

ICDE profile

The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) was founded in 1938 in Canada and is today the leading global membership organization for the open and distance education community.

ICDE is funded by the Government of Norway, membership subscriptions, and income from conferences and is supported by in kind contributions, notably from the universities and organizations represented within the Executive Committee. ICDE is a registered not-for-profit organization in Norway and operates under Norwegian law.

ICDE seeks to promote intercultural co-operation and understanding through open and distance learning throughout the world. ICDE works to foster international collaboration, support and develop networks at national, regional, global and linguistic affinity groups levels and provide forums where individuals, corporations, institutions, governments and associations can engage in professional interaction. Further, ICDE contributes to the development of new methodologies and technologies to improve lifelong learning and works to encourage the development of good practice and standards in flexible learning.

ICDE is a non-governmental organization (NGO) in formal consultative relations with UNESCO, and shares that agency's key aim – the attainment of quality education for all. In addition ICDE is guided by the following values:

- ICDE is member focused – ICDE is an organization which will involve members in decision making, in cooperative action and in cooperative problem solving.
- ICDE is transparent – Members will be able to follow the activities and decisions of ICDE.
- ICDE believes that in pursuing education as a universal right, the needs of the learner must be central.

According to its constitution, the organization is governed by the following bodies:

- The Executive Committee is responsible for making policy decisions in accordance with ICDE's mission and constitution, and is composed of six elected members
- The Board of Trustees advises the Executive Committee, and monitors the conduct of the Secretary General, the President and members of the Executive Committee.
- The Election Committee verifies the qualifications of potential candidates for the Executive Committee
- The Secretary General is responsible for the day-to-day business of ICDE and all legal and financial matters, and manages the Permanent Secretariat.

In 2009, the Permanent Secretariat had a staff of three employed in the equivalent of 2.8 full-time positions; comprising the Secretary General, Head of Administration, and Head of Information and Membership Services. The Secretariat has contracts with third party providers for services including accounting and IT provision and has a cooperation agreement with the Norwegian Association for Distance Education for sharing office space and some administrative services.

In 2009, ICDE had 122 paying members comprising 84 institutions, 11 agencies or authorities and 27 individual members, in addition to honorary individual members. 42% of ICDE's membership is in Asia, 39% in Europe, 14% in North America with the rest split evenly between Africa, Australasia and Latin America.

Twenty of ICDE's institutional members are universities with over 100,000 student enrollments - so-called "mega universities" (Ref: Daniel (1996) The Mega-universities and Knowledge Media (The Open and Flexible Learning Series)).

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1. Introduction by ICDE's Secretary General

Since its establishment, the priority for the work of the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) has been the openness of education systems and flexibility of student learning, both crucial elements for the achievement of Education for All, the overarching aim for UNESCO. After 70 years of supporting the open and distance education community, ICDE entered 2009 facing increased demand from members for assistance, particularly in the form of resources for more effective policy analysis and in the development of a quality agenda to cope with the tremendous demands on distance and open learning to increase global knowledge capacity.

In accordance with the constitution of 2006, the elected Executive Committee had been in operation for one year, and the Board of Trustees came into being in January 2009. By March 2009 staff changes at the Secretariat were complete.

The worldwide financial crisis formed the backdrop for 2009, and ICDE sought to help its members meet this challenge by devoting the 2009 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents to the theme of quality in the context of the financial crisis. This meeting provided consensus on how institutions can work to maintain standards, while simultaneously seizing the opportunities presented during these challenging times.

Potential risks to ICDE as an organization were the effect on membership numbers, lower attendance at ICDE's conferences and the threat of misuse of the ICDE brand. ICDE's Executive Committee determined that increased member focus should guide the organization's work. Consequently interaction with members was increased, the visibility of services provided to members was enhanced, and new services developed. The foundation for ever greater interaction with present and prospective members was set, while procedures were established to ensure that ICDE's name and reputation were protected and enhanced.

In an ambition to increase income, a key objective of ICDE's new strategic plan, ICDE, together with UNESCO, successfully joined a European consortium applying for funds from the European Commission in 2009. The Secretariat has also through careful planning, significantly reduced administration costs.

These different steps mean that the financial situation for ICDE in 2009 and prospects for 2010 and beyond have been improved. Linked to the management of risk is ICDE's decision to establish a minimum reserve fund equivalent to the wind up costs of the organization, the normal minimum suggested for responsible governance.

The development and launch of a new website represented both a significant investment and a major part of our work during 2009. This was very timely in relation to building ICDE's identity and allowing the organization to move forward with a modern and functional tool to disseminate information and for interaction with members. All of the above we hope has served to strengthen the ICDE brand.

Transparency and openness are key words which characterize the inner life of ICDE. Throughout 2009, new strategies to fulfill that aim were developed. The new website allows members to follow decision making processes within the organization with ease, see how the financial situation develops and follow initiatives undertaken by the Secretariat and the business bodies.

2009 has been the first full year for me as Secretary General of ICDE. Much time was spent on finalizing the strategic plan and planning for the realization of these strategies, to be carried out in 2010 and beyond. It has been a stimulating and demanding year, and I have received positive and supportive feedback from members, as well as many good suggestions for the journey ahead.

Finally, I wish to stress the strong contributions from the members of ICDE's business bodies. The ICDE Executive Committee members and their institutions, particularly, have allocated substantial funds, time, energy and creativity to the governance of the organization.

Carl Holmberg
Secretary General, ICDE

2. Executive summary

This Annual Report describes the activities carried out by ICDE during 2009.

The ICDE strategic plan and activity plan (www.icde.org/en/about/mission) was published, providing the basis for the organization's work during the period 2009-2012. Progress towards the objectives the organization has set itself is noted in each section and summarized at the end of the report.

During 2009, ICDE worked to influence attitudes to distance education internationally through lobbying at the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. ICDE has also sought to work closely with UNESCO in the planning stages of projects which have the potential to influence the practice and profile of distance education internationally. ICDE has carried out activities to reach the Norwegian distance education community and to facilitate dialogue between Norwegian and other countries' distance education institutions.

The 23rd ICDE World Conference on Open and Learning and Distance Education provided a forum for the exposure of academic research and practice within the field. The event achieved a global audience through the Internet, and important conclusions relating to the future direction of distance education were disseminated. The 2009 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents provided a unique, confidential setting for the discussion of the challenges posed by the need to improve quality in the provision of learning in the context of a negative economic climate, and published recommendations for furthering the agenda of distance education and improvements in the service to students.

ICDE's publication strategy provided considerable exposure for the major issues affecting distance education and key initiatives from the worldwide distance education community. The new ICDE website and more efficient means of electronic distribution are key achievements in the ICDE's work to increase the degree and impact of communication to actors within distance education.

Improvements in the provision of service to the ICDE membership have been made, and planning is well underway for projects which will provide added value to member institutions during the period of the strategic plan and beyond, both through opportunities for collaboration and through further raising the status and impact of distance education.

Considerable structural improvements have been made within ICDE's Secretariat and the active involvement of the ICDE Executive Committee and other business structures have led to greater dynamism and strategic progress within the organization.

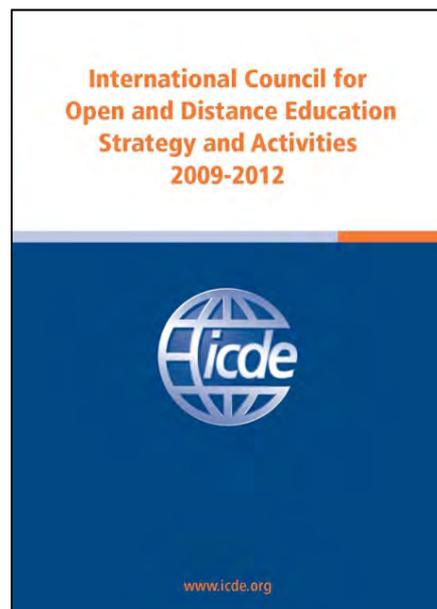
Note: The Annual Report is written in English, ICDE's language of operation.

3. The ICDE strategic plan

During 2008, ICDE after consultation with members at the Shanghai Standing Conference of Presidents, commissioned an environmental scan to examine the key global trends in higher education, adult education and distance learning. This document resulted in the publication of a report entitled *Global Trends in Higher Education*, which was published in January 2009 (see 7.1). The report, together with consultations with member institutions, provided ICDE with a framework within which its strategic plan could be developed.

The strategic plan in its final form was completed in the third quarter of 2009 and presented to members at the ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents in Barcelona in November 2009. The key points of the strategic plan are as follows:

1. ICDE shall be the global arena for the discussion of distance education policies.
2. ICDE shall promote quality in distance, flexible and ICT-based education, and work for the achievement of a global understanding of quality within distance education.
3. ICDE will contribute to the development of new methodologies and technologies, through the dissemination of information, supporting efforts to find solutions for countries with developing economies, and through working to increase awareness of the digital divide and steps taken to minimize the divide.
4. ICDE will foster cooperation between members, leading to significant increases in cooperation between national and regional organizations, and greater opportunities for collaboration between institutions in the northern and southern hemispheres.



The ICDE Secretariat's activity plan for 2009–2012 was published in combination with the strategic plan, where activities designed to meet the strategic objectives are described. Work on meeting many of the objectives contained therein began during 2009 and is described throughout this report.

The strategic plan may be downloaded from: www.icde.org/en/about/mission

4. Relations with UNESCO

ICDE's first strategic objective is to be the global arena for the discussion of distance education policies. A key strategy for the achievement of this goal is lobbying (Strategy and Activities, page 3), and ICDE's relations with UNESCO provide a crucial arena for this work.

ICDE is an NGO (non-governmental organization) in formal consultative relations with UNESCO, and works together with UNESCO in the service of international cooperation and development. This status grants ICDE's members a voice at UNESCO, while obliging ICDE to acquaint its members with UNESCO programmes activities and achievements pertaining to open and distance education.

ICDE's General Delegate at UNESCO, Bernard Loing, is President of the NGO Conference and President of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee.

4.1. The UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education

The UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education is held every ten years at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. It is billed as an occasion for key stakeholders to make commitments to the development of higher education and agree on action-oriented recommendations to enable higher education and research to better respond to the growing demands of society.

ICDE President, Frits Pannekoek, President of Athabasca University, Canada and ICDE Secretary General Carl Holmberg attended the World Conference in July 2009 and contributed to the debates, behind the scenes negotiations and formation of the final communiqué, supported by Bernard Loing, ICDE's General Delegate at UNESCO.

Frits Pannekoek was afforded a prominent role as a speaker on the use of information and communication technologies, and their role in development and giving a voice to minority cultures.

The text of the final communiqué was important in order to promote the global status of open and distance education. It states that new approaches such as open and distance learning (ODL) and information and communications technologies (ICTs) are required to realize the goals of Education for All (EFA), and to address the worldwide shortage of teachers. It goes on to state that: "ODL approaches and ICTs present opportunities to widen access to quality education, particularly when Open Educational Resources are readily shared by many countries and higher education institutions. [...]The application of ICTs to teaching and learning has great potential to increase access, quality and success." (Source: www.unesco.org/en/wche2009)

ICDE's third strategic objective is to create awareness about emerging technologies through media and conferences (Strategy and Activities, page 3), and both Frits Pannekoek's contributions and the final communiqué provide a solid starting point for the project to identify key aspects of the digital divide and possible steps towards overcoming the divide (Strategy and Activities, page 5) which remained in the planning stages during 2009.

4.2. ICDE's General Delegate at UNESCO

Bernard Loing, ICDE's General Delegate at UNESCO, was re-elected as President of the International Conference of NGOs for the period 2010-2012 at the UNESCO Conference of NGOs at UNESCO in December 2009. His re-election is a great responsibility and an honour for both Dr. Loing and for ICDE and his position brings ICDE tremendous insight in the workings of UNESCO, and a broad network of contacts within the organization.

4.3. Projects with UNESCO involvement

The Open Educational Quality Initiative, a partnership between ICDE, UNESCO and five other organizations and institutions is described under section 9.1. Although part funded by the European Commission, both ICDE and UNESCO - represented by the sections for Communication and Information and for Education - saw clear opportunities both to move forward their agendas in relation to the enhanced use of open educational resources in an international setting (Strategy and Activities, page 5), but also to enable institutions in other areas of the world to help form this important area of research.

The project described under section 9.2, regarding the regulatory framework of distance education has also benefitted significantly in its planning stages from input from Bernard Loing.

5. ICDE and Norway

ICDE established its Secretariat in Oslo in 1989 on the basis of generous funding from the Government of Norway. That funding has continued today on the pre-condition that ICDE works to foster relations between ICDE member institutions and the Norwegian distance education community. Representatives of the ICDE Executive Committee and the Secretary General hold an annual meeting with the Ministry of Education to coordinate approaches.

ICDE currently has four institutional members, one agency and two individual members from Norway and aims to attract a greater number of Norwegian institutions to the organization's membership.

5.1. Activities providing added value for Norwegian institutions

In view of two significant ICDE events being held in Europe during 2009, it was decided to concentrate on promoting these events to the Norwegian audience.

Twelve Norwegian delegates attended the 23rd ICDE World Conference, including from TISIP, Folkeuniversitetet Nettstudier, Folkeuniversitetet Vestlandet, Bodø University College, the University of Oslo and Gjøvik University College.

Rectors of Norwegian institutions received personalized Norwegian language invitations to the ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents (see also 5.3 below), though regrettably only two Norwegian representatives attended the meeting.

An internal evaluation of the limited success of these initiatives - including interviews with key figures from the Norwegian context - has been carried out and will inform an improved strategy for future promotion of activities and opportunities within the organization's host country.

5.2. International exchange - Chinese visit to Norway



A delegation from China Central Radio and TV University (CRTVU) held a study tour to Scandinavia in August 2009, led by Prof. Ruan Zhiyong, Vice President of CRTVU.

The study tour was coordinated by ICDE and Ingeborg Bø, Member of the ICDE Board of Trustees, and was a direct result of contacts made during the ICDE Study Tour to China in 2008.

At the offices of ICDE, they met and heard presentations from Carl Holmberg, Secretary General of ICDE, Torhild Slåtto, Executive Director of the Norwegian Association for Distance Education (NADE), who provided an introduction to Norwegian distance education institutions, and Ingeborg Bø who spoke in her capacity as Board Member of the European Foundation for Quality in E-Learning.

The delegation also visited Oslo University College and Norway Opening Universities in Tromsø.

5.3. Relations with the Norwegian distance education community

ICDE has a highly beneficial relationship with actors within the distance education community. Through sharing office premises in Oslo, ICDE and the Norwegian Association of Distance Education are fortunate to

be able to benefit from continuous dialogue and information exchange about the Norwegian distance education arena and how the Norwegian context interacts with the international context of ICDE. This is tremendously useful for consulting on new ideas, contact sharing, and exchange of best practice leading to the improvement of events, information and member activity and publications.

ICDE is fortunate to have Norway Opening Universities as an active member of the organization. Norway Opening Universities has proven an enthusiastic support of the organization's work and assists ICDE for example by distributing Norwegian language invitations to the ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents to Rectors of Norwegian institutions.

In December 2009, ICDE sent its publication ICDE Highlights to over 150 contacts in Norwegian institutions together with Christmas greetings in order to provide exposure for the organization and to help convince more Norwegian institutions to become members.

6. Conferences and events

ICDE's fourth key objective is to foster cooperation between members. Conferences bearing the ICDE brand are the most important element to this strategy (Strategy and Activities, page 3 and page 6).

Since 1939, ICDE has organized conferences to support the exchange of ideas between practitioners of open and distance education. These arenas have proven valuable for the development of institutions and for ongoing analysis of open and distance education policies worldwide. Three types of meetings have developed: World Conferences organised biennially, International Conferences with a regional focus and the Standing Conference of Presidents organized every year for Presidents and other Executive Officers of member institutions. Each of these events is run by ICDE in cooperation with a member institution.

Venues chosen for meetings rotate among the regions with a twofold aim:

1. To allow international participants to acquaint themselves with different countries, cultures and education systems.
2. To give local institutions and host countries the opportunity to showcase their institutions, experts, and educational values and systems to a broad international audience. The audience comprises both those attending conferences and those given access to the materials produced as a result of it.

6.1. Events held in 2009

2009 was a challenging year for both the world economy and distance education institutions. This was reflected in different ways through two key ICDE events, the 23rd ICDE World Conference on Open and Learning and Distance Education and the 2009 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents.

Both events involved a considerable commitment of time and resources by the ICDE Executive Committee and Secretariat; ICDE Executive Committee members played a key role in the executive planning, and particularly within the programme committee and in defining the strategic and academic agenda, while the Secretariat was active in the following areas:

- Distributing invitations and advertising the conference to the ICDE network and beyond
- Coordinating and contributing to the programme committee
- Overseeing the correct use of the ICDE brand
- Providing guidance and knowledge based on the experience and good practice of previous conferences
- Ensuring the correct level of ICDE exposure

- Ensuring that the tone and content of declarations is in line with ICDE objectives and that these are widely disseminated
- Sending thank you letters to the host and key contributors
- Ensuring continuity from one event to the next
- Evaluation of the planning and organization of the event

6.1.1. The 23rd ICDE World Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education



The 23rd ICDE World Conference was held in Maastricht, The Netherlands in June 2009, hosted by OpenUniversiteit Nederland and held jointly with the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities' Annual Conference. The event was attended by over 500 participants from 70 nations and achieved considerable global balance.

The 23rd World Conference gained its highest ever global audience, this being the first occasion on which the event was broadcast in real time to ICDE members and other interested parties across the globe on the conference website. Viewers were able to watch and listen to the speaker in addition to seeing the PowerPoint slides. During the keynote panel debates viewers were not only able to watch live proceedings, but also to submit questions to the panel, which were read out and discussed during the course of the debate. All previously broadcast material - as well as keynote speaker interviews - were recorded and uploaded to the conference website.

The theme for the conference was Flexible Education for All: Open - Global – Innovative. Five plenary sessions were held with keynote speeches and panel debates, and 300 papers were presented in parallel sessions and workshops on subjects ranging from learner support services to technology enhanced learning. Papers were also uploaded to the conference website.

The outcomes of the World Conference were presented in the closing session, published on the website and distributed worldwide through ICDE's mailing list, to regional organizations and to media outlets.

The outcomes were also reported at two further conferences:

- The European Distance Education Network 2009 Annual Conference in a dedicated ninety-minute panel session chaired by the ICDE Secretary General with representatives from the ICDE membership, ICDE Executive Committee and the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities.

- At the UNESCO 2009 World Conference on Higher Education in the closing session of the conference by the chair of the 23rd ICDE World Conference programme committee, Fred Mulder, Rector of OpenUniversiteit Nederland.

The Maastricht Message noted the need for governments, NGOs, not for-profit interests and the corporate sector to mobilize their imagination and resources to create flexible, accessible, and quality learning at scale, but sounded a note of caution given challenges, including inadequate accessibility to ICT infrastructure, questions over the sustainability, cultural appropriateness, quality and effective application of OERs, quality concerns, the issue of mobility of academic credentials, and the dilemma regarding the appropriate mix of public and private responsibilities for learning. Three additional statements were published covering key areas in the programme; open educational resources, quality assurance in e-learning and distance education, and international development and open, distance and flexible learning.

The 23rd World Conference thus enabled ICDE actively to work towards its primary objective, to be the global arena for the discussion of distance education policies, through the physical conference, online broadcast, dissemination of the conference outcomes, and in this way to support the development of an understanding of the values and possibilities of distance education as an instrument for lifelong learning (Strategy and Activities, page 4).

Conference website: www.ou.nl/icde2009

6.1.2. The ICDE Prize of Excellence

Promoting quality and fostering cooperation are key elements of ICDE's strategy for the period 2009-2012 (Strategy and Activities, page 3), though it has been a tradition for ten years to honour outstanding contributions to open and distance education at ICDE world conferences. Nominations and statements of support are invited from ICDE members, and the winners selected by an independent, international panel, based on merit alone with no political or cultural considerations being made.

At the 23rd World Conference in Maastricht, the following prizes were presented:

- Asha Kanwar, Vice President of the Commonwealth of Learning - the ICDE Individual Prize of Excellence for outstanding work in leading the creation of low cost technology options for delivering education to the developing world.
- The Prize for Lifelong Contribution - Gary E. Miller, former Associate Vice-President for Outreach at the Pennsylvania State University, and founding Executive Director of Penn State World Campus, one of the first global distance teaching programmes.
- The ICDE Institutional Prize of Excellence - Shanghai TV University in recognition of its work in using broadcast and digital technologies to reach diverse sections of society.

A further presentation was made to Fred Nickolmann of FernUniversität in Hagen, Germany, for his many years of service to ICDE.

6.1.3. The World Conference Fellowship Programme

ICDE's third strategic objective includes an expectation that ICDE will work actively to assist countries with developing economies to implement new methodologies and technologies (Strategy and Activities, page 3). ICDE's importance to these countries is reflected in the attendance statistics from the 23rd ICDE World Conference, with 18% of the participants coming from Asia, and 14% from Africa.

A key achievement of the World Conference was the Fellowship Programme which enabled 22 representatives from countries with developing economies to attend. ICDE took the lead together with the conferences hosts in soliciting sponsorship from member institutions and other organizations, of whom nine contributed to the programme.

Recipients who received a significant contribution towards their travel and attendance costs came from Bangladesh, Botswana, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Uganda.

6.1.4. The 2009 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents



In the light of the challenges faced by the worldwide economy, and concerns of member institutions, the theme for the 2009 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents was quality in the context of the global financial crisis.

The meeting, hosted in Barcelona, Spain, by Universitat Oberta de Catalunya was attended by eighty executives representing fifty institutions from five continents and was thus one of the best attended Standing Conference of Presidents ever, reflecting the tremendous need for dialogue and common efforts to meet the challenges posed by the financial crisis.

A keynote presentation was given by Dr. Xavier Sala-i-Martin, Professor of Economics at Columbia University, New York and Senior Economic Advisor to the World Economic Forum, Davos, and was followed by working groups led by respected academics and institutional managers, on the themes of:

- New entrepreneurship
- Quality upgrading
- Employability and lifelong learning
- Leading innovative approaches to the financial crisis

The 2009 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents declaration drew together the conclusions and recommendations of each working group and made four key recommendations that:

1. Proponents of open, online and distance education must use the current economic crisis as an opportunity both to influence policy and to drive forward innovation in teaching.
2. The open, online and distance education community must strive to meet the highest expectations with regard to effectiveness, transparency and accountability.
3. Institutions commit themselves to a deeper understanding of the aspirations of individual students within the needs of the global economy.
4. Open, online and distance universities will nurture and encourage entrepreneurship to lessen the impact of future economic crises.

Those conclusions relating particularly to quality and development will now help to form the basis of ICDE's future work in these areas (Strategy and Activities, page 5-6).

Both the keynote presentation and introductions by working group leaders were broadcast on the conference website and archived online for later viewing.

Through this exceptionally well-attended forum for dialogue, online dissemination and worldwide distribution of the recommendations and conclusions, recognition of ICDE as the leading forum for the discussion of global distance education policy was further enhanced (Strategy and Activities, page 3).

Standing Conference of Presidents website: www.uoc.edu/symposia/scop2009

6.2. Planning for future events

The process of active evaluation of ICDE events carried out by the Secretariat and Executive Committee actively informs the planning of future events. During 2009, the Secretariat sought to structure the evaluation in order better to aid the planning of future events and build a collective, lasting memory of lessons learned. This resulted in a revised version of the conference guidelines distributed to host institutions for future events.

ICDE also developed a clear and transparent process for member institutions to be able to submit calls of interest for hosting future ICDE events, and for the selection of host institutions.

6.2.1. The 2010 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents and Policy Forum

During 2009, the University of South Africa (Unisa) was selected as host of the 2010 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents. Planning began in the later stages of 2009 including a meeting immediately after the Standing Conference of Presidents in Barcelona between Unisa staff and the ICDE Executive Committee and staff of the Secretariat.

The Standing Conference of Presidents will be held 14-15 September 2010 on the Unisa Campus in Pretoria, City of Tshwane, South Africa and the theme will be Bridging the Development Gap, inspired both by the location of the conference on the continent of Africa, by expectations on higher education institutions to promote development and by the need to provide further input to the work on development foreseen in ICDE's plans (Strategy and Activities, page 5).

It was decided in addition that a Policy Forum will be held prior to the Standing Conference of Presidents where national and regional policies related to open and distance education that can promote or hinder the development of Education for All, and formal limitations and negative attitudes distance education courses and qualifications will be discussed. The Policy Forum is an activity planned specifically to aid the attainment of ICDE's first objective, to be the global arena for the discussion of distance education policies (Strategy and Activities, page 4).

6.2.2. 24th ICDE World Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education

During 2009 a contract was signed with Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia, to host the 24th ICDE World Conference. Discussions were held including a meeting with the Rector and key staff from Universitas Terbuka at the 23rd World Conference in the Netherlands. ICDE's Secretary General also travelled to Indonesia to carry out contract negotiations and partake in the selection of the venue. It was determined that the conference will be held on 2-5 October 2011 in Nusa Dua on the island of Bali.

The conference theme will be: Expanding horizons – new approaches to open and distance learning (ODL) and subthemes will be:

- ODL and human capacity building
- ODL in a changing world

- Quality and ODL in the future
- Management and strategic development of ODL
- OERs in a global world
- International development and distance learning

The chosen themes will provide both an arena for the presentation of the results of, and an opportunity to gain input to ICDE initiatives foreseen for the period 2010-2010 (Strategy and Activities, pages 4-6).

6.2.3. ICDE International Conferences in Italy and Argentina

Among ICDE's key actions to foster cooperation between members, the organization commits to give increased attention to regional conferences (Strategy and Activities, page 6).

During 2009, approaches were made to ICDE by two member institutions wishing to host ICDE International Conferences with a regional focus. Initial discussions began with both, and it is intended to hold the following events in late 2010 or early 2011:

- Università di Roma Tor Vergata to host a conference on quality in distance education in Italy in cooperation with Sle-L Società Italiana di e-Learning
- Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, Buenos Aires, Argentina to host a conference entitled Distance Education, ITC and the University: Quality, Equity and Access to Higher Education.

7. Publications

ICDE seeks to be the global arena for the discussion of distance education policy and publications and dissemination of information are central to this objective (Strategy and Activities, page 3). As previously reported, ICDE published its Strategic plan in 2009, as well as the outcomes of the 23rd World Conference and the Standing Conference of Presidents. In this section, the report which formed the basis of the strategic plan is described, as is ICDE's significant work on improving its website and electronic information dissemination during the year.

7.1. Global Trends in Higher Education, Adult and Distance Learning

In order to help ICDE better understand the context in which the organization is likely to find itself over the coming years, the ICDE Executive Committee invited Pamela Walsh from Athabasca University, Canada, to prepare an environmental scan of the key global trends in higher education, adult and distance learning.

Work on this began in 2008, though the final report, *Global Trends in Higher Education, Adult and Distance Learning*, was not published until January 2009. The report thus provided ICDE with a framework within which its strategic plan could be developed.

As a global actor, ICDE recognizes the complexity of the variety of world contexts – national, regional, professional, economic and technological.

The key trends identified in the report were:

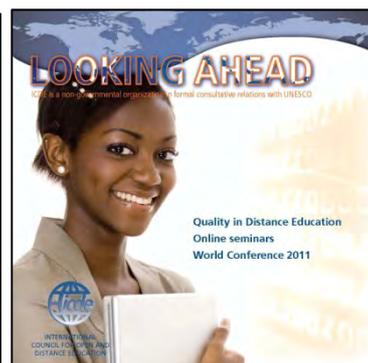
- Increasing globalization and internationalization of higher education
- Worldwide growth and increasing demand for access to higher education
- Growth and impact of open and distance universities

- Diversification of distance and higher education providers
- Changing learner demographics, experience, and demands
- Increasing focus on accountability, quality, and performance
- Increasing access to information and communication technologies (ICTs)
- New developments in technology:
 - Mobile learning
 - Personalization in online learning
 - Educational social software (ESS) in distance and online education
- Changes in cost, affordability, and economic models for open and distance education

ICDE's Secretary General presented the findings at events including a conference to mark Sweden's presidency of the European Union and an International Forum on Open and Distance Education in China in order to test the findings and help further to inform the development of ICDE's strategic plan.

The report may be downloaded from: www.icde.org/en/resources/reports

7.2. Printed materials



ICDE's membership is spread throughout the world and a significant proportion of members are to be found in countries with limited broadband width. ICDE therefore makes key information materials available to its members in printed format, as well as electronically. In 2009, the Secretariat arranged for both the Strategic plan and an attractive summary of activities over the previous twelve months - *ICDE Highlights* - to be sent to the membership. In addition, two recruitment flyers were sent to approximately 600 prospective ICDE members in the organization's database.

7.3. The ICDE website

According to the strategic plan, the ICDE website should be used for dissemination, as a source of reference and as an arena for cooperation and interaction (Strategy and Activities, pages 4-6). In order to begin progress towards this goal in 2009, ICDE committed significant time and resources to developing, transferring material to, re-cataloguing and publishing new material on the new website.

The aim has been to create an authoritative reference tool and a virtual meeting place for all sections of the open and distance education community. In order to achieve this, three main areas have been established: Forum as a virtual meeting place and a source of information about physical meetings; Context which describes the world of open and distance education; and Resources which contains information on developments within the field.

A website is of course a project in continual development, but the following was achieved in 2009:

- An easy to search news archive
- A global conference calendar with an overview of physical meetings related to the field
- A video library section to publish clips from conferences and meetings
- An overview of key international actors, regionally, nationally and at institutional level in open and distance education
- An overview of key journals with links
- Updated information about ICDE's aims, organization and activities
- An Extranet with separate areas for members, the Executive Committee, and the Board of Trustees

The ICDE website: <http://www.icde.org>

7.4. ICDE's electronic newsletter

Once a month, an ICDE newsletter is sent to contacts in the organization's database. The newsletter will normally consist of information in relation to activities being developed by the organization, information about new members joining ICDE, news from member institutions or calls for assistance with research projects.

Since the new ICDE website was launched in September 2009, over 700 individuals have subscribed to the newsletter through this function on our home page. Further the new website allows for newsletters to be sent directly from the website drawing more traffic and allowing for an enhanced look and more consistent branding of the organization. In addition, work on updating ICDE's e-mail database has helped enhance the effectiveness of ICDE's newsletters.

7.5. *Open Praxis*, the electronic journal of ICDE

Open Praxis, ICDE's online journal continues to be published and is a forum to which members are invited to submit papers, and which also enables important contributions to ICDE events to be given wider exposure. In 2009, four papers from the 2008 Standing Conference of Presidents were published together with 13 keynote papers from the UNESCO Global Forum on Open and Distance Education.

8. Membership recruitment and retention

During 2009, membership activity has focused on improving the organization's visibility and the general information flow to members, former members and potential new members, through:

- A regularly updated and attractive new website

- Improved, regular electronic newsletters
- Promotional materials and stand presence at the 23rd World Conference and 2009 ICDE Standing Conference of Presidents
- Personalized invitations to the Standing Conference of Presidents
- Promotional flyers sent to former and current members in June and November
- A membership discount offer for new members applying for membership during the second half of 2009
- *ICDE Highlights* sent to former and current members in November
- *ICDE Highlights* sent with local language Christmas greeting to institutions in Norway, Sweden and Denmark
- An attractive package containing information on ICDE's activities and a UNESCO-published book on the open educational resources movement sent to all members with renewal notices in November

Internally, the Secretariat has developed and improved procedures for new membership applications in order to combat attempts by suspected fake universities - so called diploma mills - to become members. Prospective members are now required to provide evidence of recognition in their home country and references to confirm their institution's good standing and commitment to codes of ethics in distance learning. New member applications are presented to ICDE's Executive Committee for their approval on a monthly basis, and institutions are only accepted as members after this stage.

Ten new institutions, one new agency and nine new individuals were admitted to the ICDE membership during 2009. Overall the number of institutions, agencies and authorities remained stable and membership income rose by 25% compared with 2008 due in part to a favourable Euro-Norwegian kroner exchange rate.

9. Projects

ICDE has a history of initiating and taking part in member-driven projects. With the strategic plan in place, ICDE is forging ahead with a series of initiatives in order to meet the organization's specific objectives.

9.1. The Open Educational Quality Initiative



ICDE's second strategic objective - to contribute to the development of new methodologies and technologies - challenges ICDE to develop a strategy for enhancing open educational resources - freely available teaching and learning materials - in an international setting. The strategy should follow the recommendations of the ICDE members' 2008 Task Force on Open Educational Resources (Strategy and Activities, page 5).

As the first element of this, and indeed to meet ICDE's strategic objective to promote quality (Strategy and Activities, page 5), ICDE began negotiations in 2009 to take part in a research project called the Open Educational Quality Initiative (OPAL). The initiative will focus on the provision of innovative open educational practices, both in higher education and adult education, and promote quality, innovation and transparency.

ICDE joined forces with six other organizations including UNESCO and ICDE member institution, the Open University UK to apply for funding for this two-year project from the European Commission Education and Training Lifelong Learning Programme. ICDE was involved in writing the application for funding and project description, and the OPAL Initiative was successful in its application with the European Commission agreeing to fund 75% of the Initiative's costs.

The project will move beyond the issue of access to open educational resources (OER), and focus on innovation and quality through open educational practices (OEP). ICDE will be heavily involved in two particular areas of the project; the establishment and awarding of the OEP Innovation Award to recognize outstanding achievements in the field of OEP, and dissemination and exploitation of the results of the project through targeted conferences, papers and presentations, and workshops and seminars. The nature of the funding of the project means that it will focus on the European context, though the involvement of ICDE and UNESCO underlines the project's strategy of connecting European organizations to international debate, and making the EU a lighthouse region for OEP. In this regard, ICDE commits to disseminate updates from, and findings of the project to its membership with a view to providing other regions of the world with input to their work on promoting innovative open educational practices. At the same time, ICDE members throughout the world will be invited to provide input to the project in order for the European context to benefit from international experience of good educational practice.

ICDE began dissemination activities in order to communicate the concepts and objectives of the OPAL project to its membership during 2009.

9.2. The Regulatory Framework of Distance Education

As a key activity under the objective to become the global arena for the discussion of distance education policies, work began on planning a project to study regulatory systems within distance education throughout the world. (Strategy and Activities, page 4).

It is argued that the social relevance of distance education, as well as security, quality and equity of access, are closely linked to the application of sound regulatory systems.

ICDE's strategic plan envisages that this work shall be further developed and that after consultation with ICDE's Executive Committee, the project may be launched in 2010. The suggested objectives of the project are:

- To identify the main regulatory frameworks that apply to distance and online education in different regions of the world
- To identify similarities and differences, both within each region, and also across regions
- To gather the existing laws, norms and rules related to distance and online education in a database
- To identify good practices in terms of the regulation of distance and online education

This project has benefitted substantially in the planning stages from knowledge of UNESCO's work in this sphere provided by Bernard Loing, ICDE's General Delegate at UNESCO.

9.3. World Statistics on Distance Education

Initial work began in 2009 on a proposal for a project to develop international web-based data on the use of open and distance education. Again this features under the objective to become the global arena for the discussion of distance education policies (Strategy and Activities, page 4).

The development of this proposal has involved the ICDE Secretariat working closely with ICDE member, the Brazilian Association for Distance Education (ABED). ABED has recently launched its fourth annual statistical yearbook of distance learning in Brazil, work which is probably unique in the world and could serve as a model for the work on collecting global data.

ICDE's strategic plan states that ICDE should work towards a greater understanding of the potential of open and distance education, and ICDE is fortunate that ABED has declared its willingness to support a project of this kind. It is envisaged that further discussions with the ICDE Executive Committee will result in ICDE launching a project for the development of an electronic database of statistics on open and distance education throughout the world in 2010.

9.4. Quality reviews of the student learning experience

As a key action to promote quality in flexible and ICT-based education, ICDE has resolved to revisit and revise structures and methods in order to be able to offer member institutions an external peer review of the student learning experience (Strategy and Activities, page 5).

During 2009 much work was carried out in order to obtain a historical overview of previous quality reviews, through discussions with members of ICDE's Board of Trustees, external reviewers involved in previous review processes, and member institutions which had previously undergone a quality review. This extensive evaluation and analysis has thus provided the basis for future planning work.

10. Representation at conferences and meetings

ICDE's Executive Committee and Secretary General are frequently invited to provide ICDE input at third-party conferences. ICDE will normally ask that the hosting institution or the Executive Committee member's own institution funds their participation.

During 2009, conferences where ICDE was represented have included:

- 31st Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization High Officials Meeting, January 2009
- UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, July 2009
- European Distance and E-learning Network 2009 Annual Conference, June 2009
- European Foundation for Quality in E-Learning 2nd International Forum, September 2009
- The 15th CIED – Brazilian International Congress of Distance Education, September 2009
- Conference to mark Sweden's Presidency of the European Union, October 2009
- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education Workshop, October 2009
- International Forum on Open and Distance Education hosted by China Central Radio and TV University and China Distance Education Society, October 2009
- 23rd Asian Association of Open Universities Annual Conference, November 2009
- 8th International ILIAS Open Source Conference, November 2009
- Online Educa Berlin, December 2009

11. Business structures of ICDE

ICDE's constitution of 2006 set out a new structure for the governance of ICDE. A new Executive Committee was elected to begin its term of office on 1 January 2008, while a new Board of Trustees and Election Committee were formed during 2008. 2009 was thus the first complete year of operation of these new structures. A number of changes nonetheless took place during the year and significant improvements to the coordination of these structures were introduced.

11.1. The Executive Committee



The members of the ICDE Executive Committee are (from left to right):

- Fredric Litto, President of the Brazilian Association for Distance Education - ABED
- Denise Kirkpatrick, Pro Vice-Chancellor Learning, Teaching and Quality, The Open University, UK
- Nyameko Barney Pityana, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of South Africa (UNISA)
- Tian Belawati, Rector, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia
- Frits Pannekoek, President of Athabasca University, Canada (President)
- Marta Mena, General Coordinator of PROCAE, Cabinet of Ministers, Government of Argentina

Paul Grimwood retired from the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand in 2009 and vacated a position on the Executive Committee to which Tian Belawati, Rector of Universitas Terbuka was co-opted in June 2009.

The Executive Committee is responsible for making policy decisions in accordance with ICDE's mission and constitution. The Committee sits for a period of four years and is composed of six elected members, one of whom is elected by the individual members of ICDE, while five members are elected from and by ICDE's member institutions. The extra contribution made by a small number of member institutions in terms of the time of the Executive Committee members, their support staff, and travel costs represents a significant contribution in kind to ICDE.

Seven Executive Committee meetings were held during 2009 including three physical meetings; in Oslo in March, at the 23rd World Conference in June and at the Standing Conference of Presidents in November.

Agreed administrative procedures for the meetings are now firmly engrained in the work of the ICDE Secretariat, with a draft agenda being sent ten days prior to the meeting, documentation relating to the agenda being uploaded to the Executive Committee area on the ICDE website and minutes being taken, a draft being circulated and provisional and then later agreed minutes being distributed both within the Executive Committee, and to the Board of Trustees and ICDE membership through the members' area of the ICDE website.

In addition to preparations for and participation in Executive Committee meetings, members of the Executive Committee have been particularly involved in the following areas:

- Development of the strategic plan

- Budgetary oversight
- Participation in the programme and organization committees for ICDE conferences
- Representing ICDE at conferences and meetings
- Project planning and risk analysis
- Liaison with members, particularly in their own regions
- Recruiting new members
- Evaluation and analysis of the constitution
- Evaluation and development of membership policies
- Approval of membership applications
- Providing editorial input to documentation and publications
- Providing feedback on the work of the ICDE Secretariat

11.2. The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is composed of five persons, and aims to reflect the diversity of the ICDE membership culturally, linguistically and geographically, as well as in the expertise of its members.

The Board's role is to advise the Executive Committee, and to monitor the conduct of the Secretary General, the President and members of the Executive Committee.

The Secretary General reports formally to the Board of Trustees on a monthly basis, though he and the staff of the Secretariat maintain regular contact with individual members on matters relating to the history and memory of the organization.

As well as receiving copies of the minutes of Executive Committee meetings, the Board of Trustees now also receives access to background documentation from Executive Committee meetings after a meeting has taken place, again through the relevant area of the ICDE Extranet.

Beginning with the Executive Committee meeting held at the 23rd World Conference in Maastricht, the ICDE Board of Trustees has been invited to nominate one member to attend each physical meeting of the Executive Committee in the role of observer. This member of the Board of Trustees is invited to comment on proceedings and the work of the Executive Committee and Secretariat at the end of the meeting.

11.3. The Election Committee

The Election Committee exists to verify the qualifications of potential candidates for the Executive Committee and is composed of three persons. The constitution states that one member shall have served on a previous Executive Committee or Board of Trustees, one shall be a well-known expert in ICDE's sphere of interest, and one shall represent the host country of the ICDE Permanent Secretariat.

In 2009, the co-option of Tian Belawati to the Executive Committee resulted in Helmut Hoyer, Rector of FernUniversität in Hagen, Germany being invited to join the Election Committee.

12. Conclusion

This Annual Report has sought to describe ICDE's activities during 2009 and to present them in relation to the ICDE strategic plan.

Specific progress towards the key action in ICDE's strategic plan during 2009 was as follows:

1. To be the global arena for the discussion of distance education policies
 - Successful lobbying influenced the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education communiqué
 - Significant global dissemination of the outcomes of the 23rd ICDE World Conference and ICDE 2009 Standing Conference of Presidents achieved
 - Satisfactory progress on planning of Regulatory Framework and World Statistics projects
 - Policy Forum under planning and on target

2. To promote quality in distance, flexible and ICT-based education
 - Major distance education journals presented on the ICDE website
 - Partial funding obtained and work begun on planning and information dissemination for the Open Educational Quality Initiative
 - Good progress on evaluating ICDE's historical work with quality reviews

3. To contribute to the development of new methodologies and technologies
 - Initial work to inform the project on steps to overcome the digital divide
 - First steps in defining ICDE's strategy for enhancing open educational resources through the Open Educational Quality Initiative

4. To foster cooperation between members
 - 23rd ICDE World Conference and ICDE 2009 Standing Conference of Presidents successfully held
 - Planning underway for events in 2010 and 2011, including regional conferences
 - New website launched with dedicated section reflecting the key actors in the world of open and distance education; planning and technical implementation of interactive functionality underway
 - Significant membership activity implemented
 - Two key learning opportunities offered to Norwegian actors within distance education