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World Organization of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout
Всемирная Организация Скаутского Движения
Organización Mundial del Movimiento Scout
المنظمة العالمية للحركة الكشفية

**Regional Scout Committee, European Region
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To: International Commissioners

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Membership Report

Dear Friends

As you will be aware, 'Supporting Growth in Changing Times' is the overarching theme of the Regional Scout Plan that was adopted by National Scout Organisations during the 20th European Scout Conference in Brussels, Belgium, in July 2010.

However, the issue of growth has been a focus for the European Scout Committee over successive triennia. It's not new at all. Ever since there was a realisation that declining membership, in terms of absolute numbers and market share, was a signal that there was a compelling need for change, many NSOs have been working tirelessly to address decline by taking the necessary steps to fundamentally improve every aspect of their operations. Some of this has been done with the support of the European Scout Region.

There has been some success. As evidenced in this report, a number of NSOs are experiencing growth, both in terms of absolute numbers as well as market share. This is hugely encouraging and points to the fact that having a strategic focus over the medium-term can be rewarding.

Those NSOs that are enjoying growth, and some who are in the process of implementing their strategies for growth (which often revolve around youth programme renewal) are keen to ensure that they learn lessons from recent experiences. In many cases, several NSOs have undertaken good work to gather membership data, analyse it and forecast future trends, in order that they can take action in good time. Such strategic foresight is commendable.

With this in mind, the European Scout Committee embarked on the comprehensive gathering and analysis of membership data during the last triennium. It is worth noting that extracting membership data from NSOs can be quite challenging. Whilst some have the data readily available, others do not, citing lack of membership management systems or not wishing to provide figures that might contradict what has already been supplied via census, if indeed a census return has been supplied at all.

If NSOs in Europe want us to continue 'Supporting Growth in Changing Times' we need continued assistance in openly providing us with top level membership data that is as accurate as it can be. In return, we can use this information to help identify trends that may be developing across the whole of Europe, and respond accordingly.

Our purpose in researching the membership situation in NSOs across Europe and in preparing this comprehensive report has been threefold:

1. We want to better understand the situation in each country, using all available data sources, in order to develop a European-wide perspective that will assist the European Scout Committee and the World Scout Bureau – European Regional Office, in providing targeted support and consultancy, to tackle decline where it occurs and secure growth where it has taken root.

2. We want to instil in NSOs that knowing who your members are is of vital importance in informing the development of Scouting, and influencing strategic activity at national level.
3. We want to encourage NSOs to reflect on the figures that they have provided or that we have sourced, with a view to correcting any anomalies so that future Membership Reports are even more accurate.

I would like to commend Dimitri Van Uytfange, Katrin Kelly and Radu Stinghe for their work in 'crunching' the numbers that are in this report, and also to all of those NSOs that have contributed so openly with their membership information.

This is the first time, in a long time, that we have produced such a report and therefore, there may well be some inaccuracies. In fact, we are expecting that to be the case. If you notice issues with the data relating to your NSO, please advise us directly, or discuss further with your Committee Contact.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Turpie', with a horizontal line underneath.

Craig Turpie
Chairman, European Scout Committee

You can download the Membership Report on :

www.scout.org/en/information_events/library/membership_growth/membership_report_2011