

Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting

Preamble

The Annual General Meeting of the members of the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) was held on 10 November 2021 at the Mandarin Hotel, in Doha, Qatar, during the 57th ISOCARP congress. It was the first time the meeting was organized in a hybrid session, to meet the needs of the members due to restrictions of physical gathering as result of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The meeting started at 19:35 UTC+3 and ended at 22:15. The meeting was attended by in total 90 persons of which 48 members in person and 42 members online. The quorum of 60 persons was achieved. The online meeting was held on ISOCARP's zoom platform and was recorded. The participation list, for both physical and virtual attendees, and the chatbox from the zoom-platform were extracted and filed. The first part of meeting was chaired by Martin Dubbeling, outgoing President of the Society, and, after the handover ceremony, by Pietro Elisei, the incoming President of the Society. Members could either vote in person or online. This report considers both the in-person and online participation.

[Chat box and videorecording of this hybrid meeting are available upon request.]

1. Opening of the Annual General Meeting

The President welcomed and thanked the members present and opens the AGM. He asked all physically present participants to register on the presence list, and the online attendees to write their name in the chat. A quorum of more than 60 was confirmed.

All the essential documents required for the AGM, including the Minutes of the last SGM Meeting organized in February 2021, the Annual Report, the Annual Accounts, and the proposed Budget were consultable on paper and online available on the ISOCARP-website. The documents can be downloaded in the Members areas, at the following link <https://isocarp.org/member/member-content/>.

The President thanked all participants to join this AGM in large numbers – the largest AGM ever up to date. The President apologises in case any member experienced any inconvenience due to the experimental hybrid meeting format.

2. Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting and 2021 Special General Meeting

The 2020 Annual General Meeting was held online on 10 November 2020. The minutes were already approved during the Special General Meeting of 2 February 2021. The attendees were acknowledged during the AGM about the minutes of the previous general meeting and of their approval. Both the minutes of the last AGM and SGM are available on the [member's area](#).

It was **MOVED** by Martin Dubbeling and seconded by Frank D'hondt:

THAT the Minutes of the 2021 Special General Meeting be approved. 48 in-person members voted YES, and no one abstained or voted against. The motion is CARRIED

3. Report of the Board for 2020-2021

Secretary General Frank D'hondt presented a synthesis of the extensive Annual Report. It describes the Covid-19 situation, start with the last year's virtual congress, and narrates the path from Doha to Brussels. The report and the slide-deck are available online on the [members' area](#).

Main points of the report presented:

- A successful first-ever entirely virtual World Planning Congress, co-hosted by UN-Habitat/Urban Economy Forum and spanning over a period of 3 months, totalizing 450 participants including 284 paying registrations.
- Preparations leading to the successful Doha Congress, combining an in-person with a virtual and hybrid format, with a registration/participation rate that is probably matching pre-covid figures.
- A contract with the next hosting city (Brussels, Belgium) has already been signed, including a 100k fee for ISOCARP.
- Expressions of interest for hosting the ISOCARP congress in 2023 and 2024 have been already received from cities as Wroclaw and Guadalajara. ISOCARP members should assess other possibilities for the next 5 years, also in other continents, to ensure diversification and to be truthful to ISOCARP's global aspiration.
- The initiative of organizing complementary events addressing the regional level has been launched. The first event has been organized in Vienna (Austria), in October 2021, in collaboration with CORP. Other proposals for organizing similar initiatives in other continents are welcomed.
- To enable the interaction between Society members and to compensate the lack of physical gatherings, new initiatives, complementary to the Cyber Agora events and the Community of Practices, have been introduced:
 - ISOCARP World Café for Society members during the virtual 56th World Planning Congress and after the SGM 2021
 - Special General Meeting (SGM), where the strategic plan has been presented and discussed.

The Secretary General also presented Board's follow up on member-resolutions carried at previous AGM/SGM's:

- **Financial transparency of the institute:** Martin, in his double capacity as President of the Society and as member of the Board of Directors of the Institute as an independent foundation, established a transparent financial manual format for both organisations to allow for a better overall review of the complementary finances.
- **Reestablishment of a Treasurer** accountable to the board and to the members: long-standing board member Ana Peric has been elected by the board as our new Treasurer and will be ex-officio member of the Excom responsible for the day-to-day management of the Society.
- **Oversight-role of the board of the Society over the Institute:** A report to improve more complementarity of governance of both society and institute has been elaborated by the president-elect. On October 11th, 2021, the Excom of the Society, and the board of directors of the Institute agreed on a roadmap to establish the board's oversight role over the Institute, through revision of the status of the institute. This agreement also paves the way also towards a more coordinated financial management. President-elect and SG have been invited (and accepted) to join the BoD 'ex-officio' until oversight is legally notified – aimed at February/March 2022.
- Establishment of a member-based/led **ad-hoc working group on 'strategy'** "to coordinate the process of members' participation and involve members in strategic planning via different tools including an online survey covering all members and follow-up focus-group discussions based on the survey findings". The board established its strategic plan until 2023 and presented it to the members during the ISOCARP World Café held on June 4th, 2021. The board welcomes feedback to improve and operationalize the presented strategic plan, under the coordination of the strategic plan working group. Upon the ad-hoc group's request, the Board has replaced the defunct member-area on our outdated website by a more advanced member-area on a new website of the Society, launched at the World Café on 4 June, as part of the new ISOCARPolis approach to innovate our virtual interaction and collaboration (internal and external). Also on 4 June, the ad hoc working group presented interim findings on its survey. The Board invited the ad hoc working group to stick to its initial mandate and no longer use the name 'Open Isocarp' and its related openisocarp@gmail account causing confusion and digital insecurity - and use strategy@isocarp.org instead. The Board prepared a complimentary Survey to consult members on the operationalization of the Strategic Plan 2022-2024.

The Secretary General furthermore presented an overview of all the member-led activities and thanked all the members that have contributed to ISOCARP's resilience during the pandemic, including all members of the new Scientific Committee, the jury-members of the Award schemes, the editors of the Annual Review, contributors to PULSE newsletters, participants in YPP activities, the curators of Cyber Agora and Spotlight, the coordinators of the Community of Practices and finally the General Rapporteurs and members of the Congress Team. The presentation of activities was concluded with an overview of and credits to the organizers of activities conducted by the Institute.

It was acknowledged that none of these activities would have been possible without the active and professional support from our **Secretariat**. The Secretariat was also responsible to establish a new website (and member area) to replace the initial website that was about to collapse. With the help of CORP and Institute, the Secretariat also successfully launched a ground-breaking digital platform of congress papers. This all happened despite a historical move of our Secretariat offices to a new location due to the closure of the old office by the municipality of The Hague. The Secretariat is currently much better located within the ToD of Holland Spoor railway station, in a refurbished office estate called 'The Globe'. Members are encouraged to visit our new offices whenever around.

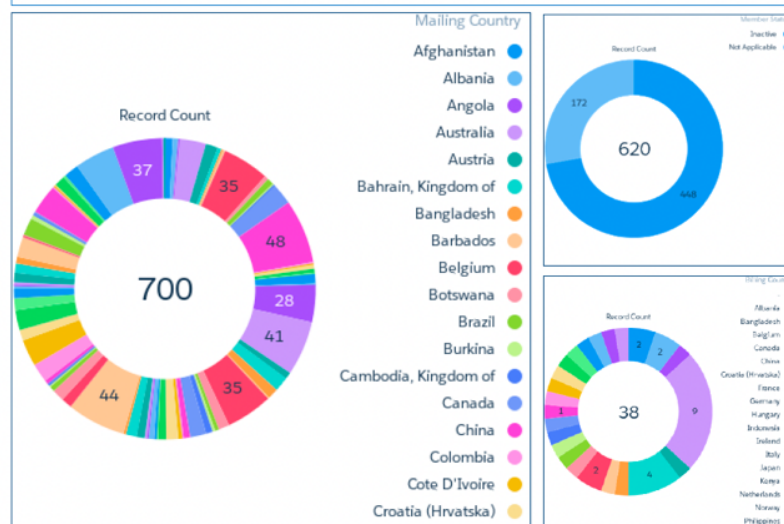
On **Partnerships**, the Secretary General reported, implementing the newly adopted partnership strategy (available on the member area) successful collaborations with UN-Habitat, Urban Economy Forum, Metropolis, Cities4Children and many others, also by jointly engaging in Urban Thinkers Campuses of the World Urban Campaign. ISOCARP also stepped up its active role within Habitat Professionals Forum and Global Planners Network, also eyeing joint activities towards and at the upcoming 11th World Urban Forum in June 2022, to which members are encouraged to join the ISOCARP@WUF11 preparation team.

On **Membership developments**, the figure below was presented showing a record count of 700 paying individual members and 38 institutional members.



PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

ISOCARP Members Monitor



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNERS AGM 2021 DOHA/HYBRID

Looking forward, the Secretary General presented the **strategic priorities** of the Board derived from its Strategic Plan 2021-2023 as previously presented at the SGM in February, and that is available on our member area.

Hence, it was **MOVED** by Frank D'hondt, and seconded by Martin Dubbeling:

THAT the Annual Report 2020-2021 be acknowledged. 68 members voted YES and 22 voted NO. The motion is CARRIED.

In addition, it was **MOVED** by Frank D'hondt, and seconded by Martin Dubbeling:

“To allow the Board to co-opt the first runner-up of the 2020 Election to fill the current Board vacancy until next Election in 2022, anticipating a Constitutional reform to regulate by- elections”.

61 members voted YES, 27 members voted NO and 2 members ABSTAINED. The motion is CARRIED.

This vote was issued after a lively discussion on the rationale as well the ‘constitutionality’ of this motion, with a promise that the board will present a draft constitutional amendment proposal well before the next AGM.

4. Annual Accounts 2019-2020

The President presented the Annual Accounts for the year 2020-2021, described the statement of income and financial result, together with the assets and the liabilities. The full Financial Report with the Accounts 2020 2021 and the Budget for 2021 2022 are approved by the Board on 08 October 2021 and made available on the [member area](#).

Despite the anticipated financial loss of 17,380 euro, the board was able to deliver a small positive result of 1,549 euro, as befits a non-profit association. Overall, the President claims that the Society sailed well through the storm of the Covid 19 pandemic, although the pandemic had quite an impact on the direct and indirect (Institute) income of the Society. For the second year in a row, the Society has received Covid 19 relief funding from the Government of The Netherlands in 2020 2021 @ € + 18.850. The present financial situation of ISOCARP is stable and safe.

Additional comments conveyed by the President on both the accounts of the Society (formal) and the (legally independent) Institute (informal) are summarized in the figure below, displayed to members.



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2020 - 2021

#SOCIETY

IN SUMMARY: DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2020-2021 AND 2021-2022

- From budgeted loss @ € - 17.380 towards a positive result @ € + 1.500
- Expected positive result draft budget 2021-2022 @ € + 3.500
- Income from membership fees (individual and Institutional) need to grow
- Incomes from 2021 (Doha) and 2022 (Brussels) congresses remain unpredictable (due to Covid-19)
- Contributions ISOCARP Society from ISOCARP Institute: balancing donations in cash, contributions in kind (hours staff) and paying the bills (office rent, etc.)

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2020 - 2021

#INSTITUTE

FOR YOUR INFORMATION: DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2020-2021 AND 2021-2022

- After first two successful and profitable years, the third year ended in a deficit of € - 35.000 (due to Covid-19, renovation costs of the new office and website)
- Expected positive result draft budget 2021-2022 @ € + 5.000
- Income from Practice Projects (UPATs) needs to be resumed
- Contributions ISOCARP Institute to ISOCARP Society: balancing donations in cash, contributions in kind (hours staff) and paying the bills (office rent, etc.)

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNERS AGM 2021 DOHA/HYBRID

ISOCARP Institute transferred € 30.000 to the Society. Additionally, the ISOCARP Institute paid 1) Rent of the office @ € 8.120 (50%), 2) Renovation and relocation costs @ € 9.677 (50%), 3) Upgrade and renovation of the ISOCARP website @ € 6.140 (100%), and 4) One off internet cabling, infrastructure, and internet services @ € 1.225 (50%). As these expenditures are made by the ISOCARP Institute, they are not part of the financial report of the ISOCARP Society.

It was **MOVED** by Martin Dubbeling, and seconded by Frank D'hondt:

THAT the annual accounts and financial statement 2019-2020 be approved. 55 members voted YES, 15 voted NO and 7 voted ABSTAIN. The motion is CARRIED.

5. Report of the Board for the Budget 2021-2022

For 2020- 2021 the board expects that we will again have a modest positive outcome of € + 3.500 as the Board is convinced that for the future of ISOCARP Society we must continue our membership activities and projects through the ISOCARP Institute as before and invest in a good operational office (provided for by the Institute) with qualified and dedicated staff and an up to date website and communications.

It was **MOVED** by Martin Dubbeling, and seconded by Frank D'hondt:

THAT the Board's budget 2021-2022 be approved. 76 members voted YES, 13 voted NO and 1 voted ABSTAIN. The motion is CARRIED.

6. Farewell address outgoing President Martin Dubbeling

Outgoing President Martin Dubbeling recalled his [State of the Profession](#) address presented earlier today at the congress, which he considers as his farewell speech to all members. He summarized the successful results of the congress in Doha, that gathered 650 registrations, physical and online (almost 400 international registrations, with participants from 35 countries, and more than 250 local registrations).

7. Inauguration address incoming President Pietro Elisei (2021-2023)

Incoming President Pietro Elisei held his inauguration speech, retracing the ISOCARP long and complex history from its very beginning until the actual days and focusing on the characteristics that must be preserved and amplified. ISOCARP story continues to generate ideas for the integrated and sustainable development of cities, to keep together different cultures and generations and to support the ability to transfer knowledge and experiences. ISOCARP has always been a generator of ideas and perspectives towards qualitative urban planning concepts, methodologies, policies, and design, and must continue to guarantee quality through its name and its brand. It must continue to stay competitive in both research as well as practical contexts. The incoming President talked about an ISOCARP Ecosystem, capable of keeping together both the Society and the Institute, being vital thanks to its members, collaborating with each other - an open, connected, permeable ecosystem. He insisted on the necessity of strengthening the dialogue between the bodies responsible for managing the ecosystem and the members, and to rebuilt internal trust. They are encouraged to complement, or criticize, the work done by ISOCARP members with management responsibilities, through surveys, ideas, proposal. Finally, the incoming President recalled the five points with which he presented his candidacy as president in the last AGM, talking about the results of the work that has been already done in the last year towards their achievement:

- Institute will maintain its independence, but the board of new directors will be chosen by the board of Society, and therefore the primacy of the Society, and thus of the wishes of the members, is re-established over the management of the Institute.
- The IRE (ISOCARP Regional Event), a new complementary instrument meant to transfer the work done by ISOCARP closer to specific macro-regional contexts.

He reaffirmed the points of his statement and invited all the ISOCARP members and colleagues to be active and to help the ISOCARP management to make the right choices, thus giving membership a strong centrality.

8. Reports, requests, suggestions, and motions from the members

It was **MOVED** by Piotr Lorens and seconded:

THAT the AGM asks for open and transparent procedures of selecting ISOCARP members for projects operated by ISOCARP society and ISOCARP institute. These procedures should include open calls directed to all ISOCARP members, clear and transparent selection criteria.

80 members voted YES, 9 voted NO and 1 voted ABSTAIN. The motion is CARRIED.

It was **MOVED** by Judith Ryser and seconded by Eric Huybrechts:

THAT the elected members should work just on a voluntary base, without salaries or fees.

The motion sparked a lively debate including following remarks:

- This is already in our constitution, we are voluntary members of the board, although we have a legacy of board members being paid for the activities executed through the institute (Frank).
- Some of the work we do for the Society (Isocarp) is even professional work. Principal members that have been elected for the society should follow the voluntary principles, but sometimes when the workload is very relevant and is also going into professional services, we should find a way to compensate for their additional efforts (Pietro).
- Many aspects that are on the board should be delegated, or we should hire someone, or the work should be compensated somehow (Daniele).
- The board needs a code of conduct. Request addressed to the person who made the motion to add that a code of conduct for the board directors that addresses any financial compensation to be introduced. Furthermore, if someone is receiving money and someone else is not, and is not transparent, is unethical from the governance point of view (Eleanor).
- All the documents regarding remuneration should be automatically available on the webpage. More transparency is needed (Elias).

The Secretary General agrees with the need for code of conduct and transparent remuneration policy for members (including board members), which are currently in a drafting stage and will be advanced to present to the next AGM. Considering the importance of the motion presented by Judith and the critical points raised by the members who intervened, the President decided to table the motion. This and all the motions presented online, will be assessed and answers will be provided accordingly. A Special general meeting will be considered to address all the open questions.

The President declared the meeting closed at 11:15 UCT+3.

[Draft Minutes endorsed by the Board on 12 September 2022.]