



International
**Forestry
Students'**
Association

IFSA Membership Report

2021/2022





IFSA Membership Report 2021/2022

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Foreword



I am honoured to be writing this foreword for the Membership Report 2021/2022 and for the amazing team of RRs and the Membership Councilor who made this term a real achievement. The amount of effort and dedication that all of you have shown throughout the term is truly admirable and you have set a real example of what IFSA should look like! I hope to see the amazing work, motivation, projects and activities that were done this year, continue in the future. I can confidently say this term will be remembered by the success of the Membership Department and your dedication to inspiring and engaging

IFSA members from all regions across the globe. I hope this Membership Report will open everyone's eyes to the inspiring work you have been doing. I would like to end by saying thank you for the work you have done, and all of the LCs and members, who make IFSA what it is!

Magdalena Jovanović, President 2021/2022

Without the Local Committees and individual members who are committed to work together in the association, IFSA definitely could not exist and shape the experiences of the forestry and related youth around the globe. Hence, it is very important to us knowing the state of the art of membership and local projects organised by our LCs, to see the disparities between the regions. Only then can we efficiently work towards better understanding and closing of the equality gaps in IFSA to improve the experience of our members. I am very happy this year we have achieved with our team to collect data in this regard for the first time, and I hope it will continue in the future to see the trends, to see the outcomes of IFSA's efforts for continuous improvements. I would like to say a huge thanks to the Regional Representatives who have been working hard and in great harmony all year round and made these efforts even possible. You made my term as the Membership Councilor much easier and pleasurable.



Šimon Hrbek, Membership Councilor 2021/2022

Acknowledgement

First of all, the Membership Department of IFSA would like to express their immense gratitude to all the Local Committees that have filled in the Membership survey and by doing so contributed to shedding light onto some of the important issues that had been waiting for its answers for over thirty years of IFSA's existence.

IFSA also wants to thank you to Alice Cosatti (Southern European Regional Representative 2015/2016), George Dennison (Northern European Regional Representative 2017/2018 & Membership Councilor 2018/2019) and Damiano Cilio (Southern European Regional Representative 2016/2018 & Head of FAO Sub-Commission 2018/2019 & Vice President 2019/2020) for consultations of the past realities in IFSA for the chapters Evolution of the Local Committees' distribution & Previous attempts for membership investigation in IFSA.

Last but not least, thank you to the representatives of the Local Committees who provided us with descriptions and photos of their projects for the chapter Case studies of LC projects. Namely they are Kamana Poudel from LC IFSA-OSU (United States of America), Bogdan-Anton Radu from LC Braşov (Romania), Ando Nantenaina Andrianarivelo from LC GASY Forestry Students' Association (Madagascar), Bright Kusi-Appiah from LC RENARSA KNUST (Ghana), Wening Ila Idzatilangi from LC UNHAS (Indonesia), Rafael Luna Reyes & Karen Gómez García from LC CHAUPEA (Mexico), and Carl Wiking from LC Umeå (Sweden).

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Abbreviations and acronyms

COP	Conference of Parties
EFI	European Forest Institute
FINTA*	Female, Inter-sex, Non-binary, Trans and A-gender. The * stands for all those who do not find themselves in any of the letters in the designation and are marginalised in the patriarchal society.
GA	General Assembly
GLF	Global Landscapes Forum
IFSA	International Forestry Students' Association
IFSS	International Forestry Students' Symposium
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organizations
LC	Local Committee
RR	Regional Representative
SDI	Simpson's Diversity Index
SG	Sub-Goal
WFC	World Forestry Congress

Executive summary

International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) is THE **world's leading association** of students of forestry and related fields, representing the voice of youth in the forestry sector in all continents. It is only possible to do so when the students get together and stand united towards the common vision - for '**A WORLD THAT APPRECIATES FORESTS**'.

Although the Local Committees and individual members who are formed under them are a crucial part of the association without whom this whole 'organism' could not function, not much has been known about their distribution in the world, across regions and gender categories, and how active the Local Committees are in terms of organising local projects.

Purpose

The aim of this report is to bring knowledge in this regard, to make everyone familiar with IFSA's membership distribution and to serve as a basis for the knowledge-based decision making for the improvement of IFSA's impact in the field of members' experience.

In the term 2021/2022, the data was collected from 80.5% of the association's Local Committees through a global survey and then a basic data analysis was done using a Google Sheets spreadsheet.

Key findings

IFSA consists of nearly **12,000 members** which exceeds the previous estimations. However, the member distribution across the regions is very imbalanced, showing that IFSA struggles with attracting members in the Americas. On the contrary, Northern and Southern Africa combined form approximately half of the IFSA's membership base. Besides that, there is only a 1.6% difference between the number of males and females in terms of gender distribution.

Over **1,300 projects** were organised by the Local Committees between August 2021 and May 2022 - most of them on a local level and mostly in person, rather than online.

Recommendations

Creation of particular action plans for each region separately based on the data from this report and workshops identifying the main challenges and solutions for them by each region's members is advisable for improving the region-specific realities and for closing the

equality gaps of the association. Furthermore, organising workshops on strategies of the Local Committees in order to attract and motivate their members and organising inspiring projects will help those Local Committees struggling with membership and activity.

Paying higher attention to less active and/or represented regions by searching for new potential Local Committees, more professional partners and opportunities in these regions and connecting the already existing Local Committees together will help to boost their motivation and participation within IFSA. More direct involvement of the Membership Councilor in these regions and their support for the Regional Representatives is recommended.

Inclusion of more members in the decision-making process on the regional level will contribute to the higher participation of the members and their stronger sense of belongingness. The possible ways to achieve this is through the Regional Council and/or creation of regional commissions or task forces implementing some of the members' ideas for activities.

It is also recommended to continue the data collection on the annual basis to be able to compare the temporal changes and to assess the potential success of the implemented actions.

Conclusions

The number of individual members exceeds the previous estimations and can serve as a useful leverage when representing forestry students at external events and bring new opportunities to IFSA members.

The results presented in this report, however, can not be only taken as facts, but rather as tools for tailored decision-making in order to support regions' development and impact on forest education in all the corners of the world.

1 Introduction

Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? This is on the one hand the name of a painting by Paul Gauguin from the nineteenth century, on the other hand these are three important questions for understanding our roots, our state of the art, our direction and the overall dynamics of us as humanity, as individuals, and in the context of this report - as the IFSA community.

IFSA was established in 1990 - more than thirty years ago. But until now, we only knew how many Local Committees (here onwards referred to as LCs) and countries IFSA consisted of. But not how many individual members we do have, what is their regional and gender distribution, how many of them are active. We only knew how many official IFSA events we do organise or how many delegations IFSA does participate in. But not how many local and/or international events are organised by our LCs throughout the year.

Knowing these statistics would help us, among other benefits, to understand our strengths and weaknesses, analyse in which corners of the world we have greater or lower impact and enable us to focus on strengthening our outreach where necessary. At the same time, being able to present how many excellent projects are organised locally by our LCs and how many individual students IFSA represents would give us greater leverage in searching for new partners and sponsors.

This report has as its goal to get the reader familiarised with the historical overview of the membership in IFSA based on the available data and to introduce the results of the current, more detailed investigation of this topic and its analysis.



The following is divided into three main parts based on the above-mentioned questions: 1) Where do we come from - which summarises the membership evolution in IFSA throughout its history and mentions the previous attempts to get a more detailed overview of the membership status. 2) Where are we - which presents the current investigation on the membership state of the art, thoroughly describes the survey distributed to all LCs and analyses its results. And 3) Where are we going - which discusses the implications of the investigation for the possible future direction and suggests particular actions of the Membership Department and IFSA as a whole.

1.1 Importance of knowledge on membership data

IFSA is the world's largest network of students of forestry and related fields. As such, our work and activity has a great potential to make a direct impact on forestry education and the future of the sector itself. Since its beginnings, IFSA has been working on creation of important meaningful partnerships with the most impactful sectoral organisations all around the globe, to create the best possible opportunities for its members to develop deeper knowledge and skills.

Over the years, IFSA has organised plethora of huge international events, such as the International Forestry Students' Symposium (IFSS), regional meetings, workshops, webinars and more, as well as secured spots for IFSA delegates at various high-political conferences - to name a few, Conference of Parties (COP), World Forestry Congress (WFC), Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) -, created internship opportunities for IFSA members with its partner organisations (like Dare to Explore! traineeship along with the European Forest Institute (EFI) and International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)).

The global presence and activities are a really important aspect of IFSA that makes it so attractive for many. However, what should never be forgotten is the association's foundations, the basis which makes it even possible to have a global impact: the Local Committees. LCs are the basic pillars of IFSA that all together, with their dedication, enthusiasm and local-level activity enable us to be such an important player on a global scale taken into consideration by the top-quality professionals.

Therefore, we need to get a deeper understanding of the distribution of our members across the world, across regions, to know where our presence and activity is stronger and

where weaker. Once we have the data, we are able to analyse the reasons behind such differences in order to build the foundations for future knowledge-based strategies to increase the association's importance and positive impact in the world.

At the same time, as already mentioned above, having the hard data in hand regarding the number of students represented under the umbrella of IFSA and the diversity of not only the huge international, but also the local activities organised by our LCs, will help us to attract new members, partners and sponsors. By that, the "cycle of success" (see [Figure 1](#)) will be triggered that would help IFSA to grow even more in terms of both membership and impact, respectively.



Figure 1: Cycle of success for increasing the global impact of IFSA (Source: Own elaboration)

PART I: Where do we come from?

Which summarises the membership evolution in IFSA throughout its history and mentions the previous attempts to get a more detailed overview of the membership status.



2.1 Evolution of the Local Committees' distribution

Ever since the IFSA term 1998/1999, the Boards have been compiling so-called Annual Reports, that are yearly publications available for all Officials, containing detailed descriptions of all association's activities and changes in all, internal, external and membership fields, respectively. Thanks to these publications it is possible to track many variables, among others also the acceptances and expulsions of Ordinary members - in other words LCs.

From the first Annual Report available (1998/1999), we can conclude that by the end of the respective term, IFSA consisted of 61 LCs from 40 countries. Which were those and what was their regional distribution, however, remains undiscovered. In the following Annual Reports it is already possible to deduct which LCs existed, but more structured and organised data regarding membership are consistently available since the Annual Report 2006/2007 and that is the reason why the evolution of LCs will be more thoroughly presented in this subchapter for the period 2006/2007 till 2021/2022.

It is worth mentioning that until the term 2012/2013, the IFSA world was divided into eight regions, instead of the current seven. There used to be two regions in the current Asia Pacific. These were Asia, and Oceania. [Table 1](#) shows the number of LCs in each of the current seven regions year by year. Hence, the regions of Asia and Oceania were merged for the purpose of this overview.

As possible to see in [Figure 2](#), between 2006/2007 and 2010/2011, the overall number of LCs in IFSA was slowly but steadily increasing (varying from region to region), but then a period of four years can be identified, when IFSA was generally losing LCs on the global scale. However, the somewhat massive decrease in this period is possible to see especially in the European regions and in Latin America. In contrast, Asia Pacific, Northern America and Southern Africa kept steadily increasing.

It is not an easy task to identify a specific reason behind this decrease period, especially because it was a contribution of more factors at once, difficult to separate one from another. A personal communication with Alice Cosatti, the Southern European Regional Representative (RR) 2015/2016, suggests that this period of several years before her term as the RR, the transition towards more efficient means of communication and IFSA

promotion was ongoing, and once this was achieved, attracting more new LCs caused a motivation boost among the next Boards, Officials and members in general, as possible to observe from the rapid LCs increment in the [Figure 2](#). However, as visible in the same figure, in the last four years the increase of the LC numbers is slowing down once the means of communication and promotion settled down.

Table 1: Number of IFSA LCs per region by year (2006/2007 - 2021/2022) (Source: Own elaboration based on data from the IFSA's Annual Reports)

Years	AP	CA	LA	NA	NE	SA	SE	Total
2006/07	5	4	8	3	17	2	20	59
2007/08	8	3	8	4	20	3	20	66
2008/09	10	3	8	5	21	2	20	69
2009/10	10	3	8	5	21	2	23	72
2010/11	11	3	8	4	22	3	24	75
2011/12	14	4	6	4	17	4	21	70
2012/13	15	5	3	2	13	5	19	62
2013/14	15	5	3	3	13	5	20	64
2014/15	17	9	6	3	18	5	17	75
2015/16	19	9	7	4	20	6	19	84
2016/17	20	8	7	6	21	6	23	91
2017/18	27	9	7	7	21	7	22	100
2018/19	31	10	11	12	22	9	23	118
2019/20	33	10	12	13	23	11	24	126
2020/21	34	10	13	13	23	11	27	131
2021/22	35	10	14	14	22	11	27	133

Note: AP = Asia Pacific; CA = Northern America (Canada-America); LA = Latin America; NA = Northern Africa; NE = Northern Europe; SA = Southern Africa; SE = Southern Europe

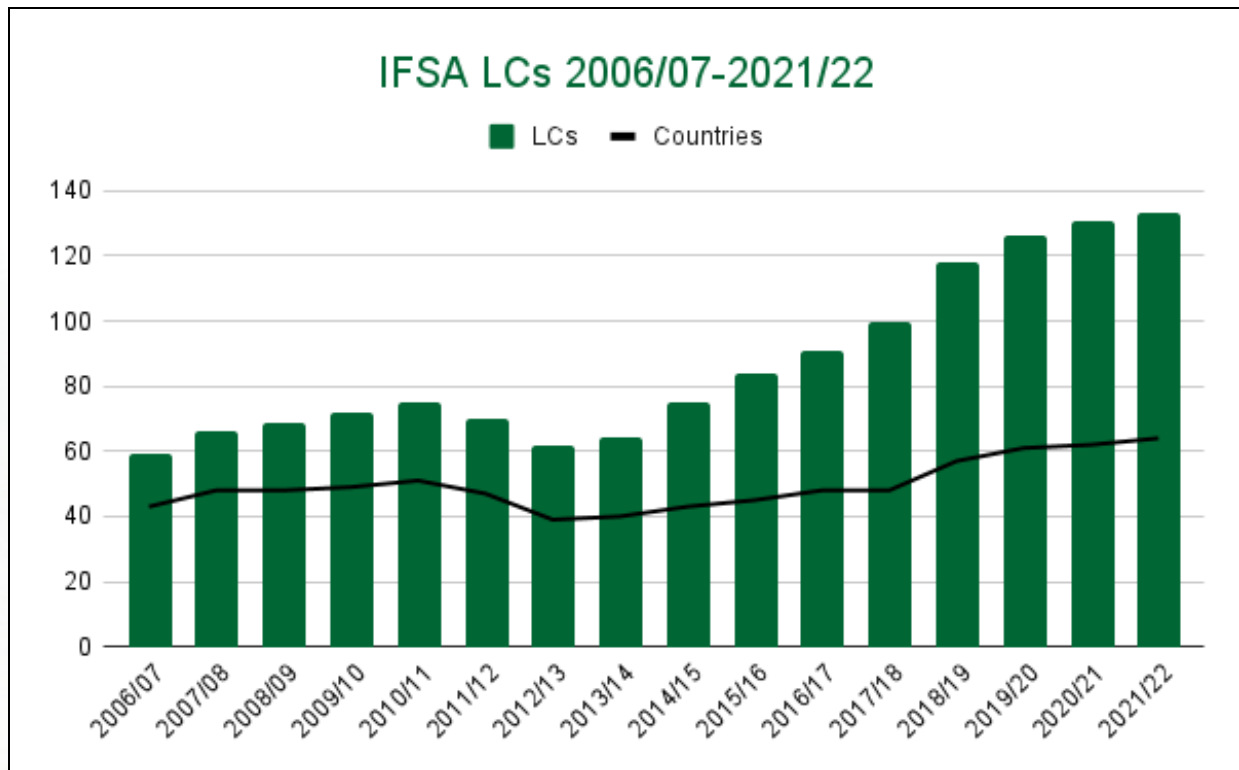


Figure 2: Evolution of IFSA LCs and countries over the period 2006/2007 - 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration based on data from the IFSA's Annual Reports)

Another interesting aspect of the historical evolution in IFSA's membership is its regional diversity. For this purpose, the Simpson's Diversity Index (SDI) was employed. It is an index originally developed for ecological purposes, to compare biological diversity of two or more localities, but it can be applied in other disciplines too¹. The formula of SDI is as follows:

$$D = 1 - \sum \frac{n \times (n - 1)}{N \times (N - 1)}$$

Where:

n = number of LCs within one region

N = number of all LCs

To have a better idea about the meaning of SDI applied to IFSA, the question we want to answer by this index would go as *"If you randomly choose two LCs, what is the probability they will belong to two different regions?"* The value of SDI ranges between 0 and 1, where 0 means no diversity, and 1 means 100% diversity. There are two variables that have an

¹ Royal Geographical Society. Year unknown. A Student Guide to the A Level Independent Investigation (Non-examined Assessment—NEA). p 104. <https://bit.ly/3yL5Lba>

impact on the result value. These are the number of species (in our case number of regions) and number of individuals of each species (in our case number of LCs in each region). Since the number of regions remains same over the years (Asia and Oceania from 2006/2007 - 2012/2013 are merged into the current Asia Pacific for this purpose), it is only the number of LCs in each region that affects the result value. Basically, we can say that increasing the number of LCs in regions with many LCs and/or decreasing the number of LCs in regions with few LCs will decrease the SDI value, while in contrary, decreasing the number of LCs in regions with many LCs and/or increasing the number of LCs in regions with few LCs will increase the SDI value, hence, the regional diversity of IFSA.

As you can see in [Figure 3](#), the increasing trend of IFSA diversity is obvious in a long term since 2006/2007, with understandable fluctuations along the trendline, starting at 0.781 (78.1%) in 2006/2007, increasing to 0.834 (83.4%) in 2021/2022. It is possible to observe a rather significant increment of diversity in 2011/2012 compared to the year before. This can be explained by the previous mention that it was the period of decrease of LC number in Northern and Southern Europe, which were at the time regions with most LCs.

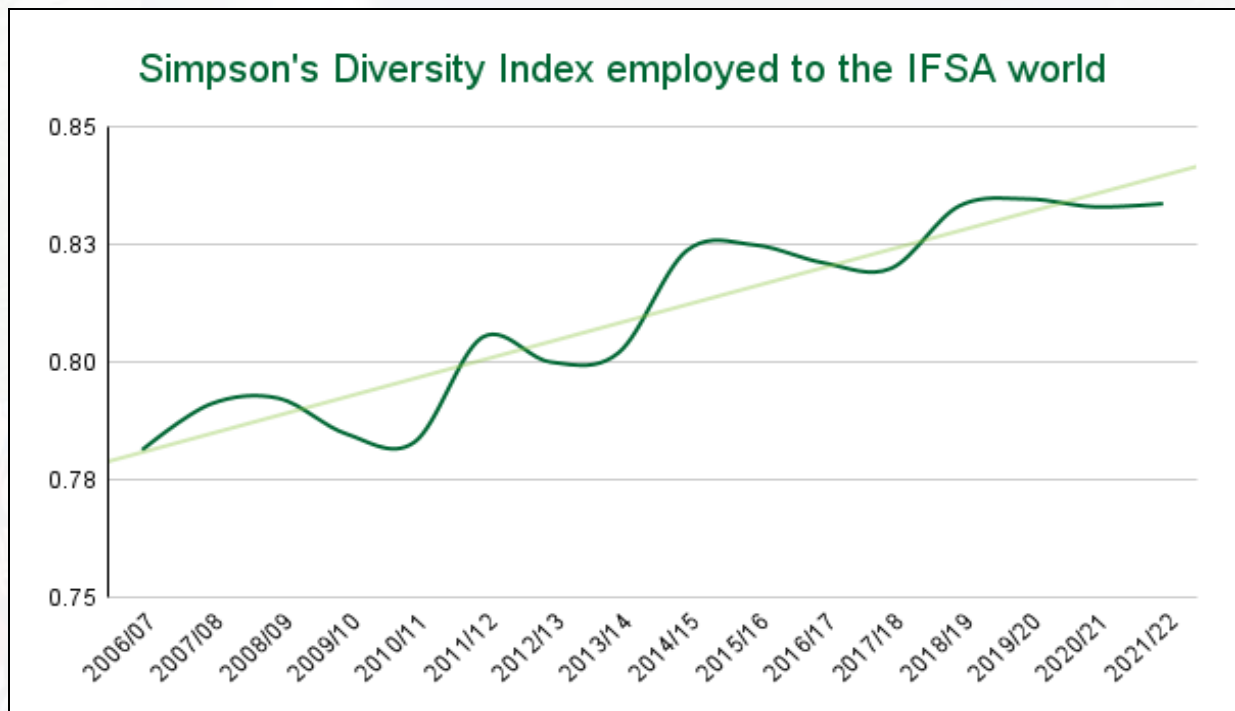


Figure 3: Simpson's Diversity Index (SDI) in IFSA (Source: Own elaboration based on data from the IFSA's Annual Reports)

2.2 Previous attempts for membership investigation in IFSA

Since knowing the membership structure is important for various reasons as mentioned in the introduction and as described more in detail in the chapter [Importance of knowledge on membership data](#), it is not surprising that there were already several attempts to investigate this topic in the past.

Disclaimer: *this chapter does not necessarily describe all the attempts made on this topic throughout IFSA's history. The authors have used available documentation found in the IFSA's electronic archive and a personal communication with relevant informants as mentioned in each attempt described.*

Firstly, an attempt was made by the Southern European Regional Representative Damiano Cilio in the term 2016/2017, creating a Google Sheets document sent to each LC of Southern Europe to fill in, containing three main sections: General information, Board information, and Dates, Activities & Members. The first section included LC name and acronym in local language, name and acronym in English, country, city, address, university, faculty, official email address, website, facebook page and facebook group. The section regarding the Board information included official Board email address, period of Board elections, frequency of Board meetings, list of all Board positions and their separate email addresses. The last section - Dates, Activities & Members - included current number of members, beginning of the LC's term, frequency of LC meetings and fixed periodic relevant activities.

From 22 LCs in Southern Europe at that moment (one more was accepted later that year), 11 (50.0%) filled in the data, although not always complete. It was, however, an insightful input for the RRs, enabling them to get a better overview of the region. Regarding the number of members, there were 472 individual members in the 11 LCs that filled in the data. On the average it makes 43 members per LC and no outlier was present in the data. If we extended this data to the missing 11 LCs, we could estimate there were around 944 members in the region in total.

Another attempt to get a membership insight, this time on the global IFSA scale, comes a year later. In the IFSA Strategy for the period 2018-2022 it is set as one of the plans to "launch inaugural 'IFSA Annual Survey' in 2018" and to "publish results from IFSA LC Survey

annually and utilise results as a feedback mechanism to shape priorities of work". A document was created discussing the survey questions among the Board members in the IFSA term 2018/2019 containing sections of Basic information (name of the main IFSA contact person, email, name of the LC) and LC information (questions about LC members and implemented activities and projects). The document also includes an additional section asking questions regarding how the LCs recruit new members and about their fundraising activities.

From a personal communication with George Dennison (Northern European Regional Representative 2017/2018 & Membership Councilor 2018/2019) results that the survey was actually launched in the end using the SurveyMonkey online software, but including only the first section in order to update the LC information + a space to provide details and/or comments within that. The main outcome of this global IFSA survey is a so-called Master Membership List created in the following term, 2019/2020, containing all the main LC information which has been continuously updated by the RRs and Membership Councilor until nowadays.

Third and last described attempt from the past comes once again from the Southern European Regional Representatives and includes only this region. Elif Naz Duman and Šimon Hrbek, the Southern European RRs from the term 2020/2021, created a Google Form survey for their region. This survey contained four sections: Membership, Events organised, IFSA Events attended and Events planned.

The first section asked about the number of the LC members divided into gender categories of Males, Females, Other non binary and Prefer not to say. The second section asked about the number of events the LC executed, divided them into four types: Local/National (online), Local/National (in-person), International (online) and International (in-person). This section also asked about what were the three most often types of focus of the executed events (for example, education, fun & relax, communication). In the section about IFSA Events attended, some main events organised by IFSA that term were listed, giving the LCs possibility to mark each of those that were attended by at least one LC member. The last section - Events planned - was included for the reason the survey was launched in April 2021 and the collection period lasted one month only. Hence, a lot of information regarding the LC events executed would be lost, excluding the months

between May and August 2021. This section therefore asked about the number of events the LC had already well planned until the end of the term.

The survey was answered by 25 out of 27 (92.6%) Southern European LCs that term, giving a reliable overview of the state of the art of the regional membership and projects organised by the Southern European LCs in the term 2020/2021. This attempt has served as the starting point for the current global IFSA investigation described in detail in Part II of this report. The main outcomes of the Southern European survey from 2020/2021 are compared to the results of the data collected from the same region in 2021/2022 in the chapter [Comparison of Southern Europe 2020/2021 and 2021/2022](#).

PART II: Where are we?

Which presents the current investigation on the membership state of the art, thoroughly describes the survey distributed to all LCs and analyses its results.



3.1 Material and methods

3.1.1 Data collection

The only feasible way to explore the question of LC members and events organised by them was seen to be a global survey to all LCs and collect the data directly from them. The Membership Department started to discuss it already at the beginning of the term 2021/2022, reviewing the previous attempts. More seriously the topic was discussed during the hybrid Membership Department meeting held in February 2022 in Prague, Czechia. The definitions and questions were set there, after which the questionnaire with sixteen questions was compiled using a Google Form.

The discussion in Prague also included the timing of the data collection. Since the academic year and examinations take place at slightly different weeks and months in each region (sometimes even within one region), the department created a simple poll for the Regional Representatives (RRs) to vote which month(s) is/are suitable for their region to collect the data. The options included months between April to August and suitability was categorised as *not at all*, *little*, *average*, *quite good*, *great* and *just the best*. From this poll, the months of April and May came out as the most suitable ones by far and so the timing was decided.

Before starting the data collection, the RRs started to inform the LCs beforehand during the Coffee Hours (monthly meetings of the region where RRs share the news from the IFSA world with the members, inform them about upcoming opportunities and facilitate discussions on various topics) so that the LCs could prepare for the data collection. The Membership Department also prepared a video explaining the importance of knowing these statistics and asked the LCs for collaboration. The mentioned video can be viewed at ifsa.net/lc-data-collection/.

The data collection period took place between 8th April and 31st May 2022.

3.1.2 Survey structure

The survey contained sixteen questions divided into four sections. The first one asked the respondents to include their email address and the IFSA region their LC belongs to. Based on this, the survey led the respondent to a subsection of the given region, displaying all the LCs the region consists of to choose their one.

The following sections asked about membership and organised projects, respectively, ending with the concluding section with a space for the respondents to make any further comments, clarifications or ask questions.

Before proceeding to the description of each of the two main sections of the survey, it is necessary to explain some of the definitions the Membership Department made to unite the terminology for the respondents, to make the results comparable between LCs.

The aim was to explore how many individual members IFSA has in total, and also how many of them are active. For this purpose, the term '*active member*' needed to be defined since each respondent could understand it differently if not done so. The definition needed to be simple enough to make it easy for the respondents to assess this characteristic but at the same time it had to be informative enough to give us an idea of the members' activity. After a long discussion, an active member was defined as the one who *'joins at least two LC activities per year'*.

Having said that, another definition had to be created. This was the differentiation between '*LC project*' and '*LC activity*'. For the purpose of knowing how many projects/events the LC has organised throughout the year, the term '*LC project*' was used, while '*LC activity*' includes both organised projects and LC meetings.

Membership

The section of membership consisted of six questions. These were as follows:

- ▶ How many members are currently in your LC?
- ▶ How many members are considered active?
- ▶ How many members are male?
- ▶ How many members are female?
- ▶ How many members are other non binary?
- ▶ How many members prefer not to say?

The introduction of this section included the above-mentioned definitions of an active member and LC activity.

LC Projects

The section of LC projects consisted of six questions. These were as follows:

- ▶ Number of projects executed
- ▶ How many of these projects have been local?
- ▶ How many of these projects have been international?
- ▶ How many of these projects have been online?
- ▶ How many of these projects have been in-person?
- ▶ What activity of your LC are you most proud of?

The introduction of this section included examples of some types of LC projects and the time frame considered when answering these questions (August 2021 - May 2022).

3.1.3 Data analysis

The Google Form was connected to a Google Sheets spreadsheet where all the raw data from the submitted questionnaires were automatically transferred. In the second sheet of the spreadsheet, the received data were sorted out based on the LCs. Pivot table was used to group the data by region in categories of *All members*, *Active members*, *Males*, *Females*, *Other non-binary*, *Prefer not to say* for membership, and *All projects*, *Local*, *International*, *Online* and *In-person* for LC projects. For each of the variables, a chart was created on a global IFSA level, as well as a comparison between regions.

At the end, information from 107 LCs was received, which makes 80.5% of all 133 LCs. The responsiveness varied across regions, ranging from 60% in Northern America to 100% in Northern Africa and Southern Europe. Detailed structure of the received data by region is possible to see in [Table 2](#) below.

To have an estimation of the overall state of the art of the IFSA membership and projects executed by the LCs, the data was extrapolated for the remaining 19.5% of LCs. For this purpose, the data from the individual regions were firstly checked for potential outliers and these were not counted with when extrapolating the data.

In the case of Asia Pacific, there were two outliers in the number of members and none in the number of projects. In the case of Latin America, there was not any outlier in the number of members and one in the number of projects. In the case of Northern Africa, there were two outliers in the number of members and one in the number of projects. In the case of Northern America, there was one outlier in the number of members and none in the number of projects. In the case of Northern Europe, there were four outliers in the

number of members and two in the number of projects. In the case of Southern Africa, there was one outlier in the case of number of members and none in the number of projects. And in the case of Southern Europe, there were two outliers in the number of members and two in the number of projects.

After removing the outliers, the averages were counted for the number of members and projects per region, and these were extrapolated for the remaining 19.5% of LCs who have not filled in the data survey.

Table 2: Structure of the received data from LCs per region (Source: Own elaboration)

<i>Region</i>	LCs in total	Filled in	Left	% of filled
Asia Pacific	35	25	10	71.4
Latin America	14	9	5	64.3
Northern Africa	14	14	0	100.0
Northern America	10	6	4	60.0
Northern Europe	22	17	5	77.3
Southern Africa	11	9	2	81.8
Southern Europe	27	27	0	100.0
Grand Total	133	107	26	80.5

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Membership

The total number of members in IFSA in the term 2021/2022 is 11,581 - ranging from 134 in Northern America to 5,287 in Northern Africa. The overall summary of the membership data can be seen in [Table 3](#) below, and the results of the individual parts such as regional distribution, gender distribution and activity are described more in detail in the following sub-chapters.

Regional distribution

The regional distribution of the LCs is as follows: Asia Pacific - 35 LCs (26.3%), Latin America - 14 LCs (10.5%), Northern Africa - 14 LCs (10.5%), Northern America - 10 LCs (7.5%), Northern Europe - 22 LCs (16.5%), Southern Africa - 11 LCs (8.3%), and Southern Europe -

27 LCs (20.3%). The regional distribution of individual members would be therefore expected to be similar if the LCs were generally of the same size in all regions. But the reality differs significantly.

The regional distribution of individuals is as follows (the number in brackets stands for the average number of members per LC after removing the outliers): Asia Pacific - 21.3% (33), Latin America - 3.3% (27), Northern Africa - 45.7% (274), Northern America - 1.2% (7), Northern Europe - 10.8% (25), Southern Africa - 7.9% (60), and Southern Europe - 10.0% (29). The graphical representation of the regional distribution of members can be seen in [Figure 4](#) and [Figure 5](#).

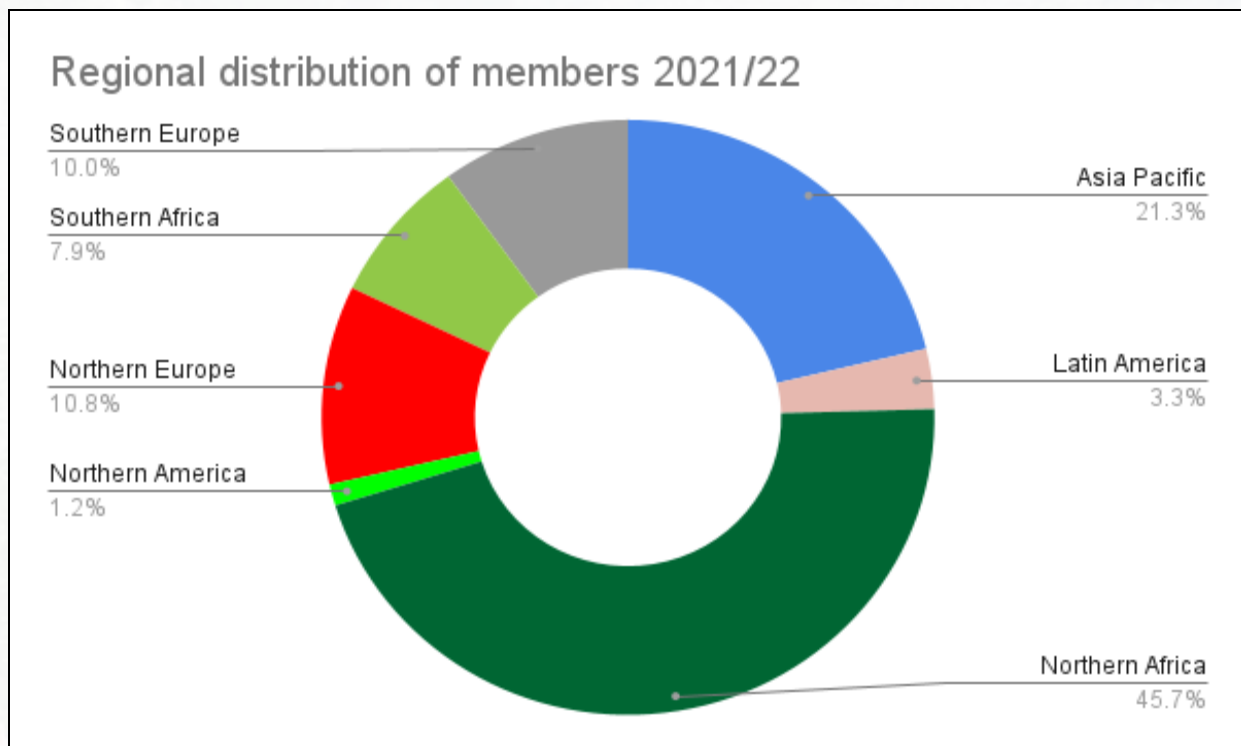


Figure 4: Regional distribution of members in IFSA in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

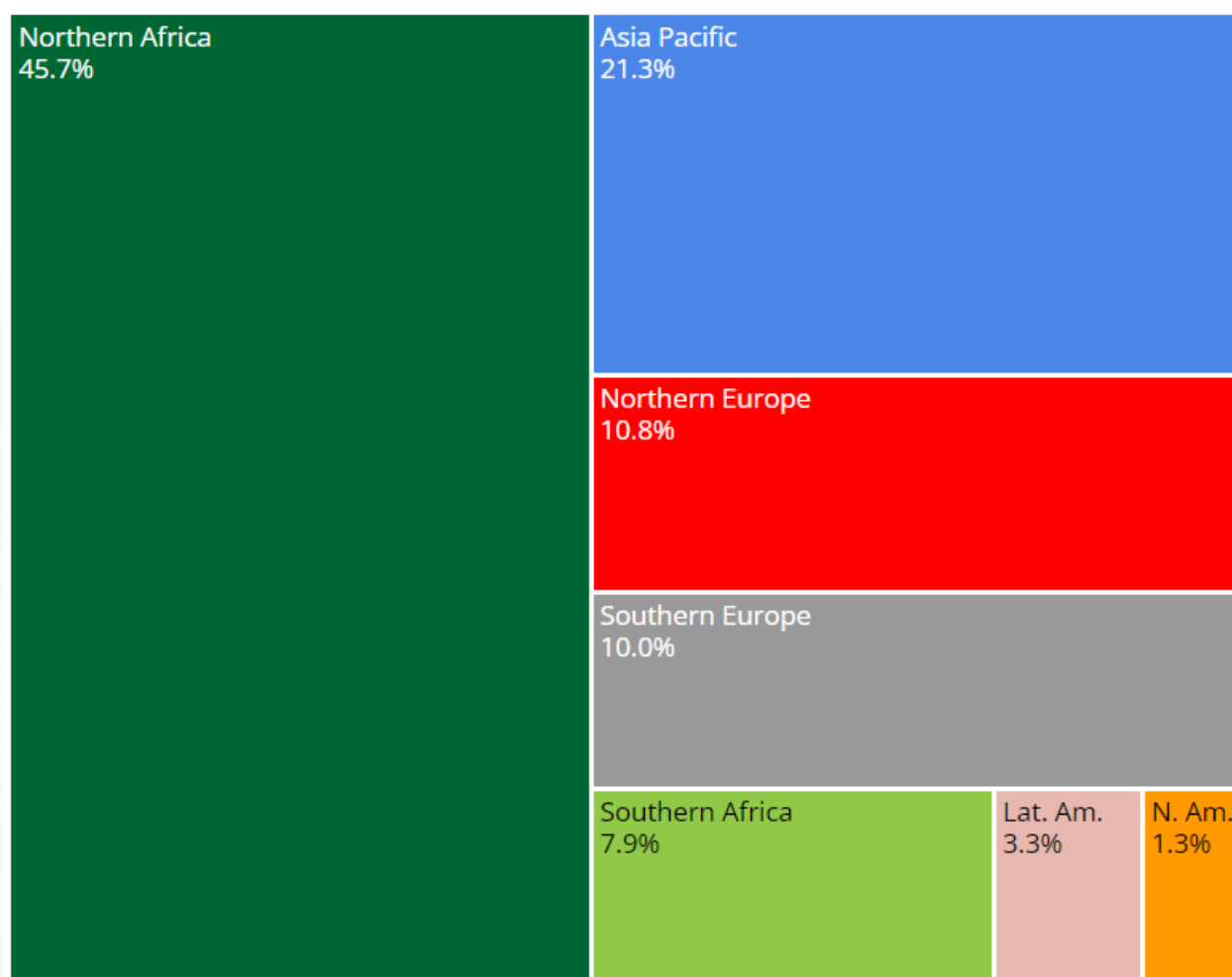


Figure 5: Visual representation of the regional distribution of members in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

Gender distribution

In terms of binary gender categories (male-female), the overall distribution is relatively equal with 5,627 (48.6%) males and 5,442 (47.0%) females. The remaining 4.4% are divided into those identifying themselves as other non-binary (83 or 0.7%) and those who prefer not to say (437 or 3.7%).

When looking at regional variances, it is possible to recognize three groups of regions. The first group is slightly more female-dominated, which includes Asia Pacific (49.3% females, 36.0% males, 14.5% prefer not to say, 0.2% other non-binary), Latin America (57.4% females, 41.8% males, 0.5% prefer not to say, 0.3% other non-binary) and Northern America (57.5% females, 41.7% males, 0.8% other non-binary). Second group is slightly

more male-dominated, including Southern Africa (56.1% males, 42.6% females, 0.8% other non-binary, 0.5% prefer not to say) and Southern Europe (57.3% males, 42.6% females, 0.1% prefer not to say). And the third group is the most balanced in terms of binary gender distribution, including Northern Africa (51.4% males, 46.2% females, 1.2% other non-binary, 1.2% prefer not to say) and Northern Europe (50.1% males, 49.2% females, 0.5% prefer not to say, 0.2% other non-binary).

The graphical representation of the overall gender distribution can be seen in [Figure 6](#) and the regional comparisons in [Figure 7](#).

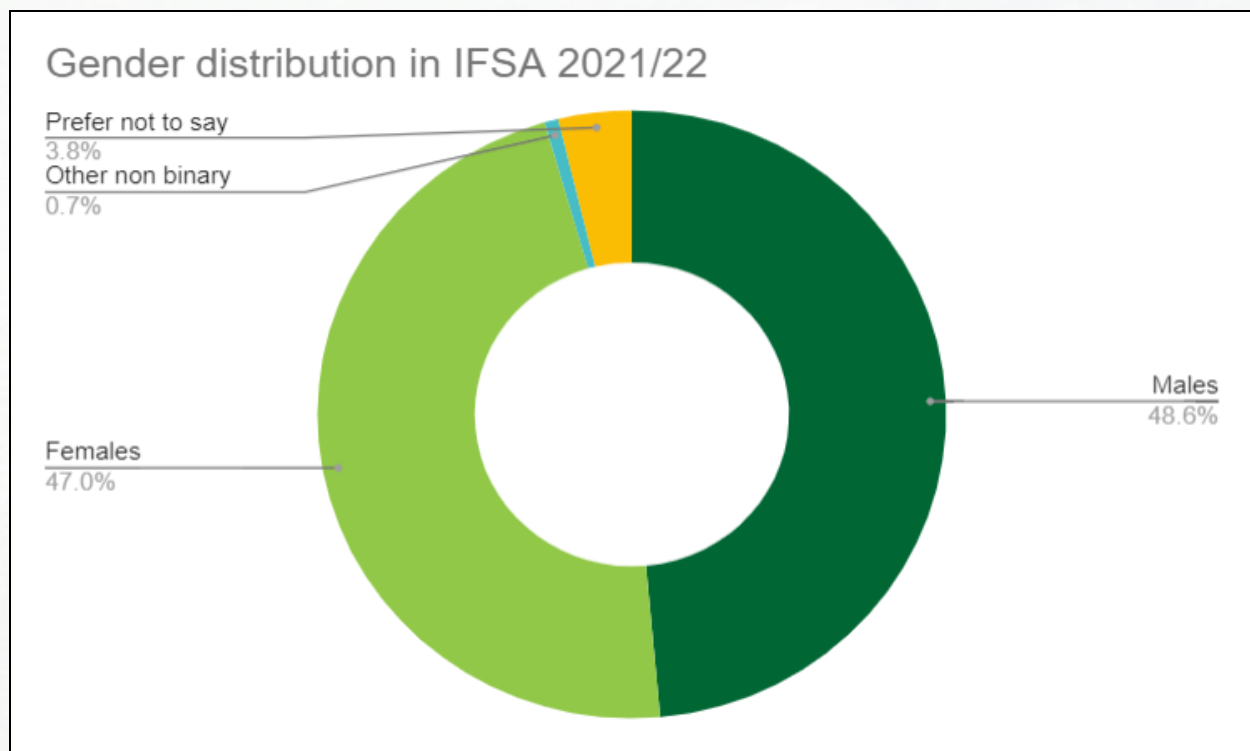


Figure 6: Gender distribution in IFSA in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

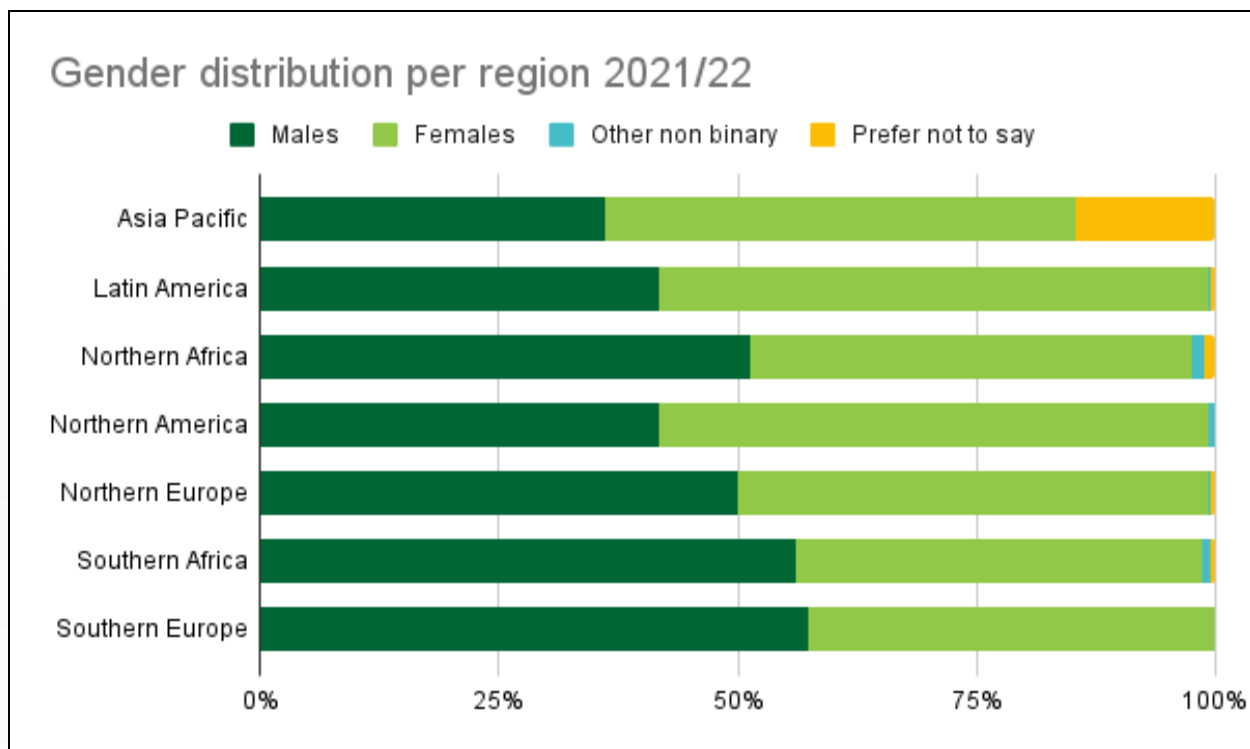


Figure 7: Gender distribution in IFSA per region in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

Activity

The overall activity ratio (percentage of active members from the total number of IFSA members) is 56.8%. This means that 6,573 out of 11,581 members have joined at least two LC activities per year, while the remaining 5,008 (43.2%) members have joined one or none LC activity per year and are hereby denominated as '*passive members*'. The visual representation can be seen in [Figure 8](#) below.

There are, however, significant differences between regions, ranging from 14.2% of active members in Northern America to 73.3% in Northern Europe. Between that, the regions with higher activity ratio are also Southern Africa with 66.3%, Asia Pacific with 63.5%, and Latin America with 58.2% of active members. Northern African members are equally active (52.4%) and passive (47.6%), respectively, and Southern Europe is after Northern America the only region with more passive members (58.7%) than active ones (41.3%). The visual representation of regional comparisons in terms of activity ratio can be seen in [Figure 9](#).

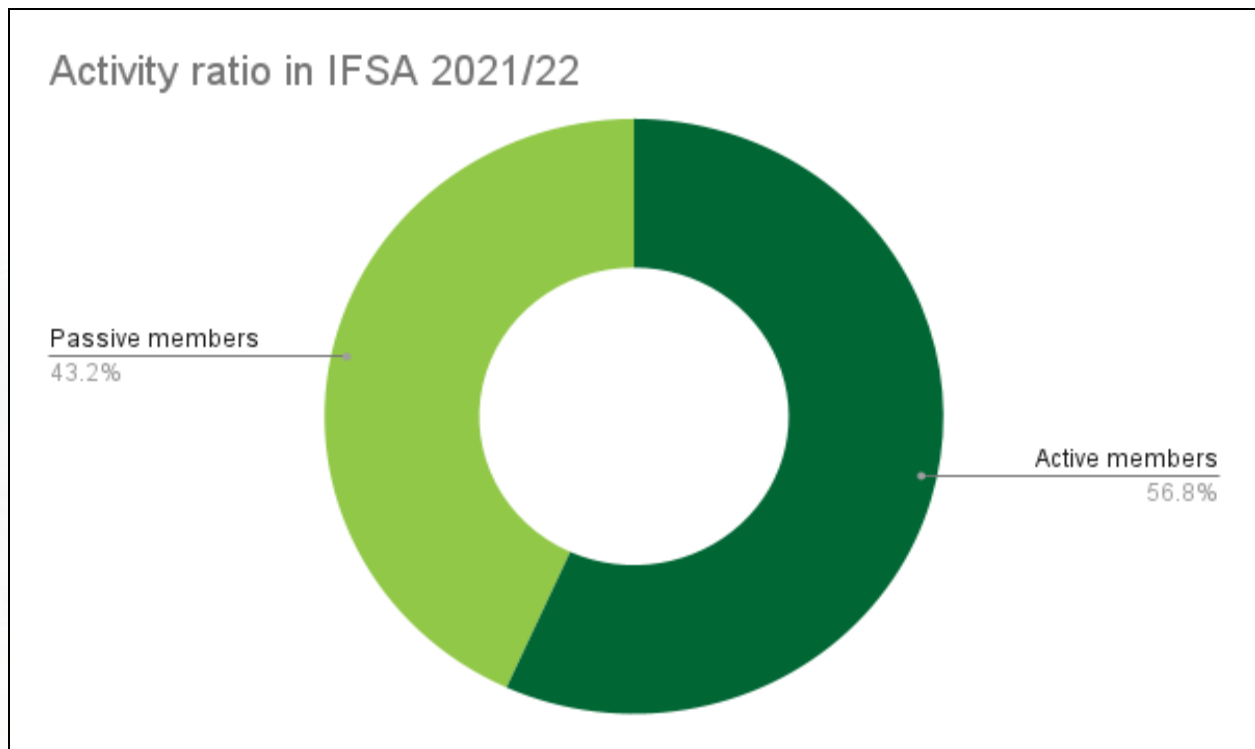


Figure 8: Activity ratio in IFSA in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

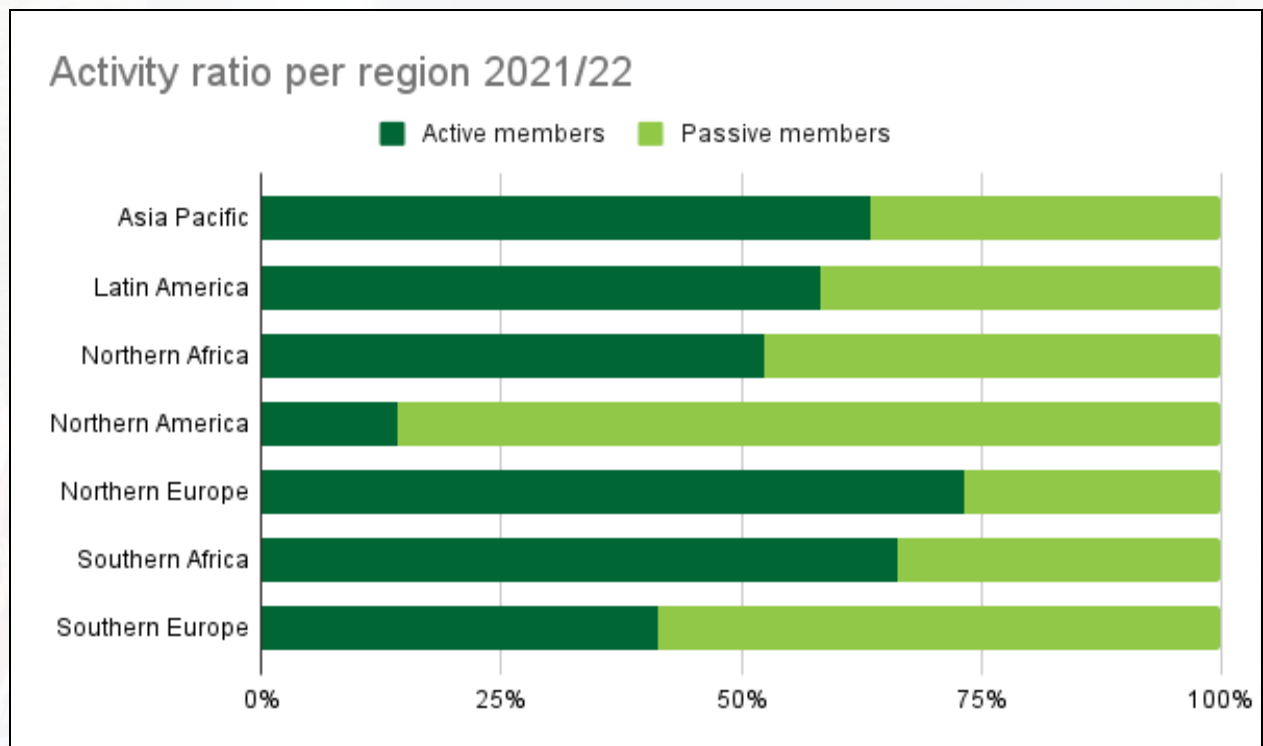


Figure 9: Activity ratio in IFSA per region in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

Table 3: Overview of the membership data in IFSA in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

<i>Region</i>	All members	Active members	Males	Females	Other non binary	Prefer not to say
Asia Pacific	2,466	1,566	885	1,209	5	357
Latin America	378	220	158	217	1	2
Northern Africa	5,287	2,771	2,718	2,437	66	66
Northern America	134	19	53	73	1	0
Northern Europe	1,250	916	626	615	3	6
Southern Africa	911	604	511	388	7	5
Southern Europe	1,155	477	676	503	0	1
Grand Total	11,581	6,573	5,627	5,442	83	437

3.2.2 LC projects

The total number of projects executed by the LCs between August 2021 and May 2022 is 1,304, which on average makes approximately 10 projects per LC. This is, however, much biased by the LCs from Sweden (IFSA Umeå and SMS Studentkår) who have organised 230 and 240 projects, respectively. The total number of projects executed in each region also varies, ranging from 11 in Northern America to 686 in Northern Europe. All data regarding LC projects are summarised in [Table 4](#) below.

Local vs. International

As LCs operate on the local level in the first place, it is not surprising that the majority of the executed projects have had the local character. More precisely, 1,215 (93.2%) of all projects were local, and only 89 (6.8%) international.

In terms of regional differences, in five out of seven regions the distribution varied between 90.0% to 94.7% of local projects, and between 5.3% to 10.0% of the international ones. The only exceptions are Latin America, whose locally focused projects comprised 79.5% and the remaining 20.5% were international, and Northern America that had 100.0% projects of the local character.

[Figure 10](#) shows the overall distribution of local and international projects in IFSA, while [Figure 11](#) compares their distribution separately per region.

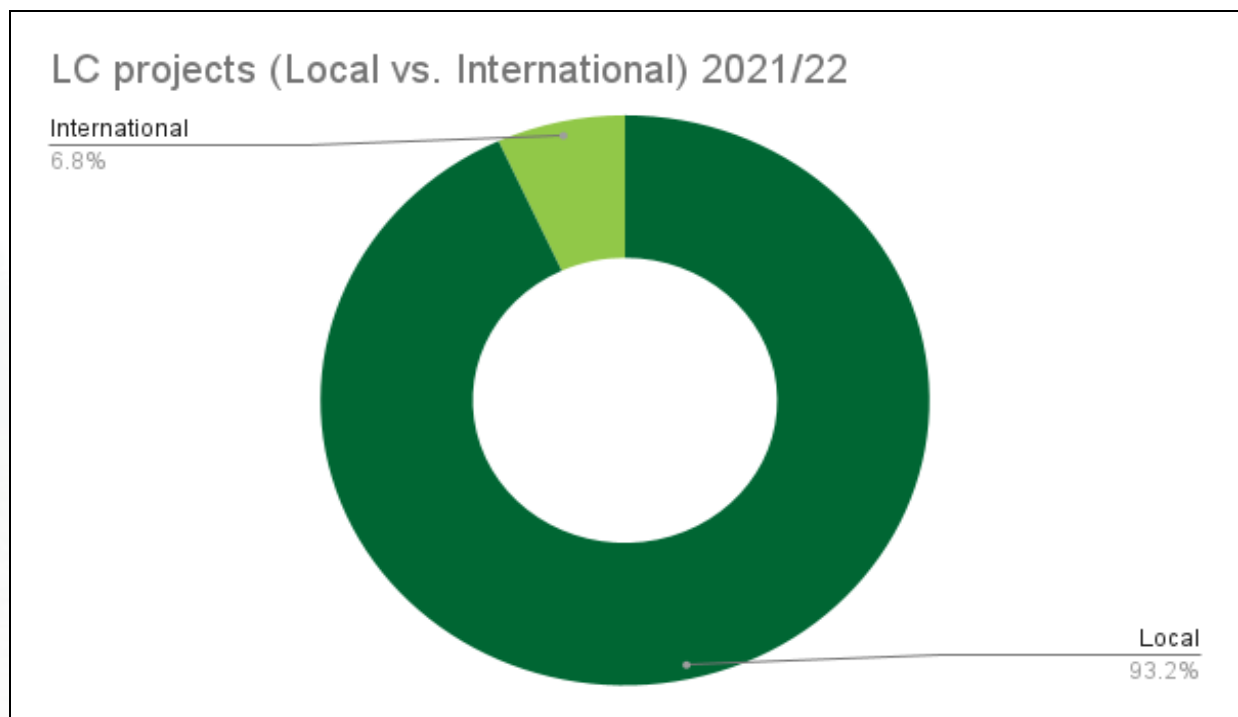


Figure 10: Local/International LC projects in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

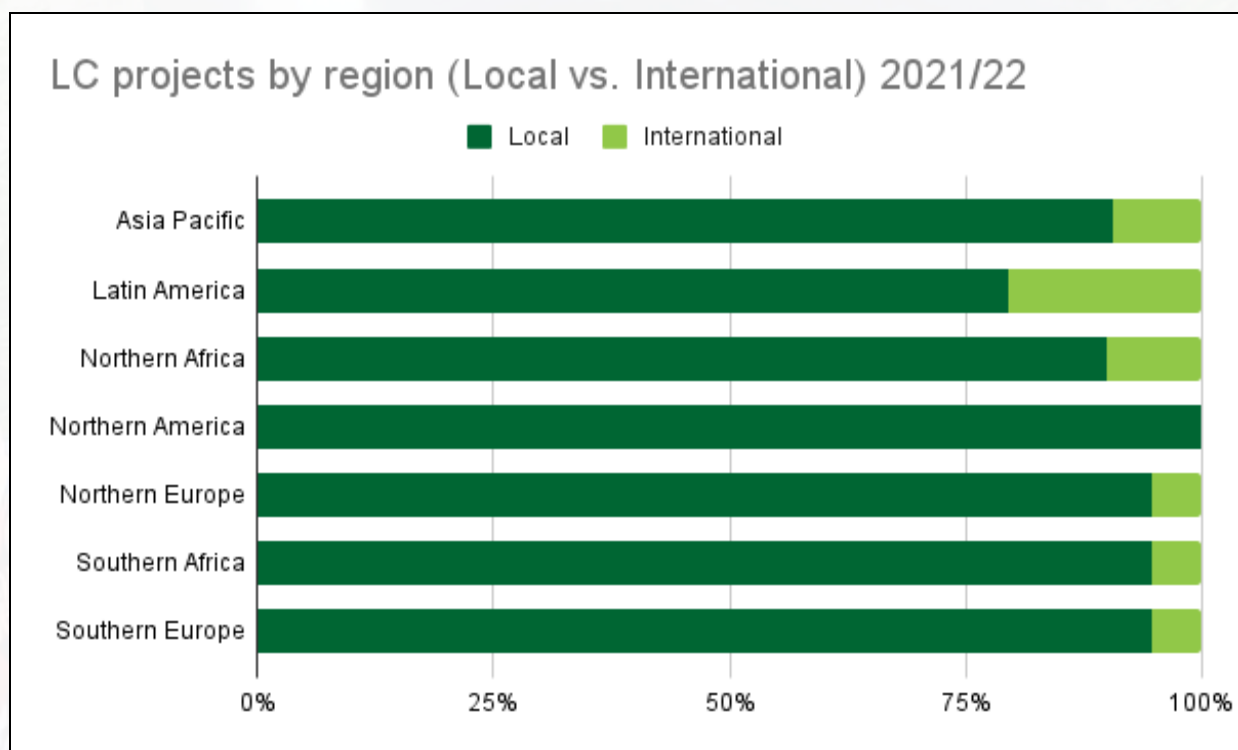


Figure 11: Local/International LC projects per region in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

Online vs. In-person

The proportion of online and in-person projects is not a surprise either. As it could be expected, the majority of projects have been organised in person, although the difference is not as large as in the case of local vs. international projects. 1,003 (76.9%) of all projects have been executed physically (in person), while the remaining 301 (23.1%) online.

The regional differences are, however, much larger than in the case of the previous division, ranging from 6.7% online and 93.3% in-person projects in Northern Europe to 62.9% online and 37.1% in-person projects in Asia Pacific.

If the regions should be grouped based on this type of projects division, three groups could be created. The first group comprises Northern Africa, Northern America and Northern Europe where online projects created between 6.7% to 18.2% and in-person ones between 81.8% to 93.3%. Second group includes Latin America, Southern Africa and Southern Europe where online projects created approximately one third (between 32.0% to 35.9%) and in-person ones approximately two thirds (between 64.1% to 68.0%) of all projects. Asia Pacific stands alone in the last group where the online projects (62.9%) dominated over the in-person ones (37.1%).

Figure 12 shows the overall distribution of online and in-person projects in IFSA, while Figure 13 represents its regional differences.

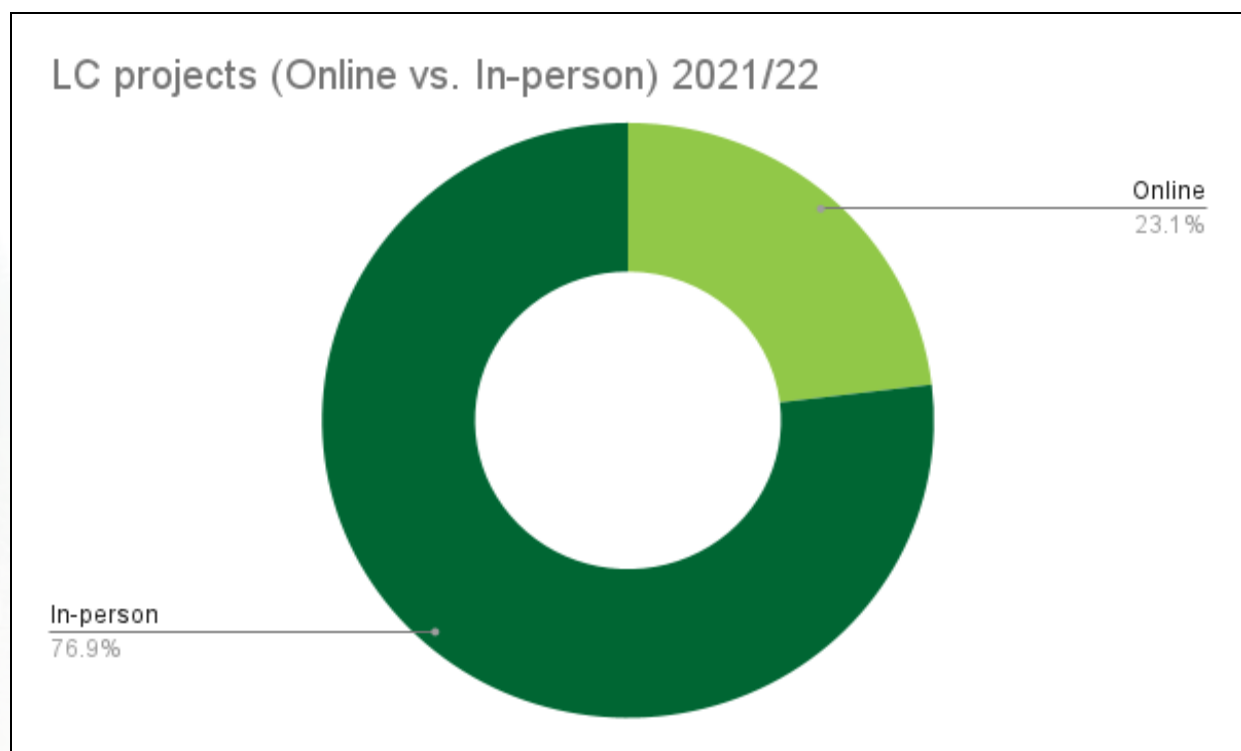


Figure 12: Online/In-person LC projects in IFSA in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

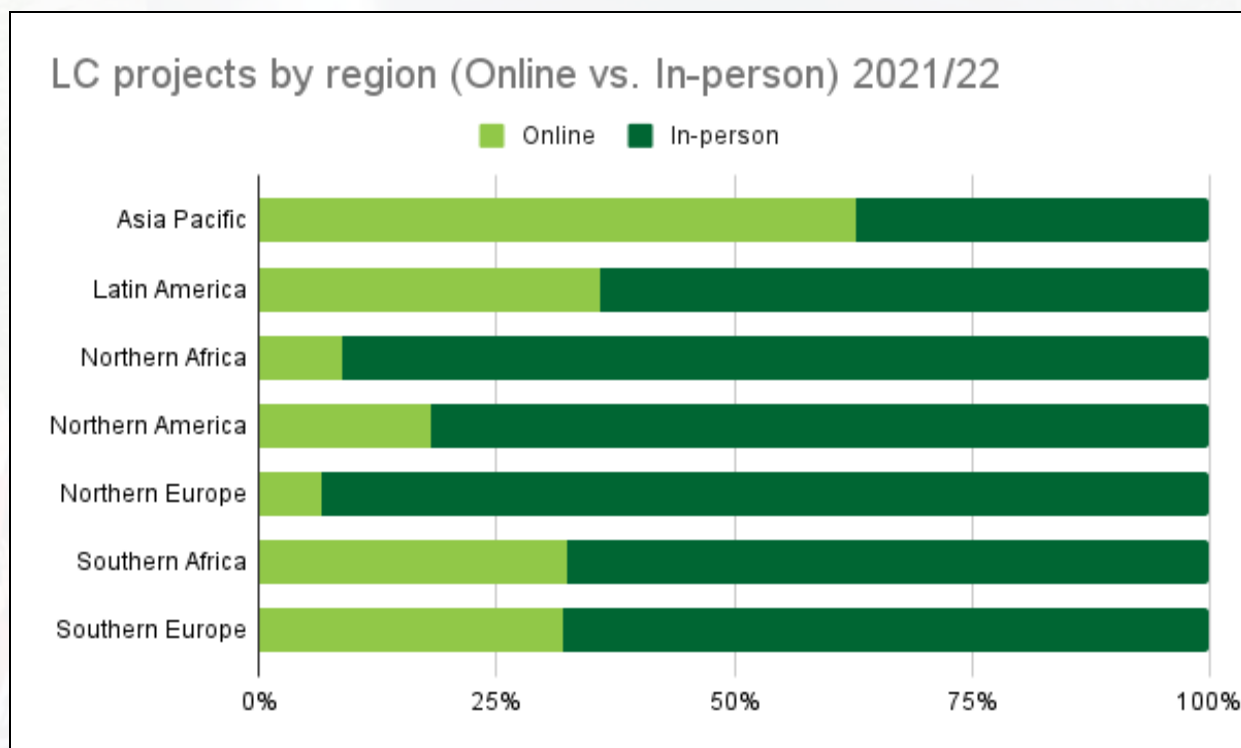


Figure 13: Online/In-person LC projects per region in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

Table 4: Overview of the LC projects data in IFSA in 2021/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

<i>Region</i>	All projects	Local	International	Online	In-person
Asia Pacific	245	222	23	154	91
Latin America	39	31	8	14	25
Northern Africa	80	72	8	7	73
Northern America	11	11	0	2	9
Northern Europe	686	649	37	46	640
Southern Africa	37	35	2	12	25
Southern Europe	206	195	11	66	140
Grand Total	1,304	1,215	89	301	1,003

3.3 Comparison of Southern Europe 2020/2021 and 2021/2022

As mentioned in the chapter [Previous attempts for membership investigation in IFSA](#), in 2020/2021, a similar survey was distributed among the Southern European LCs. This fact gives the opportunity to compare the results of these two terms between themselves.

In 2020/2021, 25 LCs out of 27 filled in the data survey, and the results were extrapolated in the same way as described in this publication, after removing the outliers. In 2021/2022, all 27 LCs filled in the survey as mentioned in the chapter [Data analysis](#).

3.3.1 Membership

Compared to the previous term, the overall number of members in Southern Europe has almost doubled in size from 614 to 1,155 members (87.9% increase) in 2021/2022. It owes especially to the fact there were three LCs whose number of members has increased by 200.0%, 1,020.0% and 2,763.6%, respectively, since the previous term (see more comment on this in the chapter [Limitations](#)).

Eight other LCs increased in numbers as well, gaining between 19.2% to 53.3% of their members. Nine Southern European LCs have maintained approximately the same number of members, with just moderate positive or negative changes, respectively - ranging from 16.7% decrease to 12.9% increase. On the contrary, one LC has lost a third of its members and four LCs have lost between 48.3% to 80.0%.

In the case of three LCs, it is not possible to compare the data. One of these LCs did not provide the data in 2020/2021 and moreover was expelled in August 2021 and hence their data were not collected in term 2021/2022 either. Another LC was accepted to IFSA in January 2022 and hence its data from 2020/2021 are missing. And the third LC did provide data in 2021/2022 but not in the term before.

Gender distribution

In 2020/2021, the binary gender distribution was in Southern Europe more balanced with 50.1% of males and 49.6% of females (remaining 0.3% preferred not to say) than in 2021/2022 with 57.3% of males and 42.6% of females (remaining 0.1% preferred not to say).

Figure 14 shows the comparison of gender distribution in Southern Europe in 2020/2021 and 2021/2022.

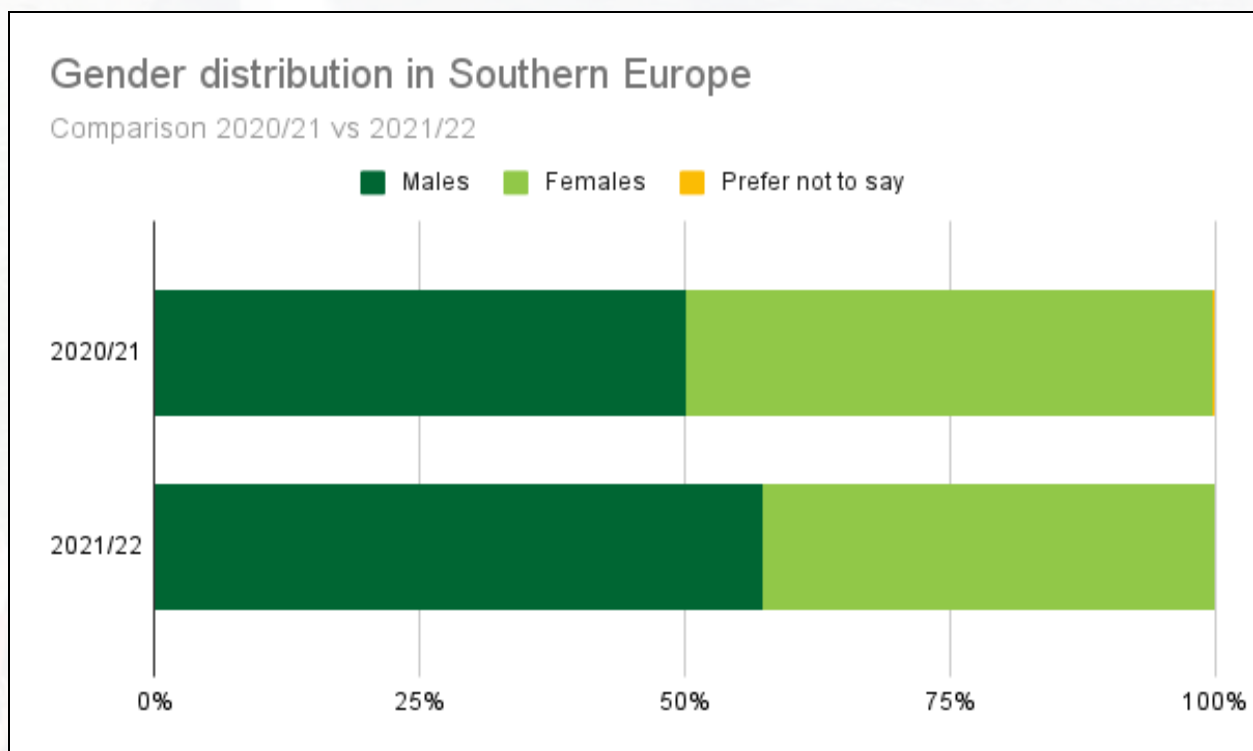


Figure 14: Comparison of gender distribution in Southern Europe (Source: Own elaboration)

3.3.2 LC projects

The distribution of projects was significantly affected by Covid-19 throughout these two years, with well visible distinction between 2020/2021 and 2021/2022. In terms of absolute number of projects executed, 89 projects were executed in Southern Europe in 2020/2021, while the term after it was 206. Hence, the interannual increment of executed projects in total was 148.2%.

Local vs. International

When taking a look at the division of local and international projects in Southern Europe, although the absolute number of international projects has stayed approximately the same (12 in 2020/2021, 11 in 2021/2022), it is possible to see a significant decrease in their proportion in the total sum of projects executed. This is caused by the 150.0% increase in the local projects (77 in 2020/2021 and 195 in 2021/2022).

When taking a look at the ratio, it means that from 86.7% of local and 13.3% of international projects organised in 2020/2021, the distribution has changed to 94.7% of local and 5.3% international in 2021/2022. [Figure 15](#) visualises the described comparison.

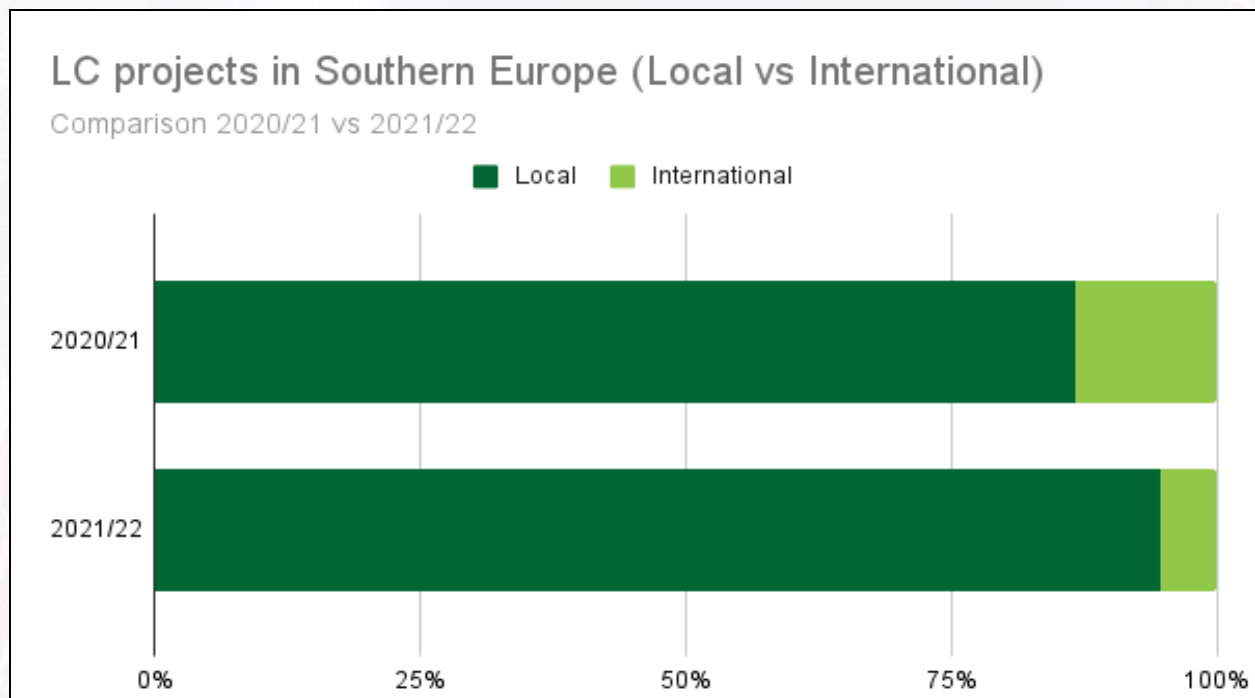


Figure 15: Comparison of local/international LC projects in Southern Europe (Source: Own elaboration)

Online vs. In-person

Even more significant difference can be noticed when comparing the ratio of LC projects in terms of their online and in-person format. While the absolute number of online projects has decreased from 74 in 2020/2021 to 66 in 2021/2022, the in-person ones have increased from 15 in 2020/2021 to 140 in 2021/2022. This means a 10.8% decrease in the number of online projects and 833.3% increase in the number of the physical ones in just one term.

When comparing the online and in-person ratio, the difference is very large. From 83.1% of online projects and 16.9% in-person ones in 2020/2021 the ratio has changed to 32.0% of online and 68.0% of in-person ones in 2021/2022. [Figure 16](#) visualises this data.

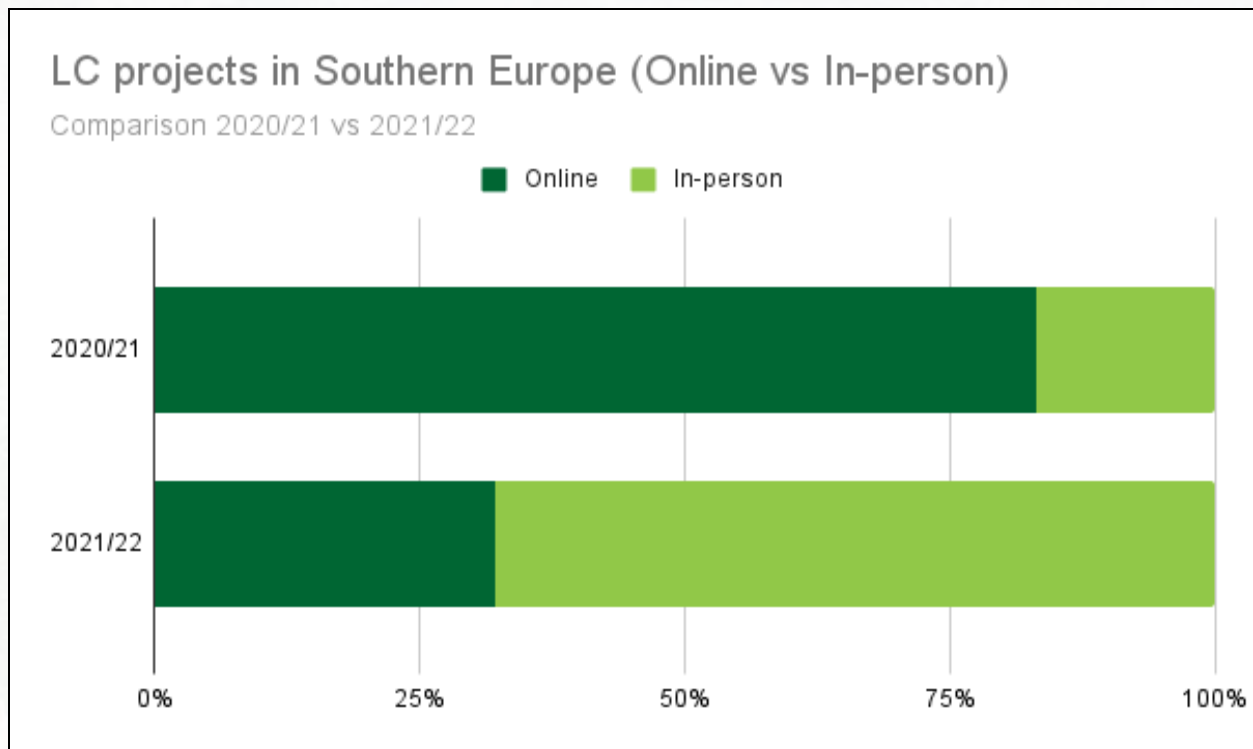


Figure 16: Comparison of online/in-person LC projects in Southern Europe (Source: Own elaboration)

3.4 Case studies of LC projects

As mentioned in the chapter [Survey structure](#), the last question in the LC Projects section of the survey was *'What activity of your LC are you most proud of?'* It is deemed crucial to showcase some of the successful LC-led projects to the IFSA world, so that other LCs and members can get inspired by their peers' initiatives and ideas and potentially implement some of them in their own local settings.

For this purpose, the Membership Department along with the Board have selected one of the LC projects mentioned in the survey submissions per region, and contacted the respective LCs to get a more detailed description of this project. This chapter is fully dedicated to showcasing these seven projects, citing the description received from the LCs.

The showcased LC projects are the following:

- ▶ **IFSA Goes to Teaching**
 - ▷ IFSA LC UNHAS, Indonesia (Asia Pacific)
- ▶ **CHAUPEAniversario**
 - ▷ LC CHAUPEA, Mexico (Latin America)
- ▶ **Green Ghana Project**
 - ▷ LC RENARSA KNUST, Ghana (Northern Africa)
- ▶ **International Conversations**
 - ▷ LC IFSA-OSU, United States of America (Northern America)
- ▶ **Scandinavian meeting**
 - ▷ LC Copenhagen, Denmark & LC Umeå, Sweden (Northern Europe)
- ▶ **Green School**
 - ▷ LC GASY Forestry Students' Association, Madagascar (Southern Africa)
- ▶ **Forests are for everyone!**
 - ▷ LC Braşov, Romania (Southern Europe)

IFSA Goes to Teaching

Region: Asia Pacific

LC: IFSA LC UNHAS (Indonesia)

Date: 31/05 2021

Description: To teach is to study, to educate is to learn. Inequality in education is something that still exists in Indonesia. We come in the same sense if teaching is not merely about speaking in front of class about something. Teaching is more than that. Teaching is helping someone find the secret of this world, help them see and realise what's going on around us. As the pandemic hits the world in a very hard way. The government decided to close the school and started introducing virtual learning. Moreover, what is going on with a remote area where signal is something that is so hard to find? How do they learn?

Through some area research, we (IFSA LC UNHAS) decided to go to a school which is built by president instruction. School built by president instruction is a school that is built for the purpose of making children in remote areas able to access education. It took one month to get funding from faculty and do research about which school that we will be visiting. The program is only a one day program.

On May 31, 2021 IFSA LC UNHAS we went to SD Trans Parang Pungallu, Belabori Village, Gowa Regency. There are 17 students from 1st to 6th grade. We play a lot of fun things. First we distributed free masks to all of the children there, then we showed them about types of plastics through interactive ppt, then we played find the cards, and finally we gave them some prizes of appreciation.

Here, we learn a lot on how education can change someone's life. The fact that these children only have three teachers in one school, and it took 3km of walking from their home once a week to submit their assignments and take another assignment because they have no internet was something that makes us feel so blessed. The word "international" in our organisation's name incentivises us to think globally, while the word "Local Committee" leads us to make changes in our community.



Figure 17: IFSA Goes to Teaching (Source: Archive of IFSA LC UNHAS)

CHAUPEAniversario

Region: Latin America

LC: LC CHAUPEA (Mexico)

Date: 05/02 2022

Description: On February 5, a celebration for the 8th anniversary of LC Chapingo Unido Por El Ambiente (CHAUPEA) was held, in which we had the great participation of graduate members of the association, Ing. Eleazar Abraham Beh Miss, Ing. Itzhak López González and Ing. Braulio Francisco Galicia Villarreal. They told us about the perspective they have about the impact of CHAUPEA within our university, the strengthening of their professional and personal growth. In addition, the recognition of consultative members was granted to Ing. Rosa Ivette Estrada Cortés and Ing. Itzhak López González for their distinguished career within the Local Committee. It is worth mentioning that this conversation was also held with the intention of motivating our new members who were joining at that time as part of the strategies of the new 2021-2022 LC Board.

Finally, the communication commission of the LC created a campaign on social media with the hashtag #OchoAñosUnidosPorElAmbiente (Eight Years United For The Environment) in which we uploaded stories so that people knew more about the association, and that our members share the actions they carry out in favour of the environment as well as their most memorable memories in the association through pictures.

We give special thanks to the people who were able to join us and congratulated us:

- ▶ Officials gathered in Prague for the IFSA Interim
- ▶ Elivis Omoit, Head of CIFOR / YiL Sub-Commission at IFSA
- ▶ Isabelle Claire, Internal Councilor at IFSA
- ▶ Steve Guzmán, Latin American Regional Representative at IFSA
- ▶ Chloe Abayao, Head of Communications Commission at IFSA
- ▶ Gaby Monge, President of the LC ASFA
- ▶ Šimon Hrbek, Membership Councilor at IFSA
- ▶ LC PFSA (Spain)
- ▶ LC Göttingen (Germany), LC Umeå (Sweden) & LC Copenhagen (Denmark)
- ▶ LC CFCF UNALM (Peru)
- ▶ LC IFSA Pokhara (Nepal)

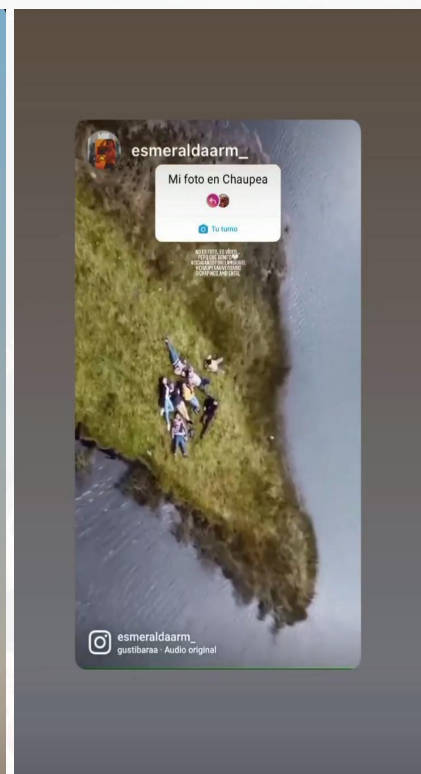


Figure 18-21: CHAUPEAniversario (Source: Archive of LC CHAUPEA)

Green Ghana Project

Region: Northern Africa

LC: RENARSA KNUST (Ghana)

Date: 11/06 2021

Description: Tree planting has become a cornerstone of many environmental campaigns in recent years. The call to plant trees is everywhere, seen as a simple and effective way to help reduce the impact of carbon emissions and restore natural ecosystems. Ghana has been losing rainforest at an alarming rate in recent years, but the government of Ghana is taking steps to change all that.

The Green Ghana initiative seeks to create a collective action toward the restoration of degraded landscapes in the country, mitigate climate change and inculcate in the youth the values of planting and nurturing trees and their associated benefits.

Green Ghana Day on Friday 11 June 2021 saw communities come together for a massive drive to plant over 5 million trees nationwide. As part of the Green Ghana Day campaign, the Government of Ghana provided free seedlings to all individuals, government and non-governmental organisations, traditional leaders, and educational and religious institutions willing to roll up their sleeves and help out.

After its launch on Friday, 11 June 2021, the initiative saw many top government officials and members of the public plant trees in their homes, schools, and other designated areas. RENARSA KNUST also partook in this exercise with 200 students of which 80 were females and 101 male students and 19 staff on the 11 of June 2021. We planted about 1,500 trees at the KNUST around the poolside area, Kwamo plantations, the Anwomaso plantation, Business School, law faculty, and the medical village. We left around 9am and returned at 3:20pm which is 6 hours 20 minutes. Overall, the program was seen as educational, engaging, and fun where members loved volunteering themselves.



Figure 22-24: Green Ghana Project (Source: Archive of LC RENARSA KNUST)

International Conversations

Region: Northern America

LC: OSU-IFSA (United States of America)

Date: 16/02, 02/03, 01/06 2022

Description: This is a series of talk events where we invited one or more faculty members, researchers, postdocs or graduate students to discuss certain topics regarding forestry and natural resources in a distended environment. During these conversations we tried to focus on some of the international experiences of our guest(s), as well as some aspects of their personal path. Some of the events hosted by OSU-IFSA as part of the International Conversations series were:

- ▶ Rural Development and Community Forestry - 16th February 2022
- ▶ Sustainable Development Solutions - The Authenticity Imperative - 2nd March 2022
- ▶ Partnership between OSU and Peru on conducting different research projects on forestry and natural resources topics in Peruvian Amazon (6 peruvian students as panel) - 1st June 2022



The flyer features a header with the IFSA logo and a background image of a lush tropical forest. The main title 'International Conversations' is prominently displayed. The event details, including the date, time, location, and Zoom link, are listed on the left. The central text describes the partnership between OSU and Peru, focusing on the FoLIAGE research group and the FOREST program. Below this, the names and portraits of the six Peruvian students participating in the panel are shown. The footer includes the logos of Oregon State University, FoLIAGE, USAID, and the FOREST program.

International FORESTRY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION IFSA

International Conversations

When?
Wed, June 1st, 12 PM

Where?
PFSC 104
[Zoom link available here!](#)

Snacks will be provided

For questions please email
Claudio or Kamana
claudio.guevara@oregonstate.edu
kamana.poudel@oregonstate.edu

Partnership between OSU and Peru

The FoLIAGE research Group (Forest, Livelihoods, Institutions and Governance) at OSU's College of Forestry in a partnership with the USFS' Forest Oversight and Resource Strengthening (FOREST) Program in Peru, are studying multiple aspects of Peruvian forests sustainability and resilience.

Several students from Peru -graduated from Universidad Nacional de la Amazonía Peruana (UNAP) and Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina (UNALM)- are now conducting their research in OSU and would like to invite you to learn and engage in a distended environment. Come join us!

Paula López Alejandro Chiroque Yury Llancari Raul Pacsi Yamile Sánchez Jose Ibaja

Oregon State University

FoLIAGE
Forest, Livelihoods, Institutions, and Governance Research Group

USAID
DEL PUEBLO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA

FOREST, programa de cooperación técnica de USAID y el Servicio Forestal de los EEUU

Figure 25: International Conversations flyer (Source: Archive of LC IFSA-OSU)

Scandinavian meeting

Region: Northern Europe

LC: IFSA LC Copenhagen (Denmark) and LC Umeå (Sweden)

Date: 26-29/05 2022

Description: It all started with LC Copenhagen contacting LC Umeå asking whether they were interested in organising a meetup together. Since the distance between Umeå and Copenhagen is very long, we decided to meet in the middle – somewhere in the centre of Sweden. At first, the plan was to have a small meeting with just the members of LC Umeå and Copenhagen participating but after a while we decided to invite all the LCs in Scandinavia – The IFSA Scandinavian meeting was born. Or so we thought, it later on turned out that the IFSA Scandinavian meeting wasn't something new. For many years there used to be a recurring Scandinavian meeting, but all of this was at the time unknown to us.

The first thing we started with was to look for accommodation in the central parts of Sweden – something that turned out to be quite tricky. At the same time, we worked with trying to get funding from different stakeholders such as forestry companies. Eventually we started to lay out the program. Since we were to organise our meeting on a public holiday it was somewhat difficult to get our hands on people who were willing to make presentations or let us visit them. Nevertheless, we managed to put together a wonderful program containing visits to a local forest owner, a plant nursery, an arboretum, an international evening, a guided tour to a natural reserve and an IFSA workshop.

We received a fantastic response from the forest student community in Scandinavia and managed to get participants from more than eight different LCs and four different countries. In total, more than 15 students participated. We didn't succeed in attracting any Norwegian participants but hopefully we will be able to do so in the future. Because there will be a future. Through organising this event we have learned that there is a strong interest in the Scandinavian forestry student community to get together, strengthen the internordic network and discuss burning issues in today's forestry. And what better space is there to do so than the IFSA Scandinavian meeting?



Figure 26-28: Scandinavian meeting (Source: Johannes Herzog)

Green School

Region: Southern Africa

LC: GASY Forestry Students' Association (Madagascar)

Date: 23/08 2021, 24/02 2022, 25/05 2022

Description: Within the framework of the achievement of the objective fixed by the State is to re-green Madagascar from the "red island" to the "green island". Actions of creation of artificial forests and restoration of natural forests by reforestation or scrub or reforestation individuelle, village and industrial are thus envisaged. Relative goals within the framework of sustainable development, that is to say allowing to cover the needs of the local population and to preserve the forest resources for the future generation. In addition to these objectives, GFSA members also participate in reforestation activities in order to achieve the goal of re-greening Madagascar in schools and civil societies. But also, GFSA members teach pupils at primary and college about the importance of natural resources and environment through visiting Biological and Zoological Park in Tsimbazaza.

We started with the idea that by educating children in the right way, we can hope for a better future. The main objective is to sensitise the children and the future leaders within the framework of the protection of the environment. To plant trees in order to take precautions against deforestation.

During the sensitisation, the following points were addressed:

- ▶ Show our biodiversity richness;
- ▶ Explain the consequences of a degraded environment;
- ▶ Explain the importance of planting trees to children according to the four functions of the forest or the four ecosystem services: production, protection, regulation and social;
- ▶ Teach students planting methods and techniques;
- ▶ The education session was marked by a planting of fruit or trees. So, the students could see their fruits of the plantation but also have a healthy education compound.

"Every child we teach is a man we win," said Victor Hugo.



Figure 29-31: Green School (Source: Archive of LC GASY Forestry Students' Association)

Forests are for everyone!

Region: Southern Europe

LC: LC Braşov (Romania)

Date: September 2021

Description: In September 2021, we have organized together with “Copii de Cristal” N.G.O., based on their call for us to come and have two field trips in the forest surrounding Braşov. The main goal of this event was to introduce the kids that have different degrees of needs to the magnificent world of Forests and Forestry. We had a walk in the forest where we also gathered up trash if there was any on the way. Throughout the path we talked with these wonderful kids about our passion for forests and they shared with us their own passions. They have been very active and curious about different aspects of forestry (we got to the point of talking about vegetation zones in Romania). We had an amazing time, all of us. We got amazing feedback from the coordinators after the events, where the kids asked about us and were requesting to meet us again. Due to this, we will try to organise ourselves so we can go and meet them once per month.

For us, it was a moving experience, where we learned how much we should be grateful to our state and how much we owe to people that were simply unlucky, for this reason we advise anybody to try this experience!



Figure 32: Forests are for everyone! (Source: Archive of LC Braşov)

PART III: Where are we going?

Which discusses the implications of the investigation for the possible future direction and suggests particular actions of the Membership Department and IFSA as a whole.



4.1 Discussion

When discussing the results, it is worth looking at the structure of the data received in the first place. There are regions with higher response rates and those with lower ones. In the case of only 60% LCs submitting the data in Northern America, it is well in line with the data received - in other words, that this region at present is the one with the lowest number of members, activity ratio and organising least projects. Hence, focusing at activating Northern America in the following years and searching for the ways to motivate its members to get more involved in IFSA is highly recommended for the future Membership Councilors and Northern American Regional Representatives.

It is worth adding that since May/June 2022, six out of ten Northern American LCs got connected together, chose new RRs and started to work hard and fresh on reviving the region. Hence, it is believed and hoped that soon the region will gain momentum again and things will go better. It will be then interesting to compare the LC data in the following years.

Out of 26 LCs not filling in the LC data survey, 10 (38.5%) come from Asia Pacific. Since it is the region with the highest number of LCs, it is not that surprising in itself. However, the Asia Pacific response ratio (71.4%) is under the overall IFSA responsiveness (80.5%) which can already be somewhat surprising taking into account that, generally, Asia Pacific could be classified as one of the top-active regions (second-largest number of members, third-largest activity ratio, second-largest number of projects, largest percentage of IFSA Officials in 2021/2022 - see below).

Membership

In terms of the regional distribution of members, there is a significant difference in the average number of members per LC across regions (ranging from 7 in Northern America to 274 in Northern Africa), which finally leads to a great difference between regional distribution of LCs and members. This is probably caused to a great extent by the difference in LCs' approach to accepting members: in some LCs, all forestry students of the faculty are automatically counted as members of the LC, in others one needs to apply for membership. In some LCs, the membership is free of charge, in others one needs to pay an

annual fee. And finally, in some LCs, one needs to fill in the membership form annually in order to be counted as a member, in others this is done only at the beginning or not at all.

This can partly also relate to the activity of the members within each region, or unequal distribution of external opportunities for IFSA members. As for example mentioned by various Regional Representatives of Northern America (region with the lowest number of LCs and members in 2021/2022) in the Annual Reports, the lack of external opportunities for Northern American members hinders them from higher motivation and participation. In the words of Krystal Lemhouse (Northern American RR 2017/2018) from the Annual Report, one of the problems of the region listed was *"lack of opportunities in our region - it seems all the conferences and opportunities are in Europe which just isn't feasible for our members"*. This is a long-term problem that is slowly improving over time, but yet far from ideal. Searching for new partners and opportunities in Northern America, however, provides a partial solution on previously stated recommendation to focus on activating this region.

This is also depicted by the difference between members' involvement internally in IFSA. In [Figure 33](#), it is possible to see the regional distribution among IFSA Officials (position holders) in 2019/2020, 2020/2021, 2021/2022 and the sum for all these three terms. Several interesting facts can be deduced when comparing this graph with the one of the regional distribution of all IFSA members ([Figure 4](#)).

First of all, the involvement of the Northern African region among the Officials (8.1% in 2021/2022, 8.5% in total 2019/2022) is significantly lower than its overall representation among all IFSA members (45.7%). Secondly, the involvement of the Latin American region among the IFSA Officials (16.1% in 2021/2022, 14.7% in total 2019/2022) is significantly higher than its overall representation among all IFSA members (3.3%). And thirdly, the involvement of the Asia Pacific region in 2021/2022 (which has been increasing since 2019/2020) among IFSA Officials (35.5%) is significantly higher than its overall representation among all IFSA members (21.3%).

From this comparison, one could approximately conclude some general aspects of the members' interest in the internal functioning of IFSA. However, it is necessary to add that this picture would be somewhat biased. To have a better understanding on this matter, rather than looking at the regional distribution of the Officials, it would be more meaningful

to take a look at the regional distribution among applicants for these positions. This data, however, is not available at present.

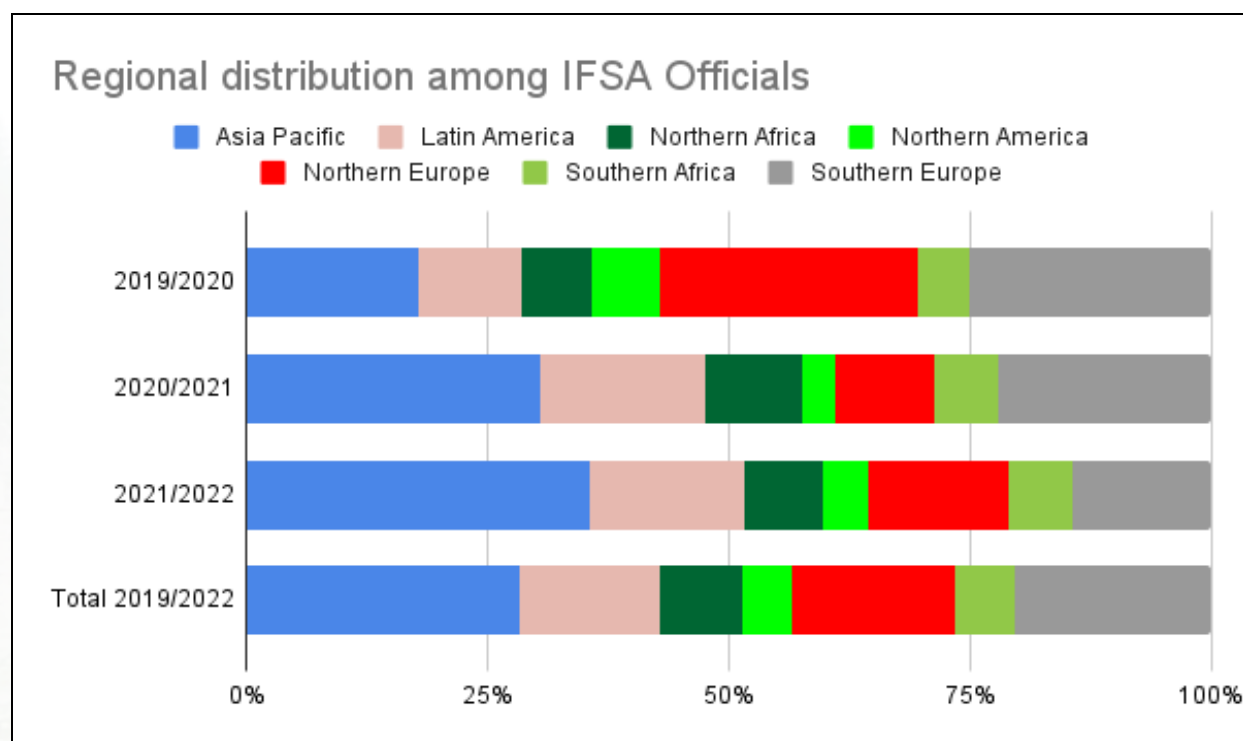


Figure 33: Regional distribution of IFSA Officials in 2019/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

While there currently does not exist any gender-disaggregated data on forest education that goes beyond the female and male genders, the most recent available data on female and male students in forest education shows that approximately 42% of all graduated forestry students in 2015 were women. This number varies from region to region: with 63%, Oceania had the highest share of female forestry graduates graduating, followed by North and Central America with 50%. In Asia and South America, women accounted for 36% of graduates, and in Africa for 30%. Europe had the lowest proportion of female forestry graduates, at 23%².

² FAO, 2020. Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020: Main report. Rome. p. 105.
<https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9825en>

This shows that non-male forestry students are overrepresented in IFSA compared to forest education in general. Through giving a platform for FINTA*³ to learn, lead and network, IFSA takes on an important role for advocating for gender equality within the forestry sector.

However, the data on the gender distribution among IFSA Officials (see Figure 34) and members in general (see Figure 6) should not be overstated or taken as the only metric of gender equality within IFSA. We regard gender as something that is being “done”⁴. As an organisation and through its organisational culture, IFSA therefore plays a role in how gender is created and recreated through interaction⁵ and should acknowledge the responsibility that comes with it.

One possible reason for this relative overrepresentation both among IFSA members and Officials is that FINTA* have generally been found to volunteer more regularly and give a larger share of their time and capacities to unpaid work. In a 2020 study, women student leaders at forestry universities were interviewed⁶. One of them shared the assumption that their organisation was women-dominated *“because participation is voluntary, and the students do not get paid. The women student leaders only get nice marks on their CV and a lot of networking opportunities”*⁷. They state that the process of obtaining leadership roles in student organisations is often without any of the usual barriers - such as the glass ceiling - as they struggle to recruit members and *“need somebody to run, mostly without being paid”*⁶.

³ FINTA* is the abbreviation of Female, Inter-sex, Non-binary, Trans and A-gender. The * stands for all those who do not find themselves in any of the letters in the designation and are marginalised in the patriarchal society.

⁴ West, C., and Zimmerman, D. H., 1987. Doing gender. *Gender and Society* 1(2):125-15. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/189945>

⁵ Powell, S., and Grubbström, A., 2021. Leading gender equality change in higher education - the case of forestry. *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1389224X.2021.2008997>

⁶ Pipiet Larasatie, Taylor Barnett & Eric Hansen (2020) Leading with the heart and/or the head? Experiences of women student leaders in top world forestry universities, *Scandinavian Journal of Forest Research*, 35:8, 588-599, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02827581.2020.1825787>

⁷ Larasatie, Barnett and Hansen, 2020, p 593.

IFSA, as a student association, plays an important role for students and their civic engagement within the forestry sector. One potential explanation for the over-proportionate number - in comparison to forest education overall - of FINTA* in IFSA is therefore a higher motivation for volunteer work, based on gender-related societal norms.

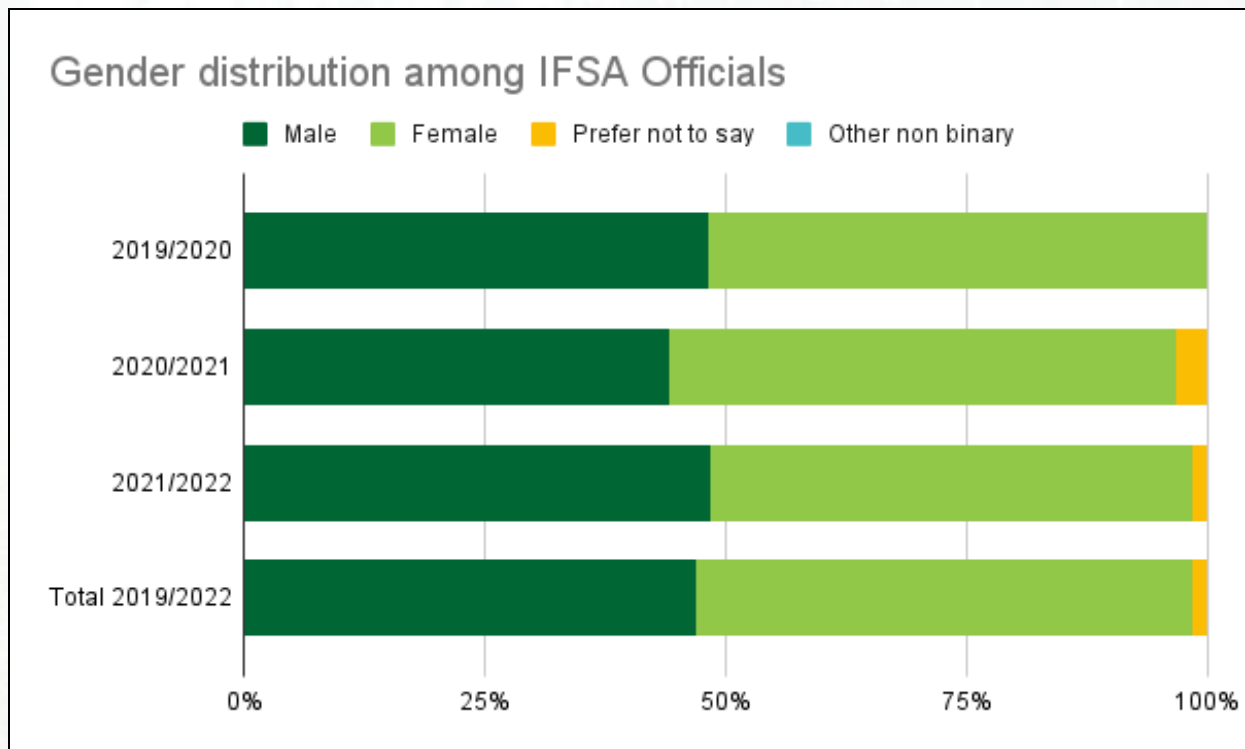


Figure 34: Gender distribution of IFSA Officials 2019/2022 (Source: Own elaboration)

Projects executed

When talking about projects executed by the LCs, it is necessary to take into account the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the number and type structure of these projects. COVID-19 has been affecting IFSA and the world in general already since early 2020, and it would be very interesting to compare the projects' structure before and after the emergence of this pandemic. However, since this data is not available, it is only possible to make assumptions based on the experience and the comparison of data from Southern Europe in 2020/2021 and 2021/2022.

It is possible to see a very significant difference especially in terms of the number of in-person projects executed in this region and its ratio with the online projects. Since in the second of the mentioned terms, the direct impact of the pandemic has decreased and restrictions have been lifted, it would be predictable that more in-person activities would take place. Similar differences could be expected in other regions too, and an even higher number of in-person projects might be predicted for the term 2022/2023.

What most brings attention is Asia Pacific being the only region with a prevailing domination of online projects (62.9%), while in the rest of the regions, online projects form only a minor part, ranging from 6.7% to 35.9%. This can be connected to the fact that it is Asia Pacific where the pandemic started at the first place, and so the universities and LCs might keep being more cautious with starting again organising in-person projects and gatherings.

Organisation of more in-person projects brings along another phenomena, and that is the higher proportion of local projects. It is still difficult, and in general more expensive and organizationally-wise demanding, to host in-person international projects. Hence, it is only natural that with the increase of in-person ones, the proportion of local projects increases as well.

4.1.1 Limitations

There are of course some limitations in the approach that was adopted. It will hardly ever be the case that 100% of LCs would fill in a survey. In this case, it was 80.5% which is already a great deal. But how to treat the remaining 19.5%? As you saw, in this case it was decided to make an extrapolation and by that extend the results from the data received to the rest of the LCs. But there are different reasons behind the LCs not answering the survey, some of which might be crucial for such an assessment.

Some of the LCs that do not answer are inactive (at least temporarily, especially during COVID-19) and might not have members - in this case, assigning them an average LC values biases the overall results. It was decided to do so because it was known that many of the LCs who did not fill in the survey are actually active and have members, only for different reasons could not fill in the survey. Hence, to some extent the results are biased for sure, but not as much as it would be in the case of not extrapolating the data.

Another limitation will play a role especially in the future. Since each year the data would be filled in by a different person on behalf of the LC, the values will be affected by that. As you can see in the chapter [Comparison of Southern Europe 2020/2021 and 2021/2022](#), the difference in the number of members in some cases reaches up to 2,763.6%. In some cases, the inter-annual difference of course can be very high, but in other ones, it can be caused by a different assessment from the side of the LC board - especially if all board members change from one year to the next. In the hereby-presented case of Southern Europe, one of the reasons for such a high difference could also be that in 2020/2021, there was no specified differentiation between number of members in total, and number of active members.

Moving on to the more specific limitation, it is important to talk about the assessment of the gender categories. Some LCs did make a specific anonymous survey for their members, to explore to which gender they identify themselves. From these LCs, this data will be indeed accurate. But it is not the case in all LCs. To the knowledge of the authors, in some cases, the LC boards assessed the gender categories based on their own, mostly binary, estimations. The overall results are indeed informative and give us an insight into the general situation, but it needs to be taken with a pinch of salt.

Last but not least, the data from the LCs were collected between April and May 2022. The reason for collecting the data in this period is explained earlier and it was the best of the possible solutions that were thought of. However, it also causes loss of data for June-August 2022. It is most likely not a problem in the case of member data since there will probably not be a large change in the number of members in the rest of the IFSA term. It is, though, different for the number of LC projects. From the experience, it can be said that there are some activities organised even throughout the summer months. When talking about the whole IFSA term, 1,304 LC projects is therefore most likely an underestimation.

5.1.2 Examples of strategies to improve the membership realities

Across the regions, there are diverse strategies to explore and improve our members' experience. Among others, these are for example the survey launched in Northern Africa to explore what hinders most Northern Africans in being active in IFSA and what solutions they see; commissions created in Latin America to involve more their members in the

regional activities; creation of task forces in Northern and Southern Europe for the same reasons; or choosing the best week days and times for Asia Pacific members to organise activities. These cases are described a little bit more in detail below, same as the LC Buddy project and membership inclusion in the IFSA Strategy 2022-2026.

Northern African survey on involvement challenges and solutions

The survey was aimed at collecting information about challenges and possible solutions on low participation of students in IFSA activities within the Northern African region. The survey form was shared with the LCs through the LCs email address and on the Northern African social media accounts. The survey lasted for the period of one month (11th October to 11th November 2021).

Some of the questions asked were:

- ▶ The gender category and level of study of the respondent;
- ▶ Have you heard about IFSA?
- ▶ Have you participated in IFSA events?
- ▶ What do you think are the main challenges students within the Northern African region face that cause low participation in IFSA activities?
- ▶ What possible solutions do you propose to solve these challenges?

175 students participated in filling in the survey and some of the preliminary results are:

- ▶ Gender proportion of the respondents: 61.7% identified as males, while 37.1% identified as females. Remaining 1.2% was equally divided between other non binary and those who preferred not to say;
- ▶ Level of study of the respondents: 97.1% were Bachelor's students, while 2.3% were Master's students and the remaining 0.6% doctoral ones;
- ▶ 68% of the respondents have heard about IFSA, while 32% have not;
- ▶ Lack of awareness is identified as the main challenge, followed by lack of funding and lack of interest;

- ▶ Creating awareness about IFSA is identified as the most important solution, followed by increasing funding opportunities and enhancing communication.

Latin American commissions to involve members in the region's growth

At the start of the term 2020-2021, the Regional Representatives created commissions so that members from Latin America could assist in different areas and help reduce the amount of work the RRs must do. Continued in the current term, the commissions were created for the areas of communication (social media), language (IFSAMate and translation of important information), extension (to look for opportunities inside the region) and events (to help organising and assisting during planning and execution of events that will contribute to the region's growth). IFSA members can apply for these commissions once the Regional Representatives start the open call and it represents a good opportunity for people to get experience on what it is like to be an IFSA Official.

Workshop and creation of Task Forces in Northern and Southern Europe

During the Regional Meetings 2022 in Northern and Southern Europe, the Regional Representatives conducted workshops which aimed to collect ideas on how to improve the interaction of LCs in their region. Especially in Europe, there's a huge opportunity to connect LCs because of the short distances they have to each other. During the workshop, the participants were first divided into smaller groups to write down ideas and discuss their feasibility. Afterwards, while meeting again all together, every group presented their favourite idea(s). In the end, the participants voted for the best ideas (projects) and the RRs noted the names of those interested in working on the projects. Based on the interested people, both regions created Task Forces to further work on the projects. In the future, there might even emerge a joint Task Force for one or more projects between Northern and Southern Europe.

The following projects were selected:

1. Northern Europe

- ▶ **LOW** ("Local Open Weekend" / "Low Organisational Weekend"): one LC opens up their doors for one weekend for any interested IFSA member to visit with as less organisational work as possible

- ▶ **Regional Puzzle:** LCs of Northern Europe submit a picture each, based on a previously selected main theme. The idea is to create one large picture created out of >20 small pictures.
- ▶ **IFSA Olympics:** all LCs meet once a year or once every two years to compete in Olympics-like competitions. Competitions will consist of practical and theoretical forest-related tasks.

2. Southern Europe

- ▶ **Theme Competition:** The idea, as the name implies, is based on a project that includes events and activities planned to be held during online, physical or regional meetings on a certain theme. It is aimed at interaction between LCs and also subregions in the region. Based on previous examples, the current state and development of the idea has been discussed and is under development. An example can serve the competitions such as the Forestry Versatility organised by LC Brno in the Czech Republic, or the Unicum Cup that in the past used to take place in Hungary, etc.
- ▶ **IFSA Song Contest:** This great idea emerged at the SERM and is in development in practice and can be implemented in different ways according to the discussion and ideas of the Task Force. If we examine them:
 - ▷ The competition can be implemented online, and this process can be carried out at the end of summer.
 - ▷ For the competition, the LCs can prepare their own songs, send them as a video for the winter semester.
 - ▷ The song can be prepared within a certain theme. This theme can be selected. As in Eurovision, you can vote by points and semi-finals, you can also do preliminary rounds with the subregions, the winners can go to the big region, and this can be done during the regional meeting. Or they can be divided directly into subregions.
 - ▷ In addition, in songs any instrument can be used or applied in the form of sending a video to candidate LCs (or members) participating in any desired way and performing the selection process.

- ▶ **Weekend with subregions:** The main idea of the project is to establish informal subregions to increase the interaction and activities of LCs that can easily contact each other due to geographical proximity in one or another relevant region.

Asia Pacific Golden Time

In an International community like IFSA, finding a suitable time for organising events is always challenging. As the area where members come from increases, this challenge gets more significant. Asia-Pacific, the largest geographical region of IFSA, always had the problem of organising events at a time and date in which they could get as many participants as possible. The Asia Pacific Golden Time project is an initiative taken by RRs of Asia Pacific 2021/2022 aiming to find the best months, days, and times to organise the events. This project helps to have a general view of the region's overall availability through IFSA terms, and RRs can place the most important events of theirs at the most suitable times.

The project implication used a Google survey sent to the individual members of the region asking for their preferred time in UTC. After gathering the information and processing them, the months, days of the week, and times most suitable for the region were identified. After that, the final decision was checked with the region and finalised.

LC Buddy project

Already in the past, there used to be a project called 'LC Partnership Program (LPP)' that started in 2010/2011 and was active for several years. In 2021/2022, we have started with its rebranding to LC Buddy project and to revive the idea. The core idea is to facilitate partnership and exchange between LCs from different countries, regions or even continents. Matching the LCs who register for this project is based on their preferences (e.g., do they want to collaborate with an LC from the other side of the world or do they prefer to get in touch with the closest LC possible?).

It is hoped that this will support members' interest and boost the LCs' activity, in cooperation with forestry and related students from other countries. This can be done in many various ways, being limited only by the participants' imagination. Some of the

examples might be fun, relaxing online meetings of the 'LC buddies', organisation of webinars and workshops, physical visits, competitions and much more.

As of June 2022, six LCs have registered for the project - four of them being matched already (LC Thessaloniki, Greece + LC Tharandt, Germany; LC Warsaw, Poland + LC FRI, India) while the two others are waiting for a suitable match. Are you interested in taking part in the LC Buddy project with your LC? What are you waiting for - register already today at <https://bit.ly/lc-buddy> and start cool projects with your new buddy!

IFSA Strategy 2022-2026 in relation to membership

Disclaimer: *this report has been written and published before the IFSA Strategy 2022-2026 was approved by the General Assembly (GA) during the 50th IFSS 2022 in Chile. Therefore, the following describes the version as it is proposed for the GA to be approved.*

IFSA Strategy is a document summarising the main goals and sub-goals of IFSA, action points for its achievement and key indicators to measure the level of these achievements. The first two strategies were set up for three years, and since 2018 the strategy period consists of four years after which the strategy is evaluated, revised and updated.

The first IFSA Strategy was implemented in 2008 and the last one was set up for the period 2018-2022 (IFSA terms 2018/2019 - 2021/2022). Therefore, it is just in this term when the strategy has been updated into its fourth⁸ edition for the period 2022-2026.

In the second half of the term, a Task Force made of 17 volunteering Officials, including most of the Board, has been working on the update of the strategy for the period 2022-2026. The strategy is divided into three main goals, each of which consists of three to five sub-goals (SGs). All of them have as its aim to improve IFSA's working and hence, members' experience and opportunities - being it directly or indirectly. In this sub-chapter, only those focusing directly on membership will be briefly shown.

It can be said that generally the Goal 1: Strengthen the IFSA Community is the goal primarily focusing on the membership in the direct way. Then, Goal 2: Take Learning Beyond the Classroom, and Goal 3: Enable Students to Engage Globally do contribute to the membership in an indirect, though very important way - by creating opportunities and

⁸ The revision of the strategy in 2014 was postponed and in the end there was no new strategy for 2014-18, rather the functional period of the Strategy 2011-2014 was extended till the new one for the period 2018-2022 as deducted from the Annual Reports and GA minutes

knowledge exchange and by that improving the members' experience and motivation. Taking a closer look at the first goal, it is divided into five SGs.

These are as follows:

- ▶ 1.1 Expand the IFSA network
- ▶ 1.2 Promote IFSA events
- ▶ 1.3 Enhance collaboration within the IFSA community
- ▶ 1.4 Enhance digital communications
- ▶ 1.5 Strengthening equality and inclusivity

With exception of the SG 1.4, all of them directly support membership traits - be it quantity of members (SG 1.1), creation and promotion of IFSA events where the members can network (SG 1.2), cooperation of the already existing members (SG 1.3) or gender & regional equality and inclusion (SG 1.5).

Besides the SGs, which are still quite vague themes, each of them comprises several action points. Action points are already concrete activities that need to be done in order to achieve the given goals and sub-goals. The level of achievement of these action points is measured by the indicators that are quantitative or qualitative metrics, easy to assess.

You can read and download the whole strategy at ifsa.net/documents/strategy.

4.1.3 Recommended future actions

Based on the Membership Department and Gender Sub-Commission experience, regional projects described above, communication of Regional Representatives and Membership Councilor with various LC members, and the results from the LC data collection described in this report, there are some ideas that have come up on how to motivate and inspire other LCs, attract more students to create new ones, and in general improve IFSA members' experience. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ▶ Organising a workshop in each region with all members to discuss the main challenges in the given region and solutions to those - similar to the Northern African survey launched in autumn 2021 described above. It might be organised by

the RRs with Membership Councilor, or even better in cooperation with the Capacity Development Commission as an interactive workshop series.

- ▶ Another workshop series idea is to identify LCs with the highest ratios of active members and those organising most activities based on the LC data collected, and invite one per region to participate in a roundtable discussion open to all interested members, to share their tips and tricks on how they motivate their members and what kind of activities they organise and are most successful.
- ▶ Based on this Membership Report, IFSA Strategy 2022-2026 and the workshops mentioned above, creation of a concrete action plan for each region separately could help to tackle the challenges and help our members to have the best IFSA experience possible. The Membership Councilor, Regional Representatives and Regional Council should be in charge of creation and implementation of these action plans.
- ▶ Inclusion of more members in the decision-making process on the regional level (e.g., via Regional Council) and tasks implementation could help to increase the motivation and enthusiasm of the members in IFSA and its activities. Creation of task forces and/or commissions like in European regions and Latin America are some of the examples.
- ▶ Showcasing some of the successful LC-led activities by implementing LC Project of the Month to award LCs for their activities is another idea on how to motivate and inspire more LCs and exchange ideas among each other. More projects might be showcased on the IFSA website where they would stay permanently.
- ▶ The dispersion of IFSA partners is not equal across the regions, which leads to unequal opportunities for our members and hence, different levels of their motivation. It is therefore recommended to search for new partners especially in less represented regions, to provide more opportunities for IFSA members there and by that boost their motivation.
- ▶ Generally, paying more attention to less active and represented regions is advisable. Membership Councilor's task is to coordinate all Regional Representatives, but

assisting more directly to those in less active and represented regions to organise activities, enhance communication between existing LCs and searching for new ones might help to (re-)activate such regions.

- ▶ Continue to advocate for gender equality in forest education and a gender-aware learning environment all the while improving the assessment of gender equality within the organisation by going beyond numbers as the only metric. Actions should involve capacity building workshops on gender equality and gender-aware forest education, including safer spaces for sharing knowledge and experiences - on a local and international level.

5 Conclusions

Local Committees and individual members are the cornerstones of IFSA. After more than thirty years of the association's existence, a light is shed onto the membership structure across the regions and some very interesting facts are brought to the table regarding members and LC-led projects, and their distribution in the world. The number of individual members exceeds the previous estimations and can serve as a useful leverage when representing forestry students at external events and bring new opportunities to IFSA members.

The results presented in this report, however, can not be only taken as facts, but rather as tools for tailored decision-making in order to support regions' development and impact on forest education in all the corners of the world.

A couple of take-home messages at the end:

- ▶ IFSA represents nearly **12,000 students** of forestry and related fields.
 - ▷ Northern Africa is the region with the highest overall number of members and increasing the awareness about international IFSA events and funding opportunities would increase the region's active involvement.
 - ▷ IFSA struggles with attracting members in the Americas and should focus on developing strategies on how to improve this situation.
- ▶ Over **1,300 projects** are organised by the Local Committees per year.
 - ▷ With decreasing of the Covid-related impact and restrictions, more projects and a higher proportion of local and in-person projects can be expected.
- ▶ FINTA* students are overrepresented among IFSA members and Officials compared to forest education in general. One possible explanation could be higher willingness of FINTA* to take part in volunteering activities.



International
**Forestry
Students'**
Association



Check IFSA on the website!

