



International Federation of
Library Associations and Institutions

Towards a new model for IFLA's World Library and Information Congress

*Results of a consultation process among members and former delegates,
sections, core activities and special interest groups, exhibitors and
sponsors and (former) National Committee members*

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2010-03-15; version definitive
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Management summary

A consultation process on the number of proposals to change the annual IFLA conference - designed by the Conference Review Committee of the Governing Board of IFLA - was carried out between January and March 2010 among four stakeholder groups: delegates and members (by an online survey), IFLA sections (by an online consultation method), (former) national committee members and representatives of sponsors and exhibitors (by interviews).

The main results are as follows:

- The proposals with regard to the forward planning cycle and a three-step selection procedure are accepted by all stakeholders involved.
- The proposals with regard to governance model are accepted by all stakeholders involved.
- The proposals with regard to a themed conference programme are generally received favourably by all stakeholder groups.
- The proposals with regard to flexibility in the setup of the conference venue are rather controversial for most stakeholder groups and appear only acceptable if certain conditions are met.
- The proposals with regard to the option of running the annual IFLA conference jointly with another national or regional conference is generally received favourably and appears to be acceptable under certain conditions.
- With regard to affordable on-site services during the IFLA conference, delegate bags, the printed newsletter during the conference and more languages for the digital newsletter during the conference have low priority for the members and delegates. However, the simultaneous interpretation services are seen as important by many from the various stakeholder groups in order to make the IFLA conference as inclusive as possible.
- The use of new technologies during the conference such as social media is very much welcomed by delegates and members and by the other stakeholder groups.

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1. Introduction

The IFLA Governing Board has set up a review into the model of the annual IFLA World Library and Information Congress. The WLIC is an IFLA brand flagship professional event, but also its highest financial investment. The Congress budget is approximately €2 million, which is the equivalent of IFLA's annual operating budget. The financial risks for IFLA are therefore considerable.

The review has led to a number of proposals and recommendations for the period from 2013 onwards, developed by the IFLA Governing Board's Congress review committee. The committee has set up a consultation process in order to consult the main stakeholders in IFLA and in the WLIC with regard to its proposals and recommendations. The consultation process was carried out by Pleiade Management and Consultancy and consisted of:

- Interviews with (former) National Committee members
- Interviews with exhibitors and sponsors
- An online survey among members and delegates of the 2008 and 2009 IFLA conferences
- Consultation of the sections, core activities and special interest groups within IFLA by an online consultation document: an online questionnaire with many open questions and with a mechanism to use it for consultation among section members.

This report describes the results of this consultation process.

Conference Review Committee
Patrice Landry (Chair)
Barbara Schleihagen
Steve W. Witt
Sinikka Sipilä
Bob McKee
Jennefer Nicholson
Ellen Tise
Ingrid Parent

2. Methods

2.1 Development of the interview formats, online survey and the online consultation document

In a workshop with the Committee members, the outlines of the interview formats, the online survey and the online consultation document were developed. The consultant of Pleiade Management and Consultancy developed these formats further and shared them with the members of the committee via a wiki. After comments by the members of the review committee, the documents were finalised. This process resulted in the following documents:

- An interview format for National Committee members
- An interview format for exhibitors and sponsors
- An online survey for members and delegates of the 2008 and 2009 conferences. This survey was developed in the English language and translated in the other official IFLA languages by a translation agency.
- An online consultation document for the sections, core activities and special interest groups within IFLA.

2.2 Results

Interviews with National Committee members

A number of National Committee members, who were involved in organising the IFLA conference in the last 8 years were approached by e-mail with a request for telephone interview. In the table below, the (former) National Committee members are listed, who have responded to a request for a telephone interview. In total 5 interviews were carried out.

National Committee members interviewed
Bob McKee, CILIP
Barbara Schleihagen, Deutscher Bibliotheksverband e.V.
Ellen Tise, University of Stellenbosch
Aldo Pirola, Comune di Milano
Agneta Olsson, Gothenburg University Library

Interviews with exhibitors and sponsors

A number of regular exhibitors and sponsors at IFLA conferences were approached by e-mail with a request for telephone interview. In the table below, the exhibitors and sponsors are listed, who have responded to a request for a telephone interview. In total 6 interviews were carried out.

Exhibitors and sponsors interviewed
Ingrid van de Stadt, Elsevier
Eileen Breen, Emerald
Ann Melaerts, INFOR
Donna Gehring, OCLC
Angela Timmerman, Springer
Gene Shimshock, Innovative Interfaces

Questionnaire to members and delegates

Sending invitations:

The following address files were used:

- IFLA members (organizations): 1252
- IFLA members (individuals): 318
- delegates of the IFLA conference 2008: 2587
- delegates of the IFLA conference 2009: 2854

The address files were combined and double e-mail addresses were removed. This resulted in a file with 5439 unique names and e-mail addresses. To all e-mail addresses, an invitation to participate in the questionnaire was sent at February 3. 837 e-mail addresses appeared to be illegal or undeliverable. Therefore, the net number of invitations sent out is 4602.

Responses:

The questionnaire was closed at February 26. In total 917 questionnaires were filled in. This is a response rate of 19.9%. In the table below, these data are summarised.

Total number of unique e-mail addresses	5439
Illegal or undeliverable	837
Net invitations sent out	4602
Responses	917
Response rate	19.9%

Online consultation documents

63 Chairs of sections, directors of core activities or convenors of special interest groups were approached by e-mail with an invitation to participate in the consultation process with a link to the online consultation document (a questionnaire with many open questions and with a mechanism to use it for consultation among other section members). The first invitation has been sent out at January 14. A reminder was sent out at February 1. A last reminder has been sent out at February 26. At the request of some sections, the deadline was postponed to March 4. In total, 33 sections participated, a response rate of 52%.

3. Description of the proposals

3.1 Proposals with regard to planning and governance

Planning proposals:

- **Forward planning** of the conferences by a seven years cycle, which describes the regions where the conferences will be held (example: 2013: Asia and Oceania; 2014: Europe; 2015: Africa; 2016: North America; 2017: Europe; 2018: Latin America and Caribbean; 2019: Europe)
- **Three-step selection procedure** with a three-year cycle: the forward planning enables parties within the region to express their interest to organise the conference. On these Expressions of Interest (EOI) will be decided by a three-step, three-year procedure - see text box.

Governance model proposals:

- IFLA, through the GB, maintains overall ownership.
- The GB, the HQ and the NC are as joint parties responsible for the implementation of the Congress.
- The Professional Committee:
 - The Professional Committee through sections and IFLA's core activities will drive the professional program.
 - Will incorporate a themed approach to the programme structure that introduces new and emerging professional issues of importance to the library and information sector and its strategic partners (each conference is expected to have 3 or 4 of such themes/threads/tracks).
- A congress advisory committee of GB will undertake the above-mentioned three-step three-year decision process with GB selecting the host city.
- A PCO (provider of congress organisation), either an international organisation that will be contracted for a 3 to 5 year period or a national conference organisation provider that will be contracted for 1 conference only.
- In all, these proposals encompass an inclusive approach that engages all 3 parties in organizing the conference.

3-year, 3-step selection process for example the 2014 congress

- Deadline for Expressions of Interest – May 2011
- GB advisory committee:
 - evaluate EOI's
 - selection for further investigation, negotiation and discussion
 - final submissions and site visits
 - recommendation to Governing Board -April 2012
- Announcement of host country, host city and conference venue for 2014 at the IFLA WLIC 2012
- Preparations start

3.2 Proposals with regard to flexibility and affordability

The present structure of the conference requires a large conference centre with among others an auditorium for 3000 people, an exhibition hall and other conference rooms in the same building. This means that only a very limited number of conference venues in the world can be selected. In addition, these large conference centres costs up to 40% of the entire Congress budget. The proposals aim to achieve more choice with regard to the congress venue by introducing more flexibility in the format of the conference. In addition, the proposals seek more affordability of on-site services. The proposals encompass:

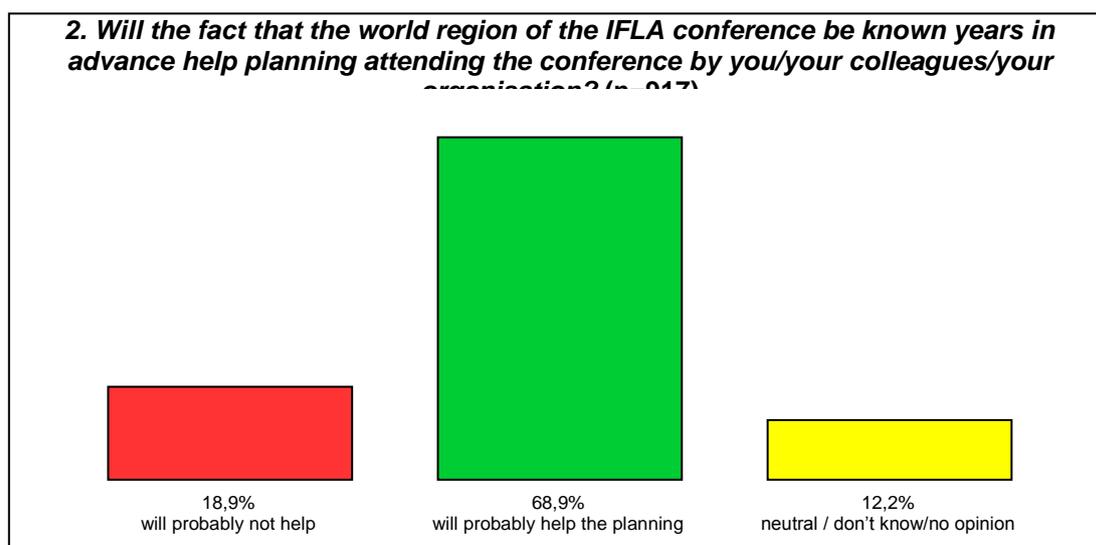
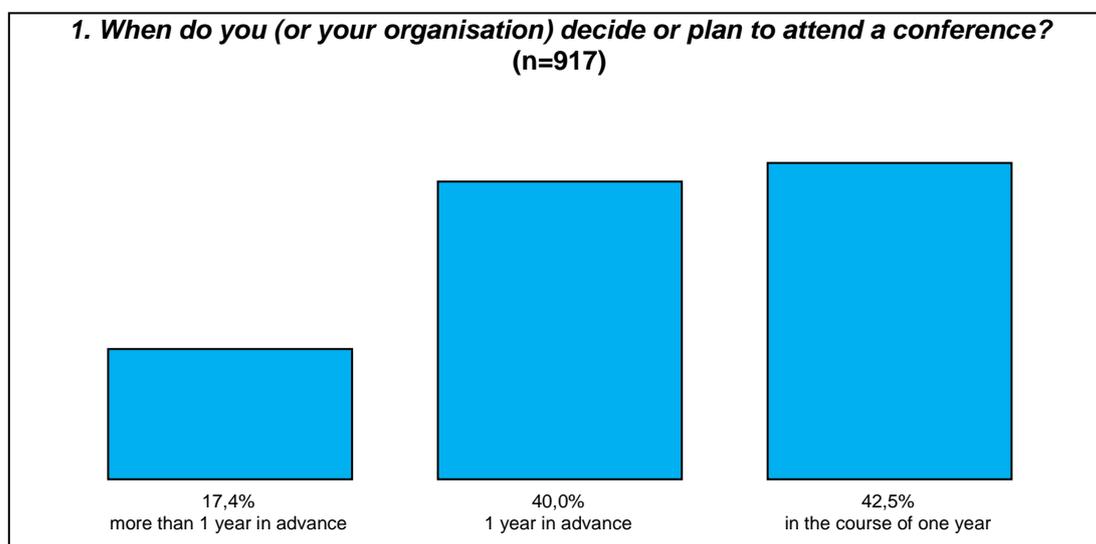
- **Flexibility in venue size, layout and facilities.** This could for instance mean:
 - A smaller conference hall for the plenary sessions that will not fit in all delegates.
 - Different locations for the business meetings (involving transport to these locations)
- **Flexibility in running the conference jointly with another Association and/or other regional or national congress.** This might involve:
 - Different period in which the conference is held
 - Adapted program
- **Affordable on-site services.** This might involve:
 - limited simultaneous interpretation services (not always available; only to a limited number of languages)
 - newsletter during the conference (IFLA Express) only digital available
- **Use of new technologies** during the conference: use of social media to comment on conference sessions, ask questions to lectures etc; use of podcast etc.

4. Results online survey among members and delegates

4.1 Planning proposals

1. When do you (or your organisation) decide or plan to attend a conference?
- more than 1 year in advance
 - 1 year in advance
 - in the course of the year
2. Will the fact that the world region of the IFLA conference be known years in advance help planning attending the conference by you/your colleagues/your organisation?
- will probably not help the planning
 - will probably help the planning
 - neutral / don't know / no opinion

The delegates and members were asked two questions about the planning proposals (see text box above). The results are presented below in bar diagrams.



These results can be summarised as follows:

- A minority of the respondents (17%) plan their attendance more than one year in advance, while the large majority planned their attendance 1 year in advance or in the course of the year.
- Nevertheless, a large majority (69%) thinks that the fact that the world region of the IFLA conference will be known years in advance will help the planning of attending the conference by themselves, their colleagues or their organisation.

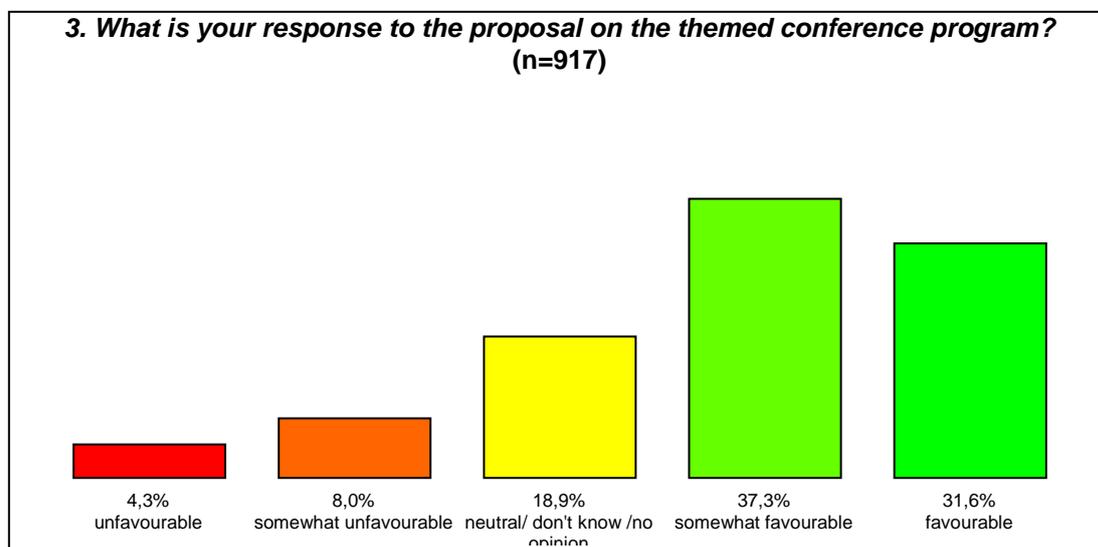
4.2 A themed conference programme

B: A themed conference program
 Presently, the IFLA conference program consists of a wide variety of topics as proposed by the IFLA sections. It is proposed to focus the programme around 4 or 5 themes. The sessions under a theme are arranged in tracks throughout the conference. Delegates can follow such a track or switch between tracks according to their wishes. Themes will encompass new and emerging professional issues of importance to the library and information sector and its strategic partners.

3. *What is your response to the proposal on the themed conference program?*

← unfavourable
 -2 -1 0 1 2
 favourable →

The delegates and members were asked a question about the themed conference programme, as presented above in the textbox. The results are presented below in a bar diagram.



The results can be summarised as follows:

- 69% of the respondents respond favourably to the idea of a themed conference programme.
- 12% of the respondents respond unfavourably to this idea, while 19% are neutral.

4.3 Conference venue size and facilities

C: Flexibility

The present structure of the conference requires a large conference centre with among others an auditorium for 3000 people, an exhibition hall and other conference rooms in the same building.

This means that only a very limited number of conference venues in the world can be selected. In addition, these large conference centres costs up to 40% of the entire Congress budget.

The proposals aim to achieve more choice with regard to the congress venue by introducing more flexibility in the format of the conference.

The consequences of the proposals on flexibility in venue size, layout and facilities could involve:

. A smaller conference hall for the plenary sessions that might not fit in all delegates who want to attend the opening or closing sessions.

. Different locations for sessions/business meetings (involving local transport to these locations)

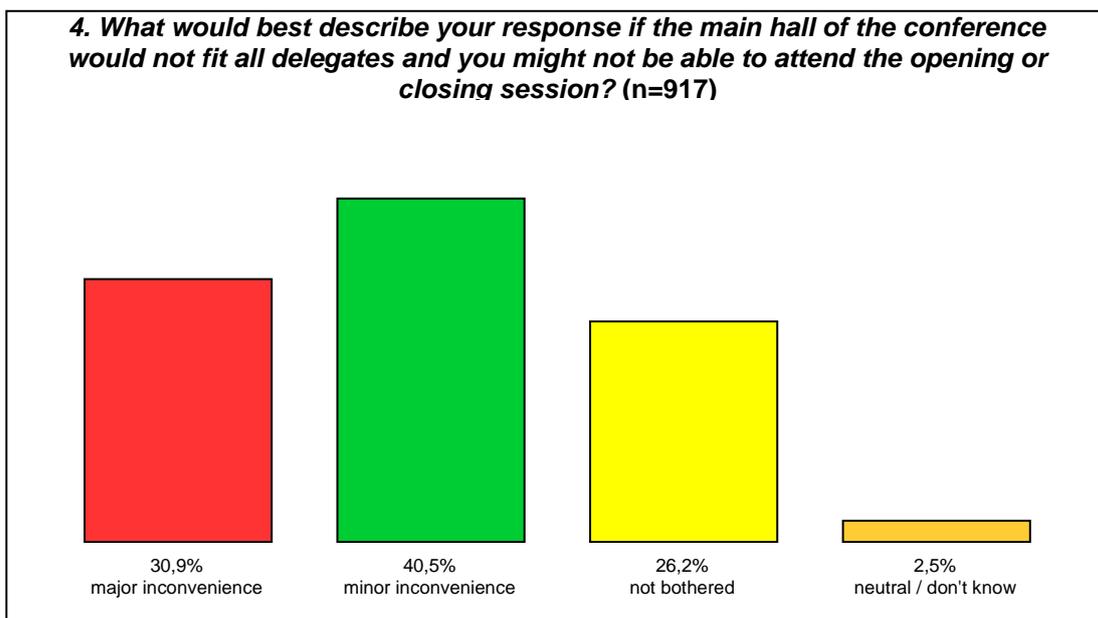
4. *What would best describe your response if the main hall of the conference would not fit all delegates and you might not be able to attend the opening or closing session?*

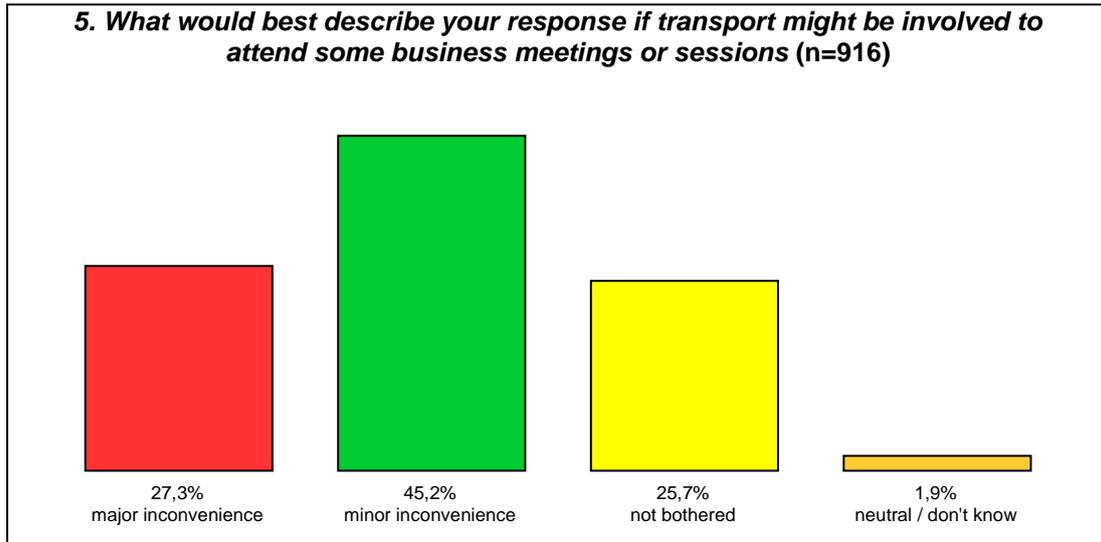
- I would see it as a major inconvenience
- I would see it as a minor inconvenience
- I would not be bothered by it
- neutral / don't know / no opinion

5. *What would best describe your response if transport might be involved to attend some business meetings or sessions*

- I would see it as a major inconvenience
- I would see it as a minor inconvenience
- I would not be bothered by it
- neutral / don't know / no opinion

The questions asked in the survey for delegates and members are presented in the textbox above. The results are presented in two bar diagrams below.





Results can be summarised as follows:

- An auditorium that could not contain all delegates for the opening or closing session of the conference would be seen as a major inconvenience by 31% of the respondents. 41% would see it as a minor inconvenience, while 26% is not bothered by it and nearly 3% has no opinion.
- A conference venue, which would make local transport to some business meetings or sessions necessary, would be seen by 27% of the respondents as a major inconvenience. 45% of the respondents would see it as a minor inconvenience, while 26% cannot be bothered by it and 2% is neutral.

4.4 Possible joint conferences with other national or regional conferences

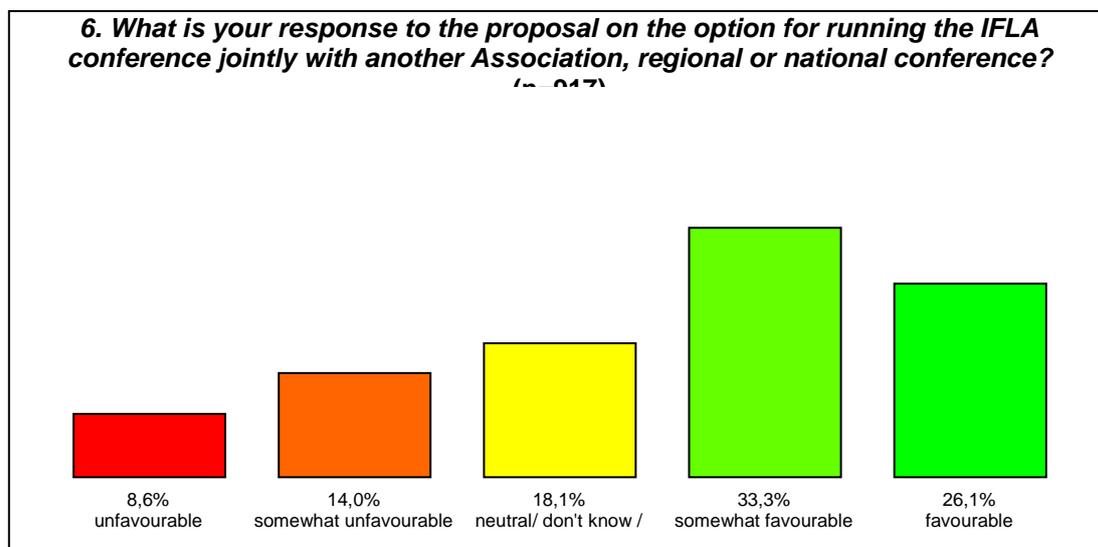
Another proposal on flexibility consists of running the conference jointly with another Association and/or other regional or national congress. This might involve a different period of the year in which the conference will be held or an adapted program.

6. What is your response to the proposal on the option for running the IFLA conference jointly with another Association, regional or national conference? ← unfavourable

-2 -1 0 1 2

favourable →

The delegates and members were asked a question about this proposal, as is presented in the textbox above. The results are presented in a bar diagram below.



The results can be summarised as follows:

- 14% of the respondents respond unfavourably to the idea of running jointly the IFLA conference with other national or regional conferences.
- 59% of the respondents respond favourably to this idea, while 18% is neutral.

4.4 Affordable on-site services

E: Your priorities

The conference budgets of the IFLA annual conferences over the years are covered by approximately 50% by the registration fees of the delegates, approximately 25% by income from the exhibition and approximately 25% by local subsidies and sponsoring.

Especially the last revenue source can fluctuate between the years, which mean that sometimes difficult choices have to be made.

What choices would you make from your perspective as a potential delegate to the conference?

12. If there was additional budget for the conference, on which services during the conference you would spend the extra money? [PLEASE TICK A MAXIMUM OF 2 OPTIONS]

- Simultaneous interpretation services
- Delegate bag
- Cultural/social evening
- Printed newsletter during the conference (IFLA Express)
- More languages for the digital newsletter during the conference (IFLA Express)
- Services using new technology such as podcasts, web 2.0 applications
- other

13. If there was less budget for the conference, on which services during the conference you would cut the budget? [PLEASE TICK A MAXIMUM OF 2 OPTIONS]
the same options could be ticked

The members and delegates were asked to make a number of choices with regard to the on-site services at the IFLA conference in order to indicate their priorities. The results are presented in the table below.

<i>If there was additional budget for the conference, on which services during the conference you would spend the extra money?¹</i>	Extra budget	Less budget	'Priority' (% extra minus % less)
Services using new technology such as podcasts, web 2.0 applications	46,9%	13,5%	33,4%
Cultural/social evening	47%	19,1%	27,9%
Simultaneous interpretation services	41,5%	13,7%	27,8%
More languages for the digital newsletter during the conference (IFLA Express)	9,3%	31,7%	-22,4%
Printed newsletter during the conference (IFLA Express)	9,6%	47,3%	-37,7%
Delegate bag	9,8%	55,8%	-46%

¹ The option 'other' was chosen by 6.2% of the respondents in case of extra budget and by 1.9% of the respondents in case of less budget. For brevity reasons, these results were left out of this table.

These results can be summarised as follows:

- The most popular on-site conference services are clearly the newly proposed services using web 2.0 possibilities, the cultural/social evening and the simultaneous interpretation services.
- The least popular on-site conference services are the delegate bags, the printed IFLA Express during the conference and the translations in other languages for the digital IFLA Express.

4.5 Use of new technologies

D: Use of new technology during the conference

The proposals also include the use of new technologies during the conference. These might involve:

- use of social media to comment on conference sessions, ask questions to lectures etc.
- use of podcast

7. Do you usually bring a laptop or notebook with you when attending a conference? no
 yes
 neutral/ don't know / no opinion

8. Do you actively use social media now? no
 yes
 neutral/ don't know / no opinion

9. Do you use podcasts? no
 yes
 neutral/ don't know / no opinion

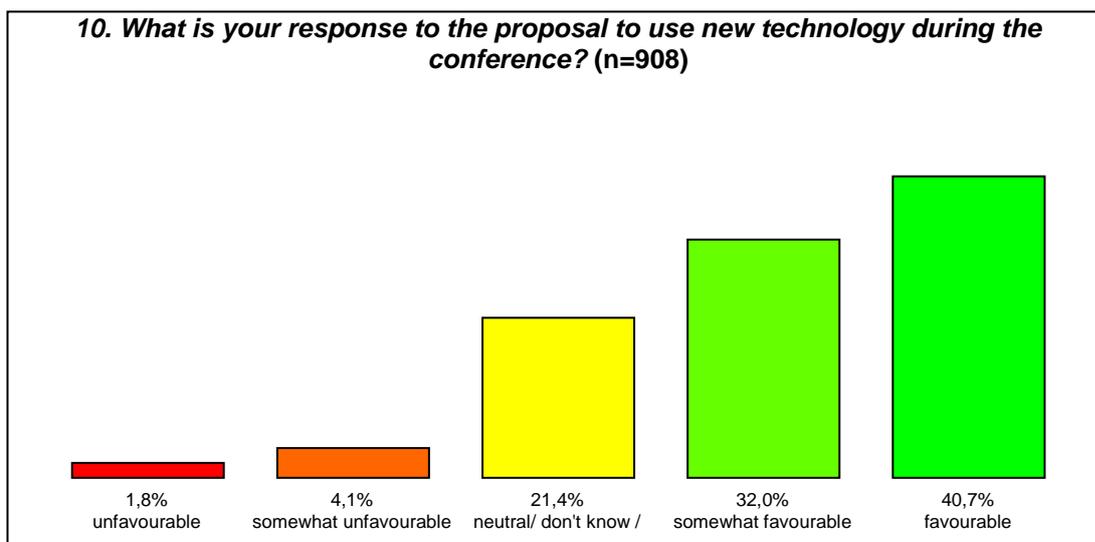
10. What is your response to the proposal to use new technology during the conference? ← unfavourable

-2 -1 0 1 2

favourable →

The delegates and members were asked a number of questions about the use of new technology during the conference, as is presented in the textbox above. The results are presented in a table and a bar diagram below.

Results questions 7, 8, 9	
usually bring a laptop or notebook when attending a conference	60,3%
actively use of social media	55,9%
use podcasts	32,9%



These results can be summarised as follows:

- 73% of the respondents respond favourably to the proposals for using new technology during the IFLA conference, while only 6% respond unfavourably and 21% is neutral.
- The actual usage by the respondents of new technologies is somewhat lower:
 - 60% bring a laptop to the conference
 - 56% actively use social media now
 - 33% use podcasts now.

4.6 Weighing of the proposals by members and delegates

14. Which of the proposed changes in the IFLA conference format will most positively influence your decision to attend the conference? [PLEASE TICK A MAXIMUM OF TWO OPTIONS)

- 7 years forward planning
- programme centred around 5 themes
- smaller main conference hall with limits to number of delegates
- some sessions/meetings on other locations, transport needed
- running the conference with other Association, national or regional conference
- use of social media and/or podcasts during the conference

15. Which of the proposed changes in the IFLA conference format will most negatively influence your decision to attend the conference? [PLEASE TICK A MAXIMUM OF TWO OPTIONS)

- the same options could be ticked

The impact of the various proposals on the decision to attend the conference by the delegates and members was gauged by 2 questions (see text box above). The results are presented in the table below.

<i>Which of the proposed changes in the IFLA conference format will most positively influence your decision to attend the conference? [PLEASE TICK A MAXIMUM OF TWO OPTIONS)</i>	positive influence %	negative influence %	'net response' (% positive minus % negative)
programme centred around 5 themes	58%	9,5%	48,5%
running the conference with other Association, national or regional conference	38,7%	17,3%	21,4%
use of social media and/or podcasts during the conference	22%	9,1%	12,9%
7 years forward planning	22,6%	13,4%	9,2%
smaller main conference hall with limits to number of delegates	8,2%	36,2%	-28%
some sessions/meetings on other locations, transport needed	11,8%	42,9%	-31,1%

These results can be summarised as follows:

- the proposals regarding the themed approach for the conference programme, the idea of running the conference jointly with other regional or national conferences, the use of social media and/or podcasts during the conference enters 7 years for planning are the most popular among the delegates and members.
- Using local transport for attending sessions/meetings on outlying locations and a smaller conference hall that would limit the number of attendees for the opening and closing sessions are the least popular.

4.7 Motivational factors to attend the IFLA conference

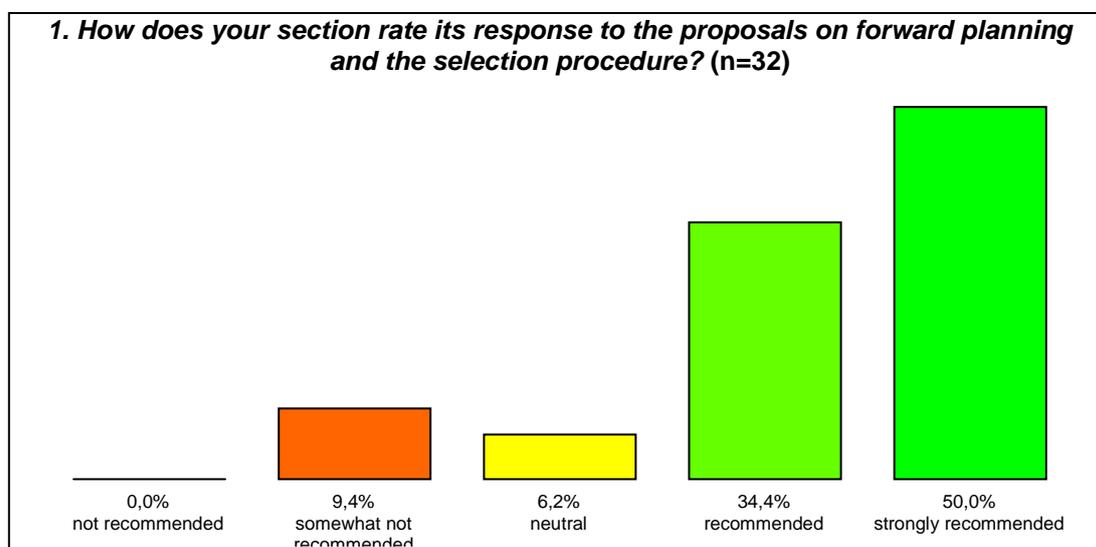
19. Which of the motivational factors to attend the annual IFLA conference weigh the most for you personally? [PLEASE TICK A MAXIMUM OF TWO OPTIONS)	n	Answers %
my professional development	463	50,5
networking opportunities	401	43,7
the worldwide aspects of the programme and attendees	355	38,7
opportunity to travel and visit libraries in another country	216	23,6
my activities within IFLA	137	14,9
furthering international standards	111	12,1
the changing venue of the Congress each year	59	6,4

The delegates and members were finally asked in the online survey to state the two motivational factors that were most important to them to attend the IFLA conference. The list of motivational factors was derived of the questionnaires of the evaluation surveys for the last 3 IFLA conferences. The top 3 arguments, mentioned by nearly 40% or more of the delegates and members, are their professional development, networking opportunities and the worldwide aspects of the programme and attendees. Other important motivational factors are the opportunity to travel and visit libraries in another country, their activities within IFLA, furthering international standards and the changing venue of the Congress each year.

It is important to view all proposed and future changes in the setup of the IFLA conference in what respect they affect these motivational factors.

5. Results consultation among IFLA sections

5.1 Planning proposals

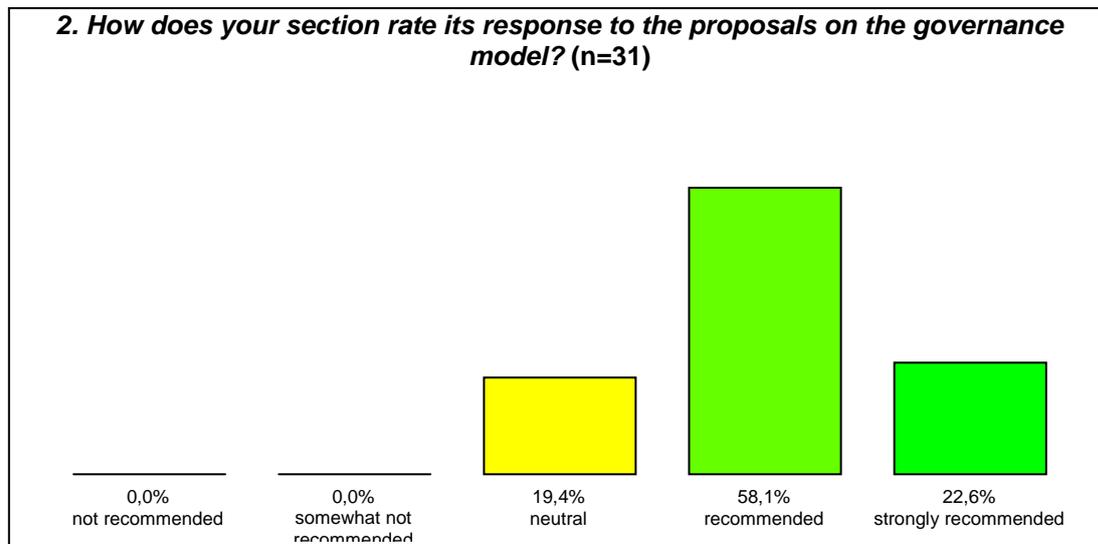


The results from the consultation among the IFLA sections are presented in the bar diagram above. The overall response is positive with more than 84% of the sections in favour of the proposals and 9.4% not.

With regard to the forward planning cycle of 7 years, most sections gave positive comments, with arguments that advance planning would enable countries to prepare a bidding in advance. The geographical distribution of the conferences however attracted some critical comments: 2 sections thought that the example given was too Europe-centred. Another section proposes 6 years cycle, with 2 times the conference in Europe.

With regard to the selection process, all sections were in agreement with the proposal.

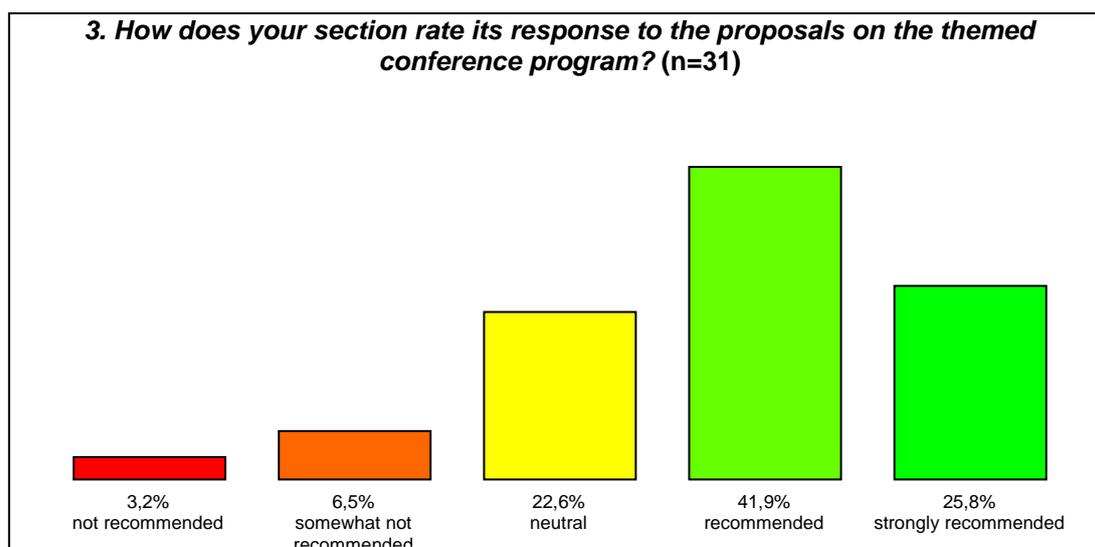
5.2 Governance model proposals



The results from the consultation among the IFLA sections is presented in the bar diagram above. The overall response is positive, with 80% in favour of the proposals and no section against the proposals. However, a few critical comments are made:

- A number of sections find the governance model complicated and bureaucratic and were concerned about the responsibilities of the National Committee.
- The role of the PCO attracts a number of comments:
 - 7 sections prefer a national or local conference organiser with the main argument that these will provide more flexibility and know the local circumstances.
 - 2 sections prefer an international conference organiser to ensure continuity. One section mentioned that a local conference organiser would have to have a proven ability to handle a conference with over 3000 attendees. Another section emphasised that if one chooses to have each time a different national conference organiser, this will require the writing of a sort of handbook with all the procedures.

5.3 A themed conference programme



The responses of the IFLA section to the proposals on the themed conference programme are presented above in a bar diagram. Over 67% of the sections is in favour, nearly 10% is not.

Most comments are positive as well: it will be easier for the audience to focus on and leads to a more cohesive and valuable conference. In addition, it might help potential attendees to get approval from their management to attend the conference. However, it is noted in a number of comments that up-to-date themes cannot be set years in advance.

However, a few sections were not in favour of this proposal. Their comments are presented below:

Many members of our Section attend the content specifically related to parliamentary libraries and find the other content of limited interest/relevance. A themed conference programme is likely to dilute the content relevant to parliamentary libraries even further. It may mean that section members only attend our preconference and find the main WLIC conference not relevant enough to attend. Another issue for us is that experienced speakers are able to speak on a variety of topics and so can find a topic to speak about within the conference themes. We work hard to encourage contributions from across our membership, which includes members who are not so fluent in the IFLA languages, or who do not have much experience in writing papers and delivering presentations. The barriers to participation are already high for them, and we would like to see them lowered rather than raised (which seem likely for a themed conference).

Themes make sense but can be difficult for our Section (Library Buildings) as not always relevant. Need to strike a balance between a theme that is relatively all encompassing in terms of Sections but does not become meaningless. Debating emerging issues makes sense.

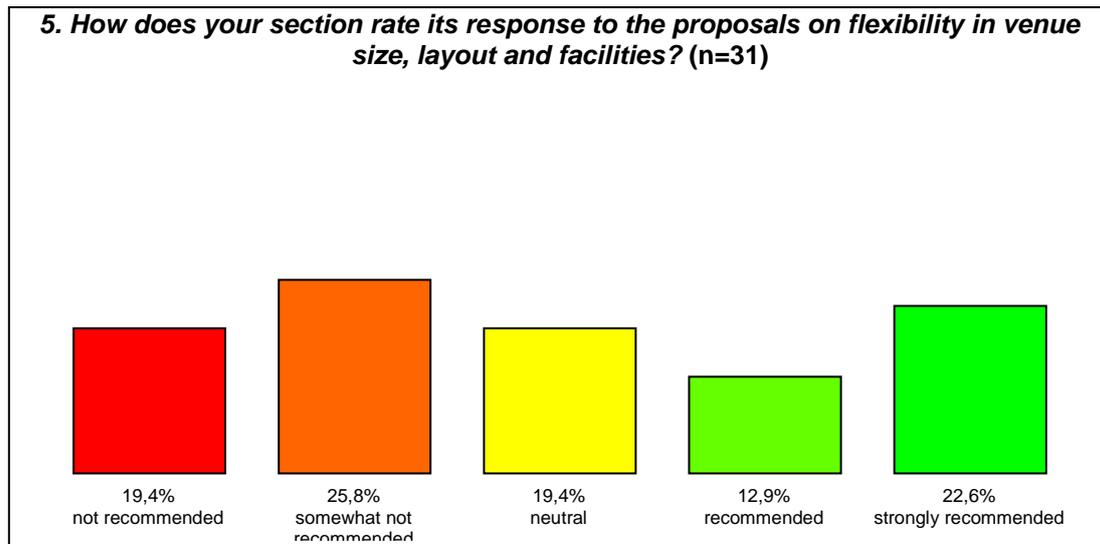
5.4 Satellite meetings

In addition, the sections were asked to give their views on satellite meetings: would a different format of the conference affect satellite meetings, and are there ideas to better integrate satellite meetings into the Congress?

A few comments are rather negative about the concept of satellite meetings: satellite meetings ‘operate in a different universe’ and ‘detract and dissipate the Congress’ or ‘compete with the main conference programme’. A number of other comments suggest to limited venues/locations of satellite meetings to within close proximity of the main conference. Others point to the high cost of attending both conferences.

However, number of sections is positive about their own satellite meetings: they point out that their satellite conference is ‘consistently rated as useful by the majority of sections members because of the increased ability to respond to section member needs’. Similar comments are made by other sections with satellite meetings: ‘half of our preconference attendees are either first time IFLA attendees or irregular attendees. The preconference gives us a chance to get to know each other, so that when we attend the main WLIC Congress, everyone has some familiar faces, and there is support and suggestions about how to get the most out of the main WLIC Congress’. A complaint by organisers of satellite conferences is the slow start of the WLIC Congress: ‘We are told by IFLA headquarters that the Preconference must end before the day of the Standing Committee meetings. So for our members there is a day which has one Standing Committee meeting (3 hours) and the following day which has the conference opening ceremony (1 hour) and the exhibition opening. These are extraordinary light days to justify the cost of international travel and international accommodation’.

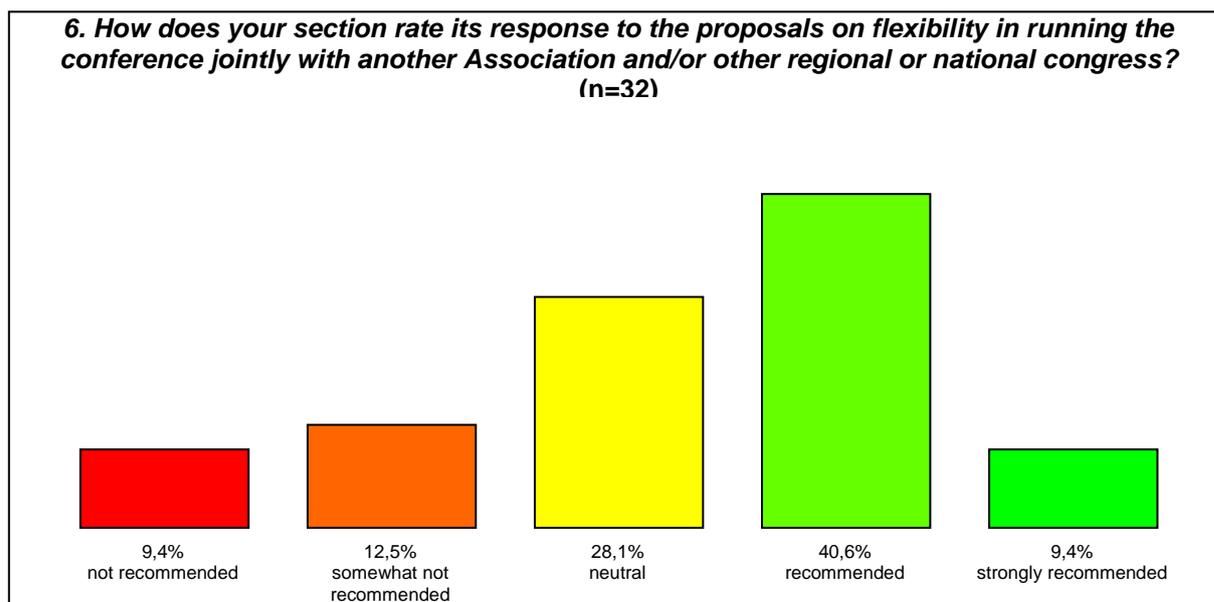
5.5 Flexibility in conference venue



The response by the IFLA sections to the proposals on flexibility in venue size, layout and facilities are presented above in the bar diagram. Clearly, the response is mixed with 35% of the sections in favour and 45% not in favour.

With regard to the venue size and local transport, many comments do support the need for cost containment and flexibility. From the comments, it becomes clear that there is only limited opposition to drop the requirement for the conference hall with 3000 seats. A few stated that it might result in a loss of identity for the IFLA conference. Others point out that delegates, who cannot attend the opening session, might be received in an overflow room or follow the opening session via social media. Many sections plead however for a conference in one location, with events within walking distance. If the conference venues were to be spread out over a city, concerns with regard to the time lost, the adequacy of the transport and especially the diminishing networking opportunities for delegates are mentioned.

5.6 Joint conferences



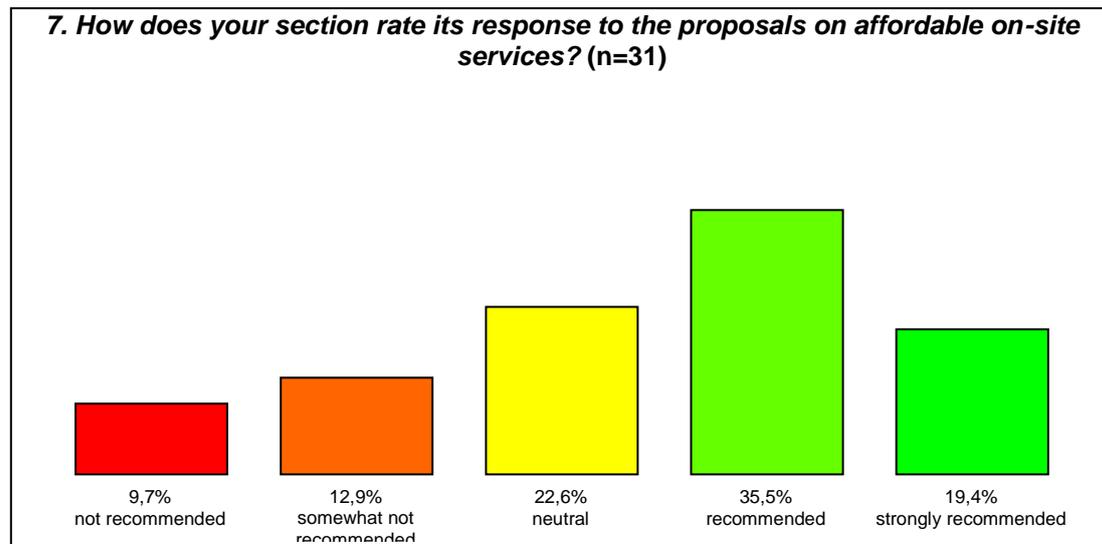
The response to the proposals on the option of running the conference jointly with another Association/regional or national Congress by the IFLA sections are presented in the bar diagram above.

The responses are generally positive with 50% in favour and nearly 22% not.

A few welcome this idea and state that collaborations and partnerships are the way forward. However, a few critical remarks have been made: sharing a conference might mean a decreased income for IFLA. In addition, there are concerns about the timeslot of such joint conference. Some fear that the organisation and the logistics of such a combined conference by being even more complicated.

Four sections are opposed to the idea because they think it will result in a loss of identity for IFLA.

5.7 Affordable on-site services



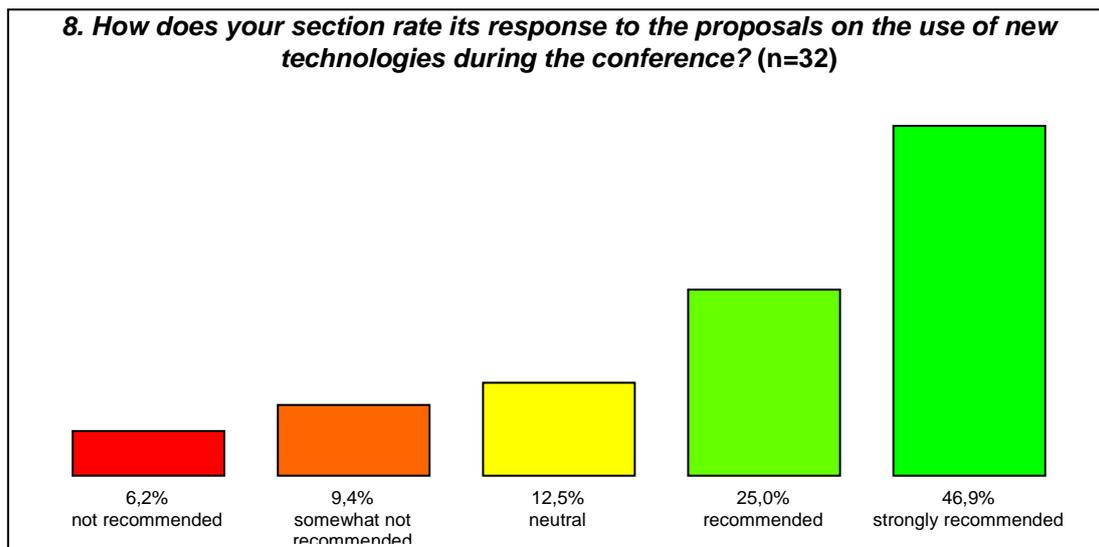
The response by the IFLA sections on the proposals to make on-site services of the IFLA conference more affordable are presented in the bar diagram above.

Although the majority (55%) is in favour, there is a considerable group of sections that oppose (some of the) proposals (23%) or are neutral.

The comments made by the sections can be analysed as follows:

- Only 3 sections are opposed to a digital-only newsletter. The other comments note that not all delegates have portable IT devices and digital only newsletter could be discriminatory. However, many comments note that if Wi-Fi is freely available and if the newsletter is also available via large screens at the conference centre, then no printed version of the newsletter would be acceptable.
- With regard to the simultaneous interpretation services, 6 sections feel strongly about the availability of simultaneous interpretation services. Reasons given are that these services are important to reach out to delegates from different linguistic backgrounds, to building participation from countries around the world, to ensure the equality of opportunity that the IFLA stands for and to counter the criticism that IFLA is Eurocentric. Similar arguments are also used by the other sections, which nevertheless are open to limit the number of languages for which simultaneous interpretation services are provided or to limit the number of sessions for rigid interpretation services are provided.

5.8 Use of new technology



The response by the IFLA sections on the proposals with regard to the use of new technologies during the conference are presented in the bar diagram above.

A large majority (72%) is in favour of the proposals; a minority of the sections (9%) do not recommend this.

The comments made by the sections can be analysed as follows:

- A few sections are opposed to the use of new technologies. They think it might distract from the face-to-face meetings and thereby the entire raison d'être of the conference.
- Many other sections are in favour but warn that not every delegate or every country have the technology and/or infrastructure to support this. It should be carried out with care to ensure not to disenfranchise those without the technology to participate.
- In addition, 7 sections mentioned the possibility to make the conference available for non-delegates via audio and video streaming. These sections see this as a positive, by which IFLA will attract more librarians and information professionals throughout the world.

6. National Committee members

6.1 Planning proposals

The proposed 7-year planning cycle including all world regions is seen as transparent and inclusive by the respondents. A number of respondents think that it will act as a stimulating factor for national library organisations that are willing to organise the IFLA conference. These library organisations and their communities will now have better information in advance to plan and prepare themselves for a bid. From the point of a National Committee, there is enough time to prepare for the conference. The forward planning cycle might also have the effect that library organisations from different countries within a world region will be communicating with each other about organising the IFLA conference. For these reasons, all respondents are in favour of the proposed forward planning cycle and selection process.

6.2 Governance model

A clear description and the delineation of the tasks and responsibilities of each party are seen as very important by a number of respondents. Therefore, this proposal for the governance model should be elaborated by such a description and delineation. What are seen as the primary tasks for a National Committee, involved in organising an IFLA conference? The respondents mentioned the following tasks:

- **Cooperation of the government:** Contacts with the national and local governments in order to get cooperation, grants and subsidies etc.
- **Local sponsors:** In addition, the inside knowledge of the country will enable the National Committee to find local sponsors.
- **National flavour:** Finally, the National Committee is responsible for creating interest and enthusiasm for the conference among the national librarian community and should take care of the national flavour of the conference by organising special events and other activities. An IFLA conference in a certain country should reflect the characteristics of that country.

In addition, one respondent pleads to make the National Committee responsible for the arrangements of the hotel accommodations instead of the PCO. A National Committee normally will include someone from the national or local tourist agency and this local agency will have a better understanding and knowledge of the hotel accommodations in the host city. In addition, this tourist agency will only need to recover its costs, while the PCO potentially might see it as an additional income stream.

6.3 Themed approach

The proposed themed approach will make it easier for librarians to attend the conference, as they can show the theme to their management and explain that this theme is relevant to their job. For the sections, the themes will give helpful guidance, rather than being an imposition. In addition, the professional committee will come up with the themes, has connections with all sections within IFLA and in a discussion about the themes, it will put the professional priorities of IFLA at the top and connect the various activities of IFLA. All respondents are in favour of the themed approach mentioning one or more of the foregoing arguments, except one respondent. This

respondent thinks that the present variety of the conference programme is liked and expected by the delegates and the focus on 4 themes might disappoint many delegates.

6.4 International PCO versus national PCO

With regard to this topic, there respondents gave a rather mixed response. A number of respondents expressed a preference for a national PCO with as main arguments the knowledge about the local situation and the easy access for the National Committee. Others are in favour of hiring an international PCO for multiple years. National PCO's might not have the experience of a large international conference (with specific problems such as the registration of people from 130 countries), and not every country might have a strong market for national PCO's.

One respondent thinks that the arguments for a multi-year contract with an international PCO outweigh the arguments for annual contracts with national PCO's. Another respondent also is in favour of for an international PCO for continuity reasons. However, one respondent has a strong preference for a national PCO because he thinks local knowledge is essential for organising a conference ('how could I function in China?'). The other respondents have expressed no strong preference for the one or the other.

6.5 Conference venue

A number of respondents stressed that the present criterion for an auditorium with minimum 3000 seats functions as a major limitation to the choice of conference locations. In the view of the number of respondents, acceptable conference venues were in the past refused because of not meeting its criterion. One respondent states that now the auditorium is only used to its full capacity during the opening session of the conference. Even at the closing ceremony, the auditorium is not completely full. Apart from the limits this criterion places on the choice of conference venues, the costs of conference venues with these large auditoriums are considerably higher, according to some respondents. Therefore, two respondents plead for a criterion of an auditorium with a minimum of 2006 seats. Delegates, who cannot attend the opening session 'live', should be able to go to an overflow room with video screens with the opening session. Another (additional) option might be to broadcast the opening session with streaming video via Internet.

Other respondents stressed the importance of the feeling by delegates of being part of the community during the conference. This 'community feeling' is seen as essential for the IFLA conference experience. These respondents think that this community feeling will be difficult to generate when the conference is scattered over various locations. This community feeling can only be generated if the majority of the meetings and events are taking place in a central location.

In summary, the respondents understand the need for more flexibility in conference venues. The majority is in favour of dropping the criterion of the touring with 3000 seats. With regard to the conference sessions, there is a strong preference to have all conference sessions at a central location (within walking distance), so that the most delegates will feel part of an international community during the conference.

6.6 Joint conferences

The respondents have a mixed response to the proposal of jointly running the IFLA conference with another national or regional conference. The respondents mention arguments against this proposal:

- The IFLA Congress is an important component of the IFLA brand. A joint conference might dilute the brand.
- The organisation of the conference will become much more complicated.

However, other respondents are more positive. No one is in favour of organising the IFLA conference with another large conference (such as ALA), but see a number of potential advantages of organising the IFLA conference with a smaller regional or national conference:

- might attract a larger national or regional audience
- might enhance the program
- could save some costs.

In addition, the respondents mentioned that because of such cooperation, the timeslot of the IFLA conference might have to change. This is seen by some as an advantage, by others as a risk.

6.7 On-site services

All respondents agreed that the printed newsletter during the conference could be replaced by the digital form only. The digital newsletter can be shown at large screens at the conference venue and be made available via the Internet.

With regard to the simultaneous interpretation services, the respondents are hesitant. A number of respondents state that the IFLA conferences should be inclusive as possible and therefore they think that the simultaneous interpretation services for the 7 IFLA languages should be maintained. Others see a major role for the English language at all international conferences and would find it acceptable to reduce the number of languages of the simultaneous interpretation services or to reduce the number of sessions in which these services are provided.

In addition, a number of respondents state that free Wi-Fi during the conference is seen as essential by most delegates. The problem with this is that it will add extra costs instead of diminishing the costs. This will make cost cutting in the other on-site services during the conference more necessary.

With regard to cost reductions, one respondent pleads to look at the options to reduce the overall costs for the delegates. Providing information about cheap accommodation and cheap restaurants will be helpful for the delegates in this respect. The National Committee will have the local knowledge about cheap restaurants and cheap accommodation and therefore should fulfil a role in this.

6.8 Use of new technology

All respondents are in favour of using new technology during the IFLA conferences. The following arguments are being used:

- it will attract younger delegates
- it will make the conference more interactive and therefore more democratic
- it will modernise the IFLA conferences
- it might save money, time, paper and the environment.

There are two concerns: one concern is that it might add costs to the conference, another concern is that delegates from developing countries might not have the possibilities to use this new media. It is important to modernise the IFLA conference, by ensuring that developing countries are not excluded.

7. Exhibitors and sponsors

7.1 Overall view on the IFLA conferences and a wish list of improvements

A number of exhibitors explained that the IFLA conference gives them in a unique opportunity to meet an international crowd of librarians. They often attend large conferences in the USA (ALA and others) and in a number of cases national conferences. A number of respondents stated that their companies go to 50 to 60 conferences a year! However, the IFLA conference stands apart because of this international, worldwide audience. A number of exhibitors expressed the view that the IFLA conference is not seen as the opportunity for sales, but more as an opportunity to build relationships with present and potential clients and to build name recognition. A number of respondents especially mentioned the fact that the IFLA conference is moving around the world as an important aspect of the attractiveness of the IFLA conference. Furthermore, one respondent added that the IFLA conference brings together up and coming leaders of the library community. This respondent said also that he sees a beneficial effect on the community of librarians when an IFLA conference is being held in this region.

The respondents give a high mark to the IFLA conferences from their perspectives: most gave a 7 or 8 on a scale from 1 to 10. However, a number of respondents have mentioned possible improvements:

- **Central and integrated position of the exhibition:** The footfall to the stands in the exhibition varies considerably per conference. Most respondents plead for a more central and integrated position of the exhibition in the conference programme.
- **Accessibility to the exhibition floor is essential:** the exhibition floor should be in the immediate neighbourhood of the other conference activities and if there is a distance, a number of activities should be organised to increase the footfall to exhibition floor. With regard to this, some respondents stated that free food and drinks have considerable power to attract visitors.
- **Costs are very high:** In comparison with other conferences, the costs of the exhibition at the IFLA conferences are high and any effort to keep the costs for the exhibitors contained will be appreciated. The fact that the costs for exhibiting at the IFLA conference are higher than normal is emphasised by several respondents.
- **Dedicated time slots for visiting the exhibition:** A number of respondents plead for dedicated time slots in the conference program for visiting the exhibition at floor. During these time slots, no other activities (such as excursions) should be organised in their view.
- **Involvement in setup of conference:** A few respondents mentioned that they would appreciate to be more involved in setting up the conference. This could be done in a special meeting for exhibitors. During such a meeting, the exhibitors could discuss and explore together with the conference organisers opportunities for further sponsorships during the conference. Such a sponsor opportunity can be rather simple: one respondent explained that he sponsored for a rolling PowerPoint slideshow shown to people waiting for conference registration. As an example of such a meeting with exhibitors and sponsors, the 'Exhibitors Steering Group' of the ALA conference was mentioned. This steering group advises on the setup of the ALA conference in order to maximise the exhibition traffic.

- **Practical matters:** one regular exhibitor complains about the necessity to sign contracts for hiring the exhibition stands (which involves attorneys and gives a lot of unnecessary paperwork) and about the presently cumbersome procedure to reserve hotel rooms for exhibition staff.

7.2 Planning

Most respondents like the fact that with the new forward planning cycle the world region of the IFLA conference will be known 7 years in advance. However, for practical purposes this advance knowledge will have little effect on the planning processes within their organisations according to most respondents. Only 2 respondents see a limited, positive effect on their planning processes: the regional sales departments of their companies will know a number of years in advance when they are responsible for the exhibition at the IFLA conference and thus could anticipate with their personnel and budget.

7.3 Themed program

From the perspectives of the exhibitors, the proposed themed conference programme will not affect their participation. However, most respondents think the conference programme will become more attractive and if a theme is relevant for their products or services, additional sponsoring opportunities might arise.

7.4 International PCO versus national/local PCO

A number of respondents think this is not a very important issue to them, and therefore some respondents have no opinion about it. However, other respondents express a slight preference for an international PCO for reasons of knowing the same conference organizer ('you know what to expect') and for reasons of understanding the conference, the audience and its nuances. Every year a different PCO might involve a steep learning curve, if the IFLA chooses to do so, a mentoring phase for the incoming PCO is advised by one respondent.

7.5 Smaller venue

Conference sessions at outlying locations result in 'loosing delegates' according to all respondents. Most respondents emphasised therefore it is important that (nearly) all conference locations are within walking distance of each other, including of course the exhibition floor. The ALA conference set up has been mentioned as an example of a conference at different locations: because of its size, this conference often uses outlying locations and as a result, many delegates do not visit the exhibition floor.

7.6 IFLA conference jointly with national/regional conferences

The respondents stated this might be a good idea if it will add to the conference in terms of more delegates. However, some respondents stated that it should not mean a longer duration of the conference, which is already considered rather long. A few respondents also warn that it should not take away from the IFLA conference character. For these reasons, at least two respondents expressed their doubt about this idea.

7.7 New technologies

Most respondents are in favour of this idea, provided that the basics - in this case free Wi-Fi - have been organised. Only a few respondents have actual experiences with social media during conferences: it makes it generally somewhat more interactive.

7.8 Changes in the setup of the exhibition floor

One respondent stated that the exhibition floor is small and therefore segmentation does not seem necessary. It is important that delegates mingle around the stands and see them all. Most other respondents also see no use for geographic zoning or along product lines and do not think the involvement of incubators will be relevant for them. One respondent however has seen pavilions at an exhibition centred on certain themes, which appeared quite successful in attracting visitors.

With regard to the proposals for more integration between the exhibition exhibitors and the conference programme, all respondents are in favour. One respondent state that he likes the idea to showcase his products during the conference programme, but most are many delegates do not like it. Therefore, one should do this only in a measured way. Another respondent mentions the possibility to sponsor a speaker on a certain theme that is relevant to the exhibitors, but this respondent also deems that a direct commercial product review in the conference programme is less desirable.

8. Summary, conclusions and recommendations

Consultation process

A consultation process on the number of proposals to change the annual IFLA conference - designed by the Conference Review Committee of the Governing Board of IFLA - was carried out between January and March 2010 among 4 stakeholder groups. The consultation process consisted of:

- **Delegates and members:** An online survey among the IFLA members and delegates of the 2008 and 2009 conferences. In total 4602 invitations were sent out, 917 responded, a response rate of 19.9%.
- **Sections:** 63 chairs of sections, directors of core activities or convenors of special interest groups were approached by e-mail to participate in an online consultation process enabling them to involve other members of their sections. In total, 33 sections, core activities or special interest groups participated, a response rate of 52%.
- **Former National Committee members:** 5 (former) National Committee members were interviewed.
- **Sponsors and exhibitors:** 6 representatives of exhibiting and/or sponsoring companies and organisations were interviewed.

Forward planning and three-step selection procedure

All stakeholder groups generally were in favour of the forward planning cycle of 7 years and the proposed three-step selection procedure. The forward planning cycle of 7 years would help - although in a limited way - the planning processes of delegates and exhibitors and sponsors. The proposals are seen as transparent and inclusive. It is expected that it will have a stimulating effect on communities of librarians in countries over the world, which can discuss and plan if and how they would like to organise an IFLA conference. Therefore, it is recommended that the Governing Board accept these proposals.

Governance model

The proposed governance model for the IFLA conference was generally welcomed by (former) National Committee members. The interviewees would like to see a more elaborate description and delineation of the tasks and responsibilities of each party. They see the National Committee as the party in the triangle who should take care of the cooperation of the government (national and local), find local sponsors, activate the local librarian community, and create the national flavour of the conference by organising special events and other activities. The IFLA sections also generally responded positively to the proposals regarding the governance model². Therefore, it is recommended that the Governing Board accept these proposals.

A related question to the governance model was the pro and cons against an international PCO (Provider Congress Organization) for multiple years versus national PCO each year. The representatives of the sponsors and exhibitors expressed only a slight preference for an international PCO. The National Committee members had a mixed response: some prefer a national PCO because of better local knowledge and easier access by the National Committee; others were in favour of an international

² The other 2 stakeholder groups were not consulted with regard to the governance model.

PCO for continuity reasons. The sections generally preferred a national PCO because of the higher flexibility and the knowledge of the local circumstances. Clearly, the choice of the international PCO or a national PCO is seen as primarily a practical matter by most participants in the consultation process.

A themed conference programme

The proposal to focus the conference programme around 4 or 5 teams was generally welcomed by the members and delegates: 69% responded favourably, while 12% responded unfavourably. The IFLA sections were also positive about this proposal: 67% in favour, nearly 10% not. A few sections foresaw problems with this proposal, mainly because of the domain of their sections probably would not be covered by one of the themes. National Committee members mentioned important arguments in favour of this proposal: it might give arguments to delegates for participating in the conference; it will give guidance to the sections and will connect the various activities of IFLA. Exhibitors and sponsors saw potential new sponsoring opportunities arising from the themes. For these reasons, it is recommended that the Governing Board will accept these proposals.

Conference venue

The proposals with regard to the conference venue strive for increased flexibility in the setup of the conference venue. In practice, these proposals might mean (1) an auditorium for the plenary sessions with a minimum of 2000 seats (instead of the present minimum of 3000 seats) and (2) the possibility to hold conference sessions at outlying locations, making local transport necessary.

These proposals appear to be controversial. 31% of the delegates and members would find the possibility that they would not be able to attend the opening or closing session of the conference a major inconvenience. 27% would find the use of local transport to attend some business meetings or sessions a major inconvenience. Both options will also have a negative influence on their decision to attend the conference: 36% stated that a smaller conference hall might negatively influence their decision to attend, 43% stated that some sessions and meetings on outlying locations might negatively influence their decision to attend.

The IFLA sections generally do not respond favourably on these proposals as well: 35% of the sections responded favourably, 45% not. From the comments by the sections a more nuanced picture arises: a smaller conference hall is acceptable for many sections if the other delegates could see a video in an overflow room of the opening session and/or could follow the opening session via Internet. Many sections plead however for a conference in one location with events within walking distance. Local transport towards outlying locations will mean loss of time and diminishing networking options for delegates.

The National Committee members mentioned three arguments: arguments in favour of the proposals are more choice of conference venues and lower costs. Another important argument mentioned that the community feeling during the conference should be preserved: this community feeling is generated by plenary sessions but also by having most conference sessions within walking distance in one location. The representatives of the exhibitors and sponsors were also mainly interested in having most conference sessions within walking distance as to generate as much traffic as possible to exhibition floor.

This leads to the following recommendation to the Governing Board:

- A conference venue with an auditorium of 2000 seats and therefore not with enough capacity to ensure a place during the opening session for all delegates might negatively influence the decision to participate by a considerable percentage of potential delegates. However, if options are provided to experience the opening session via other channels (video in an overflow room, streaming video via Internet), these negative effects might be somewhat compensated.
- The conference venue with many outlying locations for many conference sessions will negatively influence the ‘community feeling’ of the delegates and therefore distract from the IFLA conference experience. In addition, it might negatively influence the decision to participate the conference by a considerable percentage of potential delegates. Furthermore, it will also most probable negatively affect the footfall to the exhibition floor and thus the exhibitors. These effects are difficult to ‘compensate’ by other measures.
- Thus, it is recommended that the requirements for the conference venue for the annual IFLA conference will be broadened in such a way that (1) the criterion for a conference hall can be lowered to a minimum of 2000 seats if compensation measures can be taken and (2) that the conference venue will ‘house’ the large majority of the conference sessions within walking distance.

Joint conferences

The proposals to include options for running the conference together with a national or regional conference were generally received well by the delegates and members: 59% in favour, 14% not in favour.

The IFLA sections generally responded favourably as well: 50% in favour, 22% not. Some IFLA sections expressed concerns about the timeslot of such a joint conference and foresaw complications in the organisation and logistics and the potential loss of income for IFLA. Four sections opposed the idea because they saw a loss of identity for IFLA.

National Committee members gave a mixed response with similar arguments, as did the representatives of the exhibitors and sponsors. The National Committee members opposed the idea of a joint conference with another large conference such as the ALA, but were more positive about a joint conference with a smaller regional or national conference.

It is important to note that there are differences of opinion about a changing timeslot for the IFLA conference: some would like to see a different period of the year for the annual IFLA conference; others are concerned that this might conflict with timeslots of other conferences and therefore negatively affect the number of attendees.

This leads to the following recommendation to the Governing Board:

- The option of a jointly run conference with a national or regional conference should be included in the three-step selection process for IFLA conferences. If a party comes up with a proposal to do so, a clear business case should be included presenting the advantages and disadvantages from the IFLA perspective. With regard to the possible change in time slot of the IFLA conference, a further analysis of other library conferences throughout the world seems to be needed.

New technologies

The use of new technologies during the conference such as social media is very much welcomed by delegates and members and by the other stakeholder groups. It is seen by most as making the conference more interactive, democratic, and attractive for younger delegates. For these reasons, it is recommended that the Governing Board will accept these proposals.

Affordable on-site services

Reducing the cost is an important issue in organising the IFLA conferences. A number of proposals have been made by the conference review committee to reduce the costs of the on-site conference services. The members and delegates were presented with a number of options and asked to prioritise these if there was extra budget available or if there was less budget available. The combined results of these two questions made clear that the delegates and members give little or no priority to the delegate bag, the printed newsletter during the conference and more languages for the digital newsletter during the conference. High priority is given to the introduction of new technology, the cultural and social evening and the simultaneous interpretation services

The IFLA sections gave a mixed response to the proposals on onsite services: 55% is in favour, but 23% is not. From the comments by the sections, it appears that most sections would not oppose a digital newsletter only, if it were made certain that delegates without portable IT devices would be able to access the digital newsletter as well. With regard to the simultaneous interpretation services, 6 sections feel strongly about the availability of simultaneous interpretation services in order to reach out to delegates and be as inclusive as possible. These arguments are also used by the other sections, who nevertheless appear to be willing to limit the number of languages for which simultaneous interpretation services are provided or to limit the number of sessions for rigid interpretation services are provided. The respondents of the National Committees agree: many think that the IFLA conference should be inclusive as possible and simultaneous interpretation services are part of this inclusive approach. However, limitations along similar lines as mentioned above appear to be acceptable by a number of National Committee members.

The outcome of the consultation process on this topic leads to the following recommendation for the Governing Board:

- Delegate bags, the printed newsletter during the conference and more languages for the digital newsletter during the conference are not seen as essential by members and delegates and therefore are open to cost cutting. However, costs cutting with regard to the cultural and social evening and the simultaneous interpretation services are less acceptable for many members and delegates. With regard to the simultaneous interpretation services, the IFLA sections appear to be open for some limitations with regard to the number of languages or the number of sessions in which the service is provided.

Appendix A: Background data sections and delegates/members

<i>the consultation process within your section</i>	n	%
Secretary of the section involved	8	24,2%
Some standing committee members involved	9	27,3%
Most standing committee members involved	8	24,2%
Proposals have been discussed in our meeting in January/February 2010	5	15,2%

33 Participating sections
1. National Libraries
3. Library and Research Services for Parliaments
4. Government Libraries
5. Social Science Libraries
7. Science and Technology Libraries
12. Bibliography
13. Cataloguing
14. Acquisition and Collection Development
16. Serials and Other Continuing Resources
18. Rare Books and Manuscripts
19. Preservation and Conservation
20. Library Buildings and Equipment
23. Education and Training
24. Library Theory and Research
25. Africa
30. Art Libraries
31. Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities
33. Literacy and Reading
34. Management and Marketing
37. Genealogy and Local History
39. Newspapers
40. Management of Library Associations
42. Information Literacy
43. Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning
46. Metropolitan Libraries
Special Interest Groups
Agricultural Libraries
Libraries and Web 2.0
Library History
CLM: Committee on Copyright and other Legal Matters
FAIFE: Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression

ICADS: IFLA-CDNL Alliance for Digital Strategies
Women, Information and Libraries Special Interest Group

<i>Delegates and members: My country lies in:</i>	n	%
Africa	51	5,6
Asia or Oceania	119	13,1
Europe	430	47,3
North-America	272	29,9
South-America or the Caribbean	37	4,1
909 Answers/ 917 Responses		100,0
8 Blanks		

Members and delegates: Language in which the questionnaire was filled in	n	%
English	683	74,5
French	95	10,4
Spanish	46	5
German	41	4,5
Arabic	9	1
Russian	24	2,6
Chinese	19	2,1
917 Answers		100