



FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS
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**Report on the Activities of the FAFICS Communications Standing Committee
(August 2024 – June 2025)**

Chair: Juan Antonio Casas Zamora

Committee Members: Delia Barcelona, Lois Villanueva, Aye Win, Djibril Ndiaye, Ana Lucía Guimarães, Adriana Gomez, Gail Bindley-Taylor, Pierre Sayour

BACKGROUND

At its 54th session, the FAFICS Council reviewed the comprehensive report of the Communications Committee, chaired by Juan Antonio Casas-Zamora, which detailed the Committee's significant progress since the 53rd Council. The Committee, composed of members from Argentina, Chile, Mali, Myanmar, Panama, the Philippines, the United States and Switzerland, focused on implementing the FAFICS Communications Strategy, including key deliverables such as a trilingual brochure, the redevelopment of the FAFICS website, and the establishment of a Standing Committee on Communications.

The Committee emphasized expanding the communication strategy by leveraging more social media platforms, increasing interactivity, and encouraging Member Associations to contribute actively to the website. It also proposed the creation of a web management team, involving representatives from each Standing Committee, the FAFICS Secretary, and a content manager. A formal Standing Committee on Communications was recommended to institutionalize ongoing improvements and engagement.

The trilingual brochure (English, French, Spanish), digitally produced to enable local printing and easy updates, was well received. The brochure's content, derived from the former website, was simplified for accessibility and approved by the Bureau. Member Associations praised the initiative, suggesting wider distribution, including to the Pension Fund, translation into other languages like Portuguese, and inclusion of FAFICS achievements over its 50-year history. They also inquired about budgeting for future maintenance. The President underscored the

importance of unified updates through a single source to ensure consistency and expressed hope that Associations would contribute more content, including for his newsletter.

Chair Casas-Zamora stressed the brochure as a living document and a tool for outreach and recruitment, noting that communications resources would be proposed as a permanent budget line. He also acknowledged the foundational contributions of Odette Foudral (AAFI-AFICS Geneva) in establishing the original Communications Working Group and Strategy.

Regarding the website, the Chair introduced the updated FAFICS website aligned with the Federation's four pillars: pensions, health insurance, communications, and membership. Hubert Thompson, from the contractor Quattro Medios Digitales QMD (Panama), presented the site developed in partnership with the Committee. The website was praised for its modern look, though concerns were raised about user accessibility for older users, the placement of UN logos, data security, future management, and platform sustainability. The Council approved the launch of the new website by acclamation (Decision 54/6).

The Committee also presented a justification for formally establishing a Standing Committee on Communications SCC based on previous Council recommendations. This Committee would ensure effective oversight and development of the Communications Strategy and promote transparency and member engagement. The Council endorsed the proposal (Decision 54/7) and approved the appointment of Juan Antonio Casas-Zamora (AFICS-Panama) and Aye Win (AFICS-Myanmar) as Chair and Co-Chair, respectively (Decision 54/8). Associations were encouraged to nominate members for the Expertise Pool to support this new structure.

Finally, the Council approved awarding a certificate of appreciation to Douglas Helland (ARICSA), who provided long-term technical support to the FAFICS website since 2000, including its initial development (Decision 54/9).

This series of actions marks a major milestone in strengthening FAFICS' internal and external communications, modernizing its tools, and institutionalizing its efforts for broader participation and visibility.

Establishment of the FAFICS Standing Committee on Communication (SCC)

The Terms of Reference for the newly established Standing Committee on Communications (SCC), approved by the 54th FAFICS Council, outline its mandate to improve the Federation's communications and engagement with member associations. Formed in response to concerns raised by member associations and guided by prior Council recommendations, the SCC operates under the oversight of the FAFICS Bureau, which nominates its officers (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Rapporteur) for Council approval. The Committee works closely with the Bureau to ensure alignment with FAFICS' goals, develop communication strategies, and monitor progress.

Key objectives include providing policy guidance, technical support, and promoting collaboration among the Bureau and member associations. Core responsibilities involve developing and managing the communication strategy, maintaining the FAFICS website, and supporting member associations in enhancing their visibility online. The SCC also advises on advocacy tools and broader communication activities.

The SCC is composed of 5 to 8 members, including at least three from the Bureau, with terms of office set at two years (renewable once). Decisions are made by consensus or vote, with at least two virtual meetings annually. An annual work plan and budget are required, and a Plan of Action will guide outputs such as website updates, a newsletter, a bulletin, and expanded platform presence.

2024-2025 Work Plan and Results

Following its formal establishment by the 54th FAFICS Council, the Standing Committee on Communication (SCC) successfully operationalized its mandate between August 2024 and June 2025. The SCC confirmed its leadership—Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Rapporteur—defined internal roles, and invited Member Associations to nominate individuals with communication and IT expertise. The resulting Committee included members from Brazil, Senegal, New York, Geneva, Myanmar, Philippines, Chile, and Panama, offering broad geographic and institutional representation.

The Committee’s 2024–2025 Annual Work Plan outlined four strategic priorities: (1) upgrading digital infrastructure; (2) strengthening engagement with Member Associations; (3) producing multilingual content; and (4) developing communication and advocacy tools to enhance FAFICS’ visibility. These priorities guided the Committee’s extensive activities over the year and enabled the laying of a strong foundation for future work.

DESIGN AND LAUNCH OF NEW FAFICS.ORG WEBSITE

A major achievement was the design and completion of the revamped FAFICS.ORG website. Developed with QMD and built on WordPress, the site offers improved design, easier navigation, and enhanced features for members. Key technical milestones included the integration of the UNJSPF link, uploading of brochures and newsletters, improved presentation of Member News by country, and ongoing updates to association directories. A revised “Member Information Form” was initiated to enrich association profile pages.

The development of the new website followed a structured timeline, beginning with the **Design and Content Inclusion Phase**, which spanned from March 20 to May 7, 2024 (approximately 1.5 months). This was followed by an extended **Review Phase**, lasting nearly five months, from May 7 to October 20, 2024, including the submission of corrections and new content, as well as presentations to the 54th FAFICS Council in July 2024. The **Migration and Activation Phase** was carried out during the week of October 22, 2024, marking the completion of the site’s development. In total, the project took approximately seven months, from March 20 to October 22, 2024. Following the launch, the first six-month maintenance block, by the

contractor Quattrocom Digital, began on November 1, 2024, with the second block having commenced on May 1, 2025.

Administrative responsibilities for managing backend content were assigned to SSC members Delia Barcelona, Lois Villanueva, and Juan Antonio Casas-Zamora. Initial challenges with the interface prompted QMD to provide tutorials and technical support, though these materials were not always intuitive, highlighting the need for improved training. To ensure real-time coordination, a dedicated WhatsApp group was created.

UPDATING FAFICS BUREAU AND STANDING COMMITTEES' INFORMATION

The SCC advanced work on internal coordination by piloting a standardized webpage template for all Standing Committees, with sections on Terms of Reference, workplans, members, and outputs. A draft activity template was circulated to encourage uniform reporting and timely updates. Additional proposals included improved content tagging, dynamic Member News pages categorized by association, and more accessible directories.

UPDATING MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS INFORMATION

The format for updating Member Association Directories has been updated by the Committee to ensure that information about executive officers and contact details are current in the website. Member Associations are encouraged to submit their updated information to the FAFICS Secretariat in a timely manner.

FAFICS Website Analytics

Since January, engagement metrics have been promising: 4,102 sessions from 3,006 unique users and a 52,3% interaction rate, with users mainly from the United States, Germany, France, Netherlands and Switzerland. (See Annex 1. FAFICS Website Analytics Report).

ONLINE USER SURVEY

To evaluate the effectiveness of these tools, the Committee launched an online survey aimed at gathering user feedback on the website's usability and relevance. As of June, 2025, the majority of respondents are satisfied with the website's usability, speed, and structure, though there is a strong demand for more **frequent content updates, user engagement tools, and mobile optimization**. The Committee also proposed forming focus groups to help shape the Federation's long-term digital communication strategy. The summary of the results of the survey are provided in Annex 2.

FAFICS Brochure

The Committee also oversaw the completion and dissemination of the trilingual FAFICS Brochure (English, French, and Spanish), which was approved by the Bureau and distributed electronically and in print. Designed in coordination with MEDRAMOS (Philippines), the

brochure clearly presents the Federation's mission, global reach, and historical achievements, serving as a vital outreach and advocacy tool.

FAFICS' 50th Anniversary

In support of FAFICS' 50th Anniversary, the Committee worked closely with the Anniversary Task Force by providing inputs on the cover design, layout, and editorial structure of the commemorative e-book, as well as the commemorative video. It also helped coordinate the publication and archival of photographic materials and proposed a biweekly homepage update mechanism to highlight celebratory content and member activities.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Despite the significant progress, several challenges emerged regarding the management of FAFICS.ORG: persistent backend usability issues, delays in implementing a help-desk or ticketing system, slow response rates from Member Associations in updating directories, and lack of clarity in news submission protocols. In response, the Committee made a series of targeted recommendations: improve backend user training and manuals; prioritize completion of the directory update before the next Council session; launch an enhanced Member News feature by July 2025; and establish a permanent editorial oversight mechanism for homepage content.

The SCC made substantial progress in strengthening FAFICS' communications framework and digital presence. With the brochure finalized, the website completed, and key tools in place, the Committee laid the groundwork for a more interactive and representative communications ecosystem. These efforts contributed meaningfully to the 50th Anniversary celebration while modernizing the Federation's outreach mechanisms.

Looking ahead to the second half of 2025, the SCC will focus on sustaining and expanding content development, enhancing multilingual communications, and deepening engagement with Member Associations. Finalizing directory updates, launching regular editorial cycles, expanding social media platforms, and fostering training for backend administrators will be top priorities. Continued coordination with QMD and active involvement of Member Associations will be essential to maintain momentum and build a sustainable communication culture within FAFICS.

Annex 1. Narrative Summary of FAFICS Website Analytics Report (January 1 – June 8, 2025)

Between January and early June 2025, the FAFICS website recorded significant and steadily growing user engagement, reflecting a positive trend in visibility and outreach efforts. Over this 5-month period, the site registered **4,873 sessions from 3,479 unique users**, with a total of **14,470 page views**, averaging **2.9 pages per session** and **1.4 sessions per user**. User interaction was relatively high, with an **engagement rate of 53%** and a **bounce rate of 47.7%**, indicating that more than half of the visitors engaged with multiple sections of the site.

Key Highlights:

- **Language Preferences:**
English dominated user language preference, accounting for over **80% of page views** (8,959), followed by Spanish (1,283) and French (845), indicating a primarily anglophone audience but with meaningful multilingual reach.
- **Device Use:**
The vast majority of traffic came from **desktop users (79%)**, with mobile devices contributing **19%** and tablets a minor **2%**, suggesting that most users access the site in professional or home-office settings.
- **Geographic Reach:**
The top visitor countries were the **United States** (1,143 sessions), **Germany** (346), **France** (264), **Switzerland** (207), **Ireland** (183), **Netherlands** (180), **Panama** (172), **Austria** (151), **Philippines** (144) and **Australia** (129).
- **Peak Activity Times:**
Site traffic was highest on days 4 (Thursday), 3 (Wednesday), and 2 (Tuesday). The most active hours were between **8:00 AM and 12:00 PM**, peaking at 9:00 AM and 10:00 AM, aligning with professional time zones across the Americas and Europe.
- **Acquisition Channels:**
Most users accessed the website via **direct visits (47.3%)** and **organic searches (40.1%)**, while **referrals** represented **12.6%**. Organic traffic showed the highest engagement rate, indicating that users who found the site via search engines were especially interested in its content.
- **Most Visited Sections:**
The **Homepage** drew the highest number of visits, followed by key organizational pages such as the **Member Associations list**, **About Us**, and sections on **How to join/register an association**, **News section**, **Pension Issues** and **After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI)**. These trends underscore interest in core institutional information and advocacy areas.
- The most viewed news articles were **Celebrating FAFICS Golden Year and FAFICS 50th Anniversary Program**.

Overall, the analytics shows steady growth in visits and reflects a robust and expanding user base, with clear increasing interest in FAFICS' organizational structure and thematic work. The

data suggests ongoing opportunities to expand content in Spanish and French, improve mobile responsiveness, and continue strengthening SEO strategies to boost organic visibility.

Annex 2. Executive Summary of the FAFICS Website Feedback Survey

Total Participation

- **Total responses received:** 50
- **Responding Member Associations:** 30

Key Findings by Question

1. Ease of Finding Information

- **56%** found the website *very easy* to navigate.
- **42%** found it *somewhat easy*, noting occasional difficulty.
- **2%** found it *difficult*.

2. Loading Speed

- **56%** rated it *very fast*.
- **36%** said it was *reasonable but sometimes slow*.
- **8%** experienced performance issues.

3. Design and Appearance

- **58%** found the design *modern and pleasant*.
- **38%** said it was *okay but could improve*.
- **4%** did not find it appealing.

4. Mobile Usability

- **68%** confirmed the site *works well on mobile*.
- **18%** had usability concerns.
- **14%** do not access via mobile.

5. Organization of Sections

- **86%** found the site *well-organized and useful*.
- **10%** suggested clearer navigation.
- **4%** were unsure.

6. Visit Frequency

- **42%** were *first-time visitors*.
- **48%** visit *rarely*.
- **10%** visit *occasionally or regularly*.

7. Usefulness of Content

- **52%** found it *somewhat useful*, requesting more substantive updates.
- **30%** found it *very helpful*.
- **18%** found it *limited or outdated*.

8. Suggestions for New Features

- **36%** provided ideas or suggestions.
- **48%** were unsure.
- **16%** expressed no changes needed.

9. Willingness to Recommend

- **82%** would *definitely recommend* the website.

- 18% said *maybe*, pending improvements.

10. Content Update Perception

- 44% found it *somewhat up-to-date*.
- 20% said *very up-to-date*.
- 36% were *neutral or unsure*.

11. Ability to Update Member Association Info

- 40% said *somewhat easy*.
- 28% found it *very easy*.
- 32% were *neutral or unaware*.

12. Feedback and Sharing Opportunities

- 54% felt there are *sufficient feedback channels*.
- 36% said *somewhat sufficient*.
- 10% were *unsure*.

13. Search Function

- 64% rated it *very or somewhat effective*.
- 22% said *neutral*.
- 14% found it *not effective*.

14. Readability of Content

- 48% said it is *very easy to read*.
- 32% said it *depends on the section*.
- 20% needed effort to understand.

15. Overall Experience

- 44% rated the site as *excellent (5 stars)*.
- 38% gave it *4 stars (very good)*.
- 18% rated it *3 stars or lower*, citing room for improvement.

Top Suggestions from Respondents

- **More content** from member associations.
 - **Regular updates** on pensions and health insurance.
 - **Improved mobile layout and design refinement.**
 - **Better visibility** of multilingual and regional information.
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CONCLUSION

The majority of respondents are satisfied with the website's usability, speed, and structure, though there is a strong demand for more **frequent content updates, user engagement tools, and mobile optimization**. Feedback will guide improvements as FAFICS continues to strengthen its digital presence and outreach to retirees globally.