

IFLA GOVERNANCE REVIEW



**No decisions about you
without you**

IFLA Governance Draft Proposal

Following almost a year of discussions involving IFLA's Governing Board, members and volunteers, this document sets out a new governance structure for a more inclusive, transparent and effective IFLA. We are again calling on IFLA's members and volunteers to contribute their ideas and insights, to come to the best possible governance framework for the global library field.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users. It is the global voice of the library and information profession.

More than 90 years old and with members in more than 150 countries representing all continents and parts of the library field, IFLA has been on a transformational journey since 2018 when we engaged library and information professionals all over the world to create a shared Global Vision. Inspired by the future outlined in the Global Vision, we undertook an inclusive and exciting strategic planning process, resulting in the [IFLA Strategy 2019-2024](#).

The IFLA Governance Review is a major part of the delivery of IFLA's Strategy and the next step in our Development Roadmap. Its purpose is to ensure that we have the structures needed to make a reality of our goals and our values. Structures alone cannot guarantee success of the strategy but they can make it more likely. It is the continued energy and engagement of our members and Professional Units, supported by the IFLA staff team, that remains the determining factor in all that we achieve.

The Governance Review process has already benefitted from your views and contributions and builds on the ideas expressed during the two years of the Global Vision process. As we reviewed the valuable feedback you provided in the [survey](#) that was conducted last October, we saw your desire for:

- **More transparency, efficiency and collaboration**
- **Stronger regional representation**
- **Greater financial and organisational sustainability**
- **More varied opportunities for participation, especially for young leaders**
- **Better support for volunteers – everyone who gives their time to support the work of IFLA whether through Professional Units, Committees or IFLA activities.**

This proposal is based on the [principles](#) the Governing Board adopted in December 2019.

The purpose of the Governance Review is to create a new governance structure for IFLA. In scope for the Governance Review are the Governing Board, Professional Units including Special Interest Groups, Strategic Committees and Statutes and Rules of Procedure that relate to governance. Out of scope are IFLA Headquarters, World Library and Information Congress, Regional Offices, Language Centres, and membership.

You, our members and volunteers, bring IFLA alive, and we value and want to better support you. Here we set out our ideas on how to create a new, modern and more inclusive governance structure that will help us achieve our strategic outcomes.

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You asked for more transparency, efficiency and collaboration

We propose:

- Optimising the Governing Board's ability to focus on governance functions by reducing the overall size of the Board, being clearer about the governance skills and experience helpful to these functions, and by effective delegation of matters to the Regional and Professional Councils.
- Increasing the proportion of the Governing Board directly elected by IFLA Members, including the position of Treasurer. The new Governing Board will include the Chairs of the Professional Council, the new Regional Council and the Management of Library Associations Section.
- Empowering the Governing Board to co-opt additional members to the Board, as it deems necessary, to fill specific needs for diversity, regional representation and governance skills. This will be done in a transparent manner.
- Beginning a regular practice of training, support and evaluation to help the Governing Board in its continuous improvement as stewards, together with the Secretary General, of IFLA's mission, resources and strategic plan.
- Establishing regular meetings and communication between the Governing Board and the Professional and Regional Councils.
- Encouraging and supporting more regular collaboration between committees, as well as clear mandates for committees at all levels to communicate in a timely manner about their work.

You asked for stronger regional representation

We propose:

- Creating a new Regional Council, directly supporting the Governing Board, where all world regions will be represented through the chairs of Regional Divisions. This will bring the voice of the regions to the heart of IFLA, support the development of regional strategies and provide a strong voice for the integration of regional priorities in all IFLA work.
- Upgrading existing Regional Sections (Africa, Asia and Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean) to Divisions and adding further ones to ensure global coverage (Europe, Middle East and North Africa, North America.)
- Creating Regional Divisions to help develop and deliver plans for building the capacity of our members everywhere to advocate effectively for libraries. They will build on current interactions with corresponding United Nations regional agencies and work with national associations to strengthen IFLA's reach and impact in their regions.
- Creating new possibilities at all levels, including on the Governing Board and the Professional Unit Standing Committees to add new full members, in a transparent process, in order to ensure regional diversity where this has not already been achieved by elections.

You asked for financial and organisational sustainability

We propose:

- Strengthening financial and risk management in the Governing Board by targeting specific expertise for the new Finance and Risk committee.
- Ensuring that our new Regional Divisions, working in partnership with IFLA staff team and regional offices, have the necessary assistance to encourage and support increased IFLA membership in every world region.
- Strengthening procedures for transparent and regular review of committees and other structures. This will provide ongoing encouragement and incentives to deliver best outcomes for the global library field and create space for new committees where appropriate.

You asked for more varied opportunities for participation, especially for young leaders

We propose:

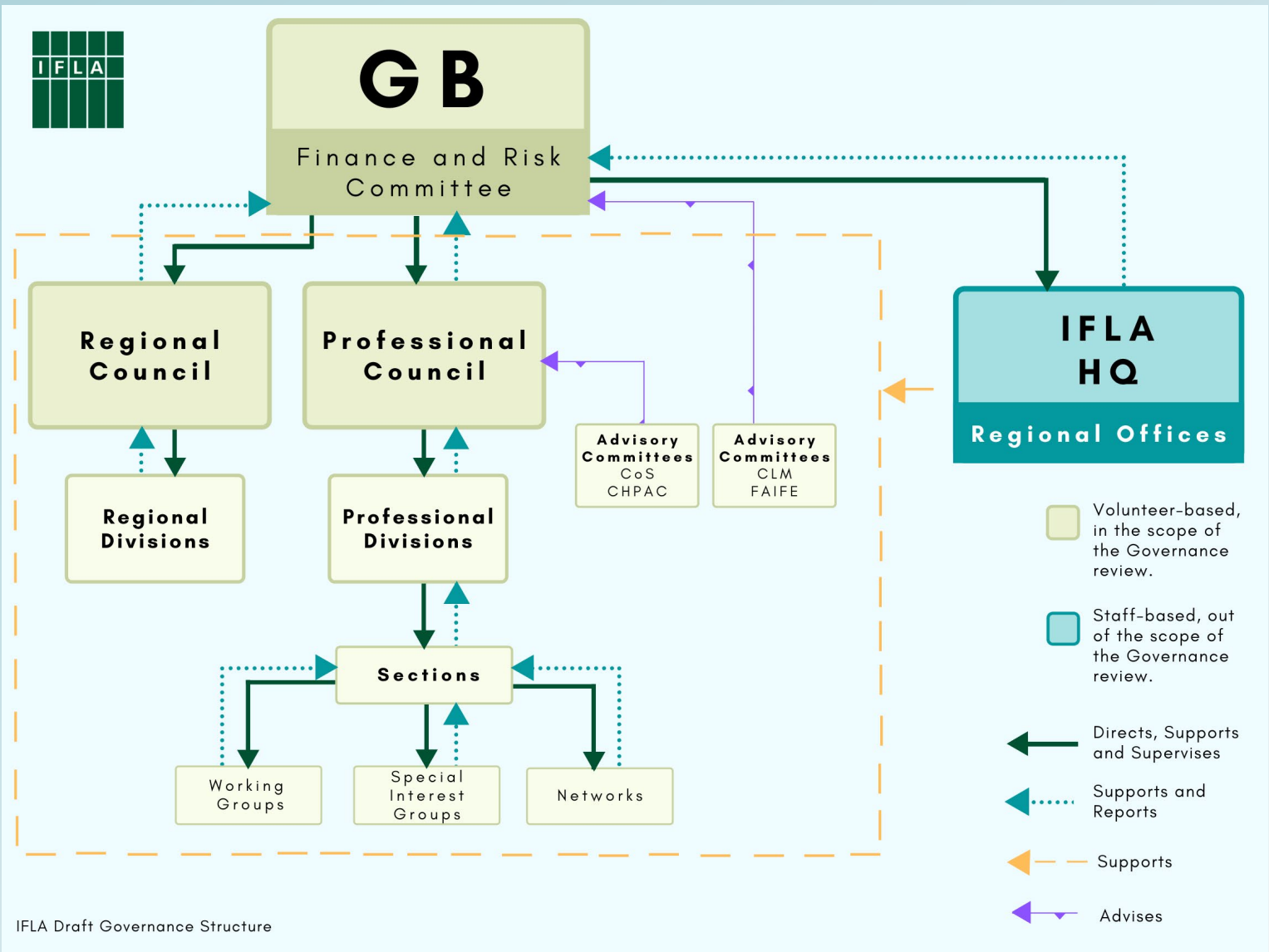
- Introducing new ways of being involved in the work of IFLA, through special interest groups, working groups and networks. This will provide greater opportunities for volunteers to engage in issues that matter to them, gain experience and be recognised for their contributions.
- Exploring ways to open up leadership positions so that there are opportunities for more people to take on these roles.
- Developing a new structure of regional representation that builds on current regional sections, providing a more powerful voice for our members and a new pathway for volunteers into positions of responsibility.
- Clarifying rules on participation in Standing Committees to ensure that they prioritise quality of contribution rather than the ability to participate physically in meetings.
- Exploring more opportunities for virtual participation.

You asked for better support for volunteers – everyone who gives their time to support the work of IFLA whether through Professional Units, Committees or IFLA activities

We propose:

- Rebalancing our system of Professional Divisions – the key structures that bring together our Professional Units – to ensure that Division Chairs have the time and scope to offer full support and guidance. Professional Divisions will each have a similar number of Professional Units with provision for further adjustments in future to maintain this balance.
- Increasing staff support to Regional Divisions to enable them to better deliver on their purpose to strengthen IFLA's presence in regions and the voice of regions within IFLA.
- Providing clearer definitions of different roles across the organisation – in particular in the professional structure – in order to ensure that office holders and others have greater clarity about what they can expect and what is expected of them.
- Standardising and simplifying committee structures to make it easier for volunteers to identify the opportunities that fit them best.
- Reducing financial barriers to serving on the Governing Board.

Proposed new structure



The Governing Board

The purpose of the Governing Board is to set the culture and values of the federation and develop its strategic direction. The Governing Board is responsible for the oversight of governance and financial and professional matters and is guided by principled goal setting, effective decision making and appropriate monitoring of performance. The Governing Board supports the Secretary General to manage resources and deliver the strategic plan.

Rationale for proposal:

The major issues identified with the current board structure are:

- **the structure and size of the current board can make decision making slower and less agile**
- **there is insufficient diversity and regional representation**
- **there is not enough explicit focus on ensuring that the board brings together the types of specific expertise required for the future**
- **there is a duplication of roles and efforts within the Governing Board due to the current structure of board committees**

Proposed structure:

The Governing Board becomes a board of 9 to 11 members comprised of 3 elected officers (President, President-elect, and Treasurer), 3 ex officio members (Chairs of Professional Council, Regional Council, and Management of Library Associations Section), 3 members elected at-large, and up to 2 additional members appointed by the board as needed to achieve goals for required skills, diversity, and representation.

The introduction of a Regional Council will ensure a stronger voice and representation for all regions of the world.

The Treasurer will be directly elected by members and will chair the new Finance and Risk committee, which will be strengthened by the addition of a co-opted member with expertise in auditing and relevant Dutch law.

The number of board committees is reduced from four to three, to minimise duplication and overlap and to reinforce that all board members are responsible for all governance and financial matters.

Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) Advisory Committee and Copyright and other legal matters (CLM) Advisory Committee continue as is, as Advisory Committees to the Board. The Committee on Standards (CoS) and the Cultural Heritage Programme Advisory Committee (CHPAC) become Advisory Committees of the Professional Council.

All Governing Board members will be funded for travel and accommodation to attend two meetings outside WLIC.

	Current Governing Board	Proposed Governing Board
Members of the Governing Board	President President-elect Treasurer Chair Professional Committee* Chair Management of Library Associations Section* Division Chairs (5)* Members at large (10)	President President – elect Treasurer Chair Professional Council* Chair Regional Council* Chair Management of Library Associations Section* Members at large (3)
Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive • Finance • Congress Advisory • Professional Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Risk • Professional Council • Regional Council
Advisory Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) Advisory Committee • Copyright and other legal matters (CLM) Advisory Committee • Committee on Standards (CoS) • Cultural Heritage Programme Advisory Committee (CHPAC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) Advisory Committee • Copyright and other legal matters (CLM) Advisory Committee

*ex officio

The Professional Council

The purpose of the Professional Council is to provide oversight and guidance to the committees and groups that work together across sectors and around the world; and to implement activities to inspire, engage, and enable the library field. It is responsible for professional matters and coordinates the professional program of the IFLA World Library and Information Congress.

The purpose of a Professional Division is to enable effective and timely communication between Professional Units, IFLA staff and the Professional Council; and to assist the Professional Units with the co-ordination of professional activities and in understanding better how IFLA works.

The Professional Council reports to the Governing Board.

Rationale for proposal:

The major issues identified with the current professional committee structure are:

- **there is a significant overlap of focus between Professional Units leading to a duplication of effort**
- **there is no clear and agile means of allowing new and emerging areas of professional practice to be covered**
- **the requirement for Standing Committee members to be able to attend WLIC excludes those who cannot do this, leading to a lack of representation especially from some regions, and so to gaps in knowledge and expertise**
- **Professional Units with similar interests are often found in different divisions, while divisions themselves are of very unequal size**
- **the unequal size of divisions makes it difficult to deliver uniform levels of communication and support.**

Proposed structure:

The Professional Committee is renamed the Professional Council and is organisationally aligned with the new Regional Council.

The basis of the professional structure is Professional Divisions comprised of Professional Units.

The composition of Professional Divisions will be flexible, and the structure can respond to the changing library environment.

All Professional Divisions will have a similar number of Professional Units, to ensure effective administration and communication. Professional Divisions are not organised by the area of activity or kind of library they cover; but by convenient groupings for discussion and administration.

Division V (currently composed of the Africa, Asia-Oceania and Latin America and Caribbean sections) will be upgraded in terms of size and responsibilities to become the Regional Council. Please see the section below on the Regional Council for more information.

In addition to Advisory Groups and Professional Units there are three mechanisms for progressing professional work and opportunities for involvement: Working Groups, Special Interest Groups and Networks. Review Groups will continue to work to the Committee on Standards.

Procedures will be strengthened for transparent and regular review of committees and other structures.

	Current Professional Committee	Proposed Professional Council
Members of PC	Chair 5 Division Chairs	Professional Council Chair (who is an ex officio member of the Governing Board) All Professional Division Chairs
	Current Divisions	Proposed Professional Divisions
Composition	5 Divisions: 1. Library Types (13 Sections) 2. Library Collections (9 Sections) 3. Library Services (12 Sections) 4. Support of the Profession (7 Sections) 5. Regions (3 Sections)	Maximum of six to eight Sections per Professional Division
Advisory Committees		Committee on Standards Cultural Heritage Programme Advisory Committee (CHPAC)
	Current Professional Committee	Proposed Professional Council
Committees	Journal Editorial Committee	Journal Editorial Committee

The Regional Council

The purpose of the Regional Council is to provide strong representation of regional priorities at the Governing Board, strengthen advocacy for libraries, create more opportunities for regional participation, make IFLA more visible globally and implement the regional elements of IFLA's Strategy.

The role of the Regional Council is to coordinate and support the development and implementation of Regional Division Action Plans; review Regional Division activities and raise relevant emerging issues to the Governing Board; provide a regional angle to IFLA advocacy work; review overall success in developing the regional dimension of the IFLA Strategy; and develop strategies for promoting IFLA membership and fund-raising in the regions.

The Regional Council reports to the Governing Board

Rationale for proposal:

The major issues identified with regional representation are:

- **IFLA members and volunteers identify diversity and representation as IFLA's greatest strength and also its biggest area for improvement**
- **IFLA's work at the regional level currently does not have a high enough profile across the Federation**
- **there is no comprehensive structure for shaping the regional dimension of the delivery of the IFLA Strategy**
- **there is currently no clear global structure for building advocacy skills and engagement with IFLA in a way that takes account of regional characteristics**
- **the current structure does not cover all regions of the world.**

Proposed structure:

The Regional Council structure mirrors what is proposed for the Professional Council.

The current Division V (Regions) will be upgraded in terms of size and responsibilities to become the Regional Council. The current regional Sections (Africa, Asia Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean) will become Divisions.

Each region will be represented by a Regional Division. There will be six Divisions: Africa, Asia Oceania, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and North America. The Chairs of the Regional Divisions make up the Regional Council.

The proposal builds on the current Division V sections and recognises the MENA region which brings together a group of countries which form a single United Nations political region, as well as having a shared language. IFLA has previously treated MENA as a separate region, for example, for the Global Vision project and the International Advocacy Programme.

Europe and North America are included as regions in order to ensure that the Regional Council represents members everywhere.

	Proposed Regional Council
Members of RC	Regional Council Chair (who is an ex officio member of the Governing Board) All Regional Division Chairs
	Proposed Regional Divisions
	10 – 20 representatives from each region* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Africa • Asia Oceania • Europe • Latin America and the Caribbean • Middle East and North Africa • North America

* still under discussion dependant on input from regions

Advisory Committees

IFLA's current Strategic Committees cover a range of policy areas and topics and have in common their role in supporting the work of IFLA's top-level governance on major policy or other cross-cutting issues.

The four committees are:

- Copyright and other legal matters (CLM) Advisory Committee
- Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) Advisory Committee
- Committee on Standards (CoS)
- Cultural Heritage Programme Advisory Committee (CHPAC)

The purpose of IFLA's proposed Advisory Committees is to support IFLA policy development and advocacy; and support the development of relationships with relevant global and regional organisations on issues for which the advisory committee is responsible.

Rationale for proposal:

The major issues identified with the Strategic Committees are:

- **there is no clear definition or statement of purpose concerning the specific role of Strategic Committees**
- **the current Strategic Committees have been set up in an ad hoc manner and have evolved separately from each other, creating complexity for those looking to understand IFLA**
- **Strategic Committees are not formally coordinated between themselves, leaving collaboration to chance**
- **there is a lack of visibility and understanding of the Strategic Committees and their work**
- **as currently organized, the benefit of these committees' depth of expertise and good work is not fully realised.**

Proposed structure:

In order to simplify IFLA's governance, their names - Advisory Committees - and their composition –the number of core members, and the way they are appointed - will be standardised.

Copyright and other legal matters (CLM) and Freedom of Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) will continue to be Advisory Committees of the Governing Board and have an emphasis on strategic matters.

Committee on Standards (COS) and Cultural Heritage Programme Advisory Committee (CHPAC) will become Advisory Committees to the Professional Council and have an emphasis on professional matters.

	Current Strategic Committees	Proposed Advisory Committees
Copyright and other legal matters (CLM)	Reports to Governing Board	Reports to Governing Board
Freedom of Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE)	Reports to Governing Board	Reports to Governing Board
Committee on Standards (COS)	Reports to Governing Board	Reports to Professional Council
Cultural Heritage Programme Advisory Committee (CHPAC)	Reports to Governing Board	Reports to Professional Council

Next Steps in Consultation - No Decisions About You Without You

One enduring principle of this process is inclusion – your voice matters!

The proposals taking shape are a direct result of your input and ideas, and we will continue to collaborate to develop these ideas further. Next you can expect a survey where we invite you to share your thoughts on our work so far.

The Governing Board will consider and incorporate this new feedback in late July, and then host a series of virtual open forums and round tables to continue to discuss the new ideas further in August. A final proposal will be presented at the General Assembly (to be held in October / November) after which members will vote on changes to the IFLA Statutes.