

Minutes of the General Assembly Meeting

16 May 2025, 09:00 – 11:30

European Convention Centre Luxembourg

Present: a full list of participants is attached.

Welcome

The President welcomes all participants to the 2025 EFCA General Assembly Meeting and formally opens the meeting.

Inés Ferguson thanks Sue Arundale and the entire EFCA Secretariat for a successful conference and for organising the GAM. She considers the Declaration adopted during the Conference a very good result. Other positive aspects from the conference that are worth noting are the participation from both European Commission and Luxembourgish representatives, including the message from the country's Prime Minister, which shows that we are connecting with the policy sphere and that our actions matter.

Ines Ferguson then introduces the FIDIC members who are attending as guests. Catherine Karakatsanis, FIDIC President, expresses both her thanks and congratulations for the conference and the Declaration. She also underlines the good cooperation that EFCA and FIDIC now have, which will continue in the coming period.

1. Apologies for absence

APPC (Portugal), LIKA (Latvia), NACES (Slovenia) and RIF (Norway) have sent apologies. Proxies have been received as follows: ACES (Serbia) is the proxy for NACES, EAACEC (Estonia) is acting as proxy for LIKA, FRI (Denmark) is the proxy for RIF and TECNIBERIA (Spain) is the proxy for APPC.

2. Approval of the minutes of the GAM held in Madrid on 24 May 2024

The President invites comments from the participants. None are made.

The minutes are approved.

3. Report by the President of the Board of Directors on the activities of the last year, discussion & endorsement, including report on the FIDIC-EFCA cooperation

The report is designed to inform the members regarding the EFCA activities over the past year, discuss with them what the main upcoming issues are, and show how EFCA will be using the recent generous budget increase.

The President presents the report (cf. slides). The main topics addressed and the related discussions are outlined below.

Rethinking European competitiveness and resilience

The President notes that there is a significant change of EU policy direction with the new European Commission (EC) team, following last year's European elections. While the 'green' agenda remains important, the two main topics now are competitiveness and resilience. Several policy and legislative actions have already been undertaken by the EC and more will be implemented in the coming period.

Resilience is an important topic for EFCA since it deals extensively with the protection of key infrastructure, in particular transport, energy, water and ICT. EFCA is already planning four reports on the resilience of this infrastructure, the work being done within the Future Trends Committee (FT COM). All reports are planned to be finalised this year. The President also notes that this is an important topic at the national level, therefore members are encouraged to engage with their national authorities on these subjects.

European Commission Work Programme 2025

The President gives an overview of this year's EC Work Programme and the main policies that are of interest to engineers. In addition, she informs the participants about the Commissioners whose portfolios have the highest importance for EFCA: Stéphane Séjourné, Executive Vice-President Prosperity and Industrial Strategy (incl. procurement); Jessica Roswall, Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy; Dan Jørgensen, Commissioner for Energy and Housing; Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism. EFCA has also been active in the policy process from the first days of the new EC team, by sending questions during the Commissioners' hearings in the European Parliament regarding topics of interest to the engineering sector.

New Thematic Working Groups

Several thematic Working Groups (WGs) have been established so that EFCA can better reply to some of the EC activities as well as to the different invitations received from the officials in the institutions:

- WG Procurement and Competitiveness, the first WG established (January 2025) has done very good work so far by preparing the EFCA reply to recent EC consultations on procurement, helping prepare the Declaration issued during the conference and the

ongoing development of the EFCA position paper on public procurement. Additional work may be expected in the future;

- WG AI and Data has already contributed to the consultations on the AI Continent Action Plan and will analyse the relevant EU legislation in the field;
- WG Water Resilience (initially Blue Deal), which is the most recent one.

New WGs are expected to be created later in the year, based on both the previous decision taken by the EFCA Board and the policy developments at the EU level.

Updates on the EFCA team

Due to the budget increase, EFCA has recently been able to expand its team. Mihai Barcanescu, Policy Manager, joined EFCA in September 2024 and has done a very good job so far. Giannis Dendrinis, Policy and Communications Officer, joined EFCA in April 2025 and has already been integrated into the team.

Moreover, a new Green Deal Committee Chair has been selected at the end of 2024: Elina Kalliala, Global Sustainability Director at Ramboll Transport. Elina is introduced and welcomed by all participants.

Launch of the FIDIC-EFCA Agreement and other partnerships

Participants are informed that a new Agreement with FIDIC was signed in December last year, covering the period 2025-2028. This opens the door to reinforced and structured cooperation between the two federations and includes annual action plans.

Subsequently, the President outlines the new and renewed partnerships that have been achieved in the past year. These are necessary as lobbying actions can be difficult, and doing this in partnership with other stakeholders increases the chances of success.

Policy

The report subsequently outlines EFCA's efforts to shape and influence the relevant policy developments. The main activities are outlined below:

- EFCA has already replied to four key consultations from the EC and other relevant ones will soon be published;
- water has become a major topic at the EU level, and there is a Commissioner who has a dedicated mandate for it. Besides the abovementioned actions on this topic, EFCA has also joined Water Europe, a stakeholders' coalition for advocacy and networking, and co-signed a joint letter to the relevant Commissioners;
- stemming from the previous cooperation with DG MOVE, EFCA is now involved in the Commission's preparations for the High-Speed Rail Master Plan, an initiative from Commissioner Tzitzikostas which will also address the dual use of rail infrastructure. Sue Arundale participated in a meeting with the Commissioner and a small number of private stakeholders, while Inés Ferguson and Mihai Barcanescu will attend a dedicated workshop in Madrid on 20-21 May;
- a Position Paper on Energy Efficiency and AI, written by a dedicated group of experts and the Director General, was published on 28 November;

- throughout the year, the EFCA Secretariat has participated in 30 external meetings and 28 other events related to various EU policies, thus being very active in representing members at the EU level.

Procurement

The topic of procurement is very important, both internally and in relation to EU institutions and other stakeholders. That is why EFCA has been very active in highlighting the role of engineers in various fora, by participating in meetings organised by the EC for the Global Gateway projects in Latin America, Africa and Asia as well as for the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), or via involvement in activities concerning Early Contractor Involvement and Collaborative Delivery Models, including with the EIB.

Partnerships

As mentioned, EFCA is pursuing numerous partnerships which involve different private and public stakeholders. Some of the most important ones are:

- the cooperation with Marburg University, which produced a very good report on AI and Scenario Planning last year. Moreover, this year's work on resilience will also be done with the university's help. Jeffrey Seeck, the FT COM Chairman, is kindly asked to convey the EFCA President's thanks to the Marburg University team for their cooperation;
- EFCA is also involved in the High Level Construction Forum and the organisation, together with FIEC and its members, of the annual Eurobridge event;
- the FIDIC-EFCA European Global Action Committee (EGAC) had its kick-off meeting on 14 May in Luxembourg, where its organisation and initial working topics were discussed. A Joint Action Plan will be presented to and approved by the Boards of both federations. The aim is also that EFCA and FIDIC representatives will attend each other's GAMs.

Participation

The report highlights that the association continues to strengthen the engagement with its Member Associations through various activities and channels, including social media and newsletters. Moreover, EFCA continues to monitor market developments in the engineering consultancy industry in Europe through the publication of the EFCA Barometer.

Support for young, bright engineers remains channelled via the Future Leaders competition, the results of which will be announced right after the GAM. On this occasion, the President thanks Kevin Rudden for his great work with the Future Leaders.

The Future Leaders Steering Committee will no longer be a committee but a network, led by 3 'champions'.

EFCA continues to connect with and support its members by attending their conferences and anniversaries, when possible.

Pricing

The President acknowledges and thanks the members for the generous 20% budget increase for 2025, which enabled EFCA to hire a new member of staff and from now on will enable the Secretariat and members perform a significant amount of work. Work continues to find ongoing additional sources of revenue via potential new members; and a new subscription model is being prepared, for implementation as from 2027, by a dedicated WG.

4. Finances

Financial Statement for 2024

The President first invites participants to look back at the most important aspects from 2024 which are mentioned in the document, in terms of both income and expenses. There had been a slight increase in revenue, but mostly due to a decrease in operational (staff) costs. This was complemented by better control of travel expenses and the lower than budgeted cost of publications. Overall, €20.000 had been saved and can be allocated to the reserves.

A test vote is first performed to familiarise the members with the new voting online tool. The test reveals that, due to what is likely a technical error¹, CACE (Czech Republic), CINOV-SYNTec-Ingénierie (France) and FSIC – Innovationsföretagen (Sweden) cannot vote online. It is agreed that they will vote by raising their hands.

A detailed overview of the voting rules and results is attached.

The GAM approves the financial statement, including the reserve allocation, with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote and 96,72% of the majority rights achieved (96,72% positive votes of the votes cast, 0% negative votes, 3,28% abstentions).

Auditor's report for 2024

The report was included with the GAM papers sent to members in advance of the meeting, and the information presented is clear proof of the correctness of the 2024 statement and of the competent management of the budget by the Director General.

The GAM approves the auditor's report with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, achieving 98,36% of the majority rights (98,36% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 1,64% abstentions).

The Board of Directors is discharged for the 2024 accounts.

¹ Members were asked for a login, although this feature had not been embedded in the voting system.

Appointment of an independent auditor for two years

The Director General informs the participants of EFCA's requirement, in the Rules of Procedure, to appoint or reappoint an auditor every two years. She proposes keeping the same auditor for the next two years.

The GAM approves the (re)appointment of the auditor with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, and by unanimity: 100% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 0% abstentions.

5. Approval of proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure (Deletion of Article 32)

The President reminds the members that, according to this article, increases in membership fees cannot go beyond 5% per year. However, last year's approved increase was higher than 5%. Consequently, the proposal is to remove it since it is obsolete and no longer relevant for today's situation. She clarifies that the proposed vote is only to remove the article, while the future formula for subscriptions will not be discussed today.

The GAM approves the deletion of Art. 32 of the Rules of Procedure with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, achieving unanimous consent: 100% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 0% abstentions.

6. Approval of the dormant member status of BACEA for a one-year period (2025)

The President informs the members about BACEA's request, which is due to financial difficulties. BACEA has also informed EFCA of its intention to come back as a full member next year. The proposal to the members is to approve this request.

The GAM approves the dormant member status of BACEA for a one-year period (2025) with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, by unanimity: 100% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 0% abstentions.

Elections, end of mandates and resignations Board of Directors

7. Resolution on the extension of eligibility of current President

The President notifies the members of the resolution on the extension of her eligibility in this role. She recalls that her mandate started in June 2023 and will end during the next year's GAM.

In consideration of Article 18 (3) of the Charter, which stipulates that *'The President, Vice-President(s), Treasurer and other Directors may only be re-elected for a second period of three years in a same mandate and for a maximum of three terms in any mandate if their eligibility is extended pursuant to a resolution of the General Assembly in accordance with Article 15 hereof,* and following the nomination by TECNIBERIA, the Board of Directors

recommends that the eligibility period be extended and that **Inés Ferguson** be appointed as President for a second three-year term (2026 – 2029).

The GAM approves the re-election of Inés Ferguson as EFCA President for a second mandate, with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, unanimously: 100% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 0% abstentions.

The President thanks the members for their vote of confidence, which will strengthen her motivation and commitment to serving the EFCA Board and Members.

8. Resolution on the extension of eligibility – Election of 1 Director

At the 10 June 2022 GAM in Paris, Despina Kallidromitou was appointed as Director for a three-year term, which expires this year.

Following the nomination by HELLASCO, the Board of Directors recommends that the eligibility period be extended, in accordance with Article 18 (3) of the EFCA Charter, and that **Despina Kallidromitou** be appointed as Director for a second three-year term.

The GAM approves the re-election of Despina Kallidromitou as EFCA Director for a second mandate, with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, by unanimous consent: 100% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 0% abstentions.

Despina Kallidromitou thanks the members for their vote and promises her continued support for the President, the Board and the EFCA team in her next mandate.

9. Election of 1 Director

On 1 June 2023, the GAM in Rome approved the nomination of Past President Benoît Clocheret as Director for a term of three years, according to the internal rules of EFCA. This meant that the Board was effectively composed of 11 members. However, Benoît Clocheret is stepping down from his position in EFCA as he will be a candidate for the FIDIC Board.

In consideration of Article 18 (1.3.) of the Charter, which stipulates that ‘If the Past President resigns before the end of his/her term, no substitution is required or permitted’, but also ensuring compliance with Article 17 (1), which stipulates that ‘The Association shall be managed by a Board of Directors, comprising eleven directors, including the President, one or two Vice-President(s) and the Treasurer’, a Director shall be appointed for a three-year term.

Following nominations by ACES of Branislav Simović and SYNTEC-Ingénierie of Sébastien Pailhès and the advice of the Governance and Nomination Committee, the Board of Directors recommends appointing **Sébastien Pailhès** as Director for a term of three years.

The GAM approves the election of Sébastien Pailhès as EFCA Director with 24 out of 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, by unanimous consent: 100% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 0% abstentions.

Sébastien Pailhès thanks the members for their vote, also expressing his honour to be part of the EFCA Board. After briefly introducing himself, he mentions the challenges that the sector is facing and the need to engage more closely in policy activities, with policymakers.

10. Election of 1 Substitute Director

At the 24 May 2024 GAM in Madrid, Roberto Carpaneto was appointed Vice-President for a three-year term. Roberto Carpaneto is stepping down for personal and professional reasons, hence the need for a substitute.

In accordance with Article 18 (5) of the EFCA Charter, which stipulates that ‘Upon resignation of a Director during his three-year term, the Board of Directors will nominate a substitute to terminate his term’, a substitute Director shall be appointed for the remainder of the term. In accordance with article 18 (2.2.), stipulating that ‘Vice-President(s) shall be Directors who have held office for a period of at least one year’, this substitute cannot be a Vice-President.

Following the nomination by OICE and the advice of the Governance and Nomination Committee, the Board of Directors proposes to appoint **Francesca Federzoni** as Substitute Director to end the 2024-2027 term of Roberto Carpaneto.

The GAM approves the election of Francesca Federzoni as EFCA Director with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, unanimously: 100% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 0% abstentions.

Francesca Federzoni introduces herself and thanks the members for their confidence. She also expresses her desire to both learn more about and contribute to the EFCA work.

The President takes the opportunity to thank the two Board members who are stepping down. She also underlines that Benoît Clocheret’s mandate as Past President had been an outstanding one, as he had to face the pandemic, the start of the war in Ukraine and the change in leadership of the EFCA Secretariat. During this time, he provided outstanding leadership and contributions to EFCA. The EFCA Director General also thanks him, adding that he always provided support, especially when she started in EFCA and through the early months of the transition process to a more modern EFCA.

Benoît Clocheret expresses his thanks, pointing to the long way that EFCA has gone since he joined its Board 8 years ago. EFCA’s reach today is outstanding, the EFCA Secretariat better mirrors Europe and its nationalities, while the members’ support for the federation, including the increased budget, is the biggest sign of trust. He considers that EFCA has a good stance in the current political context and is also happy that the relationship with

FIDIC has been strengthened. As he is planning to run for a FIDIC Board membership, he ensures the participants that he will remain close to and supportive of EFCA.

11. Budget 2026

The President mentions that the 2026 budget will see an increase in operating revenue, based on the recently approved increase in membership fees. Most of it will be allocated to salaries, but some will be used for a new website. A consistent budget of €30.000 has also been earmarked for travel, since EFCA will need to attend different meetings and events with MAs, with FIDIC, etc. Inflation has also been considered.

The GAM approves the 2026 budget, with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote and 98,36 % of the majority rights achieved (98,36% positive votes cast, 1,64% negative votes, 0% abstentions).

12. Revision of new subscription fee model

The President clarifies that today's aim is to inform the members about this change and kick-off the exercise to revise the fee model. The new formula will therefore not be discussed today.

The intention is to finalise this task and have the new fee model approved during the 2026 GAM, so that it can become applicable as of 2027.

A dedicated WG, made up of Eva Rindom, Helena Soimakallio and Henrik Garver, will be working to propose the new fee structure, and Eva is invited to provide more details about their approach. She states that they will have a balanced approach to maintaining the same revenue in the budget, and in the process will start with a request to MAs for different information to achieve this. In principle, the MAs will be asked to provide information on: their revenue (including the previous 2 years), any governmental & EU funding received (including the previous 3 years), and other sources of income (e.g. FIDIC training). It will thus be a transition from the employees' to the revenue model. The President adds that the overall aim is to simplify the model, making it more modern while avoiding an increase in fees.

13. Subscriptions 2026

The President invites the meeting to approve the subscriptions for 2026.

The GAM approves the 2026 subscriptions with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote, achieving 91,80% of the majority rights (91,80% positive votes cast, 1,64% negative votes, 6,56% abstentions).

Tamara Moreau-Dengreville (SIDiR) reminds participants of the fact that in the case of her organisation the fee is calculated differently. This is something that is currently being addressed by the Board. She explains that this is why she has voted against the proposed subscriptions for 2026. But she is happy that there is a WG which will work on the topic of subscriptions fees.

14. Admission of Full Membership to the Georgian Association of Consulting Engineers (ACEG)

The President informs the members about the candidature of the Georgian Association for EFCA full membership.

The GAM approves ACEG's membership with 24 out of the 24 representatives present and eligible to vote by unanimity: 100% positive votes cast, 0% negative votes, 0% abstentions. VBI voted by hand rather than online for this agenda item.

Irakli Khergiani, the ACEG President, thanks EFCA members for their vote and expresses his association's desire to connect with the other colleague associations from Europe and grow together. This is also seen as a big support from Europe in the current geographic and political context. He also mentions that ACEG has been active in FIDIC and would like to be active in EFCA as well.

15. Future EFCA General Assembly and Conference locations

Members are informed that the next GAM will take place in Türkiye. The ATCEA President, Ali Kerim Orhon, provides a presentation of the offer and conditions. Two locations are proposed: Istanbul and Antalya. An informal vote among the members opts to hold the GAM meeting in Istanbul, due to better transport connectivity.