

WORLD AND REGIONAL SCOUTING



Within a short time of Baden-Powell's experimental camp at Brownsea Island in 1907 and the subsequent popularity of his book 'Scouting for Boys', Scout Organisations began to develop around the world. By 1909, Scouting was established in Australia, Canada, Chile, Guyana, India, Malta, New Zealand and Sierra Leone. When B.-P. visited the United States in 1910, he found Scouting already flourishing there.

The spread continued and one of the results of the first World Scout Jamboree at Olympia, London in 1920, was the creation of the Boy Scouts' International Conference. All 31 nations represented at Olympia were the Founder Members. A Bureau was established at 25, Buckingham Palace Road, London, and the then United Kingdom International Commissioner, Hubert S. Martin, was appointed as Honorary Director. The Boy Scouts' International Conference was later superseded by the World Scout Conference, which today has 131 national Scout Organisations in membership.

Total membership of the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) is now over 25 million in more than 210 countries and territories. The countries with the largest membership are:

- United States - 4.6 million
- United Kingdom - 0.65 million
- Philippines - 2.3 million
- India - 2.2 million
- Indonesia - 2.1 million

Today, Scouts are involved in Child Health, drug abuse prevention, clean water and sanitation, appropriate technology, low-cost housing, literacy, peace education, life skills training, children at risk, intergration of the handicapped, family life education, children's rights, food production, agriculture, environmental conservation and education, renewable energies, reforestation, job skills training, youth

unemployment, immigrant communities and education about development issues. These are taking place all the time, all over the world.

The World Organisation consists of:

The World Scout Conference, comprising delegates from national Scout Organisations meets every three years with different countries acting as host on each occasion. The meetings last about one week and convene to receive reports of progress with plans made at previous meetings and to review and lay plans for future developments in World Scouting. The Conference selects venues for future world events and the World Scout Committee.

The World Scout Committee consists of 12 people from 12 countries. They serve no national interest but only the interests of World Scouting. Committee members serve a maximum of six years, half of them retiring at each World Conference. Because membership is global, meetings are kept to a minimum and much of the work is carried on through correspondence. There is a Steering Group of four Committee Members who can more easily meet and take action. The World Committee periodically forms sub-Committees, Task Forces and Groups. The Committee of the Council of The Scout Association authorises members from the United Kingdom to serve on these.

The World Scout Bureau is located in Geneva and consists of the Secretary-General, eight Directors and supporting clerical staff who put into effect the plans and decisions of the Conference and Committee. Major departments deal with Youth Programme, Adults in Scouting, Finance and Administration, Communications and Special Projects.

Regions

The World Organisation of the Scout Movement is divided into five regions: Africa, Arab, Asia-Pacific, European and Inter-American - each with its own Conference, Committee and Bureau. The Regions reflect the policies of the World Conference and Committee, while adding their own priorities and adapting the general statements to suit local conditions. The Scout Association in the United Kingdom is primarily involved as a member of the European Region, but also has Overseas Branches in the Inter-American and Asia-Pacific Regions.

European Region

At the Regional level, the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) co-operate very closely together. The European Conference, held every three years, is joint and effects a joint Committee of 12 Scouts and Guides. The staff of the European Scout Office and the Europe Office of WAGGGS work closely together to implement the plans of the joint Committee through a programme of seminars, events and publications.

The European Regions of WOSM and WAGGGS is comprised at present of 84 national Organisations in 30 countries, many of which are merged Scout/Guide Associations. Total Membership is about 3.2 million. The European Region has expanded rapidly in recent years to include new, re-established Scout Organisations in central and eastern Europe, such as Latvia, Romania and Croatia. Several more countries are expected to join WOSM in the next few years, through the European Region.

The Scout Association in United Kingdom actively participates in the Committee Working Groups and events of the European Region.

The Region is also actively engaged in the work of other bodies including the European Community, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Foundation and European Youth Centre.