



INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

ICA Rules

Policies, Procedures &

Standing Orders

September 2003

ICA Rules

*as approved by the ICA General Assembly
4 September 2003*

Mission Statement

The International Co-operative Alliance is an independent, non-governmental association which unites, represents, and serves co-operatives worldwide.

Section I. Constitution

Article 1. Name and Seat

The name of this organisation, which was founded in London, August 1895, is the International Co-operative Alliance, ICA (Alliance Coopérative Internationale, ACI; Internationaler Genossenschaftsbund, IGB; Mezhdunarodny Kooperativny Alliance, MKA; Alianza Cooperativa Internacional, ACI). Its registered headquarters, since 1982, is Geneva, Switzerland. The status of ICA is that of an association organised as a corporate body regulated by the Swiss Civil Code in Articles 60-79.

The seat of ICA may be changed by resolution of the General Assembly.

Article 2. Objects

ICA, as a world-wide representative of co-operative organisations of all kinds, shall have the following objects:

- a) to promote the world co-operative movement, based upon mutual self-help and democracy;
- b) to promote and protect co-operative values and principles;
- c) to facilitate the development of economic and other mutually beneficial relations between its member organisations;
- d) to promote sustainable human development and to further the economic and social progress of people, thereby contributing to international peace and security;
- e) to promote equality between men and women in all decision-making and activities within the co-operative movement.

ICA shall not affiliate itself to any political or religious organisation and shall maintain independence in all its activities.

Article 3. Methods

ICA shall seek to obtain its objects:

- a) by serving as a forum for exchange of experience and as a source of information on co-operative development, research, and statistics;
- b) by providing technical assistance for co-operative development;
- c) by creating international Sectoral Organisations in various sectors of co-operatives' economic and social activities;

- d) by collaborating with United Nations organisations, and with any other governmental and non-governmental international and national organisations which pursue aims of importance to co-operatives;
- e) by any other appropriate means.

Article 4. Official Languages

English, French, German, Russian and Spanish shall be the official languages of ICA. It shall be for the Board to decide to what extent each language shall be used.

Section II. Membership

Article 5. Co-operative Principles

Any association of persons, or of societies, shall be recognised as a co-operative society, provided that it has for its object the economic and social betterment of its members by means of an enterprise based on mutual aid, and that it conforms to the ICA Statement on the Co-operative Identity, as approved by the General Assembly of ICA:

Definition

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Values

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Principles

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

1st Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership

Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6th Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7th Principle: Concern for Community

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

Article 6. Eligibility

Organisations which conform to the ICA Statement on the Co-operative Identity and observe the aims of ICA shall be eligible for membership of ICA.

The decision to admit to membership of the ICA lies with the Board. In the event of the Board's rejecting an application, the organisation in question may appeal to the General Assembly.

Organisations are eligible for three types of membership:

a) Members

These are the main types of organisations in membership with full participatory powers. Normally they are:

- National unions or federations of co-operative organisations
- National confederations of co-operative unions (apex organisations)
- National co-operative business organisations with majority individual ownership

- International co-operative organisations

Exceptionally, they may also be:

- Regional federations or unions of co-operative organisations
- Individual co-operative organisations (of a multi-regional nature)
- Educational, research and other institutions which promote co-operatives and the co-operative movement

b) Associate

These are organisations which are supporters of co-operatives or are owned and controlled by co-operatives.

c) Sectoral

These are members of Sectoral Organisations¹. Sectoral Organisations are branches of ICA, and therefore all their members are affiliated to ICA as Sectoral Members. Normally, those Sectoral Members who are eligible will also be full members of ICA.

Members and Associate Members shall pay an annual subscription in proportion to their economic activities or on the basis of the aggregate business activity of their members. Associate members pay on a reduced scale.

Associate and Sectoral Members do not have voting rights in ICA's global or regional frameworks.

Article 7. Cessation of Membership

Membership of ICA shall cease:

- a) by a decision of the Board following non-payment of full subscriptions for two successive years;
- b) by voluntary withdrawal, notice of which shall be given by the organisation concerned at least six months before the end of the calendar year; subscriptions for the year in which the withdrawal occurs are payable in full, regardless of the cause of withdrawal;
- c) by resolution of the General Assembly in the case of a member organisation's acting contrary to the Rules or interests of ICA.

Article 8. Rights of Member Organisations

Subject to the proper and timely fulfilment of their financial obligations to ICA, member organisations shall have the right:

- a) to take part in formulating ICA policies and work programmes of ICA Authorities;
- b) to receive from ICA all appropriate services, information and assistance.

Members shall also have the right:

¹ See Article 28

- a) to participate in any Sectoral Organisation or Thematic Committee of ICA in accordance with its constitution;
- b) to appoint representatives to the ICA General and Regional Assemblies, and to Congress, and to nominate candidates for election to the Board.

Article 9. Obligations of Member Organisations

Every member organisation shall have the following obligations:

- a) to observe the aims and policy of ICA and to conform in its activity to the ICA Statement on the Co-operative Identity as defined in Article 5;
- b) to take all such actions as shall be recommended by the Authorities of ICA in support of its policy decisions.

Members and Associate Members shall also:

- a) supply ICA with its annual report and a complimentary copy of all its relevant publications, as well as regularly inform ICA on significant national co-operative developments, changes in its rules and bylaws, and all actions of the public authorities which affect the co-operative movement;
- b) pay during the first three months of the calendar year its annual subscription.

Section III. Finance

Article 10. Income

The income of ICA shall be derived from:

- a) subscriptions of its member organisations;
- b) sales of publications and promotional items;
- c) funds provided through agreements with development agencies;
- d) donations;
- e) other sources as agreed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Board.

Article 11. Subscriptions

- a) Members and Associate Members shall pay an annual subscription in proportion to its economic activities and in accordance with the formula established by the General Assembly for different co-operative sectors.
- b) Any Member or Associate Member not engaged in economic activities of its own shall pay its annual subscription on the basis of the aggregate business activity of its members, including primary members in the case of secondary and tertiary organisations, unless their members are themselves ICA Members or Associate Members.
- c) On the recommendation of the Board, the General Assembly shall review the formula at least every four years to ensure adequate resources for ICA and, if considered appropriate, shall determine the minimum and maximum levels of subscriptions.

- d) Annual subscriptions shall be due and payable in the first quarter of a calendar year and, together with the appropriate supporting documentation, shall be sent to the ICA Headquarters by 31 March. Failure to comply with this requirement shall lead to withholding Members' or Associate Members' participation rights and other penalties as determined by the Board.

Section IV. Governing Bodies and Congress

Article 12. Authorities

The Authorities of ICA are: General Assembly, Regional Assemblies, Board, Regional Elected Bodies, Audit and Control Committee, President, and Vice-Presidents.

Article 13. World Co-operative Congress

A World Co-operative Congress may be convened by ICA, with open participation, both for member organisations and the general co-operative public.

The time, venue, and themes for the Congress shall be decided by the General Assembly.

Article 14. General Assembly

- a) The General Assembly, being the highest authority of ICA, shall consist of representatives appointed by Members for a four-year term, and one representative from each of the Sectoral Organisations and Thematic Committees. The Board may establish targets for the representation of women at the General Assembly.
- b) The General Assembly, as a rule, shall meet every second year. Extraordinary meetings of the General Assembly may be convened:
 - on the decision of the Board, or
 - at the request of one-fifth of Members or one-fifth of the total representatives' votes in the General Assembly.
- c) Members, subject to the full discharge of their financial obligations, shall be entitled to at least one representative with a vote.
- d) The number of representatives shall depend on the amount of subscriptions paid to the ICA Head Office and shall be calculated in accordance with the rules set by the General Assembly, provided no single Member or group of Members from one country shall have more than 25 representatives, excluding the President of ICA.

Article 15. Powers of the General Assembly

The General Assembly shall have the following powers:

- a) to formulate and implement the policy on major issues affecting the future of ICA and the world-wide co-operative movement;
- b) to approve the work programme of ICA;
- c) to elect the President and the Board, and the Audit and Control Committee, and to ratify the election of the Vice-Presidents;
- d) to ratify the appointment or removal of the Director-General on the recommendation of the Board;

- e) to amend the ICA Rules, Policies, Procedures and Standing Orders, by a majority of two-thirds of the votes represented;
- f) to decide on the membership subscriptions and representation formulae;
- g) to approve the ICA annual audited accounts and the report of the Audit and Control Committee;
- h) to confirm on behalf of ICA all dispositions taken by the Board, or by any other Regional or Sectoral Organisation of ICA, which imposes liabilities or obligations on ICA, such as investments, borrowings, mortgages, buying and selling of real estate, as well as other agreements;
- i) to approve the establishment or dissolution of ICA Sectoral Organisations and Thematic Committees on the recommendation of the Board;
- j) to decide upon the dissolution of ICA by a majority of two-thirds of the votes represented.

All questions on which the General Assembly votes, unless specified otherwise, shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast. In special circumstances voting may be by correspondence.

Article 16. Regional Assemblies

In order to promote collaboration among ICA member organisations at the regional level, and to provide a forum for discussion of regional issues, Regional Assemblies are part of ICA's governing structure.

The geographic area of each body is as follows:

Regional Assembly for Europe - open to all member organisations with a head office in Europe.

Regional Assembly for Asia and the Pacific - open to all member organisations with a head office in Asia, Australia, and the Pacific.

Regional Assembly for Africa - open to all member organisations with a head office in Africa and adjacent islands.

Regional Assembly for the Americas - open to all member organisations with a head office in North, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.

International member organisations may participate fully in other Regional Assemblies, provided they have members in those regions.

Article 17. Powers of Regional Assemblies

The Regional Assemblies shall, as a rule, take place every second year, alternating with the General Assembly. They shall:

- a) implement the decisions of the General Assembly in the regions;
- b) establish the priorities for the ICA work programme in the regions;
- c) submit reports, proposals, and resolutions for the consideration of the General Assembly;
- d) elect a person as President of the region who shall also serve as ICA Vice-President, subject to ratification by the General Assembly, and a Regional Elected Body;

- e) draw up their own business procedures and representation rules, subject to approval by the General Assembly. ICA member organisations from other regions may attend Regional Assembly meetings as observers upon payment of the established registration fee.

Article 18. Board

- a) The Board shall consist of the President, four Vice-Presidents, and 15 other members, elected by the General Assembly for a four-year term. Vacancies shall be filled through election at a subsequent General Assembly.
- b) The Board shall meet at least once a year. Meetings may also be called at the request of one-third of the members or by the decision of the President. Substitutes without voting rights shall be allowed to attend the meetings only under exceptional circumstances and dependent on approval by the President. Decisions may be taken by correspondence.
- c) Members from one country shall not have more than one representative on the Board, excluding the President of ICA.
- d) No person shall be entitled to serve on the Board whose organisation is no longer in membership of ICA or is in arrears with its membership fee without a valid reason approved by the Board, or who has ceased to be an accredited representative of the nominating Member or, in the case of Vice-Presidents, of the respective Regional Assembly.

Article 19. Powers of the Board

The Board shall have the following powers:

- a) to develop and monitor a global strategy for ICA;
- b) to control the affairs of ICA between the meetings of the General Assembly;
- c) to prepare the agenda and organise the meetings of the General Assembly;
- d) to decide on all membership applications and related issues;
- e) to approve and monitor the ICA budget;
- f) to take decisions on investments, borrowings, mortgages, and buying and selling of real estate for confirmation by the General Assembly;
- g) to be responsible for the appointment or removal and the remuneration of the Director-General of ICA;
- h) to receive reports from the Audit and Control Committee prior to their submission to the General Assembly;
- i) to appoint, and receive annual reports from the Auditor of ICA;
- j) to establish committees from among its members and others, and decide upon their terms of reference, including Thematic Committees²;
- k) to appoint a Board member to act in the absence of the President.

² See Articles 24 and 28

Article 20. Regional Elected Bodies

- a) A Regional Elected Body shall consist of a President, Vice President and other members elected by the Regional Assembly for a four-year term. Vacancies shall be filled through election at a subsequent Regional Assembly or by co-option subject to ratification at a subsequent Regional Assembly.
- b) The Regional Elected Body shall be elected as decided by the Regional Assembly as long as it is within the Rules of ICA.

Article 21. Competencies of the Regional Elected Body

- a) to work within the policy guidelines and decisions laid down from time to time by the ICA Board;
- b) to manage the affairs of ICA at regional level between the meetings of the Regional Assembly;
- c) to prepare the agenda and organise the meetings of the Regional Assembly;
- d) to reinforce member organisations' active participation;
- e) to promote sustainable co-operative regional development;
- f) to strengthen and expand regional Sectoral Organisations and Thematic Committees and ensure their co-operation with their global equivalent;
- g) to enhance the image of ICA and the co-operative movement within the region, with national and regional institutions;
- h) to establish committees where appropriate;
- i) to provide recommendations on membership applications from its region to the ICA Board;
- j) to implement and monitor activities and programmes financed by the regions, Sectoral Organisations and ICA partners in collaboration with Head Office;
- k) to ensure regional finance and budgeting is strictly monitored and within the general guidelines of ICA;
- l) to approve the annual budget and work plan prepared by the Regional Director before submitting to the Director-General and ICA Board for final approval.

Article 22. Thematic Committees

Thematic Committees shall be based on functional or multi-purpose activities and shall receive support from ICA, as mutually agreed. They will

- a) draw up their Rules, which shall be approved by ICA Board;
- b) report regularly on their activities to ICA Board and General Assembly;
- c) have the right to propose to ICA Board, themes for discussion;
- d) establish a working collaboration with each other and other ICA bodies, where practicable and desirable;
- e) collaborate with ICA Head Office and Regional Offices, where practicable;

- f) ensure that their regional committees are established, and operate, in conformity with policies established by ICA and its Regional Assemblies, with regional chairs represented on global committees;
- g) be entitled to one representative at General Assembly, with voting rights.

Article 23. Audit and Control Committee

The General Assembly shall elect from amongst its Member representatives an Audit and Control Committee, consisting of not less than three and not more than five members.

The Audit and Control Committee shall:

- a) examine the financial management of ICA in relation to its constitutional obligations;
- b) examine the fulfilment of the financial obligations of member organisations;
- c) meet at least annually with the Auditor of ICA;
- d) report to the General Assembly, and to the Board, on such matters as they deem appropriate.

For these purposes the Committee shall have access to all relevant ICA documents.

Article 24. President

The President:

- a) is the chief representative of ICA and shall preside over the General Assembly and Board of ICA;
- b) shall provide the policy and organisational leadership of ICA, in collaboration with the Director-General;
- c) shall meet once a year with the Audit and Control Committee to review the finances of the ICA;
- d) shall have the right to attend the meetings of ICA Sectoral Organisations and Thematic Committees.

Article 25. Vice-Presidents

The Vice-President:

- a) shall assist and support the President, and shall serve as the link between the Regional Assemblies and the Board;
- b) will also assist the President in the policy and organisational leadership of ICA, together with the Director-General, and may undertake such other tasks and responsibilities as the Board shall determine.

Section V. Administration

Article 26. Director-General

The Director-General is the Chief Executive Officer of ICA, accountable to the Board and, as such, responsible for the leadership, recruitment and efficient management of its Head Office and Regional Offices. The Director-General shall:

- a) be responsible for implementing the policies of ICA Authorities and take the necessary initiatives to present to the Board and General Assembly any relevant issues affecting the co-operative movement;
- b) coordinate, monitor, evaluate and support the work of the Regional Offices;
- c) attend and advise the meetings of ICA Authorities, without voting rights;
- d) prepare documentation for the meetings of ICA Authorities;
- e) report to the Board on the use of finances, implementation of the work programme, and changes in staff;
- f) maintain close working relations with ICA Sectoral Organisations, and provide support as mutually agreed to the Thematic Committees of ICA;
- g) maintain relations with ICA's present and potential member organisations, and submit regular reports on membership issues to the Board;
- h) designate a member of the Secretariat as second-in-command, subject to Board approval;
- i) deal with any other issues as may be required by the Board.

Article 27. Responsibilities of Regional Offices

Regional Offices are responsible for the:

- a) promotion and defence of co-operative values and principles;
- b) co-ordination and implementation of ICA co-operative development programme within the region;
- c) representation on request of members organisations' policy concerns to governmental bodies and the public;
- d) organisation of the Regional Assemblies and support to elected bodies;
- e) carrying out of any other activities as may be requested by the Director-General, as approved by the Board.

The Regional Directors shall be responsible for submitting annual programmes and budgets to the Director-General for approval and inclusion in the overall global budget of the ICA. The Director-General shall also approve all agreements with funding agencies.

Section VI. Sectoral Organisations

Article 28. Sectoral Organisations

The ICA Board may establish or dissolve, and recognise or withdraw recognition from Sectoral Organisations in such areas of economic and social activity of co-operatives as considered desirable.

The Sectoral Organisations shall:

- a) draw up their Rules, which shall be approved by ICA Board;
- b) report regularly on their activities to ICA Board and General Assembly;

- c) be entitled to one representative at the General Assembly, who shall have full voting rights;
- d) have the right to propose to ICA Board themes for discussion at the meetings of ICA Authorities;
- e) be responsible to their members and seek to establish a working collaboration with each other, where practicable and desirable;
- f) collaborate with the ICA Head Office and Regional Offices, where practicable;
- g) ensure that their regional organisations are established, and operate, in conformity with policies established by ICA and its Regional Assemblies, with regional chairs represented on global Sectoral Organisations;
- h) self-finance their activities.

Section VII. Special Dispositions

Article 29. Status of the ICA in Switzerland

As long as the Head Office of ICA is in Switzerland, it is subject to Swiss legal requirements and any legal or judicial query will be handled in Geneva, according to Swiss procedures.

Article 30. Amendments to the Rules

Proposals to amend the Rules may only be submitted by the Board to the General Assembly, or by a special committee appointed by the General Assembly for that purpose, or by not fewer than five members.

Article 31. Definitive Text of the Rules

The definitive text of the Rules shall be that of the English language.

(*In legal matters arising in Swiss Law as stated in Article 29, the French text shall be regarded as definitive.)

ICA Policies, Procedures and Standing Orders

*as approved by the ICA General Assembly
4 September 2003*

I. Membership Application and Admission Requirements

1. Organisations shall apply for the status of Member or Associate Member on the official form to be supplied by ICA, and shall send with their applications two copies of their rules, and their last annual report and balance sheet. If the language in which the rules are printed is not one of the official languages of ICA, a translation in one of the official languages shall be enclosed.
2. All applications must include the calculation of the subscription based on the economic activity of the applying organisation, or on the aggregate business activity of its own members (Article 11), and in accordance with the formula established for the following types of co-operatives:
 - a) consumer, agriculture, industrial, fisheries, tourism and other types not specified below;
 - b) housing;
 - c) insurance;
 - d) banking, credit and other financial institutions.
3. If the amount of subscription calculated by the applying organisation in accordance with the relevant formula fails to reach the established minimum dues level, the organisation shall undertake to pay minimum subscription.
4. Organisations applying as educational, research and other institutions which promote co-operatives may request the Board to consider granting them a “minimum-dues-paying” status.
5. Before any application is submitted to the ICA Board, the Director-General shall make appropriate inquiries as to the suitability of the organisation concerned to be admitted to membership of the ICA, including consultation with existing member organisations from the same country and with the Regional Authorities and/or Offices of ICA.
6. New Members and Associate Members of ICA shall pay their subscriptions during the first year on the basis of a pro rata amount determined by their month of admittance.
7. Members and Associate Members having difficulty in paying subscriptions can apply for leniency to the Director-General by 31 March each year as follows:
 - a) Members may be granted one year’s postponement of subscription payments provided that the outstanding debt is cleared.
 - b) No Member should be entitled to more than one year’s postponement. If the above definition is not complied with, a final decision shall rest with the Board.

- c) Organisations once expelled from the ICA for non-payment of subscriptions cannot re-apply for membership within five years unless their outstanding debts are cleared.
8. Associate Members should pay an annual fee based on one-half of the amount that would be required of full members in accordance with the subscription formula, or such other amount as the Board may determine.

II. Subscription Formula

1. Membership subscription formula, which shall be reviewed by the General Assembly at least every four years, is established for different co-operative sectors and at present is as follows:

(Note: All calculations should be made on the basis of economic performance two years previous to the year of payment. Calculation should be made in national currency and then converted into Swiss francs using the current rate of exchange.)

a) Consumer, Agriculture, Industrial, Fisheries, Tourism, and other types not specified below:

Number of complete millions of annual turnover	X	3	=	ICA Subscription
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b) Housing:

$\frac{(\text{Factor A} + \text{Factor B}) \times \text{per capita GNP}}{18.67}$	=	ICA Subscription
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No. of co-operative apartments managed during the year	Factor A	No. of co-operative apartments constructed during the year	Factor B
Up to 50,000	5	Up to 1,000	5
50,000 to 99,999	6	1,000 to 1,999	6
100,000 to 149,999	7	2,000 to 2,999	7
150,000 to 199,999	8	3,000 to 3,999	8
200,000 to 249,999	9	4,000 to 4,999	9
250,000 to 299,999	10	5,000 to 5,999	10
300,000 to 399,999	11	6,000 to 7,999	11
400,000 to 499,999	12	8,000 to 9,999	12
500,000 to 599,999	13	10,000 to 11,999	13
600,000 to 799,999	14	12,000 to 15,999	14
800,000 to 999,999	15	16,000 to 19,999	15

1,000,000 to 1,249,999	17	20,000 to 24,999	17
1,250,000 to 1,599,999	19	25,000 to 31,999	19
1,600,000 to 1,999,999	21	32,000 to 39,999	21
2,000,000 to 2,499,999	23	40,000 to 49,999	23
2,500,000 or more	25	50,000 or more	25

c) Insurance:

Number of complete millions of net premium income	X	<input type="text" value="30"/>	=	ICA Subscription
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d) Banking, Credit and Other Financial Institutions:**Banking:**

Number of complete millions of share capital & reserves	X	<input type="text" value="90"/>	=	ICA Subscription
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Credit:

Number of complete millions of share capital & reserves	X	<input type="text" value="9"/>	=	ICA Subscription
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2. Organisations with membership from more than one economic sector shall calculate their subscriptions using appropriate sectoral formulas, and pay the aggregate amount.
3. Minimum subscription, as established by the General Assembly, shall be 5,500 Swiss francs.
4. Maximum subscription, as established by the General Assembly, shall be 275,000 Swiss francs.

Maximum subscription, either for an individual Member or for the group of Members from one country, shall only be used on a voluntary basis, and shall not prohibit payment of dues above the maximum level.

III. Representation at General Assembly

1. The basis for calculating the number of representatives to the General Assembly shall be 5,500 Swiss francs of subscriptions, giving a Member the right to appoint one representative with a vote.
2. Each Member or a group of Members from one country shall be entitled to one additional voting representative for each complete 5,500 Swiss francs of their total subscription, after the first 5,500 Swiss francs of subscription, with a maximum of 25

representatives per country, excluding the President of ICA, as laid down in Article 14 of the Rules.

3. In countries where there is more than one Member, the number of representatives and votes shall be divided in proportion to their financial contribution to ICA. Any cases of dispute shall be decided by the Board, subject to appeal to the General Assembly.
4. Member organisations shall have the right to entrust all their votes to one or more representatives from the same country, provided that no representative shall hold more than ten votes.
5. Members shall have the right to send substitutes for their appointed representatives to attend the General Assembly by submitting to ICA formal written notice of any such change.
6. Members shall have the right to send observers to the meeting, not exceeding the number of representatives to which they are entitled unless special permission is granted by the Director-General.
7. Observers from non-member organisations, unless invited by ICA, shall only be admitted by a decision of the Director-General.
8. A registration fee, as determined by the Board, shall be paid for each representative, associate and observer, and shall be sent to ICA Head Office with the nomination form in due time.
9. Members which are in arrears with ICA for the previous or current financial year shall not have the right to attend the General Assembly unless postponement has been granted, in which case they shall not have the right to vote.

IV. Standing Orders for General Assembly

Procedures

Sessions of General Assembly

1. Provision shall normally be made for the proceedings of the General Assembly to extend over two days.
2. No meetings of Sectoral Organisations or Thematic Committees shall take place during the sittings of the General Assembly, and all social functions which would in any way hinder the work of the General Assembly shall be strictly limited.
3. The President of ICA shall preside over all sessions of the General Assembly but may be substituted when necessary by one of the Vice-Presidents. The President is a member of all special committees appointed by the General Assembly and should, when possible, preside over their deliberations.
4. A timetable shall be prepared for the discussion of each subject, which shall be strictly adhered to, subject only to such modifications as the Board may find necessary for the admission of emergency motions under Paragraph 17.
5. The business of the General Assembly shall be carried on in such of the official languages - English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish - as the Board shall decide. Any representative who is unable to use one of the official languages of ICA may be assisted by a delegation interpreter.

6. No representative, except the President in the chair, shall be permitted to speak in more than one language during an intervention.
7. General Assembly documentation shall be issued two months before the date of the meeting.
8. All motions and amendments shall be submitted to the Director-General one month before the date of the meeting for consideration by the Board, who shall determine their admissibility.

Order of Debate

9. Members' representatives desiring to speak on any subject must indicate their wishes to the President, who shall call upon them in the order in which their requests are received.
10. All speeches must be addressed to the President and directed to the subject under discussion, or to a question of procedure.
11. Members' representatives may speak more than once on any matter under discussion, but may make a second speech only after all those inscribed have had an opportunity of speaking.
12. Questions of order or personal explanations may be raised at the end of any speech, or translation thereof, but may not interrupt either the speaker or the interpreter, or the President in the act of taking a vote.
13. Proposers of motions or substantive motions shall have the right to reply to the discussion before the motions are put to the vote. Not more than one motion or amendment to it shall be discussed at any one time unless the President decides otherwise.
14. As a general rule, speakers shall be asked by the President to adhere to specific time limitations.
15. Discussion on any question may be closed by a motion, "That the question be now put". Such motion may only be proposed by a representative who has not already spoken on the subject under discussion. If the closure is seconded, the President shall put it to the vote. The proposer of the original motion shall have the right to reply before the vote is taken.
16. Dilatory motions—i.e. "That the discussion be adjourned" or "That the matter be dropped"—shall be formally moved and seconded and put to the vote without discussion.
17. Emergency motions which any Member may desire to submit to the General Assembly must be handed in by noon, on the first day of the meeting, to the President, who shall report on them to the General Assembly on the second day, following decision by the Board.
18. No motion shall be put to the vote unless it has been presented in accordance with the Standing Orders and has been seconded.
19. Amendments to a motion must be submitted in writing to the Director-General before the discussion upon the motion begins, and shall be considered in the order in which they occur. At the close of the discussion, each amendment shall be put to the vote before the original motion.

Voting

20. All motions shall in the first instance be submitted to the vote by a show of hands of accredited representatives. Any representative may demand a count, which shall be taken by the Director-General calling aloud the name of each country in alphabetical order and at the same time announcing the number of votes to which it is entitled, and recording the responses of the respective Members.
21. The President shall have only one vote. In the case of an equality of votes being given on any question, the President shall declare the proposition "Not carried".
22. Voting shall be certified by the Director-General under the supervision of the President.

Suspension of Standing Orders

23. No motion to suspend a Standing Order for any purpose shall be accepted unless notice in writing is given to the Director-General by not less than 10 representatives, stating the reason for the motion. The motion to suspend Standing Orders shall be put to the vote after it has been moved and formally seconded, and not more than one speech made in opposition. To suspend Standing Orders the motion must be approved by a three-fourth majority. If defeated, no second motion for the same purpose shall be permitted.

V. Standing Orders for Board Election

1. ICA Members shall have the right to nominate directly candidates for election as President and to the ICA Board, with the exception of Vice-Presidents. All nominations shall be sent to reach the ICA Director-General not less than two months before the General Assembly in order to be included in the final agenda and documentation issued two months before the meeting.
2. Each ICA Regional Assembly shall have the right to elect a person to serve as ICA Vice-President, subject to ratification by the General Assembly. The nominations shall be submitted in accordance with Paragraph 1.
3. The ICA Board shall appoint an Elections Committee. The Committee shall be composed of eight persons, including the Vice-Presidents, and shall be gender-balanced. The Committee shall:
 - seek out and encourage the nomination of candidates, as needed;
 - supervise the conduct of elections at the General Assembly;
 - rule upon the eligibility of candidates;
 - ensure that elections are conducted in accordance with established procedures;
 - advise the Board as required on election issues.
4. Emergency nominations may be accepted at the discretion of the Elections Committee, for justifiable technical reasons, up to 24 hours prior to the voting.
5. The members of the Board, after serving a four-year term of office, are eligible for re-election provided their candidatures are supported by their Member or Regional Assemblies, in the case of the Vice-Presidents.
6. The Board election shall, as a rule, be conducted by secret ballot.

7. The voting shall be certified by the Elections Committee.
8. Board members may be removed during their term of office, in the case of action contrary to the interests of ICA, by a vote of two-thirds of the Members' representatives to the General Assembly in attendance.

VI. ICA Sectoral Organisations and Thematic Committees

In accordance with Articles 22 and 28 of ICA Rules, the ICA General Assembly recognises the following bodies as ICA Sectoral Organisations and Thematic Committees:

ICA Sectoral Organisations

1. International Co-operative Agricultural Organisation (ICAO)
2. International Co-operative Banking Association (ICBA)
3. Consumer Co-operative International (CCI)
4. International Co-operative Fisheries Organisation (ICFO)
5. International Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO)
6. International Co-operative Housing Organisation (ICA Housing)
7. International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF)
8. International Organisation of Industrial, Artisanal and Service Producers' Co-operatives (CICOPA)
9. International Association of Tourism Co-operatives (TICA)

ICA Thematic Committees

1. Committee on Co-operative Research
2. Communications Committee
3. Human Resource Development Committee
4. Gender Equality Committee