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THE INTEREST OF  
THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
IN DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Foundation and Objectives

1. The parent body of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.) was the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (O.E.E.C.), which itself was founded in 1948. The aim of the O.E.E.C. was to allocate Marshall Plan aid and to help the European countries which founded it to work together for the restoration of their economies. They recognised certain facts which experience had shown to be fundamental: the crucial importance of knowledge in the formulation and implementation of policy; the inter-relatedness of all economic problems; the increasing inter-dependence of national economies.

2. In 1960 a new organisation, the O.E. C.D. was set up comprising the twenty Member countries of the O.E.E.C. with the addition of Canada and the United States: later other countries joined, and the present membership is shown in Annex A. The aim of the O.E.C.D. is to work out policy approaches conducive to balanced economic growth and social progress in the Member countries and to the sound development of the economically less advanced nations. It does this in two ways: by assembling and examining knowledge relevant to rational policy-making in every major field of economic activity; by acting as a forum, meeting the year round, in which such policy-making is facilitated by the exchange and analysis of ideas and experience from all the Member countries.

Organisation and Working Methods

3. A National Delegation to the O.E.C.D. is appointed by each Member country, headed by a Permanent Delegate with the rank of ambassador. The Secretariat consists of international civil servants, organised in Directorates concerned with the various aspects of the O.E.C.D.'s activities. Members of the Delegation and the Secretariat work together in a series of Committees; examples of these Committees are those concerned with Economic Policy, Trade, Financial Matters, Scientific and Technical Personnel, Manpower and Social Affairs, Industry, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Development Assistance. The confrontation method of reviewing progress is frequently used: this is carried out by the examination of each Member country by two others on the basis of memoranda and draft surveys.

4. A development Centre was set up in 1963 as an autonomous agency within O.E.C.D. to improve liaison with the less developed countries: the aim was to enable these countries to benefit from the experience of

the O.E.C.D. and its Member countries, and also to help the latter to adopt their assistance policies so as to meet the most important needs of the beneficiaries as effectively as possible. The Centre's activities have taken two main directions: research, to obtain a better understanding of the development process and its determinants, and to contribute towards the effectiveness of aid; the transfer of knowledge and experience, including the setting-up of a development question-and-answer service.

5. In 1968 the O.E.C.D. Council authorised the Centre to undertake certain activities in the field of population: the aims of this programme are to make Member countries more aware of the importance of the population factor in economic development, to call the attention of donor and recipient countries to the latest developments in the population field, to help the Development Assistance Committee in improving the co-ordination between aid programmes in this field, to put the assembled information at the disposal of countries interested, and to prepare the way for an effective dialogue between the more and the less developed countries and problems in the population field. The population programme is separately financed by eight of the Member countries.

#### The Interest of the O.E.C.D. in Demographic Aspects of Economic Development

It will be clear from the account of the activities of the O.E.C.D. and the Development Centre given above that they have a strong interest in the demographic aspects of economic development. The demographic factor is significant throughout their work, but is particularly important in the research work of the Centre, concerned as it is with development. This factor is also a major preoccupation of the population programme set up at the Centre in 1968: a recent study carried out as part of the programme, entitled "Population Programmes and Social and Economic Development", will shortly be published.

ANNEX A

Members:

Austria  
Belgium  
Canada  
Denmark  
Finland  
France  
Germany  
Greece  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Italy  
Japan  
Luxembourg  
Netherlands  
Norway  
Portugal  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
Turkey  
United Kingdom  
United States of America

Special Status:

Australia  
Yugoslavia

The Population Programme of O.E.C.D.

The rapid growth of interest in recent years in the field of population has led to the danger of a duplication of work by two or more agencies, and the future activities planned for the Population Programme of O.E.C.D. at the Development Centre has been designed therefore to concentrate on aspects of population problems where the structure of O.E.C.D. and the expertise and resources on which it can draw will enable it to render the most useful assistance possible. These activities will include:-

a) The exchange of information. A wide network of formal and informal contacts has been built up, and the Centre is increasing represented at international meetings. In these activities the O.E.C.D. is in a unique position to stress the importance of involvement of both its Member countries and the less developed countries in the development process, and to stress the need of both groups to understand the problems of the other, and where relevant to elaborate on the point of view of countries in a position to be donors of aid. The Centre is expanding its information services, which it is hoped will be of increasing assistance to both Member countries and the less developed countries interested in the population factor of development assistance, and particularly in the management aspects of assistance in this field. It will also be in a better position to provide expert advice to those working within the O.E.C.D. framework on development and technical assistance problems in which population factors should be considered.

b) Conferences and Expert Group Meetings. The Centre will concentrate increasingly on more specialised meetings limited either regionally or in respect of subject matter. For example in April 1970 an expert working group was convened to consider the constraints on the development of family planning activities in Africa, and further meetings will be arranged to consider other aspects of the population field in Africa in the near future.

c) Research. The Research work at the Centre will concentrate on subjects in which the O.E.C.D. has a particular contribution to make. These will include the management and evaluation of aid, the evolution of government policy in respect of population matters and the economic studies traditionally carried out at the Centre and by O.E.C.D. itself. Consideration will also be given to the possibility of coordinating and synthesising research already published to provide digests for the use of those working in these fields whether they be from Member countries or from governments and other organisations in the developing world. The Centre will continue to keep in touch with current research activities by surveys and other means, and it is hoped that this will lead to both a better understanding of the population factor in the development process, and also to prevention of duplications and omissions in research activities in this field.