



**MINUTES OF THE ICOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
DEBRECEN, 1 SEPTEMBER 2017**

PRESENT: Milan Harvalík (MH, chair), Emilia Aldrin (EA), Lidia Becker (LB), Alina Bugheşiu (AB), Alice Crook (AC), Oliviu Felecan (OF), Unni-Päivä Leino (UPL, Editor-in-Chief of *Onoma*), Staffan Nyström (SN), Paula Sjöblom (PS), Valéria Tóth (VT).

APOLOGIES: Richard Coates (RC), Nobuhle Hlongwa (NH), Guy Puzey (GP).

1. WELCOME

The chair called the meeting to order on Friday 1 September 2017 at 14:06 local time (12:06 GMT). He presented the role of the General Assembly according to the ICOS Statutes and pointed out that, since more than 20 % of the personal members were present or validly represented, the meeting could begin.

2. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda, chair of the meeting (MH) and notetaker (AB) were approved by show of hands. At the same time, the members agreed on the candidates to count the votes in the election (SN and OF).

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GLASGOW, 28 AUGUST 2014)

As no comments arose, the minutes of the previous General Assembly were unanimously approved.

4. MATTERS ARISING

No new matters were noted.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In his report, MH noted that, with one exception, the Board of Directors was elected at the 25th Congress in Glasgow, Scotland, on 28 August 2014, to serve until the 26th Congress in Debrecen, Hungary. The exception came about in August 2015, when the Secretary, Carol Léonard, submitted a resignation letter due to health reasons. According to Article 9 of the ICOS Statutes, in the case of the loss of members of the Board of Directors through death, illness, continuous unavailability, or resignation, the Board of Directors may appoint substitutes, who must be members of ICOS. This issue was discussed via e-mail in August 2015 and then during the meeting of the Board of Directors in Baia Mare (2 September 2015). Several suggestions were made, and after some discussion it was agreed that AB would be appointed the new Secretary of ICOS.

MH thanked the members of the Board for their work over the past three years, as well as the members of the previous Board and the former President of ICOS, Carole Hough, in particular, for handing over ICOS in such good order. The President also expressed his gratitude to Carole Hough and Daria Izdebska for editing the Proceedings of the 25th International Congress of Onomastic Sciences (Glasgow, 25-29 August 2014; see <http://www.icos2014.com/congress-proceedings/>). At the same time, MH showed his appreciation to the organisers of the 26th Congress of ICOS for all their efforts in preparing the scientific event and the members of ICOS for participating in the Congress.

The President mentioned that the Board had reunited six times over the past three years: in Glasgow (the joint meeting of the outgoing and incoming ICOS Board of Directors, 29 August 2014), Hannover (6 March 2015), Baia Mare (2 September 2015), Prague (14-15 June 2016), and Debrecen (16 May 2017, and 27 August 2017).

Three ICOS Newsletters had been prepared and disseminated (one bilingual – April 2016, and two trilingual – May 2017, August 2017), along with information distributed via other forms of communication: the ICOS website, Facebook page, and Twitter profile (particular thanks were due to GP and AC for managing the ICOS website and social media platforms). At the same time, the ICOS survey regarding members' research interests was reissued to update the data collected previously (see item 6 below).

MH emphasised that the main tasks of ICOS consist of stimulating the development of onomastics all around the world, coordinating name research on an international level and in an interdisciplinary context, building contacts between ICOS and other national/international organisations studying proper names (from various perspectives), and encouraging everyone with a serious interest in onomastics to become members of ICOS. In this respect, the outgoing Board had succeeded in attracting a great number of new members, including young scholars (the first meeting of the ICOS young scholars' network was organised thanks to EA and AC). Moreover, it successfully adopted the suggestion made by the former President of ICOS, Carole Hough, at the previous General Assembly to have one of the Non-Executive positions ring-fenced for a Postgraduate Representative. As important points in the work of the members of the incoming Board of Directors, MH mentioned continuing the work of the previous Board of Directors, bringing the publication of *Onoma* to date, and supporting the activities of the two working groups of ICOS – the Bibliography Group and Terminology Group.

As no questions or comments were received, the meeting moved on to the following item on the agenda.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT

The participants in the General Assembly paid their respects with a moment of silence to the following members of ICOS who had passed away since the last Congress: Eva Brylla, Doreen Waugh, Ivan Lutterer, W. F. H. Nicolaisen, Rob Rentenaar, and Ojārs Bušs.

AB took over this position as a result of the consensus reached by the Board during its meeting on 2 September 2015, after Carol Léonard, who had been elected Secretary by the General Assembly at the ICOS Congress in Glasgow in 2014, resigned for medical reasons.

In the two years since she was elected Secretary, three newsletters and several general information messages/conference announcements were sent. The Newsletters were trilingual with one exception: Newsletter 24, whose first draft was made by Carol Léonard, was distributed to members only in English and French due to substantial delay caused by the secretarial change. The final approved minutes of the Board meetings, taken in English, were consistently uploaded on the website and can be accessed by all the members interested in learning more about the administrative matters of the organisation.

AB expressed her deepest gratitude to those ICOS members who had most generously offered their help with the French and German editions of the Newsletter (Lidia Becker, Pierre-Henri Billy, Milan Harvalík, Michel Rateau, and Christian Zschieschang). She also thanked Guy Puzey for his assistance with secretarial matters and revisions of the texts in English, the Board members for their wonderful collaboration and support, and all the ICOS members who contributed to the Newsletters or simply provided feedback. In this vein, AB took the opportunity to invite the members of ICOS to continue submitting to the Secretary any information (conference/book announcements, news about the funding of onomastic research projects, or any other relevant information) they wish to include in the Newsletter or want to disseminate within the ICOS community via other media as well (Twitter, Facebook, and the ICOS website).

The Secretary further presented the preliminary results of the ICOS survey regarding members' research interests, thus updating the lists compiled in 2008 and 2014, respectively. As previously, the survey could be completed in any of the three working languages of ICOS (English, French, and German). However, in addition to the other surveys the current form included two new items, one regarding members' latest publications and the other referring to whether members would agree to review papers submitted for publication in *Onoma*, the journal of ICOS. It is the intention of ICOS to have a list of members' interests, together with their selected publications, affiliation, and e-mail address on the association's website, so as to ensure a wider reach of ICOS onomastic research.

Another aim of the survey is to update the list of members' contact details. Thus, even if members do not participate in the survey otherwise, they were kindly asked to send any changes of details to the Secretary and the Treasurer.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

SN presented the following overview of ICOS incomes and expenses during the period 01 January 2014 – 31 December 2016 (all amounts shown were in euros):

	2014	2015	2016
INCOMES:			
ONOMA/Peeters ¹	4856	526	3132
Membership fees ²	6679	3255	3442
Donations	0	0	185
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	11344	3883	6759

¹ Royalties from sold copies of *Onoma* – old and new issues.

² The number of paying members increases every congress year. In 2014 the 25th ICOS congress was organised in Glasgow, Scotland.

	2014	2015	2016
EXPENSES:			
Bank costs ³	192	242	248
Credit card costs ⁴	552	528	542
ICOS organizational costs ⁵	180	0	90
ONOMA Peeters ⁶	4256	0	0
ONOMA translation costs ⁷	155	14	0
Prizes ⁸	100	0	0
Travel bursaries ⁹	630	0	0

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6065	784	880

³ Standard fees paid to Nordea Bank for handling the accounts of ICOS.

⁴ Fees paid to DIBS for the possibility to charge VISA/MC cards through a digital terminal.

⁵ Costs for hosting the ICOS homepage.

⁶ Costs paid to Peeters for printing and distributing *Onoma*. No volume of *Onoma* was published in 2015 or 2016.

⁷ Costs for translating *Onoma* abstracts and other minor texts.

⁸ A poster competition was organised during ICOS 25 in Glasgow. The first prize was 100 euros.

⁹ Following a decision by the ICOS Board, students from outside Scotland attending the Congress in Glasgow 2014 received a bursary of 40 euros each.

	2014	2015	2016
RESULT:	5279	3099	5879

The results show that the total assets of ICOS have increased throughout the period 2014–2016, as follows:

Status of ICOS bank accounts by 31 December each year

ICOS has at its disposal two different accounts: one savings account (in SEK) and one account for everyday money coming in and going out. The everyday account has one part in Swedish kronor (SEK) and one part in euro (EUR), a so-called “euro pocket”. The table below shows the status of the accounts, transferred to EUR at 31 December 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Account in SEK (> EUR)	1251	1066	1300	1219
Account in EUR (Euro pocket)	23193	8734	11693	17601
Savings account	25850	43194	44644	42836
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	50294	52994	57637	61656

Swedish tax rules

According to Swedish tax rules an organisation like ICOS must spend 80 % of its incomes over a “rolling” five-year period in order to avoid paying taxes. ICOS has not succeeded in doing so for some time now, which is not a good thing. So far the tax authorities have done nothing to alert us, but we cannot keep saving so much money every year in the future.

5-year period	ICOS must spend	ICOS actually did spend
2007–2011	80 %	95 %
2008–2012	80 %	89 %
2009–2013	80 %	81 %
2010–2014	80 %	76 %
2011–2015	80 %	74 %

A suggestion was made to use ICOS money on organising PhD courses under the ICOS flag and to support PhD students to participate in those courses. SN agreed and pointed out that the idea should be considered by the incoming Board.

8. WEBMASTER'S REPORT

As GP could not attend the General Assembly, he submitted the report below:

There have been a number of changes to the ICOS web presence in recent years, not least a fresher new look with a new content management system (Drupal) and integration with social media (Facebook posts now appear on the ICOS website main page too). There were some difficulties with the website migration, but the website structure was rebuilt. There have been some significant updates, including a bibliography of proceedings from previous ICOS Congresses (generously compiled by Lidia Becker) and updated links pages. Minutes of ICOS Board meetings are also now available on the website.

The ICOS website has had between 9,000 and 12,000 visits a month over the past year, with 4,550 unique visitors in the month of July 2017. The most popular download tends to be the English-language version of the 'List of Key Onomastic Terms', which is frequently accessed well over 200 times each month, but the most popular download in the past month has been the bid documentation for hosting the next Congress in Kraków, which was already accessed over 700 times in the first three weeks of August.

A fairly limited number of responses were received to the previously circulated electronic survey of members' interests. The responses are all saved and can be used to create a list on the website, but I would recommend that the call be issued again at the Congress to gather more members' details first.

ICOS has increased its social media presence over the past three years. As of 22 August, the ICOS Facebook page is followed by 234 people (a 234% increase on the situation at the last General Assembly), and the ICOS Twitter feed has 91 followers. I am very grateful to all the other Board members (especially Alice Crook for Twitter and Erzsébet Györfly for Facebook) who have helped to increase the activity of the social platforms. As a result of the greater workload, Alice Crook very kindly agreed to take on the role of Assistant Webmaster, and Unni-Päivä Leino has also been extremely helpful throughout the past three years.

There is more that can be done to boost ICOS social media even further with more sharing of information on the activities of ICOS affiliate organisations, and sharing of name-related news stories from around the world. The challenge is to make sure that the content shared is sufficiently representative in geographic, linguistic and cultural terms, but hopefully the challenge is not insurmountable.

I am sorry that other commitments mean I am not to be able to be in Debrecen, but I send my very best wishes to all ICOS members!

9. REPORT OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATABASE GROUP

OF, the chair of IBOS, presented the following negative and positive aspects of the activity of the Bibliography Group over the past three years:

Negative aspects:

- It took a year to gain access to the IBOS platform: <http://www.icosbibliography.net/cob/>
- Unfortunately, the platform is not user-friendly and this fact was pointed out by many former and current IBOS members: it is difficult to use and the uploading of new titles takes a lot of time (especially when it comes to journals and collective volumes).
- Users' cumbersome access to the platform and multiple accounts of a single member.
- The lack of activity of most of the members of the team, both for objective reasons (medical cases) and without any explanation (perhaps lack of time or the belief that adding new titles would be useless and without positive outcome).
- The impossibility to link IBOS to national bibliographies in various countries (e.g., Hungary).

Positive aspects:

- Despite the reduced activity of the team, numerous titles of books, studies and articles have been added (over 100); thus, the enterprise of the Bibliography Group did not fade in the past three years.
- At Lidia Becker's initiative, a new working platform was explored (Zotero), which proved easier to use and whose employment did not imply so many bureaucratic steps or mechanisms. However, the biggest problem with Zotero is that one cannot import bibliographical entries from the former platform, but can only copy them individually, step by step. Moreover, only 10 members of the current team have been active, unequally, which has led to a limited number of bibliographical entries (65).

In conclusion, OF stated he was dissatisfied with the activity of IBOS over the past three years. In this context, he decided not to candidate for the next ICOS Board of Directors, and therefore, according to ICOS statutes, he would not be able to remain the chair of IBOS for the next term (2017-2020). As the outgoing chair, he proposed Evgeny Shokhenmayer to be approved the next chair by the incoming ICOS Board of Directors.

At the same time, OF suggested that the incoming group should take into consideration several aspects in conducting their activity: 1) finding a user-friendly platform; 2) establishing a team that is motivated to work in this context; 3) finding the technical means that facilitate the creation of links to extant national/international bibliographical databases.

LB added that, following the meeting of IBOS on 28 August 2017, it was decided that the group would continue working with Zotero and would create a new category on this platform for links to national and international databases.

10. REPORT OF THE TERMINOLOGY GROUP

MH, the chair of the ICOS Terminology Group, noted that the group consisted of 12 members when it was created (in 2004), while the outgoing team included 20 members working together with a number of volunteers and representing a variety of onomastic schools, countries, and languages.

At the last meeting of the group (on 29 August 2017), two aspects were discussed:

1) It was considered that the group might need to change its structure. Specialised subgroups should be created to deal with specific categories of onomastic terms and create other lists related to terminology. These groups would be connected to a basic core group.

2) The preparation of national variants of the ICOS list of key onomastic terms was well under way. Along with the extant variants in the three working languages of ICOS (English, French, and German), several other versions were completed as a result of the activity of the group over the past three years and would be uploaded to the ICOS website. The aforementioned versions are in Slovak (by Iveta Valentová), Czech (by MH), Hungarian (by Andrea Bölcskei, Tamás Farkas, and Mariann Slíz), and Polish (by Urszula Bijak and Artur Gałkowski).

Tamás Farkas, Andrea Bölcskei, and Mariann Slíz also edited *Hungarian and International Onomastic Terminology*, a volume comprising the Hungarian translation of the ICOS list of onomastic terms and of the UNGEGN glossary of terms for the standardisation of geographical names (published by ICOS and the Society of Hungarian Linguistics). The project was presented at the General Assembly by Andrea Bölcskei.

It was suggested that the future development of the ICOS list of onomastic terms should include using a platform similar to Wikipedia, thus explaining the need of having as many national variants as possible. Discussions in this respect were initiated by MH with colleagues from Slovakia, who are working on a project on Slovak onomastic terminology. The structure of their database (which is still under construction) and some principles of the project could be used when working on the ICOS terminology list. Iveta Valentová (the person responsible for the Slovak database) and MH presented the database in a joint paper at the Congress and during the meeting of the Terminology Group. It was believed that a tool of this kind would improve work with onomastic terminology. LB suggested, as an alternative, to launch a new domain for terminology using a web application like TemaTres.

MH proposed to include Urszula Bijak and Artur Gałkowski as members of the Group and Artur Gałkowski as the chair of the incoming Terminology Group of ICOS. He thanked the members of the outgoing group and the volunteers for their interest and collaboration.

11. REPORT ON *ONOMA*

UPL, as the Editor-in-Chief of *Onoma*, apologised for the publication of the journal being very much behind schedule, but presented the following situation according to which the publication of *Onoma* should get back on track soon:

- *Onoma* 48 (2013), *Names and Religion*, guest editor Per Vikstrand: in print.
- *Onoma* 49 (2014), *Medieval Multiculturalism*, guest editors Sara Uckelman et al.: soon to be ready for print.
- *Onoma* 50 (2015), non-themed: hopefully published early in 2018.
- *Onoma* 51 (2016), *Asian Onomastics*, guest editor Sungjae Choo: should be published in 2018.
- *Onoma* 52 (2017): the project on *Family Names*, guest-edited by Richard Coates et al., underwent funding problems and was postponed indefinitely. Thus, a new call for proposals would be sent soon.

The Editorial Board of *Onoma* met on 28 August 2017 and, as regards its configuration, it was proposed to add OF to the Board. The proposal was met with unanimous agreement.

Another aspect discussed at the meeting referred to the relationship between ICOS and Peeters, the publisher of *Onoma*. There is no written contract stipulating the nature of the aforementioned relationship. Morally and legally, this gives ICOS the freedom to negotiate the future publication of *Onoma* with anyone, Peeters included. This situation would be settled soon.

The Editorial Board also considered the issue of printed journals, as their importance is diminishing fast as opposed to that of electronic journals. In this respect, the Editorial Board reviewed several ways in which *Onoma* could keep up with the times, a topic that was further examined at the meeting of the editors of journals on onomastics. Thus, some changes could appear in the following three years in the publication of *Onoma* to increase the journal's visibility, accessibility and impact.

From the audience, Sheila Embleton underlined that the biggest problems of *Onoma* are being off schedule and the delay in giving feedback to authors who submit paper proposals. UPL apologised for both situations and promised to take care of the matters as soon as possible.

12. ELECTIONS OF THE NEW ICOS BOARD (2017-2020)

The President explained the method of voting. Although several people had left the room since the beginning of the General Assembly, the election could still begin, as the personal voters (present and proxy) still amounted to more than 20 % of the personal members of ICOS. After presentations from the candidates, a paper ballot was held. The ballots were counted by OF and SN and revealed the confirmed the following candidates elected in the corresponding positions:

Total number of ballots: 79

Name and country	Position	Votes
Paula Sjöblom (Finland)	President	73
Urszula Bijak (Poland)	Vice-President	74
Adrian Koopman (South Africa)	Vice-President	66
Alina Bugheşiu (Romania)	Secretary	77
Emilia Aldrin (Sweden)	Treasurer	78
Evgeny Shokhenmayer (Germany)	Assistant Secretary and Web Officer	73
Lasse Hämäläinen (Finland)	Postgraduate Representative	74
Alice Crook (Scotland)	Non-Executive Officer	70
Artur Galkowski (Poland)	Non-Executive Officer	69
Nobuhle Hlongwa (South Africa)	Non-Executive Officer	65
Alexandra Petrulevich (Sweden)	Non-Executive Officer	71
Valéria Tóth (Hungary)	Non-Executive Officer	76

As a result of the vote, Emilia Aldrin was duly elected as Treasurer in charge of economic matters and transactions concerning ICOS business until the next General Assembly in 2020. She will have full authority to use the ICOS bank accounts and the right to sign documents on behalf of ICOS, including postal documents.

13. ELECTIONS OF THE 2020 CONGRESS VENUE

The bid for the 2020 ICOS Congress was presented by Urszula Bijak, Halszka Górny, MH, Jiří Martínek, and Iveta Valentová. Jiří Martínek was not a member of ICOS but in the meeting of the Board of ICOS on 27 August 2017 he was granted approval by the Board to participate in the General Assembly.

A number of members had left the room after submitting their votes for the members of the new Board, but a show of hands was held and 69 members supported the bid, a considerable majority of those in the room.

From the audience, Terhi Ainiala suggested that the organisers of the 2020 ICOS Congress should consider further developing the programme together with the Board of ICOS, especially with respect to the themes of the symposia and the inclusion of a meeting of the young scholars' network.

Moreover, LB, as member of the outgoing Board, recommended not to hold the General Assembly on the last day of the congress, as it is very problematic for some participants to stay for such a long time.

The presenters of the bid thanked the members for their comments and suggestions and confirmed they would take them into consideration.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As there were no matters falling under this item, MH thanked everyone for participating in the General Assembly. LB took the opportunity to thank MH on behalf of the members present at the Assembly for chairing the meeting and for his work as President of ICOS over the past three years. MH closed the meeting at 16:38 local time (14:38 GMT) on Friday 1 September 2017.

Alina Bugheşiu
Secretary
(1 September 2017)