

FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (AISBL)

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FCI REGULATIONS FOR SHOW JUDGES



Contents

1 GENERAL	2
2 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS REGARDING APPLICATION, EDUCATION, EXAMINATION AND NOMINATION AS SHOW JUDGE	2
3 DEFINITION OF SHOW JUDGES.....	4
4 HOW TO BECOME A JUDGE FOR ADDITIONAL BREEDS.....	5
5 HOW TO BECOME A GROUP JUDGE	5
6 HOW TO BECOME AN FCI ALL-BREED INTERNATIONAL JUDGE	6
7 HOW TO BECOME AN FCI ALL-BREED NATIONAL JUDGE	6
8 GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR ADMISSION AS A SHOW JUDGE	6
9 EXCLUSION OF A SHOW JUDGE.....	8
10 GENERAL DUTIES OF A SHOW JUDGE.....	8
11 TRAVEL AND INSURANCE ARRANGMENTS.....	8
12 BEHAVIOUR	9
13 PENALTIES.....	11
14 ENFORCEMENT DISPOSITIONS	12
Appendix to the DOG SHOWS and SHOW JUDGES REGULATIONS of the Fédération Cynologique Internationale.....	13

NB: Terms referring to natural persons are applicable to both genders and numbers.

1 GENERAL

The regulations set forth in the paragraphs 1 through 8 are compulsory for all FCI National Canine Organisations and must be considered as MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS of the FCI for any individual to be accepted as a show judge by the national canine organisation of the country where he has his legal residence and which is a member of the FCI (hereafter named "FCI National Organisation", shortly "FCI NCO"). It is up to each FCI NCO to increase and specify the general requirements set by the FCI. However, under no circumstances, may the rules of each country be in conflict with these FCI regulations.

2 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS REGARDING APPLICATION, EDUCATION, EXAMINATION AND NOMINATION AS SHOW JUDGE

The applications of the candidates wishing to become show judges must be accepted under the official FCI NCO regulations of the country where the applicant has his legal residence. It is the responsibility of each FCI NCO to provide adequate courses and a satisfactory basic judges training programme for its candidates to get the necessary education, to prepare the necessary examinations and to take care of their official approval as show judges. This education must follow the minimum requirements enclosed in these regulations.

In order to be recognised by the FCI as international show judge, the candidate applying for a very first breed must comply with the following requirements:

- a. Must be of legal age.
- b. At the time of application to become a candidate for one or more breeds, the applicant must prove that he has previously been a breeder with a registered affix and must have dogs registered with the official studbook of his country or alternatively that he has achieved successful results as a dog exhibitor for at least 5 years or alternatively that he has had active and responsible involvement in the canine activities for a minimum period of 5 years.
- c. Must have been on duty at official shows as a ring steward or secretary at least 5 times over a minimum period of one year in order to become knowledgeable about procedure and regulation matters.
- d. The candidate must be examined by the official examination committee nominated by his FCI NCO and take a written preliminary examination showing sufficient knowledge on the following subjects:
 1. Anatomy, morphology and movement of dogs
 2. Genetics, health and character
 3. Knowledge of the breed standard(s)
 4. Behaviour, principles and techniques of judging
 5. National show regulations and other additional national rules
 6. FCI Show Regulations, these FCI rules for show judges and other additional rules
 7. Should preferably speak one of the 4 FCI languages.

Once he has undertaken successfully the basic knowledge part, a candidate has to follow a more specific course.

This is the first course in which candidates learn how to look at dogs. The course should be given by very experienced judges who have followed a special FCI NCO training programme.

- e. The practical training programme must allow the candidate to gain a complete knowledge and understanding of the breed(s), of all regulations, as well as procedure in the ring. It consists of the successful completion of a number of shows where the candidate receives education, subject to having passed the written examination. It is the responsibility of the FCI NCO to establish a period of time and the number of practical training sessions.
- f. The education which is to be given to a judge will be done on a breed per breed basis. This “breed by breed” education must be done in countries where some breeds are common and present in reasonable numbers at most shows, but also in countries that are willing to teach more their judges and/or candidate-judges about specific breeds.
- g. The practical education must be taken under the supervision of FCI recognised and well-experienced show judges. The candidate has to write reports on the dogs he judged during the education and forward them to the judge who has the responsibility of confirming the candidate judge’s knowledge, and his performance and behaviour to the official committee in charge.

After successful completion of the practical education, the candidate has to take a practical test supervised by the official examination-committee. This examination committee has to provide a written statement about the test and its results.

- h. Examination is to be done in theory and practice. Candidates have to judge at least two dogs, no matter what breed. The candidate has to produce a consequent critique with the good and less good points of the outline and movement of the dogs and he must pay attention to the health and welfare of the dog. The critiques are to be discussed with the examiners.

Examination will be done by a special commission, appointed by the FCI NCO and following the specific rules of the FCI NCO. In case the FCI NCO has no specific rules then the following procedure applies:

The candidate has to judge and write a critique with qualification and placing as well as the indication of the BOB winner.

The candidate has to prove to the examination committee that he:

- 1 Knows the standard and that he knows how to use it
- 2 Knows the typical points and faults and knows how to evaluate them
- 3 Knows how to write a critique and knows how to correctly use the scale of grades
- 4 Knows the history of the breed
- 5 Knows the character / work / health and problems of the breed
- 6 Knows about the population of the breed in his country and other countries
- 7 Knows the difference between similar and related breeds

- i. Once approved by his FCI NCO and included in its show judges list, a candidate first has to judge over a minimum period of 2 years the breed(s) for which he has been approved in the country where he has his legal residence before he is allowed to accept to judge at FCI shows with **FCI-CACIB** outside the country where he has his legal residence. From that moment, he should be considered an international judge for that/those breed(s) and for the future breeds he will be licensed to judge.
- j. A judge – or candidate judge – who has been living for more than three years in a country different from the country where he had his legal residence is obliged to take further education and to get his approval for new breeds from the country where he lives at present. This disposition does not apply to International FCI all-breed judges.
- k. If a candidate has more than one country of residence, he has to decide under which FCI NCO regime he wants to become a show judge. The FCI Head Office must be informed of his decision. Once a candidate-judge has started his education programme for a particular breed, group, or all breed status, this programme has to be continued with the same regime. In the event that the judge permanently moves to a different FCI country, the FCI judges Regulations state that the judge's licence is transferred to the new country of residence after three years unless the original country of residence agrees to transfer the licence earlier.
- l. If a new breed is recognised by the FCI, a FCI group or FCI all-breed judge is automatically allowed to judge it providing that this breed is in a group which he is qualified to judge.
- m. It is the responsibility of each FCI NCO as member of the FCI to include in their official list of judges of the FCI only those individuals who have fulfilled the requirements stated above, to keep their list as well as all the information about every judge updated and to forward it to the FCI Head Office every year. This list must indicate clearly the breeds for which the judge is licensed to give the **FCI-CACIB**, the groups he is licensed to judge and whether or not he is licensed to judge the Best in Show. The FCI Breed Nomenclature must be observed when writing this list

3 DEFINITION OF SHOW JUDGES

A FCI Breed Judge is a person who has been approved by his own FCI NCO to judge one or more breed(s).

A Show Judge of a FCI NCO can be:

- a) FCI Breed Judge
- b) FCI Group Judge
- c) FCI All-Breed International Judge
- d) FCI All-Breed National Judge

The FCI NCO has to forward to the FCI complete information concerning every judge who is permitted to judge outside the country where he has his legal residence.

4 HOW TO BECOME A JUDGE FOR ADDITIONAL BREEDS

Show judges who are already approved to judge one or more breed(s) in any given group and wish to be approved for additional breeds must apply in writing, must take practical education and pass a test on the standard of the breed(s) they are applying to judge additionally. A practical test for said breed(s) is also compulsory.

In the case of an absolute impossibility to provide the dogs of a certain breed for the practical test, the candidate must, as an alternative solution, pass an extensive test on the standard of the breed(s) he is applying to judge. This rule applies only to experienced judges who are adding a new breed or new breeds.

5 HOW TO BECOME A GROUP JUDGE

A FCI Group Judge is a person who has been approved by his FCI NCO to judge at group level one or more groups of the FCI official groups according to the FCI Nomenclature of Dog Breeds. The group judge's education has to last a minimum of one year each for the first three (3) groups he applies for. A FCI group judge is approved to award the [FCI-CACIB](#) to any breed of said group. Once approved, FCI group judges from FCI NCO are permitted to judge Best of Group (BOG) competitions at [FCI-CACIB](#) shows for the group(s) for which they are qualified.

If a breed is transferred to a group for which a judge is not qualified, the judge retains his right to judge the breed in question.

Before a candidate is allowed to study for more than one group, the FCI NCO has to evaluate his way of judging. The FCI NCO has to decide if the candidate can apply for more breeds.

- a. A judge can apply to be educated as a group judge for his first group when he has been a judge for a period of at least two (2) years and he has to be a judge for at least three breeds of that group. During these years he has to judge at least five times the breeds he is approved for. As an alternative he has to wait three years after the approval of his first breed, before he can apply to be educated as a group judge.
- b. The examination of candidates must consist of a practical examination for one breed or for one group of breeds and a theoretical part for this group of breeds. When having been approved for a certain number of breeds (as set by the relevant FCI NCO) within the same FCI group, it is possible for a Group judge to be approved for other breeds in this group without examination providing he has taken a good education. It is up to the FCI NCO to set up the requirements for this special education.
- c. After completing his fifth group a candidate can officially apply in writing to his FCI NCO to be educated for more groups or even as an all-breed judge.
- d. While training for one or more groups a candidate has to continue judging the breeds he has already been approved for.
- e. The FCI NCO has to inform the FCI about the judge who has become a FCI group judge for his first group.
- f. The FCI NCO must update their relevant section (shows, agility, obedience, ...) in the FCI Judges Directory.

6 HOW TO BECOME AN FCI ALL-BREED INTERNATIONAL JUDGE

An FCI All Breed International Judge is a judge who has been approved by his FCI NCO to judge all breeds of the FCI recognized groups. Only these judges are approved to officiate at **FCI-CACIB** Shows around the world for all the FCI recognized breeds.

The Nomination to become an FCI all-breed international judge has to be entirely under the jurisdiction of the concerned FCI NCO, paying particular attention to the number of breeds registered in the country in question.

However these judges can be made eligible as FCI all-breed international judges only ten years after the approval as an international judge. The FCI NCO has to consider that a judge can only be an all-breed international judge when he has been educated and approved for different breeds in all groups. These breeds are at least a certain number of breeds that are common in the country where the judge has his legal residence. The necessary information about approval and Nomination as an FCI all breed international judge has to be submitted online to the FCI Head Office for final approval (**see Annex 1**).

- a. In order for a judge to be educated to become an FCI all-breed international judge, he must have been approved for at least five of the FCI groups.
- b. To start his education to become an all-breed judge, at least two of his five groups have to be a KEY Group. The FCI KEY groups are the groups 1, 2, 3, 5 and 9.
- c. It is up to the FCI NCO to put forward a candidate to be a Group judge in compliance with the above-mentioned rules and procedure.
- d. It has to be considered that an FCI all-breed judge has been educated and has passed an exam in all ten FCI groups.
- e. The period elapsed between the moment he becomes an international judge (2 years after the first breed(s)) and the approval of his FCI all-breed international judge status has to be at least ten years, upon approval by the FCI.
- f. Upon FCI request, the FCI NCO sends a list of the new FCI all-breed judges to the FCI informing them about the details of their education and the experience of this judge.

7 HOW TO BECOME AN FCI ALL-BREED NATIONAL JUDGE

An FCI All-Breed National Judge is a judge who has been approved by his FCI NCO to judge all breeds at national level. This judge is approved to judge all FCI recognized breeds at **FCI-CACIB** shows only in the country where he has his legal residence. However, this judge can only be approved to judge all breeds in his own country when he has been approved as a judge for at least 7 (seven) FCI groups. This applies only to FCI NCO where the number of dogs entered at shows does not normally exceed 100 (hundred) breeds. The FCI all-breed national judge is allowed to officiate outside the country where he has his legal residence only for the breeds for which he is approved by the FCI as group or breed judge and recognised in his own country. The information about approval and Nomination as a national all-breed judge has to be sent to the FCI.

8 GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR ADMISSION AS A SHOW JUDGE

Only the judges affiliated to an FCI NCO and listed in the FCI Judges Directory in accordance with previous conditions, are allowed to award an [FCI-CACIB](#) at international shows. The breeds which the judges from FCI contract partners are allowed to judge are clearly listed in the individual contracts signed by the FCI and contract partners.

- Judges who have been approved by their FCI NCO but have not been judging for a period of 5 years or longer, must take a new practical test or participate in a judges meeting organised by their FCI NCO before being allowed to judge again. The FCI NCO, before granting a new authorisation to judge, must verify the capacity of the applicant to judge the breed, or breeds, he had previously been authorized to judge.
- Judges emigrating to a country whose national canine organisation is not an FCI member or contract partner can, on application to the FCI, remain admitted for the breeds for which they had been licensed in an FCI NCO, provided that no disciplinary action is or has been taken against them, that the inviting organiser is informed about it and that the FCI agrees to it accordingly. The FCI Head Office keeps a corresponding list. The FCI has jurisdiction over these judges. Those judges do Not have the possibility anymore to take FCI education for further breeds and/or groups.
- Judges emigrating from one country whose NCO is member of the FCI to another one remain admitted and should be approved by the FCI NCO of the new country where he has his legal residence for the breeds they had been licensed by their former FCI NCO, provided that no disciplinary action is or has been taken against them. The FCI Head Office must be informed of this approval.
- A judge or candidate judge can only be entered in the judges list of another FCI NCO, if he has been having his legal residence in the country of this new FCI NCO for a minimum of twelve consecutive months. An application must be sent by these judges to the FCI NCO of the new country within a maximum period of 3 years after changing legal residence. This FCI NCO will then be responsible for these judges.
- The FCI NCO in which a show judge or candidate judge wants to be registered must - before a decision is made about including him in the judges list - ask the FCI NCO where he comes from if it has any objection to this inclusion. If there is no objection, the person can be included in the list. If there is an objection, the former FCI NCO will inform the new FCI NCO about the reasons. The FCI NCO from the country where the person wants to settle down has to respect the objection and the person concerned will Not be included in its list. The judge has the right to appeal to the FCI. As long as no final decision is made, he cannot be included in the judges list of the new FCI NCO. A copy of the correspondence must be forwarded to the FCI.

9 EXCLUSION OF A SHOW JUDGE

If a judge is excluded from the FCI Judges Directory upon decision of the NCO where he is registered, he must go through the entire qualification procedure again in order to be reinstated as an international judge.

10 GENERAL DUTIES OF A SHOW JUDGE

At shows in countries whose NCO is a member of the FCI, show judges must always follow the valid FCI standards of the breeds they are judging, as long as these are Not in conflict with national law. They may not interpret any standard in such a manner to be in conflict with the functional health of a dog.

When judging, any show judge has to obey strictly these judges regulations as well as the FCI show regulations and all other rules of FCI.

The judges have to prepare for each show by studying the standards and all other important regulations.

Judges must:

- be fit in order to judge the breeds they are assigned, paying respect to the dogs and the exhibitors;
- always be thorough and careful in their work;
- judge dogs according to the FCI standard of the specific breed;
- obey the FCI Show Judges Code of commitment to the welfare of pedigree dogs;
- respect their judges' colleagues and the exhibitors.

11 TRAVEL AND INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

a. Travel arrangements

Judges are free to make private arrangements with show organisations, which may differ from those stated in the Appendix to the Dog Shows and Show Judges Regulations of the Fédération Cynologique Internationale. However, when such personal arrangements have Not been made, they should expect to be provided with the benefits stated in the appendix.

It is advisable that financial arrangements should be laid out in advance in the form of a contract or written agreement between the judge and the show organisation and have to be honoured by both parties.

b. Insurance

The judge should sign up an insurance contract (flight cancellation, accidents, etc) whenever he is invited to judge abroad. Considering the high number of different possibilities offered in the member countries, the judges is recommended to act as follows:

- The judge who frequently officiates abroad should sign up this insurance contract for the whole year;
- The judge who seldom judges abroad should sign up this insurance contract on a show-per-show basis.

12 BEHAVIOUR

1. General

Every show judge of any FCI member organisation accomplishes an important duty in the international dog society. His behaviour should therefore be reliable and beyond reproach whether officiating or in his private life.

Consequently:

- A judge should never be late for his judging appointments or leave the show ground before he has completely fulfilled the duties that were assigned to him.
- A judge is a representative of his own FCI NCO, which gave him his judging licence, and he must behave accordingly.
- Under no circumstances can a judge solicit appointments to judge.
- A judge is Not permitted to consult the catalogue of the show before or during his judging.
- In the ring a judge must behave properly and examine all dogs indiscriminately. He should be soberly and properly dressed, in accordance with the duty to be fulfilled, and should always be correct and urbane.
- A judge cannot smoke in the ring.
- A judge cannot drink alcohol in the ring.
- A judge cannot use a mobile phone in the ring while judging, except for consulting the breed standards.
- A judge must be physically able to examine the breeds on the surface where they are traditionally presented.
- A judge should approach the dogs gently in the breed-specific way.
- A judge can neither enter a dog nor handle a dog at a show where he is officiating as a judge
- A partner, any member of his immediate family or any person living with the judge in his household may enter and handle any dog of such breed(s), which this judge is Not judging on that day of the show.
- The dogs that a judge handles at an **FCI-CACIB** show where he is not acting as a judge must be either bred, owned or co-owned by him, by a partner, by a member of his immediate family or any person living with him in his household.
- A judge may not judge any dog that he has either owned, co-owned, conditioned, kept or sold in the six months preceding the show where he is officiating. The same applies to dogs owned by a partner, a member of his immediate family or any person living with him in his household.
- A judge is not allowed to travel to the shows where he is judging with those exhibitors who are showing under him at those events.

- Under no circumstances should a judge socialise or stay with the exhibitors who will be showing under him. A judge may do so only AFTER his judging appointment is completed.

2. Accepting Assignments

a. In their capacity as FCI judges, FCI judges can officiate and grant FCI qualifications, placings, titles or awards, at the following events conducted according to the FCI regulations:

- An event organised by an FCI NCO or clubs affiliated to an FCI NCO. In this case the judges invited to officiate at such an event must get the approval of the FCI NCO of the country where they have their legal residence, with exception of the specific clauses indicated at point 3 “permission for judges”;
- Any event organised by FCI cooperating partners or clubs affiliated to them. In this case, the judges invited must get the authorisation from the FCI NCO of the country where they have their legal residence.

In addition, FCI judges can - to the extent that they do not act in their capacity as FCI judges – officiate at the following events:

- Any event organised by institutions-or clubs affiliated to them- that do not have any connection to the FCI, and that are run according to the regulations of the institutions or their affiliated clubs. However, the judges cannot grant any qualifications, placings, titles or awards that give the appearance of acknowledgment by the FCI (for example the results and awards obtained by the dogs at such events do not give the right to any future FCI-related registration of any offspring of these dogs). In addition, they shall make it sufficiently clear that they do not act in their capacity as FCI judges.
- b. Upon receiving an invitation to judge **an event conducted according to the FCI regulations** in a country outside the country where he has his legal residence a judge has to make all necessary inquiries to ascertain that the show organisation comes under the jurisdiction of the FCI or is organized by an organisation recognised by FCI.
 - c. If the show is organized by a club, the judge must verify that this club is officially recognised by the FCI NCO or FCI contract partner of the country where the show is being held.
 - d. When judging outside the country where he has his legal residence a judge must be fluent in at least one of the four languages of the FCI (English, French, German or Spanish). In case a judge is unable to fulfil this requirement, he is responsible for providing his own interpreter if the show organiser requests it.
 - e. A judge may under no circumstances agree to judge a breed at any show for which he is not approved by his own national organisation. The same applies for judging at Best in Group and Best in Show level.

- f. All the judges, including those from countries that are not members of the FCI, must under all circumstances follow the FCI breed standards when they are officiating at FCI sanctioned shows.
- g. The judges from countries that are not members of the FCI and judges from FCI associated member countries are only licensed to judge the breeds recognised by their national canine organisations when officiating at FCI international shows.
- h. It is absolutely forbidden for a judge to charge a double reimbursement for any expenses related to a judging assignment. If a judge is found to have claimed a double reimbursement, he will be severely punished by his FCI NCO.

3. Permissions for judges

FCI breed judges must have a written permission, issued by their respective canine organisation in order to judge at FCI Shows. Only judges who are authorized by their national organisation to judge these breeds are allowed to judge dogs. While on assignment, they are obliged to judge strictly and exclusively in accordance with the FCI breed standard that is currently valid.

FCI group judges from federated FCI NCO are allowed to judge, without any official authorisation from their national canine organisation, all the breeds of the groups for which they are qualified as well as Best of Group for the groups for which they are qualified. They can judge the Best in Show competitions provided that the national canine organisation and the inviting country approve it and he is approved as a FCI group judge for at least two of the FCI groups.

FCI all breed international judges from federated FCI NCO are allowed to judge, without any authorisation from their national canine organisation, any breed, any competition, including Best of Group and Best in Show.

FCI all breed international judges are allowed to judge any breed recognized only at national level, providing that the breed standard is made available to them in due time by the show organiser. The same applies to FCI group judges for the breeds that are in the group the judge is approved for.

At all international FCI shows at least 2/3 of the invited judges on the panel have to be FCI judges (breed-group-all breed) approved by a FCI NCO.

13 PENALTIES

- 1. Any judge violating, in any way, the FCI show regulations and/or the national ones as well as the FCI regulations for show judges falls under the jurisdiction of his FCI NCO, which has to penalize the judge in question if the violation has been proven. The FCI NCO are obliged to pass a rule which enforces them to penalize any misconduct or any violation from their judges.
- 2. It must be guaranteed that the judge in question shall be heard, either verbally or in writing. The judge must be given the right to appeal against the decision. No person having been involved in imposing the penalty may be a member of the authority where the appeal is made.

3. The FCI NCO should foresee the following penalty options:
 - a) Settle the case without penalization
 - b) Issue a warning with or without threatening to ban the judge from judging
 - c) Banning the person to judge for a certain period of time
 - d) Cancellation as a judge
 - e) Refusal or withdrawal of the permission(s) to judge abroad
4. After becoming legally effective, the FCI has to be informed about the decision by its FCI NCO.

14 ENFORCEMENT DISPOSITIONS

The Executive Committee of the FCI, especially when parts of these regulations become invalid, may, on its own final decision, take action on changing parts of these regulations in order to ensure the validity of any international event held under FCI rules and to enforce the application of these regulations.

The invalidity of one part or parts of these regulations does not force the whole regulations to become invalid.

These rules come into force immediately upon approval of the General Committee of the FCI and must be distributed to all FCI members and contract partners.

The English version is the authentic one.

These regulations were approved by the FCI General Committee at the meeting in Berlin, on October 31st, 2007. They become effective from January 1st, 2008.

The changes in bold and blue characters were approved by the FCI General Committee during its online meeting on September 22, 2020.

The changes in bold and italic characters were approved by the FCI General Committee during its meeting in Stockholm, September 2026.

They become effective upon publication.

Appendix to the DOG SHOWS and SHOW JUDGES REGULATIONS of the Fédération Cynologique Internationale

COMPLEMENTARY RULES FOR THE TRAVEL EXPENSES OF THE JUDGES

1.

All usual travel expenses including real kilometrage, parking, train, bus, taxi, flight (a reasonably priced economy ticket including a cancellation insurance – if possible - and an option for changeability), as well as meals during travel to the show, incurred by a judge have to be reimbursed immediately on arrival.

2.

For judging at all FCI World and Europe Section Shows as well as at International FCI Shows organized in countries belonging to the FCI European Section, a judge is to receive from the show organiser, in addition to the previously mentioned costs (see item 1), an allowance of at least 50 € for each travel day and at least 75€ for each judging day, i.e., per international FCI-CACIB show held daily. ***The fee includes food and beverages on travelling days.***

If the judge travels by car, the corresponding kilometrage will be paid at 0.50 €/km.

For judging at an FCI Section Show as well as at FCI International Shows organised in countries belonging to the other FCI sections, the “allowance” amounts to at least 35 € (judging and travel day) in addition to the above costs (see item 1).

If the judge travels by car, the corresponding kilometrage will be paid at 0.35 €/km.

At all FCI international shows, organisers can provide daily allowance for their domestic judges according to national laws.

3.

Regardless previous points 1 and 2, judges and organisers can make agreements as long as both parties have consented and signed the terms prior to the show, and specifically when the relevant national tax regulations require so.

The English text is the authentic document.

The changes in bold and blue characters were approved by the FCI General Committee during its online meeting on September 22 2020.

The changes in bold and italic characters were approved by the FCI General Committee in September 2026 in Stockholm. They become effective upon publication.