

PROPOSAL FOR A NEW ISC

Representation and balanced powers

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SKÅL

INTERNATIONAL
Connecting Tourism Globally

ITALIA



NATIONAL COMMITTEE
The Voice of Italian Tourism

Introduction

I am a “novice” compared to many in this room, however I do know that this is **my first and last Mid-Year Meeting** of the International Council, either **in this format** or because **the ISC will be dissolved**.

There are many changes happening in this organization and the ISC must adapt to two realities:

- 1) **We live in a post-covid world.** In 2019 I did have doubts on the necessity for the ISC, (and National Committees) tied down to a very expensive and inefficient way of meeting and working. Clubs perceived the ISC as a costly and privileged elite. Then comes Covid and Zoom with it. This is a complete game changer, and, in fact, we saw the ISC start to meet frequently at zero cost, produce useful work, and deliver constructive suggestions coming up from the base of our Clubs and Membership. We have been forced to use electronic polling and voting systems which we now considered “normal”. More in general, we were given the opportunity, as a worldwide association, to intensify relations and work more efficiently because, finally, **geographic boundaries and distances have been cancelled**.
- 2) **Skal is changing its governance.** Over the past years we have seen an incredible **institutional crisis** that did nothing else but to expose the weakness of our structure, the pockets of privilege, the lack of coordination between entities and the lack of a vision on how to truly modernize Skal. There is a specific committee who is developing proposals for a new governance so I will not speak about the Executive Board or how other Skal entities should work in the future. However, **the current role of the ISC is to provide its Executive Board with suggestions, including (and this is a point of today’s agenda), how to restructure the ISC itself.**

How to go from here

Who does the ISC represent: Currently, Clubs connected to national committees, individual Clubs, and Clubs without a national committee represented by an Area Committee. This covers **most of the membership but not all**, excluding, as just an example, Active Individuals who are virtually abandoned.

On the other hand, we all realize that there is the **need for a stronger, more stable, and more efficient Executive Board**, hence the Governance Committee.

Skal International is an association of PEOPLE, not a corporation.

Our internal dynamics work more **like a “state”** as Members are paying a fee (they are not buying stocks), delegate decisional and spending power to several institutions (club, national, area, ISC, EB, Secretariat) and pay for a permanent structure (Secretariat) for the good running of the international organization.

Once a year members get to approve or not what has been done, approve or not what is proposed for the future, especially when it comes to **expenses and budget**.

This points out to a major flaw in our system: the Executive Board can **autonomously approve extra budget expenses**, spend the money and then, eventually, justify the reasons to the assembly, once the money is gone.

A good example of this are the very contested legal expenses of the previous board.

I am not entering into the details of any fact, but I do know the **sentiment of Clubs who pay the international fees and feel they have absolutely no control on what will happens to the money**, if not being notified “a posteriori” when they must approve the accounts.

The 2020 accounts were not approved **exactly for this reason**. The same could happen to 2021 and 2022 accounts if this situation is not corrected.

The first role of the New ISC should be to provide Clubs with the knowledge, and approval /denial possibility, every time a non-budgeted expense arises and that exceeds a reasonable pre-determined amount.

How to do it

How can the ISC operate such counter-weight role **without hindering the EB activity**: the answer is in two words: **representation and electronic poll/vote**.

Representation: Currently we are not enough to represent all the Membership. Also, there is a variety of ways to become member of the ISC and this must be normalized.

Therefore, we can imagine a New ISC where:

- 1) **All Club presidents** (or whoever they decide to delegate) will automatically be members of the new ISC. *If we go back to the notion of Skal acting like a state, then the New ISC will act as a Skal parliament **that works with the new EB, and counterbalances it.***
- 2) **Active Individuals** will be given the possibility to elect a representative with right of vote.
- 3) **National and Area Committees** will be represented, but without right of vote.
- 4) **All meetings**, excepting maybe one during the World Congress, will happen **online at zero cost**.

Electronic polling/voting systems are the key to make this efficient.

- Through **online polls** it will be possible to know the **sentiment of clubs** every time there are proposals with multiple options and/or solutions. (**Engagement - transparency**)
- Through **electronic vote** it will be possible to obtain **approval or denial** for extra-budget expenses (above a pre-determined limit), or on whatever other decision that substantially changes any previous assembly determination. (**Control**)

In the framework of the **current statute**, it takes **infinite time to call for a vote** and this must be corrected.

Electronic Polls/votes can technically be organized in **hours** and the relevant documentation and polling/voting links **instantly delivered** through the **Officer Dashboard**, to all New ISC members.

If necessary, and on sensitive votes, it will always be possible to activate a 2-step verification process with an individual PIN being sent to the voting person via SMS.

By installing on the Odoo server the applications necessary to perform secure polling and voting we give SI independence from costly third-party functionalities.

It will be the **duty of each Club President** (or delegate) to make sure that the Club expresses its opinion/vote within the allotted **24/48 hours of the poll or vote** through the Officer Dashboard.

The results (regardless from the number of voters, but with some sort of quorum, to be decided) will be **binding** for the Executive Board and **immediately available** through the Officer Dashboard.

Once we setup a system like this it becomes obvious that **another role** of this bigger, and fully representative New ISC, is to **propose projects, activities, and ideas to the EB**. Such proposals will need to have the support of a percentage of Clubs (to be determined) before being forwarded to the EB. The EB will be obliged to give **proper feedback to such proposals** within a reasonable and pre-determined time span.

On the other hand, the **Executive Board can ask the New ISC to work on specific projects or activities** and the New ISC will be obliged to give **proper feedback** within a reasonable and pre-determined time span.

Conclusions

In our “wired” lifestyle we are constantly bombarded by news about wars, dictators, authoritarian states, the denial of rights, racism, discriminations, exploitation, and much more. We are in shock when we see the atrocities committed and we are emotionally and intellectually pushed to reject any association with them.

The “worst” stories are normally related to states where there is a very strong un-balance between a central power which can “legally” implement whatever, without a free press reporting to the public and an independent parliament to act as balancing counterweigh.

Therefore, ...

A modernized Skal must be a balanced organization with a strong Executive Board and a fully representative New ISC, where all the Clubs know what happens with their money and how the programs they voted for are being implemented, and where Members are kept informed about all relevant and important Skal action.

Recap of Skal Italia’s proposal

- 1) Whatever new governance must have a **stable and strong Executive Board**.
- 2) As an equally stable and strong **counterweight** a New ISC composed by **all the Club Presidents**.
- 3) Clubs **delegate** power of decision to the Executive Board and **retain** a direct, counterweighing, and real-time **power of control** through the New ISC.
- 4) The **New ISC will need to be informed** of all the Executive Board decisions therefore such activity cannot be covered by any form of secrecy or non-disclosure clause.
- 5) The New ISC will **extensively use technology** and the **Skal International platform** for a speedy work that will not slow down the activity of the Executive Board.

This New ISC will give **all Clubs** the **transparency and control** they miss and will promote a **new GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT** that is part of the **DNA of Skal International**.

Let’s make Skal stronger, more attractive, with wider participation and new possibilities to create relations between members. After all, we are just an amicable association focused on professional networking.