

DRAFT MINUTES

33rd Meeting of the IUC Association Assembly

and

38th Meeting of the IUC Association Board

Held in Zagreb and through Zoom on 12 December, and through mail until 24 December 2025.

PARTICIPATED: Wieger Bakker (mail), Gunn Elisabeth Birkelund (Zoom), Nada Bruer Ljubišić, Milena Dragičević Šešić (Zoom), Andrea Feldman, Peter Fischer-Appelt (mail), Sigmund Grønmo (mail), Lee Kendall Metcalf (mail), Lise Kjølros (Zoom), Hrvoje Kraljević, Asim Kurjak, Simona Kuti (mail), Frank Laubert (mail), James William McAllister (Zoom), Hans Egil Offerdal (mail), Krunoslav Pisk, Snježana Prijić-Samaržija (Zoom), Hans Joachim Seitz (mail), Zvonimir Šikić, Ivan Šimonović, Aleksandar Štulhofer (mail), Istvan Teplan (mail), Dušica Vujaklija, Mitja Žagar (mail)

A quorum is established by participation of 24 out of 35 members.

All documents were circulated to all members on 11 December and the meeting ended with 24 December 2025.

1. Prof. Pisk welcomed members present in Zagreb and participating through Zoom. He announced that the discussions from the Zagreb-Zoom meeting would be circulated with all members after the meeting is concluded on 24 December. The proposed Agenda was accepted. Ms. Bruer presented the report on recent developments.

In 2025 the IUC held 37 courses and 19 conferences with 1999 participants (93 online). In-person attendance matched 2024, though six programmes were cancelled. Average on-site participation was 34. Course numbers continue to decline due to rising Dubrovnik costs and some programmes shifting from “course” to “conference.”

The Ministry contract amounted to 115,000 EUR, with 10% paid upfront. The IUC supported 187 Croatian scholarship recipients, creating a deficit due to higher accommodation and meal costs. A 10% increase in Ministry support has been requested. Additional grants included 7 SE European and 6 Damaška Fund scholarships, though some grantees faced visa issues.

The contract with the University of Zagreb runs until April 2026. This year’s total fees reached 39,000 EUR, though the IUC will pay 34,500 EUR due to last year’s overpayment. Similar costs are expected next year. Fee collection met expectations, with some flexibility granted. 12 programmes generated a deficit (down from 24 last year), but the overall budget remains positive.

Prof. Seitz produced the 2025 Academic Programme brochure, an important visibility tool. The IUC expanded cross-programme activities, sharing selected lectures and events and organising some public events. Participants responded positively to these activities. The new Eminent Person Lecture Series hosted Dr. Tibi Galis, Executive Director of the Auschwitz Institute for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities and UN Under-Secretary-General Melissa Fleming, with more speakers planned.

Prof. Mirjan Damaška visited the IUC in July and was briefed on current initiatives.

Longstanding course directors have been awarded certificates of appreciation for their dedication in implementing the specific IUC programmes. The criteria was that the course/conference has been taking place for more than 10 years and that the course director is active for more than 5 years.

The IUC Secretariat arranged for participants free museum entry, free Lokrum trips, supported by the City of Dubrovnik and discounted City Walls and Cable Car tickets.

The IUC joined an EU KA220 application (unsuccessful). A BIP application is being prepared for the same programme, though the IUC is not formally involved.

Three Chinese delegations visited the IUC; one new programme is confirmed and another in preparation.

Three institutions ended membership (Liverpool John Moores, Purdue, Max Planck Institute), while the Institute for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention applied.

The IUC organised its first academic freedom workshop in Zagreb, attracting representatives from 18 embassies, academia, and media. Strong engagement led to plans for four additional workshops in 2026–2027, with partial funding already secured.

Association members unanimously accepted the report with certain comments and suggestions:

- Prof. Kurjak asked more information about the relations with University of Zagreb since at each meeting this seems to be an issue. Prof. Šimonović explained that there is a shift in a paradigm since in the previous contract the IUC was a partner to the University by investing our profit in the building, and now the IUC is just renting space under conditions of the University.
- Mr. Offerdal suggested caution in collaboration with Chinese scholars. He advocated that the IUC should be very aware of whom it is collaborating with, be aware why *the IUC* is entering into such a collaboration and *always* secure that such a cooperation is performed solely on the exclusive terms, conditions and values of the IUC, without accommodating to conditions and content based on the agenda of Chinese actors. This is also relevant given the role of the IUC as a home of academic freedom as well as in the light of preparing workshops on the topic. He shared a list of recent publications on that topic and suggested similar caution in cooperation with other non-democratic/authoritarian state actors. His opinion has been supported by Simona Kuti.
- Prof. McAllister suggested: diversifying offer of the IUC organising events in Zagreb – maybe also for University of Zagreb students, encouraging Croatian academic diaspora to organise programmes at the IUC. He also supported the cooperation with China due to its growing academic market.
- Prof. Pisk reminded that the academic programme is being reviewed and approved by the IUC Executive Committee while the Association should accept it.
- Ms. Bruer and Prof. Birkelund informed Association members that fall event on academic freedom is to be organised in Zagreb.
- Prof. Šimonović also informed Association members that the IUC has established a contact with members of the European Commission who are working on the issues of the Mediterranean and it is being discussed to get some resources for specific IUC programmes (relevant to the EU policies) for the non EU Mediterranean countries. This initiative is still being developed.

2. Ms. Bruer presented the Financial report for 2025. The support from the Croatian Ministry has been arranged in June 2025 on 115000 Euro. 10% has been received so far. The remaining 90% has been received until the end of the calendar year. Income in fees is close to the expectations in the revised budget, as accepted at the EC meeting in May 2025. Marija and Mirjan Damaška funds are kept at the separate sub-account and only spent amounts are transferred which for 6 scholarship this year amounted to 6072 Euro. 13000 Euros more than what was anticipated was spent on Croatian Ministry Scholarship. The difference would be covered from the amount left from previous years and the overall budget. The remaining amount for SE European grant is 5600 Euro, so unless the IUC does not find additional support this grant scheme would end with 2026 or first part of 2027. University of Zagreb rent has been paid in the amount of nearly 34000 Euro. Welcome receptions and guided city tours also exceeded the planned amount to 3000 euros due to rise of costs.

Some expenditures have been lower than in the approved budget: office material, travel expenses, post and teleservice, web development, equipment, and staff.

At the end of the year, it is expected that the IUC Association would be in the surplus of app. 5000 Euros.

Final numbers would be available after Mr. Hans Egil Offerdal would do the final auditing in spring 2026 and prepare the final financial report.

Prof. Šimonović informed Association members that it is planned to invest in some IUC memorabilia by the end of the year in order not to have a significant surplus.

EC members unanimously accepted the financial report for 2025. Mr. Offerdal abstained from voting due to his role as elected auditor.

3. Ms. Bruer presented the Preliminary Budget for 2026. It is the Budget accepted at the fall meeting of the IUC Executive Committee. (There was a typo in the line of the total incoming balance which was 129135 instead of 158192). This budget is based on the similar operation (both in income and expenditures) as in 2025. Part of the expenses for the Academic freedom activities have been secured under the item 4512 while additional funds would have to be secured for planned activities.

Association members unanimously accepted the Budget for 2026. Mr. Offerdal abstained from voting due to his role as elected auditor.

4. Ms. Bruer presented the Academic programme for 2026 with the note that some additional programmes may be added for fall since some additional offers may come for the academic year 2026/2027. There are some new offerings: Advancing Women's Rights in a Changing World Regional Deep Brain Stimulation Meeting, The F words that define us, Doing things with Emotions, What is life?, Philosophy of AI, AI and Law. Academic freedom programmes – initiated by the EC have also been added in the programme. Association members unanimously approved the academic programme for the IUC Association.

5. Prof. Pisk submitted a resignation to the position of the Association President due to his age and issues with mobility. He also suggested for the new president Ivan Šimonović – as a continuation of the longstanding practice, inaugurated by Dr. Peter Fischer Appelt that the same person is serving as an IUC Director General and as a President of the Association. Prof. Šimonović thanked Prof. Pisk for the nomination. The suggestion to elect Prof. Šimonović as a

President of the IUC Association was unanimously accepted while he abstained from voting. Prof. Šimonović thanked everyone for confidence while mentioning that it would be difficult to fill his predecessor's shoes. Many Association members congratulated and thanked Prof. Pisk for years of service as not only the Director general but also as President of the IUC Association. Prof. Žagar suggested naming him an Honorary President of the IUC Association. Prof. Pisk thanked everyone for kind words and closed physical and zoom meeting in Zagreb. The meeting was formally closed on 24 December 2025 after all members that participated sent their contributions.



Nada Bruer Ljubišić

Executive Secretary



Ivan Šimonović

President