

International Agency
for Research on Cancer



World Health
Organization

**Biennial Report of
the IARC Ethics
Committee (IEC)
2021-2022**

65th Governing Council Session
10-12 May 2023

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Mission and scope of the IEC

TO ENSURE:

- The protection of the safety, well-being and privacy of participants in studies carried out by IARC, to enable and promote conduct of good quality research.
- That Agency's studies demonstrate the respect for the most rigorous ethical principles and standards.
- That Agency's studies reflect the values of WHO and of the UN family.

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- Conducting international cancer research to a high level of quality, as this is the case for IARC, carries not only scientific challenges, but also ethical responsibilities.
- The research conducted by IARC relies on the participation of humans from different sociocultural and economic contexts.
- In this context, the mission of the IEC is to ensure that the research conducted by IARC conforms with international ethical standards for research involving humans and that measures are in place to safeguard the rights and welfare of participants.

Composition of the IEC

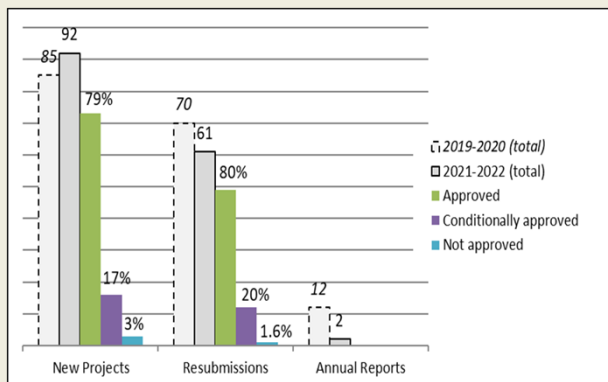
- Eleven senior individuals with diverse backgrounds and nationalities (Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Iran, Italy, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia).
- Representing sciences, medical care, ethics, law, and the general population.

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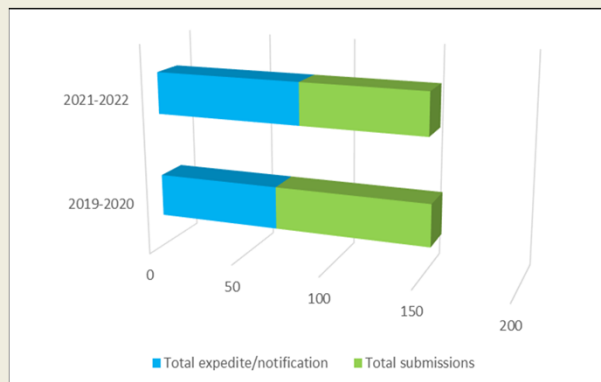
The broad diversity of experience and knowledge among IEC members ensures that the ethical review of research carried out at IARC is thoroughly addressed through its different components.

IEC evaluations

Evaluations over the biennium



Increased evaluations in-between meetings



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- On the left: the total number of projects reviewed by the IEC (including both new projects and re-submissions) remained almost equal to the previous biennium. The approval rate of submitted projects was recorded very high, at approximately 80%.
- On the right: though the total number of total evaluations remained almost equal to the previous biennium, an increased 9.7% of projects cleared in-between meetings though the expedite review and notification procedures was recorded.

Other activities

- Regular update of Standard Operating Procedures;
- Monitoring of potential Conflicts of Interest in research studies;
- Monitoring of the *Asbest* study;
- Training in biomedical research ethics; and
- Collaborations with WHO and other UN Agencies.

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- The IEC Procedures were updated to enhance the efficacy of projects' evaluation in support of IARC PIs.
- Conflicts of interest were strictly monitored to ensure the unbiased evaluation of projects.
- The IEC continued to monitor advances and potential ethical implications of the *Asbest* study, as recommended by the 50th session of the Scientific Council.
- Trainings on ethics in research were delivered by the Secretary to new IEC members, to IARC early career scientists and new IARC scientists; and a publicly available online module for participants of the 2021 IARC Summer School, was produced.
- The IEC is collaborating with the WHO to produce a common IARC/WHO ethical framework for the review of studies on Artificial Intelligence, and with the UN Inter-Agency Committee on bioethics areas of mutual interest.

Thank you

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