

Ethics

Ethics of Science and Technology

Bioethics

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Global Ethics Observatory

Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights

The Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights was adopted unanimously and by acclamation at UNESCO's 29th General Conference on 11 November 1997. The following year, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the Declaration.

Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights (11 November 1997)

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Evaluation of the Declaration

The Declaration has been cited in many academic and popular journals, and has been referred to in numerous national and regional legislation on medicine, privacy and genetic research. UNESCO is currently evaluating the impact of the Declaration worldwide, in accordance with the [Guidelines for the Implementation of the Declaration \(1999\)](#), which the General Conference endorsed at its 30th session. These Guidelines outline the action that different groups must take if the Declaration is to be implemented, and provides guidance as to how these tasks can be achieved.

History of the Declaration

At its 27th session, by its Resolution 27 C/5.15 (15 November 1993) the General Conference of UNESCO asked the Director-General to prepare an international instrument for the protection of the human genome. The IBC, having been entrusted by the Director-General with the preparatory work for this task, created a Legal Commission, chaired by Mr Héctor Gros Espiell to consider the form and content of the instrument.

A first outline, examined by the IBC at its 2nd session, led to the preparation of an Outline of the declaration (7 March 1995) based on universally acknowledged rights and freedoms. The General Conference examined a Report on this subject at its 28th session. On 14 November 1995, it asked the Director-General to draw up a preliminary draft declaration and to create and convene a committee of governmental experts to finalize this declaration (Resolution 28 C/2.2).

This Committee met at UNESCO Headquarters from 22 to 25 July 1997. Based on the deliberations and work of the IBC between 1993 and 1997, the Committee drafted the text of the Draft of a Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights (25 July 1997), which was presented to the General Conference three months later.

The 29th Session of the General Conference adopted the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, unanimously and by acclamation, on 11 November 1997. By Resolution 29 C/17 entitled 'Implementation of the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights', the General Conference laid out the methods for the follow-up of the implementation of the Declaration.

Aware of the significance and scope of this Declaration, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the Declaration by its Resolution A/RES/53/152 on 9 December 1998 at its 53rd session.

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San José, Costa Rica, 3 May 2017
- ▶ Third Regional Ethics Teacher Training Course in Trinidad and Tobago
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 13-16 June 2017
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UNESCO Paris, France, 27-30 June 2017
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