

May 15, 2023

**CAS Representative Report regarding ICS 17** (the 17<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Slavists, to be held at Sorbonne-Paris University).

Revised dates of ICS-17: AUGUST 25-29, 2025

LINK to ICS-17 website: [MKS Paris 2023 - Sciencesconf.org](https://mksparis2023-sciencesconf.org)

Note: On the first page of the ICS-17 website (in muted brown cursive, in both the French version on the left and the Russian version on the right) you will find the revised dates of the Congress, as well as the updated submission deadlines for participation. This information (except for the precise date of the Congress itself) was already included in my report of **SEPT 2, 2022**, which was posted on the CAS website and circulated via the CAS listserve. For your convenience of reference, I have pasted the first two parts of text of the SEPT 2, 2022 report immediately below (“Dear CAS Colleagues,...”). The text has been modified to reflect small bits of new information (enclosed in square brackets, e.g. [...]). I have also deleted the qualifier “provisional” where it is no longer relevant. The third part of the Sept 2 text I do not repeat verbatim here, but rather summarize the main points of discussion which took place at an interim MKS Zoom held in March 2023.

Sept. 2, 2022

Dear CAS Colleagues,

This letter is to inform you that the most recent annual plenary session of the MKS (International Committee of Slavists) was held in zoom format on Friday, Sept. 2, 2022 (10am-12:30pm, Paris time) and hosted by the French Organizing Committee.

The DECISIONS (and matters pertaining thereto) reached at this meeting are as follows:

- 1) ICS-17 has been postponed till Aug-Sept. [now Aug 25-29] 2025, but will still be held in Paris and organized by the French Committee. The vote in favour of this proposal was unanimous (32-0) with no abstentions.
- 2) All currently approved CAS paper proposals (6) and poster proposals (1) will retain their status for the duration (i.e., through the dates when ICS-17 is actually held). Since the Canadian paper proposal quota is (10), there is still room for (4) more proposals in this category. Poster proposals have no quota limit (see ICS-17 website for details). [Also, so far only (1) CAS member has notified me that they will be participating in one of the “Thematic block” panels (there was no quota for these either, but all “Thematic block” panels were approved in August 2021, so that ship has sailed, so to speak)]. The DEADLINE for me to send any NEW approved [Paper or Poster] proposals to the French Organizing Committee is MAY 1, 2024 (a reminder that the proposals are usually only 500-1,000 characters, whereas the longer versions for [later] posting on the ICS-17 website can be from 2-5 pages, based on current practice). Therefore, for the purposes of CAS internal review, I am setting a new deadline of MARCH 1, 2024, for you to send me

new proposals at [joseph.schallert@utoronto.ca](mailto:joseph.schallert@utoronto.ca). I will also accept any modifications by the authors of currently approved proposals by the same deadline.

My Sept 2, 2022 report also had a **third section**, which pertained to the consideration of proposed changes in the organization of future ICS congresses. At the outset, it was agreed that no changes would be instituted till AFTER ICS 17 in 2025. In the interim, a working committee consisting of members from 12 national committees presented a set of proposals for preliminary discussion at a special (non-plenary) MKS Zoom session, held on 24 March 2023 (the minutes of which were circulated internally on 17 April 2023). The main issues discussed on March 24 were 1) the regulation of abstract reviews, 2) national quotas, 3) the status of national committees in general, and 4) the composition of the MKS presidency. Here I can only provide a brief summary (in the same order).

- 1) Should paper (and other) proposals continue to be reviewed by national committees (allowing for input from other outside expertise at the discretion of the national committee) or instead by an international Program Committee (which would conduct its assessment of anonymous submissions and which could also supplement its ranks where more specific expertise was required)? Perhaps not surprisingly, no general agreement was reached on this issue. As one might expect, resistance to change here seemed generally to be strongest among the representatives from Slavic-speaking countries, although there were notable exceptions. On the other hand, it was pointed out that such a Program Committee would not only bring the Slavic international conference in line with more widely common academic professional practice, but could also lift some of the organizational burden from the Organizing Committee. As testimony to the discouraging effect of this burden, reference was made to the fact that no Slavic-speaking national committee answered the call for volunteers to host the current ICS-17 (although most of the French organizing committee are Slavic emigrees). In connection with the review of submissions, two alternative compromises were also proposed at the Zoom session, each of which involved two stages (“filters”) in the review process, the first conducted by either the Program Committee or the national committees individually, and the second by the other party.
- 2) Should national quotas be abolished? Here opinions tended to align with the respective views on issue #1, although there was at least considerable agreement that countries with small Slavic studies programs should be guaranteed at least some minimal number of positions, if for no other reason than so as not to discourage the continued development of such programs.
- 3) As to the status of national committees and more specifically the role they play in the management of the ICS congresses, defenders of the proposed changes pointed out that professional academic associations (such as our CAS) still have plenty of tasks to occupy themselves with even without playing a central role in the ICS. On the other hand, one of the representatives from a country with a small Slavic studies program

- pointed out that its membership in the ICS raised its profile and helped to justify its existence in the local academic environment.
- 4) Currently, the MKS president and both of its vice-presidents or in some cases, apparently, the single vice-president, must belong to the host ICS Organizing Committee. The reforms in their current formulation would require one vice-president to come from the national association of another country. (More radical uncouplings had been proposed prior to the current formulation.) This issue is still under discussion.

Several of the proposed changes involve revisions to certain portions of the ICS/MKS charter. The details and rewording of these revisions are also generating discussion.

Virtually all of the topics to which I have referred, as well as others, will be taken up again at the plenary MKS Zoom to be held later this summer (probably late August 2023). Thus far, nothing has been decided or voted upon (other than what I indicated at the outset). As to the interim, I already received feedback from CAS colleagues after I circulated an earlier draft of proposed ICS organizational reforms in March of 2022 and I will be glad to learn more from the membership moving forward. I will acknowledge receipt of any communications, but will only review their content a couple of weeks prior to the August Zoom session.

With best wishes,  
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