



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

International Association of Travel and Tourism Professionals
Founded 1934

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2015-2016

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SKÅL HISTORY

A trip to Sweden

Shortly after the inauguration of the first joint Swedish and French air service between Stockholm and Paris in 1932, a group of travel people from the French capital were invited to make an exploratory flight over the new route. The welcome they received in Stockholm led to many pleasant friendships. Realizing the importance of closer relationships among those who strive to develop and promote both national and international travel, the men who made the flight to Stockholm determined to found a permanent organisation whose primary aim would be the creation of goodwill and friendship in travel and transportation circles throughout the world.

Paris Club is formed

The Paris Skål Club was formed on 16 December 1932, with Rene Genestie as President. On 27 April 1934 twelve other Clubs from five countries had been formed and Florimond Volckaert conceived the idea of uniting them into an international organisation. The "Association Internationale des Skål Clubs (A.I.S.C.)" was created on 28 April 1934 in the Hotel Scribe and Florimond Volckaert became its Founder President.



Founding Committee:

Jules Mohr, Florimond Volckaert, Hugo Krafft,
Pierre Soulié and George Ithier

On 27 April 1934 a cocktail was held in the Cintra Bar after which a dinner was held at the Pennsylvania Hotel. This meal will always be remembered as a "marvellous culinary experience".

On 28 April 1934 the working sessions were held and it is for this reason that it is considered as the founding date. The Agenda for the meeting was as follows:

1. Study of the Statutes
2. Nomination of the A.I.S.C Committee
3. Organisation of the General Secretariat
4. Organisation of the Treasury

5. Report by the Secretary for the Skål Bulletin
6. Responsibilities of the delegates on the Committee
7. 1934 Action programme
8. Next meeting - date and place
9. Any other matters

The meeting opened at 10.15 and twenty-one official delegates were present representing eleven Clubs and two observers from London. The recently formed Copenhagen Club was absent but agreed to the decisions that would be taken.

The delegates represented Antwerpen, Bruxelles, Budapest, Lucerne, Montreux, Marseille and Provence, Netherlands, Paris, Stockholm, Wallonia, London.

At the beginning of the meeting and as it was an "amicable" it was decided that voting would be by a show of hands and each delegation would have one vote. Florimond Volckaert read the articles which were discussed and approved. During the elections all the candidates were unanimously approved except Axel Ekstam and Honore who received nine votes each.

Camille Mathez, who was elected unanimously, gave his post to Axel Ekstam so that Sweden would be represented. All countries were represented on the committee and they were elected for one year with the possibility of re-election. The first committee looked like this:

President:	Florimond Volckaert	Paris
Secretary General:	Pierre Soulié	Paris
Vice Presidents:	J. Arlt	Anvers
	George Wilczek	Lucerne
	Axel Ekstam	Suède
	Honore	Marseille
Treasurer:	George Ithier	Paris
Press:	R. Hahn	Montreux
Auditors:	W. de Lange	Rotterdam
	Dr. Szarz	Budapest

SKÅL TODAY

Skål International today has approximately 18,000 members in 450 Clubs throughout 85 nations. Most activities occur at local level, moving up through National Committees, under the umbrella of Skål International, headquartered at the General Secretariat in Torremolinos, Spain. Skål International is governed by an Executive Committee of seven members, elected by delegates to an annual General Assembly, held during the World Congress, hosted by a different country each year. This allows members first-hand observation of the travel and tourism potential around the world.



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PRESS RELEASE

Skål International is the only international organisation which brings together all sectors of the travel and tourism industry. Representing the industry's managers and executives, Skål members meet at local, national and international levels in an environment of friendship to discuss subjects of common interest. Skål has approximately 17,000 tourism professionals in 450 Clubs spread throughout almost 85 countries. As in other associations of professionals most Skål activities take place locally, but the movement also features National and Area Committees under the umbrella of Skål International.

FIVE GOOD REASONS FOR JOINING SKÅL INTERNATIONAL:

- **Access to the Skål Database** – membership directory worldwide with close to 17,000 contacts.
- **Networking/Doing Business among Friends**
- **Fairs and Trade Shows**
- **Discounts, benefits and support**
- **Skål Greeter Programme**

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Skål International, following the United Nations declaration of 2002 as the Year of Ecotourism and the Mountains, launched the Ecotourism Awards in the same year, to highlight and acknowledge best practices around the globe. The Ecotourism Awards are now known as **Sustainable Development in Tourism Awards**.

Skål International is an Affiliate Member of the UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) whose mission is to promote the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. Skål has adopted the Global Code of Ethics in Tourism, and also supports the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from sexual exploitation in tourism, ECPAT International and the project ST-EP (Sustainable Tourism- Eliminating Poverty). Skål International is also a member of ICTP (International Coalition of Tourism Partners) and a partner of IIPT (International Institute for Peace through Tourism).

Skål is not only a friendship association, but provides many opportunities for members to do business together.

Every year a Skål Club is responsible to organise the annual World Congress, which includes the **General Assembly, Tourism Forum and Business to Business Workshop**. This Congress provides a unique opportunity for Skålleagues to meet other members from around the world, make new friends and renew and revitalise old friendships in an atmosphere where the power of friendship can actually be felt. The Tourism Forum and Business to Business Workshop provide the possibility of **“Doing Business among Friends”**. It also presents the opportunity, in a very special way, to see parts of the world and special features not seen by the normal traveller.

For any further information please contact:

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Tourism is Friendship and Peace
Le Tourisme c'est l'Amitié et la Paix
El Turismo es Amistad y Paz

- “A Trusted Voice in Travel and Tourism”
- « Une Voix de Confiance dans le Secteur du Tourisme »
- “Una Voz de Confianza en el Sector del Turismo”

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Young Skål: The Future of Skål



Skål International cares about young professionals and students in tourism. In 1999, Young Skål was set up with the aim of creating a greater awareness of Skål International by those young people studying for or training in the various sectors of the travel and tourism industry, enabling them to join Skål.

The requirements to become a Young Skål member are:

- (a) **Young Skål Student** is a student at an authorised, tourism, educational establishment which grants a degree or recognised diploma upon completion of studies. They must be a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 27 years of age.
- (b) **Young Skål Professional** is a young professional training for or working in the industry. They must be a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 29 years of age.
- (c) **Young Skål Associate** is a Young Skål Professional still training for or working in the industry after the age of 29 who does not yet qualify for Active membership may continue as Young Skål Associate member until the age of 35.

The objectives of Young Skål are:

- To develop friendship and common purpose between the students of the educational establishment, by participating in areas related to the tourism industry, but also in cultural, sports, travel and public relations activities.
- To encourage and assist in the tourism education or experience of the members by participating in Skål activities and meeting Skål members.
- To cooperate voluntarily in all Skål activities and the organisation set up by the sponsoring Club.
- To promote training opportunities for its members and to acquire professional experience with the support of the local Skål Club.
- To ensure that its members are fully aware of Skål, locally, nationally and internationally.

More information at www.youngskalnow.org



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WORLD CONGRESSES

1934	Paris	1934	Bruxelles	1935	Lucerne
1936	Stockholm	1937	Paris	1938	London
1939	Zürich	1947	Genève, Lausanne & Montreux	1948	Bruxelles, Anvers & Luxembourg
1949	Côte d'Azur	1950	Denmark	1951	Brighton & Bournemouth
1952	Rome & Naples	1953	Palma de Mallorca	1954	Vienna & Salzburg
1955	New York	1956	Interlaken & Berne	1957	Dublin
1958	Paris	1959	Hamburg	1960	Amsterdam
1961	Athens	1962	Ciudad de México	1963	Islas Canarias
1964	Stockholm	1965	Toronto	1966	Naples
1967	Manila	1968	Malaga	1969	Abidjan
1970	Istanbul	1971	Las Vegas	1972	Tel Aviv
1973	Rio de Janeiro	1974	Helsinki	1975	Malaga
1976	Florence	1977	Buenos Aires	1978	Singapore
1979	Berlin	1980	Dublin	1981	Johannesburg
1982	Manila	1983	Las Vegas	1984	Paris
1985	Jerusalem	1986	Puerto Rico	1987	Adelaide
1988	Vienna	1989	Vancouver	1990	Colombo
1991	Munich	1992	Cape Town	1993	Istanbul
1994	Los Angeles	1995	Granada	1996	Bangkok
1997	Rio de Janeiro	1998	Montreal	1999	Stuttgart
2000	Malta	2001	Puerto Rico	2002	Cairns
2003	Chennai	2004	Durban	2005	Zagreb-Dubrovnik
2006	Pattaya	2007	Antalya	2008	Taipei
2009	Budapest	2010	Sydney	2011	Turku
2012	Seoul & Incheon	2013	New York	2014	Mexico City
2015	Torremolinos	2016	Monaco	2017	Hyderabad

Skål International is proud to announce the call for submissions to the 2016 Sustainable Tourism Awards.

Skål International is an Affiliate Member of the UNWTO whose mission is to promote the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. We have adopted the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics in Tourism, and also support the ST-EP initiative (Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty). Skål is affiliated to other important international organisations such as IIPT, The Code, ECPAT, ICTP, STI.



Following the United Nations declaration of 2002 as the Year of Ecotourism and the Mountains, Skål International launched these Awards in the same year, to highlight and acknowledge best practices around the globe. As an international organisation of tourism industry leaders, Skål International is a powerful force in the travel and tourism industry to initiate change and encourage the conservation of the environment in order to promote tourism and travel.

Now in its 15th year, the Sustainable Tourism Awards, while highlighting best practices in tourism around the world, also serve the purpose of acquainting the world with this new concept that puts emphasis on the importance of the interaction of the physical, cultural and social environment, the traveller's responsibility and the need for active community participation for Sustainability.

Any company from the public and private sector, NGOs and government agencies worldwide are welcome to submit an entry in one of the nine available categories:

1. Tour Operators
2. Urban Accommodation
3. Rural Accommodation
4. Transportation
5. Countryside and Wildlife
6. Marine
7. Community and Government Projects
8. Major Tourist Attractions
9. Educational Institutions/Programmes and Media

Why should you enter these Awards?

The awards programme is a platform to increase visibility and get recognition of your outstanding performance in terms of sustainable and responsible tourism. The winners will be invited to personally collect the awards during the Opening Ceremony of the 77th Skål World Congress on Sunday 30 October 2016 in Monaco. The awards will be presented by the President of Skål International, Mr. Nigel Pilkington. In addition, the winners will have the possibility to promote their products during the B2B held during the Congress and will receive media worldwide exposure.

The deadline to submit applications online is **30 June 2016 at 23:59 CET**. There are no entry fees.

For full information, please consult our [brochure](#) and [click here](#) to enter online. If you have any query, please contact sandra.vera@skal.org



What is the tourism industry doing about human rights?

Over the past 10 years the travel and tourism industry has embraced the need to go green; so much so that it is now the norm and not a fad or a unique selling proposition.

Airlines, wholesalers, hoteliers and tour operators all promote their green tinge and many are happy to ask their clients to help pay for their carbon footprint. We are also seeing a growing market sector in volunteer-tourism where clients pay to work on projects in villages and regions while they are on holiday.

However what is the industry doing about another and potentially more important issue; that of human rights?

Many in the industry are affiliate members of the UNWTO (United National World Tourism Organisation, who is active in promoting programmes such as [Tourism and Poverty Alleviation](#) and Protection of Children in Tourism), as well as other organisations such as ECPAT International or the Grey Man Project; yet how does the industry turn these into real actions and not just logos on their letterhead?

During annual contract negotiations how many companies seek information on the other company's human rights policies or the same policies of the country/region they operate in? Or do they, like many, simply ignore the issue because it is too hard and potentially a threat to their bottom line?

Skål International, whose 18,000 members make up the world's largest organisation covering all sectors in the travel and tourism industries, want to bring this issue to the fore and make it as important to the industry today as the green issue was when it first made its appearance 10 years ago.

States Skål International World President, Mok Singh "As an industry we cannot continue to ignore the plight of men, woman and children, who because of their sex, race or religious beliefs have their basic human rights abused and trampled on by governments in countries where international tourism is a major source of revenue."

"Tourism is one of only of a few industry sectors that continues to see growth and with this growth comes the need for responsibility – a responsibility to ensure all those involved understand and actively support basic human rights. We cannot sit back and allow clients to continue to fly to and visit exclusive resorts and regions where the local peoples are suppressed by their governments and have little or no basic human rights nor input into how their tourism industry is run or where the profits go too".

As an industry we need to ask the hard questions and be upfront with all our clients and say - 'yes that is a great destination, however are you aware of their human rights record?' Many will say 'that will kill my bottom line. Others won't follow and my customers will go elsewhere!'

While this may happen in the short term one can only look at the rise in fair trade initiatives in the food industry, especially coffee, where there is a growing and very profitable market segment emerging as many customers are demanding their daily fix come from a fair trade organisation and are prepared to pay more for it.

The travel and tourism industry needs to learn from this example and say to clients "yes that's a great destination but because of their human rights record we don't recommend it - we would like to recommend this destination which honors their people's human rights and involves their indigenous peoples in all matters relating to travel and tourism development".

To achieve this, the industry as a whole, needs to agree on a code of conduct in terms of human rights and at the same time be very supportive of initiatives within countries who want to develop better human rights systems within their tourism sector and borders.

Mok Singh continues "Skâl International, through its global membership, wants to lead this initiative, and along with interested parties and the UNWTO, develop a code of conduct on human rights in the travel and tourism industry. We invite comment from all sectors of the industry, NGO's, and pressure groups within countries whose human right record are wanting. We also need to establish a comprehensive list of those countries, regions and companies who continue to ignore the basic human rights of their peoples and employees. This list needs to be published for all to see and comment on. Only then can we truly have an industry that can make a global difference."

"This will take time, however unless we start now and take the high ground, it will be our customers who will walk away from us and accuse the industry of a profit before people stance that will take years to expunge and put the industry on the defensive and a potential course that will see a substantial loss of future revenues".

ENDS

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GENERAL SECRETARIAT

SECRETARIAT GENERAL
SECRETARIA GENERAL

Skål International presents its position on the Aviation Market

The world aviation market is one of the toughest businesses to be in at the present time. The industry is not only slowly recovering from the global financial crises that saw a dramatic downturn in passenger numbers and traffic in 2009, it is also faced with continuing fuel price increases. The introduction of the recent US budget will see cuts to air traffic management and at the same time the increase in the UK's Air Passenger Duty on 01 April this year, (now making it the world's highest aviation tax) will cut deeply into the projected 1.6% net profit margin for the 2013 year.

In spite of this the industry is leading the charge in the development and introduction of new and innovative design, route management systems and fuel saving concepts that are not only producing one of the greenest industries, but also one of the safest and most efficient.

Skål International, whose 18,000 members make up the world's largest organisation covering all sectors in the travel and tourism industries, including a majority of the major airlines, want to support the aviation industry in its move to continue to be one of the safest, most efficient and environmentally sound industries in the world, without undue interference from individual governments introducing adhoc regulations, that at best can be seen as revenue gathering, and at worst major impediments to the aviation industry achieving these goals.

States Mok Singh, World President Skål International, "It is vital that an organisation such as Skål International, that covers all facets of the travel and tourism industry, has a clear and concise position on an industry as important as aviation. It is our intention to make it clear to governments, both local and national, that adhoc regulations such as cuts to air traffic management systems and the introduction of localised airline taxes have a dramatic effect on the whole travel and tourism industry, and in some cases see the loss of employment, not just in the immediate industry but via a flow on effect in an entire economy. It is also important to note that the footprint of aviation goes beyond the stakeholders in the aviation industry alone, particularly in developing countries. This often includes education and growth in skillsets which offer opportunities for foreign employment impacting inward remittances and economic upliftment of subsets of the population."

It is Skål's contention that the aviation industry continues to move towards a safer and environmentally sound footing by working holistically with international bodies such as the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the leading safety boards. However the aviation industry also needs to work more closely with national and regional tourism boards when planning and realigning routes and timetables. On too many occasions short term revenue pressures have seen airlines remove services from destinations that result in great financial and economic harm for that region. In some cases regions have never recovered from these situations. While airlines must manage their businesses to ensure they meet their shareholder charters, it is also vital that they and their shareholders also take a wider view of the travel and tourism industry when making major route change decisions.

It is also the responsibility of airport companies to act not only in their shareholders interests but in the wider travel and tourism industry's interests when they set higher landing and handling fees. Adhoc increases can have a dramatic effect on airline profitability and ticket pricing, the latter being very consumer sensitive. Such taxes

provide a strong source of revenue for tourism-heavy countries, but ongoing focus must be centred on the purpose of these taxes. It is simply not good enough for tourists to be taxed for the simple aim of raising revenues, which potentially decreases tourist interest in nations with higher taxes. Rather, these taxes should be used, either fully or with a large percentage, to fund tourism related projects – be those infrastructure, public events, hospitality training, or security.

The aviation industry is not just airlines, it consists of all those industries that directly effect the airline industry – airport companies, air traffic management, national and local tourism organisations as well as international bodies (IATA, UN, EC etc).

States Mok Singh “Skâl calls on all these sectors to ensure they work together to ensure that the consumer is provided with the best possible service in terms of safety, efficiency and environmental concerns. This can only be done if all parties work towards this goal and are prepared to closely audit their own positions when making decisions that affect the industry.”

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Skål International challenges the hospitality industry to consider social issues as well as profit

The hospitality industry is arguably the oldest in the travel and tourism sector. Starting over 2,000 years ago as camps and waypoints along the caravan routes of the Middle East and Asia, it grew dramatically with the introduction of horse drawn transport followed by rail, the automobile and finally aircraft.

In basic terms the industry has not changed from its beginnings where its focus was to supply the traveller with security and comfort. What has changed and will continue to change is the dynamics of the traveller and the way in which he or she perceives security and comfort.

The industry is now customer driven and all decisions from location selection, financing, development, management and branding must all be based on the customers' perceived needs and wants that are varied as they are constantly changing.

So what does the hospitality industry need to do to ensure it can still meet the security and comfort of its guests and at the same time honour the human rights of its employees; ensure sustainability and environmental care and show strong social responsibility?

Skål International, whose 18,000 members make up the world's largest organisation covering all sectors in travel and tourism, and with many coming from the senior ranks of the hospitality sector, wants to challenge the industry to ensure that in its desire to gain and retain customers, through enhanced comfort and security offerings, it also understands the social, environmental and human responsibilities it must meet in today's world.

States Mok Singh, World President of Skål International, "While no one wants to challenge an organisation's right to increase profits and returns to its shareholders, we do believe that such growth needs to carry a social and human responsibility as well. If employees are on or below minimum wages and have little or no input in the development of their roles in the industry, nor basic protection in terms of human rights, it does not reflect well on the Industry as a whole."

"We are glad to note that the industry appears to be placing great emphasis on being seen to be green. A similar emphasis needs to be encouraged on promoting the well being of its employees and surrounding community". "We need to show stakeholders, who include guests, that the employees in the organisation are highly valued in terms of a fair remuneration for their work, as well as the communities they live in."

The modern guest is becoming very aware of this, particularly in resort regions that employ local communities. Many are starting to question what is being done for the communities and those organisations that include them in their operational plans and budgets will certainly attract guests who are willing to pay. Like quality, humanitarian actions can result in a higher yield.

The industry continues to prove it is acting responsibly in the environmental and sustainability arenas. It is not good enough to ask guests to save water or decide whether they want their sheets changed daily or weekly and claim a "green tinge". Organisations need to work from the bottom up and fully audit their policies and

practices to identify areas that can be improved to meet sustainable and environmentally safe practices. There are a number of global organisations such as Diversey and Green Globe that work with the industry to audit their practices from building design and development through to the use of environmentally safe cleaning products.

The bottom line is these actions can also show a healthy lift in profits through reduced energy costs and a lower carbon footprint.

Skål International, following the United Nations declaration of 2002 as the Year of Ecotourism and the Mountains, launched the Ecotourism Awards in the same year, to highlight and acknowledge best practices around the globe.

The awards encourage the conservation of the environment in order to promote tourism and travel and also serve the purpose of acquainting the world with this need to put an emphasis on the importance of the interaction of the physical, cultural and social environments, the traveller's responsibility and the need for active community participation in Ecotourism.

Mok Singh goes on to say "Skål challenges those in the hospitality industry to enter these awards and prove, not only to the industry, but the wider community, that they really care about the environment."

"I would also like to see the day when the first "organic" hotel or resort is launched. Imagine a property built from natural, reusable material, or even better recycled material, that fits into its surrounding environment with the lowest possible visual and carbon footprint. A property that empowers its employees and the community it lives in; buying products and services from that community and if they aren't available helping the community to develop the systems and infrastructure to produce them. That would be a powerful template for the future and one, I firmly believe, we need to aspire too."

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Why do Governments Marginalise the Benefits of Tourism?

Skål International comments:

Global tourism represents over 9% of GDP (direct, indirect and induced impact). One in eleven jobs globally is in tourism. Tourism represents 6% of world exports and generates over US\$1.3 Trillion dollars annually. (Source: UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2013)

Yet governments continue to raise taxes and damage this vital industry.

- The UK's Air Passenger Duty introduced in 2013 is the world's highest aviation tax
- The 2013 US budget cuts to air traffic management threaten safety standards and flight scheduling.

These examples are just the tip of the iceberg and all are additional burdens on an industry that in many cases cannot take much more before seeing drastic reductions in revenue and the resulting detrimental flow on effect to many economies. Why do governments then continue to impede the industry with the introduction of more and more taxes and levies?

Skål International World President, Karine Coulanges, states

"It is timely that governments calculate the real benefit and income streams gained from overseas visitors before imposing yet more taxes and levies to try and bolster their treasury funds. Even a small increase in charges can see a far greater loss of revenue as a result of tourists voting with their wallets and travelling to other destinations".

"As the world's economies see the first shoots of growth and confidence after six years of turmoil it is timely to remember that tourism was one of the only sectors to see growth during that time and like all industries it will continue to need fostering and care to ensure this growth continues and not policies of additional taxation for short term gain."

Tourist revenue in many countries is in the top five of their total GDP, yet many continue to hinder tourism through unnecessarily long visa application periods; the high cost of visa on arrival systems, as well as increasing airport taxes and border control levies. How would these governments react if tourist numbers fell by 10 – 20% with the resulting downturn in revenue? And what flow on effect would that have to their economy? An example can be seen in the decline in tourists visiting Thailand as a result of the unrest in Bangkok. While not related to this issue it does illustrate the effect a drop in tourism can have on a country's economy. According to Thailand's Minister of Tourism, arrivals in the country fell by 1 million visitors in January 2014 as compared to January 2013. The Tourism Council of Thailand estimated the revenue loss as 22.5 billion baht (approximately USD\$690 million)

How many countries could absorb losses like that? Remember tourists vote and travel with their wallets and if they perceive the cost and time required gaining visas, plus the cost of additional charges and levies imposed by both central and local governments, are too high, they will reconsider where they travel to.

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For information or membership, please contact:

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Tourism through Friendship and Peace
Le Tourisme par le biais de l'Amitié et la Paix
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