

Meeting summary for Skål Europe board with Presidents (22/05/2025)

Quick recap

The meeting began with technical setup and introductions among participants from various regions, including the International President Denise Crafton. The main discussion centered around structural reforms proposed by Paolo, focusing on ESG certification and transparency initiatives to improve the organization's credibility and effectiveness. The group addressed concerns about communication, membership engagement, and digital presence, with participants emphasizing the need for better tools, transparency, and collaboration to reverse declining membership trends and modernize the organization's approach.

Next steps

- Skal Europe to send out a survey to European clubs regarding priorities and desired services from Skal International.
- Paolo to share the survey and related documents with interested parties outside Europe upon request.
- Skal Europe to create a group of volunteers to prepare proposals for Skal International reform.
- Skal Europe to invite a representative to join the Skal International working group on technology and restructuring.
- Skal clubs to check their spam folders and email settings to ensure they receive communications from Skal Europe.
- Skal Europe to continue updating their website with current and future activities.
- Skal International Board to improve transparency by sharing more detailed information about their work and decisions.
- Skal International to consider implementing ESG certification for the organization.
- Skal International to review and improve its financial reporting to provide more detailed management accounts.
- Skal International to reconsider its policy on Executive Board meeting confidentiality to increase transparency.

Summary

Subtitle Testing and Language Preferences

The meeting began with participants testing subtitles to ensure they were working correctly. The group discussed language preferences, with Constantine confirming fluency in four languages, and Stefan Pettersson reminding participants to mute microphones when not speaking. The conversation ended with introductions and greetings among participants, including President Denise and various other attendees.

Global Meeting Introductions and Poll

The meeting began with introductions and welcome remarks from Franz, who noted the late hour for some participants, particularly those in Australia and New Zealand. Stefan Pettersson introduced an anonymous poll for

participants to share their opinions, and several attendees greeted each other from various locations including France, Italy, Austria, and South Africa. Denise Crafton, the International President, joined the meeting as an observer and expressed her gratitude for the invitation, while Franz emphasized the importance of the discussion points to be covered.

ESG Certification for Organizational Trust

Denise welcomed attendees and highlighted the importance of collaboration to address key issues, mentioning past decisions and ongoing efforts to improve the organization. Franz expressed support for Skål Europe and introduced Paolo, who presented the need for an ESG certification to enhance transparency, accountability, and compliance with international standards. Paolo emphasized the benefits of certification, including improved financial transparency, compliance with EU regulations, and a clear reform plan to be voted on at the next Congress. The discussion underscored the urgency of addressing low trust among members and the importance of acting collectively to strengthen the organization's credibility and effectiveness.

SKAL Structural Reforms Discussion

The meeting focused on a presentation by Paolo regarding structural reforms for SKAL, emphasizing transparency in financial decisions and accountability. Participants discussed the cost of implementing reforms, with Paolo mentioning a potential fee of \$1,000 per year for certification. Constantine expressed support for the reforms and emphasized the need for immediate action and transparency in decision-making processes. Jo, representing the German Board, acknowledged valid points in the proposal but raised concerns about communication issues and called for further discussion and cooperation. The conversation ended with Franz reiterating the importance of transparent communication and the need to redefine SKAL's purpose and goals for the future.

Enhancing Transparency and Membership Impact

Birger expressed concerns about the organization's lack of transparency and relevance, emphasizing the need to regain openness and focus on member benefits. He highlighted the importance of taking clear stances on tourism industry issues and ensuring that clubs' actions have an impact at both local and global levels. Alan shared his experience with Skål International's digital presence and membership challenges, noting that promised changes, such as a new website, have not materialized, leading to member dissatisfaction and a lack of new joiners, especially among younger professionals.

Enhancing Skål's Digital Presence

The group discusses the need for clear communication and promotion of Skål's value to members. Alan expresses disappointment with the organization's lack of progress in the digital age, particularly regarding its online presence and member attraction. He emphasizes the importance of the ESG certificate as a first step towards restructuring. Fiona Angelico commends the European team's work and research, highlighting the need for better collaboration

between the Board and regional groups to address long-standing issues like the website. She suggests that more open communication and collective effort could lead to positive changes in the organization.

ESG Certification for SKAL's Future

Augusto, a past president of SKAL RO and vice president of SKAL Italy, emphasized the need for SKAL to regain its former glory by adopting ESG certification, which would provide globally recognized standards for governance and management. He criticized the current accounting practices, lack of transparency, and closed-door decision-making processes, advocating for a more democratic and transparent approach. Paolo explained the delay in involving members in the proposal process, noting that the European Board needed time to review and approve the structured proposal.

Skal International Reform Proposal

Paolo presented a proposal for reforming Skal International, focusing on enhancing its relevance and value to clubs and members. He outlined seven strategic areas for Skal International's mandate, including international representation, strategic trade shows, valuable congresses, ESG certification, modern tools for transparency and voting, member visibility, and sharing club activities. The next step is to distribute a survey to clubs to gather their priorities and ideas, which will inform a structured proposal to be discussed at the upcoming AGA in Cusco in September.

Enhancing Skål's Membership Engagement

The meeting focused on addressing challenges with communication and membership engagement within Skål International, particularly in Europe. Participants discussed issues related to email delivery, GDPR restrictions limiting access to contact information, and the need for better tools and transparency to reverse declining membership numbers. Luigi emphasized the importance of building a strong organization through collaboration, while Franz highlighted the need for feedback on undelivered communications. The group agreed on the necessity of modernizing their approach and offering more professional services and benefits to attract and retain members.

Tito Livio suggested to use Skaleurope.org as an example of what a Skal site must do, with almost daily updates and very detailed materials on past, current and future activities and asked Skal to enter the XXI century, even if 25 years late, with a new approach on technology, transparency and a real bottom up reform.