

FINAL REPORT, 2 December 2022



**FEEDBACK SURVEY ON  
the 52<sup>ND</sup> COUNCIL MEETING  
and other FAFICS MATTERS**

**Survey period: 6 Oct-15 Nov 2022**

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

The survey was undertaken by FAFICS as part of the leadership's commitment to ensuring integrity, transparency, and collegiality in the way FAFICS conducts its business. It also puts emphasis on openness and mutual communication and FAFICS' ability to listen and respond to concerns of member associations. More specifically, the survey sought feedback from participants about the 52<sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting (Council52) held in Vienna from July 19-21, 2022. Member associations were also asked for suggestions about the FAFICS work programme, the website, means of communication, and other retiree concerns. Altogether, these comments and recommendations inform future Council meetings and the Federation's overall agenda and working modalities.

The survey ran from Oct 6 to November 15, 2022. A total of 21 member associations sent replies to the questionnaire. It should be noted that some associations also consulted with their own members in providing responses to the survey.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **A. Overall assessment of Council52**

1. The meeting was generally well-organized.
2. Participants appreciated the excellent support provided by ARICSA.
3. The hybrid meeting format, despite its technical challenges, was deemed practical and inclusive of those who were unable to attend due to high costs of participation and other reasons.
4. Most recommended keeping this format as a viable option for future meetings.
5. Participants generally felt that they were given good opportunities to participate and felt comfortable sharing their views on different agenda items.
6. The Council documents were considered quite substantive, well-prepared, and presented, although some papers were thought to be somewhat long.
7. Suggestions for improvement of future Council meetings focused on giving attention to tri-lingual communication (particularly of key documents), more easily digestible, timely and systematic distribution of documents, more time for member associations to share their views and concerns, more efforts to get greater participation of member associations and better management of remote participants when using the hybrid meeting format.
8. Those who did not (or were not able to) participate, either in-person or virtually, gave reasons such as not having enough information on how to participate, or not motivated enough to participate, in addition to travel cost considerations.

### **B. Since there is always room for improvement, here are some implications for future Council meetings based on specific comments from participants.**

#### **1. Agenda:**

- a. Encourage member associations to suggest agenda items
- b. Dedicate sufficient time on pension issues and ASHIL

- c. Review the interface between the pre-council agenda and the Council agenda, minimizing redundancy while ensuring adequate time for substantive discussion of the two most important concerns of retirees: Pensions and ASHIL
- d. Include in the beginning of the Council agenda, a review of actions/recommendations/decisions taken in the previous Council meeting
- e. Consider time zones of remote participants when developing the agenda to be certain that they can participate in key agenda items
- f. Arrange for more rotation among FAFICS members of chairing/presiding officer roles during council sessions
- g. Include opportunities, if schedule permits, for member associations to share specific national association concerns or just to highlight relevant developments at country level
- h. Give more support to the presiding officers in handling remote participants, to ensure balance and better management of speakers from the floor as well as those connected virtually

**2. Participation:**

- a. Encourage more member associations to participate, either in person or remotely
- b. Seriously consider and make provisions for tri-lingual communication to improve participation
- c. Provide advance information about the hybrid format, so that more associations may consider this modality of participation
- d. For the hybrid format, provide more guidance on the use of this digital platform
- e. Those participating remotely can also provide written comments (by email, or thru the chat box) to complement their verbal interventions
- f. Improve technical handling of multiple virtual screens and projection of documents, always mindful of how they can be helpful to remote participants as well
- g. Find ways to address member associations' lack of motivation or interest to participate

**3. Documents:**

- a. Always keep in mind the importance of having the documents also in French and Spanish.
- b. Ensure timely, more orderly/systematic way of sharing documents (to avoid trickling distribution that confused some participants in terms of references to the agenda and drafts vs final versions);
- c. Determine which documents will be made available onsite or during the Council meeting itself
- d. Apply a uniform format for the documents, and have clear references for them in the agenda
- e. Provide executive summaries (in print or verbally through the Presiding Officer/s) for key documents/presentations
- f. Establish a timeline for completing and disseminating the final Council report, preferably within 6-8 weeks after the Council meeting

**4. Social Events:**

- a. As not all participants know each other well, build-in some time for interaction (in addition to the cocktail reception) and include introduction of newcomers/first-time attendees
- b. Make room for light/informal "sharings" from member associations about their activities
- c. Explore more events in town such as cultural activities, visits to art centers/museums, concerts, boat rides, etc. or offer information about these events/or sightseeing packages for interested participants
- d. Think of creative ways to "socialize" with those who are connected remotely

5. **Venue:**

- a. Consider venues other than Vienna and Geneva (this was of course before London was announced)
- b. Participants seem to be aware that Council meetings take place wherever the Pension Board meeting location is, but there were a couple of suggestions to explore venues outside Europe, possibly co-hosted by a member association

**C. Comments and suggestions related to communication strategy and website**

1. Communication related to Council meetings:

- a. Provide adequate and timely information about Council meetings, its format, and ways to participate
- b. Encourage member associations to use the website in locating official FAFICS council documents and interacting with other member associations
- c. Expedite completion and timely distribution of Council documents and reports, in three languages

2. Priority retiree concerns which can also inform FAFICS messaging through its communication strategy/materials

- a. Continue to focus on pension and health insurance issues, including long-term care
- a. More attention to smart and healthy ageing
- b. Additional concerns mentioned were investments and financial well-being, fraud awareness and protection of privacy, digital accessibility, rights of ageing people, and senior-friendly retirement/vacation places

3. Specific comments on the FAFICS website

- a. Regularly update the website and ensure that member associations directory is up to date
- b. Ensure continuous flow of relevant communication between FAFICS leadership and member associations, through the website and other means
- c. While many seem to be familiar with the website and have accessed it, there were strong recommendations to make it more current, interesting and user friendly and to give it a re-design/overhaul, with more creative/graphic content.
- d. Encourage member associations to use the website for Council related information/documents
- e. Explore ways by which member associations can contribute more actively to the website content.

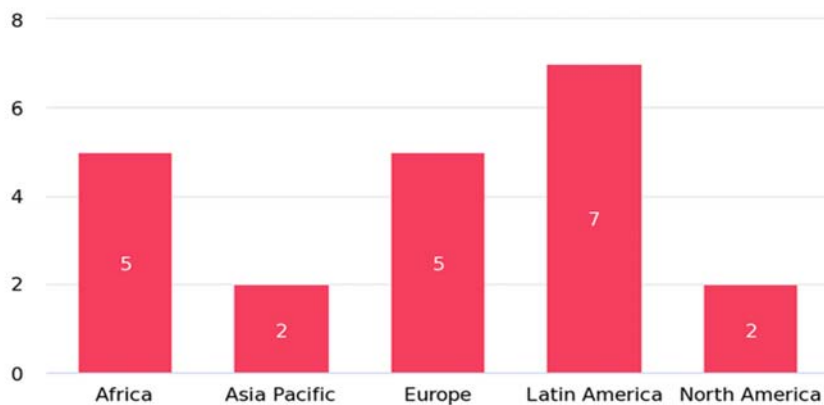
4. Suggested other ways to maintain communication between member associations and the FAFICS leadership include:

- a. Revival of FAFICS MATTERS
- b. Regular messages from the leadership, i.e., through the President's monthly newsletter
- c. Sharing of Bureau reports, including periodic updates on important decisions
- d. Send alerts to member associations when relevant documents are available and/or important events happening that may be of interest to associations

#### D. Other general suggestions for FAFICS

- Ask member associations how FAFICS can be of help to them
- Ensure a more democratic selection of FAFICS officers
- Continuously strive for transparency in decision-making
- Improve perception about FAFICS as a legislative organ
- Prioritize communication
- Observe the rules of procedure
- Consider geographic representation in the Bureau/address regional issues
- Train member associations on digital accessibility

#### E. Survey respondents: 21 Member Associations sent feedback



### 3. DETAILED SURVEY RESULTS

#### Part I. Feedback from those who were able to attend Council52

**Q: "How did you assess the organization of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Council meeting?"  
In a scale of 1-5, where 5 is highest: Scores averaged 3.75**

#### Additional comments/suggestions:

##### Encouraging:

- "Overall, for our delegation, the 52nd FAFICS council meeting gave a very positive impression."
- "Thank you for all efforts to make this session a success. The support provided by ARICSA was truly indispensable and very much appreciated."
- "The meeting was generally well organized with a lot of effort made by ARICSA for the reception."
- "The discussion was shorter than traditional and more focused. This trend should be continued."
- "It was well organized. As it was a hybrid meeting there were some challenges, but the people at large were able to make their views known at an appropriate time."

- *“In general, very productive and participatory.”*
- *“Overall organization of the meeting was good with a major effort made to achieve a balance between in-room and virtual participation.”*
- *“Good to have the hybrid meeting for both the Council and FAFICs Standing Committees and in the future, it should announce in advance that there will be hybrid meetings, so more associations can fully participate in the discussions. This should be the new operational modality.”*
- *“The meeting was a real success considering that it was the first time ever that FAFICS Council met in a hybrid format.”*
- *“Presiding officer did a great job in coordinating interventions – assisted by several other people on the podium “*
- *Most of the documents were received prior to the meeting. There has been an effort to translate some documents into French as far as we are concerned. During the meeting the floor was given to all those who requested it.*
- *“Satisfactory annotated agenda and moderator fit for performance.”*
- *“The quality was good, and the presentations were better than in previous years. “*
- *“It gives the opportunity to participate and learn more about the way decisions are made in FAFICS”.*
- *“Very efficient organization of the elections.”*
- *“The meeting was organized very well and went very smoothly. “*

#### Constructive:

- *“Balance the official UN languages with the documents to be distributed and send the documents respecting the chronology of the days on which they will be discussed. This will allow participants to study them well in time. But sending them in bulk causes great confusion. “*
- *“Approve the agenda and then follow it so that participants can satisfactorily plan their eventual contributions in each item.”*
- *“The schedule of the sessions made it difficult to participate in a better way..but it is understandably difficult since all the continents must be accommodated.*
- *“More time could be given for interventions from distant members.”*
- *“The confusion on the hybrid modality of the first day was very disheartening and did not set a proper tone for the beginning of the Council. Presiding officers should remain neutral and not intervene on the substance as representative of an Association. Presiding officers and the Secretary should ensure a proper verbal summary at the end of each theme on the agreements/consensus reached as well as stated disagreements requested to be placed for the record.”*
- *“As first-time attendees, it was hard to rate its quality vis-à-vis the prior Council meetings. Among the areas for improvement would be (1) an increase in participation of member associations; (2) providing discussion time (pre-Council meeting?) for member associations to share issues and concerns (and also achievements) in management of their national associations; (3) better monitoring of views of remote participants (especially those not usually heard from); (4) better distribution of invitations, confirmations and other relevant documentation of the meeting; (5) a directory of participants for outside-of-meeting discussions.”*
- *“Need more democracy during the meeting, at present there are favoured delegates and others!”*
- *“It seems that interpretation, (at least French) may help some colleagues to participate more fully. Perhaps giving the floor to colleagues online remotely would also make them feel more involved.*

Finally, I think the secretary (rapporteur) of the meeting needs to be present (not remote) for the session to ensure good minutes/summary record are produced.”

- “Several aspects could be improved: 1. Sharing of documents by email resulted in an overload of in-boxes – why not simply post them on the protected part of the website and just invite participants to consult the website? 2. Documents could be less formal / legalistic with clear one-page summaries per topic. 3. There should be a list of participants early on during the meeting (especially virtual participants could not be easily identified).”
- “The main problem is blending virtual and physical meeting. Spreading a physical meeting over 5 days allows for social interaction, networking, and exchange of useful information. A virtual meeting must concentrate on information delivery/exchange and should be much briefer as it is difficult to focus on a zoom screen for longer than three hours. Thus, the very pleasant and convivial times for a live meeting can be difficult for a zooming hybrider. Time zones are also an issue. I have no solution but think we should always bear this in mind when planning, as I think it is inevitable that FAFICS will have to continue using the hybrid meeting modality, unless there is a change in worldwide health and economic conditions. The advantages of a hybrid meeting are that it allows maximum participation, including from those who have restrictions on their mobility or could, as older persons, be immune compromised. Further airfares may stabilize or continue to escalate as they are now, and airports may or may not have sorted out their passenger and baggage handling logistics.”
- “While we very much appreciated the innovation of \_a hybrid meeting, which should be sustained in the future, there is need for more support to the Presiding Officer in terms of identifying people who wish to speak.”

**Q: “How did you feel about sharing your opinions and ideas during the meeting?”**

**In a scale of 1-5, where 5 is highest: Scores averaged 3.9**

#### **Additional comments/suggestions:**

##### Encouraging:

- “Topics of interest to many, well presented”
- “Comfortable to share views and opinion”
- “The meeting was well monitored, granting the floor in a timely manner to the participants who requested it.
- “There was all the opportunity for those present. Maybe a little bit less for the "At Large"”
- “Good opportunities to take the floor.”
- “Congratulations to the conference organizers who kept careful note of both the actual and virtual participants who wanted to speak. It ran well. “
- “I think the participants were free to give their opinions as many people expressed their opinions on the topics discussed.”
- “Generally, everyone was able to provide inputs to the discussions.”
- “All those who asked to speak received it and said without hindrance what they wanted to say/share their opinions and ideas.”
- “Very effective either virtually or in person”



### Constructive:

- *"FAFICS officials responding on behalf of the Bureau should ensure "active listening" and ensure they have understood the question or proposal using active listening techniques such as paraphrasing or asking related questions, avoidance of phrases such as "it has always been done that way", "the Board would never agree to that" , "we have tried it before and it did not work "and similar negative or dismissive comments should be discouraged and more open and probing questions should be promoted"*
- *"For the F2F participants, the ranking would be a (4). The score may be different for the remote participants."*
- *"The main problem is that the opinions of virtual participants and chats are not adequately reflected."*
- *"For a person whose English is not the 1st language, it was difficult to follow and to express oneself. For my part, it was my 1st participation. The speakers spoke quickly and some of the topics discussed were new to me. "*
- *"At a point finding it difficult to get the Presiding Officer to be allowed the floor. Discrimination in favour of Board members"*
- *"The larger associations seem to have more opinions and are more vocal. Also, it would help if there were only one voice per association rather than sometimes dissenting views from one association or repetition of views."*
- *"As it was my first time in a Council meeting, I did not share ideas, I was very attentive to the discussions"*
- *"When participants raise their hands to speak, it would be good to acknowledge the list of order of speakers, as at times some speakers were waiting for a while and other speakers were given the floor beforehand or in a different order."*
- *"For those who were physically present, it is always an advantage to be able to interact in person and share views, both during the meeting and side events or pauses. Those participating from a distance are not necessarily familiar with the technical tools available (e.g., raise/lower hand; mute/unmute sound; good internet connection required for camera; Q&A in chat; etc.); the quality of sound, time differences and slightly delayed time needed for their reaction can prove to be a challenge for some."*
- *"The inability of virtual participants to see the reactions of those present. This is inevitably a price we must pay for the hybrid format."*

**Q: How would you assess the quality of papers and presentations during the meeting?**

**In a scale of 1-5, where 5 is highest: Average score: 3.84**

### **Additional comments/suggestions:**

#### Encouraging

- *"All docs dealing with subjects discussed during the Council were very pertinent."*
- *"The presentations were punctual, clear, there was room for questions and clarifications."*
- *"The papers were intelligent, comprehensive."*
- *"The documents were generally well developed"*
- *"The quality was good, and the presentations were better than in previous years."*

- *“The papers were well prepared, particularly the Pension Board Papers “*
- *“The documents were clear and short and to the point. Especially the documents from the chairs of the pension and the insurance matters.”*
- *“Documents were well prepared and presented.”*
- *“The content of the papers on substantive issues were of high quality.”*
- *“Thoroughly appreciated the depth of the papers which were provided”*
- *“The documents were well written and there was an effort to translate some documents. As for the presentations, they were also good, especially those in PowerPoint made by the guests at the meeting.”*

#### Constructive:

- *“Papers should include options with pros and cons for each option, background history needs to be succinct and acceptance of “change” more forthcoming. Many documents seem to indicate issues as cast in stone and unchangeable. Better use of power point or similar software should ensure a more user-friendly with pedagogical approach for the audience to comprehend. Reading out documents which have been submitted and read do not ensure a good economic or effective use of time.”*
- *“Some papers were a wee bit too long”*
- *“It would be useful to have short summaries and key questions for discussion for each paper.”*
- *“Each topic should be introduced, assuming that everyone was at their 1st meeting”.*
- *“Documents should all have the same format, unified”*
- *“Papers are too formal / legalistic and lengthy, apart from also being too numerous. One-page summaries with key messages would be helpful.”*
- *“My concern is much more with the report produced of the meeting. Very few of us have the stamina to read through up to 90 pages of meeting notes. There may be a reason why the record is so voluminous and, if so, this should be shared with us. I have never encountered such lengthy and verbose minutes in any other organization I have worked with.”*
- *“There should be broader representation of bureau members/associations in the presentation of the papers.”*
- *“Two areas which could be improved: - Documents were distributed at times in an unordered and piecemeal manner ; some documents were updated without clear indications of the changes introduced in the previous version; a clear chart/list should summarize the different documents (reference number, title, date of issue, revised version, timeline, etc.); ideally, all the documents should be sent together within the statutory deadline; - Translation of the documents in French and Spanish would greatly improve their understanding by FAFICS members and ensure a higher participation of the membership.”*
- *“Generally felt them to be too detailed and in need of selective summary of the main issues, simply referring to previous papers where necessary. Similarly, some of the presentations could be less repetitive of the papers themselves.”*
- *“The meeting could be improved by translating the various documents of the meeting into the three languages (English, French, Spanish) and having all documents ready before the meeting (revised documents were received or under revision during the meeting).”*
- *In general, I find the documents too long and difficult to understand. A brief executive summary of the most important ones would make things much easier. “*

**Q. Do you think hybrid meetings should continue to be a modality for Council sessions? And if so, what suggestions do you have to ensure that hybrid meetings are effective?**

**Response: A resounding YES with suggestions on how to improve it in the future.**

### **Additional comments/suggestions:**

#### Encouraging

- *“The option of virtual access gives more flexibility”*
- *“Gave the possibility of participation for those who cannot travel to the place of the meeting. With ease of connectivity, it is possible to ensure greater representation and participation”*
- *“Hybrid is the way to go especially with continuing health concerns and the high costs of travel and accommodation.”*
- *“Hybrid meetings allow a larger participation of FAFICS membership, especially for those who are far and away or unable to attend (health, entry visas or scheduling reasons); they can also prove cost effective for some associations with limited resources (travel costs, per diem).”*
- *“No suggestions because for a first attempt, I found that the meeting was effective.”*
- *“The attendance level was and will be higher. Gives more options to associations”*

#### Constructive:

- *“Time spans should consider time differences and coffee breaks and lunch breaks kept to a minimum. All participants should verify they are using their mute function and be sure to identify themselves when taking the floor. They should be guided in the use of the digital system specially to use the “raise hand” function to request for the floor”*
- *“There are ways to improve the participation of those in remote locations – more thinking on ways to improve these. An additional moderator for remote participants; request that remote participants send in video statements on select key issues they are passionate about. “*
- *“Ensure headphones work well and speakers speak loudly”*
- *“Those participating at a distance to prepare short, typed inputs to accompany verbal communications”*
- *“Continue as it was. Have somebody following the at-large group full time. An extra effort should be made to have more associations present on zoom.”*
- *“There must be better technical ways to coordinate screens, both visuals of virtual speakers and projections of documents. Not sure how speakers in the room are caught on camera and projected. Coordination of these three streams is to be handled by professionals (Conference Services?).”*
- *“Strongly recommend hybrid meetings in the future to increase overall participation from all FAFICS Associations. To achieve full participation, suggest that the notice of the hybrid meeting of the Council as well as the Standing Committees should be given up front. To ensure participation of both the in-person and remotely connected participants, it would be useful to have an order of participants who have requested to speak.”*
- *“A good balance can be found in time between those attending in person and those from a distance; the latter should be encouraged to take the floor in case of imbalance. With the increase of Pension Board meetings, such hybrid format will be useful for the FAFICS Council meetings to be held on their eve (3 per year now). “*

- *“Hybrid meetings have many advantages - they enable wider participation and are cost-effective for the member associations - but also some obvious disadvantages. So FAFICS should encourage associations to participate in person if possible - and to continue its present practice of subsidizing participation when necessary “*
- *“However, it is imperative to have one physical meeting each year.”*

**Q. What do you think about the pre-council meetings on Pension Issues and ASHIL?**  
**In a scale of 1-5, where 5 is highest: Scores averaged 3.76**

**Additional /suggestions:**

Encouraging:

- *“Very good thematic coverage and appropriate driving”*
- *“Pre-Council meetings are the most important part of the meeting because they address the basic issues of the participants.”*
- *“Given the importance of the topics, I found that the sessions were very short.”*
- *“It gives more chances to discuss and share on these subjects prior to the Council”*
- *“They are extremely important issues and should be an integral part of the Council meeting the improvements are outlined in question”*
- *“Yes, if meetings take place immediately before Council session; these 2 items are of importance and dedicated meetings are imperative “*
- *“These meetings are very useful, and I think that if I still must participate on the board, I will make sure to take part in the pre-meetings that allow me to better understand the topics and efforts made by FAFICS”*
- *“Pre-Council meetings are the most important part of the meeting because they address the basic issues of the participants.”*
- *“I thought it was a very useful, thoughtful, and participatory session.”*
- *“I found them excellent and very productive due to the importance of the topics”*
- *“The pre-council session on pensions was excellent, as it was well prepared and informative.”*
- *“The presentations were quite informative”*

Constructive:

- *“The pre-council meetings on pension issues and ASHIL were important but for a participant, it seemed like the sessions were duplicating each other. The pre-Council discussions on these 2 topics should take on a more consultative tone and limited in numbers attending. The fuller discussion could then take place in the main Council session. “*
- *“I wonder if the success of the pre session depends on the hosting entity and in this case could cause unevenness over the years, as perhaps different associations have different levels of available funds to spend.”*
- *“As a newcomer I did not understand why it was called a pre-meeting and not part of the overall session. “*
- *“The one on ASHIL was reasonable, because it was informative. But it came with a too weak proposed recommendation, which could however be strengthened because of the debates.”*

- *“Both meetings were good but needs participation on a regular basis from more Associations. Going forward, with active participation of a group of qualified individuals from various Associations in accordance with the new rules of procedures, it would be interesting to see the dynamics and participation during these meetings. Hopefully, this will significantly increase the overall participation and new ideas for pension and ASHLI – two of the most important benefits for the retirees.”*
- *“Pre-meetings represent the time when substantive issues are discussed. More participation of the Associations with expertise in the subject matters should be strongly encouraged.”*
- *“Very useful to prepare the plenary discussion in the Council, especially on technical issues. It cannot be merged within the Plenary Council sessions because the Rapporteurs of the two Standing Committees on Pensions and on ASHLI would not have sufficient time to draft the Reports for adoption during the Council session.”*

**Q. What do you think about the social events during the Council meeting?**  
**In a scale of 1-5, where 5 is highest: Scores averaged 4.08**

**Additional comments/suggestions:**

Encouraging:

- *“Just the right number and length of events. The dinner downtown was excellent.”*
- *“Gathers members of all associations and allow exchanges.”*
- *“They were perfect, and they allowed me to get closer to some of the participants and visit the beautiful city of Vienna”*
- *“Very well organized and thanks again to ARICSA for a memorable event. “*

Constructive:

- *“The 2 events would be enough if people really knew each other prior. However, they do not. So perhaps, a get-to-meet session with newcomers, new members etc. may be helpful in the welcome-day reception. “*
- *“To improve relations between Associations and their Members why not organizing a social event which would include the town visit or any other typical / specific event to the town (artistic, musical ...) “*
- *“If time permits, maybe a cultural group visit (for those interested) organized with the receiving host city – e.g., museum, boat trip, even an expo in the host agency HQs – would contribute to the team building spirit. “*

**Part II. General comments for FAFICS’ consideration**

**A. Future Council meetings**

- *“We must relocate the places of the sessions to other countries because there are other cities than Vienna and Rome which host most of the sessions”*
- *“Continue with hybrid mode and submit full documentation in advance in a timely manner”*

- *“The Council Meetings are so directed to informing member associations on FAFICS developments; there would be some benefit if the Bureau takes a step backward and asks how FAFICS can help associations better manage their issues and concerns (membership, fund-raising etc.) Perhaps a preliminary session on internal management concerns? How about a display table of AFICS merchandise etc. etc. In other words, how do you get the national associations tell the FAFICS what their priority concerns are! It might not be all about pensions and benefits only. “*
- *“Prepare more detailed preparatory documents. Further clarify the role played by FAFICS”*
- *“The election of a PO decided in advance. So, the vote was just a show. Sure, that preliminary consultations necessary with potential candidates but a vote is a vote. ””*
- *“Given that many people may be traveling to that location for the first time or may use that trip to explore the city or the country, a side benefit could be to offer sightseeing packages (at the personal cost of the participant). “*
- *“There was room for improvement in the catering in the Vienna International Center.”*
- *“There should a strict timeline established for the FAFICS Council Report, and the President must agree on the stipulation that only matters of facts should be corrected by the Associations. The final report of the Council should be shared and posted within 6-8 weeks of the Council meeting. “*
- *“It would be appropriate for the Presiding Officer to summarize the issue discussed under each item of the agenda and the decision reached by the Council. “*
- *“Prepare a summary of decisions taken at previous Council Meeting and report on results achieved during the period listing the pending issues.”*
- *“Documents be sent to Member Associations at least two weeks in advance to allow them to prepare and, if possible, that documents be available in all three languages to allow for greater and better participation in the debates.”*
- *“Several associations requested interpretation in French and Spanish during the Council”*
- *“We did not have enough funds to meet the air fare cost for our representative to participate”*
- *“For the vote, we find that it would be better if the online vote is reserved for the associations not present and the associations present normally vote in a physical ballot box. ””*
- *“Find a way to give more space and voice to those who, for whatever reason, cannot travel to the meeting site. On the other hand, the videos of the sessions could be shared to disseminate much more information and conclusions with the rest of the partners who cannot otherwise know what FAFICS does.”*
- *“The period was not convenient to our president to participate because of prior arrangements.*
- *“The FAFICS Council meeting should also be held in (other places), so that we feel that we are not discriminated against. In other words, the meetings should rotate among the various UN Headquarters...”*
- *“I wonder if it is possible to translate at least the essential sessions such as those on pension and medical insurance? “*
- *“Still very concerned about the vote for the new Executive Board. Since delegates tend now to vote by region (e.g., Europeans vote for a European candidate, which is entirely their right) those areas of the world with few delegates (e.g. Africa with 2 or 3 delegates or Small Island States with 1 delegate) had little chance of being represented in the Board. So broad geographical representation was not achieved. “*
- *“More rotation among FAFICS membership to chair council sessions should be encouraged (including gender rotation). “*

## B. FAFICS activities/work programme

- *“Since new activities and projects are being proposed it is important that these be clearly spelt out with clear deadlines, budgets, and Key performance Indicators”*
- *“I entirely agree with the President’s statements regarding the principles / values to be observed: promoting communications between FAFICS and its associations, sharing decision -making process with Associations for major /strategic problems, transparency and independence of the Bureau, democratic selection of FAFICS officers, increasing perception that Council is the true legislative organ”*
- *“Suggest a virtual meeting of the full council or relevant FAFICS Standing Committee before the Pension Board meetings. It will also be an opportunity to discuss issues being discussed by FAFICS representatives at various Pension Board committees/groups”*
- *“Organize a meeting of the Council for a mid-term review on the status of the implementation of the work of FAFICS, at about 5/6-month interval with a focus on key issues. It could be one 3–4-hour meeting with a focused agenda on some of the important issues such as communications, pension, ASHIL, and implementation of the rules of procedures.”*
- *“The Federation needs to focus on (1) greatly improving its website and (2) providing regular newsletters which synthesize development of interest to retirees. The current reports from the Bureau are virtually impossible to share with most retirees. In this connection, the Bureau is far too focused on preserving an illusory confidentiality, failing to realize that such confidentiality does not exist some of our retirees are far better informed about what is happening behind the scenes from their respective alma maters which make no such pretense of confidentiality; this is doubly unfortunate because such feedback is sometimes highly misleading. To our surprise this undue respect for "confidentiality" appears even to apply to members of the Standing Committee who do not attend board sessions; this makes no sense and the Federation's current policy on this should be changed.”*
- *“In 2019, our association supported the issue of having a specific unit/section for the elderly. Currently, every major UN agency including UN Headquarters has sections for children, women, youth, and others. Given that the majority of FAFICS members are elderly, there is need for FAFICS to continue advocating to the UN to establish a unit dedicated to the elderly. Ironically, even elderly politicians are not sympathetic to the elderly who are less fortunate and have no social welfare, especially in developing countries...”*

## C. Retiree concerns that member associations would like FAFICS to give more attention to in Council meetings or in the FAFICS work programme

Average scores, in a scale of 1-5, where 5 is highest:

4.65	Pension issues, including small pensions
4.0	Access to long-term health care facilities
3.46	Smart ageing

3.46	Ageing rights
2.86	Senior-friendly retirement/vacation places

#### **Additional comments on retiree concerns**

- *“More of associations’ efforts to promote smart aging etc. or vacation places. FAFICS need not promote these as topics, but rather, let the associations talk about their priority in initiatives. Just let the associations inspire each other. “*
- *“It is essential that the Africa zone be represented among the vice-presidents of FAFICs. The next council must consider how to fill this void “*
- *“It would be a good idea to prioritize communications”.*
- *“The main problems will always be about the protection of pensions and health insurance. CIGNA's US\$250,000 cap for some organizations, as well as the US\$20,000 cap for local staff, is grossly insufficient. Health costs are much higher today than those used to set the limits.”*
- *“Giving time and space given to discuss the specific problems of given regions, exploring how responses from one country or region can be useful for another country/region.”*
- *“Insurance matters in general and trends in the insurance market and the UN. Perhaps bringing in someone from the UN ASHI committee. Also exploring differences in ASHI between agencies and secretariat.”*
- *“Total recognition from the Coordination of the United Nations System”.*
- *“Investments and ensuring financial wellbeing in retirement; Fraud awareness and protecting privacy. Possibly presented by UNFCU.”*
- *“More information on level of members’ participation in their respective agency/organization’s governance on items of interest to retired staff (e.g., governing bodies sessions (EXB, GC), local SPI committees, relations with staff associations/unions, etc.). “*
- *“FAFICS general has its subject-matter priorities correct.”*
- *“Digital accessibility and usability of Pension and Health Care schemes, using real-world older retirees as testers of new digital tools.”*
- *“I feel that FAFICS should also discuss climate justice because it is affecting its members in both developing and developed countries. This has implications for ‘Smart Ageing’”*

#### **D. Challenges to participation and communication between FAFICS and member associations**

- |   |
|---|
| <p>Main reasons, ranked in this order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not enough information on how to participate</li> <li>2. Not motivated enough to take part</li> <li>3. No internet or unstable internet connection</li> <li>4. Don’t know enough about FAFICS</li> </ol> |
|---|

#### **Additional comments/suggestions:**

- *“Inconsistent mailing of information. There has been no updating of member information on the website. If we use the addresses provided by the website, we can be assured of high bounce back mail. “*
- *“It is necessary to use the translation into the two official languages (Spanish and French)”*



- *“Reason: Difficulty financing the trip”*
- *“Not motivated/encouraged to take part, probably not clear what may be the impact in a system that is detached from their everyday lives and language issues”*

**E. Familiarity with the FAFICS website and suggestion to improve it**

- *“Already a very useful website”*
- *“The Federation needs to focus on (1) greatly improving its website and (2) providing regular newsletters which synthesize development of interest to retirees. The current reports from the Bureau are virtually impossible to share with most retirees. some of our retirees are far better informed about what is happening behind the scenes from their respective alma maters”*
- *“More Associations should have their publications and other news items on the FAFICS website. It is interesting to note how low pensioners in other countries are dealing with health and taxes”*
- *“More graphic content”*
- *“First, keep it updated, standardize the AFICS information format, decide how many Bulletins should be included for each country (the current year?), for example...”*
- *“Website is unattractive and difficult to navigate. Password protection completely insufficient – let all participants choose their own password.”*
- *“The website needs major overhaul - to ensure a completely new look, it should be more interactive and ensure that various topics are easily accessible. b. All reports of FAFICS Bureau and Council meetings should be available in folders which can be accessed by Members with specific access rights.*
- *“It should be updated at least once a month with an indication of the date of the last updating. Make it more trilingual at least for the main documents (such as Council Reports, Bureau Meeting Reports, Periodic Letter of the President to Associations, etc.)”*
- *“The website needs \_a complete re-design, with help from an external IT support company. Insiders almost certainly do not have enough modern skills for the job.”*
- *“It is quite simple, but may improve with tutorials made by retirees, not young techies, also videos with testimonies of retirees, regarding future of UN pensions and health schemes”*
- *“That information or updates sent by Member Associations be published in a timely manner”*
- *“The update should be more frequent to show the associations’ activities”*

**F. Best ways to inform the association about FAFICS**

Based on average scores:	
4.55	FAFICS President’s message to Presidents of member associations which can be shared widely at the local level
4.47	Revamping the FAFICS website to feature more member associations’ news/events
4.44	Member associations to post relevant materials on the FAFICS website
4.29	Reviving the newsletter, FAFICS matters
4.29	Updated directory of member associations so members can communicate with each other
4.23	President’s message to all (registered) members of member associations

#### **Additional comments/suggestions:**

- *“Communicate in all languages”*
- *“More friendly. Updated regularly. In English, French and Spanish (the most important topics)”*
- *“Permanent updating and contributions of the AFICS members”*
- *“Country has made several recommendations in the past and have been submitted in writing and are part of FAFICS Council meetings documentation”*
- *“Update the information please! Make materials more current”*
- *“The periodic newsletter could be quarterly if the necessary resources (human and financial) are available”*
- *“Filled by the President”*

### **Part III. Survey respondents**

Number of member associations that replied: 21

<b>1. Argentina (AFICS Argentina)</b>	<b>9. Italy (FFOA Rome)</b>	<b>17. Senegal (ASAFI)</b>
<b>2. Australia (AFICS Australia)</b>	<b>10. Kenya (AFICS Kenya)</b>	<b>18. Switzerland (AFICS Geneva)</b>
<b>3. Burkina Faso (AAFNU-BF)</b>	<b>11. Mali (AMAFINU)</b>	<b>19. UK (BAFUNCS)</b>
<b>4. Brazil (AAFIB)</b>	<b>12. Mauritius (AFICS Mauritius)</b>	<b>20. Uruguay (AFICS Uruguay)</b>
<b>5. Canada (CAFICS)</b>	<b>13. Mexico (AFPNU Mexico)</b>	<b>21. USA (AFICS NY)</b>
<b>6. Colombia (ASOPENUC)</b>	<b>14. Netherlands (AFICS NL)</b>	
<b>7. Ecuador (AFICS Ecuador)</b>	<b>15. Panama (APEFONU)</b>	
<b>8. France (AAFU)</b>	<b>16. Philippines (AFICS Phills)</b>	

#### Replies by region:

Africa (5): Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Mauritius, Senegal

Asia and the Pacific (2): Australia, Philippines

Latin America and the Caribbean (7): Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay

Europe (5): France, Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK

North America (2): Canada, USA

#### Comments on the survey itself/suggestions for future surveys

- *“Very much welcome the survey”*
- *“For future surveys, whilst most of the questions can be answered online others would seem to require a numeric response on a paper form version, use survey apps that facilitate responding and results tracking”*
- *“Consider doing this at the end of Council meeting, which normally covers quick feedback on several aspects of the meeting – a) the objectives were met; b) duration of the event; c) specific sessions were implemented, i.e., presenters, delivery, support documents/visual aids; d) venue; e)*

*secretariat support, etc. But sometimes, participants are too much in rush at the end and do not take it seriously. Doing it later after the meeting may give more thoughtful feedback as participants would have reflected on their experience attending the meeting”*

- *“On the survey form. perhaps explore use of survey apps like GOOGLE FORM, survey planet, survey monkey, etc. where the responses are automatically sent to an excel file for ease of analysis”*
- *“The survey form should be answered by as many participants as meetings affect us in different ways.”*

**Annexes: Cover letters and Survey Forms in a) English, b) French and c) Spanish**