



ANNUAL REPORT

FOR

(JAN'2025 – MAR'2026)

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

PREPARED BY HRÖ TEAM

OCTOBER 2026

“THANKS TO ALL THOSE EC MEMBERS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE REPORT”

Hinduistische Religionsgesellschaft in Österreich (HRÖ)
Hindu Religion Organization in Austria (HRA)
(Rechtspersönlichkeit von religiösen Bekenntnisgemeinschaften)
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Hinduistische Religionsgesellschaft in Österreich (HRÖ)

Hindu Religion Organization in Austria (HRA)

(Rechtspersönlichkeit von religiösen Bekenntnisgemeinschaften, BGBl. I Nr. 19/1998 (PRBG) Bescheid vom 15. April 1999, GZ 13.486/2-9c/99 – bm:bwk)

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Statement by the President

Following a highly successful 2023–2024 period, the past year presented a mix of progress and challenges. While there were moments of uncertainty and operational difficulty, the Executive Committee (EC) responded with determination and resilience. At no point did these challenges divert the organization from its strategic direction or its commitment to delivering on the manifesto priorities and key tasks outlined in the previous annual report.

A defining milestone of the year was the successful convening of the first-ever General Assembly, which marked a significant step toward strengthening democratic governance within the organization. This was complemented by a comprehensive review and amendment of the constitution. The existing framework, developed over 26 years ago, no longer fully reflected the realities and demands of the present environment. Through careful consideration and learning from past experiences, the revised constitution now aligns more effectively with current regulatory requirements and organizational needs. The updated document has been formally adopted and made accessible through translations in both English and Hindi, ensuring broader understanding and inclusivity among members.

The organization also successfully conducted its first Annual General Meeting and presented an audited financial report, reinforcing its commitment to transparency and accountability. A notable structural reform was the introduction of a membership fee system, replacing the earlier congregation-based contribution model, thereby creating a more sustainable and equitable financial structure.

In response to the concerns of the community, the organization demonstrated its advocacy role by organizing and leading a demonstration addressing injustices faced by Hindus in Bangladesh. At the same time, considerable effort was invested in strengthening institutional relationships. Productive engagement and collaboration were maintained with key partners, including Kultusamt, the Archdiocese, the Vienna City Interreligious Council, and the Buddhist Religious Organization. Equally important was the continued effort to build trust and cooperation with Hindu community organizations such as Austria Tamil Sangam, Bengali Hindu Culture Association, and the Bengalisch Austrian Hindu Cultural Association.

Engagement with public authorities also progressed during the year, particularly through coordination with the Federal Ministry of Education to advocate for the recognition of Holi as a day off for Hindu schoolchildren upon request. Internally, organizational capacity was enhanced through the appointment of a dedicated Social Media Manager, reflecting the growing importance of effective communication and outreach.



The organization remained committed to its educational mission. Regular discourse initiatives continued, including the Bhagavad Gita sessions, which have now been conducted for over two years, as well as structured sloka learning programs designed for children. These initiatives continue to play a vital role in educating and teaching Sanatani scripts.

Despite these achievements, several challenges impacted operational efficiency. Resignations among key functionaries required re-elections, which demanded considerable time and organizational resources. Additionally, only two Congregation Meetings were held during the year, and maintaining the regularity of monthly Representatives' meetings proved difficult.

Nevertheless, the organization has continued its efforts to raise awareness of its mission and purpose among Hindus living in Austria. The range of activities undertaken reflects a steady and deliberate approach to strengthening community engagement, institutional credibility, and long-term sustainability.

Looking ahead, the focus remains on consolidating these achievements, addressing structural and operational gaps, and continuing to serve the community with dedication, transparency, and a clear sense of purpose.

The table below showcases the various activities HRÖ has undertaken to gradually increase awareness among Hindus living in Austria.

Event	Number of times event occurred {n}	Average duration (Hours) {t}	Time spent* (Hours) {=nxt}	Total count of EC members attended event {N}	Total time spent by all EC members combined (Hours) {=Nxt}
EC meetings	70	1.9	133	366	695
HRÖ Representing	18	3	54	38	114
HRÖ Reps Meeting	7	2	14	30	60
Congregations Meetings	3	3	9	17	51
Demonstration	1	5	5	6	30
Annual General Assembly	1	3.7	3.7	7	26
Interreligious – council Graz/Vienna	5	2	10	7	14
Introducing HRÖ	1	2	2	3	6



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School Children visits attended	2	2	4	2	4
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Table 1: Matrix for time spent [* Cumulative time spent by individual EC member for the event]

Kind regards,

Ing. Sandeep Khanna

Letter from Vice President

Dear Members of the Hindu Community,

Namaste!

It is a privilege to address you once again as Vice President of HRÖ. The year 2025 has been one of consolidation, institutional strengthening and broader community engagement. Together, we have continued to build HRÖ as a transparent, inclusive and responsible representative platform for Hindus in Austria, guided by integrity, fairness and service.

A major focus this year has been strengthening HRÖ's governance. The Annual General Assembly in June supported accountability, member participation and strategic review. Constitutional reforms and leadership-renewal measures were advanced to create clearer responsibilities, stronger oversight and a more future-ready organization. When the positions of General Secretary and Joint Secretary became vacant, HRÖ conducted a structured election process. Following guidance from the Kultusamt, the process was repeated through a formal General Assembly and ballot, and the election of 19 October 2025 was subsequently confirmed by the Austrian authorities.

HRÖ also strengthened its visibility and relationships across Austria through spiritual, cultural, educational and interfaith engagement. During 2025, HRÖ representatives participated in interfaith dialogue programmes, Ganeshotsav, Vijaya Dashami Utsav, the cultural and commemorative Diwali celebration at the United Nations Office at Vienna, and other community gatherings. These engagements connect our diverse traditions, strengthen cooperation and help ensure that Hindu perspectives are represented with dignity in Austrian public life.

We have also continued working to make HRÖ more accessible and connected to the community. Transparent communication, regular Executive Committee coordination, improved digital channels, membership outreach and engagement with community representatives remain central to our work. Our objective is clear: strengthen Hindu representation, preserve our cultural and spiritual heritage, support future generations and build the broad participation needed for HRÖ's continued growth and recognition.

One Voice • Shared Dharma • One Community • One Future



Our progress is possible because of the dedication of our Executive Committee, representatives, volunteers, partner organizations and members. I sincerely thank everyone who contributed time, ideas and energy during 2025. I encourage every Hindu in Austria to remain connected, participate actively and support HRÖ in building a strong, united and respected Hindu community.

Wishing you and your families good health, peace, happiness and prosperity.

Warm regards,

Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey, PhD

Vice President, HRÖ

Hinduistische Religionsgesellschaft in Österreich (HRÖ)

Letter from Treasurer

हमारे प्रिय हिंदू समुदाय के समस्त सदस्यों को सादर प्रणाम!

Warmest greetings and respectful regards to all the members of our beloved Hindu community!

It is my honor to share this report (01.01.2025 - 25.05.2026) in my capacity as Treasurer of HRÖ. Since our last General Assembly in year 2025, we have seen a meaningful increase in both registered and contributing members. This growth reflects a deepening sense of unity and a shared commitment to preserving and celebrating our rich cultural heritage. The committee remains fully dedicated to supporting the well-being, growth, and spiritual vitality of our community.

Over the past half-year, HRÖ has focused on launching initiatives that bring our members together and strengthen our shared traditions. We believe that by partnering with like-minded organisations such as the All-Hindu Society, we can amplify our impact and create even more meaningful opportunities for cultural preservation, education, and community service.

● **Proposed Collaborative Initiatives**

To build on this momentum, we would like to propose the following areas of cooperation:

- **Joint Funding & Community Contributions:** We respectfully invite our members and partner organisations to support upcoming projects through voluntary contributions. These funds will help us organise cultural celebrations, educational workshops, and other initiatives that serve our community's spiritual and social needs.
- **Resource & Capacity Sharing:** By pooling our strengths whether through shared facilities, volunteer networks, or coordinated financial support, we can execute projects more efficiently and ensure that our efforts reach those who need them most.



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● Call for Collaboration

We would be grateful to hear your thoughts on these proposals and explore how we can work together in a way that aligns with our shared vision. Please feel free to share your availability for a meeting, or let us know of any upcoming events where we might connect in person.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication, generosity, and continued service to our community. With your support, we are confident that we can build something truly enduring and uplifting for generations to come

Warm regards,

Sanjay Kumar

Treasurer, Hindu Religious Organisation (HRÖ)

What Is HRÖ?

HRÖ – Hinduistische Religionsgesellschaft in Österreich (HRÖ) is a state-registered Religious denominational community in Austria; an official umbrella body responsible for all matters related to Hinduism in Austria.

Objectives of HRÖ

1. HRÖ achieved the state-registered religious denominational community status in the year 1998, due to which all Hindus living in Austria are free to practice their faith and establish their own places of worship. The next and final stage in the recognition ladder is to achieve the status of legally recognized religious society. Achieving this status will bring many benefits, like having Hinduism also as a religious subject in state schools, getting tax-exempt for donations made to religious bodies (mandirs, mutts, ashrams, etc) etc.
2. Highlight and convey the core beliefs, teachings, and doctrines of Hinduism so that the believers can benefit from them in every walk of life in contemporary society.
3. Engage with the local Hindu communities throughout Austria.
4. Participate in social service projects and charitable activities.
5. Conduct discourses on private and public forums and teach Hinduism in public and private schools as and when appropriate approvals are received.
6. With the financial contributions from the community, as well as the aid from various government bodies received as per the law, disseminate the teachings of Hinduism for greater benefits of human society.
7. Develop educational programs for Pandits (clergy), leaders, and members. Provide theological training, ethical guidance, and care resources.



8. Promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue between Hindus and members of other religious bodies. Foster goodwill and understanding between followers of all faiths.
9. Develop a robust and transparent organizational and financial structure, so that the continuous functioning of the governing body or the council can be ascertained for the time to come.
10. Secure suitable places to accommodate a large audience to promote Hinduism and Hinduism related events.
11. Represent Hindus residing in Austria on all public channels, be it broadcast media, print media, or any internet-based social media platform.
12. Promotion of the study of the Indian languages, especially Sanskrit.
13. Adherence to the culture of Hinduism by promotion of the traditional arts, music, dance etc.
14. Import and sale of spiritual and cultural articles like religious books, pictures, puja articles etc.
15. Foundation of libraries and promotion of the translation of holy scriptures into English and German.

Services Provided by HRÖ

Being the official umbrella organization for all activities related to Hinduism in Austria, HRÖ provides the following services:

- Receive, review, and give approvals to affiliation requests received from any Hinduism practitioner or a group wanting to form a new religious organization like establishing a new non-profit association (Verein) to perform Hinduism related activities or establish a new temple etc.
- On request, issue religion certificates to members of HRÖ. This is sometimes asked for admissions in schools or in offices to take special leave on Hindu festival days etc.
- Assist Hindus in their religious practices by sharing info about pandits etc.
- Provide Hindu Religion classes.
- Assist Hindus living in Austria on all activities related to religion.

Support HRÖ

For HRÖ to achieve the status of legally recognized religious society, it needs 0.2% of the population of Austria (~18000) as its members. So, if you are a believer of Hinduism and want Hinduism to achieve this status, please become a member of HRÖ. Please register on our [website](http://www.hroe.at) or send us an email to office@hroe.at to express your interest. You can also volunteer in various activities of HRÖ, write blogs to post on HRÖ's website or help prepare material for Hinduism classes. Please contact us for any questions or feedback.



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Governance and Institutional Development

Annual General Assembly - Strengthening Democratic Governance

Transparent governance, member participation and accountable decision-making

The Hinduistische Religionsgesellschaft in Österreich (HRÖ) reaffirmed its commitment to transparent and participatory governance through the successful conduct of its Annual General Assembly (AGA) on 8 June 2025 in Vienna. The Assembly was convened in full compliance with constitutional requirements, with timely notification sent to over 500 registered members, ensuring broad awareness and inclusive participation.

The AGA served as the organization's highest decision-making platform, enabling comprehensive review, accountability and strategic alignment.

Key highlights

- Presentation of the President's annual report, reflecting on achievements, challenges and future priorities
- Operational updates from the General Secretary, outlining progress in organizational activities
- A detailed financial report by the Treasurer, complemented by an independent audit confirmation, ensuring financial transparency and accountability
- Open-floor discussions encouraging member participation, feedback and collective decision-making

Despite an initial delay due to quorum requirements, the Assembly was reconvened in accordance with constitutional provisions and proceeded effectively, demonstrating procedural robustness and organizational discipline.

Importantly, the Executive Committee ensured that all outcomes, resolutions and key discussions were formally documented and communicated to members, reinforcing transparency and trust. This structured communication approach strengthens member engagement and ensures that all stakeholders remain informed and aligned with HRÖ's direction.

Constitutional Reforms - Driving Institutional Transformation

Modernizing HRÖ's governance framework for long-term effectiveness

In recognition of evolving organizational needs and the limitations of legacy provisions, HRÖ initiated a comprehensive constitutional reform process aimed at modernizing its governance framework and enhancing institutional effectiveness.



The Executive Committee developed and presented a series of strategic amendment proposals, which were shared in advance with members to facilitate informed dialogue and participation. These proposals were formally introduced, discussed in detail and democratically voted upon during the General Assembly.

Reform priorities

- Establishing robust governance mechanisms to improve accountability and decision-making
- Introducing direct membership structures, enabling stronger engagement with the broader Hindu community in Austria
- Strengthening financial governance and oversight, ensuring responsible and transparent resource management
- Clarifying institutional roles, responsibilities and communication authority
- Updating structural definitions to reflect contemporary organizational realities

Strategic alignment

Short-term priorities	Long-term goals
Expanding membership, improving operational efficiency and achieving financial sustainability.	Building a strong institutional foundation capable of achieving broader recognition and sustained growth.

The adoption of these amendments marks a significant milestone in HRÖ's evolution, laying the groundwork for a more resilient, transparent and scalable organizational structure.

Structured Renewal and Term Limits - Ensuring Sustainable Leadership

Balancing continuity with inclusivity, innovation and ethical governance

A cornerstone of HRÖ's governance transformation has been the introduction of a forward-looking leadership renewal framework, designed to ensure continuity while promoting inclusivity and innovation.

The Executive Committee proposed and secured approval for a term limit policy establishing that:

- Executive Committee members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms
- A mandatory break period is required before re-election, preventing prolonged concentration of leadership
- Defined rules ensure that partial terms are fairly accounted for, maintaining consistency and transparency



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Complementary governance safeguards

- Restrictions to prevent multiple members from the same family holding positions simultaneously, ensuring impartiality
- Mechanisms to promote fair representation and diversity in leadership roles
- Clear guidelines to strengthen ethical governance and avoid conflicts of interest

WHAT THIS FRAMEWORK ENABLES

- New ideas, perspectives and innovation
- Stronger democratic participation and inclusivity
- Long-term institutional credibility and trust

Overall impact and strategic outlook

Through the successful execution of the Annual General Assembly, the implementation of critical constitutional reforms and the introduction of structured leadership transition policies, HRÖ has taken decisive steps toward strengthening its institutional foundation.

- Enhances transparency, accountability and governance quality
- Fosters greater member engagement and participation
- Establishes a modern, scalable and future-ready organizational framework

The Executive Committee remains committed to building on this momentum and ensuring that HRÖ continues to evolve as a credible, inclusive and forward-looking institution serving the Hindu community in Austria.



A Peaceful Call for Protection, Justice and Dignity

HRÖ and Hindu community associations raise concern over violence against Hindus in Bangladesh

Vienna | Thursday, 15 January 2026



Figure 1: Members of the Hindu community gathered in Vienna with bilingual banners calling for protection and justice for Hindus in Bangladesh.

On Thursday, 15 January 2026, the Hindu Religious Society in Austria (HRÖ), together with Hindus from India, Bangladesh and other countries organized a peaceful protest in Vienna to draw attention to concerns about violence, insecurity and human-rights violations affecting Hindus in Bangladesh. The gathering took place at two internationally significant locations: the United Nations Office at Vienna and the Embassy of Bangladesh.

The action was conceived as a peaceful and humanitarian appeal. Participants called for the protection of religious minorities, impartial investigation of reported incidents, accountability under the rule of law, protection of homes and places of worship, and respect for religious freedom. The written appeal emphasized that the protest was not directed against the people of Bangladesh or its national values, but sought equal protection and dignified coexistence for all citizens regardless of religion or belief.

The protest also gave the Hindu community in Austria a visible platform to express solidarity with people affected by reported attacks, intimidation, displacement and damage to property and places of worship. Rather than limiting the action to public demonstration, the organizers combined community mobilization with formal institutional engagement through written memoranda addressed to the Bangladeshi authorities and the United Nations human-rights system.

From Community Concern to a Coordinated Protest

Preparation for the protest began through coordination within HRÖ and with representatives of Hindu congregations and community associations. At a planning meeting on 5 January, HRÖ



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Executive Committee members and representatives from BAPS, Sargam, the Bengali Hindu Cultural Association and other community networks discussed the purpose, public messaging, participation, languages, safety and practical arrangements for the demonstration.

A central consideration was how to communicate the message clearly to both the Austrian public and the communities most directly connected to Bangladesh. Participants discussed the use of German, English and Bangla. German was considered important for local public understanding, while English provided broader international accessibility. The planning discussion also emphasized that the words “Hindus” and “Bangladesh” should remain clearly visible so that the purpose of the protest could not be misunderstood.



Figure 2: The protest used clear English-German messages and brought together participants from different parts of Austria's Hindu community.

The resulting banners carried direct bilingual appeals including “Save Hindus in Bangladesh / Schützt die Hindus in Bangladesch,” “Justice for Hindus in Bangladesh / Gerechtigkeit für Hindus in Bangladesch,” “Every Hindu Life Matters / Jedes Leben von Hindus zählt,” and “Stop Persecuting Hindus in Bangladesh / Hört auf, Hindus in Bangladesch zu verfolgen.” These messages reflected the agreed focus on protection, justice and human dignity.

The planning process also addressed participation and public-order considerations. Organizers discussed expected attendance, contact with relevant authorities, the role of volunteers, accessibility and safety. The emphasis throughout was on an orderly, peaceful demonstration in which participants could express concern firmly while maintaining a respectful and non-violent character.

A Visible Appeal in Vienna

On 15 January, participants assembled despite winter conditions and stood together with banners and placards. Photographs from the day show a diverse group of men and women gathered peacefully, listening to speakers and holding messages in German and English. The visual identity of the demonstration was deliberately simple: the red and green associated



with Bangladesh, combined with messages focused on the safety and rights of Hindu minorities.

Taking the Appeal to the United Nations



Figure 3: Participants assembled in Vienna as the community appeal was taken to international institutions.

An important part of the initiative was the submission of a formal memorandum through the United Nations Office at Vienna for the consideration of the United Nations Human Rights Council. The submission described concerns relating to reported physical violence, destruction of property and places of worship, intimidation, displacement and inadequate accountability. It framed these concerns in relation to international human-rights standards, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The memorandum requested that the UN human-rights system take cognizance of the situation of Hindus and other religious minorities in Bangladesh, raise the matter through appropriate mechanisms, and consider engagement of relevant UN Special Procedures, including mandates concerning freedom of religion or belief and minority issues. It further called for protection of minorities, independent and impartial investigation of incidents, accountability for perpetrators and protection of religious freedom.

The appeal was explicitly presented as peaceful, humanitarian and non-political. It invoked the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - “the world is one family” - to place the initiative within a broader ethical commitment to peaceful coexistence. Its central message was that the safety and dignity of minorities are inseparable from social harmony and human rights.

An Appeal to the Embassy of Bangladesh

The community also directed a memorandum to the Ambassador of Bangladesh. This document stated that members of the Hindu community in Austria were gathering in peaceful protest because of concern over reports of physical violence, destruction of property and places of worship, intimidation, displacement, discrimination and insecurity faced by Hindus in Bangladesh.



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The memorandum carefully distinguished criticism of reported violence and failures of protection from criticism of Bangladesh or its people. It stated that the appeal was not directed against the people of Bangladesh or its national values. Instead, it called upon the administration to uphold equal protection regardless of religion or belief and to strengthen confidence among minority communities.

Five practical requests were placed before the Bangladeshi authorities: immediate and effective protection for Hindu minorities; transparent and impartial investigation of incidents; accountability under the rule of law; protection of religious freedom, property and personal security; and constructive engagement with minority communities to restore trust and confidence. The memorandum asked the Ambassador to convey these concerns to the appropriate authorities in Bangladesh.

Solidarity, Responsibility and Peaceful Civic Action



Figure 4: Community members stood together with messages calling for an end to persecution and for equal protection and justice.



The 15 January protest represented a form of civic engagement in which public demonstration and institutional advocacy were deliberately combined. Participants did not only gather with banners; they also placed their concerns in writing before institutions capable of receiving and transmitting such appeals. In this way, the action moved from community concern to public expression and then to formal engagement with diplomatic and international bodies.

For HRÖ, the protest was also an example of cooperation across congregations and associations. The preparatory discussions brought together office bearers and representatives from several community networks, while the demonstration itself created a shared public space for Hindus with different organizational backgrounds. The focus remained on a limited and clearly stated purpose: drawing attention to the safety, dignity and rights of Hindus and other religious minorities in Bangladesh.

The bilingual banners were important to that purpose. “Every Hindu Life Matters,” “Justice for Hindus in Bangladesh,” “Save Hindus in Bangladesh,” and “Stop Persecuting Hindus in Bangladesh” made the community’s concerns visible to local residents, international audiences and officials. Their German translations ensured that the appeal could also be understood directly in the Austrian public sphere.

A Message Beyond the Demonstration

The protest concluded with a message that extended beyond one community or one day of action: the protection of minorities is a fundamental element of peace, justice and social harmony. The memoranda submitted in Vienna called for protection and accountability through lawful institutions and emphasized peaceful coexistence rather than confrontation.

By gathering publicly, coordinating across community organizations and submitting formal representations, HRÖ and participating Hindus sought to ensure that concerns about Hindus in Bangladesh were communicated through peaceful democratic means. The event demonstrated how a diaspora community can use civic participation, public awareness and institutional channels together when responding to reports of serious human-rights concerns abroad.

The enduring message of the Vienna gathering was therefore both specific and universal: those facing violence or intimidation because of their religious identity should receive protection, reported abuses should be investigated fairly, and every community should be able to live with security, dignity and freedom of belief. In that spirit, the protest of 15 January 2026 stood as an appeal for justice, responsibility and peaceful coexistence.



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Establishing Effective Administrative Structure

General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary Elections

As mentioned in the President's message, the previous year brought several challenges that affected the organization's operational efficiency. Following the resignations of the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary in June 2025, the Executive Committee (EC) was required to conduct fresh elections for both positions.

In accordance with the constitutional guidelines, the EC announced the vacancies and invited nominations within the required timeline. Based on the experience and practical challenges faced over the past two years, the advertisements clearly stated that the roles would require a minimum commitment of eight working hours per week.

At the close of nominations, only one candidate had been nominated for each position. Since there were no competing candidates, the EC interpreted the constitution to mean that formal elections were not necessary, and the nominees were declared elected as General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary respectively.

However, when the election outcome was communicated to the Kultusamt, they advised that elections should still be formally conducted, regardless of whether there was only one nominee for each position. Although this differed from the EC's interpretation of the constitution, the EC respected the recommendation and restarted the entire process.

During the second round as well, the same single candidates were nominated for the respective positions, and formal elections were conducted accordingly. To ensure transparency, Mr. Dharam Sharma was appointed as an independent observer to oversee the election process.

Finally, on 26 October, the Kultusamt officially confirmed the election results for the polls held on 19 October. Dr. Satyendra Tomar was confirmed as the General Secretary, and Mr. Mayank Bindal as the Deputy General Secretary.

This process has been an important learning experience for the Executive Committee, and the EC sincerely thanks the Hindu community for its patience, understanding, and continued cooperation throughout the process.



Figure 5: Dr. Satyendra Tomar was confirmed as the General Secretary, and Mr. Mayank Bindal as the Joint General Secretary.



Figure 6:Volunteers assisting during the elections

Election of Vice-President 1 – 2026

Extraordinary General Assembly | 15 March 2026 | Vienna

Following the resignation of Dr. Deepti Garg from the position of Vice-President 1 on 22 January 2026, HRÖ initiated the procedure to fill the vacant Executive Committee position.

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The election was held on 15 March 2026 at Lammgasse 1, 1080 Vienna, and Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey, PhD was elected Vice-President 1.

Election date	Venue	Votes cast	Elected
15 March 2026	Lammgasse 1, Vienna	201	Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey

14–15 February 2026 – Election announced

HRÖ informed members that the Vice-President 1 position had become vacant and announced an Extraordinary General Assembly for the election. The notice referred to §5.8.1 of the HRÖ Constitution, under which a vacant Executive Committee position was to be filled within eight weeks. The election date was set for 15 March 2026.

26 February 2026 – Nominations closed

The published timetable set 26 February 2026 at 21:00 as the nomination deadline. Dr. Shefali Kumar and Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey submitted completed nomination forms for the position.

1–7 March 2026 – Candidate list finalized

On 1 March, HRÖ announced Dr. Shefali Kumar and Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey as the two candidates. Following the withdrawal deadline of 4 March, the same two candidates were confirmed in the final announcement on 7 March. Dr. Durga Prasad and Mr. Ashwini Soni were also announced as election observers, with the stated role of overseeing that the process was followed in a transparent and fair manner.

Election Day – 15 March 2026

The Extraordinary General Assembly was held at Lammgasse 1, 1080 Vienna. The official minutes record that voting was conducted by ballot and that 201 members voted. Voters were required to show photographic identification. Their HRÖ membership and payment of membership dues were checked before a ballot was issued. Members whose dues had not yet been paid were offered the possibility of paying them on site. The ballots were stamped with the HRÖ stamp before being issued.

The election process began shortly after the scheduled opening. The observer report records the first vote at approximately 11:15 and the last vote at 14:21. The observers reported that the voting process was conducted peacefully and that there were no disputes or violations of the rules during voting.



Figure 7: Election-day registration and voting arrangements at Lammgasse 1, Vienna.



Figure 8: Election-day Election administration and one of the ballot boxes during the Vice-President 1 election.

Counting and Result

After voting closed, the ballots were counted under the supervision of the two candidates, the election observers and additional volunteers. According to the official minutes, the result was announced at approximately 15:15.

Candidate / ballot	Votes
Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey	117
Dr. Shefali Kumar	81
Invalid ballots	3
Total votes cast	201

Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey received 117 votes, Dr. Shefali Kumar received 81 votes, and 3 ballots were invalid. Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey was therefore declared elected Vice-President 1. The observer report recorded the same vote totals and stated that the election process concluded peacefully.

After the result was announced, both candidates were congratulated for their willingness to serve the community. The official minutes record that the meeting was closed by the HRÖ President at approximately 15:40.

Notification after the Election

On 16 March 2026, HRÖ President Ing. Sandeep Khanna informed the Kultusamt of the election result and transmitted the signed election minutes. The notification stated that Dr.



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Ram Vinay Pandey, who was serving as Vice-President 2 at the time, had been elected Vice-President 1 and would assume the new office following confirmation.

Assembly of Congregations

HRÖ's Constitution (§7) requires the Executive Committee (EC) to hold quarterly assemblies of its affiliated congregations. These assemblies are an important part of HRÖ's operations and provide an opportunity for affiliated congregations to discuss organizational matters, share updates, and make decisions collectively.

In 2025, two assemblies of congregations were held, with most participating congregations based in Vienna.

Details of the First Assembly Meeting:

Date: 22nd Feb 2025.

Location: Sanatan Dharam Mandir, 1160 Vienna.

Attendees: Chairpersons or representatives of HRÖ-affiliated congregations.

Agenda:

- Updates on HRÖ's activities and accomplishments.
- HRÖ membership registration and membership fee collection

The main purpose of the meeting on 22 February 2025 was to discuss matters relating to the registration of HRÖ members and the collection of membership fees, in accordance with §3.2 and §3.6 of the Constitution.

Following a constructive discussion, it was agreed that affiliated congregations may register HRÖ members and forward the completed registrations to HRÖ. However, the collection of membership fees would be carried out exclusively by HRÖ.

This proposal was subsequently presented to the General Assembly in June 2025, where it was approved.



Figure 9: Congregations Meeting at Sanatan Dharama Temple on 22nd February, 2025

Sanātan Dharma Council: Building a Shared Dharma Platform for Hindus in Austria

From constitutional vision to congregation dialogue, cooperation and implementation

A vision already rooted in HRÖ

The Sanātan Dharma Council (SDC) is rooted in the constitutional structure of the Hinduistische Religionsgesellschaft in Österreich (HRÖ). The Constitution envisages the Council as an HRÖ body concerned with the spiritual-religious and cultural interests of Hindu life in Austria. Its responsibilities extend across religious education, spiritual leadership, sacred knowledge, languages, culture, dialogue, social service and cooperation among Hindu congregations. Until an independent Council is constituted in accordance with the Constitution, these responsibilities are carried by the Executive Committee. The Constitution also provides that the Council should ultimately have its own rules of procedure.

21 December 2025: the vision enters congregation-level dialogue

A major step toward giving this constitutional idea practical form came at HRÖ's 2nd Congregations Assembly in Vienna on 21 December 2025 (as shown in Figure 10). HRÖ Executive Committee members met with representatives of Bhāgwat Dharm Āshram, Brahmkumaris, Hindu Mandir Association, ISKCON Wien - Vedisches Zentrum Wien, Sanātan Dharm Mandir and Shiva Mandir - Hindu Gesellschaft Austria. The gathering brought different Hindu traditions and institutions into one room to exchange information about their activities, discuss cooperation and consider how HRÖ could strengthen collective Hindu life in Austria.





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Figure 10: Congregations Meeting at Shiva Temple on 21st December, 2025

The gathering also discussed practical collaboration around Shivrātri. All six participating congregations agreed in principle to come together, with further coordination to follow on participation, venue and programme. This spirit of cooperation provided the setting for a dedicated discussion on the Sanātan Dharma Council.

An initial seven-point framework for the SDC was presented. It covered protection and support of life; education in Sanātan values; preservation and wider accessibility of sacred knowledge; physical and mental well-being through Prāṇāyāma and Yoga; spiritual growth and meditation; inclusive worship and spiritual spaces; and self-defence and protection of values. The concept was presented as a starting point rather than a finished structure, with congregations invited to contribute ideas and help refine it.

The response established an important foundation for the next phase. The participating representatives agreed to form the proposed SDC. Bhāgwat Dharm Āshram emphasized the importance of putting differences aside and creating continuity beyond the normal election cycle. Brahmkumaris welcomed the positive step and the opportunity created by bringing many congregations together.

Shiva Mandir related the concept to its own spiritual learnings. HRÖ leadership clarified that the SDC would be an organ of HRÖ distinct from the elected Executive Committee, while participants were encouraged to study the constitutional framework and continue contributing ideas.

A broad constitutional mandate

The Council's constitutional scope is wider than the initial seven-point framework. It includes education and training of spiritual leaders and Pujaris; study of Sanskrit and other Indian languages; translation and reprinting of sacred texts; development of libraries; research into Vedic and Hindu sciences; support for domestic worship; traditional arts, music and temple dance; networking among Hindu religious societies and congregations; interreligious dialogue; Hindu social service; and public education through exhibitions and lectures. The Constitution also assigns the SDC roles in certain membership appeals and in consultation on questions concerning the recognition or compatibility of congregations.

2026: connecting the vision with wider cooperation

The vision gained another practical dimension in August 2026 through HRÖ's Memorandum of Understanding with Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh. The cooperation framework preserves the independence and decision-making autonomy of both organizations while identifying areas of common work that closely correspond with the SDC's constitutional purpose.

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These areas include promotion of Sanātana Dharma, Yoga and meditation; Hindu philosophy, scriptures and spiritual education; traditions, festivals and cultural heritage; Sanskrit and other Indian languages; youth participation; networking among Hindu organizations; and knowledge exchange between Austria and India. Possible activities include lectures and workshops, education for children, youth and families, cultural programmes, exchange visits, translation and dissemination of Hindu literature, research and community engagement. Any concrete project or financial commitment remains subject to separate agreement.

From concept to an operating Council

The next phase is to translate this accumulated vision into a representative and workable institution. The developing approach is for an SDC that is constitution-based, advisory, plural and Austria-wide, while formal authority remains with the HRÖ bodies established by the Constitution. The proposed practical structure groups the Council's work into six areas: Dharma, Scriptures & Scholarship; Priests, Rituals & Spiritual Education; Education, Sanskrit & Languages; Yoga, Meditation & Well-being; Culture, Heritage & Community; and Dialogue, Seva & Cooperation.

A consultative formation process has been proposed: preparation of a draft Charter, consultation with congregations, temples, HRÖ members and experts, an open call for nominations, development of a balanced shortlist, formal approval in accordance with HRÖ's statutes and a public launch. A 15-member inaugural Council has been proposed as a workable starting size, bringing together spiritual leaders, scholars and educators, cultural and well-being expertise, congregation representatives, women and youth, and people experienced in seva and public dialogue.

Three early programme ideas give the Council a practical starting point: a Sanātana Dharma Education Pilot, a Pujari & Spiritual Leadership Forum and a Sanātana Knowledge Repository. Together, these would allow the SDC to begin with visible educational, religious and knowledge-building work while its longer-term structure develops.

A shared institution for continuity and cooperation

The development of the Sanātana Dharma Council can therefore be seen as a continuous journey. The Constitution created the institutional foundation. The December 2025 congregation gathering brought the concept into collective discussion and produced agreement to move forward. Cooperation established in 2026 broadened the possibilities for education, spiritual exchange and cultural work. The emerging implementation plan now provides a route toward a functioning Council with defined workstreams, broad participation and practical programmes.

The purpose is not to replace the diversity of Hindu traditions and congregations in Austria, but to create a common HRÖ platform through which knowledge, experience and service can be brought together. If developed through consultation and in accordance with the Constitution, the SDC can provide continuity for Dharma education, spiritual and cultural knowledge, cooperation among congregations, youth engagement, dialogue and community service - while respecting the plurality that characterizes Hindu life in Austria.



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Advancing Efforts for HRÖ's Full Legal Recognition

Interreligious Council - Vienna

Since HRÖ is a member of Vienna Religions Council, it received invitations to attend the meetings on 19th Feb and 14th Oct 2025 respectively.



Figure 11: EC members with Viennese Mayor Dr. Michael Ludwig

On the 19th Feb meeting was attended by way more religious community representatives than in the past. The council spoke among other points also about the current situation in the Middle East (war) and Villach stabbing attack which shouldn't have happened and is to be condemned. Dr. Ludwig emphasized that the contribution of religious

communities to peaceful coexistence is more necessary than ever in view of the current world situation and its impact on Austria. He expressed his gratitude that in Vienna it is possible to come together and advocate for good coexistence. "The social role of religious communities is of overall societal significance. All of you are heard. You give guidance and orientation to many people in our city. And all of you actively help to further improve coexistence in our city," said Ludwig. The mayor also informed that in the next meeting the Vienna Religion Council Charter which was worked on will be presented and finalized. In addition, information exchange with Vienna's Director of Education, Councilor Elisabeth Fuchs will take place. In the meeting of 14th October, Vienna's Director of Education explained the challenges she is facing in the schools and how the schools are trying to overcome them.



Figure 12: The entire Religious Council Team (Copyright: Stadt Wien/Bubu Dujmic)



On 29 January 2026, the Executive Committee attended another meeting of the Interreligious Council. During the meeting, the HRÖ President signed the Vienna Religion Council Charter alongside the leaders of other participating religious communities and organizations, reaffirming HRÖ's commitment to interfaith dialogue, mutual understanding, and cooperation.

Figure 13: HRÖ President signing the Charter

Those who are interested may click on the below links and read the charter in [German](#) and [English](#) from HRÖ's Gdrive (translated by HRÖ GS, Dr. Tomar).



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Interreligious Council - Graz - Tag der Religionen

On Sunday, October 19, 2025, the closing event of the second “Day of Religions” took place at Volksgarten Graz. Mr. Deno Kaufmann opened the program with a musical performance at 4:30 p.m., followed by the official opening and welcome by Eva Wenig at 5:00 p.m.



Figure 14: Mrs. Smriti Kohli attending the Tag der Religionen event

The program continued with greetings from Mayor Elke Kahr and a representative of Holding Graz, as well as a musical performance by the Coptic Orthodox Choir. Eva Wenig then introduced the theme of the event, **“Life... in Encounter.”** The focus was on personal statements and reflections from the participating religious communities.



HRÖ was represented by Ms. Smriti Kohli, who presented the HRÖ phrase: **“Begegnung mit der Gewissensfreiheit jedes Individuums”** (“Encountering the freedom of conscience of every individual”). She then silently placed her commemorative stones at the commemorative tree.

Figure 15: Stones with put by all Religious Communities



Following another musical performance, Eva Wenig invited all participants to share a simple meal of bread and water at 5:35 p.m. The shared buffet provided a meaningful opportunity for everyone to come together once more and conclude the event in a spirit of fellowship and encounter.



Figure 16: The entire Religious Council Team of Graz

The Executive Committee extends its heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Smriti Kohli for her tireless commitment and for representing HRÖ with dedication at the event in Graz.

Building Religious Network

As HRÖ expands into various Hindu congregations, its duty and responsibilities are to maintain strong relationships with congregation members and Hindu communities across Austria. Over the past year, the HRÖ executive committee has worked diligently to rejuvenate connections with existing congregation members and establish new relationships with emerging congregations and Hindu communities that were encountered over time.

During this process, the executive committee recognized that a lack of communication in recent years had literally led to non-cooperation between HRÖ and the congregations. To address this gap, specific measures were taken to rebuild trust and strengthen relationships. One of these initiatives was to attend individual congregational events whenever possible. By doing so, the EC was able to introduce itself to the respective committee members and the devotees personally.

The congregations warmly welcomed the HRÖ team, treated them with respect, and listened to them attentively. This interaction marked an important step towards fostering mutual understanding and cooperation.



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HRÖ Participates in Member Congregation Events

Hindu Mandir Association (HMA)

Diwali Mela organized by HMA

26 October 2025 | Lugner City, Wien

Event Overview

The Diwali Mela, hosted at the iconic Lugner City in the heart of Vienna, stood as a beacon of cultural celebration on 26 October 2025. Organized by the Hindu Mandir Association (HMA), the festival transformed the commercial hub into a vibrant tapestry of lights, colors, and traditional decorations. The festive ambiance was palpable, drawing a diverse crowd of both the Hindu diaspora and local residents, fostering an inclusive environment that bridged cultural boundaries within the Austrian capital.



Figure 17: EC Team members at the Diwali Mela in Lugner City



Cultural Highlights

The event featured an extensive program of cultural performances that captivated the audience throughout the day. Classical Indian dance forms, including Bharatnatyam and Kathak, were performed by talented local artists, showcasing the intricate storytelling and rhythmic precision of Hindu heritage. Complementing the dance were soul-stirring musical recitals and contemporary Bollywood-inspired acts, reflecting the dynamic evolution of Indian arts. These performances served not only as entertainment but as a vital medium for passing down traditions to the younger generation within the community.

Community Impact

The significance of holding such a large-scale event in a prominent location like Lugner City cannot be overstated. It provided the Hindu community with a platform for increased visibility and public engagement, strengthening the social fabric of Hindus in Austria. For HRÖ, participation in the Mela was a strategic opportunity to deepen ties with the HMA and reinforce our commitment to community cohesion. The impact was felt through the shared sense of pride and belonging among attendees, further solidifying the role of cultural festivals in maintaining a robust and connected local Hindu community.

The organization's praise is deeply rooted in its unwavering dedication to fostering unity among the diaspora. Through the tireless efforts of its members, who work behind the scenes to facilitate grand cultural events like the Mela, HRÖ has established itself as a cornerstone organization. By consistently elevating the Hindu community's presence and spirit in Austria, HRÖ ensures that such celebrations are not merely fleeting moments but enduring milestones of cultural strength.

Visit to Hindu Communities

Alongside the ongoing membership drive, HRÖ has also worked hard to expand its reach by connecting with congregation members and reaching out to new groups. Throughout the year, Executive Members attended various Hindu events like Pujas, Satsangs, Kirtans, and festival celebrations organized by different communities.

HRÖ reached out to Hindu communities that are not yet members, met their spiritual leaders or representatives, and introduced them to HRÖ's purpose and goals. These communities were happy to learn about HRÖ's work and

appreciated its efforts to promote Hinduism in Austria. Some communities are considering registering as legal entities with the Vereinspolizei and may join HRÖ in the future.



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EC met Nepal Ambassador to Austria



Figure 18: HRÖ Team with His Excellency Sh. Bharat Kumar Regmi

Since Nepal is a predominantly Hindu majority country, HRÖ reached out to the Embassy authorities to meet H.E. Mr. Bharat Kumar Regmi and got an appointment for 21st Jan 2025 to meet him in person.

The HRÖ team was warmly welcomed, and Embassy officials were delighted to have us and appreciated our efforts. The Executive Committee members introduced themselves and explained to the team present, the purpose of HRÖ and its objectives.

EC sought support of Nepalese community as it can play a big role in the recognition of HRÖ. We were informed that some schools are teaching Nepali language and there are few Nepali groups which can be communicated for HRO registration. As Nepal is a secular country, they will not promote it on front, but they will make possible efforts to spread word about HRÖ.

BAPS

From Burnout to Balance – Rise Above Stress – BAPS Event

The seminar “**Burnout to Balance – Rise Above Stress**” was conducted by Pujya Dr. Gnanvatsaldas Swami, a highly sought-after motivational speaker. The HRÖ Executive Committee (EC) was invited to attend the event, and the invitation was gladly accepted. The

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seminar took place on 29 May 2025 and was attended by HRÖ President Sandeep Khanna and then General Secretary Dr. Chandra Sekher Reddy Nathala.

Pujya Swami Ji delivered an insightful and engaging lecture on managing stress, sharing practical examples and perspectives. He explained that burnout should not simply be viewed as a sign of exhaustion, but rather as an opportunity to **realign** oneself. He further emphasized that achieving balance is about engaging with life more consciously and purposefully.

Following the lecture, a book titled ***Inspired: Daily Wisdom for Holistic Living***, authored by Pujya Dr. Gnanvatsaldas Swami Ji, was launched. The HRÖ representatives were graciously presented with complimentary copies of the book, for which HRÖ is very grateful.

The seminar was an enriching and thought-provoking experience, offering valuable insights into managing stress, finding balance, and living a more conscious and purposeful life.



Figure 19: Pujya Swami ji launched the book

Light, Peace & Partnership

On 12 November 2025, the United Nations Office at Vienna became a setting for a distinctive Diwali gathering that brought together spirituality, culture, diplomacy and civic partnership. BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, hosted the cultural and commemorative celebration under the theme of light, peace and partnership. Diplomats, UN officials, faith representatives and community organisations joined the programme, creating a visible platform for Hindu values in an international institutional setting (BAPS, 2025).



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Figure 20: Delegates and guests attending the cultural and commemorative Diwali programme at the United Nations Office at Vienna on 12 November 2025. The UN setting underscored the event's themes of peace, dialogue and partnership.

A Celebration with Global Significance

The programme marked more than Diwali itself. It also commemorated two milestones in BAPS's relationship with the United Nations: 30 years of partnership with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), including 25 years of General Consultative Status, and 25 years since His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj's landmark address at the Millennium World Peace Summit at the United Nations headquarters in New York. These anniversaries gave the celebration a broader message: spiritual values can contribute meaningfully to peace-building, service, sustainability and international cooperation.

Traditional Vedic prayers for universal peace and well-being opened the programme. A presentation on Diwali highlighted the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil, followed by ceremonial lamp lighting as a symbol of hope, harmony and renewal. The programme also recalled Pramukh Swami Maharaj's message of peace founded on mutual respect and personal responsibility, and included contributions from representatives of the Permanent Mission of India, UN organisations and BAPS leadership (BAPS, 2025).



Figure 21: HRÖ representatives (from left Vice President Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey and president Ing. Sandeep Khanna) with BAPS swamis during the Diwali celebration at UNOV. The gathering created opportunities for direct exchange between Hindu community representatives, spiritual leaders and participants from a broad international network.

HRÖ Participation and Community Connection

For HRÖ, participation in the celebration reflected an important dimension of its work: supporting the visibility of Hindu traditions in Austria while building constructive relationships across Hindu organisations, public institutions and wider society. The event offered a valuable opportunity to engage with BAPS representatives and other participants in an atmosphere centred on mutual respect, peace and service.

Diwali at the United Nations demonstrated that Hindu traditions can be presented in a way that is both rooted in dharma and open to dialogue. This is closely aligned with HRÖ's objective of strengthening recognition and understanding of Hinduism in Austria while respecting the diversity of Hindu traditions and communities.

Light, Peace and Partnership in Practice

The international character of the event was especially significant. According to the organisers, diplomats and dignitaries from multiple Permanent Missions joined UN officials and representatives of interfaith and community organisations. BAPS representatives from several countries also attended, reflecting a network that combines spiritual practice with humanitarian service and civic engagement (BAPS, 2025).



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A Shared Message for the Future

The 2025 Diwali celebration at UNOV was a meaningful example of how cultural heritage,



Figure 22: HRÖ representatives (from right HRÖ president Ing. Sandeep Khanna, in middle Joint Secretary Mr. Mayank Bindal and left Vice President Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey) participating in the Diwali celebration at UNOV..

spiritual values and institutional partnership can come together. It celebrated Diwali as a living Hindu tradition while connecting its message to global themes of peace, compassion, human responsibility and service. For HRÖ, such occasions strengthen the wider effort to ensure that Hinduism is visible, understood and respected as an integral part of Austria's pluralistic society.

The gathering also reinforced the value of cooperation across Hindu traditions and organisations. By participating in platforms that bring together religious communities, diplomats, international institutions and civil society, HRÖ can help build bridges while advocating for the long-term interests of Hindus in Austria.



Seminar: “From Ayodhya to Abu Dhabi – A Journey of Global Harmony”

As part of its continued commitment to fostering Hindu community dialogue and spiritual awareness, HRÖ was represented at the seminar “From Ayodhya to Abu Dhabi – A Journey of Global Harmony”, organized by BAPS Swaminarayan Satsang Mandal Vienna.

The event brought together members of the Indian diaspora, spiritual leaders and community stakeholders to explore the role of Hindu philosophy in promoting peace, coexistence and cultural unity in a global context.

Representation by HRÖ leadership

Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey, PhD, Vice President of HRÖ, attended the seminar as a representative of the organization. His participation reflects HRÖ’s active engagement in initiatives that promote dialogue across cultures, religions and communities within Austria.

During the event, Dr. Pandey interacted with organizers, spiritual leaders and participants, contributing to meaningful exchanges on the role of diaspora institutions in preserving heritage while fostering integration and mutual understanding.

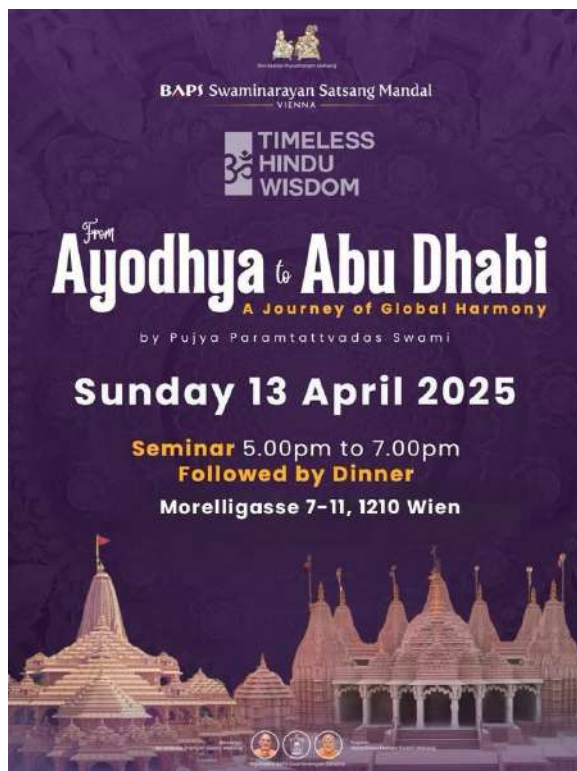


Figure 23: Event announcement for the seminar “From Ayodhya to Abu Dhabi”, held in Vienna on 13 April 2025.



Figure 24: HRÖ Vice President Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey with a BAPS spiritual representative during the seminar in Vienna.

Key themes and insights

The seminar featured a keynote discourse by Pujya Paramtattvadas Swami, who shared insights on the symbolic and cultural journey connecting Ayodhya, representing India’s spiritual heritage, with Abu Dhabi, a modern example of interfaith harmony.



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- The relevance of Hindu wisdom in addressing contemporary global challenges
- The importance of interfaith collaboration and peaceful coexistence
- The role of landmark initiatives such as the Abu Dhabi Hindu Temple in strengthening global cultural connections
- The contribution of diaspora communities in bridging tradition and modern multicultural societies

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE FOR HRÖ

- Promote interfaith understanding and cultural dialogue
- Strengthen partnerships with Hindu and global spiritual organizations
- Encourage community engagement through educational and cultural platforms
- Position HRÖ as a progressive and inclusive representative body

The Executive Committee recognizes such engagements as essential to advancing HRÖ's vision of a harmonious and inclusive society. Through active participation in thought leadership and community events, HRÖ continues to contribute to building bridges between cultures, fostering mutual respect and promoting shared human values.

Vienna Tamil Sangam

Diwali Celebrations with Vienna Tamil Sangam

ViennaTamil Sangam (VTS) celebrated the Deepavali Festival on 25 October 2025, bringing together an evening of light, culture, and community. As in the previous two years, members of the HRÖ Committee were warmly invited to join the celebrations, an invitation we gratefully accepted.

The program featured a diverse range of art, dance and cultural performances by men, women, and children. Their enthusiastic participation reflected the community's strong commitment not only to preserving its traditions but also to passing them on to future generations.



Figure 25: Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey, Guest of honor by Austria Tamil Sangam during Diwali celebrations



Figure 26: EC members with Bala ji

During the event, the HRÖ Executive Committee members stick HRÖ posters with QR codes to the wall and took the opportunity to introduce HRÖ and its activities to several members of the Tamil community in person.

HRÖ is very grateful to Balaji for giving us the opportunity to attend this wonderful event, connect with members of the Tamil community, and introduce HRÖ and its work. HRÖ sincerely appreciates his support and hospitality.



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Maharashtrian Mandal Austria

Celebrating Cultural Heritage and Community Spirit

HRÖ proudly participated in the vibrant celebration of Ganeshotsav 2025, held in collaboration with Maharashtra Mandal Austria. The event brought together members of the Hindu community across Austria to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi, one of the most cherished and spiritually significant festivals.

A celebration of devotion and togetherness

Ganeshotsav 2025 was marked by deep devotion, vibrant cultural expression and strong community participation, as devotees gathered to welcome Lord Ganesha (Ganpati Bappa) into their homes and hearts. The celebration reflected the core values of wisdom, prosperity and auspicious beginnings.

The program began with a warm welcome and registration, followed by a traditional procession. The central religious segment included:

- Ganesh Pooja and rituals, performed with devotion and authenticity
- Aarti and Mantrapushpanjali, creating a shared spiritual experience
- Darshan, offering devotees the opportunity to seek blessings



Ganesh Chaturthi 2025

📅 August 30, 2025

We celebrated Ganeshotsav 2025 with great joy and devotion, welcoming Ganpati Bappa into our homes and hearts. The event featured traditional pujas, cultural programs, Marathi food and community gatherings. It was a memorable festival where we came together to seek the blessings of Ganpati Bappa and share in the joy of this auspicious festival.

[See details →](#)

Figure 27: Ganesh Chaturthi 2025 event communication highlighting the devotional and community-focused celebration.

Cultural expression and community engagement

The celebration featured a lively cultural program, including music and performances that highlighted the richness of Indian traditions. Attendees participated enthusiastically in traditional Indian attire, contributing to the vibrant and authentic festive atmosphere. The sharing of Prasad and participation across generations reinforced a strong sense of community unity, inclusiveness and cultural continuity.



Leadership representation and felicitation

The event was attended by Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey, PhD, Vice President of HRÖ, whose presence reflected HRÖ's active role in supporting and engaging with cultural and religious initiatives in Austria.

In recognition of his contributions and leadership, Maharashtra Mandal Austria felicitated Dr. Pandey, along with other distinguished dignitaries, as a gesture of appreciation for their continued efforts in strengthening community engagement and promoting cultural values. This moment highlighted the spirit of mutual respect, collaboration and acknowledgment within the community.



Figure 28: Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey during the felicitation at Ganeshotsav 2025.

Culinary and social interaction

The celebrations concluded with a traditional dinner featuring authentic Marathi cuisine, providing a platform for networking, conversations and social bonding. This informal interaction further strengthened ties within the community and fostered a welcoming and inclusive environment.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE FOR HRÖ

- Preserve and promote Hindu cultural and religious traditions
- Foster community cohesion and intergenerational participation
- Strengthen collaboration with regional cultural and community organizations
- Enhance the visibility of Hindu festivals within Austria's multicultural society

Conclusion



Hinduistische Religionsgesellschaft in Österreich (HRÖ)

Hindu Religion Organization in Austria (HRA)

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Ganeshotsav 2025 was a joyous, spiritually uplifting and community-centric celebration, reinforcing shared values of devotion, unity and cultural pride. It exemplified the importance of such festivals in building a connected, vibrant and resilient community.

The celebration resonated with the spirit of devotion through the chant “Ganpati Bappa Morya!”, symbolizing faith, joy and collective celebration.

HSS

Vijaya Dashami Utsav 2025



Figure 29: HRÖ representation at the Vijaya Dashami Utsav.

HRÖ President Ing. Sandeep Khanna (right) and Vice President Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey (left) at the community celebration on 9 November 2025. Source: HRÖ photo archive, 2025.

A Community Celebration of Vijaya Dashami

On Sunday, 9 November 2025, the local Shakha celebrated its Vijaya Dashami Utsav in Vienna with approximately 110 participants, including Karyakartas, families, children and invited guests. The programme reflected the spirit of Vijaya Dashami as an occasion for discipline, collective service, cultural continuity and renewed commitment to Dharma.

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The Hindu Religious Society in Austria (HRÖ) was represented by President Ing. Sandeep Khanna and Vice President Dr. Ram Vinay Pandey. Their participation underscored HRÖ's commitment to engaging with Hindu organisations and community initiatives across Austria, strengthening cooperation while respecting the diversity of Hindu traditions and forms of service. Their presence is documented in Figure 28.

The event brought together ritual observance, physical training, intellectual reflection and intergenerational participation. This combination is particularly significant for the Hindu community in Austria, where cultural transmission depends not only on formal teaching but also on repeated community practice and meaningful participation by children and families.

Shastra Puja and Shakha Demonstration

Following the Sampata, Ravi Dada and Manju Tai performed the Shastra Puja. The ceremonial observance was followed by Pratyakshik demonstrations that included Suryanamaskar, Vyayam Yog, Niyuddha and Samata. A Khel demonstration was also presented, offering attendees a glimpse of one of the most popular and engaging activities of the weekly Shakha.

The demonstrations highlighted physical discipline, coordination, teamwork and confidence. As shown in Figure 29, children and youth were actively involved in the programme, while families observed and encouraged the participants. Such activities help connect cultural identity with healthy routines, collective responsibility and positive social engagement.



Figure 30: Shakha demonstration during the Vijaya Dashami Utsav.

Participants demonstrate coordinated Shakha activities during the programme. The session formed part of the Pratyakshik segment, which included Suryanamaskar, Vyayam Yog, Niyuddha, Samata and Khel. Source: HRÖ/community photo archive, 2025.



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Geet, Subhashit and Bauddhik

After the Shakha demonstration, the programme continued with the Sangh Geet “Sangh Kiran Ghar Ghar Dene Ko,” followed by Subhashit and Amrut Vachan. These elements created a reflective transition from physical demonstration to intellectual and spiritual engagement.

In the Bauddhik session, Rushin Thacker, Regional Coordinator for Europe, BAPS, delivered an address on “Sankalp, Shraddha and Sangh.” A second Bauddhik was delivered by Pradyumna Paranjape on “Dharma and Sangh Karya.” Together, the talks explored the relationship between resolve, faith, collective organisation and service to Dharma.

A separate Baal Gana activity was organised for children during the Bauddhik session. Children also received hand-painted bookmarks prepared by Karyakartas, adding a personal and creative element to the programme.

Sangh Bhav, Prasad and Community Participation

The Utsav concluded with Vishwadharm Prarthana. Karyakartas prepared and served Chhole, Puri, Halwa and Gulab Jamun as Prasad for all attendees. The shared meal created an informal space for families, volunteers, new participants and long-standing members to interact and strengthen community bonds.

The success of the programme was attributed to the enthusiasm, discipline and voluntary service of the Karyakartas. Their active participation demonstrated Sangh Bhav - a spirit of working together for a shared purpose. Many new participants also attended the Utsav after being invited by friends and members, showing the importance of personal outreach in expanding community participation.

HRÖ Perspective

HRÖ values initiatives that bring Hindu families together, strengthen cultural confidence and provide young people with opportunities to participate meaningfully in community life. The Vijaya Dashami Utsav demonstrated how spiritual values, physical discipline, learning, volunteering and hospitality can be integrated within a single community programme.

By participating in such events, HRÖ seeks to strengthen dialogue and cooperation among Hindu organisations and communities in Austria. The long-term objective is a Hindu community that is connected, confident, mutually supportive and capable of representing its traditions constructively within Austrian society.



Durga Puja Events



The Durga Puja celebrations in Vienna, Austria, began on September 28, 2025, with Shashti, followed by Saptami, Ashtami, and Navami, and concluded with Vijaya Dashami on October 2, 2025. Throughout the celebrations, devotees gathered to seek the blessings of Maa Durga.

HRÖ received invitations from the organizers and participated in the Durga Puja celebrations. This provided an opportunity to introduce HRÖ and its mission to the wider Hindu community in Vienna, including members of the Hindu Bangladeshi Group, Austria.

Figure 31: HRÖ at Bangali Austrian Hindu Cultural Association (BHO KV)



Figure 32: EC members with Bangali Austrian Hindu Community Members



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Figure 33: EC members with Bangali Austrian Hindu Community Members



Figure 34: HRÖ with Bangali Hindu Cultural Association members



Figure 35: EC at Durga Puja Samiti Vienna



The participation of HRÖ Executive Committee members provided an opportunity to receive blessings and to introduce HRÖ to a broader Hindu audience in Vienna. They engaged with community members and devotees, shared HRÖ's mission, and sought their support. A key focus of the outreach was encouraging members of the Hindu community to register for HRÖ membership through the HRÖ website.



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Kriya Yoga Zentrum



Figure 36: The Executive Committee of HRÖ Participated Kriya Yoga Zentrum in A-2523 Tattendorf, Austria, on 7th December 2025.

The Kriya Yoga Centre in Tattendorf, approximately 46 km from Vienna, is a tranquil and serene location that is well suited for yoga, meditation, and spiritual retreats.

The Centre is associated with the teachings of the renowned Kriya Yoga master, Paramahansa Prajnananandaji and team, who imparts teachings on Kriya Yoga, spiritual



living, and profound interpretations of Vedanta and sacred texts, including the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The HRÖ team had a productive discussion with Swami Sankalpanandaji. The meeting reflected a shared enthusiasm for potential collaboration, particularly in supporting the official recognition and registration of Hinduism as a recognized religion in Austria.

The team also expressed great enthusiasm about the possibility of the Kriya Yoga Zentrum becoming a member of HRÖ in the near future. The Kriya Yoga Zentrum has also organized a **“Pray for Peace”** initiative, reflecting its commitment to spiritual values, peace, and harmony.

Kriya Yoga Zentrum organized an International Religion Pray for Peace for all religions and HRO EC members participated in the Pray for peace program and highlighted Hinduism and Sanatan value to other religions and communities.

PRAY FOR PEACE

Interfaith prayer • Peace • Hindu and Sanatan values

Republic Day Celebrations at the Embassy of India

26 January 2026 | Multipurpose Hall, Embassy of India, Vienna

Event Overview

The 77th Republic Day of India was commemorated with a solemn Flag Hoisting Ceremony on 26 January 2026 at the Multipurpose Hall of the Embassy of India in Vienna. The event served as a focal point for the Indian community in Austria, marking decades of democratic heritage with patriotic fervor. Held at the diplomatic mission on Kärntnerring, the ceremony brought together officials and community leaders in a shared celebration of national identity, reinforcing the cultural bridge between the Republic of India and its diaspora in the heart of Europe.

HRÖ Representation

Hindu Religionsgesellschaft in Österreich (HRÖ) was prominently represented by a dedicated delegation of its members and leadership. The participation of HRÖ delegates underscored the organization’s active role in representing the spiritual and social interests of the Hindu community within official diplomatic frameworks. By attending the morning ceremony and engaging with the mission's staff, the HRÖ delegation ensured that the voices and values of Austrian Hindus were integrated into this significant national milestone, reflecting a unified and vibrant community presence.



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Figure 37: HRÖ President, Joint Secretary and Treasurer at the Indian Republic Day Celebrations

Community Impact



The engagement at the Indian Embassy highlights the strengthening of bilateral ties between HRÖ and the Indian diplomatic mission in Austria. Such participation is instrumental in deepening institutional collaboration and fostering a sense of community cohesion among the diaspora. For HRÖ, these diplomatic and cultural engagements are vital for maintaining a robust connection with the cultural roots of the community while enhancing its visibility as a key stakeholder in Austria's social fabric. This interaction solidifies the partnership necessary for the continued growth and representation of Hindu traditions on an international stage.

Figure 38: HRÖ Vice President and Treasurer



Socializing with Non-Hindu Religious Societies and Communities

Consecration of Archbishop Josef Grünwidl

In December 2025, the [Archdiocese of Vienna](#) sent an invitation to the President of HRÖ to attend the consecration and inauguration ceremony of Archbishop-elect Josef Grünwidl, which was gratefully accepted.

The ceremony took place on Saturday, January 24, 2026, at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. It was a significant and solemn occasion, attended by approximately 3,000 people inside the cathedral, while several hundred thousand viewers followed the ceremony on television.

The President of HRÖ had the honor of representing HRÖ at the ceremony. The event was attended by numerous distinguished guests, including prominent representatives of Austrian political institutions, legally recognized religious societies, and state-registered religious communities, of which HRÖ is a part.

Following the ceremony, a reception was held, providing the President of HRÖ with an opportunity to meet Archbishop Josef Grünwidl personally and briefly introduce HRÖ to him. Despite the short duration of the conversation, the Archbishop listened attentively and showed genuine interest in what the President shared about HRÖ.



Figure 39: Brief Introduction of HRÖ to Archbishop Mr. Grünwidl



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ÖBR Vesakh Festival: A Celebration of Buddhist Heritage and Interfaith Harmony

The Österreichische Buddhistische Religionsgesellschaft (ÖBR) warmly invited the President and General Secretary of the Hindu Religious Organisation (HRÖ) to attend the **Vesakh Festival**, one of the most significant celebrations in the Buddhist tradition, held on **25 May 2025**.

The traditional festival commenced with an official welcome, followed by sacred recitations representing various Buddhist traditions. The prayers and chants were led by venerable monks, nuns, and distinguished representatives, creating an atmosphere of spiritual reflection, peace, and devotion.

From a Hindu perspective, the occasion was particularly meaningful as an expression of the shared values that connect Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Both traditions place great importance on compassion, non-violence, spiritual discipline, respect for all living beings, and the pursuit of inner peace. Participation in such celebrations provides a valuable opportunity to strengthen mutual understanding and friendship among Austria's diverse religious communities.

Following the ceremonial program, representatives from different religious societies and communities had the opportunity to meet, exchange views, and enjoy fellowship. These occasions play an important role in promoting interfaith dialogue, respect, and peaceful coexistence within Austrian society.

The celebration concluded with a wonderful communal meal, generously prepared and offered voluntarily by members of the ÖBR representing different countries and cultural backgrounds. The shared meal beautifully reflected the spirit of hospitality, diversity, and unity that characterized the entire event.

The HRÖ sincerely appreciates the invitation from the ÖBR and the opportunity to participate in this important Buddhist celebration. Such interfaith gatherings strengthen relationships between religious communities and contribute to a more harmonious, respectful, and inclusive society in Austria.



*Figure 40: Buddhist Community and representatives of Religious communities attending the Vesakh Fest
Source: www.buddhismus-austria.at*

Teaching Hinduism

One of the primary goals of HRÖ is to encourage and support educational classes focused on Sanatan Dharma and its values. In the pursuit of achieving this aim, with the support of Dr. Satyendra Tomar, Dr. Sandip Banker, Ms. Darshana Banker, and Mrs. Seetha Medavarapu, HRÖ commenced two Bhagavad Gita discourses and one Sanskrit Shlokas class.

This initiative serves as an enriching opportunity to explore the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita and its relevance in modern life and derive the benefits of learning Slokas at an early age.

The two Bhagavad Gita discourses and the Slokas class are conducted by Dr. Satyendra Tomar, Mr&Mrs. Banker, and Mrs. Seetha Medavarapu respectively. Over the past 12 months, the classes have been running consistently, offering insightful teachings about Hinduism. Individuals who are interested are warmly invited to join.

Current Classes:

Class 1: Bhagavad Geeta Discourse I:

Dr. Satyendra Tomar is an alumnus of the IIT Kanpur (PhD 2002; Mathematics and Scientific-/super Computing) and has been living in Europe since 2001. For more than 6 years he has been devoting a considerable amount of his time towards important issues such as Sanatan life, learning scriptures, inspiring people/students to enhance their knowledge.



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In these Hindi Bhagavad Gita discourses, one also gets the opportunity to ask Dr. Tomar at the end of every class about our queries about any of the shlokas. Once a month a question-and-answer session is held where the participants and students get the answers to all their questions about what they learned throughout the month as well about the learnings of the shlokas.

Session Details:

Format: In each class Dr. Tomar reads out some shlokas and then he tells their interpretations as well as how these teachings could be adapted in day-to-day life with interesting and meaningful examples and stories from our spiritual books and Vedas. In addition to learning about the shlokas, meditation is also being practiced in these classes.

Audience: Open to individuals aged 12 and above, with ~20 participants attending from Austria, India, Italy - depending on their availability.

Timings: Every Sunday at 11:00 hrs.

Duration: 60 minutes per session.

Language: Hindi

Class 2: Bhagavad Geeta Discourse II:

Under the dedicated efforts of Dr. Sandip Bankar, and Mrs. Darshana Sandip Bankar, a weekly English discourse on the Bhagavad Gita has been running successfully since January 2024. Residing in Innsbruck, the Bankars have been ardent followers of the Bhagavad Gita for over 15 years, guided spiritually by ISKCON.

Mrs. Darshana Sandip Bankar, a graduate of the Bhakti Shastri course—which encompasses an in-depth study of the **Bhagavad Gita As It Is**—has been conducting Bhagavad Gita sessions for children in Innsbruck. The couple now extends their teachings to a broader audience.

Session Details:

Format: Participants read the Shlokas, followed by discussions on their meanings and significance. Queries are addressed comprehensively to ensure participants grasp the profound essence of the text.

Audience: Open to individuals aged 12 and above, with ~22 registered participants attending depending on their availability.

Timings: Every Thursday at 20:00 hrs.

Duration: 30 minutes per session.

Language: English.

Meeting Link: [Join Here](#)



Class 3: Sanskrit Shalokas (Verses) Learning Program

The **Shlokas Learning Program**, that was conducted in 2024, had received a good response and was successfully completed, benefiting many participants, especially children. Encouraged by this success and the positive feedback received, the program was restarted in Jan 2025 with the aim of continuing to support the spiritual and overall development of children.

The program is led by the teacher Mrs. Seetha Medavarapu voluntarily and for this she deserves respect as a guru, the parents of these young children deserve praise to motivate them towards this direction, and these little children deserve the love of the entire Sanatan community.

Introducing Hinduism to School Children

In February 2026, a teacher from Bundesrealgymnasium in Vienna's 3rd district contacted HRÖ with a request to visit the school and introduce Hinduism to their 7th-grade students during two separate Religion/Ethics classes.

This was a new challenge for HRÖ, as school classes had traditionally visited us at the temple. This time, however, we were asked to take the introduction to Hinduism directly to the school. To fulfill this request, we contacted Ms. Umapuri ji from the Shiva Temple in Vienna and sought her guidance and assistance.

Ms. Umapuri ji introduced us to Ms. Anja Vukadin, who has studied South Asian religions and is also a Sanskrit teacher. After discussing the request with Ms. Vukadin, she kindly agreed to introduce the students to the basic concepts and traditions of Hinduism.

Ms. Vukadin subsequently prepared a presentation covering the fundamental aspects of Hinduism, including: What is Hinduism?, the Trimurti, reincarnation, Hindu scriptures, rituals, and festivals. She shared the presentation with the HRÖ Executive Committee for review and feedback.

After incorporating the feedback received, the presentation was finalized. On 6 March 2026, Ms. Vukadin and Sandeep Khanna visited the school and conducted the presentation for the students. They also brought along educational and religious materials, including a copy of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, a Ganesha idol, an Om symbol/idol, and incense sticks, to provide the students with a more engaging and practical introduction to Hinduism.



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Figure 41: Ms. Anja Vukadin presenting slides



Figure 42: Slide explaining reincarnation

The teacher and students sincerely appreciated HRÖ's efforts, which helped them broaden their understanding and knowledge of Hinduism.

Last year, I (Sunita Chib) had the opportunity to spend time with some students visiting from Linz. At the Lammgasse Hindu temple, Rashmi-ji and I welcomed them by joining our hands in the traditional Hindu manner. True to the custom in Indian households, we first offered them tea and snacks; they were absolutely delighted by the Indian samosas. Afterward, I showed them the idols of our deities while explaining the rituals and practices associated with Hindu worship.

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They examined all the pictures displayed there with great curiosity. Upon seeing a picture of Lord Shiva, some asked why His complexion was blue. I explained that His complexion was blue because He had consumed poison; driven by curiosity, they immediately asked why He had drunk the poison.



Figure 43: School Children from Linz visited HMA

I explained to them that His complexion is blue because He had consumed poison; out of curiosity, they immediately asked why He had drunk it. I then told them the story of the *Samudra Manthan* (Churning of the Ocean). Although a lack of time prevented me from



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recounting it in great detail, I certainly shared the gist of the story with them—specifically the part about Lord Shiva consuming the poison.

Additionally, Rashmi-ji presented some very interesting facts regarding the architectural design of Hindu temples.



It was particularly gratifying to see that, along with the students, the accompanying teachers also showed an interest in yoga practice. We introduced them to a few yoga *asanas*. Together with Rashmi-ji, they also practiced *Surya Namaskar* (Sun Salutation) under my guidance.

Finally, we offered them a small amount of dry fruit as *prasad* and

Figure 44: Mrs. Rashmi demonstrating Surya Namaskar to children

offered to apply a *tilak*; not everyone agreed to it, but that didn't matter—after all, even Hindus these days

often feel self-conscious about getting a *tilak* applied, and these guests were Austrian Christians.

After spending a wonderful time together, we bade each other farewell with Ram-Ram" 🙏.



Financial Report (as of 25 May 2026)

1. Foreword

Namaste All Members,

We are pleased to present the Annual Financial Report of Hinduistische Religionsgemeinschaft Österreichs (HRÖ) covering the financial years 2025 and 2026 (up to 25 May 2026). This report is based on our official Balance Sheet and reflects the actual income and expenditure recorded across both periods, as verified from the detailed yearly balance sheets.

HRÖ is funded entirely through your membership contributions and generous donations. Every euro is used exclusively to serve our community and advance the Hindu religion and culture in Austria. We are proud to report a healthy bank balance and a positive financial position.

2. Sources of Funding

HRÖ receives income from three main sources: annual membership fees, member donations, and web advertisement revenues. There are no government grants or commercial revenues.

2.1 Membership

Members contribute via bank transfer or cash payment. The table below shows membership income for each year.

Category	2025 (€)	2026 partial (€)	Total (€)
Membership – Bank Transfer	€350.00	€1,200.00	€1,550.00
Membership – Cash	€60.00	€1,420.00	€1,480.00
Total Membership Income	€410.00	€2,620.00	€3,030.00

2.2 Donations

Donations are received by bank transfer or cash collection. All donated funds are used exclusively for HRÖ's religious and community activities.

Category	2025 (€)	2026 partial (€)	Total (€)
Donations – Bank Transfer	€1,230.00	€171.00	€1,401.00
Donations – Cash	€402.00	€10.00	€412.00
Total Donations	€1,632.00	€181.00	€1,813.00

3. Income Summary

The table below shows all income received during the reporting period, including the opening balance carried forward from year 2024.

Income Source	2025 (€)	2026 partial (€)	Year Total (€)
Donation – Bank	€1,230.00	€171.00	€1,401.00
Donation – Cash	€402.00	€10.00	€412.00
Membership – Bank	€350.00	€1,200.00	€1,550.00



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Income Source	2025 (€)	2026 partial (€)	Year Total (€)
Membership – Cash	€60.00	€1,420.00	€1,480.00
Sub-total (new funds)	€2,042.00	€2,801.00	€4,843.00
Opening Balance 2024 – Bank	€1,049.81	–	€1,049.81
Opening Balance 2024 – Cash	€348.14	–	€348.14
Opening Balance 2024 – Total (Bank + Cash, per Auditor)	€1,397.95	–	€1,397.95
TOTAL INCOME (incl. opening balance)	€3,439.95	€2,801.00	€6,240.95

4. Expenditure

All expenditure is paid either by bank transfer or in cash. In addition, cash collected is periodically deposited into the bank account by the Treasurer (recorded as 'Cash Deposit in Bank'). This deposit is an internal transfer, not an external expense.

Category	2025 (€)	2026 partial (€)	Total (€)
Expenses – Paid by Bank	€704.87	€1,222.55	€1,927.42
Expenses – Paid by Cash	€128.39	€180.73	€309.12
Cash Deposit in Bank (internal transfer)	€539.00	€1,100.00	€1,639.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	€1,372.26	€2,503.28	€3,875.54

5. Annual Result

	2025 (€)	2026 partial (€)	Total (€)
Total New Income (excl. opening balance)	€2,042.00	€2,801.00	€4,843.00
Total Expenses (bank + cash only)	€833.26	€1,403.28	€2,236.54
Net Surplus (new funds only)	€1,208.74	€1,397.72	€2,606.46

6. Financial Position as at 25 May 2026

The following reflects HRÖ's actual cash and bank position as confirmed on 25 May 2026.

Asset	Amount (€)
Cash in Hand	€292.02
Bank Balance	€3,712.39
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	€4,004.41

7. Challenges & Appeal for HRÖ

The Hindu Religious Organisation (HRÖ) has made significant strides in its financial activities despite being a relatively small organisation. However, the current reliance on donations underscores the pressing need for consistent financial support to ensure the sustainability of HRÖ's efforts.

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Appeal for Support

We earnestly call upon all members, devotees, and supporters to step forward with sustained financial contributions. Your generous donations will help to:

- Strengthen the long-term growth and stability of HRÖ.
- Safeguard the future of our Hindu community.
- Enhance HRÖ's role in shaping the future of Austrian Hindus.
- Support the preservation of Indian cultural values and Hindu diaspora traditions.

How You Can Contribute

Your support is invaluable. Please use the following bank details to make your donation or annual membership contribution:

Bank Transfer Details	
Account Name	HRÖ – Hinduistische Religionsg.Ö
IBAN / BIC	AT21 1200 0100 4116 6934
BIC	BKAUATWWXXX

Please use your Name + Membership / Donation / Sloka as the payment reference.

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Acknowledgements

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all donors, members, and supporters who have contributed to HRÖ's mission. Your continued support ensures the preservation of our religious values and cultural heritage while strengthening the Hindu community in Austria.

Thank you for your generosity and commitment to our shared values and traditions.

Sanjay Kumar

Treasurer, HRÖ

ॐ Jai Shree Ram ॐ

Key Tasks for the Year Ahead

From Stronger Foundations to Participation, Expansion and Delivery

HRÖ has made important progress in strengthening its organisational foundations, community outreach and engagement with Hindu congregations and organisations across Austria. The next phase should build on this foundation by moving increasingly towards implementation, wider participation, Austria-wide representation and sustainable institutional development.

The proposed direction for 2027-2029 describes this transition as moving from foundation-building towards expansion, participation and delivery. It envisages stronger governance, broader community leadership, increased membership, regional expansion, education and youth engagement, improved communication and progress towards the long-term recognition of Hinduism in Austria.

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The coming year will therefore be particularly important. HRÖ should not only define what it wants to achieve, but also build the organisational structures, teams and community networks needed to deliver these objectives.

1. Implementing the 2027-2029 Strategic Roadmap

One of the most important tasks will be to translate HRÖ's longer-term vision into clear activities, responsibilities, timelines and measurable outcomes.

The proposed roadmap identifies 2027 as a Foundation Year for the next phase of HRÖ's development. Priorities include establishing working and coordination structures, strengthening membership systems, expanding community participation and working towards a permanent HRÖ office.

Rather than concentrating responsibility within a small number of office-bearers, implementation should increasingly involve members, volunteers, professionals, Hindu organisations and regional representatives. Progress can then be reviewed regularly through committee updates, membership and financial indicators, regional reports and reporting to the General Assembly.

2. Building a Broad HRÖ Coordination Platform

A central priority should be the establishment of the HRÖ Coordination Committee as a broad platform connecting Hindu organisations and communities across Austria.

Its purpose is not to replace the independence or identity of existing organisations. Instead, it is intended to provide a common space in which temples, spiritual organisations, linguistic and regional associations, cultural organisations and other Hindu communities can communicate regularly, exchange information, identify shared priorities and cooperate where there is mutual interest.

The proposed structure is deliberately broader than an ordinary working committee. Participating organisations and communities may nominate one or two representatives. The current concept includes HSS, Maharashtra Mandal, BAPS, Vienna Tamil Sangam, Telugu organisations, Bengali and Nepali communities, Bangladesh Hindu Association, Pakistan-Afghanistan Hindu Community and Sri Lankan Hindu Association, while remaining open to additional Hindu organisations and communities across Austria.

Regular dialogue through such a platform could improve coordination of community calendars, festivals, educational activities, public representation and matters of shared



community concern while allowing every participating organisation to retain its own identity and autonomy.

3. Establishing Six Working Committees

A major organisational development for the coming year should be the creation of six functional Working Committees. These committees are intended to translate HRÖ's priorities into practical programmes, services and community activities. Most would consist of approximately five to six members, allowing members and volunteers with relevant interests or professional expertise to contribute directly to HRÖ's work.

The proposed structure consists of the HRÖ Coordination Committee; Digital, Membership & Communications Committee; Finance & Growth Committee; Sanātan Dharma Council Development Committee; Community Events & Engagement Committee; and Members & Community Visibility Committee.

Each has a clearly defined purpose. Digital and membership work will focus on the website, registration, payment processes, member communication and digital visibility. Finance and growth will address financial planning, membership income, fundraising, sponsorship and sustainability. The Sanātan Dharma Council Development Committee will support the constitutional, consultative and organisational work required to establish the Council. Community Events & Engagement will develop HRÖ-led events and participation opportunities, while Members & Community Visibility will highlight volunteers, members, organisations, professionals, youth and community achievements.

This model represents an important shift towards shared responsibility. The Executive Committee would continue to fulfil its constitutional governance responsibilities, while Working Committees provide additional capacity for implementation and create meaningful opportunities for members and volunteers to contribute.

4. Creating Eight Regional Committees Across Austria

HRÖ's development should also become increasingly Austria-wide.

To strengthen its presence beyond Vienna, the proposed organisational model provides for Regional Committees in Austria's other eight federal states: Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Styria, Salzburg, Tyrol, Carinthia, Vorarlberg and Burgenland. Each committee would normally consist of five to six people and be led by a Region Coordinator who connects the local Hindu community with HRÖ.

The Regional Committees would connect local Hindu families, professionals, students, organisations and volunteers; coordinate with temples and associations; support membership outreach; identify regional needs and opportunities; assist with events and Austria-wide initiatives; and provide regular regional updates to HRÖ leadership.



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Six Working Committees provide thematic implementation across HRÖ, while eight Regional Committees provide geographical implementation across Austria.

5. Establishing the Sanātan Dharma Council

Another major institutional priority is to move the Sanātan Dharma Council (SDC) from concept and consultation towards a representative and functioning HRÖ institution.

The proposed process aims to establish the Council transparently and in accordance with HRÖ's Constitution. It includes constitutional and governance review, consultation with congregations, temples, members and experts, preparation of a Charter, an open nomination process, balanced selection and formal constitution of the Council.

The proposed Council would address six broad workstreams: Dharma, Scriptures & Scholarship; Priests, Rituals & Spiritual Education; Education, Sanskrit & Languages; Yoga, Meditation & Well-being; Culture, Heritage & Community; and Dialogue, Seva & Cooperation.

Importantly, the SDC is intended to develop through consultation and representation rather than as a parallel administrative structure. Initial practical activities could include a Sanātan Dharma Education Pilot, Pujari & Spiritual Leadership Forum and Sanātan Knowledge Repository.

6. Growing Active and Paid Membership

Membership will remain fundamental to HRÖ's future development. The objective should not simply be to increase registrations, but to develop a larger body of active, participating and financially contributing members.

The digital membership journey should therefore be made as simple as possible - from discovering HRÖ and understanding membership to registration, confirmation, payment and participation. This work naturally connects with the proposed Digital, Membership & Communications Committee.

At the same time, HRÖ needs to demonstrate the value of participation. Members should have opportunities to volunteer, contribute professional expertise, participate in committees, support regional activities, attend programmes and contribute ideas.

The strategic roadmap also distinguishes regular membership fees from additional voluntary contributions and envisages other appropriate sources such as sponsorships, community partnerships and ethical business advertising under an approved policy.



7. Engaging Different Generations and Sections of the Community

HRÖ represents a diverse Hindu population, and community engagement should reflect that diversity. Different groups will naturally have different needs and different ways of contributing.

Senior community members can contribute experience, knowledge and established networks. Professionals can contribute expertise in areas such as law, finance, education, IT, communications, healthcare and organisational development. Students and younger professionals can bring digital skills, energy and new ideas. Newcomers to Austria can benefit from stronger connections with local Hindu organisations and community networks.

Children and youth require particular attention. The proposed direction includes Hindu values and cultural education, regional-language learning, leadership development, volunteering and opportunities that strengthen identity and belonging while growing up in Austria.

The Working Committees and Regional Committees provide practical channels through which these different groups can become participants rather than simply recipients of HRÖ activities.

8. Expanding Hindu Religious, Cultural and Language Education

Education should become one of HRÖ's most visible long-term areas of service.

HRÖ should continue extending Hindu educational activities for children, youth and adults, including Hindu values, Dharma, festivals, traditions, scriptures, Yoga and meditation. Where practical and supported by community demand, Sanskrit and regional Indian-language learning can complement religious and cultural education.

This objective also aligns directly with the proposed Sanātan Dharma Council, where Education, Sanskrit & Languages forms a dedicated workstream. The SDC concept further proposes an introductory Sanātan Dharma education programme for children, youth and adults.

Over time, HRÖ can develop a more structured educational framework combining congregation-based learning, HRÖ-organised classes, qualified teachers and spiritual leaders, digital learning materials and cooperation with Hindu institutions.

9. Increasing Community Events and Participation

Community engagement should become more regular and visible. The proposed Community Events & Engagement Committee envisages one or two flagship HRÖ-led events each year alongside family activities, youth and professional participation, volunteering, event partnerships and membership outreach.



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At the same time, HRÖ should continue supporting and participating in activities organised by congregations and Hindu community organisations. The aim should not be to duplicate existing community work, but to identify areas where HRÖ can connect communities, create common platforms and strengthen participation.

Regional Committees can make this approach more effective by ensuring that activities are not concentrated only in Vienna.

10. Making Members and Community Contributions More Visible

HRÖ's strength ultimately comes from the people and organisations that contribute to Hindu life in Austria. Their work should therefore be more visible.

The proposed Members & Community Visibility Committee would highlight members, volunteers, community organisations, youth, professionals and community achievements through HRÖ's website, social media and other communication channels.

This is more than a communication exercise. Recognising community contributions can strengthen belonging, encourage volunteering and allow Hindus from different linguistic, regional and generational backgrounds to see themselves represented within HRÖ.

11. Strengthening Financial and Institutional Sustainability

Expansion requires sustainable resources. HRÖ's indicative roadmap anticipates expenditure on administration and compliance, office infrastructure, community events, meetings, education, IT and communications, government and interfaith relations, and representation. Indicative annual expenditure increases from EUR 18,000 in 2027 to EUR 24,000 in 2029.

Financial sustainability should therefore be developed through membership income, voluntary contributions, fundraising, appropriate sponsorships and partnerships, accompanied by transparent planning and monitoring.

The proposed Finance & Growth Committee provides a practical structure for this work, including annual financial planning, membership-fee growth, community donations, fundraising, sponsorship, advertising and long-term sustainability.

Working towards a permanent HRÖ office should also remain part of HRÖ's longer-term institutional development.

12. Strengthening Communication, Transparency and Accountability



As the organisation becomes larger and more distributed, communication will become even more important.

Members and participating organisations should receive regular information about HRÖ activities; decisions, programmes, opportunities to participate and progress against agreed priorities. The strategic roadmap proposes regular weekly, bi-weekly and monthly communication, with official information published through the HRÖ website and summaries shared through email and social media.

The same principle should apply to the new committee structure. Working Committees and Regional Committees should have clearly defined responsibilities and provide appropriate updates so that their activities remain connected to HRÖ's overall objectives.

Digital communication should therefore support not only visibility, but also participation and organisational transparency.

Looking Ahead: From a Small Core Team to a Participatory Austria-Wide Organisation

The year ahead offers HRÖ an opportunity to move from building foundations towards creating a broader and more participatory organisation.

The proposed structure is ambitious but straightforward: the Executive Committee provides constitutional governance and leadership; six Working Committees build functional implementation capacity; eight Regional Committees create an Austria-wide grassroots network; the Coordination Committee connects Hindu organisations and communities; and the developing Sanātan Dharma Council provides a structured platform for Dharma, education, culture, spiritual guidance, dialogue and cooperation.

The Team & Working Committees concept captures the underlying principle clearly: HRÖ seeks to bring together elected office-bearers, community members and volunteers to serve Hindu communities across Austria through responsible governance, active participation and collaborative action.

The success of the coming year should therefore be measured not only by how many activities HRÖ organises, but also by how many people and organisations become meaningfully involved in delivering them.

A stronger HRÖ will require stronger governance, but also broader participation. It will require national representation, but also active local teams. It will require sustainable finances, but also volunteers and professional expertise. It will require education and preservation of Dharma, but also meaningful opportunities for children and youth. And it will require cooperation among Hindu organisations while respecting the diversity and independence of the traditions and communities they represent.



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This is the direction for the next phase: a stronger institution, more active members, wider community participation, greater Austria-wide presence, sustainable development, stronger Hindu education and continued progress towards HRÖ's long-term objectives.

How to Contact HRÖ

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