

*Title of the Satellite Meeting: Leadership roles in international librarianship: how can information professionals from Africa, Asia & Oceania, Latin America & Caribbean be part of it?*

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## **How are the IFLA Sections Standing Committees Members geographically distributed?**

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### **Abstract:**

*One of the strengths of any associative movement is the participation of representatives of the most diverse regions, typologies, and functions. Specifically, in the case of an association, such as the International Federation of Librarians and Associations and Institutions (IFLA), this is extremely important to guarantee a holistic and truly global vision, ensuring the production of activities and products with respect to general differences and specificities. Thus, knowing the geographical distribution of their members can highlight the movement, alignment, and ideas more often present in the institution, but mainly illuminate the regions with less or no participation, enabling the definition of inclusive and specific strategies. This study analysed 865 active members in all the 44 Standing Committee Sections in the 2017-2019 period and indexed: the geographical origin, topics of interest according to the sections they participate in, and positions assumed (elected member, chair, secretary and information coordinator). The result was that the presence of representatives from Africa, Asia & Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean is very small, in all the topics evaluated. In all its 44 Sections, IFLA has 865 members; 757 elected members and 108 corresponding members. Even though the regions aforementioned show to be composed of the largest number of countries and the largest population (Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean), they have a small share of the IFLA decision-making positions. The three regions combined account for under 1/3 of the total members. Only 18 IFLA sections have representatives from all the five regions, that is, only 43.9% of the IFLA sections can be said to be globally inclusive. Representatives from Europe are 43% of the total elected members in IFLA's professional sections, followed by North America (27%) and then Asia & Oceania (18%), Africa (8%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (4%). The total number of members from IFLA Division V countries participating in IFLA Sections are 259 and come from 49*

countries. From the total number of officer positions available in those Sections, the IFLA Division V members occupy only 20% of the total Section chairs, 12% of the total secretaries and 29% of the total information coordinators. Lastly, some recommendations are made, especially to all the three Sections from IFLA Division V.

**Keywords:** Global representation; Latin America and the Caribbean; Africa, Asia and Oceania; IFLA Division V. Standing Committee members

**Resumen:**

*Una de las fortalezas de cualquier movimiento asociativo es la participación de representantes de las más diversas regiones, tipologías y funciones. Específicamente, en el caso de una asociación, como la Federación Internacional de Bibliotecarios y Asociaciones e Instituciones (IFLA), esto es extremadamente importante para garantizar una visión holística y verdaderamente global, asegurando la producción de actividades y productos con respecto a las diferencias generales y especificidades. Por lo tanto, conocer la distribución geográfica de sus miembros puede resaltar el movimiento, la alineación y las ideas más a menudo presentes en la institución, pero ilumina principalmente las regiones con menos o ninguna participación, lo que permite la definición de estrategias inclusivas y específicas. Este estudio analizó a 865 miembros activos en las 44 Secciones del Comité Permanente en el período 2017-2019 e indexó: el origen geográfico, los temas de interés de acuerdo con las secciones en las que participan y los puestos asumidos (miembro electo, presidente, secretario y coordinador de información). El resultado fue que la presencia de representantes de África, Asia y Oceanía, América Latina y el Caribe es muy pequeña, en todos los temas evaluados. En todas sus 44 Secciones, IFLA tiene 757 miembros elegidos y 108 miembros correspondientes. A pesar de que las regiones mencionadas muestran estar compuestas por el mayor número de países y la mayor población (África, Asia y Oceanía, y América Latina y el Caribe), tienen una pequeña parte de los puestos de toma de decisiones de la IFLA. Las tres regiones combinadas representan menos de 1/3 del total de miembros. Solo 18 secciones de la IFLA tienen representantes de las cinco regiones, es decir, solo se puede decir que el 43.9% de las secciones de la IFLA son globalmente inclusivas. Los representantes de Europa representan el 43% del total de miembros elegidos en las secciones profesionales de la IFLA, seguidos de América del Norte (27%) y luego Asia y Oceanía (18%), África (8%) y América Latina y el Caribe (4%). El número total de miembros de los países de la División V de la IFLA que participan en las Secciones de la IFLA son 259 y provienen de 49 países. Del número total de puestos de oficiales disponibles en esas Secciones, los miembros de la División V de la IFLA ocupan solo el 20% del total de los presidentes de las Secciones, el 12% de las secretarías totales y el 29% del coordinador de información total. Por último, se hacen algunas recomendaciones, especialmente a las tres Secciones de la División V de IFLA.*

**Palabras clave:** Liderazgo internacional; América Latina y el Caribe; África, Asia y Oceanía; IFLA División V. Miembros del Comité Permanente

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## 1 Introduction

One of the strengths of any associative movement lies in the participation of representatives belonging the most diverse regions, typologies and functions. In the case of an association as the International Federation of Librarians Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the presence of professionals from the most different and varied regions of the planet is essential to enable a holistic and truly global vision, and to guarantee the production of activities and products

respecting the differences and specificities of all, as well as establishing a common level of understanding, growth and improvements.

Moreover, this international participation must take place in all of its ambits, (a) be it among its IFLA Members<sup>1</sup>, (b) or as members<sup>2</sup> of the professional units of the Federation responsible for developing the activities (guidelines, rules, standards and others), (c) as well as for the professionals who seek to participate in its events and activities.

**Table 1 - Number of IFLA Members per Category by Region - 2018**

	Africa	Asia & Oceania	Europe	Latin America & the Caribbean	North America	TOTAL
National associations	15	31	64	17	15	142
International associations	2	2	12	2	5	23
Institutions	68	182	458	45	98	851
Individuals	15	71	63	10	152	311
Other organizations	1	3	2	0	0	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>1333</b>

Source: IFLA Annual Report 2018, p.25.

IFLA Members can be national or international associations, institutions encompassing all types of libraries, library schools, archives, documentation centres, etc.) and individual (professionals. The largest contingent of Members in all regions are institutions, followed by individual Members. Table 2 below shows the movement of Members in the last five years by region:

**Table 2 - Number of IFLA Members by Region from 2014 to 2018**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Africa	121	118	120	104	101
Asia & Oceania (A&O)	262	264	263	255	289
Europe	653	622	613	609	599
Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC)	90	80	82	75	74
North America	270	250	291	250	270
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1396</b>	<b>1334</b>	<b>1369</b>	<b>1293</b>	<b>1333</b>

Source: Research data, 2019.

Overall, the total number of IFLA Members has been stable in recent years, which is why IFLA is looking for new strategies and, at the 2018 General Assembly, approved a very low membership fee for individual Members. Only the Asia & Oceania region and the North America region continue to increase their membership annually. Europe, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean regions have undergone a decreasing process since 2014.

As an IFLA Member, everyone is entitled to participate in any professional group program specializing in various areas of the library and information service activity. For this, upon joining, and annually reaffirming one's affiliation, the Member must indicate which IFLA Professional Units activities he/she is interested in following.

<sup>1</sup> Following the standard used in the IFLA Statute, the word **Member** (with an initial capital letter) will be used to refer to associations, institutions or individuals (as mentioned in Articles 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 e 4.6) that endorse the purposes of the Federation and agree to comply with its Statutes.

<sup>2</sup> The word member (with no capital letter) is used to refer to the experts nominated and elected by IFLA Members to compose the standing committees of the IFLA Professional Units and Governing Board

*Members can join as many Sections (Professional Units) as they want, even beyond the number of Sections allocated to their category. For instance, Members from the Africa, Asia & Oceania, or Latin America & the Caribbean region are also automatically registered for the corresponding IFLA Regional Section. New Association Members are also automatically registered for the Management of Library Associations Section. Additional section registration is possible at extra cost<sup>3</sup>.*

Each of these professional units has a Standing Committee (SC) to carry out the activities corresponding to their area or theme. The members of the Standing Committees do not themselves have to be Member of IFLA, but they must be named by one current IFLA Member and they must be elected by all the Members from that respective Section. These appointments can be made by the institutions in which they work, as well as any other, from their country or abroad. The Members must be registered as a participant of the Section they want to put forward a nomination.

Therefore, the number and profile of members in the various IFLA professional units standing committees is directly related to the interest and commitment assumed by the voting Members. Regions with the largest number of IFLA Members, in theory, are more likely and have greater chances to elect members to professional units.

According to IFLA 2018 Annual Report, professional units are

"a showcase for the global reach and work of IFLA across every aspect of the library field. ... Individual Members come from library associations and all types of library institutions around the world. They commit to activities which enhance and develop libraries and the services they provide to their communities. (IFLA, 2019, p.18).

The professional units standing committee level is where all the guidelines, standards, rules, publications and documents, adopted by thousands of libraries and library schools worldwide, are produced. Therefore, having a good balance and representativeness of the various regions among the members of each of the standing committees of the different IFLA professional units seems to be a key factor for enabling broad perspectives and views, routinely. It is the success factor for the development of the area, allowing all libraries, regardless of the region they are in, to effectively enjoy IFLA production directly, reducing the risk of products that are inadequate to their realities, needs and values.

Thus, knowing the geographical distribution of these members can highlight the movement, alignment and ideas most present in the institution, but mainly, can enlighten the regions with less or no participation, enabling the definition of inclusive and specific strategies for all.

In this context, this study aims to analyse the geographical origin of the members of the IFLA Standing Committees of the Professional Sections, in order to present a macro view of the international representation of these elements, and a specific detailing of the participation of the regions where the developing countries are located. It also seeks to understand the dynamics of the participation of various groups, the conformation of leadership functions, as well as to detect areas of greatest need.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ifla.org/membership/benefits/participation>

## 2 The Dynamics of IFLA Professional Sections

In practice, the Standing Committees of the IFLA Professional Sections act on four-member status: elected members, corresponding members, convenors and ex-officio members.

For **elected members**, according to IFLA Rules, the Sections may have a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 members elected by the Members to the SC of the IFLA Professional Sections. Elections are held every two years for a term of four years with the right to re-election for another equal period (which means 8 years in total). There are clear definitions of their obligations (attending meetings, developing projects, representing the Section, etc.). All the elected members have the right to vote and to be voted for in all internal section decisions and to hold the position of the section officer (such as a chair, secretary, and information coordinator).

Specifically, in the Regional Sections, Africa, Asia & Oceania and LAC, all the elected members must reside in the region of the Section of interest, except for two vacancies that may be contested by persons from any other regions, provided they have an interest and knowledge in that specific region. They can also participate in 2 terms of 4 years each. These members from outside the region equally participate in all the activities of the Standing Committee but are neither entitled to vote or to be voted for, nor occupy any officer position (chair, secretary or information coordinator) in the Section.

Another profile of all SCs is **Corresponding members**, who are selected and invited to participate by the very members and officers. The invitation, according to IFLA website<sup>4</sup>, may have different purposes: “These places are intended for people who are normally unable to attend the IFLA World Library and Information Congress (and therefore the meetings of the Standing Committee) for geographical or financial reasons. Their role is to represent countries in geographical areas, which might not otherwise be represented, or to provide expertise in a specific subject field. They are also a great way to introduce people to the work of the Committee who might then later stand for election”. According to the Rules, each Section may invite up to 5 corresponding members for a 2-year term, who may be re-elected for two other years. These members have no rights to vote or to be voted for. Yet the corresponding members have no obligation to participate in the Sections meetings.

A third member profile acting in IFLA Section Standing Committees are **ex-officio members**, individuals invited to be at the Section by virtue of office or position. Specifically, for Division V Regional Sections, IFLA Regional Office managers are ex-officio members who sit on their SC Standing Committee in order to share experiences, support and assist in the development of Section tasks, but are not entitled to vote or to be voted for. They have no obligation to participate in the Sections meetings.

A fourth profile of SC members corresponds to the **convenors**, which are responsible for the Special Interest Groups (SIG). Those are linked directly to the section that originated it, represent thematic groups of interest or with a specific task to be developed, but which do not yet have the maturity or specificity to be considered a Section. These members do not have the right to vote and to be voted for, or any obligation to participate in the Sections meetings, either.

Those are the official profiles in all the Standing Committees according to IFLA Statute. However, surveying the Sections pages, other categories created by some specific Section can be observed. This paper will study only the elected and corresponding members category.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ifla.org/officers-corner/corresponding-members>

From a managerial point of view, the sections are grouped into divisions, according to their specificities, activities, library typology or services, namely:

- Division I - Library Types: include 13 Sections, one Strategic Programme and four Special Interest Groups (SIGs);
- Division II - Library Collections: include nine Sections, two Strategic Programmes and three SIGs;
- Division III - Library Services: include 12 Sections, two Strategic Programmes and three SIGs;
- Division IV - Support to the Profession: include seven Sections, three Strategic Programmes and four SIGs;
- Division V - Regions activities: include three Sections, two Strategic Programmes and one SIG.

By strategic and methodological definition, this study will exclusively analyse the Sections of all the divisions listed above, not focusing on GIS or Strategic Programs.

This is a documentary study whose main source of data collection and analysis was the IFLA website, more specifically, the public web pages titled Standing Committee of each Professional Sections. All these pages were reviewed in February 2019, and the individual data of SC members were properly indexed and analysed using the Excel software and the Pivot Table tool. The metadata used to index all the members was their institutional affiliation, country and region of origin, SC function and their term of office - 1st and 2nd Terms.

To account for representative registrations by country and region, the following criteria were adopted as used in IFLA:

- Russia and Turkey are Eurasian, but were counted as Asia;
- Taiwan was considered to be China;
- Puerto Rico and Mexico joined as Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

### **3 Data analysis and results**

#### **3.1 Characterization of the analysed sample**

By the time of the data collection, the Standing Committee of the 44 IFLA Sections counted on 757 members elected by Members and 108 corresponding members invited by SC members, totalling 865 people.

With 20 official vacancies for elected members and 5 for co-responding members in 44 sections, this adds up to 1,100 vacancies to be filled. IFLA currently has 865 members, i.e. it is developing its activities with 78.5% of its capacity. Hence, the elected members are 86% of the total possible and the corresponding members are only 49%.

In this mapping by regions (Table 3 below), it appears that the total number of members varies in some sections, but they all generally have 18 to 20 elected members, two of which have only 11 members in their SC. This may be due to various circumstances: a decision of the SC members themselves, who prefer to work with a smaller group, or a lack of community interest in participating in that particular SC, or the existence of few Members in that Section to nominate new members.

As far as corresponding members are concerned, they do not exist in ten of the sections analysed, which is peculiar. Ten sections use this possibility by inviting a maximum of 5 corresponding members, including the Asia & Oceania Sections and LAC.

**Table 3 - Standing Committee Members at IFLA Sections**

Division	Section #	Section name	Elected members	Corresponding members	Total	Division total
Division I	1	National Libraries	20	1	21	236
	2	Academic and Research Libraries	18	3	21	
	3	Library and Research Services for Parliaments	20	1	21	
	4	Government Libraries	12	5	17	
	5	Social Science Libraries	16	0	16	
	7	Science and Technology	12	0	12	
	8	Public Library	20	4	24	
	11	School Libraries	15	5	20	
	28	Health and Biosciences Libraries	14	0	14	
	30	Art Libraries	14	1	15	
	31	Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities	16	3	19	
	46	Metropolitan Libraries	17	0	17	
48	Law Libraries	19	0	19		
Division II	14	Acquisition and Collection Development	16	3	19	167
	15	Document Delivery and Resource Sharing	22	0	22	
	16	Serials and Other Continuing Resources	11	0	11	
	17	Government Information and Official Publications	16	0	16	
	18	Rare Books and Special Collections	21	0	21	
	19	Preservation and Conservation	20	5	25	
	35	Audiovisual and Multimedia	10	3	13	
	37	Local History and Genealogy	22	5	27	
39	News Media	12	1	13		
Division III	9	Library Services to People with Special Needs	14	3	17	247
	10	Libraries for Children and Young Adults Section	20	5	25	
	12	Bibliography	13	3	16	
	13	Cataloguing	20	4	24	
	21	Information Technology	20	3	23	
	29	Subject Analysis and Access	20	4	24	
	32	Library Services to Multicultural Populations	18	4	22	
	33	Literacy and Reading	19	0	19	
	36	Reference and Information Services	16	2	18	
	42	Information Literacy	19	5	24	
47	Knowledge Management	20	4	24		
50	Indigenous Matters	11	0	11		
Division IV	20	Library Buildings and Equipment	18	5	23	146
	22	Statistics and Evaluation	14	0	14	
	23	Education and Training	22	5	27	
	24	Library Theory and Research	20	0	20	
	34	Management and Marketing	20	2	22	
	40	Management of Library Associations	20	3	23	
	43	Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning	13	4	17	
Division V	25	Africa	18	2	20	69
	26	Asia & Oceania	21	5	26	
	27	Latin America & Caribbean	18	5	23	
<b>5</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>SECTIONS</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>865</b>



### 3.2 Regional representation among IFLA Standing Committees members

Another view of the same data is with the organization of the elected and corresponding members of each Section, according to their regional origin.

**Table 4 - Distribution by region of the Elected and Corresponding SC members**

	#	Section name	Africa		Asia & Oceania		Europe		LAC		North America		TOTAL		
			Elected	Corresp	Elected	Corresp	Elected	Corresp	Elected	Corresp	Elected	Corresp	Elected	Corresp	General
Division I	1	National Libraries	2	0	4	0	10	1	2	0	2	0	20	1	21
	2	Academic and Research Libraries	5	0	3	2	6	1	0	0	4	0	18	3	21
	3	Library and Research Services for Parliaments	2	0	3	0	8	0	4	0	3	1	20	1	21
	4	Government Libraries	1	0	4	2	5	2	1	0	1	1	12	5	17
	5	Social Science Libraries	2	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	8	0	16	0	17
	7	Science and Technology	1	0	3	0	3	0	1	0	4	0	12	0	12
	8	Public Library	0	0	5	2	11	2	1	0	3	0	20	4	24
	11	School Libraries	0	1	4	1	7	2	1	1	3	0	15	5	20
	28	Health and Biosciences Libraries	3	0	3	0	3	0	1	0	4	0	14	0	14
	30	Art Libraries	0	0	2	0	9	0	1	0	2	1	14	1	15
	31	Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities	2	0	3	1	7	2	2	0	2	0	16	3	19
	46	Metropolitan Libraries	0	0	4	0	9	0	0	0	4	0	17	0	17
	48	Law Libraries	0	0	5	0	3	0	1	0	10	0	19	0	19
Division II	14	Acquisition and Collection Development	0	1	4	1	7	0	0	0	5	1	16	3	19
	15	Document Delivery and Resource Sharing	1	0	7	0	8	0	1	0	5	0	22	0	22
	16	Serials and Other Continuing Resources	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	7	0	11	0	11
	17	Government Information and Official Publications	0	0	4	0	6	0	0	0	6	0	16	0	16
	18	Rare Books and Special Collections	2	0	2	0	12	0	1	0	4	0	21	0	21
	19	Preservation and Conservation	3	1	3	1	9	3	2	0	3	0	20	5	25
	35	Audiovisual and Multimedia	0	1	0	0	5	1	0	0	5	1	10	3	13
	37	Local History and Genealogy	6	0	3	0	4	2	1	0	8	3	22	5	27
	39	News Media	0	0	0	0	9	1	0	0	3	0	12	1	14
	Division III	9	Library Services to People with Special Needs	0	0	3	1	8	2	1	0	2	0	14	3
10		Libraries for Children and Young Adults	2	0	5	0	11	4	1	0	1	1	20	5	25
12		Bibliography	0	2	2	0	8	0	0	0	3	1	13	3	16
13		Cataloguing	1	1	1	2	15	1	1	0	2	0	20	4	24
21		Information Technology	7	0	3	1	7	2	1	0	2	0	20	3	23
29		Subject Analysis and Access	1	0	2	1	10	2	1	1	6	0	20	4	24
32		Library Services to Multicultural Populations	0	0	4	0	9	1	0	0	5	3	18	4	23
33		Literacy and Reading	1	0	3	0	10	0	1	0	4	0	19	0	19
36		Reference and Information Services	1	1	3	1	3	0	2	0	7	0	16	2	18
42		Information Literacy	5	0	3	1	6	3	0	0	5	1	19	5	24
Division IV	47	Knowledge Management	2	0	3	1	5	1	0	0	10	2	20	4	26
	50	Indigenous Matters	0	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	4	0	11	0	11
	20	Library Buildings and Equipment	0	0	2	1	11	2	0	1	5	1	18	5	23
	22	Statistics and Evaluation	0	0	3	0	7	0	1	0	3	0	14	0	14
	23	Education and Training	1	2	8	0	4	1	0	1	9	1	22	5	27
	24	Library Theory and Research	2	0	6	0	6	0	1	0	5	0	20	0	20
	34	Management and Marketing	1	1	3	1	8	0	0	0	8	0	20	2	22
	40	Management of Library Associations	1	1	2	2	13	0	1	0	3	0	20	3	22
43	Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning	0	1	1	0	5	1	0	0	7	2	13	4	16	
		<b>41 Sections</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>796</b>



Table 4 presents a sub-total with members distribution only of SC from Divisions I to IV. And the general total, at the end of the table, also includes Division V members. Note that the participation in Division V is restricted to professionals from their respective regions, except for two external members, as already explained. This particularity of the Division V section is because its responsibilities are exactly to work with professionals from their region, give them the opportunity to be at IFLA and prepare them to start working with other sections.

The table above shows that there are 18 sections (excluding Division V sections) with elected members from all the five regions. Three of the sections listed have no elected members other than Europeans and North Americans. Six sections, besides Europe and the US, have elected members from Asia and Oceania. Similarly, two sections have elected members from Africa, Europe, and North America. Latin America and the Caribbean are not represented in 17 sections of the 41 analysed. Although Asia & Oceania are well represented (in 38 out of the 41 sections), it is necessary to dig deeper to see which countries are present at these percentages shown, whether developed and/or developing.

Individually, elected members from Africa participated in Sections 2, 19, 21, and 37 and 42, Academic and Research Libraries, Preservation and Conservation, Information Technology, Local History and Genealogy, and Information Literacy, respectively. This occurrence may indicate the concern of this region with professional and educational strengthening, management and strengthening technical services of libraries, especially academic and research, children and youth, school, health, etc.), as well as services to users and technologies. These focuses are also the objectives of the Africa Section, which may indicate cross-work between professionals in the region and the sections of interest.

Theoretically, having a larger number of IFLA Members enables Asia & Oceania to elect more members in the Sections. By the distribution of the elected members, as shown by the systematization of the data, it is inferred that the features of this region differs from the Africa region by the thematic typology, such as Libraries and services: they search for themes related to government and higher education (Governmental, National, Metropolitan, Academic, Theory, Science, Technology and Research, Governmental Libraries), as well as technologies, literacy, education and training, technical services, among others. The most often sought sections are number 23 (eight participants), 8, 15 and 24 (seven participants), 4 and 14 (six representatives), 1, 2, 10, 11 and 42 (five participants).

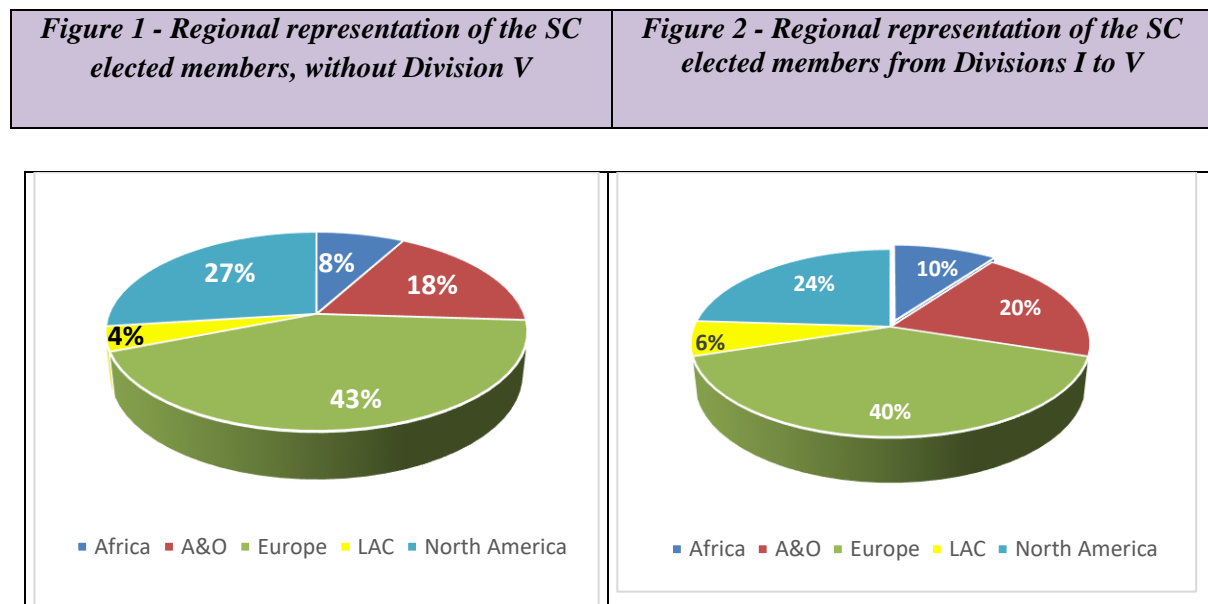
Latin America and the Caribbean, with only 31 elected members, has a more homogeneous but small distribution. In addition to other topics, the LACs most representative section is interestingly number 3 - Library and Research Services for Parliaments, with four participants (two from Brazil, one from Argentina and one from Chile), followed by Sections 1, 11, 19, 29, 30, 31 and 36 with two participants each, whose themes are national libraries, school libraries, preservation and conservation, subject analysis and access, art libraries, libraries serving persons with disabilities, reference and information services. As verified, all those topics are much more related to specialized and/or academic libraries. There is only one representative from Brazil participating in the Public Library Section. In all the LACs, the public libraries have a very small budget and this poses great difficulties for those librarians to participate in IFLA.

Noting the primary objectives of each of the three Sections of Division V, these results support their concerns about the social function of libraries as promoters of human growth and development.

Therefore, by examining the set of preferences of those representatives from Division V countries together, it can be noted that, whereas there is a significant demand for Specialized

Library Sections, especially National, Governmental and their developments, Legal and Academic and Research and, the search for themes that deal with School Libraries and Public Library is small. These preferences may have some connection with each member's institutional ties, with the regional needs of each country, but certainly also with those libraries possibilities and resources. A complementary study specifically into the institution profile and the country of those representatives can offer a better interpretation of those data.

In order to view regional representation in IFLA sections in an integrated and comparative manner, two graphs follow; the first shows the percentage of the elected members without Regional Division V sections members and the second shows the percentage of elected members per region in the 44 IFLA sections,



In Figure 1, with sections from Divisions I to IV only, representatives from Europe are reported to occupy 43% of the total elected members in IFLA's professional sections, followed by North America (27%) and then Asia & Oceania (18%), Africa (8%). and Latin America and the Caribbean (4%). When accounting for participating members by Region, including Division V, 757 representatives are identified, with 303 (40%) from Europe, 187 (24%) from North America, 148 (20%) from Asia & Oceania, 74 (10%) from Africa and 47 (6%) from Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC).

That means Division V sections contributed to an increase of 2% of the number of elected members from those regions in the total of IFLA members. With or without Division V members, still Europe and North America together have about 66% of all the IFLA Sections elected members.

Thinking of the Corresponding Members, if all 41 sections worked with the maximum number of members, i.e. occupying all the 5 possible positions, the total amount of representation would be 205 representatives. However, there are only 108 representatives in all the IFLA Sections, which means only 50% of the possibility has been used. Hence, out of those 108, 39 members (36%) came from countries covered by Division V regions.

Specifically analysing the profile of the corresponding members of each section, 58.3% are from Europe and North America. Of the remainder, 15.6% are from Africa, 21.8% from Asia and 4.2% from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Of the 41 sections reviewed, 32% (13 sections) do not have any corresponding members. And six sections have representatives from Europe and / or North America only.

It should be noted that only 7 sections without any elected members from Africa have corresponding members from this region. For Latin America, this situation occurs in only one section and none for Asia.

In brief, even in the corresponding members' position, there are many more representatives from Europe and North American than in all three regions of Division V altogether. And this is a very good position to be occupied for developing countries' representatives because everyone can help and participate in the projects and in online meetings of the Section without the obligation of going to the WLIC, which is the major hindrance to developing countries professionals.

### 3.3 Geographic representation among IFLA Standing Committees members

After understanding the distribution of the elected and corresponding members to the Standing Committees of the different IFLA sections, it is necessary to observe the geographical origin.

Understanding which countries are being represented in the various IFLA positions and how often it happens can highlight the differences existing inside each of the regions.

**Table 5 - Countries representation versus members on SC Sections from Division I to IV**

Africa		Asia & Oceania		LAC		Europe		North America	
Country	#	Country	#	Country	#	Country	#	Country	#
Algeria	1	Australia	19	Argentina	3	Austria	1	Canada	43
Botswana	2	Bangladesh	2	Brazil	12	Belarus	1	EUA	158
Cameroon	5	China	39	Chile	7	Belgium	5		
Egypt	12	India	14	Colombia	1	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1		
Ivory Coast	5	Indonesia	1	Cuba	1	Bulgaria	3		
Kenya	5	Iran, Islamic Republic of	1	Haiti	2	Croatia	13		
Mali	1	Japan	20	Mexico	6	Czech Republic	5		
Mauritius	1	Kazakstan	2	Peru	1	Denmark	5		
Morocco	4	Korea, Republic of	10	Uruguay	2	Estonia	5		
Namibia	1	Kyrgyz Republic	1			Finland	16		
Nigeria	5	Lebanon	3			France	44		
Senegal	2	Macau	2			Germany	46		
South Africa	13	Malaysia	4			Greece	3		
Tunisia	1	Nepal	1			Hungary	4		
Uganda	9	New Zealand	6			Ireland	1		
Zambia	2	Oman	1			Italy	20		
		Philippines	2			Kosovo, UN Interim	1		
		Qatar	5			Lithuania	4		
		Saudi Arabia	2			Luxembourg	1		
		Singapore	7			Netherlands	11		
		Sri Lanka	3			Norway	24		
		Turkey	1			Poland	5		
		United Arab Emirates	2			Portugal	1		
		Uzbekistan	1			Republic of Serbia	4		
						Romania	4		
						Russian Federation	22		
						Slovakia	4		
						Slovenia	4		
						Spain	21		
						Sweden	31		
						Switzerland	6		
						United Kingdom	22		
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>		<b>149</b>		<b>35</b>		<b>338</b>		<b>201</b>

From the table above, in the Europe region, a total of 338 members in 32 countries were identified, with the largest countries (over 40 members) being Germany and France. In the North America region, there are 201 members, of which 158 are from the USA and 43 members from Canada. Individually, thus, the largest representation is from the United States with 20% of the total number of members.

The countries from Division V regions with the largest number of representatives are China (39 members), Japan (20), Australia (19), South Africa (13), all developed countries. However, Brazil and Egypt must be cited also, each one with 12 members.

As a region, Asia contributed with 24 countries and 149 members (18.8%), Africa with 16 countries and 69 members (8.7%) and Latin America and the Caribbean with 9 countries and 35 members (4.4%). The 253 representatives from the Africa, Latin America & Caribbean, and Asia & Oceania regions, members of the SC of 41 IFLA Divisions 1-4, are from 49 countries.

The discrepancies between countries is quite impressive and delicate. In this table, the effort that some developing countries are making to stay active and participatory can be predicted.

All the countries effectively represented among the members of the IFLA 44 Standing Committees (including the Africa, Asia & Oceania and Latin America and the Caribbean Sections), can be seen in Table 6 below.

This new information shows a large number of countries for the first time. The Africa region, formerly with 16 countries represented, now has 21; Asia & Oceania, formerly with 24 countries, now has 27 and Latin America and the Caribbean region, formerly with 9 countries, now has 12. There are thus 11 new countries represented at IFLA because of Division V, and all of them are developing countries: Africa (Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe); Asia (Myanmar, Pakistan, and Vanuatu) and Latin America and the Caribbean (Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Trinidad & Tobago).

The cities in the Division V regions that previously occupied the first five places in membership remain the same, but with an even larger number of representatives.: China (41 members), Australia (23), Japan (22), South Africa (16) and Brazil (17).

**Table 6 - Countries representation versus elected and corresponding members in all the IFLA SC Sections**

Africa		Asia and Oceania		LAC		Europa		North America	
Country	#	Country	#	Country	#	Country	#	Country	#
Algeria	1	Australia	23	Argentina	5	Austria	1	Canada	43
Botswana	4	Bangladesh	2	Brazil	17	Belarus	1	EUA	158
Cameroon	6	China	41	Chile	9	Belgium	5		
Egypt	14	India	18	Colombia	5	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1		
Ethiopia	1	Indonesia	1	Costa Rica	1	Bulgaria	3		
Ivory Coast	5	Iran, Islamic Republic of	1	Cuba	2	Croatia	13		
Ghana	1	Japan	22	El Salvador	2	Czech Republic	5		
Guinea-Bissau	1	Kazakstan	3	Haiti	2	Denmark	5		
Ivory Coast	1	Korea, Republic of	12	Mexico	9	Estonia	5		
Kenya	7	Kyrgyz Republic	1	Peru	2	Finland	16		
Madagascar	1	Lebanon	4	Trinidad and Tobago	1	France	44		
Mali	1	Macau	2	Uruguay	2	Germany	46		
Mauritius	1	Malaysia	5			Greece	3		
Morocco	5	Myanmar	1			Hungary	4		
Namibia	1	Nepal	1			Ireland	1		
Nigeria	6	New Zealand	7			Italy	20		
Senegal	3	Oman	1			Kosovo, UN Interim	1		
South Africa	16	Pakistan	1			Lithuania	4		
Tunisia	1	Philippines	3			Luxembourg	1		
Uganda	11	Qatar	5			Netherlands	11		
Zambia	2	Saudi Arabia	2			Norway	24		
Zimbabwe	2	Singapore	9			Poland	5		
		Sri Lanka	5			Portugal	1		
		Turkey	1			Republic of Serbia	4		
		United Arab Emirates	2			Romania	4		
		Uzbekistan	1			Russian Federation	22		
		Vanuatu	1			Slovakia	4		
						Slovenia	4		
						Spain	23		
						Sweden	31		
						Switzerland	6		
						United Kingdom	22		
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>		<b>175</b>		<b>57</b>		<b>340</b>		<b>201</b>

### 3.4 Status of the SC Members from Africa, Asia & Oceania and LAC in Divisions I to IV

Elected members of the Standing Committee of all the IFLA Sections may take on certain managerial responsibilities as chair, secretary and information coordinator. Being "section officers", they must coordinate the activities to be carried out by the team, to decide on the best strategies of action and management of the section. Also, they will be in direct contact with the managerial positions above, such as the Chair of their respective Divisions, members of the Professional Committee and even the Governing Board. Therefore, those are spaces for action and development, but also for hierarchical climbing within IFLA itself.

Observing the geographical provenance of the current IFLA Section officers can also show if balanced regional participation is taking place. Especially, if members from Africa, Asia & Oceania, and LAC countries are occupying the chair, secretary and information coordinator positions in some of the 41 IFLA Sections.

Table 7 shows the distribution of these representatives by regions and functions (Chair, Secretary and Information Coordinator) points out that Asia & Oceania is the region with the largest number of officers as compared to Africa and LAC.

Specifically, in the Chair function, Asia & Oceania have six members, followed by Africa with 2 members. In the "Secretary" and "Information Coordinator" roles, the situation is: Asia and Oceania respectively have three and five representatives, Africa one and four, and Latin America and the Caribbean, one and three.

These results mean that from the total positions available in the 41 sections of Divisions I to V, 20% of the total chairs, 12% of the total secretaries and 29% of the total information coordinators are occupied by representative members from three regions : Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean. It was reassuring to see that there are not only representatives from developed countries among all those officers.

**Table 7 - Division V countries representation versus member functions - Division I to IV**

Regions	Countries	Functions			Total per country
		Chair	Secretary	Information Coordinator	
Africa (6 countries)	Cameroon			1	1
	Egypt		1		1
	Ivory Coast			1	1
	Senegal			1	1
	South Africa	1		1	2
	Uganda	1			1
		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	
Asia & Oceania (11 countries)	Australia	2	1	1	4
	Bangladesh		1		1
	China	1			1
	India		1		1
	Japan	1			1
	New Zealand	1			1
	Oman	1			1
	Qatar			1	1
	Singapore			1	1
	Turkey			1	1
	United Arab Emirates			1	1
		<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	
LAC (3 countries)	Brazil		1	1	2
	Mexico			1	1
	Peru			1	1
		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>

### 3.5 Management period of SC elected members of 41 IFLA Sections

As aforementioned, SC members are elected for a four-year term (1st term) (requiring reconfirmation every two years) and may be re-elected for a further 4 years (2nd term). As elections occur every two years, and data collection on the IFLA website took place in May 2019, there is a situation of members at the beginning, middle or end of their terms. Note that corresponding members are not elected, but rather invited by the Section Chair to be part of the Section for no more than 2 years.

Trying to understand how many elected and corresponding members are starting or finishing their term now, it is important to see the distribution of members from the Africa, Asia & Oceania, and Latin America & Caribbean regions across the 41 IFLA sections corresponding to Divisions 1 through 4.

**Table 8 – Terms for representative members from Division V countries throughout Division I to IV**

Regions	Periods							Total
	2011-2015	2013-2017	**2015-2017	2015-2019	**2017-2019	2017-2021	**2018-2020	
Africa	6	5	6	33	5	12	2	69
Asia & Oceania	9	17	5	43	8	58	8	148
Latin America & Caribbean	2	1	2	13	3	15	0	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>253</b>

\*\* Information on the corresponding member terms.

A close evaluation of members period terms, indicates that 15 representatives from 2011-2015 were re-elected for the 2015-2019 period, adding to those elected for the latter period, which shows a significant and extremely positive participation of these regions in the 41 IFLA Sections, 83.14%. The same happens with the representatives of the 2013-2017 period: the 23 members were re-elected for the 2017-2021 period, whose leap to the latter period was 72.94%. In the 2015-2017 period, 13 Corresponding Members continued for the second period in 2017-2019.

According to Table 8, 20 members from Division V countries are ending their terms in 2019 and 26 will end theirs in 2021. However, 117 members started their 1st term in 2015 and 104 in 2017. This means they all have the prospect of renewal for the 2nd Term. If it occurs, during the years 2019 to 2021, at least 221 members (between elected and corresponding members) will be counted from Division V countries. This represents a very small growth compared to the current total of 214 members. Actions need to be taken and strategies adopted to increase this number by both GB, and especially by Division V itself.

The highest rate of growth, comparing the last two elections 2015 to 2019 and 2017 to 2021, was in Asia and Oceania, as already noted also in the growth of memberships. Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean also had some increase.



## 4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

At the end of this study, a broad picture was obtained, which allowed comparing the representation of the five regions of the IFLA Standing Committee members. In 2019, in all the 44 Sections, IFLA currently has 865 members; 757 members elected by Members and 108 corresponding members invited by SC officers.

By its Statute, the IFLA Standing Committee could work with 1,100 members (20 elected members and 5 corresponding members per Section). Hence, IFLA Standing Committee Members are currently working with 78% of its capacity. Why so? Is it because there are so many sections? Are the total numbers approved by statute too large to be managed by the officers? Is there no demand for all these vacancies? A closer study of the biennial election processes may provide further insight into this discussion.

The results of this study show that the regions composed of the largest number of countries and the largest population (Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean) have a small presence in the IFLA decision-making positions. The three regions combined account for just under 1/3 of the total member from five regions distributed in the 44 IFLA Sections. This situation is exactly the same as the IFLA Member numbers, whereby the three sections from Division V totalized 34% of the 1.333 IFLA 2018 Members.

The member's geographic distribution (elected and corresponding members) of the Standing Committees of IFLA Sections show that 18 sections (excluding Division V sections) have representatives from all the five regions. Therefore, only 43.9% of the IFLA sections can be said to be globally inclusive. Three of the 41 sections have no representatives other than from Europe and the USA. Some sections, besides Europe and North America, have elected members from Asia and Oceania only, other representatives only from Africa. Latin America and the Caribbean are not present in 17 sections of the 41 analysed. This is thus a situation to be carefully evaluated by the IFLA Governing Board and also by the Division V Sections in order to define a really inclusive program with specific strategies.

A specific look at the regional dispersion of elected and corresponding standing committee members in the 41 sections of IFLA Divisions I to IV, shows that representatives from Europe are reported to occupy 43% of the total elected members in IFLA's professional sections, followed by North America (27%) and then Asia & Oceania (18%), Africa (8%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (4%). When including the Division V sections, an 2% increase occurred in the number of members of each of those regions. Still with or without the Division V members, Europe and North America together have almost 70% of all IFLA Sections elected members.

Those 259 members from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia & Oceania regions at 41 IFLA Division I to IV sections are from 49 countries. Putting together those members with the representatives from Division V sections, this number increases to 60 countries. There are thus 11 new countries represented at IFLA because of Division V. Most importantly, all of them are developing countries.

From the total number of officer positions available in the 41 Sections of Divisions I to IV, only 20% of the total chairs, 12% of the total secretaries and 29% of the total information coordinators are occupied by representative members from three regions: Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean. It was good to see that there are not only representatives from developed countries among all those officers.

From all the 108 corresponding members, there are many more representatives from Europe and North American than all the three regions of Division V altogether (64%). Nowadays, using all the technology available, this could be a specific space where professionals from developing countries can start to work at the IFLA Sections, without being required to participate in WLIC, which is financially unfeasible for many of them.

A thorough evaluation of the elected member's mandates terms indicates that the last two elections increased the number of candidates elected from regions of Division V, but not enough to make a great difference.

Although Asia and Oceania have a larger representation in terms of Members as well as members, most of them represent few countries and especially developed countries. As evidenced in all the aspects analysed in this study, the three regions are far below expectations and, above all, desirable. Latin America and the Caribbean of the three regions is the most precarious, non-existing in many of the aspects studied.

These results only prove what was already known. However, they provide grounds to reflect on the importance and opportunity to act more efficiently and effectively in the process of including developing countries, seeking precise and systematic inclusion strategies. This is not an easy task, but only this will consolidate a united library field. The mass of information shown here can be useful for all the three Division V Sections to plan their future, define how to approach their regions, how to work together and project a specific strategic plan.

In the June 2019 workshop (in The Hague, Netherlands), organized by IFLA with the participation of all Division officers to discuss and to propose the IFLA Global Vision Program, Gerald Leitner quoted Abraham Lincoln "The best way to predict the future is to create it together". This is good advice. Maybe it is time for Division V members to start working together and planning their future and presence in IFLA.

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