



**8th Slow Food
International Congress**
Pollenzo, Italy - 2022 July 16-17



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SLOW FOOD

1. WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS?

The **International Congress**, whose functions are detailed in Article 7 of the Statute, is Slow Food's decision-making body. It is convened by the Executive Committee, which draws up the Congress Regulations, subsequently approved by the International Council. The function of the Congress is twofold: on the one hand to discuss, define and approve the association's policies and the program of activities of the international movement; and on the other hand to define the organization's governing structure and elect the governing and controlling bodies.

2. WHY IS IT HELD IN 2022?

The 2022 Congress will be the eighth International Congress (the first Extraordinary one) and will take place five years after the last one was held in Chengdu, China, in 2017. In Chengdu, it had been decided to hold the next Congress in the fall of 2020, in order to sanction the work done in the three-year mandate and to verify the implementation of the mandate, but the Covid-19 pandemic prevented its realization in both 2020 and 2021. In February 2022, the Executive Committee decided that Congress could not be moved any further and therefore would necessarily have to be held in 2022. This choice was based both on considerations of political and organizational opportunity, and on the obligation to adapt the structure (and the Statute) of Slow Food to a new Italian law for non-profit organizations, which has recently come into force.

3. WHERE AND WHEN DOES THE CONGRESS TAKE PLACE?

The International Congress will take place in Pollenzo (Italy), at the headquarter of the University of Gastronomic Sciences. The Congress will be held on 16th of July and will end on 17th of July with the vote on the adjustment of the structure and the Statute, the election of the Board of Directors of the movement, the election of the Board of Auditors and of the Board of Arbitrators.

4. IS IT A CONGRESS LIKE ANY OTHER?

No. The Congress has always included a physical meeting with the participation of a large number of delegates, representing the territories where our network is present and active, in all its different forms (Convivia, Communities, Presidia, Gardens, etc...). In China in 2017, there were 466 participants between delegates and observers from 85 countries from around the world.

Planning for an event of this nature in 2022 is unfortunately impossible. It is not possible to predict how the pandemic situation in the world will be during this year and what the rules for travel will be. However, it is very credible that there will be entire countries in the world (especially those where the spread of vaccines is more limited and those using vaccines not recognized by the European Union) that will not be able to travel. Therefore thinking about a traditional formula is impossible: we do not want to make a Congress in which only the Italian delegates can participate, probably also European delegates and possibly few others, excluding representatives of many countries that are fundamental to the life of our movement.

5. IS IT POSSIBLE TO HOLD THE CONGRESS ONLINE?

No. It is a formula not foreseen in the Slow Food Statute. In Italy, due to the situation in which the country finds itself because of the pandemic, a state of emergency was in effect until March 31. Until that date it was possible to hold assemblies - like our Congress - online, but the state of emergency has not



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been confirmed and therefore the situation is the same as before the pandemic: the current Statute does not allow us to organize an online Congress.

6. WHAT IS THE FORMULA FOR THE CONGRESS?

Since the Congress must necessarily take place in 2022, not being able to hold it online and not wanting to exclude the participation and representation of the territories in which the Slow Food network operates, the only possible solution was to reduce the number of delegates, while guaranteeing the highest possible level of representation.

The Congress will not be organized as in the past with 500 participants, but one necessarily adapted to the context of extreme uncertainty given by the pandemic, with a Congress composed of 50 participants in person, delegated by the network.

7. WHO ARE THE DELEGATES?

The 50 delegates will be representative of the global movement and therefore will be chosen according to criteria that take into account the spread of members, communities and projects currently active.

The Executive Committee has therefore decided to maintain the same criteria of geographical (30 countries are represented) and thematic (Indigenous, SFYN, Foundation for Biodiversity and University of Gastronomic Sciences) representation that had led to the composition of the International Council voted in Chengdu. This is very significant with respect to both the spread of the international network, and because it is a criterion already validated at the previous Congress.

The Executive Committee further indicated to identify the 50 delegates of the next Congress among the Councilors elected in Chengdu. Indeed, they are not only representative of the network at territorial level, but they are also the individuals who have received a mandate from the previous Congress for the reorganization of the Association. These are the individuals who in recent years have played a connecting role in relation to the territories and have contributed to the reflections to arrive at the new structure that will be proposed to the coming Congress. There will be online regional assemblies that will be held from mid-April to June that will serve to share the congressional path with the global network and to confirm this choice of congressional delegates.

8. WHAT IS THE PATH TO CONGRESS?

Given the impossibility to have a Congress organized as in the past, it will be fundamental for a strong involvement at the territorial level in the path towards the Congress, to make sure that the voice, the ideas, the proposals of the network are shared and representative.

Consequently, starting from mid-April, meetings and assemblies will be organized in which the themes and contents to be brought to the Congress will be discussed. All members of the network will be invited to these meetings, with the aim of ensuring the widest participation of leaders and members of the movement from all territories.

It is important to remember that during 2020 and 2021, on the occasion of the digital edition of Terra Madre, an enormous amount of work was done in preparation for the Congress: dozens of meetings were held at the regional level, on every continent, with the aim of discussing the Call to Action and reasoning together about the future of our movement. Product of these meetings are the documents of "Contribution to the local strategy" of the different territories that are the basis of the present and future plans of activities.

9. WHAT LINKS TERRA MADRE TO THE CONGRESS?

Terra Madre is the largest international event dedicated to good, clean and fair food and food policy. After a 2020-2021 edition held mostly online, the event will be hybrid with a strong presence in Turin,



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Italy, from 22-26 September, 2022. If 2020 and 2021 were the years of resilience, the new theme that will guide the 2022 edition of Terra Madre will be "regeneration". The theme will be the regeneration of soils, mountains and ecosystems, but also the regeneration of relationships, in an event that aims to be a symbol of restarting and overall rebirth, bringing together in Turin voices related to food from all over the world. So Terra Madre and the Congress will take place at two different times: the International Congress in July and Terra Madre at the end of September. However, they remain two important moments in the life of Slow Food, two strongly connected events. The Congress will define the movement's strategy and adapt the legal entity, while at Terra Madre - hopefully in the presence of a large number of delegates - the dialogue and exchange of views on the Congress themes and the future of our organization will continue.

The International Congress and Terra Madre, in fact, as already happened in 2012 when they were held at the same time in Turin, will propose a coherent vision, will complement each other and will address, with different approaches and different methods, the same issues with the aim of building together the future of food, accrediting Slow Food as the movement that, thanks to its proposals and the widespread diffusion of its network, will be recognized as a world leader in changing the food system.

10. WHAT IS THE CALL TO ACTION?

The Call to Action, or "[An Urgent Call to Collective Action](#)", is a fundamental document for the future of Slow Food that stems from the Chengdu Declaration and its motions, without of course forgetting all the documents that have been approved in Slow Food's history and previous Congresses, starting with the historic Manifesto signed in 1989. This is a document written by the Executive Committee in 2019 following the Chengdu Congress and that since 2020 has been widely shared with the entire Slow Food network, which has sent more than 300 contributions to improve, integrate and finally adopt it in its daily actions.

The document confirms the philosophical and political structure built in over 30 years of history but also contains important innovations compared to the past: it proposes to systematize the activity of the movement and to clearly define the objectives in the medium and long term to change the future of food and help save the world.

The Call to Action testifies to the Slow Food movement's desire to work to ensure that everyone has access to food that is good for them, good for the people who grow it and good for the planet. It also indicates that the priorities of the movement's work are: i) defending biological and cultural diversity; ii) educating, inspiring and mobilizing citizens; iii) influencing policies in the public and private sectors.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

THE PROPOSAL OF TRANSFORMATION OF LEGAL ENTITY OF SLOW FOOD

11. WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO CHANGE THE LEGAL ENTITY OF SLOW FOOD INTERNATIONAL?

During the last International Congress in Chengdu in 2017 the 304 delegates representing the global network made a commitment to find new organizational formulas that would allow Slow Food to be a more open and inclusive movement. In the document "[Organizational Guidelines](#)", the entire movement committed itself to initiating a structural change, "a process of reforming the Slow Food Association, which will culminate in a Congress [...] when delegates will vote on implementing the new organizational structure. This change should have the purpose of making our organization better able to reach the



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challenges and strategic political objectives contained in the congressional document presented and approved by the Congress and confirmed in the Chengdu Declaration”.

This phase of organizational reform for the movement, already sanctioned in Chengdu, coincides with a new Italian law (where Slow Food has its legal headquarters) coming into force, which regulates the non-profit sector according to new criteria, that applies to Slow Food, requiring several changes to be made.

12. WHY A PARTICIPATION FOUNDATION?

In Chengdu, with the approval of the “[Organizational Guidelines](#)”, Slow Food made a commitment to “go beyond the association model as the only possible form of membership and presence in local areas. [...] To this end, it will be possible to assess the constitution of legal entities different from the association, both at an international and a regional level”. In fact, it has been demonstrated that becoming a member of Slow Food exclusively through membership is not an effective means in all the contexts in which Slow Food exists. With the Association formula, only those who are members can formally be part of Slow Food, which means not taking into account, for example, the thousands of people who have created new communities in every corner of the planet in recent years. For this reason, it is necessary to take a step forward towards a legal entity that allows a broader participation of all possible subjects interested not only in collaborating with Slow Food, but in being Slow Food, in different and broader ways. Slow Food will remain the same, with the same identity and values but with greater managerial and aggregative flexibility.

The new legal entity proposed is the '**Participation Foundation**'. In the Italian legal system this is the non-profit entity which, more than any other, expresses the characteristics necessary to respond to the need to pursue the objectives of Slow Food while at the same time being inclusive and formally allowing the adhesion of all those components of our network and of civil society which today, with the associative model, are not completely so.

13. WHO APPROVES THE TRANSFORMATION PROJECT AND WHEN?

The transformation project is explained in detail in the document called "Project for the transformation of the International Slow Food Association into the Slow Food Foundation". This document explains the reasons for the transformation and the organizational, economic and legal consequences. The Transformation Project is preliminarily approved by the Association's governing bodies, then deposited in the relevant Prefecture and published on the Slow Food website. In order to be approved, the transformation must be voted on during the International Slow Food Congress by at least 80% of the eligible delegates.

14. WILL THE SLOW FOOD FOUNDATION BE AN ITALIAN LEGAL ENTITY?

Yes, exactly as the Slow Food Association is today. The new Foundation resulting from the transformation will be a non-profit entity, in compliance with the new Italian regulations of the third sector that recently came into force. The new law (art. 45 of Legislative Decree 117/2017) activated from November 23, 2021 the "Single National Register of the Third Sector", a registry of non-profit organizations based in Italy to which the Slow Food Association would still have to register by making statutory changes (specifically related to the associative purposes).

The transformation will therefore allow the Slow Food movement to have a legal entity that complies with the norms of the new law thanks to the statutory changes provided.



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15. WHAT WILL THE STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF THE NEW FOUNDATION LOOK LIKE?

The "Slow Food Foundation" will be a "participation foundation" with a structure very similar to that of the current Slow Food Association. The Assembly, that is the general assembly in which representatives of all Slow Food members in the world participate, will continue to meet once every four years and will maintain the task of outlining proposals and indications on the programs and strategies of Slow Food on a global level for the following four years. The International Council will be maintained, which will meet every year and which will maintain a role of political and strategic direction and will remain the cohesive body and reference point for interaction between the Foundation and the different Slow Food organizations at a local/national levels. The operational management of the Foundation will be the responsibility of a Board of Directors (equivalent to the current Executive Committee). Finally, an Advisory Board (a new body that the structure of the association does not currently contemplate) will be appointed, composed of individuals who have distinguished themselves for their authority and moral stature, and who embody the values and principles of Slow Food.

16. WHAT WILL CHANGE FOR THE SLOW FOOD NETWORK IN THE TERRITORIES?

Basically nothing. The Slow Food Foundation will be an organization that will continue, through the new legal entity, the activities of the Association.

The local groups (Community and Convivia) will remain the heart and base of the movement, the irreplaceable asset on which everything is founded. Local activism will continue to be the founding and unifying element of Slow Food. As indicated in the "[Organizational Guidelines](#)" voted in Chengdu, the Communities "They must increasingly become local groups of activists, rather than places resembling societies dedicated to the organization of events for their own members. They must be very free to choose their own activities and their priorities for action, but they must also be committed to the realization and support of the major campaigns carried out at a global level".

The regional and national structures, where they exist, will continue their life without any substantial change: the annual collaboration agreement signed in the past with the Slow Food Association for the definition of relationships, roles and responsibilities, will be from after the Congress signed with the Slow Food Foundation.

17. WILL THERE STILL BE CONVIVIA MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS?

Yes, all the members of the network, in their diversity, will be Participants of the Slow Food Foundation. As the Statute states in Article 7.3, Participants in the Foundation will be "individuals, public or private legal entities and bodies, Italian or foreign, Local Groups and Territorial Offices which, sharing the purposes of the Foundation, contribute to its life and to the realization of its aims in ways, forms and measures that conform to those established annually by the Board of Directors".

18. WHAT HAPPENS WHERE NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS EXIST?

At the national level, each organization will be free to decide the type of legal entity to be used. For those who decide to remain associations, nothing will change: the members will remain members of the National Association of reference and at the same time will become Participants of the Slow Food Foundation. The National Associations will sign an agreement with the Slow Food Foundation (as was done until now with the Slow Food Association).



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19. WHAT WILL BE THE GOALS OF THE SLOW FOOD FOUNDATION?

As it has always been, the objectives will be those established once every four years by the International Congress and annually according to the political-strategic direction defined by the International Council. These objectives and the nature of the movement are clearly stated in the "Call to Action", also called or "[An Urgent Call to Collective Action](#)", the document born from the spirit and ideas developed during the Chengdu Congress. The Call to Action sets out the movement's mission: Slow Food works so that everyone can have access to food that is good for them, good those who grow it and good for the planet. It does this based on three fundamental pillars: i) defending biological and cultural diversity; ii) educating, inspiring and mobilizing citizens; iii) influencing policies in the public and private sectors. It does so by being a network, a global network of local communities that operate guided by the values of fraternity, solidarity, inclusion and appreciation of diversity.

In case of further clarifications, please contact international@slowfood.it.

All documents are available here: <https://www.slowfood.com/about-us/our-structure/international-congress/8th-slow-food-international-congress-turin-2022/>
