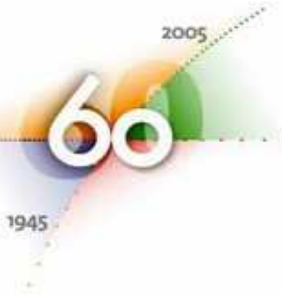




United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization
Organisation des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation, la science et la culture



**UNI
TWIN**

UNITWIN UNESCO Chairs Programme: A Vehicle for North-South Cooperation Colloquium

22-23 January 2009 , Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK

Sonia Bahri, Ph.D

Chief, Section for International Cooperation in Higher Education

Division of Higher Education

Education Sector

UNESCO



Launching of UNITWIN Programme



UNITWIN is the abbreviation for university twinning and networking

Launched in 1991 to advance research, and training in higher education by building university networks and encouraging inter-university cooperation through transfer of knowledge across borders.



UNITWIN in figures



As at December 2008

- 626 UNESCO Chairs
- 60 UNITWIN Networks
- 125 Member States
- 750 Higher Education Institutions

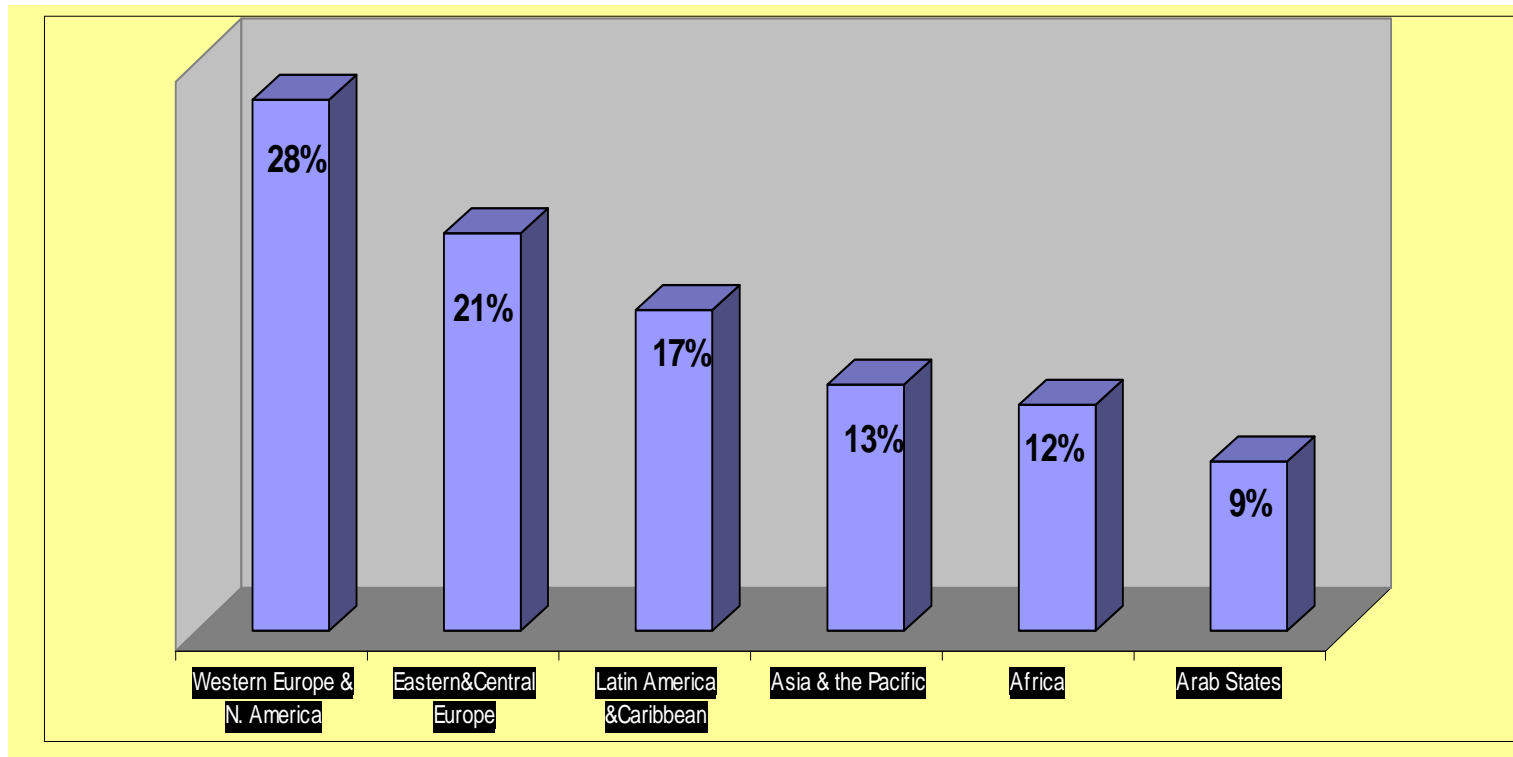




UNITWIN in figures



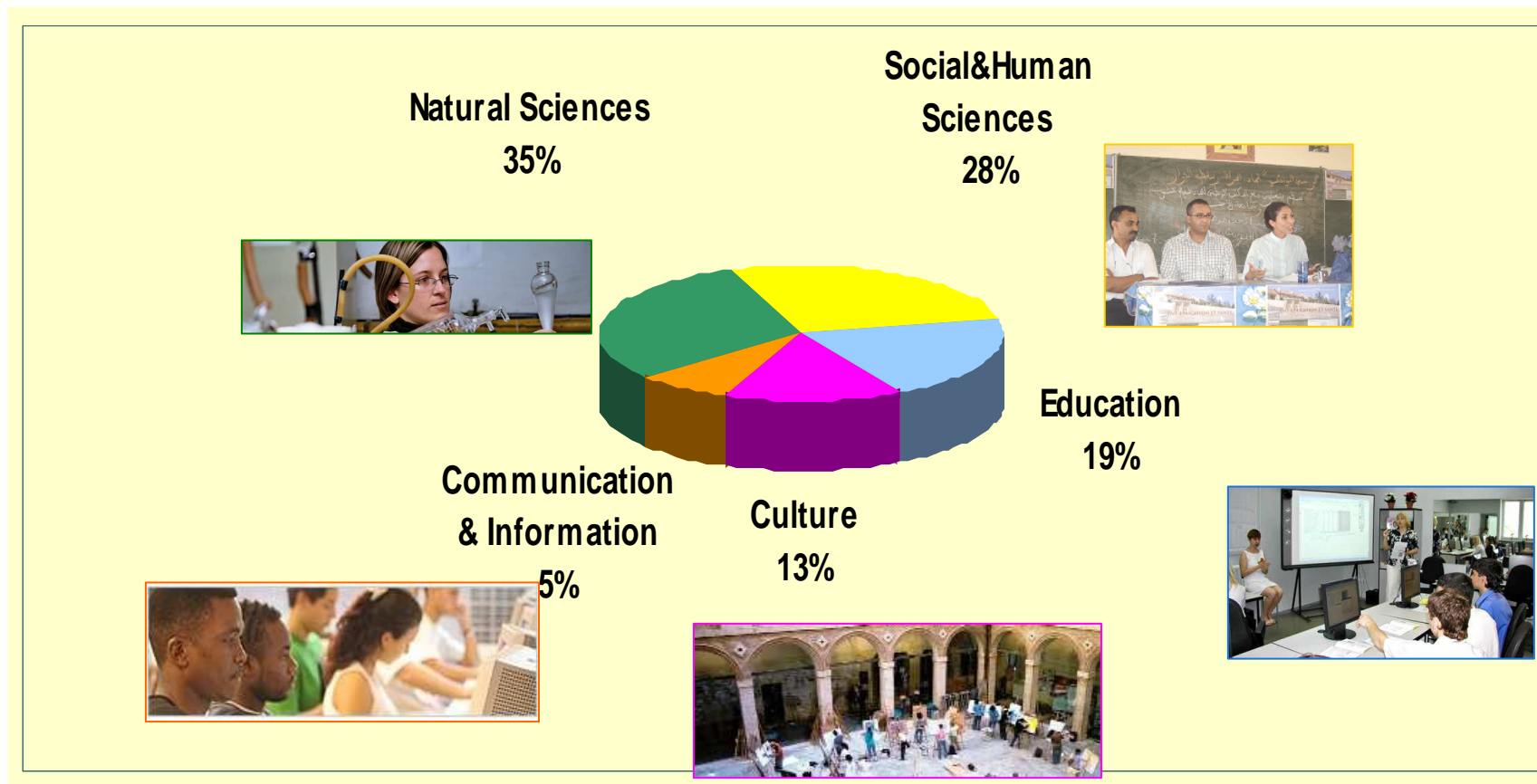
By region





UNITWIN in figures

By Field

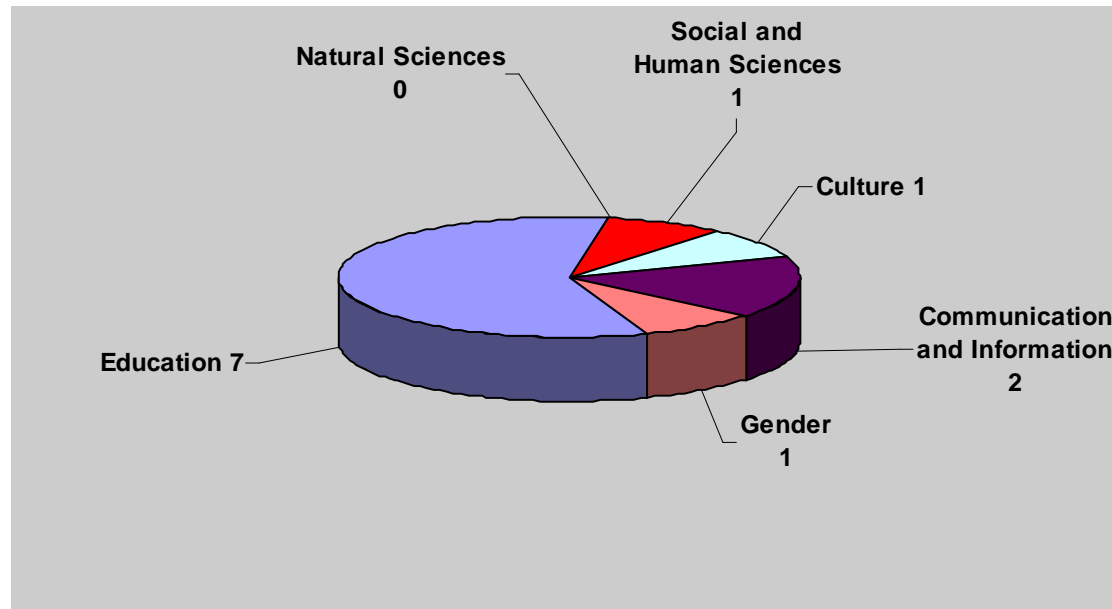




United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland

11+1 UNESCO Chairs

By Field



United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland by University, Domain, Subject, Year of establishment



| | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|------|
| University of Ulster | EDUCATION | Education for Pluralism, Human Rights and Democracy | 1999 |
| University of Bath | EDUCATION | Higher Education Management | 2000 |
| Institute of Education, University of London | EDUCATION | Intercultural Studies and Teacher Education | 2000 |
| University of Nottingham | EDUCATION | Political Economy of Education | 2005 |
| University of Oxford | EDUCATION | Education as a Humanitarian Response | 2005 |
| Aberystwyth University | EDUCATION | HIV/AIDS Education and Health Security in Africa | 2007 |
| National University of Ireland, Galway | EDUCATION | Children, Youth and Civic Engagement | 2008 |
| University of Birmingham | CULTURE | Interfaith Studies | 1999 |
| Royal Holloway, University of London | COMMUNICATION & INF | ICT for Development | 2007 |
| City University London | COMMUNICATION & INF | Information and Communication Engineering | 1998 |
| Lancaster University | GENDER | Gender Research | 2008 |
| University of Bradford | SOCIAL & HUMAN SCIENCES | African Peace and Conflict Studies. | 2008 |



Chairs and Networks to be established in 2009



UNESCO Chairs

1. UNESCO Chair in Information and Computer Ethics, University of Hertfordshire
2. UNESCO Chair in Sustainable Mountain Development, UHI Millennium Institute (Future University of the Highlands and Islands)
3. UNESCO Chair in The Development of a Sustainable Geoenvironment, Cardiff University
4. UNESCO Chair in International Development, University of Edinburgh

UNITWIN Networks

1. UNITWIN Network in Marine Biology and Sustainable Development for East Africa , Bangor University & University of Dar es Salaam , Tanzania
2. UNITWIN Network in Global Pharmacy Education Development, with WHO, School of Pharmacy, University of London, and the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP)
3. UNITWIN Network in Entrepreneurship Education, University of Zambia and University of Strathclyde



UNESCO Chair, UNITWIN Network : what is the difference?



- **UNESCO Chair:** a network of universities coordinated by one of them which signs a common Agreement with UNESCO
- **UNITWIN Network:** universities from different countries which establish a network and sign a common Agreement with UNESCO

New strategic orientations

April 2007 (Doc. 176 EX/10)

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In spite of its success, evaluations (internal and external) of the Programme showed deficiencies :

- **Geographical imbalance in favour of the North;**
- **Lack of real interaction of some Chairs with UNESCO and with other UNESCO Chairs;**
- **“Inflation” of the newly created projects without proper follow-up, or linking arrangements with projects falling in the same domain.**
- **With the aim of optimizing the potential of the UNESCO Chairs/UNITWIN Networks, **New Strategic Orientations of the Programme**, proposed by the Director-General and adopted by the Executive Board.**

Main lines of the new strategy:



- **New generation of Chairs in line with the objectives and priorities of UNESCO's Medium Term Strategy (2008-2013);**
- **Real interaction (two-way) with UNESCO's Programmes and activities;**
- **More emphasis on quality and relevance, innovation and interdisciplinarity;**
- **Greater geographical balance in favour of the South;**

Main lines of the new strategy:



- **Strengthening the role of National Commissions to UNESCO;**
- **Stimulation of North-South, South-South and triangular North-South-South cooperation;**
- **Reinforcement of Networking by priority areas;**
- **Systematic re-grouping of Chairs into Networks (Networks of Chairs);**

Main lines of the new strategy:



Through reinforced North-South and South-South cooperation, UNESCO Chairs & UNITWIN Networks could have a stronger impact on:

- **Capacity development, both in higher education and in specific priority fields;**
- **Socio-economic development and sustainable development at national, regional and international levels.**

Main lines of the new strategy:

They could have this impact on development:

1) by playing fully their roles as:

➤ **Think-tanks**

➤ **Bridge builders**





Think-tanks

in key domains of development such as:

EFA

Reduction of digital divide

HIV/AIDS

Access to water

Climate change

Bioethics

Peace and human rights



Think-tanks

- To anticipate future needs and trends;
- and therefore adopt a prospective approach



Bridge builders

Between

Academia **and** Local
communities

Research
outcomes **and** Decision making

Main lines of the new strategy:

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They could have this impact :

2) by enabling the creation of

Poles of excellence and innovation

A pole of excellence and innovation is a combination, in a given geographic space, of universities, institutes of higher education, training centers, foundations and public or private companies involved in a synergy around innovating common projects. This partnership is built around a specific theme in UNESCO's priority areas and must seek out for a critical mass to enable a certain quality and international transparency.

Poles of excellence

The idea is to pool regional or subregional academic expertise in a specific field.

This pooling is even more needed at a time where financial resources for higher education are rare :

- « because of EFA » (it's a paradox !)
- in the context of financial crises





Poles of excellence

To contribute to reducing “brain drain” and convert it to “brain-gain” for regions of developing countries.



Poles of excellence

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Where ?

Focus on AFRICA for the biennium

In which domains?

- Water & Renewable Energy
- EFA
- Peace/Security
- HIV/AIDS
- Gender
- ICTs ...





Implementation of the new strategy

Main Criteria for establishing a UNESCO Chair or UNITWIN Network

1. Concern UNESCO's priorities or be linked to a priority area and contribute to implementing the Approved Programme and Budget and Medium-Term Strategy;
2. Interdisciplinary content;
3. Contribute to stimulating and developing intellectual and educational activities and to the impact and implications of such activities on development;
4. Be linked to requests by the country/region, including by decision-makers, civil society and local authorities;



Implementation of the new strategy

... Main Criteria

5. Have potential for cooperation with UNESCO on partial / complementary implementation of activities (e.g. lectures, seminars, workshops, conceptual and/or operational work, pool of experts) and for developing capacities in the country or region;
6. Entail a South-South, North-South or North-South-South partnership (one of these types of partnership is essential for proposals for Chairs from countries of the North).

Implementation of the new strategy

UNESCO will pay particular attention to applications:

- From LDCs, Africa, small island developing states (SIDS), post-conflict countries and E-9 countries having no UNESCO Chair or only a few UNESCO Chairs;
- Educationally innovative projects in terms of new paradigms (future challenges) and forms of intervention (e.g. open universities);
- Requests for Chairs with women as Chairholders (gender balance).



Implementation of the new strategy

Development of new mechanisms and new tools :

- Strengthened cooperation with National Commissions to UNESCO
- Closer cooperation between relevant Divisions, Sectors, Field Offices, UNESCO Institutes
- Networking of Chairs and network of Networks: virtual communities of practice, access to ICTs (participation in conferences of UNESCO Chairs through ODL)
- New UNITWIN portal, with all relevant links and contacts of UNESCO's focal points
- Logos for UNESCO Chairs
- Revised Guidelines and Procedures for the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme (2008)



Implementation of the new strategy

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UNITWIN STRATEGIC PARTNERS

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- **United Nations University (UNU)**
- **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**
- **Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)**
- **Commonwealth of Learning (COL)**
- **AHED – UPESED- Canadian NGO- Academics for HED & Development**



UK Chairs contribution to this implementation

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Contribution of National Commission :

- Peer review process
- Monitoring
- Evaluation
- Specific website
- Facilitation role
- Meeting of European National Commissions for exchange of best practice?





Contribution of UK and Ireland Chairs

- Reinforcing participation in UNESCO's Programmes
- Having 'alert' function
- Pollination
- Playing anticipatory role

in

R=Research & Innovation

E=Entrepreneurship

D=Development

Contribution of UK and Ireland Chairs

- Identification of possible areas for triangular cooperation
- Stimulation of sub-regional, regional or inter-regional synergies
- Assistance in the establishment of poles of excellence and innovation, notably in Africa through ODL





UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme



Thank you for your attention .