

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ACCOUNTANTS— BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Organization

The International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) is the worldwide organization for the accountancy profession. Founded in 1977, its mission is to serve the public interest by: contributing to the development, adoption and implementation of high-quality international standards and guidance; contributing to the development of strong professional accountancy organizations and accounting firms, and to high-quality practices by professional accountants; promoting the value of professional accountants worldwide; speaking out on public interest issues where the accountancy profession's expertise is most relevant.

IFAC is comprised of 167 members and associates in 127 countries worldwide, representing approximately 2.5 million accountants in public practice, industry and commerce, the public sector, and education. No other accountancy body in the world and few other professional organizations have the broad-based international support that characterizes IFAC.

IFAC's governing bodies, staff, and volunteers are committed to the values of integrity, transparency and expertise. IFAC also seeks to reinforce professional accountants' adherence to these values through the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (IESBA Code).

Visit the IFAC website at www.ifac.org for further information.

Standard-Setting Initiatives

IFAC has long recognized that a fundamental way to protect the public interest is to develop, promote, and enforce internationally recognized standards as a means of ensuring the credibility of information upon which investors and other stakeholders depend.

As such, IFAC provides the structures and processes that support the operations of four independent standard-setting boards: the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB), the International Accounting Education Standards Board (IAESB), the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA), and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB). These independent standard-setting boards follow a rigorous due process that supports the development of high-quality standards in the public interest in a transparent, efficient, and effective manner; in addition, the IAASB, IAESB and IESBA have Consultative Advisory Groups that provide public interest perspectives, and include public members. These boards issue the following pronouncements:

- Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants.
- International Standards on Auditing, Review, Other Assurance, and Related Services.

- International Standard on Quality Control.
- International Education Standards.
- International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

The IAASB, IAESB and IESBA are subject to oversight by the Public Interest Oversight Board. See www.ipiob.org for more information.

The Compliance Advisory Panel (CAP) oversees IFAC's member body compliance program, which requires IFAC members and associates to demonstrate how they have used best endeavors to implement the standards issued by IFAC and the International Accounting Standards Board. Member bodies' obligations are set out in IFAC's Statements of Membership Obligations. See www.ifac.org/complianceprogram for more information.

Other Initiatives

IFAC develops benchmark guidance and promotes the sharing of resources to serve professional accountants in business. It has also established groups to address issues pertaining to small and medium practices (SMPs) and entities (SMEs) and developing nations, all of which play a critical role in the global economy.

- Professional Accountants in Business Committee

The Professional Accountants in Business (PAIB) Committee serves IFAC member bodies and professional accountants worldwide who work in commerce, industry, financial services, education, and the public and not-for-profit sectors. Its objectives are to promote and contribute to the value of professional accountants in business by increasing awareness of the important roles professional accountants play in creating, enabling, preserving, and reporting value for organizations and their stakeholders; and to support member bodies in enhancing the competence of their members to fulfill those roles. These objectives are achieved by facilitating the communication and sharing of good practices and ideas. See www.ifac.org/paib for more information.

- Small and Medium Practices Committee

The committee provides direct input from an SMP/SME perspective into the work of international standard setters to shape their work agenda and ensure standards produced are relevant and proportional to SMPs and SMEs. The committee also issues practical support for SMPs such as implementation guides and web-based resources on topics such as efficient implementation of international standards and proficient practice management. The committee engages in outreach activities such as the annual SMP Forum, to keep abreast of emerging issues, raise awareness of the importance and value of this sector, and facilitate timely response to its constituents' needs. See www.ifac.org/smp for more information.

- Professional Accountancy Organization Development Committee
The committee's focus is on addressing the challenges facing the development of strong professional accountancy organizations (PAOs) in emerging and developing countries. It brings together individuals from both developed and developing nations, who drive an agenda to raise awareness of accountancy, bring attention to the need for a formal profession, and highlight the economic and social benefits that a formal profession can bring. See www.ifac.org/about-ifac/professional-accountancy-organization-development-committee for more information.
- Transnational Auditors Committee
The committee operates as the executive arm of the Forum of Firms (FoF, Forum), an association of international networks of accounting firms that perform transnational audits. It provides the official linkage between the Forum and IFAC and plays a major role in encouraging members of the Forum to meet high-quality standards in the practice of international auditing. See www.ifac.org/about-ifac/transnational-auditors-committee for more information.

Other Resources

IFAC publishes a wide range of publications and resource materials. Available handbooks are as follows:

- *Handbook of International Quality Control, Auditing, Review, Other Assurance, and Related Services Pronouncements.*
- *Handbook of International Education Pronouncements.*
- *Handbook of the Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants.*
- *Handbook of International Public Sector Accounting Pronouncements.*

IFAC also publishes adoption and implementation support materials, exposure drafts, consultation papers, and print and electronic newsletters. The majority of these publications are made available in electronic format on the IFAC website for download free of charge. Printed copies of the handbooks are also available for purchase. See www.ifac.org/publications-resources for more information.

Copyright and Translation

IFAC's policy with regard to copyright of its publications is outlined in its Policy Statement, *Policy for Reproducing, or Translating and Reproducing, Publications Issued by the International Federation of Accountants.*

IFAC recognizes that it is important that preparers and users of financial statements, auditors, regulators, lawyers, academia, students, and other interested groups in non-English speaking countries have access to its standards in their native language. IFAC's policy with regard to translation and reproduction of its international

standards (in final form) is outlined in its Policy Statement, *Policy for Translating and Reproducing Standards Issued by the International Federation of Accountants*. See www.ifac.org/translations for more information.