

Preface

In recent years the ideas and thoughts embodied in the Social Sciences have once again gained prominence at Universities and other educational institutions worldwide, providing as they do a useful insight into seemingly unrelated fields of study and indeed to present international problems.

It was felt that the Mediterranean in particular would benefit from a Social Sciences Network concentrated exclusively on the region. At a meeting in Vienna in November 1985 convened by the Europe Centre, it was agreed that a Mediterranean Social Sciences Network be set up with the specific aim of coordinating such research.

The Mediterranean Institute at the Foundation for International Studies was designated as the focal point of the Network. The Institute welcomed this task, for one of its primary aims is the promotion of research and training on the Mediterranean culture as well as on the economical, political and social issues which should contribute towards the promotion of unity among Mediterranean peoples.

The main emphasis of this Network will be directed towards identifying the relevant Institutes and researchers within the region active in Social Science, thus providing the initial impetus for a Newsletter designed to serve as a link between the various institutions and as a point of reference regarding research in progress. We hope that the Newsletter will be the first step in a programme of coordination and cooperation concerning research in the Social Science in countries that border the Mediterranean as well as in other institutions which though not being Mediterranean have academic interest in this part of the world.

The international nature of this Network must be emphasised. Researchers should use the content of the Newsletter to identify specific problems or issues that call for further investigation and research and to contribute toward their analysis and, hopefully, resolution.

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