

Annual Report of the Secretary General 2020/2021

Dear fellow IFA Members,

The Covid-19 crisis has altered the world forcing it to a shutdown in order to fight the virus. IFA events such as all regional conferences and many bilateral and Branch activities were either cancelled or adapted to a virtual equivalent. To anticipate future developments and to ensure the health and wellbeing of our participants, all future Annual IFA Congresses have been postponed with another year and in 2021 IFA will again offer a virtual programme to its members in November/December 2021.

Although the pandemic still ruled most of 2021/2021 IFA has been active. Many Branches and regions organised virtual events for their members, the IFA networks YIN and WIN participated in many online events, and 2020/2021 saw the implementation of a new governance structure which better reflects IFA today. This annual report gives a brief overview of the most important matters and events in 2020/2021.



International Fiscal Association



New governance structure

On March 3, 2021, the General Assembly approved of a new governance structure. The new structure better reflects IFA's international personality and activity in the Articles of Association and in the organization of the Association as it is today. While preserving the necessary autonomy and independence of national Branches, the revised Articles better structure and streamline actions and activities that take place under the common and unique value of our Association: the IFA Brand. The following governance structure is now in place:

General Assembly

The General Assembly, the gathering of all members, is now the sole ultimate body of the Association. The General Council which constituted the gathering of delegates of each Branch, has been abolished and its tasks have been entrusted to the General Assembly.

Executive Board and Supervisory Board

The revised Articles attribute the entire management of the Association to the Executive Board. The Executive Board has become the body responsible for developing the strategy and ensuring the management of the Association. It is supervised and advised by a Supervisory Board. The Supervisory Board will be asked to specifically approve certain decisions. The Executive Committee, which was entrusted with the overall management of the Association has been abolished.

Broadening of the Executive Board

To make sure that the international but also complex activities and personality of IFA may be translated into the activities and management of the Association, the Executive Board has been enlarged and now includes the Vice-President (see below) and the Chair of the Permanent Scientific Committee. Voices from Regions where IFA is present and active, shall be heard via a number of Regional Chairs joining the Executive Board. Such broadening will also allow extended allocation of tasks among the members of the Executive Board. The maximum number of members of the Executive Board would be eight, which is a reasonable number for an organization of the size of IFA.

President/Vice-President

In the new governance structure a true executive function as Vice-President is established, such person to usually become the President after a term of two years. This structure reinforces the highest function within IFA, while smoothing transitions and, again, allowing better international representation.

Introduction of a Nominations Committee

In the new governance structure a Nominations Committee has been instituted as a body of the Association, with the duty to research and nominate in the best interest of IFA the most suitable candidates for positions to be renewed.

The Permanent Scientific Committee

With the increasing number of actions and activities of IFA worldwide but also the increasing complexity of technical topics that are to be studied by IFA as an institution of international tax interlocutor, it is more important than ever to have a scientific presence and voice which are beyond any doubts of absolute neutrality and complies with highest standards. To that effect, a number of Vice Chairs have been introduced, allowing a better allocation of tasks and activities.

Regions introduced in the Articles of Association

With the ever-growing complexity and multiplication of diverse tax issues, with also the internationally growing activity of the Association, a number of actions and activities are better organised at regional level rather than at worldwide level. In the new governance structure the IFA regions are official recognised. The Regions are not meant to act as an intermediate level interposed between national Branches and Central IFA. To the opposite, Regions and regional activities and bodies are meant to represent an additional way of communication and coordination within the Association.



IFA Activities, Branches and regions

IFA Activities

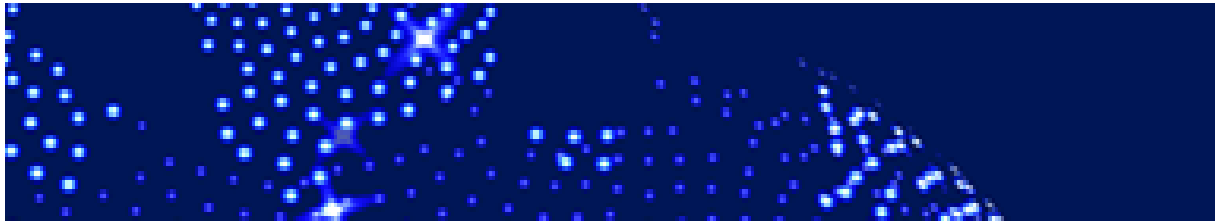
2021 saw the launch of Central IFA's virtual webinar series: **"A conversation on International Tax Practice"**. The first session gave an in-depth analysis of the merits of most recent landmark cases on matters such as royalties and transfer pricing cases. IFA intends to establish the Webinar series as a reoccurring event throughout the year.

IFA Branches and Regions

IFA has 70 Branches and several countries have expressed their interest in establishing IFA Branches. 2021 will see the establishment of IFA's 71st Branch in Paraguay. Membership of IFA now stands at 13.185 members (per 14 September 2021) from 117 countries.

In 2020 the North American region was established and IFA now has four established IFA regions: the Asia-Pacific, European, the North American and the Latin American Regions. An African region covering the African continent also meets significant interest among African members and is about to be launched in the near future.

Due to the Covid-19 crisis, most regional and bilateral IFA conferences had to be cancelled from early 2020 onwards. Some were developed into successful virtual events, accessible to all IFA members.



Future IFA Congresses

Annual IFA Congresses

Due to the Covid-19 crisis all future Annual IFA Congresses and Main Subjects have been postponed with one year. This resulted in the rescheduling of the already allocated annual Congresses as follows:

- 4 – 8 September 2022 Berlin Congress
- 10 - 15 September 2023 Cancun Congress
- 27 – 31 October 2024 Cape Town Congress
- 2025 Lisbon Congress
- 2026 Melbourne Congress
- 2027 Stockholm Congress

The next three future Congresses to be allocated will therefore cover the years 2028-2030. Allocation will be finalised and decided upon during the virtual meetings of the SB in 2022.

IFA Virtual Event 2021 "The Global Tax Agreement: The Two-Pillar Solution".

For 2021 it has been decided to organise a virtual event with a programme on the most current developments in international corporate tax policy, from 29 November-1 December 2021. "The Global Tax Agreement: The Two-Pillar Solution". The programme will focus on the global tax agreement and the implementation plan to be finalised in October 2021. Following a dedicated IFA/OECD session on Monday, Tuesday will be focused on IFA's Inclusive framework with a session dedicated to each region. The last day of the event will see virtual sessions of IFA's Young IFA Network (YIN) and Women of IFA Network (WIN). The sessions will be accessible through the IFA website and the IFA App. They will be live with interactive features allowing attendees to participate. To ensure these sessions are convenient for all participants across the globe, all sessions will be recorded and made available to participants if they wish to access these at a later stage.

We thank all future Congress Organising Branches, IFA's Supervisory Board and IFA's Permanent Scientific Committee for their support and cooperation for their solidarity and to make this happen.



International Fiscal Association



Young IFA Network (YIN)

IFA's young community is thriving as more and more Branches have become interested in YIN. 59 IFA Branches have YIN Representatives that promote and coordinate the YIN activities in their Branches. The YIN Community is present on LinkedIn and on Facebook. It has grown into a robust network developing activities in a growing number of Branches. The YIN Committee gets full support of Central IFA in its actions to make IFA even stronger in the future. More information on the activities of YIN can be found in their annual report.



Women IFA Network (WIN)

In recent years, the female membership of IFA has grown to more than 2.000 female members across the globe; it is an evident and welcome sign of the increasing awareness of the significance of professional women in international taxation. WIN has been established as a Special Committee to represent and connect the many professional women working in international tax. WIN is present on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. The WIN Committee includes representatives from all IFA regions and is chaired by Jeanne Goulet (USA). Also, most IFA Branches have appointed a WIN representative on which more information can be found on the IFA website. More information on the activities of WIN can be found in their annual report.



Publications and communication

IFA Cahiers Online

The IFA Cahiers are fully available online. The “Online Cahiers” are published on the IFA website and are only accessible by IFA Members. The Cahiers with all its Reports (General Report, EU Report and the Branch Reports) are available from 1980 onwards. It is possible to search for a specific Cahier via a large set of predefined keywords, or go directly to a specific year and select Cahier A or Cahier B. The printed publication of the Cahiers consists of the general reports of both Subject 1 and Subject 2, together with EU reports and OECD reports where applicable, and short summaries of all Branch reports. By continuing the printing of the general reports, IFA will sustain the legacy of the Cahiers.

2021 Cahiers

Due to the Covid-19 situation all future Annual IFA Congresses and Main Subjects have been postponed with one year. Therefore, the publication of the Cahiers has also been postponed with one year in order to align with the main subjects on future Congresses.

Website, IFA Society App and social media

The IFA website has been further developed and now includes a multisite platform for Branches and Regions. Branches can choose to use the multisite for their own website, benefitting from uniform branding and exchanging information and activities with other Branches. In 2021 a considerable number of Branches have expressed their interest to use the multisite platform, making the IFA Brand more recognisable and uniform across the globe.

Next to the website, the IFA App has become a traditional feature during the Annual IFA Congresses, which is highly appreciated by the attendants. The App has now also been developed to include the possibility to participate in the virtual events and become part of the IFA community all year round. Regularly members are kept informed by the IFA newsletters on publications, activities and the annual congress.

IFA and social media

Next to its own LinkedIn Community of more than 10.000 followers, IFA has a number of thriving groups: YIN, WIN and many of the regions have established their own LinkedIn groups. To stay up to date of activities and events, members can stay connected by becoming part of the IFA community: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-fiscal-association> <https://twitter.com/GlobalIFA>





Closing remarks

Conclusion

Although the pandemic still ruled most of 2021/2021 IFA, its branches and its regions have been able to adapt and remain active. IFA will continue its efforts to make sure that IFA, a global organization, continues to work in a global manner, including, in its typical neutral way, all constituencies worldwide.

We are most grateful for the dedication and enthusiasm of so many members who spend part of their precious time to contribute to IFA – they are making and keeping IFA the unique, neutral and independent platform for study, research and dialogue on international taxation.

We also want to thank our Chief Operating Officer, Cecile Riphagen, and her team at our Secretariat in Rotterdam, Ms Anja van Zwietering, Ms Marga Vink, Ms Anita Burggraaf and Ms Lizzy van Loon for their absolute dedication to the multiple activities of IFA, that they very competently manage on a daily basis.

IFA's objectives are the study and advancement of international and comparative law in regard to public finance by organising Annual Congresses, Regional Conferences and publishing scientific research while taking current fiscal developments and changes in local legislation into account. Reaching these objectives assumes that IFA, in all its global, regional, national and local activities, must remain a neutral, technical, independent and non-lobby organisation.

Traditional fiscal borders are fading in a global economy that is becoming more digitised by the day. An increasing number of jurisdictions in the world is getting involved in international taxation and, among others, the BEPS project of the OECD keeps having a very significant impact. These continuing developments will provide IFA with ample opportunity to fulfil its objectives and grow stronger in all regions across the globe.

We hope to see you all at our virtual event from 29 November – 1 December 2021, and in person in the years to come.

September 2021

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JBEL', is positioned above the typed name of the Secretary General.

Jean-Blaise Eckert
Secretary General IFA