



Council of International Fellowship

Council of International Fellowship Annual Report, 2025

Approved by the Board of Directors, April 18, 2026

www.cifinternational.com

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Abbreviations

- BD: Board of Directors of CIF International
CIP USA: Council of International Programs, USA
CP: Contact Person of CIF International
EC: Executive Committee of CIF International
ELC: Election Committee of CIF International
GA: General Assembly of CIF International
IPEP: International Professional Exchange Programme
NB: National Branch of CIF International

EDITORIAL BOARD: Executive Committee of CIF International
EDITORIAL ADVISOR: Paul Dolan, Birmingham, UK

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Welcome!

Dear CIF members and friends,

CIF International was founded in 1960 - 65 years ago. For many people this is about the age to think about retirement. For an organisation it is comparable: it is necessary to look back as well as to plan for the future. Not that this doesn't happen every year, but 65 is a good time to look at the CIF state of affairs more precisely, to reflect on a few milestones.

CIF International has limited financial and personal resources, but it has highly qualified and active volunteers spread all over the world. It has no employed staff (except for CIF USA), but new technical means now make it easier to communicate and to work together. CIF's members have longstanding experiences, often strong relations with each other and an ability to concentrate on the main tasks: exchange programmes and conferences.

CIF International used its opportunities in 2025 to take several steps forward.

- It was recognised as tax exempt by the German authorities, from 1 January 2025, an indispensable premise for further financial development using more than our very limited own means.
- A special committee has taken steps to arrange CIF's archives.
- CIF International started to support individual membership in countries without a national branch, and
- it is implementing enhanced financial assistance for IPEP participation.

CIF International is the umbrella organisation of 30 national branches and 18 contact persons and is, like other organisations, as strong as its component parts. Development in one part helps to strengthen development in other parts.

From its member organisations in 2025 came important steps:

- CIF India organised the 36th CIF Conference in close cooperation with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences TISS and the College Nirmala Niketan in Mumbai; and its presentations are still available. It was a fantastic experience for hundreds of younger and older professionals!
- CIF USA became the CIF Committee of CIF USA. This is not only a clarification but provides a stronger situation for both regarding programmes, cooperation and development.
- CIF Switzerland completed a two-year well-funded project to show how exchanges can work differently for participants and for the national branch, as well as bringing many new insights to CIF International.

So the different parts of the organisation work well together, using different styles of working, different ideas and ways of thinking. Through this they realise daily what is possible in learning and gaining experiences in joy and warmth. They learn what is possible in working together in peace, and with common efforts to understand what might be completely different from previous views and experiences. It is what we all need in times like the times we live in.

The CIF Board of Directors and the Executive Committee would like to thank all of you for your contribution to a network which has been functioning for 65 years and which looks forward to its 70th anniversary in 2030.

Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen
President

International Professional Exchange Programmes (IPEPs)

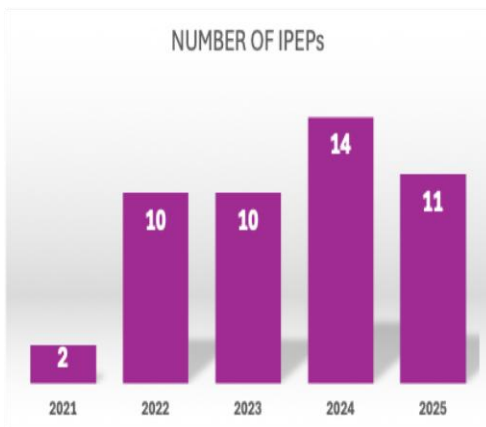
A. Statistics

IPEPs

A total of **12** CIF International Professional Exchange Programmes (IPEPs) was announced for 2025, **11** were carried out and one had to be cancelled:

National Branches of CIF International in Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Hellas, Italy, Nepal, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and Türkiye successfully organized and implemented their IPEPs through to completion. CIF Israel postponed its programme to 2026.

All 11 National Branches submitted their Final Evaluation Reports (FERs) for 2025, providing comprehensive updates and assessments of their respective IPEPs.

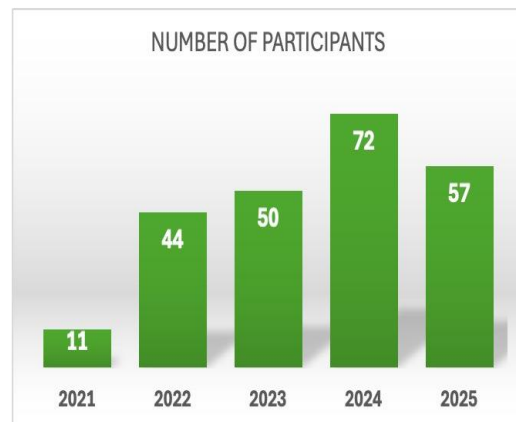


During 2025, two IPEP Coordinators' Meetings were held—one virtual and one in person in Mumbai, India. These meetings provided an important platform to review programme implementation, share updates, and discuss operational and strategic matters concerning the IPEPs.

Participants

In total, 57 participants successfully commenced and completed the programmes in 2025, compared to 72 participants in 2024, 50 in 2023, 44 in 2022, and 11 in 2021, reflecting the continued recovery and stabilisation of programme participation in the post-pandemic period.

Participants in the 2025 IPEPs of CIF International represented a diverse global cohort, coming from 20 countries. The country-wise distribution was as follows: Argentina (3), Australia (1), Austria (1), Czech Republic (1), Estonia (1), Finland (3), Germany (7), Ghana (1), Greece (2), India (9), Indonesia (6), Italy (2), Morocco (2), Spain (6), Sweden (2), Switzerland (1), Taiwan (1), Türkiye (6), USA (1), and Vietnam (1).



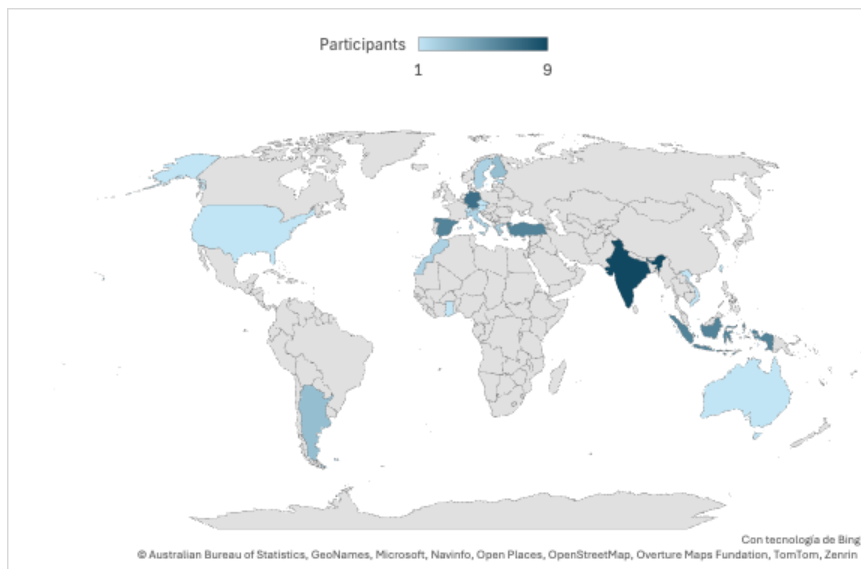
Of the total participants, 47 were from countries with established National Branches (NBs), 9 were from countries represented by Contact Persons (CPs), and 1 participant came from a country without a National Branch or designated Contact Person. This reflects CIF's continued global outreach and its ability to engage participants across both established and emerging networks.



CIF Switzerland Participants



CIF Finland Participants



B. General information on the characteristics of the IPEPs

The International Professional Exchange Programmes (IPEPs) lasted between two and four weeks, with an average duration of 21 days. They were conducted between March and November, with two programmes in March, six in April–June, two in September, and one in November. Most programmes were held in English, while the one in France was conducted in French.

Participants received information about the IPEPs through CIF International and National Branch websites, social media, local professional

associations and universities, as well as through former participants.

The programmes of CIF International were organised by a coordinator and National Board members, with responsibilities shared among them on a voluntary and unpaid basis. A shortage of active members was identified as a key limitation in the organisation and development of the programmes.

Difficulties

Most National Branches of CIF International filled the available programme places. However, four cancellations occurred due to visa difficulties and personal reasons. Ten branches also emphasized the complexity of visa procedures, which increased the workload for both organisers and candidates and did not always lead to successful outcomes.

An additional challenge identified during recruitment was that some candidates applied simultaneously to multiple programmes without prior notification. As a result, two branches had to revoke their offers after discovering this at a later stage.

Procedures

All applicants to the programmes of CIF International used the Common Application Form. Most selected participants were social workers from diverse fields of practice, followed by mental health professionals and educators.

In the selection process, CIF International ensured that candidates' professional profiles and interests aligned with the opportunities offered, while also promoting diversity in countries of origin. As noted by CIF Türkiye, *"This diversity significantly enhanced intercultural learning and strengthened the overall impact and quality of the programme"*.

Prior communication between organizers and participants of CIF International was conducted through email and virtual platforms, both individually and in groups. This facilitated assessment of participants' language proficiency and provided a clearer understanding of their professional interests before the programme began.

All National Branches of CIF International agreed that participants received adequate information prior to arrival, including programme details, agenda, participant group, expectations, host family arrangements, information about the host country and city, key contacts, and visa procedures where applicable.



CIF Hellas Participants

Content of Programmes

The structure and content of the International Professional Exchange Programmes (IPEPs) of CIF International remained consistent with previous years. While variations existed depending on the organisation and duration of each programme, they generally included the following components:

An orientation period lasting between 1 and 5 days. Participants usually shared accommodation, in places such as hostels, hotels, apartments, usually located in the countryside or in areas outside the cities. This period is organised mainly *"to get to know each other"*, to link the group with each other and with the hosting branch.

A general programme, when participants received general information about the social services system in the host country, with a mix of agency and study visits, lectures, and meetings with professionals, where participants stayed as a group. Every participant made a presentation on their own country and work.

Almost all programmes established contact with universities or schools of social work, involving – at different levels - participation through activities such as classes, seminars, or guest lectures, and providing also a space for participants to contribute and exchange experiences with faculty members and students.

Participants had contact and exchange with professional associations (Social Worker Associations), which also provided support to the organisers, for example, with rooms for the meetings, and contacts for agency visits.



CIF Austria Participants

Peace as a theme was integrated into all programmes, although addressed through different approaches. Some branches focused on the analysis of specific conflicts, while others engaged in meetings with peace organisations. This reflects CIF's mission and its commitment to the defence and promotion of peace as part of global social work *"...every IPEP is about international understanding and that is the base of peace in this world..."* (CIF Austria).

An **individual programme** was a stage where each participant took part in their selected areas of interest, visited agencies, met professionals and observed the field work. For three branches this took place in different cities.

CIF Switzerland continued with the programme focus on families and children, and so all the participants attended the same workshops and institutions, and they also stayed with families in the same neighbourhood.

Every branch had a **final evaluation** of the programme, and three branches also had a mid-term evaluation. Each had a written evaluation following the CIF Participants' Evaluation Form, plus two programmes had their own forms. Different methods were used, such as meetings and discussions; in some cases they used cards and pictures, to review the experience, feedback and assess the main aspects of the programme.

A variety of **cultural activities**, such as sightseeing, visits to historical sites, cultural events, was also included in the programmes, which contributed to enriching the participants' experience. As usual there were parties, including in one case a dramatic performance, where participants and members from the branch served food specialties from each country.



CIF Nepal Participants

Host family living placement was provided for every participant. They stayed in different families on average from 1 to 4 families. The hosts received prior guidance on the characteristics of the programme and information about the participants and agenda. Video calls, information letters and WhatsApp groups were used. It was noted that most of them were experienced hosts and knew about CIF and the programmes. Two branches pointed out that it is becoming difficult to get enough host families.

C. Participants Feedback

Participants highlighted that the programmes allowed them to share experiences, discuss different social work perspectives, and learn how field work is practiced in other countries. *"They felt being such a good group, feeling well and comfortable with each other as well as in their host families. Having a lot of interesting exchange. Getting new ideas regarding their work..."* (CIF Switzerland).

Living in host families was also noted as a very good experience. *"...enjoy discussing with social workers in host family living"* (CIF Sweden).



CIF Germany Participants

Suggestions from participants

As in previous years there were comments and discussions about the intensity of the agendas: *“to show little less agencies”* (CIF Germany), *“Less visits, get more deeply involved in the everyday work done”* (CIF Hellas), *“...to have more time together for networking, peer learning and getting to know Turkish culture.”* (CIF Türkiye). There was general agreement on the positive feedback: *“we received very positive feedback but there is always the discussion if it was too intense or not, how many study visits per day, but over the years I guess we found a good way in the middle”* (CIF Austria).

Differences in social systems and language made it difficult for some participants to fully understand the topics discussed. *“The orientation programme is dense with a lot of information which requires a great concentration, in the French language. It would also be useful to provide some guides, data, especially about acronyms”* (CIF France).

To participate more in customer processes. *“To have more possibilities to shadow a social worker in a meeting with a client”* (CIF Finland). *“To have the possibility to see more services working, not just to talk to the people that work in it”* (CIF Italy).

D. Financial Conditions

Most national branches highlighted the financial difficulties they face in organising and sustaining the programmes, as well as the requests for financial assistance from candidates to cover programme-related expenses.

The IPEPs were mainly financed by:

- Participation fees. 7 branches had fees which supported 10-80% of the cost of the IPEP. The fee covered part of programme costs, domestic travel, meals, and sociocultural activities. NBs supplemented the fee with support from local members, donations and other sources. CIF Austria requested a participation fee for the first time in many years.

- 4 National Branches did not have a fee, and they covered their expenses with contributions from local members, and funds from professional associations.
- All National Branches received volunteer support from their members and host families and in some cases from the universities, which contributed significantly to the financing of the programme.
 - CIF Switzerland had money available for IPEP participants from the government agency for international exchange, and used part of it for the programme as well as for 5 out of 8 participants.
 - CIF Germany stated that next year their organisation would not be able to afford the high expenses of the programme and will charge a fee again.
 - CIF Türkiye has decided to increase the participation fee for next year as well.
 - CIF Nepal asked for financial support for host families to be included in the CIF International Financial Assistance Programme.

Participants' perspectives:

- 2025 was the second year that CIF International offered Financial Assistance for IPEP participation. Three National Branches (Austria, Germany and Greece) asked for it, and a total of 6 participants received financial support. The three branches agreed that this assistance was very helpful.
- CIF Finland had an applicant from Ghana who had to cancel her participation because though she got partial assistance from CIF International she still couldn't cover the rest of the expenses.

36th CIF International Conference

The 36th CIF International Conference was held at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, from 9th to 13th November 2025. This was particularly significant as it marked the first conference organised collaboratively by three partner institutions; TISS, Nirmala Niketan (NN), and CIF India and was strongly supported by the active involvement of student volunteers. Earlier, CIF India had hosted two international conferences: in 1981 at TISS, Mumbai, and in 2003 in Goa.

The conference brought together national and international delegates, academicians, professionals, and institutional representatives from diverse regions of the world. It provided a structured platform for scholarly exchange, professional collaboration, and intercultural dialogue. The conference design and schedule evolved through nearly two years of consultations and deliberations involving the CIF India local branch, collaborative partners, academicians, practitioners and members of the CIF Executive Committee.

What an incredible richness of professional knowledge, teaching excellence, organisational capacity, volunteer's kindness, eagerness, friendship and smile came together during these days!

Day 1: Registration and Inaugural Ceremony (9th November)

The conference began with the registration of participants, followed by the inaugural ceremony. The CIF International President, Ms. Elisabeth Fischbacher, presided over the programme. India's Union Minister of Social Justice, Shri Ramdas Athawale, attended as the Chief Guest. The conference convenor and CIF India President, Dr. Virochan Raote, formally welcomed the dignitaries and delegates. Prof. Bipin Jojo, Convenor from TISS, along with representatives from TISS and Nirmala Niketan, addressed the gathering and encouraged active participation.

The inaugural session included keynote addresses and the recognition of founding members of CIF India and other distinguished invitees. The vision, objectives, and thematic framework of the conference were clearly articulated.

A special presentation by Prof. Helen Joseph on "*Unity in Diversity in India*" was widely appreciated and offered valuable insights about India and its cultural diversity to both national and international delegates. Link here to view the presentation:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pyal88yAV10TnyZFKfMKeFdCvPCNcjIQ/view?usp=sharing>

Glimpses of the inaugural day!



Day 2: Academic Sessions (10th November)

The second day was devoted to academic deliberations through paper presentations, panel discussions, workshops, and thematic sessions. Participants shared research findings, professional experiences, and practice-based perspectives, facilitating critical engagement and informed scholarly dialogue. The thematic areas discussed included:

- A. Building global peace and amity
- B. Evolving identities and harmonising cultural diversities
- C. Inequity, sustainable development, and ecological justice
- D. Human rights, social justice, and inclusion in a diverse world

Day 3: Institutional Visits and Cultural Engagement (11th November)

The third day comprised institutional visits aimed at familiarising participants with local organisations and their operational frameworks. These visits promoted experiential learning through direct observation and interaction, while also strengthening professional networking and cross-cultural understanding.

Day 4: Academic Sessions, EC Elections, and Market of Nations (12th November)

Academic sessions continued on the fourth day, further advancing discussions aligned with the conference themes. Additional thematic discussions addressed:

- E. Enhancing couples, family, and social relationships
- F. Technology and emerging challenges for the social work profession
- G. Nurturing children, global ageing, and social security

Post-lunch, elections for the new CIF Executive Committee were conducted. In the evening, the *Market of Nations* was organised, showcasing cultural traditions, initiatives, and representations from various countries. Cultural performances by delegates and students added a vibrant and celebratory dimension to the programme.

Link to all the abstracts:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SXDRpKB5dhYD8ecPI4owLm3H7DJL_K72/edit?usp=drive_sdk&oid=101917645294780903062&rtpof=true



Day 5: General Assembly Meeting and Valedictory Ceremony (13th November)

The final day featured the introduction of the newly elected Executive Committee members, followed by the CIF General Assembly Meeting, during which organisational matters and future directions were discussed. Invited dignitaries were recognised, and the CIF India President delivered the vote of thanks, acknowledging the contributions of participants, organisers, and partner institutions. The conference concluded with the valedictory ceremony, highlighting key outcomes and reaffirming collective commitments.

VOLUNTEERS!

The 36th CIF International Conference was made truly exceptional by the dedication, professionalism, and tireless efforts of the student volunteers, whose seamless coordination and warm hospitality ensured a smooth and enriching experience for all.

"Volunteers do not necessarily have

Evaluation

The Organising Committee of CIF India and its partners reviewed the 36th CIF International Conference, noting positive delegate feedback, strong academic quality, and effective collaboration. Operational learning on scheduling, parallel sessions, communication, and logistics were discussed. Members appreciated the contributions of TISS, CSW-NN, and CIF India, reviewed the tentative finance report, and considered an e-book and abstract booklet for dissemination. The meeting concluded with a note that final financial calculations will determine CIF India's contribution to CIF International, followed by a vote of thanks



Conclusion

The 36th CIF International Conference was characterised by strong participation, rigorous academic engagement, and meaningful cultural exchange. Alongside the main programme, the *Swadeshi Mela* showcased indigenous products, local enterprises, and traditional craftsmanship. Overall, the conference strengthened professional social work networks, enhanced institutional collaboration, and successfully advanced its stated objectives.

National Branches

Across all branches, CIF members actively participated in international meetings, Baltic/Nordic cooperation initiatives, Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings, international conferences, and IPEP exchanges. These collective engagements strengthened professional networks, advanced international social work exchange, and reinforced CIF's global cooperation and visibility.

Efforts to initiate a Mediterranean Regional Meeting did not progress, despite expressions of interest from eight countries. An initial on-site meeting was held in Morocco in 2024; however, due to financial and other intervening constraints, the initiative could not be implemented. It has been postponed until after the CIF International Conference 2027, which will be hosted in Cyprus, as CIF Cyprus is unable to undertake organising both events concurrently.

National Branches of CIF International are formally constituted country-level associations that operate in alignment with CIF's statutes, mission, and governance framework. Each national branch maintains its own board and membership structure, while participating actively in international cooperation, Board and Executive Committee processes, conferences, and International Professional Exchange Programmes (IPEPs).

Activities reported in 2025 (Alphabetical order)

CIF Algeria focused on promoting the national branch through networking, social media, and guidance to new candidates. Activities included reviewing applications for CIF France programmes and participation in online meetings. Due to visa difficulties, no participant joined in 2025. A new Board was established, with Mrs. Manel Guellil appointed President from 1 January 2026.

CIF Argentina cooperated closely with the Council of Social Workers in Buenos Aires and the National Federation of Social Workers of Argentina. Workshops were organised where former IPEP participants shared experiences from Greece, Germany, and Switzerland. Planning an IPEP for September 2026, proposing an editorial team for World News, and developing a short national PEP are envisaged.

CIF Austria strengthened communication and international engagement, increased social media activity, and welcomed a new young member responsible for this area.

CIF Cyprus worked intensively to meet legal and registration requirements and these are in the final approval stage. The NB unanimously accepted the task to organise the International CIF Conference 2027.

CIF Estonia was active through online meetings, social media, and a seminar in November. The NB organised a three-day mini-programme in Eastern Estonia in preparation for the 2026 Nordic-Baltic Meeting in Narva. An article by a Taiwanese IPEP participant was published.

CIF Finland celebrated its 60th anniversary in Helsinki with 60 participants, including partners and representatives of Talentia and guests from Sweden and Estonia.

CIF France strengthened cooperation with social work schools, councils, and partners. It supported a new international project and assisted branch development in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Vietnam, and Portugal.

CIF Germany enhanced its organisational structure through working groups and regional meetings. It held a General Assembly focused on IPEP quality. Eighteen members attended the International Conference in India. Continued partnerships and preparation for future IPEPs were areas for activity.

CIF Hellas maintained cooperation with the Hellenic Association of Social Workers and the University of West Athens. The NB conducted public relations work linked to IPEPs and organised member gatherings.

CIF India organised the International CIF Conference in November 2025 with TISS and Nirmala Niketan. It hosted EC and Board meetings and is preparing National Board elections.

CIF Israel focused on visibility, governance, and membership development. It updated its website in Hebrew, English, and Arabic, engaged with NGOs, and fulfilled national NGO compliance requirements.

CIF Kyrgyzstan promoted IPEPs through visits to agencies and universities and explored organising a second IPEP.

CIF Morocco collaborated with social work schools and authorities, supported new international projects, and strengthened international networking.

CIF Nepal promoted CIF among NGOs, INGOs, and government bodies. It continued efforts to recruit host families and raise awareness of international exchange.

CIF Netherlands focused on information sharing and cooperation with host families and the University of Applied Sciences in Utrecht.

CIF Scotland supported UK participation in IPEPs in Kyrgyzstan and Taiwan.

CIF Slovenia focused on internal sustainability and succession planning for future international engagement.

CIF Spain strengthened professional visibility through partnerships, conferences, and promotion of IPEPs. Its IPEP experience was recognised as being a finalist in a professional training award given in Madrid.

CIF Sweden held its Annual Meeting with 35 members, organised seminars; and seven members attended the International Conference in India.

CIF Switzerland maintained strong professional networks, secured IPEP funding from Movetia, and organised a follow-up evaluation with alumni. The result was presented in the CIF Conference together with CIF Finland. Two students shot a movie of the IPEP 2025.

CIF Taiwan maintained international engagement via social media and planned future IPEPs for 2027. It supported participation in France (2024), Finland (2025), and Sweden (2026).

CIF Turkey focused on communication, social media engagement, and distribution of World News and EC Letters.

CIF-USA / CIP members merged to form a CIF Committee within CIP, reactivating regular meetings and strengthening outreach through newsletters, professional presentations, and the hosting of exchange programmes.

CIF visibility has increased through the active engagement of its national branches in professional networks, conferences, IPEPs, and partnerships with universities and social work organisations. Regular communication via social media, newsletters, and public events has strengthened recognition of CIF at national and international levels.

Contact Persons

A CIF **Contact Person** (CP) in a country without a national branch is an officially recognized individual who serves as the liaison between CIF International and its national branches and local professionals. The CP shares information on CIF activities and IPEPs, supports interested participants, and promotes networking, with the aim of fostering engagement and potentially developing a future national branch.

Development and Outreach Activities

The **CP in Australia** is rebuilding its branch after the loss of its previous core group. A new team is working to re-establish structure and membership, focusing on online networking through universities and professional social work associations to strengthen visibility and consolidate a committed base.

The **CP in Indonesia** has begun steps toward forming a national branch, concentrating on networking, promoting CIF and IPEPs, and identifying professionals who can support future organisational development.

The **CP in Madagascar** is working toward branch establishment by increasing IPEP participation and seeking supportive CIF partners. Cooperation with NGOs, particularly from Europe and North America, remains a priority to enhance exchange opportunities.

The **CP in Pakistan** focused on humanitarian relief following severe flooding, with direct involvement in assisting affected families. Participation in the International Conference in India was discussed but did not take place due to political tensions.

The **CP in Tanzania** continues efforts to establish a national branch through visits to agencies and universities, promoting IPEPs, and strengthening institutional partnerships.

The **CP in Vietnam** is progressing toward branch development through active IPEP participation in France, Finland, and Sweden, supported by ongoing collaboration with CIF France and other partners.

In countries with existing CP, information from CIF International, Board of Directors meetings, and international activities is primarily disseminated through WhatsApp groups. These groups connect IPEP alumni and professionals who have expressed interest in future participation in IPEPs or CIF initiatives, thereby maintaining communication, engagement, and continuity despite the absence of a formal national branch.

Development of Contact Persons in new countries

In 2025, more than eight new professional inquiries were received from individuals seeking to promote awareness of CIF in their respective countries. Current contacts include professionals working or residing in the United Kingdom (London), Australia, Canada, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, and Lebanon.

While these countries are still in the process of identifying additional interested colleagues, efforts continue to support participation in IPEPs, which remains a prerequisite for

recognition as an official CIF contact person. The availability of CIF grants for IPEP participation has also significantly improved access to exchange programmes and broadened professional involvement, thereby reinforcing the foundation for future contact person roles and potential national branch development.

General Assembly

The CIF General Assembly 2025 was held at the Tata Institute for Social Sciences, Mumbai, and was attended by approximately 80 members. This number met the quorum requirement, thereby validating the proceedings and decisions of the General Assembly.



President Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen warmly welcomed all members following the highly engaging 36th CIF International Conference. She also extended a special welcome to the newly elected Executive Committee members for the 2025–2027 term, Kirsten Prange and Priyadarshini Deo.

Gone but not forgotten!

Silvia Nutter honoured the memory of CIF members who had passed away during the past year and all members of the GA then observed a two-minute silence as a mark of respect and remembrance. The following members were remembered with gratitude:

- Gisela Hofmann-Germany
- Jaana Suokonautio and Tyyne Annikki Martikainen (born Kuosku)-Finland
- Margaret Longuevre and Maryse Penin-France
- Joan Mori-van de Garde, Kees-van de Klundert and Tom Hoeks-Netherlands
- Matts Olsson- Sweden
- Mia Maessen-CIP-CIF, USA
- Mr. S. Agashe, Noella Antao, Katy Gandevia and Sulbha Warde-India.

Reports

The agenda of the meeting, as well as the minutes of the General Assembly 2024, were presented to the members and unanimously approved.

The Annual Report 2024, including the financial statement and the auditor's report, was briefly presented. The Board of Directors (BD) meetings held in 2025 were summarized, highlighting the key developments and progress achieved in recent years. Within the framework of the CIF 2028 project structure, it was emphasized that CIF International maintains close and well-coordinated relationships with its National Branches (NBs) and with CIP-USA.

CIF was reported to be financially secure, although a temporary deficit is anticipated due to increased project-related expenditures. Nevertheless, the organisation is well prepared in all respects to initiate and strengthen its fundraising efforts. The Board of Directors also reviewed key statistical indicators, noting that between 2005 and 2024, CIF organized more than 200 IPEPs, with approximately 1,200 participants representing over 70 countries. In addition to board strategies to expand CIF membership base, particularly by engaging alumni in countries where no National Branch exists.

The Board also expressed its support for the ongoing project to secure and preserve the CIF Archives.

The General Assembly formally released the **Board of Directors** from further responsibility for the financial year 2024, thereby approving and accepting its governance and oversight

Thanks to the outgoing EC members

President Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen warmly expressed her sincere appreciation to the outgoing Executive Committee members, Astrid Sehmer and Demet Gülaldi, for their dedicated service over the past eight years. In recognition of their valuable contributions, they were presented with the traditional “Glass World,” a token of appreciation given to outgoing EC members. Demet’s letter of

Open Microphone: Global conflicts

Representatives of several national branches of CIF International expressed concern about ongoing global conflicts and their impact on social workers worldwide, with particular reference to the Israel–Gaza conflict. The discussion became intense, reflecting the depth of concern among members.

The President acknowledged that social workers around the world are deeply affected by and concerned about global conflicts.

for the reporting period. All relevant reports, minutes, and guidelines have been made available on the members’ section of the CIF International website, www.cifinternational.com. The statutes of the organization are accessible on the introduction page of the website, ensuring transparency and ease of reference for all members.

gratitude, reflecting on her meaningful and enriching experience as a member of the Executive Committee, was read aloud to the General Assembly.

The complete report of the CIF Election Committee, including details of the newly elected Executive Committee members for the 2025–2027 term, is published in this Annual Report.

However, she clarified that the General Assembly is not the appropriate forum for political debate. She emphasized the importance of maintaining CIF’s focus on its mission, promoting peace, and strengthening its professional programmes. She further informed the Assembly that an official CIF statement on peace, approved by the Board of Directors, would soon be published on the CIF International website.

Board of Directors Meetings

In 2025, CIF International held two Board of Directors (BD) meetings. In addition to conducting its statutory responsibilities, such as approving the Annual Report and budget, these meetings aimed to strengthen mutual understanding, trust, and collaboration across the global volunteer-based organisation. Online meetings enabled wider participation from National Branch representatives, overcoming financial and time constraints. Additional meetings of IPEP Coordinators and sub-groups further enhanced coordination and programme planning.

On April 12, the Board of Directors of CIF International, with 22 National Branches represented, approved the Annual Report 2024, including the financial report. The Board welcomed the confirmation from the Finanzamt in Bonn granting tax-exempt status to CIF International effective from January 1, 2025.



On November 7 and 8, the second Board of Directors Meeting of CIF International was held in Mumbai, India. Sixteen National Branches participated in person, while nine were represented by proxy votes. CIF Algeria, CIF Palestine and CIF Taiwan gave apologies.

The first day focused on CIF's future development. After reviewing achievements up to the end of 2025, the Executive Committee emphasized the need to further strengthen CIF's organisational structure and strategic direction.

For the first time, global statistics on IPEP participation and National Branch membership were presented. The Board decided that:

- These statistics should be further refined and analysed.
- Alumni in countries without National Branches should be invited to join CIF International through a structured process.
- Contact Persons should receive stronger support, including dedicated meetings and assistance to facilitate their participation in CIF activities.
- IPEP Coordinators' meetings should address issues such as preventing late cancellations, reviewing programme procedures and content, developing new themes, and supporting less experienced National Branches.
- Fundraising should become a key priority to support financial assistance for participants, the organisation of CIF archives, and the development of new IPEPs.

CIF should explore the development of structured exchange programmes for social work education faculty members and students, drawing inspiration from the earlier collaboration in India between the **College of Social Work Nirmala Niketan** and **Stockholm University**, and initiate similar partnerships with universities in countries where CIF has an active presence.

The second day of the Board of Directors meeting of CIF International was dedicated to the approval of the Budget 2026. The Board approved the budget, including funds to support a volunteer group responsible for organizing CIF's archives, as well as an allocation for unforeseen expenses under the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

The Board also approved CIF's Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct, published on the members' section of the CIF website, and prepared for the election of the new Executive Committee for the 2025–2027 term. In addition, the President presented how CIF Switzerland has implemented CIF's Privacy Policy in practice, offering a useful model for other National Branches.

The Board of Directors of CIF International considered a request submitted by CIF Spain on November 3, calling for a public statement from CIF International and suggesting that the Israeli branch publicly express its position regarding the current situation in its country.

This led to an intense discussion within the Board. While some members opposed any involvement of CIF in political matters, others expressed concern about the Executive Committee's position that CIF is not a political organisation.

The discussion concluded with the Board approving an official statement, which has since been published on the CIF International website:

“CIF is an organisation committed to promoting peace, human rights, and social justice. We firmly believe that every individual has the right to dignity, respect, and to live free from violence and oppression, regardless of race, gender, nationality, or belief. Guided by international human rights frameworks and the principles of peace, we work tirelessly to foster a world where every person can live in harmony and free from discrimination.

We reject any action that endangers human life or contributes to suffering. We oppose war, discrimination, genocide, terrorism and any form of injustice that dehumanizes individuals or communities. Through the promotion of exchange programmes for professionals working in the social field, we strive to create bridges of peace and understanding, and build societies where human rights are universally respected, and peace is a reality.”

President Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen expressed her sincere gratitude to the Board of Directors and the observers of CIF International for their valuable contributions and engaging discussions throughout the meeting. She also

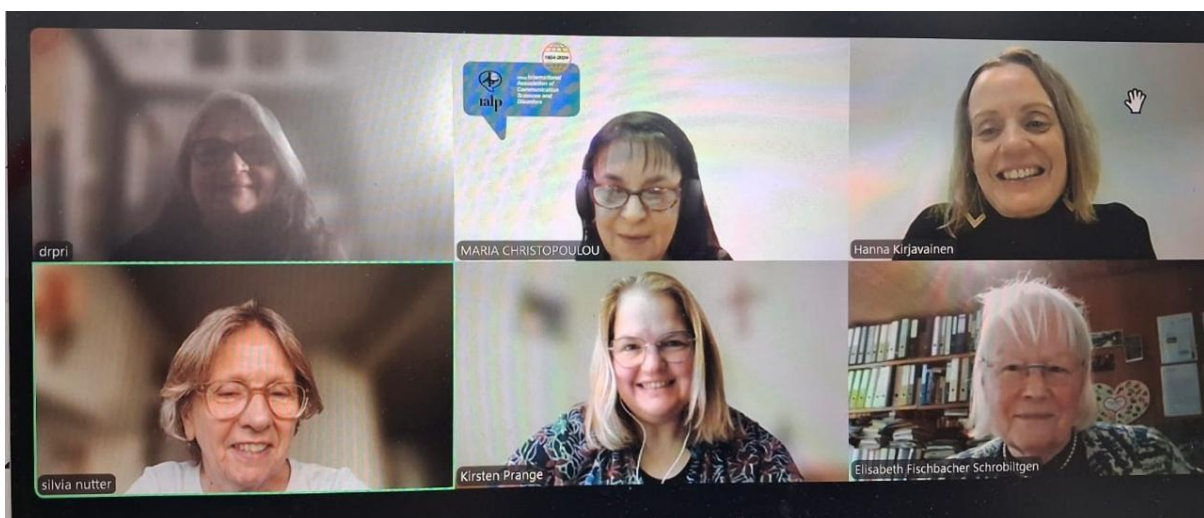
thanked the hosts for their excellent organisation and warm hospitality, and wished all participants a meaningful and enriching 36th CIF Conference at the Tata Institute for Social Sciences TISS campus in Mumbai.

Executive Committee

In 2025, the Executive Committee (EC) of CIF International held ten online meetings and one in-person meeting in Mumbai, India. The Committee addressed a wide range of matters related to the organisation's daily functioning, governance, and strategic development.

- Key areas of work included the preparation and coordination of the two Board of Directors (BD) meetings and the General Assembly held in 2025. The EC also published the Annual Report 2024, including the audited financial accounts, and released one edition of *World News*. Significant efforts were made to restructure and regularly update the international website, ensuring improved accessibility and relevance of information. In addition, EC members actively participated in various WhatsApp groups to strengthen communication across national branches and contact persons.
- A major administrative milestone was achieved when the EC supported the successful application for tax exemption status for CIF International at the Finanzamt in Bonn. This exemption was granted in April 2025, with effect from January 1, 2025, strengthening the organisation's financial and legal standing.
- To enhance financial sustainability, the EC established a Fundraising Committee to explore potential sources of funding. As an initial step, a "Donate" button was added to the CIF International website to facilitate contributions. Efforts were also made to support regional engagement. Maria Christopoulou initiated preparations for a Mediterranean meeting of National Branches; however, this had to be postponed due to the situation in the Middle East.
- The EC also made decisions regarding the allocation of grants to support participation in the BD meetings and the International Conference in Mumbai. Furthermore, Ilse Hoffmann-Klee (CIF Germany) was encouraged to examine CIF's archived material held in Berlin, resulting in a clear proposal for its review and management.
- In line with evolving organisational requirements, the EC developed a privacy policy, which will require further discussion and coordinated implementation across National Branches and with Contact Persons. The EC also addressed various matters concerning National Branches and formally endorsed new Contact Persons where required.

Completing this substantial volume of work with approximately 25 hours of online meetings and one in-person meeting while also preparing for leadership transition was both demanding and highly engaging, reflecting the EC's strong commitment to advancing CIF International's mission and operations.



Election Committee

The year 2025 was particularly active for the Election Committee (ELC) of CIF International. Preparatory work for the election of the Executive Committee (EC), scheduled to take place in India in November, began early in the year. The ELC convened several online meetings starting in January, with the objective of ensuring timely and effective preparation for a successful election process. To promote healthy competition and ensure the most suitable candidates were elected to EC positions, applicants were encouraged to stand for more than one post where appropriate.

By the spring, however, the number of candidates remained insufficient. There was no candidate for the Treasurer position, and only one candidate each for the remaining posts. In response, the ELC initiated an additional round of outreach and consultations. As the situation remained unsatisfactory, the ELC convened an urgent online meeting with all National Branch Presidents on September 28th. Following this meeting, the National Branches increased their engagement significantly. Ultimately, there was one candidate each for the positions of President, Vice President, and Treasurer, while the roles of Secretary and Member-at-Large attracted multiple candidates. In total, nine candidates applied for six EC positions.

All applicants submitted both a video presentation and a curriculum vitae, which were made available on the international website. This ensured transparency and allowed all members, including those voting in absentia, to review and assess the candidates.

During the 36th CIF Conference held in Mumbai, candidates presented themselves in person to the Presidents, National Branch representatives, and Contact Persons, and responded to questions from attendees. A total of 24 Presidents participated in the election held on November 12, 2025, comprising 15 in-person votes and 9 proxy votes.

The ELC extends its sincere appreciation to all candidates for contributing to a smooth and successful election process. We would also like to thank those candidates who were not elected and encourage them to consider standing again in the 2027 elections, as their willingness to serve is vital to the continued strength and leadership of CIF International.

Furthermore, it is important that all National Branches proactively identify and recommend capable and committed members to the Election Committee well in advance of the next election. The process of identifying potential candidates and maintaining communication with and about them should be continuous, ensuring a strong and diverse pool of candidates for future leadership roles.

For the Election Committee

Ilse Hoffmann-Klee, Convener (CIF Germany)
Catherine Psarouli (CIF Hellas)
Merja Niemelä (CIF Finland)

CIF Executive Committee members 2025-2027

- President: **Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen** (CIF Switzerland)
- Vice President: **Dr. Maria Christopoulou** (CIF Cyprus)
- Secretary: **Dr. Priyadarshini Deo** (CIF India)
- Treasurer: **Kirsten Prange** (CIF Germany)
- Members at Large:
Silvia Nutter (CIF Argentina)
Dr. Hanna Kirjavainen (CIF Finland)

Social Media & CIF Website

The social media strategy of CIF International aims to increase the organisation's visibility, engage and motivate existing members, attract new members and disseminate knowledge, experiences and updates related to CIF's activities and events.

Hanna Kirjavainen, as a member of the Executive Committee, is responsible for overseeing the website and social media platforms. The CIF International website is regularly maintained and provides comprehensive information about the organisation, its mission, and its activities. It includes details about IPEP programmes, participant experiences, and announcements of upcoming conferences and events. The website also lists contact information of all National Branches and Contact Persons and has served as the primary platform for CIF's World News since 2022. The website is hosted by Pineapple Web Company, with Julien Ferard serving as the contact person.

Additionally, the website features a dedicated document centre accessible exclusively to members. This repository contains essential organisational documents such as meeting minutes, newsletters, and statutes. In 2025, the structure of the document centre was improved for greater clarity and usability, and outdated documents were systematically removed.

In terms of performance metrics, the CIF International website recorded 6,460 total clicks in 2025, representing the number of times users directly accessed the site, and 118,000 total impressions, reflecting how often links to the site appeared in search engine results.

Besides Facebook, CIF International maintains accounts on Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube which are underutilised and not updated regularly.

The CIF Facebook page remains the most active social media platform, currently with 141 followers, reflecting a 28% increase from the previous year. Over the past year, the page received 10,611 views and generated 1,180 engagement actions, including clicks, shares, comments, and saves marking a 42% increase compared to the previous year.

Content shared on Facebook includes announcements of upcoming IPEPs, updates from the CIF conference in India, reports from events, and participant experiences. Posts from National Branches are also regularly shared to enhance visibility and engagement.

Though the other social media platforms of CIF International have seen limited activity, there are plans to increase their usage and improve engagement.

Strengthening CIF International's social media presence will require greater participation from members. Their increased involvement in content creation, sharing experiences, and promoting activities would significantly enhance outreach, engagement, and the overall visibility of the organisation. Kindly refer to the following links for further information:

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/Socialmediacifinternational>

Website : <https://cifinternational.com/>

Instagram : <https://www.instagram.com/socialmediacif?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y%3D>

WORLD NEWS

World News (WN) is the magazine of CIF, published once each year with the primary purpose of informing members, fostering professional exchange, and sustaining international networks within CIF and the wider global community.

Enhancing Quality and Professional Visibility

As a global publication, World News serves as a strategic communication platform and knowledge resource for members and partners worldwide. It enables readers to gain deeper insight into CIF's mission, initiatives, and societal contributions, while inspiring professionals to engage actively with CIF and consider membership within their respective countries. - see the 2025 edition on the CIF International website.

For the 2026 edition, *World News* will be guided by a newly established **Editorial Committee** responsible for overseeing the strategic development, content curation, and overall quality of the publication. The inclusion of professionally submitted and peer-informed articles in recent editions has significantly enhanced the magazine's academic rigour, visibility, and professional standing. As a result, *World News* now reflects a refined editorial standard and presents content of consistently high quality.

Members, colleagues, and friends of CIF are warmly invited to contribute articles showcasing events, organisational developments, achievements, projects, IPEPs, and other relevant initiatives. This structured exchange of experiences and professional activities strengthens CIF's international collaboration and reinforces its shared identity across national branches.

In addition, World News features a dedicated section for evidence-based contributions from diverse global contexts, addressing contemporary professional, social, and policy-related issues. This section advances the magazine's objective of promoting the professional dimension of CIF while simultaneously enhancing its public profile and expanding awareness of the organisation's impact.



FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME

In 2025 CIF had an income of **€ 8.212,45**.

The main regular income is the yearly paid membership fee (this year totalling € 6.477,58). Every national branch is responsible for ensuring that 10 or 5 Euros for every member go as an annual membership fee to the bank account of CIF International, the amount depending on the financial situation of specific countries.

In 2025 the membership fee was paid in respect of 683 members. Some payments were also based on years before 2025. From countries where money transfer expenses are too high, CIF International agrees to have fees paid as a group, and even in cash when practically feasible.

We had the following income from the conference in Mumbai: € 1.366,10 from the market of nations. At the time of writing, it is unclear whether CIF International will receive conference fees and fees for the peace project fund.

In 2025 we had € 368,77 as extraordinary income.

The bookkeeping of CIF International is based on real payments/expenses and does not include "debts" of members fees

EXPENDITURE

In 2025 CIF expenses were **€ 13.321,38**.

The CIF conference was held in Mumbai, as were the annual EC and BD meetings. These resulted in costs for travel and accommodation for the EC (€ 4.835,10) and for accommodation for the BD (€ 470,00). Many thanks to the CIF members from India for their extensive voluntary work and to the BD members who did not claim reimbursement of expenses.

It should be also mentioned that all CIF members work on a voluntary basis, there are no meeting fees, and often no expenses allowance. Many also support CIF financially. We would like to thank all of them for their strong commitment, both at international and national levels.

Grants amounting to € 3.505,76 were given for participation in the conference and the BD meeting.

The Election Committee was reimbursed € 600 in travel experiences.

CIF spent € 1.700,00 as financial assistance for IPEP participation.

The magazine of CIF International, CIF World News has only been published digitally since 2020. The layout of one issue costs € 450; in 2025 one issue was produced.

CIF spent € 1.080,00 on web and email hosting and maintenance of the website.

Further costs were administrative expenses and bank charges, together amounting to € 398,94 as well as other expenses with € 281,58.

RESULT

The operating result showed a minus of **€ 5.108,93**.

For the third consecutive year, a deficit was incurred, which is detrimental to CIF's assets. As part of future financial planning, consideration must be given to how income can be increased so that the CIF's assets do not continue to decline. To this end, in addition to income from donations, targeted fundraising efforts should be made to raise money.

ASSETS

This deficit also affects the assets. At the end of the year 2025 CIF International had an **asset value of € 71.554,56**. This is a minus of € 3.759,54 composed of the operating result of € 5.108,93, plus interest on the assets of € 1.349,39.

The money is held at the Sparkasse Koblenz in Germany. A small part, of around € 2.400, is invested with S Broker, the online broker of the Sparkasse Financial Group.

The assets include the following earmarked funds: HB Ollendorff/M Ollendorff Fund, S & P Unger Fund, Peace Project Fund, and the Fund of Financial Assistance for IPEP Participation. All these earmarked funds together amounted to € 17.996,63.

BUDGET AND PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT, IN EUROS			
	Profit & Loss	Budget	Profit & Loss
	2024	2025	2025
Income			
Membership fee	6.675,00	6.700,00	6.477,58
Market of the nations		3.500,00	1.366,10
Conference fees		2.000,00	
Conference fees for Peace project		500,00	
Fundraising		3.000,00	
Other Donations/Legacy		1.000,00	368,77
Donations for Fund Financial Assistance for IPEP Participation	1.167,63		
Total	7.842,63.	16.700,00	8.212,45
Expenses			
Travel & board EC	4.219,00	6.300,00	4.835,10
Travel & board BD	2.950,24	3.750,00	470,00
Grants		5.000,00	3.505,76
Election committee		600,00	600,00
Financial assistance for IPEP participants	2.655,00	5.000,00	1.700,00
World News (layout)	450,00	450,00	450,00
Internet expenses/social media	765,64	700,00	780,00
Social media group		200,00	
Website	838,00	600,00	300,00
Peace project		500,00	
Administrative expenses	205,29	100,00	220,02
Bank charges	160,11	100,00	178,92
New national branches		100,00	
Other expenses		100,00	281,58
Total	12.243,28	23.500,00	13.321,38
Operating result	-4.400,65	-6.800,00	-5.108,93

ASSETS 2025, DECEMBER 31, IN EUROS		
	2024	2025
SPK Koblenz Bank Account	2.183,77	1.434,62
Money Market Account	20.741,37	17.443,49
Savings Bank Letter	50.000,00	50.000,00
S Broker Depot	2.388,96	2.381,45
Transferred IPEP assistance 2026		395,00
Liabilities		-100,00
Capital of the Organisation	75.314,10	71.554,56
Assets include the following earmarked funds		
HB Ollendorff /M Ollendorff Fund	7.387,74	7.387,74
S & P Unger Fund	5.958,86	5.958,86
Peace Project Fund	1.400,59	1.400,59
Fund Financial Assistance for IPEP participation	3.249,44	3.249,44
Earmarked funds	17.996,63	17.996,63

Audit and Approval

The full accounts 2025 were presented by the CIF Treasurer, together with the confirmation of the independent audit, at the BD meeting on April 18, 2026, where they were approved. The audit of the accounts 2025 was done by CIF

Germany's members Dorte Feierabend and Conny Zwar.

The 2026 Budget was presented and approved at the Board of Directors meeting on November 7, 2025.

Donations are very welcome to maintain and improve the work of CIF International. Here is the relevant information:

Name: Council of International Fellowship e.V.
 IBAN: DE02 5705 0120 0000 1884 25
 BIC-Code: MALADE51KOB
 Bank: Sparkasse Koblenz (Germany)

Donations can also be sent via PayPal to treasurer@cifinternational.com
 Or via our website <https://cifinternational.com/donate>

For all further information please contact the Treasurer of CIF International:
treasurer@cifinternational.com.

List of CIF Committees

ELECTION COMMITTEE

Ilse Hoffmann-Klee, Convener, CIF Germany
Merja Niemelä, CIF Finland
Catherine Psarouli, CIF Hellas

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen, President, CIF Switzerland
Maria Christopoulou, Vice-President, CIF Cyprus
Priyadarshini Deo, Secretary, CIF India (as of November 12, 2025)
Demet Gülaldi, Secretary, CIF Turkey (until November 12, 2025)
Kirsten Prange, Treasurer, CIF Germany (as of November 12, 2025)
Astrid Sehmer, Treasurer, CIF Germany (until November 12, 2025)
Hanna Kirjavainen, Member-at-large, CIF Finland
Silvia Nutter, Member-at-large, CIF Argentina

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR IPEP PARTICIPATION WORKING GROUP

Silvia Nutter, EC Member at Large, Convener
Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen, CIF Switzerland
Patricia Gandara, CIF Argentina
Bhavana Mehta, CIF India
Jessica Seitz, CIF Germany

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen, President, CIF Switzerland
Patricia Gandara, CIF Argentina
Kirsten Prange, Treasurer, CIF Germany (as of November 12, 2025)
Astrid Sehmer, Treasurer, CIF Germany (until November 12, 2025)

WORLD NEWS EDITORIAL COMMITTEE (2026)

Maria Christopoulou, CIF Cyprus
Mireille Boucher, CIF France
Mariela Colmenro, CIF Argentina
Alicia Maria Gardel, CIF Argentina
Annita Koni, CIF Cyprus
Meera Shah, CIF India