

*"Necessary and appreciated" (Staff member, UNESCO San José Office; Costa Rica; 2011)*

*"Responded to questions that in the past the Organization refused to answer" (Staff member; UNESCO SHS; Paris; 2011)*

*"The Committee was impressed with the extent of coverage of the Ethics function through training programmes so far undertaken and meetings held with staff" (UNESCO Oversight Advisory Committee: Summary Report; February 2011)*

## Training workshops provided by the Ethics Office

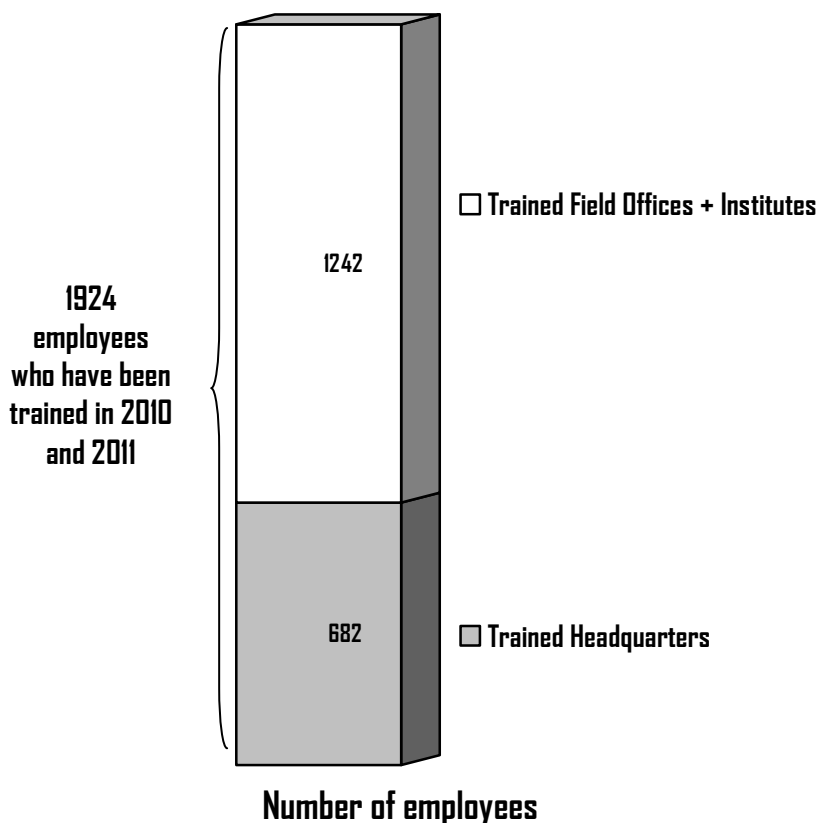
The Ethics Office’s flagship training workshop, mandatory for all UNESCO employees, is the training on ethics. Structured around a 1/2 day session, the workshop has been designed to cover specific ethical issues that UNESCO employees should be aware of: conflict of interest; abuse of power; moral and sexual harassment; discrimination etc. As well as raising awareness on the UNESCO core values, ethical conduct and relevant policies.

Another training workshop provided by the Ethics is the “Positive and productive workplaces to strengthen UNESCO by keeping us free of harassment”. This 3 day workshop, based on the UNESCO Anti-harassment policy, is aimed at sensitizing UNESCO employees on harassment issues and what to do when confronted with any form of harassment. UNESCO has a zero tolerance policy approach with regards to all forms of harassment, and has developed strict guidelines on the responsibilities of managers to tackle all forms of harassment.

The Ethics Office is currently developing a third training workshop on ethical management, detailing the specific responsibilities and actions of managers in this respect.

**Figure I**

Number of participants for the **ethics training workshop** (up to 31 December 2011)



**Figure II**

Breakdown of training delivered

Ethics Training by year	Number of participants
2011	1315
2010	609
<b>Total</b>	<b>1924</b>

According to current data in the Ethics Office, approximately 1500 employees based in Headquarters, Field Offices and Category I Institutes still need to participate in the ethics training workshop.

The training “Positive and productive workplaces to strengthen UNESCO by keeping us free of harassment” was delivered in four Field Offices in 2011, with a total participation of 153 UNESCO employees.

### Statistics - Advice, guidance and allegations

The Ethics Office received **348** requests during 2011, almost double the number received in 2010. The increase is due to the fact that more training sessions were delivered during 2011, (due to the arrival of the Ethics Officer (in September 2010)), which has served to raise awareness among UNESCO employees on the role of the Ethics Office. In addition, the Ethics Office has two staff members able to receive employees to discuss ethical concerns, namely: the Ethics Advisor and the Ethics Officer.

Please find below statistics compiled by the Ethics Office for 2011. During this period the Ethics Office received **348 requests**.

Figure III

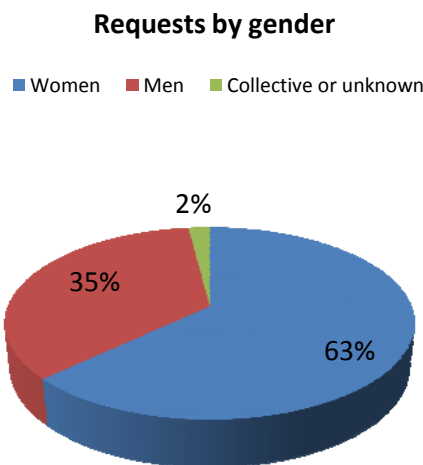


Figure IV

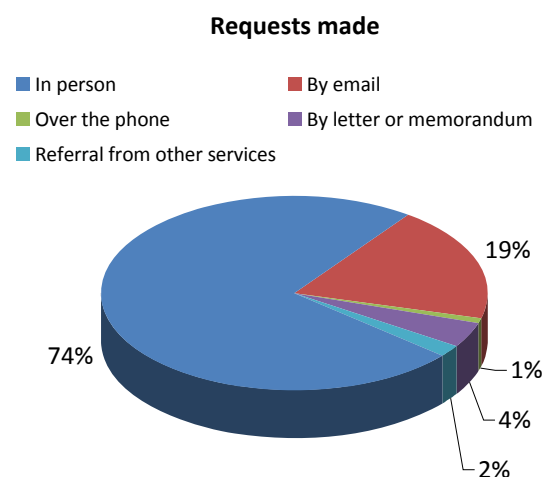


Figure V

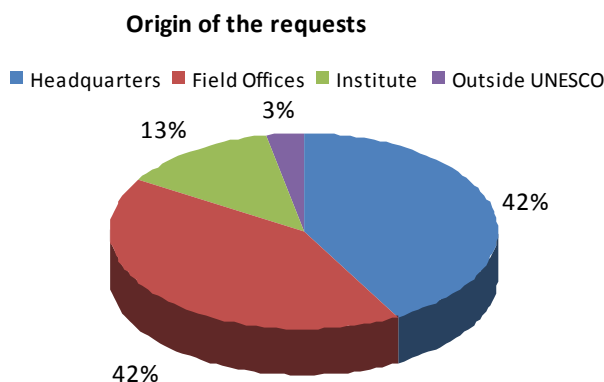


Figure VI

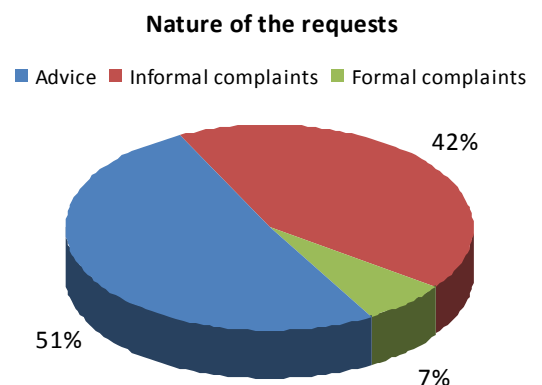


Figure VII  
Category of requests

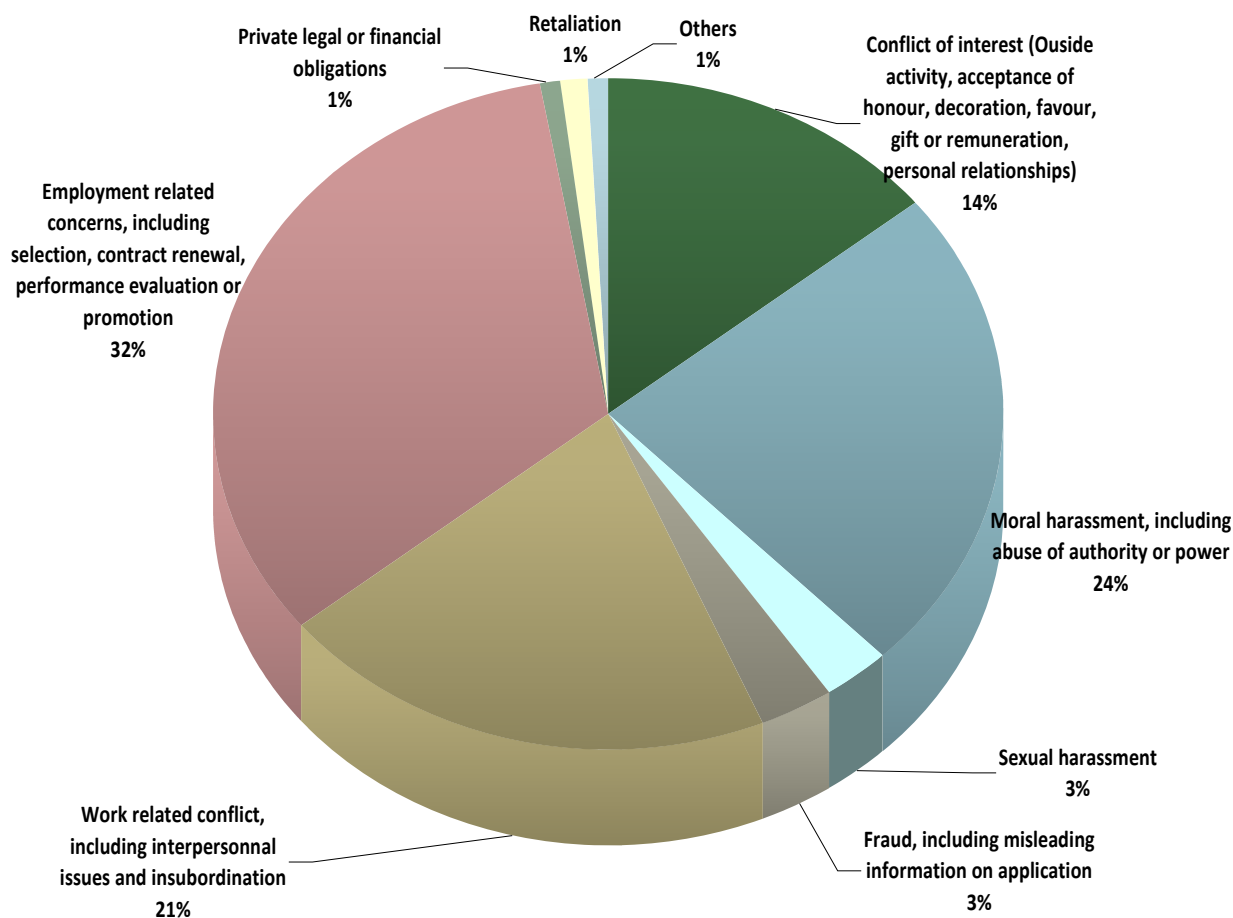


Figure VIII  
Categories explained

<b>Conflict of Interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Accepting gifts, honours, and remuneration</li> <li>❖ Outside activities/employment</li> <li>❖ Favouritism</li> <li>❖ Family employment</li> <li>❖ Use of UNESCO property and assets</li> <li>❖ Use of privileged information</li> <li>❖ External pressures</li> </ul>	<b>Work-Related Conflict</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Interpersonal relations</li> <li>❖ Management issues</li> <li>❖ Absenteeism</li> <li>❖ Incivilities</li> <li>❖ Slander/Defamation</li> <li>❖ Negative work environment</li> </ul>
<b>Harassment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Moral</li> <li>❖ Sexual</li> </ul>	<b>Third-Party Witness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Testimonies/additional information to support a case</li> </ul>
<b>Employment Related Concerns</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Contracts</li> <li>❖ Evaluations</li> <li>❖ Transfers</li> <li>❖ Career development/Grade</li> <li>❖ Selection and Recruitment</li> <li>❖ Job description</li> </ul>	<b>Other Categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Fraud/Corruption</li> <li>❖ Discrimination</li> <li>❖ Abuse of Power/Authority</li> <li>❖ Retaliation</li> <li>❖ Non-Respect of Private and Legal Obligations</li> </ul>

## Figure IX

Distinction between advice, informal complaint and formal complaint (see **Figure VI; p11**).

<b>Advice</b>	Request for guidance regarding an ethics-related issue; not an allegation against anyone/entity
<b>Informal Complaint</b>	Allegation against someone/entity; not necessary warrants further action other than an advice by the Ethics Office on how to handle the situation. Normally, this is the first stage in trying to resolve a conflict informally; if unsuccessful, see row below:
<b>Formal Complaint</b>	Allegation sent to the Director-General for action

Out of the 348 cases opened during 2011, 238 have been closed. There are several reasons for the Ethics Office to close a case. Over half of the demands received by the Ethics Office are requests for advice (see **Figure VI; p11**), which are usually 'closed' once the advice has been given. Other cases are closed by the Ethics Office following successful resolutions between the parties concerned, or once the Director-General has accepted recommendations by the Ethics Office for action to be taken by the administration. In rare circumstances, employees decide to withdraw their complaint and, therefore, the Ethics Office closes their case.

### **Standard-setting and policy support**

A key function of the Ethics Office is to develop, clarify and provide information on standards of conduct. While UNESCO's standards generally compare favourably with many leading institutions, some policies and rules require further consideration and some are in need of clarification. Ethical standards of conduct need to be current, concise and easy to find.

The Ethics Office is mandated to clarify the rules on conflicts of interest, and ensure that staff members strike the right balance between their private interests and their obligations to UNESCO. With this in mind, the Ethics Office will implement, in 2012, a Declaration of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme in order to identify, manage, reduce, or eliminate the risk of conflict of interest.

The Declaration of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme is currently undergoing an internal consultation process, and will then be presented to the Director-General. The UNESCO Ethics Office has designed a Programme that, if accepted, will put UNESCO at the forefront among international organizations in terms of conflict of interest policy, as the Programme will be considered as a risk management assessment tool: the first of its kind in the United Nations System.

## Case Summaries

The Ethics Office is often asked during training workshops, meetings and consultations, to provide examples, pertinent to UNESCO, on the type of requests and complaints received and handled by the Office.

In this chapter, the Ethics Office has provided real case examples of requests and complaints received by the Ethics Office. The summaries of the cases show the Organization taking action to correct ethical lapses, and illustrate significant progress has been made in changing certain people's beliefs that actions have no real consequences in matters of unethical behaviour.

**Some of the information has been altered to protect the anonymity of the individuals concerned.**

### Cases of conflict of interest

#### *Managing gifts*

An Assistant Director-General (ADG) solicited the advice of the Ethics Office after receiving a gift while on official duty in a Member State. The ADG could not turn down the gift as it may have caused offence and embarrassment for the Organization. The gift was of no value to the Organization. It had a symbolic value for the ADG. The ADG agreed, upon the recommendation of the Ethics Office, to make a donation to UNESCO Staff Day.

#### *Familial relationship*

An ADG solicited the advice of the Ethics Office regarding a couple working in the same Section who have a child together. As this could be perceived as a conflict of interest, the couple will be moved during a restructuration process: they will remain in the same Sector but will have no common lines of authority. The Ethics Office found this solution acceptable.

#### *Outside activities*

The Ethics Office received an allegation that an employee from a UNESCO Field Office was performing an outside activity which was gaining notoriety on the internet. The activity could be considered as offensive, and have a prejudicial impact on the image and reputation of UNESCO in the country. Besides, the staff member had failed to seek prior authorization for this activity as stated in the UNESCO Staff Rules and Regulations. Consequently, the Ethics Office recommended that the employee in question desists immediately from this activity and removes all related inappropriate content from the internet, which was done with immediate effect.

### Cases of moral and sexual harassment

#### *Moral harassment*

The complainant submitted a formal written complaint to the Director-General, alleging moral harassment at the hands of his/her supervisor who was accused of excluding the complainant from professional activities related to his/her work. In accordance with the standard procedures, the Director-General referred the complaint to the service responsible for managing issues of harassment: the Ethics Office. The latter proposed to reach an informal resolution through mediation between the parties, which was declined by the complainant. Following careful



analysis, the Ethics Office found that the complaint did not constitute moral harassment as the evidence produced reflected work-related conflicts. These conflicts were mostly due to the different approaches of the supervisor and supervisee regarding the work to be done at the programmatic level. The events that the complainant described as instances of harassment related to disagreements concerning decisions or instructions. Subsequently, the Ethics Office's recommendation to the Director-General was approved, and the complaint of moral harassment rejected on the grounds of insufficient evidence. The Ethics Office advised the complainant to contact the Office of Mediators to resolve the work-related conflicts.

#### *Moral harassment*

The complainant, in this case the supervisor, suffered moral harassment by a member of his/her team who was allegedly consistently showing hostility and insubordination towards him/her, by engaging in public verbal abuse and refusing to carry out instructions. Following analysis and supportive testimonies, the Ethics Office considered there was prima facie evidence of both moral harassment and physical intimidation, and recommended to the Director-General to authorize an investigation by IOS. An interim measure was also taken to suspend the staff member from UNESCO during the investigation due to the seriousness of the allegations (physical intimidation). IOS concluded, in its investigation report, that the allegations were substantiated. In accordance with procedures, both the Ethics Office and IOS recommended to the Director-General to request the Bureau of Human Resources (HRM) to take disciplinary measures against the staff member. The sanctions are currently under consideration by HRM.

#### *Moral harassment*

The complainant reported that a colleague criticized the complainant's work in a letter addressed to the Assistant Director-General and a Director of a UNESCO Field Office, which had a negative impact on the complainant's reputation and relationship with other colleagues. During interviews with the Ethics Office, the colleague admitted not only to sending the letter, but sharing it with other UNESCO colleagues and members of UNESCO Permanent Delegations. In light of the above, the Ethics Office concluded there was sufficient evidence of manipulation of an employee's professional reputation by false statement, which is considered as moral harassment. In accordance with the UNESCO Disciplinary Procedure, HRM imposed on the staff member a written censure for a period of three years.

#### *Sexual harassment*

The complainant reported that his/her supervisor had made two unwelcome gestures of a sexual nature. The Director-General, upon the recommendation of the Ethics Office, mandated IOS to carry out an investigation. The allegations were substantiated and supported by a number of other employees who had also experienced unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature at the hands of this colleague. The alleged harasser was therefore suspended pending disciplinary measures to be taken by HRM. Following the investigation report by IOS, the staff member was summarily dismissed.

### **Cases of work related conflict**

#### *Interpersonal issues*

During a mission by the Ethics Officer in a Field Office, two staff members separately reported issues against a third staff member: problems of communication and defamation. Following a successful mediation between all the parties concerned by the Ethics Officer, apologies were

shared and accepted. All parties agreed to put their differences behind them and make a conscientious effort to remain professional and civil in their future relations with one another.

## **Cases of private legal and financial obligations**

### *Indebtedness*

The complainant reported to the Ethics Office difficulties in resolving a private matter of indebtedness with another UNESCO staff member. Final court orders were submitted as evidence that showed that the indebted staff member had not honoured paying off the debt. The Ethics Office managed to reach a settlement between the two parties, whereby the indebted staff member reimburses the complainant on a monthly basis. The case will be considered as closed as soon as the debt has been paid in full.

## **Cases of employment related concerns**

### *Recruitment process*

The complainant reported to the Ethics Office alleged irregularities in the recruitment process for a vacant post in a UNESCO Field Office. The Director of the Field Office would have interfered in the process and influenced the pre-selection committee to include a candidate who had not been shortlisted, and did not appear to have the required profile for the position. Following a careful analysis by the Ethics Office, comparing the candidate's qualifications and professional experience with those required in the vacancy announcement, it was recommended to reject the appointment of the candidate in question. The Director-General approved the recommendation by the Ethics Office.

### *Recruitment process*

The complainant reported to the Ethics Office to have allegedly suffered unfair treatment when applying for a post that he/she had been acting as Officer-in-Charge for a number of years. It had been raised against the candidate the he/she had gained an unfair advantage, as he/she was the Officer-in-Charge for a number of years, and had, therefore, acquired more relevant experience for the position. It was recommended that his/her appointment should be rejected, despite being shortlisted by the selection panel as the most qualified candidate for the post. The Ethics Office was of the opinion that rejecting his/her appointment to the post could be considered as unethical (as it could be perceived as discrimination), and furthermore, could set a fallacious precedent, as staff members in the future may be reluctant to accept interim responsibilities for positions they may be interested in applying for in the future. The Director-General took into consideration the ethical concerns raised by the Ethics Office, and agreed to appoint the complainant, who was the recommended candidate, to the position.

### *Recruitment process*

HRM brought to the attention of the Ethics Office information on a candidate applying for a position at UNESCO, who would have allegedly lied and manipulated his/her curriculum vitae. There were also noticeable disparities between information divulged during the application process for the position and what was stated on the candidate's curriculum vitae. The Ethics Office invited the candidate to justify these disparities, and the candidate could not provide convincing arguments. The Ethics Office, therefore, recommended to HRM to reject the candidate's application.

### *Merit Promotion Programme*

The staff member had applied to the Merit Promotion Programme but had been unsuccessful. The complainant had some concerns about the grounds that led to this failed outcome. The Ethics Office consulted the recommendations made to the evaluation panel of the Merit Promotion Programme, as well as the set of criteria required for promotion. The Ethics Office concluded that the staff member only met part of the criteria necessary, and consequently the application for the Merit Promotion Programme had been rejected.

*Almost a third of all requests received by the Ethics Office in 2011, are categorized as 'employment related concerns' (see Figure VIII, p12). The majority of these requests are not specifically ethics-related issues (career development; recruitment; performance evaluations) and therefore, many of the requests are referred to the appropriate internal service (for example: HRM) and the Ethics Office requests only a follow-up from the staff member in question to determine whether the matter has been resolved.*

## Issues Raised in 2010: Action Taken

In Chapter 5 of last year's Ethics Office Annual Report October 2009 to December 2010, the Ethics Office raised 5 ethical concerns which it was going to examine more closely in 2011. To remind you of the points raised, a summary is provided in italics.

### 1. Ethical Management

#### *Summary*

- *high number of allegations concern abuse of authority by managers over temporary employees*
- *failure of some managers to take responsibility for their work*

The Ethics Office is developing a training workshop specifically tailored for UNESCO management. The workshop is designed to raise awareness on specific ethical concerns that managers have to face in their supervisory capacity.

The training workshop will begin during the current year at Headquarters, and budget permitting, in the UNESCO Field Offices and Institutes.

### 2. Respect of private legal and financial obligations

#### *Summary*

- *A number of staff members are failing to honour their private legal and financial obligations, and are inappropriately using their diplomatic immunity*

Failure to honour private legal and financial obligations harms the reputation and image of UNESCO. The Ethics Office has received a number of allegations of staff members failing to honour paying their rent for example.

With this in mind, the Ethics Office has drafted a policy in collaboration with the other Central Services (Bureau of Human Resources Management and Internal Oversight Services) which should be submitted for the approval of the Director-General during the current year.

### 3. Performance Assessment (PerfoWeb)

#### *Summary*

- *The Ethics Office is concerned with how staff members perceive the objective of performance evaluations:*
  - o *How managers perceive their responsibilities in performing this task*
  - o *How staff members perceive criticism in their evaluations*

The Ethics Office has raised the issue with the Bureau of Human Resources (HRM), regarding the problems perceived by UNESCO employees in relation to performance assessments.

Following discussions, HRM informed the Ethics Office that the HR PerfoWeb had been revised to introduce a more flexible performance evaluation sheet: instead of only three levels of evaluation, the latest version has four. This version was made operational in the last biennium.

These issues of performance assessment of employees will also be addressed in the training workshop on ethical management (see point 1 above).

#### 4. Global Conflict Resolution System

##### Summary

- *The Ethics Office and the Office of Mediators provide similar services in resolving work-related conflicts.*

The Ethics Office and the Office of Mediators convened a meeting to clearly define the roles of each respective Office. It was agreed that allegations on interpersonal issues received by the Ethics Office, where mediation between the parties could be successful, will be directly referred to the Office of Mediators. However, the Ethics Office will continue to provide advice and mediation on issues related to ethics.

The Ethics Office and the Office of Mediators share the same view about what should not be considered as moral harassment: the dividing line between harassment and other work-related conflicts may, at times, be difficult to establish. It was agreed that situations of conflict and tensions are not automatically, nor necessarily, harassment.

#### 5. Geographical Mobility Programme

##### Summary

- *The Ethics Office was concerned after hearing reports that allegedly Directors were abusing the policy to move “problematic” staff members*

The Ethics Office was informed by the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM), responsible for the implementation of this Programme, that Member States urged UNESCO to prioritize international staff members who were located in hardship duty stations and had completed their standard duration of assignment of 2 years. In parallel, HRM also prioritized the reassignment of all Administrative Officers based in the field who have completed or exceeded the standard duration of 5 years (in family duty stations).

#### Figure X

Geographical Mobility Programme statistics for 2011 (statistics provided by HRM)

Field Offices to Headquarters	4 staff members (1 P3, 1 P2, 1 P5, 1 DI)
Headquarters to Field Offices	0 staff members
Field Offices to Field Offices	11 staff members: (2 P4, 2 P-3, 6 P-2, 1 DI)

The Ethics Office understands that the current policy prioritizes certain categories of staff members. Nevertheless, the Ethics Office will be following future developments to ensure that

opportunities are explored to implement the Programme to all internationally recruited staff members, in all directions: staff movement between Field Offices, from Field Offices to Headquarters, and from Headquarters to Field Offices.



## Priorities Going Forward

We, at the Ethics Office, will continue to work hard to promote the interests and serve the needs of all our UNESCO colleagues.

We plan to develop a system-wide survey during the present biennium to measure the impact of our work and the services that we provide in the Organization. The Ethics Office has now been in operation for over two years, and we have visited numerous Field Offices and Institutes around the world. Therefore, we feel the time is ripe to begin evaluating the impact of the Ethics Office in terms of establishing an ethical culture at UNESCO.

The Ethics Office will also be looking into the Rules and Regulations of UNESCO to ascertain that all people are treated fairly and equally. It has been brought to our attention that certain groups feel that certain UNESCO rules are discriminatory.

We aim to complete the first cycle of training on ethics to all the employees of UNESCO, by the end of the biennium. The timeline has had to be pushed back due to the financial constraints imposed on the Organization, which has had an impact on our ability to deliver the training. Nevertheless, the Ethics Office will focus on completing the training for all personnel at UNESCO Headquarters by the end of 2012.

We will be pooling our efforts during 2012, in order to establish the Declaration of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme as mentioned earlier in the report. An electronic questionnaire is currently under development, as well as work on guidelines and security considerations. We are aware that this information is sensitive and personal, and we will make sure that all information is kept confidentially and securely. Should the Programme be adopted, this will make UNESCO a leader among its peers in terms of conflict of interest policy, as it will be the first risk management assessment tool of its kind in the international organization arena.

We will continue to carry out our mandate by managing allegations of unethical conduct, and providing advice and recommendations on ethics-related issues to all the employees of the Organization, including the Director-General.

We encourage our UNESCO colleagues to drop by, email or call at any time to become acquainted or to discuss, in confidence, any matter of concern, and we welcome your feedback as we work together to establish an ethical culture at UNESCO.

## **UNESCO Ethics Office**

**Ethics Advisor:** Jean-Paul Proulx

**Ethics Officer:** Farice Quinio

### **Contact details**

**Telephone:** + 33 1 45 68 13 90

**Fax:** + 33 1 45 68 55 51

**Email:** [ethics@unesco.org](mailto:ethics@unesco.org)

**Address:** 7, Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France