



# ISKCON

## REGIONAL GOVERNING BODY

Founder-acarya His Divine Grace  
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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### **Euro RGB meeting, Villagio Hare Krishna April 29-30, 2025**

Total number of members: 24

Voting members: 18

Quorum: 9

Voting members present:

Global GBCs present: 6 (out of 7)

Non-voting members present: 3

#### **Attendance**

#### **PRESENT – VOTING MEMBERS**

##### **GBCs**

1. Bhaktivaibhava Swami (GBC for Albania, Czech Republic, Finland, Macedonia, Slovakia, Co-GBC with Prahladananda Swami for Bulgaria)

2. Hridaya Caitanya das (GBC of Andorra, Gibraltar, Portugal, Spain, New Mayapur; Co-GBC with Madhu Sevita d for Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and France except Dole; Co-GBC with Krsna Premarupa d for Dole)

3. Krsna Premarupa das (GBC for Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Lichtenstein; Co-GBC with Hridaya Caitanya d for Dole)

4. Madhu Sevita das (GBC for Italy, Malta, San Marino; Co-GBC with Hridaya Caitanya d for Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and France except Dole; Co-GBC with Radha Krsna d for Cyprus and Greece)

5. Praghosa das (GBC for the UK, Faroe Islands, Channel Islands, Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Sweden)

6. Prahladananda Swami (GBC for Croatia, Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia; Co-GBC with Bhaktivaibhava Swami for Bulgaria; Sannyasa Minister)



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### OTHER MEMBERS

1. Divya-prabandha das (Chair of the Croatian National Council)
2. Janesvara das (Almviks Board; Regional Secretary for Sweden, Norway, and Denmark)
3. Lalitanatha das (Regional Secretary for Denmark)
4. Madhava das (Regional Secretary for Spain)
5. Mahaprabhu das (Minister of ISKCON Communications Europe)
6. Mahendra das (Euro RGB 1st vice-chairman, Chair of Bulgarian National Council)
7. Nrsimha Krsna das (Zonal supervisor for Turkey)
8. Parabhakti das (Euro RGB 2nd vice-chairman, IGPO Continental Officer for Europe)
9. Trilokatma das (Euro RGB chairman, Zonal supervisor for Slovakia, Albania, and Macedonia)

### NON-VOTING MEMBERS

1. Citrarupini devi dasi (Child Protection Office Regional Director for Europe)
2. Dayanidhi das (Chairman of the Greece National Council)
3. Sankirtan das (Representative of the Czech National Council)

### GUESTS

1. Gaura-bhagavan das (Iceland, for the second day of the meeting)

### NOT PRESENT

### VOTING MEMBERS

1. Krsna Ksetra Swami (Minister of the Ministry for Cow Protection and Agriculture)
  2. Radha Krsna das (GBC for Hungary, Romania, Turkey; Co-GBC with Madhu Sevita d for Greece and Cyprus)
  3. Tapas das (Regional Secretary for Sweden)
  4. Trisama das (Chair of the Polish National Council)
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### NON-VOTING MEMBERS

1. Devasri Radhika devi dasi (Head of Legal Department)
2. Tapo-divyam das (Chair of the Finnish National Council)

## MINUTES

### 1. Membership

Trilokatma das is Euro RGB Chairman.

Mahendra das is Euro RGB First Vice-Chairman.

Parabhakti das is Euro RGB Second Vice-Chairman.

Praghosa das has been welcomed back to the Euro RGB following the restoration of his status as a GBC for the UK and Northern Europe.

Krishna Premarupa das was appointed as an Assistant GBC member for Germanic Europe during the GBC meeting held in Mayapur in February 2025.

Two devotees acquired voting status: Divya-prabandha das, chair of the Croatian National Council, and Madhava das, Regional Secretary for Spain.

Two devotees acquired the acting position: Citrarupini devi dasi, Child Protection Office Regional Director for Europe, and Sankirtan das, representative of the Czech National Council.

Divya-prabandha das has been nominated as a new member of the Euro RGB Executive Committee (EC), and his nomination has been accepted.

### Action point:

1. Divya-prabandha das will attend EC meetings until the autumn meeting for training purposes and will officially become a member then.



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## 2. Euro RGB EC report

Since the last Euro RGB meeting, the Euro RGB EC has focused on several key initiatives, including finalizing the Rules and Regulations paper and working with the Last Wills Committee to encourage GBCs, sannyasis, and gurus in Europe to draft their last wills. They also collaborated with the Child Protection Oversight Committee (CPOC) to implement new child protection directives, including follow-up meetings and communications. Additionally, preparatory work for the Ombuds Office was carried out with Guruttama das, and the RGB EC assisted in coordinating the participation of European devotees in the ILS conference held in Mayapur earlier this year. The RGB EC also addressed a few complaints and prepared for the Euro RGB meeting in Villaggio Hare Krishna.

## 3. GBC report

Radha Krsna das gave a report on behalf of the present GBC Secretaries, reading from the latest minutes of the GBC meeting held in Mayapur in February 2025, while also providing additional information and responding to questions from the Euro RGB members.

## 4. GBC succession

Parabhakti d gave a presentation on the succession plan, leadership development, and membership structure proposal which addresses lack of uniformity and clear system of training ISKCON's members. The discussion centred on the need for a more structured and inclusive educational framework within ISKCON, particularly to address the current perception of initiation as a final goal rather than a developmental step. The lack of standardized foundational courses across temples was highlighted, proposing a global system of tiered training and certifications to guide devotees from basic to advanced levels. Concerns were raised about initiation being misused either as a prestige marker or a means for gurus to amass followers, diverging from Srila Prabhupada's educational emphasis. Analogies with similar practices were made, suggesting the need to make congregation members feel part of the movement without necessitating priest-like initiation. The idea of a committee to investigate and propose a coherent educational system was approved.

### Action points:

Euro RGB EC will:

1. Finalize committee members and assign leadership roles
2. Identify ISKCON regions to pilot the training and membership system
3. Secure funding for succession and training initiatives



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### 5. GBC College in Europe

The discussion focused on launching a GBC College leadership training program in Europe, with two distinct tracks: one for prospective zonal supervisors and another shorter version for general ISKCON leaders such as temple presidents. The course will begin in Spring 2026, combining one in-person 10-day session and 12 months of online learning, with potential hosting in New Vrajamandala at an estimated cost of around 500 euros per participant. Key points raised included language barriers in Europe, the importance of English proficiency, and clarification that course completion does not guarantee a zonal supervisor position. The training is intended as a leadership development initiative, not a certification for appointment. Flexibility to add region-specific subjects was affirmed. A proposal was approved to give each GBC Secretary one month to estimate how many potential participants they could identify.

#### Action point:

1. Each GBC Secretary will provide an estimate of potential participants for the GBC College leadership training within one month.

### 6. Rules and Regulations of the Euro RGB

The discussion on the Euro RGB Rules and Regulations continued from the previous meeting, covering several key points. Prior to the meeting, the document was circulated among the European Leaders for feedback, and no comments were submitted by the designated deadline.

Amongst others, the question of representation for a country with more than two zonal supervisors was discussed. While the current draft stipulates that a country cannot have more than two zonal supervisors representing the country, various practical considerations were raised, and no final conclusion was reached. The Euro RGB EC has been tasked with further deliberating on the matter and presenting a proposal at a later date.

The new amendments to the existing draft of the Rules and Regulations are as follows:

- New Euro RGB members will acquire voting rights after one year of membership (previously two years). However, GBC Secretaries are exempt from this rule and can vote immediately.
- Euro RGB members who become emeritus members of the global GBC will automatically be granted emeritus status within the Euro RGB as well.
- Amendments to these Rules and Regulations now require only a simple majority vote, rather than the two-thirds majority stipulated in the previous draft.



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- The Euro RGB Executive Committee (EC) can approve expenditures within the Euro RGB budget up to 40% of the total budget. Any expenditure exceeding this threshold requires approval from the full body.
- Each year, one European GBC member, on the request of the Euro RGB EC, will serve as a consultant for a one-year term in case help is needed.
- Section 6.4. about GBC veto is to be completely removed from the Rules and Regulations.
- In exceptional circumstances, a GBC Secretary may participate in the meeting remotely via the internet.
- The quorum of GBC Secretaries is determined at the beginning of the meeting.

The Euro RGB voted in favour of these amendments and subsequently approved the revised version of the Rules and Regulations incorporating them. This approved version will be submitted to the GBC for final ratification.

#### **Action point:**

1. Euro RGB EC will further deliberate on the topic of presentation of countries that have several zonal supervisors.

### **7. ISKCON Resolve and Ombuds Office**

During the discussion on ISKCON Resolve and the proposed European Ombuds Office, Vraj Vihari das and Guruttama das presented a plan to establish a European branch under the existing ISKCON Resolve global framework, rather than creating a new institution. In January 2025 European leaders were asked to recommend local candidates for training and so far, over 14 enthusiastic devotees from countries including Germany, Switzerland, Finland, the Netherlands, Croatia, Italy, and Ireland have expressed interest. Vraj Vihari das clarified that while anyone can take the training and become a mediator, formal involvement with ISKCON Resolve requires ratification by some level of management, and it's generally preferable that trainees are not currently in managerial roles.

Post-training, the focus will be on formally launching ISKCON Resolve Europe under the guidance of the Global Co-Directors and in collaboration with Euro RGB, with Guruttama das serving as the European Regional Contact Person. Key areas include team building, developing communication content, and partnering with relevant ISKCON bodies (such as ELM, ISKCON Communications, ISKCON News, etc.) for effective outreach.

A presentation on the topic is available on request.



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### 8. Justice Ministry European Committee

The discussion focused on establishing a proper justice system within ISKCON, aligned with Prabhupada's instructions. The aim is to investigate how to implement these instructions that have not been fully followed and to develop a system based on principles like presumption of innocence and preponderance of evidence.

The proposed Justice Ministry European Committee would handle complaints and appeals, providing a structure with escalating levels of appeal involving increasingly qualified members, focusing on correction rather than punishment. Questions arose about how appeal validity would be determined and who would oversee the process, with an emphasis on reasonable judgment and preparation of devotees as appeals progress. The Euro RGB would have oversight and could send cases back for final decisions.

This approach has GBC approval and is intended to create a model that other areas can follow, also relieving the Euro RGB EC from handling complaints.

#### Action point:

1. A working group consisting of Campakalata dd, Devasri Radhika dd, and Prahladananda Swami was approved to develop the committee and system further. The deadline for their work is the Euro RGB autumn meeting.

### 9. GBC's Last Wills Committee

The discussion focused on implementing a 2022 GBC resolution requiring ISKCON leaders (initially GBC members, sannyasis, and spiritual masters) to sign a last will, aiming to ensure organizational continuity and clarity regarding assets. The initiative, which has progressed but remains ongoing, now seeks to expand the definition of ISKCON leadership to include Temple Presidents, board members, property trustees, or anyone with legal powers over ISKCON's assets, with the proposal brought to the Euro RGB for regional application. It was noted that in Europe, properties are generally held by associations rather than individuals. To avoid duplicating efforts which European division of the ISKCON Global Property Office (IGPO) is making and ensure a clear understanding of the current situation across European ISKCON entities, it was agreed to table the proposal temporarily and gather more detailed information before moving forward.

#### Action point:

Euro RGB EC will:



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1. Follow up with the ISKCON Global Property Office – European division to gather updated information on ISKCON legal entities, property holdings, and leadership structures across Europe. The deadline for their work is the Euro RGB autumn meeting.

### 10. Child Protection in Europe

Campakalata dd, Interim International Child Protection Director, and Govinda Lilamrta dd, Chair and Convener of the Child Protection Oversight Committee, provided an update on developments regarding the newly established office and answered questions from Euro RGB members. A proposal was made that the Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with the European Child Protection Office (CPO), organizes training for devotees involved in services related to child protection from various leadership levels across Europe.

The main obstacle to implementing the new system, as noted by Euro RGB members, is the cost of hiring external investigators, which the system requires. To address this, the CPOC is working with the ISKCON Law Department to create a network of professionals willing to offer their services at reduced rates or pro bono. Additionally, the GBC has allocated a separate fund to support child protection globally.

Another obstacle that was highlighted is the regionalization of child protection services, given that ISKCON is an international society where devotees frequently travel and change communities. This raises important questions about who is responsible for covering costs in cases that involve multiple regions.

It was emphasized that the new system is currently in a pilot phase and will be refined over time based on field experience.

#### Action point:

1. Euro RGB members will convene for a dedicated meeting as soon as possible to further discuss this important topic and the implementation of the new CPO system in Europe.



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## REPORTS

### 11. Ministry for agriculture and cow protection report

The discussion focused on revitalizing and expanding ISKCON's cow protection efforts across Europe, emphasizing practical initiatives like increasing milk production for Deity worship and engaging oxen in meaningful work. Under the guidance of Krishna Ksetra Maharaja, a resolution is being developed to encourage temples to support or affiliate with existing farms, and for each country to form a national plan to ensure milk supply for their deities. Concerns were raised about the broader use of milk for devotees and festivals, but consensus leaned toward initially focusing on Deity worship to keep the scope manageable. Examples like Slovenia's large farm and the Bhaktivedanta Manor's success in fundraising for their goshala were discussed. The need to compensate devotees doing cow and ox care was strongly supported. The group stressed the importance of integrating economic models that sustain cow protection and counter vegan critiques, asserting that caring for cows strengthens ISKCON's spiritual and ethical standing. The discussion also highlighted that oxen must be actively engaged and their contribution measured and valued.

Presentation with a report and update available upon request.

#### Action point:

1. Syamasundar das will approach the yatras to discuss their involvement in cow protection initiatives, particularly in relation to milk provision for Deities and farm support.

### 12. Youth Ministry update

We are currently seeking a devotee to take on the role of minister for the Youth Ministry, as the current arrangements have posed communication challenges, crucial for effective collaboration with the Euro RGB. It was suggested to consider potential candidates from across Europe, with no strict age limit for the position.

### 13. IGPO Europe report

The functioning of the global IGPO and GEPOC has experienced delays, but efforts are now resuming with a focus on achieving clarity before training new participants. Currently, 11 trustees from Europe have not completed the required course, and only those who have taken the course are eligible to serve as property trustees. Some countries lack the minimum



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of three trustees required per country. The goal is to complete the training and then collaborate to ensure property protection, although no firm deadline can be set due to limited cooperation from some leaders. Attempts have been made to engage GBC members and National Councils, but more cooperation is needed.

Concerns were raised about bureaucracy, with suggestions that local devotees often understand property needs better than external trustees, especially given the complexity of holdings like the UK's numerous investment properties. It was emphasized that an office in Europe should maintain updated records of properties per country, and that each GBC should ensure their region's compliance. Question remains about handling properties in regions without active ISKCON presence, with suggestions for trustees and GBCs to decide on management or possible gifting of such properties.

Online training for property trustees is scheduled for May 29 and June 5.

#### **14. Book Distribution Department Report**

Trai das gave a report on behalf of the Book Distribution Department, highlighting the department's ongoing efforts to promote and encourage book distribution. He mentioned that periodic online meetings are held to discuss strategies and progress, emphasizing the importance of leaders encouraging book distribution within their communities. Some devotees also travel to various locations specifically to motivate and support book distribution efforts. Additionally, he provided a detailed report on the book distribution results, presenting data country by country.

Two presentations on book distribution in Europe are available upon request: one covering the types of books distributed across countries, and the other analysing the sankirtan scores for 2023-2024.

#### **15. ISKCON Environmental Initiative Report**

Launched in 2022, the ISKCON Environmental Initiative (IEI) aims to bring a more structured approach to environmental sustainability across ISKCON centres worldwide. The initiative offers a variety of resources on its website, providing guidance on how to make temples greener and more eco-friendly (<https://iskconenvironment.org>). Each year, the IEI organizes two key activities: Earth Day on April 22nd, and World Cleanup Day in the third weekend of September, with this year's Clean-Up Day scheduled for September 20th, 2025.



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These initiatives encourage a deeper understanding of our responsibility to the environment and the divine connection to Mother Earth, Bhumi Devi.

Earth Day activities included a webinar series titled "Divinity and the Environment," alongside podcasts featuring senior devotees who discussed the topic from different perspectives.

For World Cleanup Day, the IEI mobilizes ISKCON temples, communities, youth groups, and more to collect trash and clean up temple premises, local neighbourhoods, forests, lakes, and other public spaces. This event provides a great opportunity to connect with local municipalities, which typically support such efforts, and is a meaningful way to honour and show respect for the Earth. All ISKCON centres are invited to take active part in World Cleanup Day and contribute to the global movement for a cleaner, greener future!

### **16. ISKCON Communications Europe Report**

ISKCON Communications Europe (ICE) serves two key functions: internal communication with devotees and external communication with organizations. Key achievements include hosting an ISKCON Communications Conference, with 47 participants expected in 2025, thanks to the financial support of the Erasmus program. Support from the North American Yatra, including a €2,500 grant to sponsor devotees and cover airfare, has been invaluable. Additionally, the publication of the ISKCON Communication Journal (ICJ) was funded with €1,500 from the same source.

As a legal entity, ICE currently has members from 16 countries. However, challenges persist due to limited resources and time. To better support the yatras, an additional annual budget of €2,000 would be required to visit three yatras each year. There is also a need for a dedicated secretary to assist with administrative matters. Another setback is the loss of credentials for accessing the European Parliament, as ICE is no longer able to finance representation in European institutions. The possibility of closing the legal entity was considered due to resource constraints, but this idea was abandoned, as it would jeopardize access to European grants.

So far, ICE has been managing the accounts for collecting TOVP donations and Euro RGB funds. TOVP has now opened its own account, and the funds have been transferred. As Euro RGB is not in a position to meet the financial requirements for managing its account under ICE, ICE has decided to close the account and transfer the funds to its main account. The Euro RGB Executive Committee has been working on securing a new account.



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**Action point:**

1. Divya-prabandha d has volunteered ISKCON Croatia to take over the management of the Euro RGB account, and this offer has been formally accepted. He will discuss the details locally and help facilitate a smooth transition.

## **17. ELM announcement**

The upcoming ELM event at Villa Vrindavan will be held on September 27th and 28th, covering key topics such as guru succession, addressing religious narcissism, Euro RGB rules and regulations, an overview of conflict resolution, the relevance of hard copy books in the digital age, and the new CPO model. Everyone is warmly invited to participate.

## **18. Next Euro RGB meeting**

The next Euro RGB meeting will be held on the 26th of September, 2025, at Villa Vrindavan, Italy.