



Working Group for the Entry into Force (WGEF)  
of the International Coffee Agreement 2022  
12<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
2 July 2026  
London, United Kingdom

### ICO conversion factors

#### Background

1. In accordance with Article 2 of the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) 2022, the Council shall review the conversion factors for roasted, decaffeinated, liquid and soluble coffee, and establish a conversion factor for premixed coffee as soon as possible after the Agreement enters into force. Additionally, Resolution 476, adopted at the 133<sup>rd</sup> Session of the International Coffee Council in June 2022, requested that the Executive Director update and submit, for the Council's approval, the conversion factors for roasted, decaffeinated, liquid, soluble and premixed coffee prior to the entry into force of the ICA 2022.
2. At the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the WGEF, the Secretariat presented a proposed methodology for reviewing the existing conversion factors and developing a new factor for premixed coffee. The approach included a questionnaire aimed at Members, consultations with the private sector, and bilateral consultations as required, noting that similar methods had been applied in previous reviews.
3. **Annex I** of this document provides further details on the approach and methodology proposed to review the conversion factors. **Annexes II** and **III** provide, respectively, a comprehensive overview of global trade flows across different forms of coffee and information on the potential impact of changes in conversion factors on trade statistics and exporting Members' contributions, addressing questions raised by Members during the 11th meeting of the WGEF.

#### Action

Members are requested to consider the information contained in **Annexes I, II and III**.

## ICO Conversion Factors

### **A. Definition and context**

1. Conversion factors are coefficients used to convert different coffee forms (i.e. roasted, decaffeinated, liquid, soluble and premixed coffee) into their green bean equivalents (GBE). These technical coefficients reflect differences in physical form and processing yields. For example, under the current methodology, the net weight of soluble coffee is multiplied by 2.6 to estimate the volume of green coffee required for its production. They are essential for compiling consistent global data on coffee production, exports, imports and consumption. By converting different coffee forms into a common equivalent unit, data can be aggregated across products while ensuring the interoperability of global coffee statistics. In addition, aggregated data enables the ICO to maintain continuity in historical statistical series, ensuring neutrality and comparability among Members and coffee markets. Accurate and consistent conversion factors are also required for the calculation of voting rights, contributions and the implementation of compliance provisions. They are therefore integral to both the statistical and governance functions of the ICO. At the international level, conversion factors are widely used by international organizations, customs and statistical authorities, trade analysts and researchers.

2. The current conversion factors for roasted, liquid and soluble coffee date back to the International Coffee Agreement 1983, while the factor for decaffeinated coffee was approved at the 105<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council in September 2010. At its 107<sup>th</sup> Session in September 2011, the Council approved the introduction of conversion factors for decaffeinated roasted and decaffeinated soluble coffee expressed in GBE, with effect from 1 October 2011 (see document [ED-2123/11](#)). Subsequent reviews conducted by the International Coffee Council in 2016 and 2019 confirmed that the existing conversion factors continued to reflect conditions in the coffee sector.

### **B. Review of conversion factors upon the entry into force of the ICA 2007**

3. At its 25<sup>th</sup> meeting in September 2008, the Statistics Committee considered the review of conversion factors pursuant to Article 2 of the ICA 2007 (see document [WP-Statistics 132/08](#)). Recalling that no changes had been recommended during the previous review, the Committee decided to seek the advice of the Private Sector Consultative Board (PSCB) before making recommendations to the Council.

4. The PSCB reviewed the matter in March 2009 (see document [PSCB-115/09](#)) and recommended that the conversion factors in use remain unchanged, except for green decaffeinated coffee, for which it proposed a conversion factor of 1.05. At its 26<sup>th</sup> meeting in March 2009, the Statistics Committee endorsed this recommendation (see document [WP-Statistics 137/09](#)).

5. In May 2009, the Executive Director circulated document [ED-2062/09](#) inviting Members' comments on the proposed amendment. Since no objections were received, the Council approved the new factor at its 105<sup>th</sup> Session in September 2010 (see document [ICC-105-24](#)).

6. In March 2011, the Statistics Committee consulted the PSCB on the possible introduction of conversion factors for decaffeinated roasted and decaffeinated soluble coffee. Following consultations with PSCB members, the matter was discussed again in September 2011, after which the Statistics Committee agreed to recommend the proposed factors to the Council (see document [SC-8/11](#)). At its 107<sup>th</sup> Session, the Council approved the introduction of these conversion factors (see document [ICC-107-22](#)).

### **C. Subsequent reviews under the ICA 2007**

7. In 2014, the Statistics Committee decided to consult the PSCB once again on the review of conversion factors (see document [SC-42/14](#)). At its 10<sup>th</sup> meeting in March 2016, the Committee recommended that the existing factors remain unchanged, and this recommendation was approved by the Council at its 116<sup>th</sup> Session (see document [ICC-116-14](#)).

8. At its 16<sup>th</sup> meeting in March 2019, the Statistics Committee requested that the Secretariat conduct a survey on the existing conversion factors and present the findings at the following meeting (see document [SC-96/19](#)). In June 2019, the Secretariat circulated questionnaire [ED-2306/19](#) to Members, observers and PSCB participants, while also encouraging dissemination to the private sector.

9. Based on the survey results, the Statistics Committee concluded, at its 17<sup>th</sup> meeting in October 2019, that the conversion factors introduced in 2011 and subsequently confirmed in 2016 continued to reflect market conditions and should therefore remain unchanged. The Council approved this recommendation at its 125<sup>th</sup> Session in October 2019 (see document [ICC-125-15](#)). This constituted the last review of conversion factors.

### **D. Proposed way forward under the ICA 2022**

10. A similar approach to the one used in the three previous reviews of conversion factors could be adopted, with adjustments to reflect the role of the WGEF and the current status of the PSCB. This would include consultations with Members, the PSCB and other private sector stakeholders through a targeted questionnaire, as well as bilateral consultations where necessary. The following roles are proposed:

- (a) The **WGEF** would serve as the lead coordinating body mandated to address transitional issues related to the ICA 2022. In light of its role, the WGEF could request, review and approve preparatory technical work by the Secretariat, as well as engage, where necessary, with other relevant ICO bodies such as the Joint

Committee, for endorsement of the technical pathway, including options, consultations, and timing.

- (b) As instructed by the Council through [ICC Resolution 476](#), the **Executive Director** would update and submit, for the Council's approval, the conversion factors for roasted, decaffeinated, liquid and soluble coffee, as well as the new factor(s) for premixed coffee, prior to the entry into force of the ICA 2022.
- (c) The **International Coffee Council** would be responsible for approving the revised conversion factors and authorizing their publication and date of application.

11. The proposed timeline is presented below:

Process	Proposed dates
1. WGEF to define the scope and guiding principles of the review, and request the Executive Director to conduct the review accordingly.	Next WGEF meeting: July 2026
2. Executive Director to develop a survey questionnaire, if agreed, and circulate it to Members, PSCB members, and other relevant stakeholders.	July 2026
3. Executive Director, with the support of the Secretariat, to conduct bilateral consultations as required, collect survey responses, and prepare a report containing technical recommendations, to be circulated to the WGEF at least six weeks before the meeting.	August – November 2026
4. WGEF to consider the technical recommendations based on the survey results and, if appropriate, recommend them for approval by the Council.	Proposed WGEF meeting: January 2027
5. International Coffee Council to consider the recommendation of the WGEF and, if appropriate, approve it.	Proposed ICC meeting: March 2027

12. An overview of the exports of coffee by form is contained in **Annex II**.

13. **Annex III** contains an analysis of the potential impact of changes in conversion factors on trade statistics and on exporting Members' contributions.

## Overview of coffee trade by form

### A. Introduction

1. Coffee is traded internationally in a range of forms, reflecting different stages of processing and value addition. The main categories include green beans, roasted coffee and soluble coffee. Soluble coffee can also be used in preparations with a basis of coffee, specified as premixed products.

2. This analysis reviews exports by coffee-producing countries and re-exports by countries not classified as exporting countries (in line with the definition provided in Article 2 (7) of the [ICA 2007](#)), as well as imports, in order to provide a comprehensive overview of global trade flows across these different forms of coffee.

3. However, caution should be exercised in interpreting data on soluble and premixed coffee, as they rely on information submitted by countries or derived from customs sources which, in some cases, do not provide sufficient detail on the coffee content or do not specify the exact Harmonized System (HS) code required to allocate products to the appropriate category with certainty, or to assess the share of coffee in dry matter within the preparation.

4. In cases of uncertainty, the ICO has followed a precedent-based approach by maintaining historical practices and allocating such trade to soluble coffee. As a result, the analysis is likely to underestimate the size of the premixed coffee trade.

5. The analysis below is presented in terms of GBE, using existing conversion factors and estimated average dry matter coffee content in coffee preparations, which ranges between 10% and 40%.

### B. Exports of coffee by form

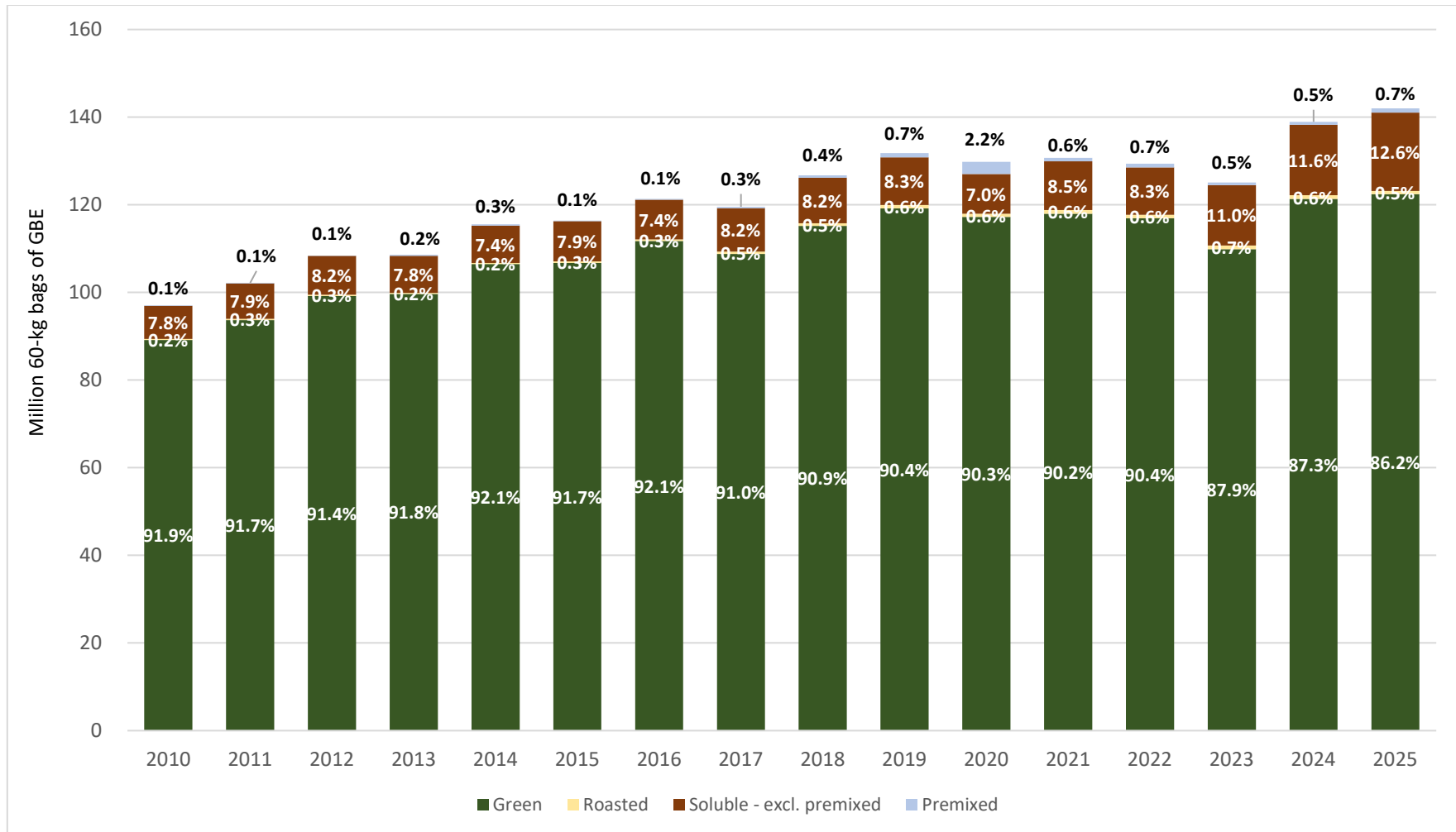
6. Over the period 2010–2025, green coffee has consistently remained the dominant form of exports from coffee-producing countries, accounting for the vast majority of shipments, as shown in **Figure 1**. However, its share has shown a slight but gradual decline over time, from about 92% in 2010 to 86% in 2025, reflecting a modest shift towards more processed forms of coffee.

7. Processed forms of coffee, particularly soluble coffee, have shown a gradual expansion over the period, with their share increasing steadily. This reflects the sustained growth in demand for convenience-oriented products, as well as the increased processing capacity in certain producing countries. Soluble coffee has been the main driver of this structural change, partially offsetting the decline in the share of green coffee and indicating a gradual move up the value chain in some origins. By contrast, roasted coffee exports have remained marginal throughout, confirming that roasting activities continue to be concentrated in importing countries.

8. Premixed coffee, when measured in terms of coffee dry matter content (i.e. expressed in GBE), has remained a very small component of total exports over the 2010–2025 period, below 1% of total exports. Nevertheless, its share has increased significantly—by approximately sevenfold over the period. This indicates that, although starting from a very low base, premixed coffee is gaining traction in exports from coffee-producing countries, reflecting the growing importance of convenience-oriented products, even if its contribution in coffee-equivalent terms remains limited.

9. The presence of premixed coffee in export flows indicates the emergence of downstream, consumer-ready products within producing countries. However, this segment remains at an early stage of development and has not yet materially altered the overall structure of global coffee exports.

Figure 1: Exports of coffee by form by coffee-producing countries



### **C. Re-exports of coffee by form by non-coffee-producing countries**

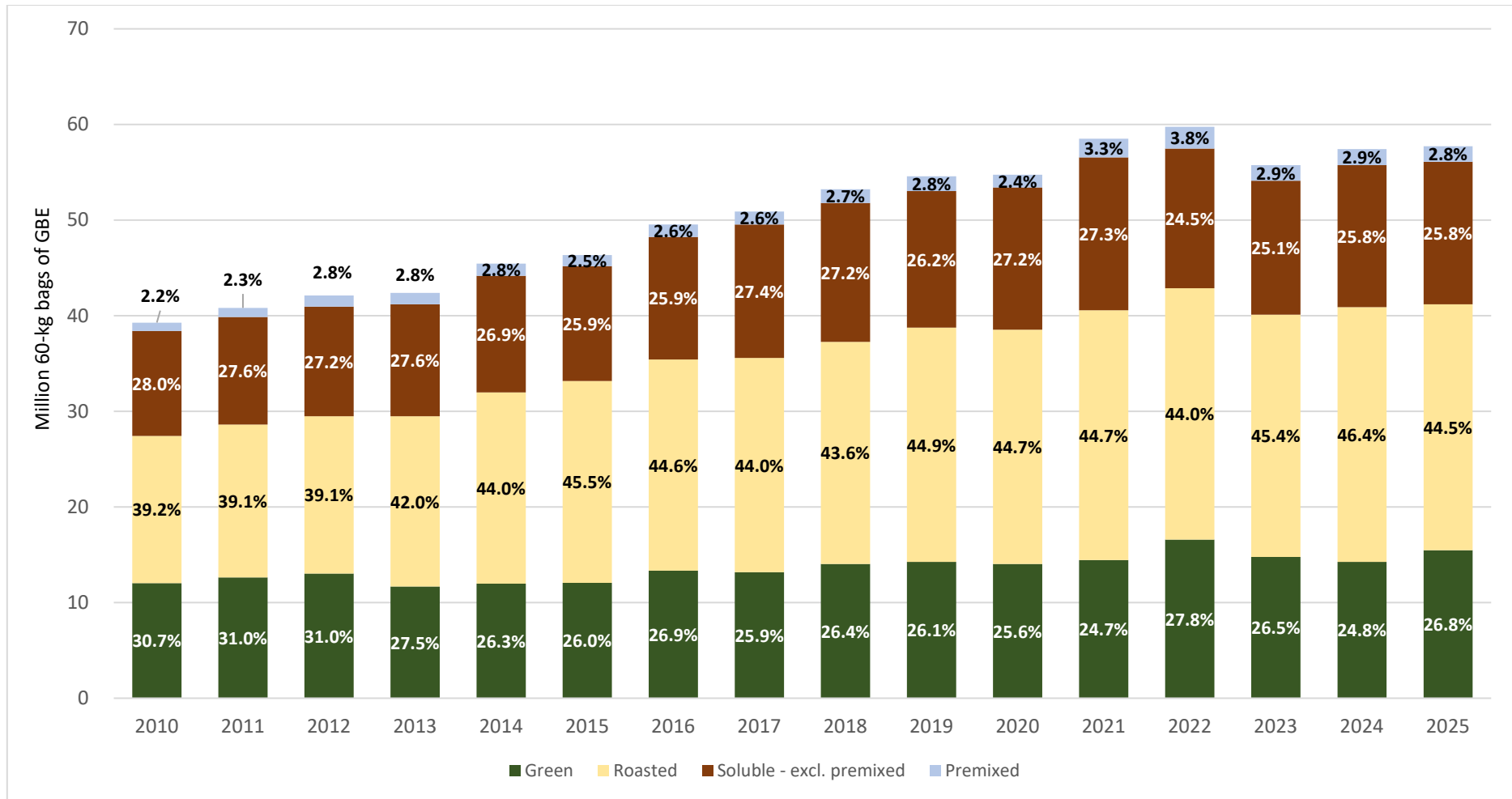
10. Over the period 2010–2025, the structure of re-exports (i.e. exports by countries not classified as exporting countries as per the definition of Article 2 (7) of the [ICA, 2007](#)) has remained markedly different from that of exports by producing countries, with a significantly higher share of processed coffee. While green coffee continues to account for a notable portion of re-exports, its share has shown some variability over time and a slight declining tendency overall, reflecting the growing importance of value-added products in re-export flows, as shown in **Figure 2**.

11. Processed forms of coffee, particularly roasted and soluble coffee, have consistently represented the largest components of re-exports. Roasted coffee has remained the dominant category throughout the period, underscoring the central role of importing countries in roasting and redistributing coffee to final markets. Soluble coffee, while still accounting for a substantial share, has shown a slight declining trend over time, suggesting some relative shift within processed segments rather than a reduction in its absolute importance. Together, roasted and soluble coffee account for the majority of re-exports, at about 70%, highlighting the concentration of downstream activities outside producing countries.

12. Premixed coffee, when measured in terms of coffee dry matter content (i.e. expressed in GBE), has remained a relatively small component of re-exports over the 2010–2025 period. However, similar to exports from producing countries, its share has increased—albeit from a low base—indicating a gradual expansion of ready-to-consume or easy-to-prepare coffee products within re-export trade flows. Despite this increase, premixed coffee continues to represent only a minor share in coffee-equivalent terms.

13. Overall, the structure of re-exports underscores the role of non-producing countries as key actors in the downstream segments of the coffee value chain. The gradual increase in the share of soluble and premixed coffee points to a continued diversification of traded products, although this has not fundamentally altered the dominance of roasted and, to a lesser extent, green coffee in re-export flows.

Figure 2: Re-exports of coffee by form



#### **D. Imports of coffee by form**

14. Over the period 2010–2025, green coffee has consistently accounted for the majority of imports, reflecting the continued reliance of importing countries on green beans as the primary input for domestic processing. However, this share has shown a slight but gradual decline over time, from 75% in 2010 to 69% in 2025, indicating a modest shift towards processed forms of coffee, as shown in **Figure 3**.

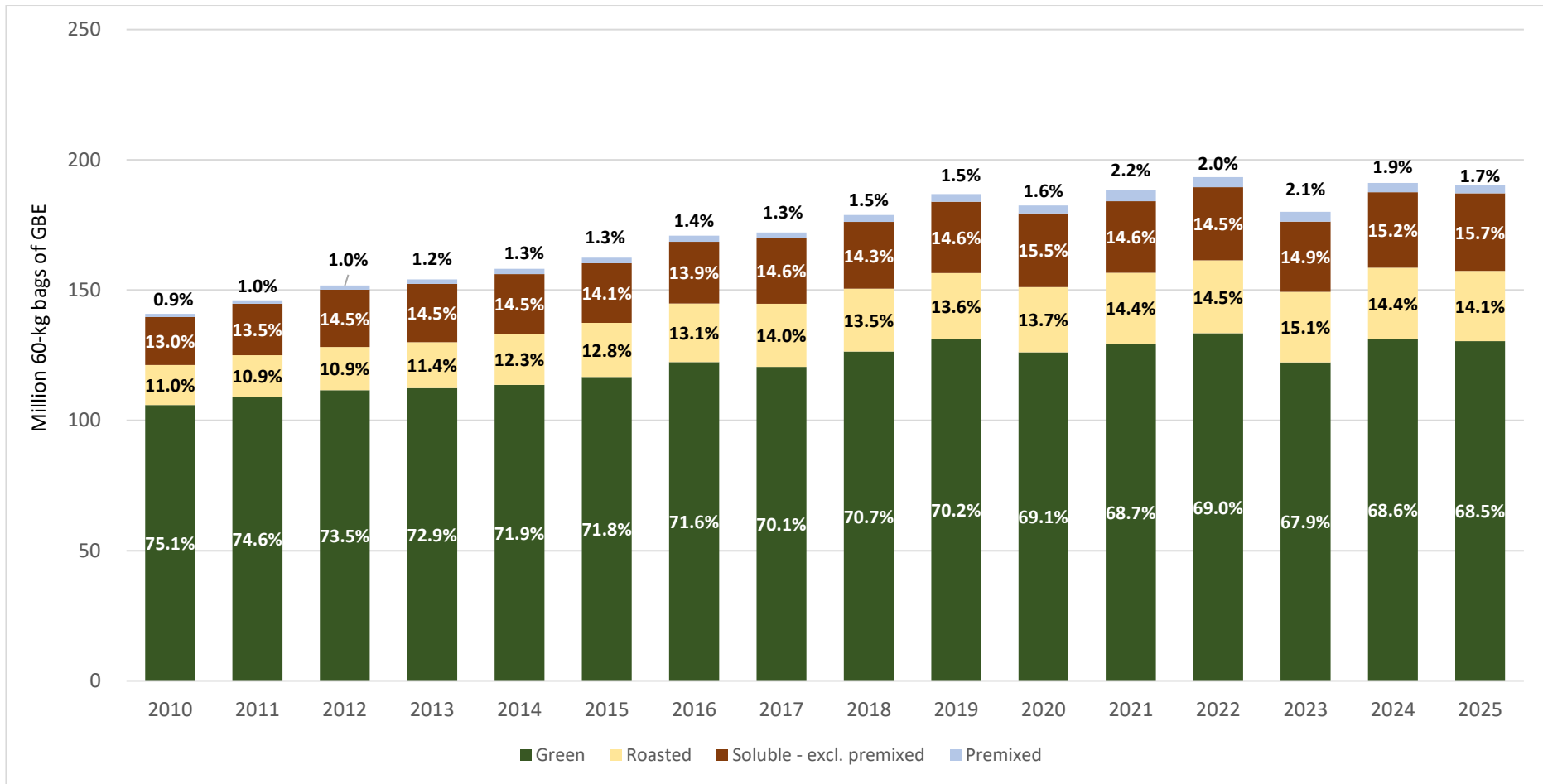
15. Processed coffee forms, including roasted, soluble and premixed coffee, have represented a significant share of imports throughout the period. Roasted coffee has shown a gradual increase in its share over time, from 11% in 2010 to over 14% in recent years, reflecting the expansion of trade in finished products and the strengthening of intra-regional supply chains, particularly among consuming markets. Similarly, soluble coffee continued to account for a substantial share of imports, showing a slight rising trend over time, from 13% in 2010 to almost 16% in recent years. Together, roasted and soluble coffee have increasingly represented a significant component of global imports, from 24% in 2010 to 30% in recent years, highlighting the diversification of consumption across markets.

16. Premixed coffee has remained a small component of imports when measured in terms of coffee dry matter content (i.e. expressed in GBE), with its share generally remaining below 2% over the period. Nevertheless, similar to export and re-export trends, its share has increased significantly—by several multiples—albeit from a very low base. This indicates that premixed coffee is gradually gaining traction in international trade, reflecting the growing importance of convenience-oriented products in certain markets.

17. It should be noted, however, that the relatively modest share of premixed coffee imports expressed in GBE underestimates the actual scale of trade in premixed products, as this measure captures only the coffee content of these preparations. In volume or value terms, premixed coffee products represent a more significant segment of the market.

18. Overall, the structure of coffee imports reflects a gradual diversification of traded forms, with a slight shift away from green coffee towards processed products. While the overall structure remains broadly stable, the increasing presence of premixed coffee, combined with evolving shares of soluble and roasted coffee, highlights changing consumption patterns and the growing role of convenience products in global coffee markets.

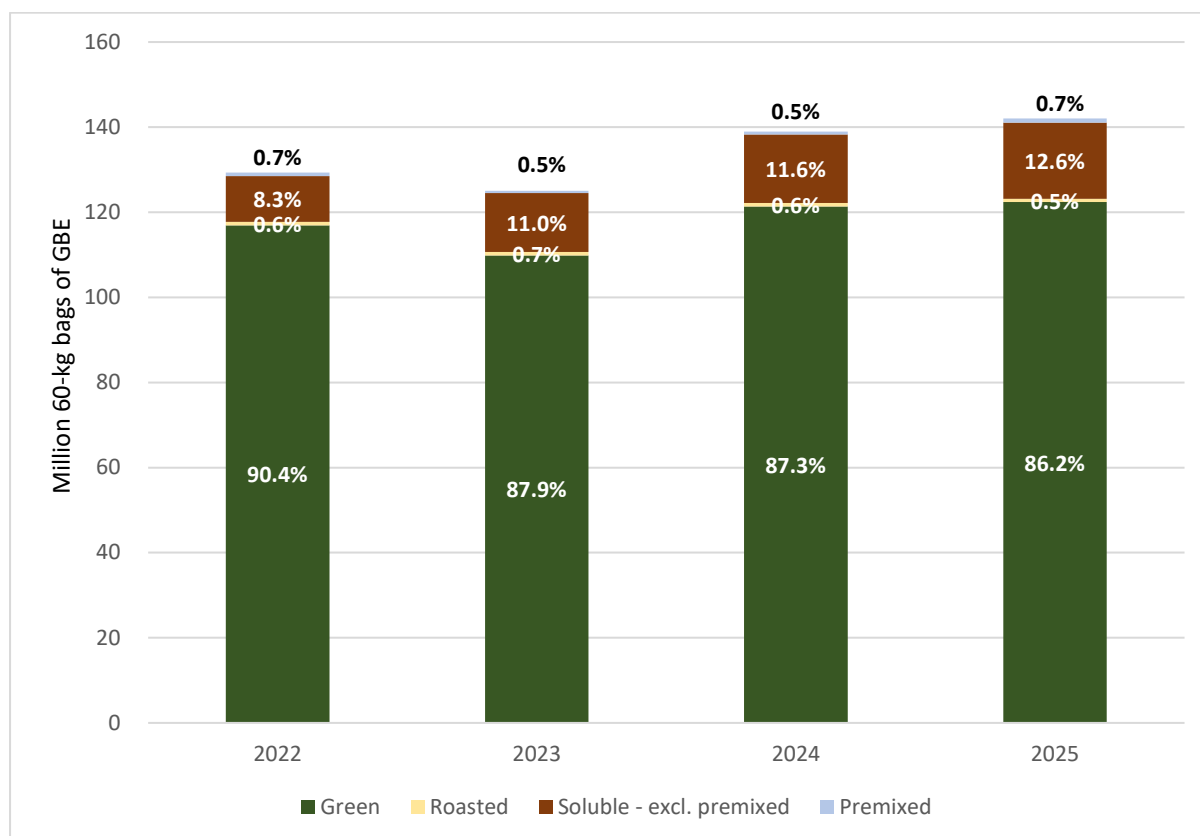
Figure 3: Imports of coffee by form



### Potential impact of changes in conversion factors on trade statistics, and exporting Members' contributions

1. The Secretariat conducted preliminary simulations to assess the possible implications of potential revisions to the conversion factors on the distribution of votes for exporting Members and therefore on Members' contributions, based on Article 7 of the ICA 2007 and the average volume of coffee exports in the preceding four calendar years, consistent with the methodology used for the calculation of the 2025/26 budget.
2. It should be noted that green coffee accounted for an average of 89% of total coffee trade over the past five years. Accordingly, any revisions to conversion factors would affect only the remaining 11% of trade, comprising processed coffee forms.

**Figure 4: Share of green, roasted, soluble and premixed coffee in all forms of coffee exports**



3. The simulations were based on indicative adjustment ranges derived from a preliminary review of the available literature and should be regarded as illustrative at this stage, pending the outcome of a survey to be circulated to ICO Members and coffee industry experts, as well as subsequent consultations.
4. Under the scenarios examined, an increase of up to 6% in the conversion factor for roasted coffee resulted in a maximum variation of one vote for individual Members. For soluble

and premixed coffee, simulated increases or decreases of up to 20% resulted in a **maximum variation of three votes** for individual Members compared to the current situation with the existing conversion factors. Most countries would likely experience no impact, while Members with a higher share of trade in processed coffee would be the most affected, whether positively or negatively.

5. Overall, the analysis suggests that potential revisions to conversion factors would likely have a limited impact on the distribution of votes and contributions.