



International Commission on Occupational Health - ICOH
Commission Internationale de la Santé au Travail - CIST

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Meeting of the ICOH Board Session 1

**April 27, 2024
Marrakesh, Morocco**

Time: Saturday, 27 April 2018, 14.30 – 18.00

Venue: Mogador Menara Hotel, Moroccan Room

Participants: Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang (Rep. of Korea) – ICOH President
Dr. Diana Gagliardi (Italy) – ICOH Secretary General
Ms. Claudina Nogueira (South Africa) – ICOH Vice President
Dr. Martin Hogan (Ireland) – ICOH Vice President
Dr. Jukka Takala (Finland) – ICOH Past President
Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (Italy) – ICOH Past Secretary General
Prof. Alexis Descatha (France) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Maureen Dollard (Australia) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Frida Marina Fischer (Brazil) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Olivier Lo (Singapore) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Shyam Pingle (India) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Stavroula Leka (Ireland) – ICOH Board member
Dr. Prof. Riitta Sauni (Finland) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Paul Schulte (USA) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Akizumi Tsutsumi (Japan) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Sandeep Sharma (India) – ICOH Board Member

Ms. Erika Cannone (Italy) – ICOH Staff
Ms. Valeria Boccuni (Italy) – ICOH Staff
Ms. Maria Giannitelli (Italy) – ICOH Staff
Ms. Claudia Campisano (Italy) – ICOH Staff
Mr. Pasquale Fruscella (Italy) – ICOH Staff

Apologies: Dr. Kirsi Lappalainen (Finland) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Eun-A Kim (Rep. of Korea) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Sunil Kumar Joshi (Nepal) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Dingani Moyo (Zimbabwe) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Rosylane Rocha (Brazil) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Francesco Violante (Italy) – ICOH Board Member



1. Opening of the Meeting

The President of ICOH, Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang, opened the meeting welcoming all the participants. Prof. Kang offered his thanks to ICOH 2024 Congress Organizers for the good preparation of the 34th International Congress on Occupational Health and wished everybody a successful and productive congress.

2. Approval of the minutes of the ICOH Board Meetings held in Angers, France on March 16-17, 2023

The minutes of the activities and decisions taken at the last Midterm Meeting held in Angers (March 16-17, 2023) were circulated among the ICOH Board Members for comments and amendments and then made available on the ICOH website.

Decision:

- The Minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Approval of the minutes of the ICOH General Assembly held online, February 6 and February 10, 2022

The minutes of the ICOH 2022 General Assembly were circulated among the ICOH Officers and Board members for comments and amendments and then published on the ICOH website.

Decision:

- The Minutes were approved unanimously.

4. President's Report

The ICOH President, Prof. Kang, briefly reported on the activities carried out during the triennium, and he referred to his written report included in the ICOH Report 2022-2024 for a more exhaustive description.

The implementation of ICOH plans and priorities progressed well in terms of engagement and good connection with the key organizations, in particular, the ILO and WHO.

Specific priorities were set according to the President's strategy for the term, also considering its shorter duration (two years and two months) compared with the previous triennia. Important activities were successfully conducted in line with such priorities.

The agreed strategies included collaboration with other international entities for the organization of international conferences. One example is ICOH's participation in the organization of the 'OH week' at Osaka2025 Expo.

Other important achievements during the term include the publication of the ICOH Statement on migrant workers, approved by the ICOH Board in May 2022. The statement is a joint effort by the ICOH Working Group on Future of Decent Work, ICOH Scientific Committee on Thermal Factors, ICOH Scientific Committee on Occupational Health in Small-Scale Enterprises and the Informal Sector, the ICOH Officers and Board members.

Prof. Kang also stressed the importance of collaboration with ICOH Sustaining and Affiliate members and called for exploring new ways and opportunities to keep active and increase these kinds of partnerships in the next triennium.



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To conclude, the ICOH President presented some points for reflection and action about things to be improved.

The ICOH President expressed his appreciation for the active role of some Scientific Committees and expressed his concerns regarding other inactive Scientific Committees. Efforts should be made to activate those Scientific Committees, in the general perspective of a possible restructuring of the Scientific Committees. Furthermore, he underlined the importance of increasing the use of social media by ICOH to reach a wider audience, especially young professionals, for the promotion of ICOH membership.

Finally, Prof. Kang expressed his cordial thanks to the ICOH Board, Vice Presidents and Secretary General, as well as to the Chairs and members of Task Groups (TGs), Working Groups (WGs) and the ICOH Secretariat staff for the work done during the term.

The President Report was followed by a discussion. The ICOH Board members expressed their appreciation for the activities carried out during the last term and agreed on the importance of strengthening the networks of ICOH Sustaining members and ICOH Affiliate members through the promotion of new initiatives to collaborate.

Decisions:

- The President's report was approved unanimously.

5. Report on Scientific Committees

Ms. Claudina Nogueira, ICOH Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees (SCs), reported on the key activities of the tenure 2022-2024.

Despite the difficulties experienced during the period, many of the ICOH SCs have continued their efforts to remain active in research, advocacy, advisory, and service delivery. However, other SCs gave very little contribution to the ICOH activities and/or failed to submit SC reports and other deliverables.

As remarked by Ms. Nogueira, the overall assessment of the SCs should consider not only their outputs but also provide a general coordination of activities and topics, to avoid overlapping and to include new topics to be addressed, such as artificial intelligence, digitization, robotization, and climate change, in the Scientific Committees portfolio.

The new ICOH SC in Biohazards and Occupational Health (SCBOH) was created in the term 2022-2024, bringing the total number of ICOH SCs to 38. This arose from the conversion of the ICOH Working Group on Occupational Infectious Agents (WG OIA), which had been in existence and very active for many years, developing guidance documents and awareness-raising materials.

Ms. Nogueira also mentioned the publication of the ICOH Statement on Protecting the Occupational Safety and Health of Migrant Workers, a joint effort by the ICOH WG on Future of Decent Work, two ICOH SCs, viz. Thermal Factors, and Occupational Health in Small-Scale Enterprises and the Informal Sector, and the ICOH Officers and Board members.

Other remarkable achievements include the collaboration between the ICOH SC on Accident Prevention (SCAP) and IOSH, one of the ICOH Sustaining members. Furthermore, Ms. Nogueira mentioned the SC BOH collaboration with the journal 'OH for Southern Africa' (OHSa) in publishing related articles and their collaboration with ILO for the development of technical guidelines on biological hazards.

Ms. Nogueira also mentioned the work carried out by members of the SC on Education and Training in OH (SCETOH) in preparation of a proposal for the creation of a sub-group of experts on basic OH services (BOHS).

The VP report on SCs was followed by a lively discussion. The ICOH President thanked Ms. Nogueira for her work and guidance to SCs, especially for the contribution to the preparation of the scientific program of ICOH2024. The ICOH Board members discussed the diverse contribution given by SCs and agreed that some kind of reorganization of the Scientific Committees should be addressed during the triennium 2024-2027, to increase commitment by SC leadership and members and to refine the array and allocation of topics.



Decisions:

- The Report on SCs was approved unanimously.
- The possibility of reorganizing the SCs will be explored during the triennium 2024-2027.

6. Report on activities of National/Area Secretaries

Dr. Martin Hogan, ICOH Vice President in charge of the National/Area Secretaries (NSs), informed the ICOH Board of the NSs triennial activities.

A total of 56 NSs were appointed for the triennium 2022-2024. Dr. Hogan recalled the main tasks of the NSs and their strategic role in terms of membership recruitment at the country level. Special efforts were made by many NSs to promote ICOH and to recruit new members, particularly at the annual conferences of the occupational health associations/societies of their respective countries. Some NSs created a significant increase in new members.

During the triennium, the Vice President held online meetings of NSs to discuss the membership campaign and the promotion of ICOH activities.

On experimental basis, it was decided to invite selected NSs to the ICOH Midterm meeting in 2023, one per geographical area, based on best results in membership. Their participation was very productive and helped strengthen the NS network and the links between NS, SCs and ICOH Officers. The same could be replicated for the following Midterm meeting.

Decision:

- The Report on activities of National/Area Secretaries was approved unanimously.

7. Report of the Secretary General (BD4)

Dr. Diana Gagliardi reported on the good results in terms of membership numbers and other activities carried out during her first term as ICOH Secretary General.

The activities were carried out considering the priorities of keeping the ICOH role as a key international organization in the field of occupational health, with operational stability and financial solidity. The Secretary General underlined the efforts to foster the collaboration with the International Organizations like WHO and ILO as well as the regular contacts with the international sister organizations like IOHA, IEA, ISSA, IALI and IOM.

Another important focus of the Secretariat's activity concerned innovation and modernization of some aspects of the general management, looking as much as possible at the sustainability and impact on efficiency, finances and the environment.

The activities of the Secretariat General included membership recruitment and sustainability, also with the development of new tools and benefits for ICOH members, the implementation and updates of the ICOH website contents, the voting procedures supported by ELIGO, and, last but not least, all the activities related to the ICOH Congress organization.

For ICOH2022, the impossibility of having an onsite Congress had an impact also on the membership campaign, which was conducted entirely online.

However, considering the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic situation that affected the whole term, and the shorter term (only two years and two months, compared to a regular term) the overall results of the campaign can be considered satisfactory. The composition of the ICOH membership for the period 2022–2024 follows the trends observed in previous triennia with a constant increase of members from LMICs, now representing 67% of the total ICOH membership. Dr. Gagliardi



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reminded the current payment methods to renew the membership: direct bank transfer (DBT), VISA/Mastercard/ American Express credit cards and PayPal.

In addition to the activities mentioned above, the Secretary General has represented ICOH at international conferences and meetings held in the period 2022-2024, by delivering statements (75th World Health Assembly), contributing presentations and expertise (WHO Global Forum “Towards healthier and safer workplaces”; 23rd World Congress on Safety and health at Work) or organizing special activities (Thematic Workshop on Mental Health and Well-being in Workplaces at the 5th Global Mental Health Summit).

Finally, Dr. Gagliardi thanked the Board for the support given to the Officers during the term.

Decision:

- The Report of the Secretary General was approved unanimously.

8. Financial Update on Budget 2022–2023 and Auditors’ Report (Ref: ICOH Report 2022-2023)

Dr. Gagliardi presented the interim budget from October 1, 2021, to February 10, 2022, and the budget 2022–2023 (February 11, 2022 – November 30, 2023). The results were satisfactory, considering the major effort by ICOH of taking the financial responsibility of all the costs related to the ICOH2022 Congress organization. The ICOH budget was audited by BDO according to international standards. The Auditors’ report states: *“In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Commission as of November 30, 2023, and of the result of its operations and its cash flows for the financial period then ended, in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union.”*

Then Dr. Gagliardi raised the issue of the appointment of Auditor and Vice Auditor. On the basis of costs calculation, the Secretary General submitted to the Board the proposal to elect BDO as Auditor for the next tenure. The Board agreed with the proposal, which will be presented to the General Assembly for final approval in execution of Article 4, Section 1 of the Constitution.

Decisions:

- The budget 2022–2023 and the interim budget from October 1, 2021, to February 10, 2022, were approved unanimously.
- The Board approved the proposal to elect BDO as Auditor for the next tenure. The proposal will be presented to the General Assembly for final approval.

9. Report of the Finance Committee

Dr. Pingle reported briefly on the activities of the Finance Committee. The outcome of the ICOH2022 financial management was positive in terms of both participation and finances. Not only the incomes produced by the congress registration fees and by the sponsorships allowed covering the costs of the congress organization, but they also generated a revenue that was in line with the extra fees that ICOH generally receives from the organization of in-presence Congresses.

The membership fee system adopted for the term 2022-2023 was approved unchanged by the General Assembly on February 6, 2022. As a result of this system, the number of members from low- and middle-income countries has grown constantly and significantly over the last term, reaching 67% of the entire membership, which is a very positive result reflecting ICOH principles of inclusion and equity. This trend needs to be accompanied by decisive action to retain members from high-income countries so as not to affect ICOH finances in the long term.



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The 2022-2023 budget shows that as of November 30, 2023 incomes reached 79% of the estimated budget, while the expenditures were about 48%. A correct evaluation of such a result needs to consider the shortest duration of the financial period of this tenure (February 11, 2022 – November 30, 2023), due to the one-year postponement of the closure of the previous budget.

In March 2024, BDO completed the audit process and expressed a positive opinion on the ICOH accounting.

Decision:

- The Report of the Finance Committee was approved unanimously.

9. Report of the Task Group on Information and Communication

Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang presented the triennial work of the TG providing a comprehensive overview of the ICOH instruments for information and communication. Regarding the Social Network Service (SNS), ICOH engages with its members and other OHS professionals through popular platforms such as Facebook, X, and Instagram. Also, on behalf of the Editor in Chief, Prof. Won-Jun Choi Newsletter, Prof. Kang reported on the Newsletter. According to the publishing plan, the newsletter is issued three times a year and includes a summary in French.

Finally, Prof. Kang addressed the SCs' websites, proposing a reorganization based on the activities of each SC.

Decision:

- The General Secretariat was assigned the task of exploring the establishment and management of an official LinkedIn institutional account for the next triennium.
- The Report of the TG on Information was approved.

10. Report of the Ethics and Transparency Committee

Dr. Paul Schulte, Chair of the Ethics and Transparency Committee, provided a brief update on the report previously presented in Angers during the Midterm Meeting, highlighting key developments in the second part of the term. At the Midterm Meeting in Angers, the ETC was requested to investigate a potential violation of ethical principles and research conduct by the chair of one of the ICOH SCs. After a thorough examination, the ETC concluded that there was an infraction of ethical principles and guidelines in the conduct of the research. Consequently, the ETC recommended that the President take action towards the resignation of the Chair of the Scientific Committee.

Finally, Dr. Schulte concluded by emphasizing the need for future improvements, suggesting that association's practices within ICOH require revision and amendment. Prof. Sergio Iavicoli intervened during the discussion to emphasize the importance of reviewing the ICOH Code of Ethics considering new challenges in the field of occupational health arising from the interaction with AI and robotics.

Decision:

- The Report of the Ethics and Transparency Committee was approved unanimously.

11. Report of Task Group on Constitution, Bye-Laws and Guidelines

Prof. Kang provided a follow up on the key issues addressed by the TG during the triennium 2022-2024. He proposed an amendment to Bye-Laws 2, suggesting the inclusion of the term "academic unit" in the description of the Affiliate collective members.



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Currently, there are two types of collective memberships: Sustaining and Affiliate. Sustaining membership includes independent institutes of occupational health that conduct research on occupational health. Affiliate membership covers national associations or societies of occupational health, which are professional associations in each country/area. However, Academic institutions, such as departments of Occupational Medicine or Health within universities, interested to join ICOH, traditionally apply for Affiliate membership. Therefore, it would be preferable to explicitly mention academic institutions within the collective membership category of Affiliate members and, thus, modify the Bye-law 2 as follows:

BYE-LAW 2- Collective membership

At present:

(b) Affiliate members: Any professional organisation or scientific society pursuing the same or related purposes as the ICOH may be admitted to affiliate membership upon fulfilling the following conditions: (I) application by the president of the professional organisation or scientific society; (II) submission by the applicant society of its constitution and a report on its aims, structure, size and activities; (III) payment of the membership fees; (IV) appointment by the President.

Proposed Amendment

(b) Affiliate members: Any professional organization, scientific society, **or academic unit** pursuing the same or related purposes as the ICOH may be admitted to affiliate membership upon fulfilling the following conditions: (I) application by the president of the professional organization, scientific society, **or chair of the academic unit**; (II) submission by the applicant society of its constitution or **equivalent document** and a report on its aims, structure, size and activities; (III) payment of the membership fees; (IV) appointment by the President.

Additionally, during the ICOH Midterm Meeting held in Angers, France, on May 16-17, 2023, the Board discussed the election process for SCs. The Board agreed to make special provision to integrate the SC Guidelines with more detailed instructions on how to manage election of SC Chairs in case of equal number of votes. The new text on election process of SC Chairs as formulated by the ICOH Officers was submitted to the Board for approval, as follows:

"In case of equality of votes between two or more candidates for the Chairperson position, priority is given to the contestant with seniority as an active ICOH member."

Decision:

- The amendment to ICOH Bye-Law 2 was approved by the Board;
- The Board agreed to include the proposed text on election process of SC Chairs in the Voting and Election section of the SC Guidelines;
- The report of the TG on Constitution, Bye-Laws and Guidelines was approved unanimously.

12. Report of the Task Group on Membership

Dr. Diana Gagliardi presented the achievements of the Task Group on Membership outlining the key tasks and actions undertaken to enhance membership recruitment and sustainability during the triennium. Firstly, she highlighted the continuous efforts of the National Secretaries, who have strengthened their capacities and activities to identify and invite new members to the organization, yielding highly positive results. Dr. Gagliardi emphasized the ongoing collaboration with sustaining members (14 in good standing), affiliate members (19), and national associations, as well as the successful recruitment of new collective members. This progress was largely attributed to the new fee system introduced in 2018, which has facilitated and promoted collective membership applications also from LMIC.



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Dr. Gagliardi then presented data from the membership campaign. Due to a shorter duration of the tenure and the digital congress held in 2022, there was a decline in the total number of members in good standing (1,807), mostly due to a noticeable loss of renewals during the initial phase of the campaign, which traditionally takes place at the ICOH Congress. However, when comparing the equivalent two-year period rather than the full term, the membership campaign for this triennium reached the same level as the previous one. Dr. Gagliardi also provided a breakdown of membership data by country, highlighting significant growth in India, Morocco, the USA and Italy, while noting a decline in Finland and a remarkable increase in China, where membership more than doubled.

Additionally, the Secretary General analysed membership distribution by geographical region: Africa experienced a significant increase in membership (21%), Asia reached 31%, Europe decreased to 24% and the Americas collectively accounted for 20%. Regarding GDP per capita distribution, Dr. Gagliardi noted the fundamental shift in the composition of ICOH membership. During the triennium beginning in 2018, low and middle-income countries represented only 37% of the total membership while the high-income countries accounted for 63%. By December 31, 2023, this ratio had reversed with high-income countries representing 33% and two-thirds of members coming from low and middle-income countries. While this shift aligns with ICOH's goal of expanding occupational health and safety initiatives in low and middle-income countries and engaging the scientific community, it can also significantly impact ICOH's financial sustainability in the long term, as membership fees from these regions are much lower than those from high-income countries. Given these trends, ICOH must develop new strategies to attract and retain members from high income countries.

Finally, Dr. Gagliardi reported that gender balance has improved during the triennium with female members now accounting for 40% and male members 60% of the total membership.

Following the Secretary General's report, a lively discussion took place. Key suggestions arising from the debate included:

- Enhancing efforts to attract new young members;
- Strengthening engagement with high-income countries;
- Promoting the role of collective members within ICOH;
- Introducing a special reduced fee for members wishing to rejoin ICOH after a stop period.

Decision:

- The Report of Task Group on Membership was approved unanimously.



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Meeting of the ICOH Board Session 2

**April 28, 2024
Marrakesh, Morocco**

Time: Sunday, 28 April 2024 (9.00 – 12.00)

Venue: Mogador Menara Hotel, Moroccan Room

Participants: **Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang (Rep. of Korea)** – ICOH President
Dr. Diana Gagliardi (Italy) – ICOH Secretary General
Ms. Claudina Nogueira (South Africa) – ICOH Vice President
Dr. Martin Hogan (Ireland) – ICOH Vice President
Dr. Jukka Takala (Finland) – ICOH Past President
Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (Italy) – ICOH Past Secretary General
Prof. Alexis Descatha (France) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Maureen Dollard (Australia) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Frida Marina Fischer (Brazil) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Olivier Lo (Singapore) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Shyam Pingle (India) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Stavroula Leka (Ireland) – ICOH Board member
Dr. Prof. Riitta Sauni (Finland) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Paul Schulte (USA) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Dingani Moyo (Zimbabwe) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Akizumi Tsutsumi (Japan) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Sandeep Sharma (India) – ICOH Board Member

Ms. Erika Cannone (Italy) – ICOH Staff
Ms. Valeria Boccuni (Italy) – ICOH Staff
Ms. Maria Giannitelli (Italy) – ICOH Staff
Ms. Claudia Campisano (Italy) – ICOH Staff
Mr. Pasquale Fruscella (Italy) – ICOH Staff

Apologies: **Dr. Kirsi Lappalainen (Finland)** – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Eun-A Kim (Rep. of Korea) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Sunil Kumar Joshi (Nepal) – ICOH Board Member
Dr. Rosylane Rocha (Brazil) – ICOH Board Member
Prof. Francesco Violante (Italy) – ICOH Board Member



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1. Voting on the venue of ICOH 2030

The meeting started with the Bid Committees' presentations for determination of the ICOH 2030 venue. ICOH Secretary General, Dr. Diana Gagliardi, reminded the ICOH Board members of the decision-making process to determine the venue of ICOH 2030 Congress – Bid submission process, Board recommendation, Voting by ICOH Members – according to the Guidelines for ICOH Congress Organization.

Two countries presented a bid for hosting ICOH 2030: Colombia (Medellin) and Italy (Rome). A third bid was originally presented by Spain (Barcelona), but it was withdrawn at a later stage. Dr. Gagliardi reminded the meeting participants of the terms of reference and the criteria to be taken into consideration by the Board as follows:

- professional strength, including the local Scientific Community;
- occupational health situation in the country;
- technical facilities, logistics, feasibility;
- economic capacity;
- geographical rotation;
- demonstrated experience in organizing Scientific Conferences with the involvement of professional conference organizing company with large experience in the organization of international conferences.

A site visit was conducted by the two ICOH VPs in each of the bidding country; Dr. Gagliardi showed to the Board a comparative table among the two venues with the main information gathered by each Officer during the site visits.

Subsequently, Dr. Gagliardi explained crucial information regarding the voting procedure that will take place at the ICOH stand during the 34th ICOH Congress in Marrakesh, where every ICOH member in good standing can express his/her own preference during the scheduled time.

The time allocated for each Bidding Committee was 10 minutes for the presentation and 3 minutes for discussion. The first Bidding Committee in alphabetical order by country was asked to join the meeting.

Ms. Maria Claudia Borda (Chair of the Bidding Committee) and Ms. Vicky Marmolejo (Keres Group) presented the bid for hosting the 36th ICOH Congress in Medellin, Colombia.

The Bidding Committee composed by Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (Chair), Dr. Bruna Rondinone, Dr. Pierluca Dionisi, Prof. Angelo Moretto, and Ms. Roberta Pasquini (Triumph Group) presented the bid for hosting the 36th ICOH Congress in Rome.

The presentations of the bidding committees were followed by a discussion among the Board members. Then, the voting for the Board Recommendation took place by secret ballot.

The results of the voting were:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| • Colombia (Medellin) | 5 votes |
| • Italy (Rome) | 12 votes |

Decision:

- The Board decided to recommend Italy as the venue for ICOH 2030 Congress.
- The Board was informed that the President appointed the Committee of Scrutineers for counting the votes for ICOH Congress venue in 2030, composed by Dr. Malcom Sim (Chairperson), Dr. Shyam Pingle, and Dr. Olivier Lo with the assistance of ICOH Secretary General, Dr. Diana Gagliardi. The ballot scrutiny will be held on 2nd May 2025 and the venue of the 36th ICOH Congress will be announced at the Second General Assembly, on Friday.



2. Reports of Working Groups

(Ref: background documents 6.1 – 6.7)

a) Global Strategy of OH for All and Occupational Cancer

Dr. Jukka Takala reported on the activities carried out by the Working Group (WG) on Global Strategy of Occupational Health for All and Occupational Cancer during the triennium.

Regarding the global strategy, the WG focused on the collaboration with other organizations in joint efforts to achieve a global asbestos ban and to promote fundamental occupational health strategies. Dr. Takala also presented key findings, highlighting an estimated economic loss of approximately 5.8% of the GDP globally due to poor health and safety at work. He then referred to the previously published written reports, including those in the ILO Journal which identified the three most pressing occupational health issues among workers: circulatory diseases, cancer, and respiratory diseases. Additionally, the reports emphasized the importance of preventing biological risks. Dr. Takala also addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused significant worker fatalities, and highlighted the recently adopted “Global Frameworks on Chemicals” to which Prof. Alixis Descatha contributed. Concluding this section, he underscored the continue risks of asbestos exposure and the need for urgent action in every country. He provided Sweden as an example, noting that the country banned asbestos 40 years ago and introduced specific regulatory measures in 2005. Finally, Dr. Takala emphasized the crucial role of ICOH in influencing not only the parliaments but also other key stakeholders in advancing occupational health and safety initiatives.

Dr. Takala then reported on the activities of the Working Group on Occupational Cancer, which aims to expand knowledge and implement actions to eliminate workplace exposures leading to cancer. The WG’s overarching goal is to establish a global program advocating for administrative decisions that will progressively reduce and ultimately eliminate occupational cancer.

Actions and outputs of the WG have included:

- research studies, scientific papers and editorials;
- posters and publications;
- conferences and presentations;
- engagement and discussions with WHO, ILO, the EU, and other stakeholders, including relevant institutions and policymakers.

A comprehensive list of selected actions was included in the WG’s written report.

Decision:

- The Report of the WGs on Global Strategy of OH for All and Occupational Cancer was approved.

b) Future of Decent Work

Dr. Paul Schulte provided an overview of the future developments in occupational safety and health (OSH) with a focus on two key areas: the role of OSH in decent work and the subgroup dedicated to migrant workers. Regarding the first topic, he emphasized the collaboration with the Working Group on Demographic Changes in OH led by Dr. Frida Fisher, and the contributions of her colleagues. Their work resulted in the publication of a paper in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, which presents a framework for examining the relationships between decent work and its determinants. Dr. Schulte also highlighted the limited references to decent work and the UN Sustainable Development Goals within OSH literature, stressing the need for greater attention to these aspects.

On the second topic, addressing migrant workers, Dr. Schulte expressed his gratitude to Dr. Acran Salmen-Navarro for his invaluable support and commitment during the drafting of the ICOH Statement on Migrant Workers. He also reported on significant collaborations with the UN organizations, such as the International



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Organization for Migration (IOM), and referenced a key meeting held in Geneva (September 16, 2022), attended by President and Secretary General.

Finally, while reaffirming his support to the subgroup, Dr. Schulte suggested that it could be benefit from an independent structure moving forward.

Decision:

- The Report of the WG on Future of Decent Work was approved.

c) Demographic Changes and OH

Dr. Frida Fisher expressed her gratitude to her team for the outstanding work, which included the publication of several research papers. However, she emphasized that only a limited number of professionals in the field currently consider this topic to have significant relevance. For this reason, during the ICOH 2024 Congress, she planned a special session to discuss the relation between climate and demographic changes, e.g. on elder and/or migrant workers. She expressed hope that, in the future, more individuals would engage with this subject and foster collaborations, ultimately benefiting the broader ICOH community. Additionally, Dr. Fisher highlighted ongoing collaborations with the President of the International Ergonomics Association (IEA), both during the International Congress ICOH 2024 and in the development of the Memorandum of Understanding between ICOH and IOHA. Finally, she concluded her report by suggesting a significant and timely topic for the future discussion: discrimination against older workers.

Decision:

- The Report of the WG on Demographic Changes and OH was approved.

d) Inequalities in OH

Prof. Rantanen reported on the activities carried out by the WG on Inequality in OH during the tenure. While the established goals were only partially achieved, progress is ongoing. For this reason, he proposed extending the survey task into the next tenure and introducing an additional survey on occupational health curricula across different countries.

Dr. Antonio Valenti then provided a detailed overview of the WG's findings, noting that one task was fully completed, two were partially achieved, and a fourth is scheduled for the next term. The first completed task involved organizing a special session at the ICOH 2024 Congress to encourage discussion on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on workers and propose potential solutions. A special acknowledgment was given to Ms. Claudina Nogueira for her contributions to this initiative. The two partially achieved tasks included:

- a literature review on international policies and practices, incorporating fifteen studies on multidisciplinary and integrated occupational health services.
- a series of meetings to refine and expand survey questions related to the COVID19 emergency.

The last task, scheduled for the next triennium, involves conducting a new survey on professional training programs for occupational health physicians, with a particular focus on cross-disciplinarity as a common theme.

Decision:

- The Report of the WG on Inequalities in OH was approved.



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e) Implementation of ICOH Guidelines on Congress Organization and Modernization of ICOH processes and practices

Dr. Stavroula Leka stated that there were no significant issues in implementing the ICOH guidelines for Congress Organization and, therefore, had little to report to this matter. She then provided an update on the establishment of a new WG on the Modernization of ICOH Processes and Practices, which was founded during the meeting in Angers, France. The WG's first task focused on the scientific community and the need to advance ICOH themes and activities. However, she emphasized that achieving this goal requires a stronger spirit of support and collaboration among ICOH members to ensure greater efficiency. Dr. Leka also expressed her gratitude to the Secretariat General for its outstanding work in developing the modernization tool. Nevertheless, she highlighted that substantial efforts will be required in the next triennium, particularly in the following areas:

- supporting the Officers in engaging more Sustaining and Affiliate members in the organization;
- drafting a more detailed version of the National Secretaries' guidelines;
- implementing a free one-term membership for winners of the student poster competition;
- establishing a mentorship program.

Decision:

- The Report of the WGs on Implementation of ICOH Guidelines on Congress Organization and Modernization of ICOH processes and practices was approved.

3. Proposal for Honorary Members election

Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang presented the two ICOH members to be proposed to the ICOH General Assembly for election as Honorary Members, in recognition of their long-lasting contribution to ICOH and occupational health.

- Prof. Bonnie Rogers, USA
- Prof. Toshiaki Higashi, Japan

Decision:

- The Board agreed to submit the two proposals to the General Assembly for the election.

4. Elections of ICOH Officers and Board members 2024-2027

ICOH Secretary General presented to the Board members the procedure related to the election of ICOH Officers and Board members. The process followed ICOH regulations and was conducted using an electronic voting system provided by ELIGO. The Call for Election was published in the ICOH Newsletter and on the ICOH Website on April 17, 2023. Candidatures were submitted by July 28, 2023, and the candidates' curricula were made available on the ICOH website as well as in ICOH Newsletter subsequently. The voting period ran from January 30 to February 19, 2024. During these three weeks, all 1,441 voting-eligible members in GS were notified via e-mail and received two reminders. Voter turnout reached 45.39%, marking a significant increase compared to both the traditional 2018 election and the digital election held in 2022.



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Finally, Dr. Gagliardi informed the Board about the scrutiny to take place online on Tuesday 30 April 2024 at 3.00 p.m., with the results to be posted at the ICOH stand and announced at the Second General Assembly on 3 May 2024.

The President proposed to appoint the following Scrutineers Committee: Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang, Dr. Jorge A. Morales Camino, Ms. Claudina Nogueira, Dr. Stavroula Leka, Dr. Antonio Valenti, with the assistance of the Secretary General, Dr. Diana Gagliardi.

Decision:

- The Board unanimously approved the proposal, and the Committee of Scrutineers was appointed by the President.

5. Other issues presented by Board Members

The Board members presented no additional issues. The concluding remarks included some recommendation for future work: to take strategic initiatives to increase new members and to improve interaction among members with more engagements from National Secretaries. Moreover, to implement the use of social media to promote ICOH organization and activities.

ICOH President closed the Board Meeting expressing his thanks to all the participants for their active contribution to the meetings, particularly to the outgoing Board members who concluded their two-term mandate.