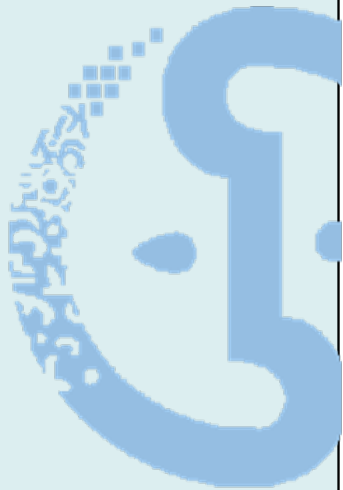


International Council on Archives

Raising the Public Profile of Archives: The Role of the International Council on Archives

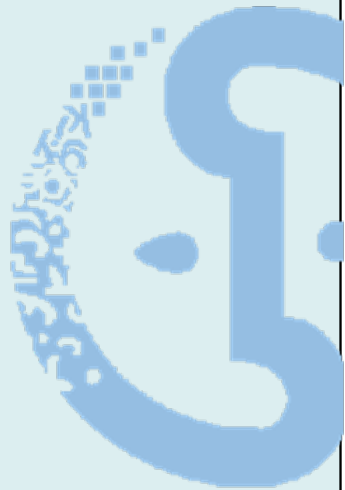
David Leitch
ICA Secretary General

International Archives Day, 9 June 2010,
National Historical Archives, Madrid



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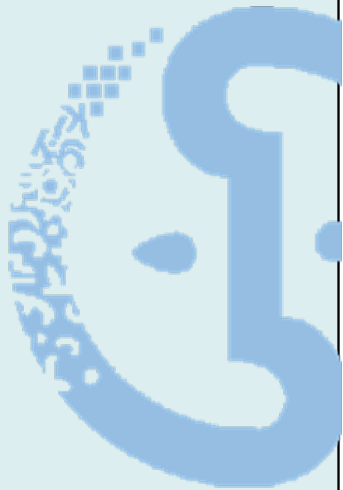
What is ICA?



ICA

ICA is the international body that represents the cause of archives and archivists on the world stage. It is the global voice of archive institutions and professionals.

ICA- Introduction



ICA

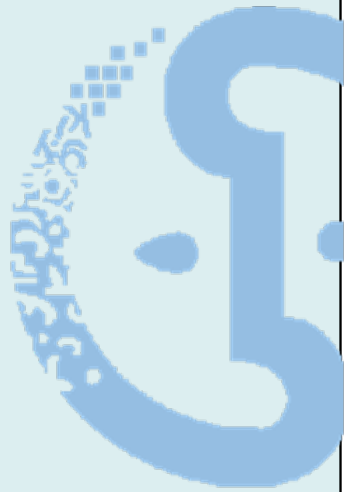
- Founded as an **international NGO** at UNESCO on 9 June 1948
- Today it has over **1,400** members, institutions and individuals
- Its members are based in over **190** countries and territories
- Funded almost entirely by membership dues
- Works in partnership with UNESCO and other bodies

ICA – Global Network



ICA

- **Executive Board:** led by elected President and Vice-Presidents
- **13 Regional Branches** spanning the entire globe, including EURBICA and ALA
- **13 Specialist Sections** based on common professional interests
- **Project Teams & Working Groups**
- **Secretariat:** 6 staff based in Paris
- **An army of volunteers throughout the world**



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ICA- Successes

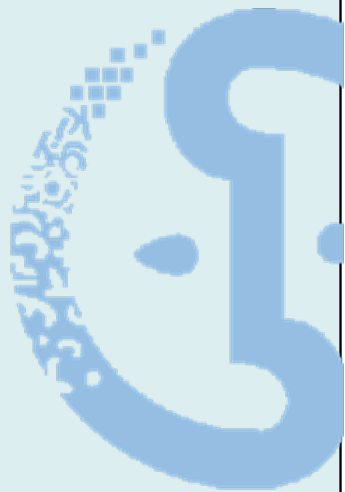
- Provided a forum for professional discussion across political divides
- Produced many important publications, often with UNESCO
- Plays a leading role in the development of standards
- Has stimulated the development of professional training
- Organizes annual conferences and major Congresses every four years

Globalisation and other Major Changes

- Better transport and communications: one global market place for information
- Media: news travels faster
- Rapid growth of population in many parts of the world
- Increasing scarcity of resources
- Climate change is increasing the vulnerability of archives



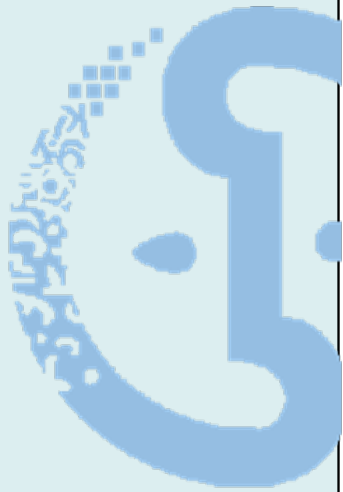
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Advances in Technology

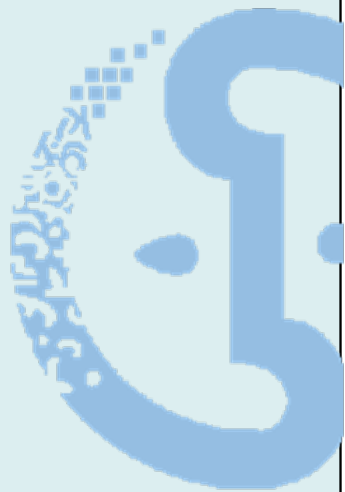
- Advent of the internet, digital records, e-mails, text messages
- Need to manage data for long periods of time
- Need to appraise material in vast accumulations of electronic data
- Challenge of preserving records on media that rapidly deteriorate



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Political Developments

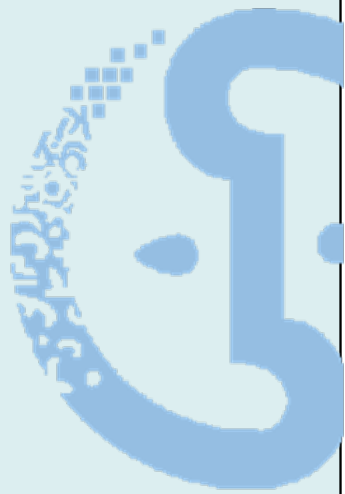
- United Nations organizations play a truly global role
- World Bank and IMF have a major impact on developing countries
- Increasing power of regional organizations (EU, Mercosur)
- In western countries many people are joining civil society organizations
- In developing countries there is a strong emphasis on nation building



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Social Trends

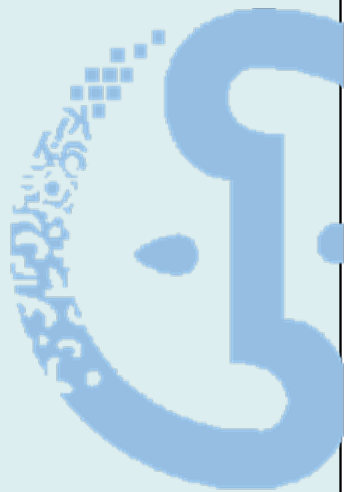
- Public appetite for information, for example family history sources
- Demand for swifter, easier access to information online
- Archivists have to respond to these demands or risk being marginalized
- Need to bridge the 'digital divide' within and between societies



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ICA's response

- Introduce greater accountability: more elected posts, a shorter governance cycle
- Focus on a clear mission, vision and strategic objectives
- Manage a professional programme aimed at archives professionals today
- Develop better internal and external Communications
- Use ICA's stronger organization to advocate the cause of archives



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ICA's New Vision

*ICA aspires to convince **key decision-makers and the general public** that effective archives management is an essential precondition for good governance, the rule of law, administrative transparency, the preservation of mankind's collective memory and access to information by citizens*

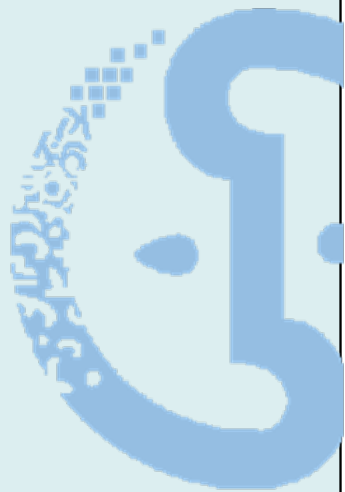


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Mission - 1

ICA promotes the central role of record-keeping and archives in protecting the rights of individuals and states, and in supporting democracy and good governance.

ICA strives to build a better understanding across societies through fostering international cooperation, while respecting linguistic and cultural diversity.



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Mission-2

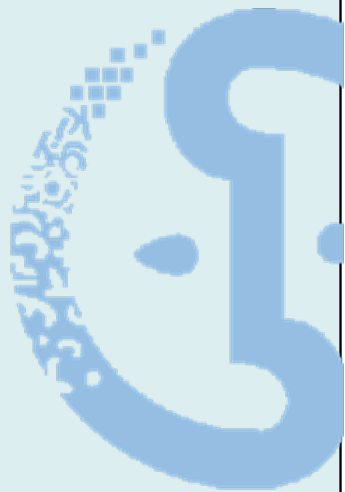
ICA provides opportunities for professional contact, for information exchanges, and for research and education. It takes a leadership role in developing best practices and standards. It acts as an information hub on archives for society.

Strategic Directions and Professional Programme



ICA

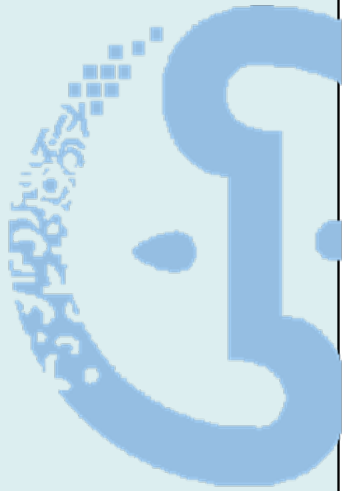
- Six strategic objectives for the ten-year period 2008-2018 agreed in 2008
- Strategy is underpinned by a rolling business plan
- Today ICA has a flourishing professional programme consisting of over 40 projects
- Need to monitor progress, and to evaluate impact on the profession and society



ICA

Strategic Objective 1: To Raise Awareness

- Make key decision-makers aware that archives matter for good governance and accountability
- Underline the importance of archives as an information asset
- Persuade the public that if archives are not preserved, there will be a loss of collective memory
- Encourage the wider public to be more aware of archives and to use them



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Strategic Objective 4 : To Strengthen the network

- Construct a new programme is based on professional solidarity
- Ensure that developing countries are not overlooked
- Organize conferences that focus on cutting edge developments
- Improve direct communications between ICA bodies
- Improve services to members in order to increase recruitment

Strategic Objective 6: Building Partnerships

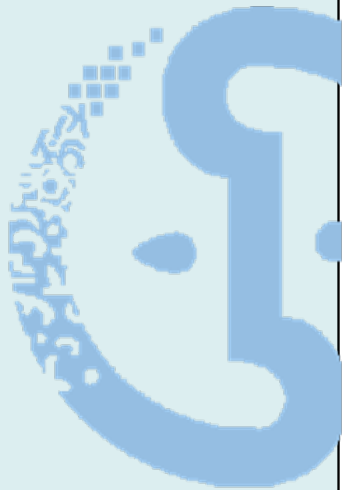


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- More joint initiative with other NGOs, including IFLA, ICOM, and ICOMOS
- Example of the Blue Shield for the protection of cultural property
- Build on strong relationship with UNESCO, especially Memory of the World Programme
- Cultivate closer links with other national and regional organisations
- Build alliances with other professions (lawyers, auditors) that use records

Improving Communications

- Enhance new ICA website so that it becomes an information hub
- Explain what ICA is and does in a clear guide – without acronyms!
- Identify our key messages and main stakeholders
- Ask members with proven communications skills to act as ICA Ambassadors – here the regional branches could play a major role



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Raising the Public Profile of Archives



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- International Archives Day (9 June) is celebrated in many countries
- ICA's efforts must be reinforced by national publicity campaigns throughout the year
- Highlight the importance of managing current records in public administration and private enterprises
- Remind the general public that that the collective memory of societies is contained in archives

Key Messages about Archives

- Democratic accountability and good governance depend on effective archives management
- If archives are not preserved, societies will lose their history, memory and identity
- Citizens' rights are based on evidence found in records and archives
- Archives are for everyone, not just administrators or academic researchers



ICA

Universal Declaration on Archives -1

Archives record decisions, actions and memories. Archives are a unique and irreplaceable heritage passed from one generation to another. Archives are managed from creation to preserve their value and meaning. They are authoritative sources of information underpinning accountable and transparent administrative actions.

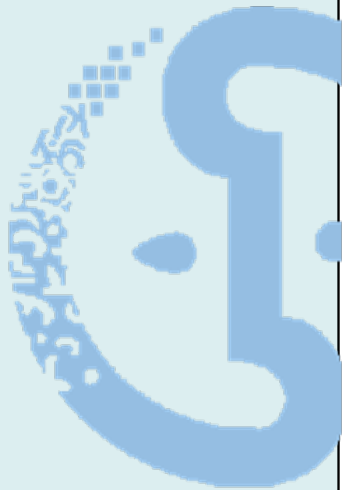


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Universal Declaration on Archives - 2

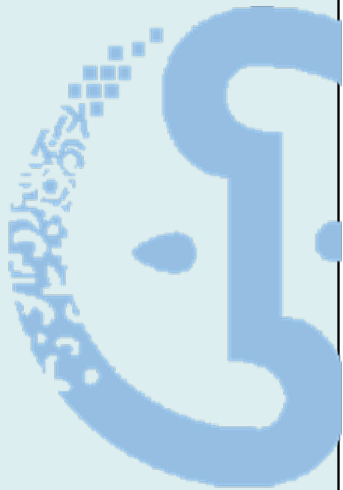
They (archives) play an essential role in the development of societies by safeguarding and contributing to individual and community memory. Open access to archives enriches our knowledge of human society, promotes democracy, protects citizens' rights and enhances the quality of life.

ICA's aim is to have the Declaration adopted by UNESCO



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The Way Forward



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- Archives are not just paper and parchment documents
- Image of the archivist: a modern professional comfortable with IT
- Archivists must use modern techniques of communication
- Crucial need to influence key-decision makers
- More likely to succeed if archives have broad public support

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