



European Scout Region - Regional Circular 12_EN

EOESC 2019: Discussion Paper Triennium vs. Biennium

Discussion Paper regarding the proposed temporary interim measures to align the timing of the Regional and World Scout Conference and enable there to be a reduced period of service for the next European Scout Committee

The European Scout Committee proposes the following resolution at the Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the European Scout Conference for adoption by its member organisations. This paper aims to help member organisations to understand the rationale, the benefits and challenges and to gain an overview of questions and concerns raised by member organisations regarding this proposal, to prepare for the forthcoming decision and to engage in the ongoing discussion and consultation.

To include the following Transitional Articles under a new title 5 "Transitional Articles" in Article VII in its Regional Constitution:

Transitional Article 1: *The Regional triennium starting after the ordinary 2019 Regional Scout Conference will exceptionally last only 2 years, with the next ordinary Regional Conference, therefore, taking place in 2021*

Transitional Article 2: *Candidates elected to serve for a mandate as Member of the Regional Scout Committee at the 2019 Regional Scout Conference will exceptionally only serve until the 2021 Regional Scout Conference. Those eligible for re-election at the 2021 Regional Conference will if elected serve a mandate until the next ordinary meeting of the Regional Conference foreseen in 2024.*

Background

The European Scout Committee strongly believes that enhancing the unity of the Scout Movement worldwide is one of the primary aims of the World Organization. It is one of the foundation stones on which our movement is built. The international contacts are an essential aspect both of its purpose (contributing to the education of young people to become members of their international communities) and its principles (the promotion of international peace, understanding and cooperation).

To achieve its mission, all levels of the World Organization – national, regional and world – must pursue a common purpose and direction. In line with the journey started by the 35th World Scout Conference in Durban in 1999, all parts of the World Organization move forward together. This synergy will enable the worldwide Movement to be channelled to utmost effect. Commitment to our common mission, and working together in coherent ways to achieve it, will lead to a greater unity of the movement and to the building of a better world through the education of more young people.

European Conference Resolution 22ESC/6 stressed that the European Regional Vision is embedded in the WOSM Vision 2023 and that the region is signed up to the overall Mission of Scouting, as agreed in 1999. Enhancing the Unity of the Scout Movement is part of our Regional Scout Plan and facilitating engagement, discussion and decisions are part of the current mandate of the European Scout Committee.

Rationale

The ways of working and strategic planning on the World Level have significantly changed, improved and grown stronger in recent years, particularly after the adoption of vision 2023 and a clearer strategic framework to implement it and achieve its goal. As our Regional Scout Plan and our European regional work is not working as a stand-alone item, but is part of the whole **interconnected WOSM structure**, further alignment between the plans and work is necessary.

The European Scout Committee thinks that member organisations are facing a **strategic choice** between the Region being an organisation steering the ideas of the European Region towards the World Scout Conference or, being a Region aligned with the general direction of World Scouting. The Committee believes that in the past we have been seen as too dominant, which was often not really helping in our relations both with World Level and with other Regions. A softer, but equally participative, approach might be beneficial. We also recognise that our European NSOs are also very vocal and numerous at World Level and still have the possibility to influence the World Agenda. It goes without saying that we

will continue to share examples, and influence through developing our practices and regional pilot projects.

Following this strategic position, the European Scout Committee sees logic in having a World Conference, followed by a regional Symposium, followed by a European Scout Conference

- Using the WSC outcomes as inputs for the Symposium
- Creating a plan in line with the WSC plan
- Able to add a European flavour
- Vision 2023 will end in 2023. By doing this change, we would be directly aligned in 2024.

If member organisations decide not to make the change, the Region can only adapt to the new Vision in 2025, two years later than it is adopted. With the opportunity of an already scheduled Extraordinary Meeting for the approval of the new Rules of Procedure, the Committee felt it would be best to prepare to take a decision as early as possible to give candidates for the next committee elections in the summer certainty about the length of their term and to prepare the most appropriate draft of a new Regional Scout Plan for the European Scout Conference because of the inevitable impact - Biennium or Triennium - would have on the content and realistic objectives. Due to the necessity of an amendment to the Regional Constitution to make this a "one-time change" possible, the committee sought the guidance and support of the Constitutions Committee and the World Level.

There were other influences on the proposal, as the last three evaluations of the Conference, on the Joint part of the Conference, have been rather negative. This, together with Conference Resolution 22ESC/10 which asked the committee to undertake an assessment of the working methods and evaluate the balance of work between the different working structures within the Region, brings these questions to the Member Organisations for a transparent and participatory process.

Joint Work

Discussions on the timing of the regional conferences began in the previous triennium and it was felt at that time that there would be a probable change in the WAGGGS cycle. In fact, it was only at the November 2018 joint committee meeting that the policy of WAGGGS to extend their planning cycle to a longer timeline meant that they felt no need to change their cycle.

With the significant changes in the structure of WAGGGS and the strengthening of WOSM in reflecting all Member Organisations, rather than being a federation of Regions, the relations between the two regional committees have loosened and the ways of working have changed.

The WAGGGS Committee has been informed about these changes and all Member Organisations of WAGGGS and WOSM in Europe are invited to reflect on this as they are all partners in the change.

Perhaps the telling aspect of our work together is that our success is often measured in the success of the events we support together. It seems more logical to look at how we support our member organisations - through events, positioning and common activities rather than holding a conference where there is a wide range of expectations which are often difficult to be fulfilled.

Challenges

Joint work - our successes in working together are not linked to a conference, rather to interpreting the needs of our members and delivering good events. Currently, the MOU inhibits a flexible approach.

Joint conference - there is a wide range of feelings about the joint conference and we believe that we perform better in offering participation events for learning and upskilling, rather than a talking shop. It may mean that a wider range of our practitioners benefits from our work together. We also see an increase of online-based discussion forums making meetings and exchanges cheaper, less time intensive and more environmentally friendly.

Joint Committees - there is no reason to assume that the Joint Committees will not continue to meet. The proposal to manage strategically an approach to events and training will ensure that the products of working together will remain valid and supportive for our members. Over the years, there has been a rather flexible approach to how often the committees met together. A change of approach may solidify the need for meeting and also ensure a clear monitoring and developmental role for the Coordinating Group (Chair, Vice-Chair and staff support from each committee).

Q: Why is WAGGGS Europe not interested in changing the cycle with us?

They had started this discussion a few years back in the first place. It is an interesting debate, as the rationale to make this change, could count in the same way for the WAGGGS Region in Europe. However, it's not our task to take a political stand on this. We would, of course, be happy if the dialogue of

changing the WAGGGS Europe Conference together, or later on to the same cycle would be re-opened, as those discussions have been ongoing for the past six years.

Q: Do other Regions consider this change?

Interamerica Region just made the change in the past biennium. In November 2018 they closed their cycle of two years and are now synced with the cycle as we also propose now. Based on the changes and their learnings, our Region can benefit now directly from the process as was done in the Interamerican Scout Region. Most recent conference: Regional Conference November 2018

Arab Region will adapt to the majority position to ensure their full involvement in developing and participating in any world plan.

Eurasia Region - continues to have its developmental needs and will concentrate on ensuring that the world plan recognises also their particular needs.

Asia Pacific Region: Is already in the new proposed cycle. No adaptations needed. Most recent conference: Regional Conference October 2018

Africa Region: Is already in the new proposed cycle. No adaptations needed. Most recent conference: Regional Conference September 2018

Q: Are you not rushing this decision?

With the opportunity of an already scheduled Extraordinary Meeting for the approval of the new Rules of Procedure, the Committee felt it would be best to take a decision as early as possible to give candidates for the next committee elections in the summer certainty about the length of their term and to prepare the most appropriate draft of a new Regional Scout Plan for the European Scout Conference as the decision on whether it will apply to a Biennium or Triennium has a major impact on the content and realistic objectives.

If your NSO thinks it needs more time to consider the change and its potential impact, you can propose to defer the proposal to the ordinary conference this summer under the Rules of Procedure.

If you think the 2019-2022 Triennium is too soon to implement this change, you can propose changing the Triennium 2022-2025 to a Biennium 2022-2024 under the Rules of Procedure. This would still enable a closer alignment with the successor of Vision 2023. Of course, you can also propose a deferment and change of timing together.

Q: What will happen after the proposed changes have been accepted or rejected?

The upcoming vote is just one step in our ongoing commitment to review our working methods and continuously improve our ways of working. Every outcome is just setting a path to further discussions and decisions.

After the upcoming IC Forum, we are expecting that further resolutions will emerge to give guidance on the direction of travel.

If the constitutional amendment succeeds, we will need a resolution on how to continue to develop our regional joint work with WAGGGS, how a possible joint event could be created or reshaped to enable NSOs to continue to set the strategic direction of the joint work and to give the committee a mandate and a direction for the upcoming dialogue with the WAGGGS committee. There is also the question of how NSOs would like to coordinate themselves in preparation of the World Scout Conference. This could be NSO led as happened in 2017 or coordinated by the Region.

If the constitutional amendment fails, we will need to draw up practical arrangements on how we can achieve continued close alignment with the World Triennial Plan, its priorities and the successor of Vision 2023. Also needed will be further guidance on future joint work with WAGGGS, how to amplify the benefits for both organisations and its members, to develop a better strategic framework and how to make the joint conference more relevant.

Overview of the questions, as raised during the Crowdcast

(link to the Crowdcast: <https://www.crowdcast.io/e/extraconfmeeting>)

During the first Crowdcast introducing the constitutional amendments and Rules of procedure we received several questions regarding the proposed temporary interim measures to align the timing of the Regional and World Scout Conference. The full answers are still available on the recording of the Crowdcast.

Q: How can you make sure that a joint working group could function constructively if members from WAGGGS and WOSM would join in different rhythms?

Hear answer in Crowdcast, and;

The "Heads of Agreement Document", agreed with WAGGGS, will progress how we work together and involve the Joint Conference in debating.

Q: Where any other options to make the WOSM conference and/or joint conference more attractive without breaking them up discussed, and if so which?

Hear answer in Crowdcast, and;

Our objective was to get greater alignment with the world level. Our proposals developed with our WAGGGS colleagues we hope will address the continuing relationship.

Q: How will we mitigate against the negative effects of a biennium? Due to the time taken to recruit volunteers, there is a concern of not much happening in the 2 years.

Hear answer in Crowdcast, and;

Our Volunteer Management Team have been putting together a streamlined recruitment process, to be aligned with the adoption of the RSP - quicker and in place sooner. 2 years can be a long time, with the potential of continuity of actions needed in Europe.

Q: Has WAGGGS reacted in any way to the WOSM idea to make the IC Forum longer or more strategic?

Listen to the reply on, and;

The Forum was just one suggestion. There could be other ways - a forum of the Big 6 in Europe, an educational event dealing with SDGs, non-formal education....

Q: What are the possibilities for the joint work if we decide to move the WOSM conference? How do you plan to organise the joint work in the European region?

Listen to the reply on Crowdcast, and;

There are many ways - and our Heads of Agreement Document may help to illustrate that Work in Partnership will not be lost.

Q: Where can we find the report of joint conference and the evaluation of the session? Is there a numerical report?

Listen to the reply on Crowdcast, and;

the remark was based on general feelings. An extract of the most recent conference evaluation is attached.

Q: From whom would the joint committees receive their mandates and legitimation?

Listen to the reply on Crowdcast, and;

Each Committee will continue to get its mandate and period of office from its electorate - there is currently no joint mandate - just a way of working.

Q: Did you do an exercise where you identified the pros and cons of both models (i.e. joint conference and separate conferences)? And if so, will you publish your findings in full?

Listen to the reply on Crowdcast, and;

Our supposition was that WAGGGS too would change the cycle in Europe. We only learned that was not going to be the case in November so we have no findings - part of the reason for engaging with our members who would be affected.

Q: How are we going to be sure that aligning World and European Strategic and Triennium Plan won't mean World level shaping directly the European Region instead of the other way around?

Listen to the reply on Crowdcast, and;

All our experience has been with an active European voice, through elected members, volunteers, NSO engagement - we influence and gain a lot through our relations worldwide.

Q: What are the chances and risks of a change in the Conference cycle? Have these changes been discussed with the European Committee of WAGGGS?

Listen to the reply on Crowdcast, and;

We will discuss in-depth at the Joint meeting in March - we are already planning our work in partnership. This is not the end of the road, simply different ways of working.

Geneva, 17 February 2019