IFLA Strategy Surveys
Survey 2 – Experience of Working with the IFLA Strategy

The second of our four surveys designed to help the Governing Board prepare for its discussions about next steps on the IFLA Strategy focuses on the content of the current (2019-2024) edition. It aimed to complement the first (looking at how people had used the Strategy), and understand how far people felt that the current text was relevant, informative, inspiring and guiding – four key roles of a Strategy.

This document shares information about the methodology and respondents, and then provides analysis of the quantitative data, looking first at overall results, then results by region, type of respondent, and question. In each case, questions for the Governing Board to consider are highlighted.

1. Methodology

Based on questions also shared at a special session at the World Library and Information Congress, it asked how far participants agreed with the following statements, using a Likert scale. The shorthand used for each of these follows the full statement:

- IFLA’s Vision and Mission are relevant (Vision Relevant)
- IFLA’s Vision and Mission inform me about IFLA’s work (Vision Informative)
- IFLA’s Vision and Mission inspire me to engage in IFLA’s work (Vision Inspiring)
- IFLA’s Vision and Mission guide me in my engagement with IFLA (Vision Guiding)
- IFLA’s Strategic Directions are relevant (SDs Relevant)
- IFLA’s Strategic Directions inform me about IFLA’s work (SDs Informative)
- IFLA’s Strategic Directions inspire me to engage in IFLA’s work (SDs Inspiring)
- IFLA’s Strategic Directions guide me in my engagement with IFLA (SDs Guiding)

We also asked open questions about which elements of the IFLA Strategy were most and least useful, and for contextual data around the region from which they were answering, and the way in which respondents primarily engaged with IFLA.
There were 234 responses to the second survey, lower than those received in the first. In terms of respondents by region (see Graph 1a), Europe again came top with almost a third of responses in total, with Asia-Oceania and North America almost tied at just over 23%. Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa all came in with between 6.4% and 8.1% of the total votes. Overall, this represents a slightly lower share of votes for Europe and North America than last time.

As for responses by respondent type (Graph 1b), the majority came from people identifying as IFLA volunteers (over 56%), with most of the rest being people primarily describing themselves as IFLA members (41.5%). Those who simply follow IFLA without having a particular link, or those who have no link at all represent barely 2% in total, and answers for them are not subsequently provided.

A full overview of the breakdown of responses by region and respondent type is given in Table 1 below.
Table 1: Respondents by region and type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>I volunteer on an IFLA committee/unit</th>
<th>I am an IFLA member/affiliate</th>
<th>I follow IFLA’s work without having any particular link</th>
<th>I have no link with IFLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia-Oceania</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Overall Responses

We can look at the data in different ways overall. First of all, by allocating numbers to the responses (from 5 for strongly agree, and 1 for strongly disagree), we can work out averages across the board. Graph 2a does this for the data as a whole.

In short, this underlines that the most positive responses concern the broad sense of relevance of IFLA’s Vision and Mission and Strategic Direction, with average responses between agree and strongly agree. There is a notable drop-off as we get to questions around whether these inform people about IFLA and what it does, inspires them, and guides them. Indeed, on the question of whether the Vision and Mission inspire and guide, and whether the Strategic Directions inform, inspire and guide, the average response was between ‘agree’ and ‘neither agree nor disagree.

Graph 2b presents the same data, but pairing up responses for the vision and mission, and the Strategic Directions. On statements about whether these are relevant, informative or inspiring, the Vision and Mission score higher on average. It is only on the question of guiding that the Strategic Directions (SDs) receive a higher score than the Vision and Mission. This is perhaps normal – the SDs are indeed supposed to be the elements that guide work practically towards the Vision and Mission, but arguably should also be informative.
Graphs 2c and 2d offer an alternative look, exploring the share of respondents who (strongly) agreed or (strongly) disagreed with each of the statements. These offer a relatively similar overview, of the overall trend (declining levels of agreement through the questions, from high agreement (at or over 80%) that the Vision, Mission and SDs are relevant and informative, but then a somewhat less with the idea that they are inspiring or guiding.

The highest levels of disagreement were with whether the Vision and Mission are guiding – almost 10% of respondents. These figures are nonetheless quite low, although imply that there is also a reasonable amount of indifference.

**Questions for the Governing Board:**

1. **Should we be concerned that scores for the Vision, Mission and SDs on being inspiring and guiding are that much lower than those for being relevant?**
2. **Do the lower scores in general for the Strategic Directions indicate a need for change?**
3. **Does the overall positivitiy of the scores imply anything for how far the Strategy as a whole needs to change?**

3. **Responses by Region**

Graphs 3a to 3f set out the average responses for each region in turn.

**Graph 3a: Asia-Oceania**

**Graph 3b: Europe**

**Graph 3c: Latin America and the Caribbean**

**Graph 3d: Middle East and North Africa**

**Graph 3e: North America**

**Graph 3f: Sub-Saharan Africa**

These underline that the trend of people finding the Vision, Mission and SDs more relevant, and progressively less positive answers when it comes to being informative, inspirational and guiding is most clearly replicated in Europe and North America,
which together represent over half of the responses. In other regions, the picture is different.

Looking at the Vision and Mission, these clearly score highest for being relevant in Asia-Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), but this aspect stands out less in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). In LAC and MENA, the role of the Vision and Mission in guiding people is relatively strong compared to its role elsewhere.

As for the Strategic Directions (SDs), again, the pattern of generally lower scores is seen in Europe and North America, but the difference is less stark in other regions, and indeed, MENA respondents tended to see the SDGs as being more relevant, informative, inspirational and guiding than the Vision and Mission.

Questions for the Governing Board:

4. Does it matter that there are quite different profiles, in particular in terms of informing, inspiring and guiding action, between regions?

5. How can we take account of potentially different regional needs from a Strategy?

4. Responses by Respondent Type

Graphs 4a and 4b show the results for the main two categories of respondents – Volunteers and Members, again showing average scores.

As highlighted in overall results, the pattern here is the same – in the case of both the Vision and Mission, and the Strategic Directions, agreement is progressively less strong as we go from questions around relevance to information, to inspiration, to guidance. The difference between these is, however, much sharper when it comes to responses from members, especially around the Vision and Mission.

IFLA did emphasise, in its promotion of the Strategy, the desire that this should help to inspire and structure action not just among volunteers, but also among Members. The results point to a relative measure of success among volunteers, but more work needed among Members (while noting that the average scores are of course still positive – i.e. respondents tended to agree with the statements).
Questions for the Governing Board:

6. Should we be concerned at the scores for how far the Strategy has inspired and guided action amongst volunteers? If so, what can we do about it?

7. Should we be concerned that the SDs seem to get higher scores on all counts among members than amongst volunteers? If so, is there anything we can do about it?

5. Responses by Question

This section provides answers broken down by region and respondent type, with one graph per statement. The results for IFLA’s Vision and Mission are given in Graphs 5a to 5d.

Looking at regional differences here, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) consistently has the highest levels of agreement, with Asia-Oceania, LAC and MENA on relatively similar scores on most statements, a little further behind. In general, Europe and North America have lower levels of agreement on whether the Vision is inspiring, and whether it is guiding, but have similar levels of agreement as to whether it is relevant and informative.
As for the types of respondent, volunteers tended to have higher levels of agreement in general, although volunteers and members agreed to the same extent that the Vision and Mission were informative.

The question has already been raised about whether there may be different regional needs from a strategy – in particular, given that the practice of developing plans and strategies will vary, and that there may be cultural factors in play in determining the role that this sort of document plays in people’s lives.

Questions for the Governing Board

8. Should we be concerned about the lower scores for the Vision and Mission being Inspiring and Guiding in Europe and North America, and if so, is there anything we can do about it?

9. Should we be concerned that the Vision and Mission in particular appear to get significantly lower scores for inspiring and guiding the work of members, and is there anything we can do about it?

The next four graphs provide the answers for the Strategic Directions (SDs) (Graphs 5e-5h)
As with IFLA’s Vision and Mission, Sub-Saharan African respondents tended to agree most strongly with the statements, with those from the MENA region following, then Latin America and the Caribbean (in all cases except for the SDs providing guidance), and then Asia-Oceania. Europe and North America have the lowest average level of agreement. While the gap between these two and the rest is not so wide as concerns whether they see the SDs as relevant and perhaps how informative they are, it is bigger when it comes to the power of the SDs to inspire and guide.

As for the result for volunteers and members, levels of agreement tend to be slightly higher for members than for volunteers, although it is worth noting that when it comes to the SDs informing, inspiring and guiding, average scores are between 3 and 4 (agree and neither agree nor disagree).

Questions for the Governing Board

10. Should we be concerned about the lower levels of agreement with statements concerning the Strategic Directions among European and North American respondents - especially as concerns inspiration and guidance – and if so, is there anything we can do about it?

11. Should we take anything from the relatively low levels of agreement with the idea that the SDs provide guidance and inspiration to volunteers, despite their key role in delivering IFLA work?

6. Summary of Questions

1. Should we be concerned that scores for the Vision, Mission and SDs on being inspiring and guiding are that much lower than those for being relevant?
2. Do the lower scores in general for the Strategic Directions indicate a need for change?
3. Does the overall positivity of the scores imply anything for how far the Strategy as a whole needs to change?
4. Does it matter that there are quite different profiles, in particular in terms of informing, inspiring and guiding action, between regions?
5. How can we take account of potentially different regional needs from a Strategy?
6. Should we be concerned at the scores for how far the Strategy has inspired and guided action amongst volunteers? If so, what can we do about it?
7. Should we be concerned that the SDs seem to get higher scores on all counts among members than amongst volunteers? If so, is there anything we can do about it?
8. Should we be concerned about the lower scores for the Vision and Mission being Inspiring and Guiding in Europe and North America, and if so, is there anything we can do about it?
9. Should we be concerned that the Vision and Mission in particular appear to get significantly lower scores for inspiring and guiding the work of members, and is there anything we can do about it?
10. Should we be concerned about the lower levels of agreement with statements concerning the Strategic Directions among European and North American respondents - especially as concerns inspiration and guidance – and if so, is there anything we can do about it?
11. Should we take anything from the relatively low levels of agreement with the idea that the SDs provide guidance and inspiration to volunteers, despite their key role in delivering IFLA work?