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EUROPEAN
CHORAL
ASSOCIATION

- 
- A group of young people, mostly of African descent, are performing a dance or movement piece on a stage. They are wearing casual clothing like t-shirts and jeans. The stage is lit with blue and white spotlights, and the background is dark. The performers are in various poses, some with arms raised, some with hands on their heads, and some kneeling. The overall mood is energetic and expressive.
- Activities and Events
 - Multiannual Projects
 - Our Network

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

ONE VOICE FOR COLLECTIVE SINGING IN EUROPE!

EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION | ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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we reach out to

CONDUCTORS / VOCAL LEADERS, ORGANISATIONS, EVENT
ORGANISERS, SINGERS, CHOIRS / VOCAL ENSEMBLES,
COMPOSERS / CREATORS, MANAGERS, MUSIC EDUCATORS

cooperating across borders in the field of collective singing since 1963.

We are a network of organisations in the field of collective singing in Europe. Through our membership and the Friends of the European Choral association, we indirectly represent more than **2,5 million** people, amateurs and professionals, and we reach out to more than **37 million** people in Europe active in the field.

SingingEurope.org

In 2021, our members decided to change our statutes to make the European Choral Association a network of organisations and institutions only. From 2022, individuals and choirs as well as other legal entities can become members of the Friends of the European Choral Association.

FriendsOfEca.org

In 2023, the European Choral Association had around **60** regional and national organisations as **members** in **33 countries**.

Our members are actively involved through:

- Membership days
- Working groups
- Consultations
- Online voting

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

WELCOME

TO THE EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION



we connect people through

EDUCATIONAL SINGING ACTIVITIES

FESTIVALS • TRAININGS • PROJECTS

MEETINGS • AWARDS • CONFERENCES

all over continental Europe.

why?

- We love collective singing, we want to share it!
- We promote peace and solidarity
- We want to exchange and learn from each other

did you know?

4,5% of the European population are actively involved in collective singing

SingingEurope.org

Dear readers, members and friends of the European Choral Association

As we reflect on the events of 2023, there is a backdrop of global conflicts, financial crises, alongside environmental concerns that continue to impact our lives and international choral events.

A highlight of 2023 undoubtedly was the immensely successful Europa Cantat junior festival held in Ghent, Belgium. It was a joyful week of music and the celebration of singing as the Festival showcased youth choral singing. A big thank you to Jeroen Keymullen, Marleen Moorgat, and all at Koor & Stem, the music commission for the Festival, and all who contributed to the Festival's great success. The World Youth Choir returned with an alumni session in Croatia, Slovenia, and Hungary in June 2023 marked a significant milestone, paving the way for a regular summer session in 2024 – a testament to our enduring commitment to nurturing young choral talent, through our partnership as co-organiser of the Choir.

2023 was also a year when time was taken to consider the strategy for the EuroChoir's future and the choir will officially transition to become the European Youth Choir in the coming years. I also fondly remember our 60th Anniversary celebrations during 2023 particularly a concert and reception held in Bonn to mark this significant milestone. It was a joy to meet in Vilnius for our General Assembly in Lithuania, where we gathered with members and friends for

enriching discussions, networking opportunities, and, of course, the joy of shared music-making.

Furthermore, I am delighted to report significant strides in our commitment to diversity, equity, and

inclusion within the choral landscape as we focused on these topics as part of our strategic plans and in fulfillment of our programme as part of IGNITE network funding from the European Union. We also focussed on extending the reach of our choral community through our regional development strategy and I am delighted to say that those efforts have been successful and we are now in a strong position to reach countries that have previously not been connected to us as closely. This work is ongoing as we reach out and connect to people in our target countries.

In our ongoing efforts to promote choral excellence and collaboration, we had the second year of our EU-funded network project IGNITE, offering additional activities such as funding schemes, webinars, and online networking sessions. We also initiated two new projects funded under the EU Creative Europe programme, namely Choral TIES and SWAN, further expanding our scope and impact within the choral community.

I want to acknowledge the hard work of my fellow board members, our dedicated executive staff led by Sonja Greiner, and the numerous working groups of the Association who give their time to the federation to ensure that we meet our strategic aims, the talented music commissions that work at our events, and the many other artists and musicians who have contributed to our work. The Youth Committee of the Association is a vital part of our work and they make both active and meaningful contributions to the growth and future direction of our Association. We are grateful to them for their ideas, activities and contribution to our work.

With gratitude for your continued support,

Dermot O'Callaghan
President



Welcome to this seventh edition of our Annual Report in which we are looking back at the year 2023 which was a year in which we felt that in some ways the choral world was “back to normal” after the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, the ongoing war in the Ukraine, new conflicts and wars added in 2023, the continued financial crisis, as well as global developments such as climate change had an impact and partly will continue to have an impact on people’s life and on international choral events.

The highlight of 2023 was the very successful Europa Cantat junior festival in Ghent, Belgium, which brought together over 1.000 children and young people for a week full of joy and music in rehearsals, choir concerts, open singing and the amazing final atelier concerts. We were also very happy that the World Youth Choir was finally back with an alumni session in Croatia, Slovenia and Hungary in June 2023, and that we were able to announce a regular summer session for 2024, the first one after the anniversary session in 2019. There was no EuroChoir session in 2023, yet we already worked with the Bulgarian Choir Union and a EuroChoir alumnus on the 2024 session in Bulgaria and we prepared the future of this special activity from 2025 when it will turn into the European Youth Choir.

We celebrated our 60th anniversary with a concert and reception in Bonn in June, and with our members at the membership weekend in Vilnius, Lithuania, in November. There we gathered 120 (potential) members and friends for intense days of networking, discussions, the exchange of examples of good practice and our formal general assembly, as well as wonderful concerts, informal

meetings and spontaneous common singing in the hotel bar in the evening with the famous “family feeling” which is very important for our association.

We also had several events under the label of the European Choral Association in 2023, such as the Walter Strauss Choral Conducting Masterclass in Ankara, the Festival di Primavera in Montecatini Terme as well as the Academy for Conductors in Fano in Italy, and we supported the IFCM World Symposium in Istanbul, the Africa Cantat Festival in Yaoundé (Cameroon) as well as the 10th edition of the America Cantat Festival in La Plata (Argentina).

Next to these events, we were in the 2nd year of the EU-funded network project IGNITE through which we offered many additional activities such as funding schemes, webinars and online networking sessions, we closed the project Training Leading Voices and started two new projects funded under the EU Creative Europe programme, Choral TIES and SWAN.

On the following pages you will find reports and pictures that will take you back to events you attended in 2023 or will give you an idea of what you missed. In addition, you will be able to read background articles on gender equality and equity, and how to use choir concerts to raise awareness for environmental sustainability. Enjoy!

Sonja Greiner
Secretary General







ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

2023

COOPERATION EVENTS

These events are designed by the European Choral Association and travel between different countries. They have a typical structure which remains the same with some aspects adapted each time.

The European Choral Association is involved in the artistic design and the most important decision making processes and the participation fees include reduced fees for direct and indirect members of the European Choral Association as well as for participants from specific country groups (fee system of the European Choral Association based on a solidarity principle).

In some cases, the European Choral Association is the only organiser.



© Wim Gelders for Europa Cantat Junior 2023

world youth choir alumni session

3-12/06/2023

ORGANISERS

Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary
World Youth Choir Foundation
(European Choral Association,
JM International, International
Federation for Choral Music)



Various organisations have collaborated to make the 2023 session possible. These partners include **JM Croatia, Ministry of Culture and Media of Croatia, JSKD, JM Hungary, Veszprém-Balaton 2023** and the **European Music Council**.

The World Youth Choir Alumni Session 2023 was the first session since the anniversary session held in 2019 in France and Portugal. It is an important step for the choir to be back after four years of interruption due to covid.

For this session, the choir was composed of **40 alumni singers** - who took part in a WYC session from 2016 to 2019 - from **26 different countries**. The choir gathered for a short rehearsal session and international tour in Croatia, Slovenia and Hungary, from 3-12 June 2023.

The choir performed under the artistic direction of Zoltán Pad (Hungary) and the guest conductor Sebastjan Vrhovnik (Slovenia) for the performances in Grožnjan (Croatia) and Ljubljana (Slovenia).

worldyouthchoir.org

It was the being together again after covid ... the joy and enthusiasm, and just the sheer pleasure they felt after the silence of the last four years [that made it] a fantastic experience on many levels.

Ki Adams, President of the Board of the World Youth Choir Foundation.

After all of the pain and tears of cancelled projects, hopeless dreams, and years of begging the universe for any opportunity to see each other again, I will spend the rest of my life being thankful for those incredible days where we suspended life itself to delight in each other's company, incredible abilities, and endless optimism to build a better world through music.

Graeme Climie, alumni singer

europa cantat junior festival 2023

KOOR &
STEM

EA
EUROPEAN
CHORAL
ASSOCIATION

ghent:



5-13/07/2023

Ghent, Belgium

ORGANISERS

European Choral Association in cooperation with
Koor&Stem vzw and VFJK (Flemish Federation of
Young Choirs)

1200 singers

55 choirs

from 15 countries

From 5 to 13 July 2023, hundreds of young singers from all over the continent gathered in Ghent. They came here to sing together and to enjoy fine ateliers, beautiful concerts and special moments of friendship in a great international atmosphere.



As an atelier leader I enjoy being at an event with so many conductors from all over the world, who share the same passion. Not just the kids, but we too can learn so much from each other.

P. Smith, atelier conductor



© Wim Gelders for EuropaCantatJunior2023



11 ATELIERS

Each atelier leader prepared a different programme for the festival, which varied in difficulty, genres, and intended age groups. The outcomes were presented during the final concert. The ateliers included:

Tracy Wong (CA/MY) - BEYOND BORDERS | Merging voice and movement

Basilio Astulez (ES) - TONGUE TWISTERS | Fun songs for boys and girls

Kadri Hunt (EE) - THE POWER OF SONG AND DANCE | Music from the Baltic Countries

Rohan Poldervaart (NL) - GROOVE STORIES | Pop for choirs

Paul Smith (UK) - THE VOCES8 METHOD | Renaissance, folk, pop and jazz a capella!

Michael Barrett (ZA) - WHERE AFRICA MEETS THE WEST | Sing and dance the South African way

Erica Mandillo (PT) - WORLD TRAVELLERS | Universal emotions in songs

Dieter Staelens (BE) - FROM DUSK TILL DAWN | Atmospheric songs

Birgitte Næslund Madsen (DK) - EXPLORING THE NORTH

Ken Wakia (KE/UK) - TUIMBE PAMOJA | Let's sing together

Jan Schumacher (DE) - SONGS OF LOVE & HOPE

STUDY TOUR

The study tour consisted of a full-day programme for choir conductors, music students, and anyone interested in singing with children, led by Inge Sykora (BE) and Linas Balandis (LT).

OPEN SINGING

Many call it the most fun of any Europa Cantat festival: open singing! All participants gathered every day to enjoy singing all together. Tom Johnson (BE) conducted this activity.

CHOIR-TO-CHOIR CONCERTS

During the choir-to-choir concerts, choirs from all over the world presented themselves to the audience and to the other choirs.

FINAL CONCERT

The final concerts took place on Wednesday 12 July in the Ghent opera house and were live streamed online.

EuropacantatJunior.org

membership weekend 2023



17-19/11/2023

Vilnius, Lithuania

ORGANISERS

**European Choral Association in cooperation with the
Lithuanian National Cultural Centre & the Lithuanian
Choral Association**

With over **120 participants** from **26 countries** all over Europe, we discussed and brainstormed key topics for our sector, revisited past activities, and shared our vision for the future in the beautiful city of Vilnius, Lithuania. Participants had the chance to learn, bond, and strengthen connections, as well as enjoy amazing concerts in impressive locations. And last but not least, we raised a toast to celebrate our association's 60th anniversary all together.

MEMBERS PROJECT PRESENTATION

During this inspiring hybrid session which took place in Vilnius and was live-streamed online, some of our members and friends showcased innovative projects they are carrying out.





MEMBERSHIP DAY DISCUSSION SESSIONS

On Friday afternoon the members met in parallel groups to learn about old and new projects, get inspired, and add their opinion and their ideas. The available sessions were: "The European Choral Association in a nutshell", "Fostering cooperation within our sector", "Brainstorming on (our) future events and activities", "Gender diversity in the choral sector", "Choirs' and event organisers' wishes and challenges", and "Brainstorming on needs of national and regional choir associations".

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As usual, we looked back at what we have achieved in 2023 and ahead at our plans for the next years.

PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

- "How to make your events more environmentally sustainable & inclusive" with Sophie Dowden (FR/UK) and Linnéa E. Vågen Svensson (NO)
- "Ancient melodies: a workshop of traditional Lithuanian multipart singing" with Damiël Bagdonavičienė (LT)

DISCOVERING LITHUANIAN CHORAL MUSIC

- Concert by "Jauna Musika"
- Concert by "Liepaites Girls Choir"

60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

With a reception Saturday evening and a special anniversary cake we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the official foundation of the European Federation of Young Choirs (later Europa Cantat, now European Choral Association).

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/activities/membershipweekend



These activities were organised in the frame of the IGNITE project co-funded by the EU (p.32).

ONLINE ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

WEBINARS

- **COLLECTIVE SINGING AS INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**
with Silja Fischer (DE), Janis Ozols (LV), Ieva Krivickaite (LT) | 29/03/2023
- **WHEN CHORAL MUSIC ISN'T ENOUGH**
with Robert Hollingworth (UK) | 17/05/2023
- **CHOIRS FOR ECOCIDE LAW**
with Merzi Rajala (FI), Kirsi Kaunismäki-Suhonen (FI) and Peder Karlsson (SE) | 20/09/2023

MEMBERS' PROJECT PRESENTATION

- **HYBRID SESSION AT THE MEMBERSHIP WEEKEND | 18/11/23**
12 presentations from 12 countries
2 presenters online, 3 video recordings, 8 live presentations

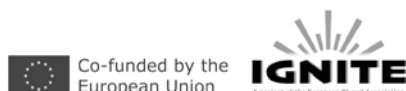
MEMBERS' ONLINE NETWORKING CAFE

- **SING ME IN REVISITED**
with members of Youth Committee | 7/11/2023

youtube.com/c/EuropeanChoralAssociation/videos



© Gabriellus Jauniskis for MembershipWeekend2023



These activities were organised in the frame of the IGNITE project co-funded by the EU (p.32).

FINANCIAL SUPPORT SCHEMES

IGNITE GRANTS FOR THE INTERNALISATION AND GREATER INCLUSIVITY OF EVENTS

The European Choral Association offered grants to help choral events organisers to cover additional costs connected to the internationalisation or greater inclusivity of their events.

After launching the first call in spring 2023, we received **15** applications from **13** different countries.

The Commission awarded **4** financial grants to the following projects:

- Music - supporting people in depression | Katowice, Poland – 7-15 October 2023
- XL Resurrexit Festival - Study tour | Šialiluai, Lithuania – 10-16 April 2023
- International Day of Music – A concert by Blind & partially sighted people | Tirana, Albania – 21 June 2023
- Women in choral conducting | Madrid, Spain – 15-17 March 2024

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/activities/financial-support-schemes/ignitegrants

PEER TO PEER TRAINING

The European Choral Association offered financial support for setting up international peer-to-peer training and learning opportunities in the field of collective singing.

This is an ongoing programme that offers participants the chance to spend some days learning from each other, sharing experiences, enlarging their networks and getting an insight into a foreign (work) culture.

In 2023, 3 Peer to Peer exchanges were realised. In particular, we supported:

- the leader of the vocal group Afro Vocals (SE) visiting Tanzania
- the exchange of the conductors Stephan Lutherman (DE) and Bask Dougan (TR), who were working with each other's choir in Turkey and Germany.
- the visit of the Ukrainian conductor Ruben Tolmachev at the United Lithuanian children's Choir

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/activities/financial-support-schemes/peer-to-peer-training/

CONNECTORS

One of the objectives of the European Choral Association for the period 2022-2024 is to implement a new regional development strategy (see pag. 53) through the so-called European Choral Association short-term Choral Connectors.

We offer funding to our members and friends to help us to learn more about the culture and the choral landscape of target countries, as well as discover examples of good practice, establish new contacts and strengthen relationships with existing ones.

In 2023, we supported one connector from Lebanon who connected us with the Armenian choral scene in the process of planning a study tour to Armenia.

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/activities/regional-development



These activities were organised in the frame of the IGNITE project co-funded by the EU (p.32).

EVENTS UNDER OUR LABEL

Events for choirs, singers, conductors, composers or managers with differing and flexible structure and programmes. The artistic programme is developed in partnership with the European Choral Association and the participation fees are based on the European Choral Association's system.

WALTER STRAUSS CHORAL CONDUCTING MASTERCLASS

22-28/01/2023

Ankara, Türkiye

ORGANISERS

Koro Kültürü Derneği

The seventh edition of the Walter Strauss Masterclass hosted the renowned German choral conductor **Georg Grün**. Active participants had the chance to work individually for one week with Grün and rehearse with the Turkish State Choir during the masterclass, while the listener could attend all rehearsals and take part in group lessons.

korokulturu.org

FESTIVAL DI PRIMAVERA

13-15/04/2023 &

Montecatini Terme, Italy

19-22/04/2023

ORGANISERS

**Feniarco in collaboration with ACT
(Tuscany Regional Choral Association)**

Europe's most important festival addressed to school choirs started again, in 2023, with the 18th edition. The focus of the festival was on **education**, **sharing experiences** and **discovery** of the territory. The days went by with study ateliers, concerts, sightseeing, friendships with other choirs and participants from all over Italy and abroad, moments of relaxation and lots of fun.

feniarco.it

EUROPEAN ACADEMY FOR CHORAL CONDUCTORS

27/08-03/09/2023

Fano, Italy

ORGANISERS

**in collaboration with ARCOM (Marche Regional
Choral Association)**

The European Academy is a professional masterclass addressed to experienced choir conductors. The lecturer for the 2023 edition was **Brady Allred** (USA).

feniarco.it

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS SUPPORTED BY US

Different types of International choral events organised by partner organisations or organisations in which the European Choral Association is a member, and which follow the three principles described above. The concept, structure and artistic programme are developed by the local organisers alone and the European Choral Association has no responsibility for the quality of these events.

WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON CHORAL MUSIC

25-30/04/2023

Istanbul, Türkiye

ORGANISERS

IFCM event, hosted by Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and organised by Choral Culture Association

wscmistanbul2023.com

AFRICA CANTAT

1-6/08/2023

Yaounde, Cameroon

ORGANISERS

African Confederation for Choral Music with Les Amis du Choeur Madrigal du Cameroon. With the support of IFCM, A Coeur Joie International and the European Choral Association

facebook.com/africacantatfestival/

AMERICA CANTAT

11-15/10/2023

La Plata, Argentina

ORGANISERS

Asociación Argentina para la Música Coral "America Cantat" (AAMCANT)

facebook.com/america.cantat.10/

BEYOND 2023

This list includes the events taking place after 2023 which were confirmed at the time this report goes to press. Dates may be subject to change, please check our website or the website of the organisers for the latest updates.

2024

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| January | 22-28/01/2024 | Walter Strauss Choral Conducting Masterclass | Ankara (TR) |
| April | 11-13/04/2024 17-20/04/2024 | Festival di Primavera | Montecatini Terme (IT) |
| July | 02-07/07/2024 | Study Tour to the 100th Anniversary of the Lithuanian Song Celebration | Vilnius (LT) |
| | 04-17/07/2024 | Eurochoir | Varna (BG) |
| | 08-14/07/2024 | International Choral Festival Barcelona | Barcelona (ES) |
| | 14-21/07/2024 | European Seminar for Composers | Aosta (IT) |
| | 22-27/07/2024 | Singing Bridges Festival | Novi Sad (RS) |
| August | 07-11/08/2024 | Artic Boys Choir Festival | Bodø (NO) |
| | 18/08-08/09/2024 | World Youth Choir summer session 2024 with German National Youth Orchestra | Germany and Italy |
| September | 14-20/09/2024 | Study Tour to Georgia and/or | Tbilisi (GE) |
| | 20-26/09/2024 | Study Tour to Armenia | Yerevan (AM) |
| October | 18-20/10/2024 | Fosco Corti International Competition for choral conductors | Turin (IT) |
| November | 15-17/11/2024 | Membership Weekend 2024 | Flanders (BE) |



Cooperation event of the European Choral Association



Event under the label of the European Choral Association

Mark your calendar for these upcoming choral events!

2025/2026

| | | | |
|---------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| July | 06-10/07/2025 | Leading Voices | Tallin (EE) |
| October | 23-27/10/2025 | RelaxSing Costa Barcelona | Santa Susanna (ES) |
| July | 11-19/07/2026 | Europa Cantat junior | Girona (ES) |

Check our website from July 2024 for the complete list of Cooperation Events and Events under the label of the European Choral Association taking place in 2025.



© Feniarco





ARTICLES 2023

GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE COLLECTIVE SINGING SECTOR

by **Sophie Dowden**, project consultant at the *European Choral Association*,
Joana Costa and **Alba Rooda Martinez**, members of the *European Choral Association Youth Committee*

Across decades of action, the women's rights movement has made significant strides globally, advocating for gender equality in various spheres, including collective singing. More recently, we have also seen a surge in awareness of gender diversity and the deconstruction of the gender binary. Despite these advances, in 2024 we still see biases, imbalances and injustices persist, some more evident, some more subtle.

Distinct from biological sex, gender *“refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women ... These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialisation processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable.”*¹

Gender diversity meanwhile refers to the fact that peoples' identities and self-expression can fall outside binary gender norms (man / woman) and that this can be subject to change over time, whether permanently or fluidly. Gender identities are various, but include transgender, cisgender, non-binary and genderqueer/genderfluid identities.

Marginalisation of people due to their gender or gender identity can also intersect with other characteristics, preferences and backgrounds of an individual, including geographic origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other statuses.

It can be tempting to believe that “gender blindness” or “gender identity blindness” can be a solution to biases, imbalances and injustices. However, this approach fails to recognise the particular barriers that are faced by people who are marginalised due to their gender or gender identity. The final effect is that it serves to maintain the status quo at the expense of marginalised people and fortifies the unequal structure of gender relations rather than dismantling it.

Singing Europe and Beyond

Statistics on gender among singers in Europe were gathered by the European Choral Association in 2015 in the Singing Europe study:

*“Through our various sources, we can confirm that male singers constitute a third of the “singing Europe”. But we were also able to confirm that they are statistically either part of a mixed choir, where they stay in the minority, or part of all male choirs: We found very little evidence of mixed choirs with a majority of male singers.”*²

*“In most countries about a third of the singers are male. This general tendency is confirmed by our qualitative survey. Nevertheless, countries such as Poland seem to show almost an equilibrium between genders. Estonia distinguishes by the highest percentage of female singers.”*³

The gender imbalance among singers was rightly highlighted in this study. Furthermore, it should be recognised that the gender binary itself can pose further and different issues for choirs. For instance, this includes voice parts being traditionally associated with men or women or clothing being assigned either to men or to women.

1 UN Women Gender Equality Glossary

2 Singing Europe, 2015, p.7

3 Singing Europe, 2015, p.34



When we speak, the language we choose can make someone feel more or less safe and like they belong. We can learn to be more inclusive by avoiding terms that refer to biological sex (for example, male / female singers) and instead by preferring gender neutral terms (for example, referring to singers by their vocal parts). If we were to revise the study above for instance, we would refer to singers by their gender identity (men, women, nonbinary singers).

Youth Committee Gender Think Tank

To foster dialogue regarding this topic, the Youth Committee of the European Choral Association initiated a Think Tank addressing Gender Diversity within the choral sector. Two online meetings were organised: one involving various cultural organisations, and another with young individuals connected to the choral sector who have a connection to this particular topic.

These two sessions were focused on both the challenges the sector is facing (for example. a lack of inclusive guidelines for people who don't fit in the gender binary, a lack of women in leadership positions, etc.), the underlying issues that lead to those challenges, as well as possible practical solutions which could be implemented.

Following the first two sessions, a third session was organised in November during the Membership Weekend of the European Choral Association in Vilnius, Lithuania. This session was open to any members who wanted to join the discussion. The aim was to hear everyone's thoughts on the topic by sharing any relevant experiences they've had, dig into the root causes behind these experiences and brainstorm potential solutions together.

During these sessions, the participants not only shared many personal experiences concerning gender, but also raised issues they had encountered in the choral sector. People shared stories about nonbinary singers who did not feel comfortable with a strict dress code for men and women, there were conversations about a lack of balance in gender representation in different parts of the sector, which might discourage young people to pursue a certain career, and different views on ways of increasing the amount of men and boys in choirs were shared.

Throughout these sessions, it became clear that there are many topics regarding gender in the choral sector that need attention. One of the ways of addressing these topics that came up during the sessions, was to construct a



series of recommendations, which choirs and organisations can use to increase gender diversity. At the time of writing, the current Youth Committee is drafting a first version of recommendations specifically aimed at creating safe spaces in choirs for those singers who do not fit into the gender binary. These recommendations will be written with the help of the participants of the Think Tank meetings, and will be shared with the membership of the European Choral Association towards the end of this year.

Gender is a vast topic, and it is the aim of the European Choral Association to continue after these recommendations with multiple chapters on other topics regarding gender, for example the gender distribution in the conducting world and in leadership positions in the sector, as well as ways to attract more boys and men as singers, amongst others. With this effort, the European Choral Association hopes to help develop a more inclusive and diverse choral sector, in which people from all gender identities feel welcome and safe.

Are you inspired after reading this article, or were you part of the session during the Membership Weekend in Vilnius, and do you want to keep the conversation going?

Please feel free to contact our Youth Committee! We would be very happy to talk to you about your own experiences. You can contact us at

youthcommittee@europeanchoralassociation.com.

CHOIRS FOR ECOCIDE LAW

by Merzi Rajala, Artistic Director of the *Choirs for Ecocide Law* project



Choirs for Ecocide Law is an artistic popular music choral project, the main purpose of which is to spread awareness about the need to make large-scale environmental destruction (ecocide¹) an international crime, as an addition to the Rome Statute, alongside the international criminal laws that came into force earlier.

Choirs for Ecocide Law is not a politically orientated project, as it acts equally for all humans on the planet regardless of their race, ethnic background, age, gender, religion, political thoughts, economic status or geographic location.

The project, which is supported by the European Choral Association, was first launched at the World Symposium of Choral Music in Istanbul in April 2023.

The idea underlying the project is that art – in this case music – can communicate and transform information very effectively as it reaches us not only cognitively, but also on a more experiential and emotional level. Choirs for Ecocide Law offers a tool for singers to act for the environment, in their own community, through singing. The project invites all the singers around the world to participate, learn and perform a programme concert and to organise a panel discussion after the concert with their local community, experts and politicians.

The project provides a 60-minute concert program called "Let us change the rules!" to be performed by any choir for free. The programme is a carefully thought storyline of 15

popular music songs. To create the storyline, the core team asked several international composers to write songs for this specific purpose around related themes. As a result, the lyrics of the songs represent diverse voices and emotions around ecocide and show how we are all connected around the globe. The storyline highlights the lack of international rules and offers the positive solution of adding the new ecocide law. Overall, the core message of the concert is to provide a voice for a positive opportunity to nurture our common planet.

Beyond this, the project also foresees the organisation of high-level panel discussions connected to the concert focusing on the need to have a new international law on ecocide. We have experienced that music can effectively open channels to communication through a holistic perspective and therefore connecting a panel discussion to the concert may create a very fruitful frame for discussion. Local organisations involved in "Law for Ecocide" can help choirs in selecting and inviting panelists as well as in supporting them to moderate the discussion.

ARTISTIC ACTIVISM as CHOIR CONDUCTORS

Choirs for Ecocide Law started as an artistic activism project in which the core team chose to use their own expertise area – choral singing – as a tool for nature.

We chose to aim **to spread the awareness of ecocide law via singing**, so that the target group is the singers themselves, and we assumed that along with the singers, the information would also reach their families, communities and audiences.

¹ Ecocide is broadly understood to mean mass damage and destruction of ecosystems – severe harm to nature which is widespread or long-term.

We also acknowledge that other people feel the need to take action in defense of the environment, as we experience a shared despair and feelings of helplessness connected to the topics of climate change, ocean damage, plastic pollution, chemical disasters, oil spills, biodiversity loss - to mention just a few.

This brought us to the other aspect and goal of the project – to offer an artistic tool for singers **to express and to deal with their own feelings and thoughts** connected to this topic in their own choir and community **through singing**.

The pedagogical intent is to offer a platform for choirs to move through a thinking and learning process. While practising the music, storyline and the lyrics, the singers are invited to look deeper at the content and to discuss their own environment and experiences. Through the pre-written workshop material and group tasks, the singers will learn about the positive ripple effect that criminalising ecocide could have on our society.

Criminalising ecocide internationally would change the aesthetics of many harmful decisions, making the decisions of decisionmakers a personal responsibility. That would have a positive impact not only on business, banking and insurance practices, but also our joint value system and practices around the globe.



I never ever can read the newspapers in the same way I did before this project

In the process it is important to reserve enough time to be able to facilitate the collaborative learning process: “In a psychologically safe environment, recognizing one’s own and other’s feelings is important, because it is the feelings that determine our attitude to change (Ponteva, p.29)”² Finally, the rehearsal process leads to the concert, where the choir passes “the challenge of acting for ecocide law” to the audience.

If the texts had been just read at the event without music (singing), the message would not have gone nearly as well through. In singing, you go deep inside a person.

As previously mentioned, our primary target group is the singers themselves. We trust them to carry the information to their homes and families and later invite a couple of friends or relatives to the concert. That makes every singer count for 5-7 more people knowing about the Ecocide Law. Keeping in mind that in Europe alone we have around 37.000.000 choral singers,³ we are aiming high!

Currently, 141 choirs from several countries have already signed, including Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Lithuania, Belgium, France, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, Türkiye, Thailand, Uganda, Kenya, the USA, Canada, the UK and India. Although our starting point is in Europe, the vision is to get our project to spread to other continents, where the will for legal protection for nature is even lower.

² Managing emotions in change. The non-parliamentary influence of choral singing. (Kirsi Kaunismäki-Suhonen 2024, University of applied science, Helsinki)

³ According to the European Choral Association, see [SingingEurope.org](https://www.singingeurope.org)

Inclusivity

For maximum inclusivity (within our resources as voluntary artists) all the songs are arranged for three diverse choir forms (SATB, SSA, UNISONO) and all the material is available free of charge. The project provides access to rehearsing tracks, audible material, media material and scores both in printable and digital form.

I thought this is just some politically orientated critics, but then I realized this is not in an agenda of one party but is a thing that really speaks on behalf of us all in this planet.

Our partner, ChoirMate, donates free access to their application for CfEL projects, where the same scores and rehearsing tracks are available for example for phone or laptop users.

The nature of the material is flexible and can be performed in very small events (one instrument + one voice) but also in huge productions with multiple choirs, soloists and a band. Through the project, we want to encourage local communities to come together and join forces. As all the lyrics are in English, the participants are invited to contribute and add their own proposals to the translation bank on our resources page. It is very important that every singer and listener has a clear understanding of the content, both in the rehearsing process and in the concert program books.

Does choirs for ecocide law actually matter?

According to the research part of our project, participating in the project really changed the perspectives of the participants towards global ecological sustainability.⁴

The singers have reported that the experience was important and empowering. They report to have learned much in the process and that the process changed their perception of the global situation and legislation.

Several research group singers wrote about an “awakening” about their own activities or environmental issues, as well as on the importance of cooperation. Indeed, “nature conservation is more everyone's business, not just the few”.⁵

According to the research's results, 91,3% of the choirs involved had experienced a change in their world of thought and emotions during the project.

Art is a great vehicle to people's hearts. No matter how much information we get into our cognitive minds, we do not change our behaviour unless something touches us emotionally. We now pass the torch to you and wish you an inspirational journey wherever you go and sing!

CHOIRS FOR ECOCIDE LAW CORE GROUP

Merzi Rajala, Finland – artistic director

Kirsi Kaunismäki-Suhonen, Finland – executive producer

Peder Karlsson, Sweden - executive producer

The entire work has been created as a non-profit, free volunteer work by artists and the working team. Our work is done as a donation to Mother Earth.

The European Choral Association, Stop Ecocide International, Choir Mate, Edition Ferrimontana and several people and organisations from different countries support the project.

The patron of the project is the former president of Finland, Tarja Halonen.

All project materials are available for any choir in the world for free and can be found on stopecocide.earth/choirs

⁴ Managing emotions in change. The non-parliamentary influence of choral singing. (Kirsi Kaunismäki-Suhonen 2024, University of applied science, Helsinki)

⁵ Ibid.



© Gabrielius Jauniskis for Membership Weekend 2023





MULTIANNUAL PROJECTS 2023

IGNITE

IGNiting an Inclusive and sustainable future for collective singing Throughout Europe

2021–2024

CO-FUNDED BY THE EU CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME
UNDER THE STRAND FOR NETWORK PROJECTS
WITH 275.000 PER YEAR



IGNITE is a project of the European Choral Association, dealing with collective singing at the heart of the revitalisation of post-pandemic Europe, due to its effects on the health and wellbeing of the individual and society. From December 2021 until November 2024, IGNITE shall contribute to the European Green Deal, increase **diversity, inclusion and equity** in the sector, **strengthen the network**, increase its **representativeness, empower and train** people in the sector, increasing their capacity to become **resilient and sustainable**, be active internationally, **cooperate** at a European level, and make use of modern technology.

In 2023 the European Choral Association within the IGNITE project:

- offered the Membership Weekend 2023 in Vilnius, Lithuania and online gatherings;
- continued enhancing youth participation and peer-to-peer training;
- continued growing the network with a regional development strategy;
- offered further physical and online training opportunities on environmental issues, inclusion and gender equality;
- disseminated guidelines and handbooks through the resources section of our website;
- offered grants for the internationalisation & inclusivity of events;
- continued working with the #BenefitsOfSinging awareness campaign started in 2021 and curating the research database on collective singing;
- continued advocating for music, singing in music education, amateur arts and other topics together with other European and international networks;
- continued developing a strategy for the years 2025 – 2030 with the Singtank which gathered for its first live meeting.

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/ignite



Co-funded by the
European Union

TRAINING LEADING VOICES

for the professionalisation of vocal and choral leaders in Europe and the internationalisation of their careers

2020–2023

CO-FUNDED BY THE EU CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME

PROJECT COORDINATOR: ZIMIHC

CO-COORDINATOR: EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION



The project sought to contribute to the professionalisation of vocal and choral leaders in Europe and the internationalisation of their careers through events in France, Italy, Slovenia and the Netherlands, centring on “Leading Voices”, a new major European event for vocal and choral leaders that was held in Utrecht in July 2022.

After first adaptation of the project during the COVID-19 pandemic, and successful events in 2022, including the presentation of results at our 2022 Membership Weekend in Novi Sad, the project was wrapped up and the reporting done and approved in 2023.

PARTNERS

ZIMIHC (Coordinator)

zimihc.nl

European Choral Association (Co-coordinator)

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

À Coeur Joie

choralies.org

Feniarco

feniarco.it

JSKD

jskd.si

Europa Cantat Utrecht

TrainingLeadingVoices.org

CHORAL TIES

Cross-border Training on International and European level for professionals in the field of Collective Singing

2023 - 2026

CO-FUNDED BY THE EU CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME



PROJECT COORDINATOR: EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION

The Choral TIES project offers Cross-border Training on International and European level for professionals in the field of Collective Singing and runs from 1 December 2023 to 31 May 2026. It is coordinated by the European Choral Association and will receive 186 649.00 € of co-funding from the European Union.

In addition to physical, hybrid and online training for choral conductors / vocal leaders, managers and composers, Choral TIES promotes youth participation and aims to provide training adapted to different needs and contexts, to train the trainers and others working in the field and to introduce a new online training tool.

Choral TIES aims to benefit hundreds of professionals within the European Union, in other European countries and beyond through:

1. making use of new technology and digital tools for training
2. strengthening international cooperation in the field of collective singing, especially with EU neighbours
3. using online and hybrid training formats to support access and environmental sustainability

Resources planned for development in the project include:

- guidelines on how to organise training activities
- the digital training tool “conductors coach” into several languages
- audiovisual documentation and recordings of streamed hybrid and online courses.

PARTNERS

European Choral Association (Coordinator) (DE)

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

Carus-Verlag (DE)

carus-verlag.com

Croatian Cultural Association (HR)

hrsk.hr

Estonian Choral Association (EE)

kooriyhing.ee

Some of the activities will be promoted in cooperation with the International Federation for Choral Music – IFCM

ChoralTies.eu



SWAN

Supporting People with Additional Needs in Collective Singing

2023 - 2026

CO-FUNDED BY THE EU CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME

PROJECT COORDINATOR: NORSK SANGERFORUM



The SWAN project (Singing with Additional Needs) draws on best practices from different European countries to include people with additional needs in collective singing. These additional needs may arise due to disabilities and/or physical or psychological health issues.

The project takes a holistic approach, taking into account the complexity and intersectionality of people's additional needs and the diversity of skills and approaches needed to welcome everyone.

The SWAN project aims to:

- collect, scale and promote best practices in collective singing for people with additional needs
- provide transnational opportunities for collective singing professionals to engage with the best practices of other countries
- develop and make use of digital tools to support people with additional needs in participating
- make knowledge internationally accessible

SWAN includes such activities as the development of digital tools and a best practices database, sharing research, experimentation with and evaluation of certain best practices, networking and knowledge-sharing through workshops, round-tables and conferences.

The project expects to benefit hundreds of amateur and professional singers with additional needs, choral conductors/vocal leaders, and organisers of future initiatives. We also hope to benefit thousands more with the resources and outputs created in the frame of the project, increasing the quality of inclusion of people with additional needs in collective singing as well as in the quantity of opportunities.

PARTNERS

Norsk Sangerforum (Coordinator) (NO)

sangerforum.no

European Choral Association (DE)

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

Kanker in Beeld (NL)

kankerinbeeld.nl

Sing Ireland (IE)

singireland.ie

With the contribution of the Turkish Choral Culture Association (TR)

SwanProject.eu



RESOURCES AND RESULTS FROM EU-FUNDED PROJECTS

SINGING EUROPE

Statistics on Collective Singing in Europe, collected as part of the VOICE project

SingingEurope.org

TheVoiceProject.eu

SING ME IN

Handbooks on the use of collective singing as a tool for the inclusion of (young) migrants, four handbooks available for free download, 3 of which were translated into 10 languages in addition to English (German, Dutch, French, Norwegian, Spanish, Catalan, Estonian, Finnish, Turkish and Arabic)

SingMeIn.eu

EP:IC - EMERGING PROFESSIONALS / INTERNATIONALISATION OF MUSIC CAREERS

Data collection on careers of emerging musicians and four webinars for emerging professionals

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

STAMP

Toolbox and guidelines for (young) managers and Handbook for potential organisers of a training programme for (young) managers developed in the frame of the project STAMP, coordinated by the European Music Council

Stamp-Music.org

SHIFT

Resources for leaders of European cultural networks developed during the SHIFT project coordinated by the European Music Council, focusing on what culture can do to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development goals, especially for Climate Action (Environmental Sustainability), Reducing Inequalities (Inclusion) and Gender Balance (Sexual Harassment), as well as Cultural Leadership

Shift-Culture.eu

HANDBOOK ON YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

Developed by the Youth Committee of the European Choral Association as part of the project Upgrade – Connect – Reach Out: Raising Awareness for Collective Singing in Europe

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH CHOIRS IN MOVEMENT AS LOW-BUDGET EVENT

Developed as part of the project Upgrade – Connect – Reach Out: Raising Awareness for Collective Singing in Europe, based on the experience of the Youth Choirs in Movement Festival 2019 in Bonn

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

GUIDELINES ON WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

Developed in the framework of IGNITE, these guidelines aims to contribute to a more inclusive and accessible digital landscape

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

Guidelines and handbooks can be downloaded here:

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/resources/guidelines-and-handbooks

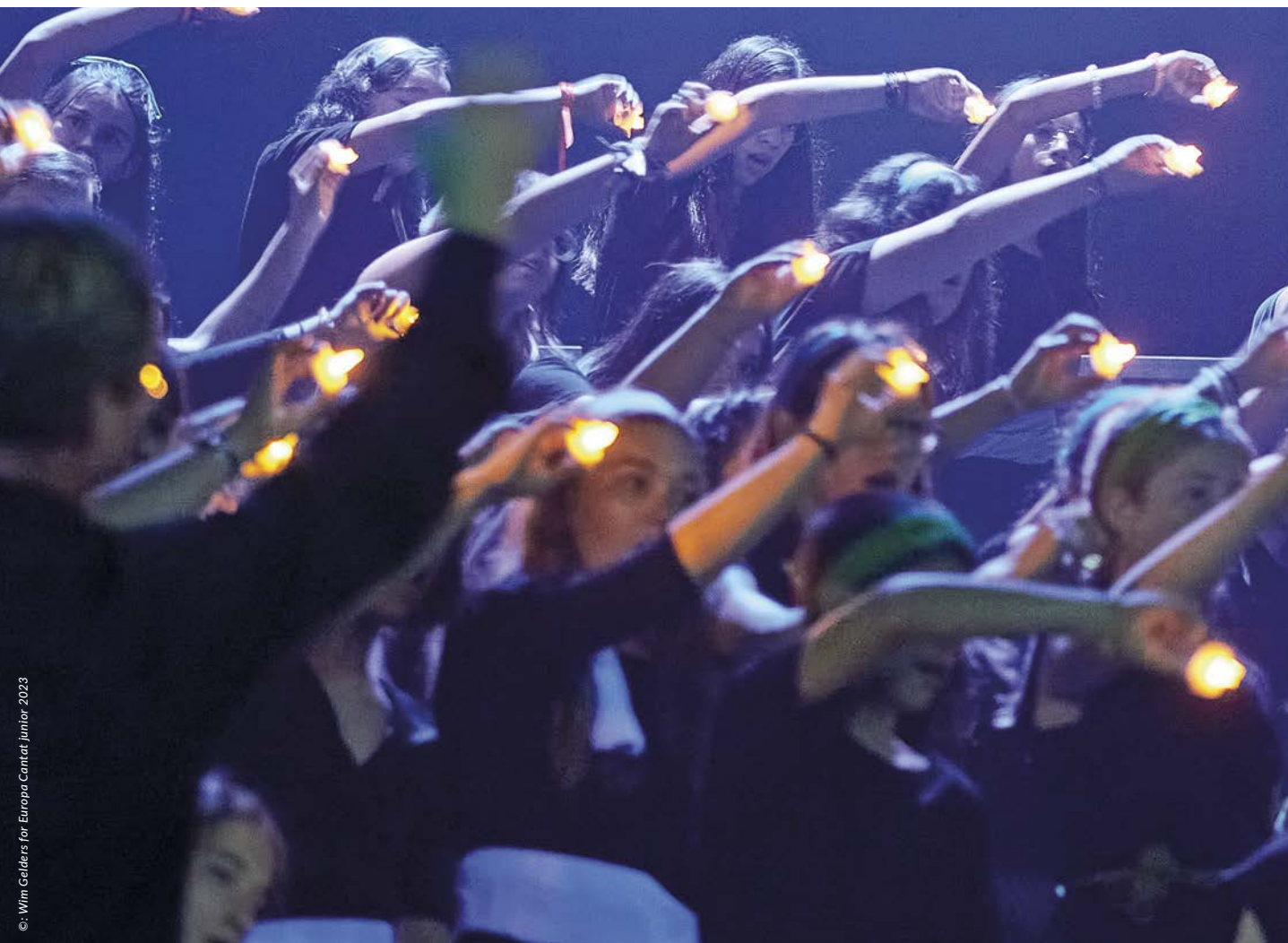


All these resources were co-funded by the EU through the Culture Programme, Creative Europe or Erasmus+.

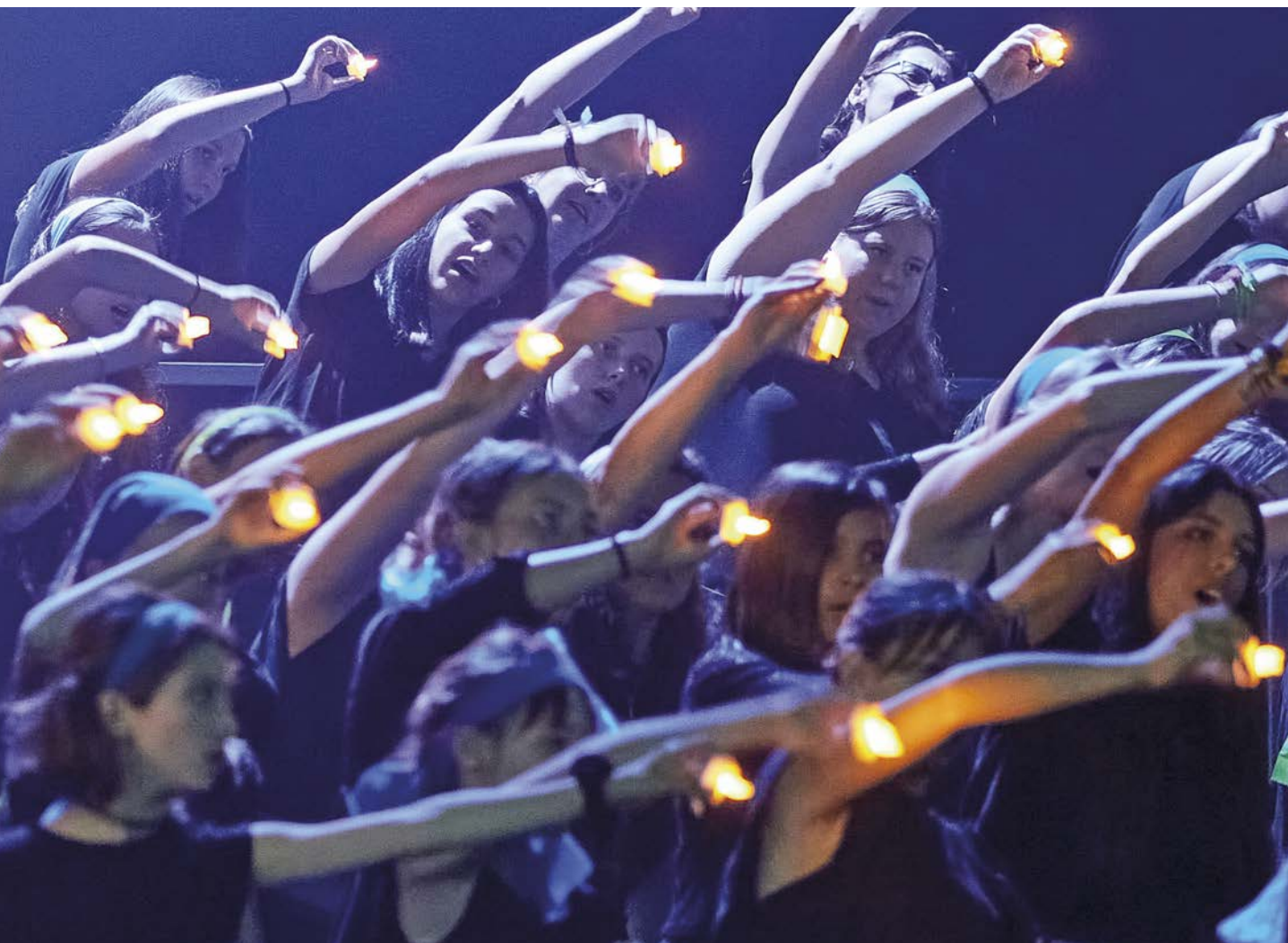


Co-funded by the
European Union





©: Wim Gelders for Europa Cantat Junior 2023



OUR NETWORK 2023

HISTORY

how it all began



Collective singing as an international tool to connect people and countries after World War II:

A group of conductors from different European countries, many of whom had been soldiers during the war, met during a youth event at Loreley (Germany) and discussed what would be the best way to make sure that their young singers would not want to go to war with each other.

1952

During the Tiroler Sängertag in Innsbruck representatives of choir associations in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland established the idea to promote choir singing by exchanging compositions, choirs and other initiatives throughout Europe, followed by the official foundation of AGECE in 1955.

1960

Informal founding meeting of the European Federation of Young Choirs in Geneva (Switzerland).

1961

First EUROPA CANTAT festival in Passau (Germany) ending just a few days before August 13th, 1961, when the wall between Western and Eastern Germany was closed.

Since then, we have been organising the festival every 3 years in a different country.



On the model of the French festival Choralies in Vaison-la-Romaine (France), they decided to create a festival in which the singers would not only sing for each other, but also participate together in different workshops.

They would be sleeping in the same accommodation, eating together and spending their free time together, thus making friends for life.

1963

Signing of the Élysée Treaty and foundation of the "European Federation of Young Choirs" in Bonn (later renamed "Europa Cantat")

2011

Merger between Europa Cantat – European Federation of Young Choirs (EFCY), founded in 1960/1963 and the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäischer Chorverbände (AGEC), founded in 1955.

2014

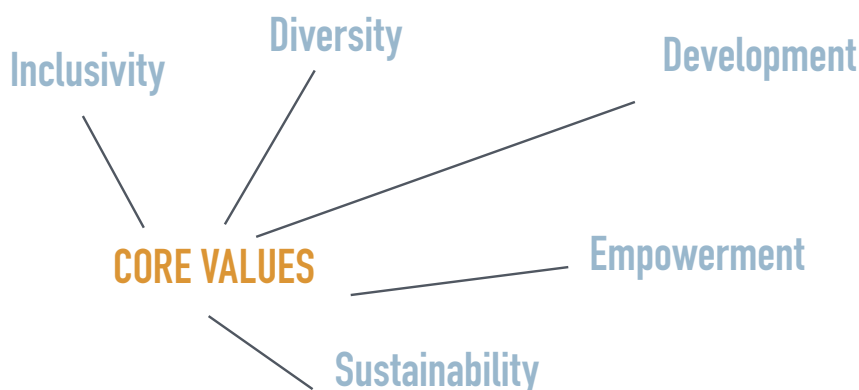
Incorporation of the archives and the history of IDOCO (Internationale des Organisations Culturelles Ouvrières) which dissolved at the end of 2013.

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/about-us/history

STRATEGY

values, vision and mission

We are a European non-profit organisation aimed at contributing to the mutual understanding among European nations, their music, their languages, and their cultural life.



As a democratic organisation, we respect the values as described in the Convention of the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression 2009, as well as in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and in the Five Music Rights formulated by the European/International Music Council:

- The right for all children and adults to express themselves musically in all freedom
- The right for all children and adults to learn musical languages and skills
- The right for all children and adults to have access to musical involvement through participation, listening, creation and information.
- The right for musical artists to develop their artistry and communicate through all media, with proper facilities
- The right for musical artists to obtain just recognition and fair remuneration.

The activities and the application to membership of the association are open to everyone, without any restriction based on political and religious opinion, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, cultural background or citizenship. Consequently, we have no links with ideological movements, religions or political parties.

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

Our vision is a world where everybody experiences the benefits of singing!

Our mission is to be the leading pan-European non-profit organisation dedicated to life-long learning and cultural exchange through collective singing. Since 1955, our aims are to promote singing as an art form and as a tool to connect people of all ages, with a focus on children and young people, to foster cooperation and understanding between cultures, nations and individuals across social and political borders by promoting, supporting, developing and organising activities and events, and to represent the collective singing sector.

strategic plan for 2020 – 2030

STRATEGY

In November 2020 our membership approved the following main strategic objectives for 2020 - 2030:

- Develop the network further
- Support and promote performances of diverse genres and groups
- Offer and support life-long capacity building and training
- Identify inspiring trends, promote innovation and encourage the exchange of examples of good practice
- Raise awareness of the benefits of collective singing
- Reach out

We connect to the international cultural field!

Membership and participation in activities are also open to non-Europeans. We are also connected to the choral world outside Europe and to other music and culture organisations through our membership.



We organise and promote activities and events for choirs/vocal ensembles, singers, vocal leaders/conductors, music creators/composers, music educators, managers, and organisations.

Our strategic aims shall be reached through these activities, which will also be evaluated and developed in view of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially with a view to environmental sustainability and inclusion / accessibility.

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/about-us/our-strategy

MEMBERS IN 2023

In 2021 it was decided to change the membership system so that starting from 2022 the European Choral Association only has member organisations and institutions divided in four categories.

CATEGORY A1: Organisations with choirs as indirect beneficiaries

All direct and indirect members of these organisations and institutions, choirs or ensembles and their members as well as individual members who can prove their membership will profit from reduced participation fees for indirect members at activities of the European Choral Association and in partnership with the European Choral Association, as long as the organisation is in good standing.

ARMENIA | Armenian Little Singers

AUSTRIA | Chorverband Österreich (ChVÖ)

BELGIUM | Fédération Chorale Wallonie – Bruxelles – A Cœur Joie ASBL

BELGIUM | Koor&Stem vzw

BELGIUM | Vlaamse Federatie van Jonge Koren (VFJK)

BULGARIA | Bulgarian Choir Union

ESTONIA | Eesti Kooriühing (Estonian Choral Association)

FINLAND | SULASOL (Finnish Amateur Musicians' Association)

FRANCE | A Cœur Joie (ACJ) France

FRANCE | Confédération Musicale de France (CMF)

GEORGIA | Georgian Choral Society

GERMANY | Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend e.V. (AMJ)

GERMANY | Deutscher Chorverband e.V.

GREECE | Hellenic Choirs Association

HUNGARY | KÓTA – Association of Hungarian Choirs and Orchestras

IRELAND | Sing Ireland

ISRAEL | Hallel – Israelian Choral Organisation

ITALY | Federazione Nazionale Italiana Associazioni Regionali Corali (FENIARCO)

ITALY | Südtiroler Chorverband

LIECHTENSTEIN | Fürstlich Liechtensteini-scher Sängerbund

THE NETHERLANDS | Koornetwerk Nederland

NORWAY | Norges Korforbund

NORWAY | Norsk sangerforum

NORWAY | Ung i Kor

NORWAY | Ung kirkesang (Young choristers)

PORTUGAL | Coros Portugal – Portuguese Association for Choral Music

ROMANIA | Asociatia National Coral din Romania (ANCR)

RUSSIA | Radost The Centre for the Creative Development and Music Aesthetic Education of Children and Youth

RUSSIA | Moscow Music Society

SERBIA | Serbian Choral Association

SLOVENIA | JSKD (Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities)

SPAIN | Confederación de Coros del País Vasco / Euskal Herriko Abesbatzen Elkarte (EAE)

SPAIN | Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corals (FCEC)

SPAIN | Federació de Coros de la Comunitat Valenciana (FECOCOVA)

SPAIN | Moviment Coral Català

SPAIN | Secretariat de Corals Infantils de Catalunya (SCIC)

SWEDEN | Sveriges Körförbund (Swedish Choral Association)

SWEDEN | UNGiKÖR

SWITZERLAND | Schweizerische Föderation Europa Cantat (SFEC)

SWITZERLAND | Schweizerische Chorvereini-
gung / Union Suisse des chorals / Unione
svizzera dei cori / Uniun svizra dals cors (SCV/
USC/UCS)

TÜRKIYE | Koro Kültürü Dernegi (Choral
Culture Association)

UKRAINE | NGO Osnova Society

CATEGORY A2: Organisations with individuals as indirect beneficiaries

All direct individual members of these organisations and institutions who can prove their membership will profit from reduced participation fees at activities of the European Choral Association and in partnership with the European Choral Association. This reduction does not apply to the members of their choirs or ensembles, as long as the organisation is in good standing.

CROATIA | Croatian Choral Directors Association

GERMANY | Chor- und Ensembleleitung
Deutschland e. V.

GERMANY | Fachverband der Chorleiter e. V.

ITALY | Associazione Nazionale Direttori di
Coro Italiani

LITHUANIA | Lietuvos Choru Sajunga

RUSSIA | Interregional Conductors Association
of Children and Youth Choirs of North-West

SPAIN | AEDcoro

UNITED KINGDOM | Association of British
Choral Directors (ABCD)

CATEGORY A3: Umbrella organisations without indirect beneficiaries

They pay a lower membership fee, have fewer votes and their members cannot profit from reduced participation fees

CROATIA | Hrvatski sabor kulture-glazba
HRSK (Croatian Cultural Association)

FRANCE | Institut Français d'Art Choral (IFAC)

FRANCE | Musique en Territoires

CATEGORY A4: Other organisations and institutions without members

They pay a lower membership fee, have fewer votes and cannot profit from reduced participation fees

FINLAND | Tampere Vocal Music Festival

LATVIA | Latvian Song Celebrations Society

LUXEMBOURG | Institut Européen de Chant
Choral Luxembourg (INECC)

MONTENEGRO | Montenegrin Choral Asso-
ciation

RUSSIA | The Centre of International Coope-
ration "Inter Aspect"

SWEDEN | Eric Ericson International Choral
Centre

THE NETHERLANDS | ZIMIHC

PEOPLE

The European Choral Association is currently governed by a board of twelve under the presidency of Dermot O'Callaghan (elected in November 2021).

The board receives support from different commissions and committees (such as the Artistic Strategic Group and the Youth Committee) as well as the staff of the European Choral Association.

The Youth Committee consists of 7 members and supports the Board, giving the organisation a youth perspective whilst also providing a platform to learn.



BOARD 2021–2024

DERMOT O'CALLAGHAN (IE) | President
MARTINE SPANJERS (NL) | 1st Vice-President
and Treasurer
BURAK ONUR ERDEM (TR) | 2nd Artistic
Vice-President
RAUL TALMAR (EE) | 3rd Vice-President
DAPHNE WASSINK (NL) | Representative of the
Friends of the European Choral Association

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JEROEN BECKERS (BE)
CÔME FERRAND COOPER (FR)
XAVIER DEVILLERS (BE)
MARCO FORNASIER (IT)
SILVIJA PROČKYTĖ (LT)
JOSEP VILA I CASAÑAS (ES)

YOUTH COMMITTEE 2021–2024

ALBA ROORDA MARTINEZ (NL/ES) | Chair
ANNA BOBRIKOVA (FI/RU)
JOANA COSTA (PT)
BEN JACOB (IE)

AUGUSTAS KVEDARAVI ČIUS (LT)
NERIS ÖZEN (TR)
KERTU SÜLD (EE)

youthcommittee@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

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[EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/about-us /who-we-are](https://EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/about-us/who-we-are)

PEOPLE

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BARBARA BIERI (DE)
JULIA BLANK (NO/DE)
INESSA BODYAKO (BL)
FILIPPO MARIA BRESSAN (IT)
NICOLA CAMPOGRANDE (IT)
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MARIA VAN NIEUKERKEN (NL)
MARGARET O'SULLIVAN (IR)
ANDREW PARROTT (UK)
CARLO PAVESE (IT)
THEODORA PAVLOVITCH (BG)

LOTI PIRIS NIÑO (BE/ES)
JOSEP PRATS (ES)
JONATHAN RATHBONE (UK)
SIMONA ROŽMAN STRNAD (SI)
FLANNERY RYAN (DE)
AARNE SALUVEER (EE)
JEROEN SCHRIJNER (CH/NL)
JAN SCHUMACHER (DE)
PATRICK SECCHIARI (CH)
CHRISTOPHER SIMMONS (UK)
FRED SJÖBERG (SE)
JEAN SMEETS (BE)
DAN-OLOF STENLUND (SE)
KAIE TANNER (EE)
THIERRY THIEBAUT (FR)
ERIK VAN NEVEL (BE)
ALEXANDER VACEK (UA)
ALEKSANDAR VUJIC (RS)
DAPHNE WASSINK (NL)
MARTIN WILDHABER (CH)
JEAN-CLAUDE WILKENS (FR)
ANNELIESE ZEH (AT)

MUSIC CONSULTANTS IN 2023

Help the organisation to reach out to countries otherwise not (well) represented in the different bodies of the association and/or among its member organisations.

ZELJKA ANDRIC (BA)
MARGRÉT BÓASDOTTIR (IS)
INESSA BODYAKO (BY)
JOSEPH LIA (MT)
ELENA MARIAN (MD)
BESIM PETRELA (AL)

DOMINIKA SEMAŇÁKOVÁ (SK)
KRZYSZTOF SZYDZISZ (PL)
SASHO TATARCHEVSKI (MK)
SUZANA TURKU (AL)
SIMEON ZLATKOV (BG)

ARTISTIC STRATEGY GROUP IN 2023

BURAK ONUR ERDEM (TR) | Chair, Artistic Vice-President of the European Choral Association

JEROEN BECKERS (BE) | Board of the European Choral Association

JOSEP VILA I CASAÑAS (ES) | Board of the European Choral Association

XAVIER DEVILLERS (BE) | Board of the European Choral Association

TAMARA ADAMOVIC PETIJEVIC (RS) | Board of the European Choral Association

SILVIJA PROČKYTĖ (LT) | Board of the European Choral Association

RAUL TALMAR (EE) | Board of the European Choral Association

AUGUSTAS KVEDARAVIČIUS (LT) | Youth Committee of the European Choral Association

ALBA ROORDA MARTINEZ (NL/ES) | Youth Committee of the European Choral Association

EUROPA CANTAT JUNIOR 2023 MUSIC COMMISSION

MARLEEN ANNEMANS (BE) | Chair

MARLEEN DE BOO (BE)

MARIETTE EFFING (NL)

HANS HELSEN (BE)

EREN ZEYNEP KOVANKAYA (TR)

RAUL TALMAR (EE)

EUROPA CANTAT JUNIOR 2023 STEERING COMMITTEE

JEROEN BECKERS (BE)

SONJA GREINER (DE)

JEROEN KEYMEULEN (BE)

MARLEEN MOORTGAT (BE)

SILVIJA PROČKYTĖ (LT)

JEAN SMEETS (BE)

NOËL MINET FUND COMMITTEE

NOËL MINET (BE)

CARLO O'CALLAGHAN (IE)

BURAK ONUR ERDEM (TR)

DAPHNE WASSINK (NL)

ANNA BOBRIKOVA (RUS/DE)

SONJA GREINER (DE)

FRIENDS



friends of the european choral association

In November 2021, it was decided to rename the association “Friends of Choral Music In Europe” into “Friends of the European Choral Association” and to turn it into a community of individuals, choirs, and other legal bodies who wish to support the work of the European Choral Association through their membership and through fundraising activities.

BOARD IN 2023

DAPHNE WASSINK (President)
FLANNERY RYAN (Vicepresident)
ALFRED JÜRGENS (Treasurer)

SUSANNA KANTELINEN
HENRIKE SCHAUERTE
JEAN-CLAUDE WILKENS

noël minet fund scholarships

The Noël Minet Fund, administered by the Friends of the European Choral Association since 2021, offers scholarships for applicants under 30 with limited economic resources coming from a European Country.

As in 2022, the focus in 2023 was on the target countries of the Regional development strategy. Applicants could apply for a scholarship for our events or for events held under the label of the European Choral Association. The committee of the Fund approved 6 applications and 5 were from target countries.

11 applications received from **9** different countries
(among these, **5** from target countries of our Regional development strategy).
6 approved applications from Serbia, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovenia.

[EuropeanChoralAssociation/activities/financial-support-schemes/noel-minet-fund-scholarship](https://www.EuropeanChoralAssociation/activities/financial-support-schemes/noel-minet-fund-scholarship)

FriendsOfEca.org

NETWORKING

we are members of

International Music Council (IMC)



imc-cim.org

Culture Action Europe (CAE)



cultureactioneurope.org

European Music Council (EMC)



*A Regional Group of the
International Music Council*

emc-imc.org

Musica International



musicanet.org/en/

International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM)



ifcm.net

Choral Festival Network (CFN)



choralfestivalnetwork.org

World Youth Choir Foundation



worldyouthchoir.org

In 2023 we attended live and online general assemblies, membership meetings, conferences, receptions and working group meetings, and we had representatives on the boards of IMC, IFCM and the World Youth Choir Foundation.

NETWORKING

in 2023 we cooperated with

Amateo



Association Européenne
des Conservatoires (AEC)



ELIA



European Association for Music in Schools
(EAS)



European Network on Cultural
Management and Policy (ENCATC)



European Theatre Convention
(ETC)



TENSO



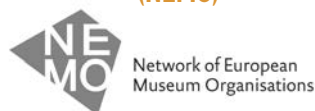
IETM



Jeunesses Musicales International
(JMI)



Network of European Museum Organisations
(NEMO)



ON THE MOVE



Trans Europe Halles
(TEH)



Network of Cantat festivals

advocacy work

In 2023, the European Choral Association supported the advocacy work of the major European networks such as Culture Action Europe and the European Music Council. Finally, the European Choral Association published an advocacy statement on collective singing and intangible cultural heritage.

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/resources/our-advocacy-work

regional development strategy

In the frame of the IGNITE project that started in December 2021 (see page 32), the European Choral Association launched a new regional development strategy that replaced the regional centres from 2022.

The European Choral Association was already connected to the choral world in many European countries but the connection to some of the countries or regions, especially in the South-Eastern and in Central-Eastern Europe, was still not very strong.

Since 2022, we actively worked and reached out to the target countries and in 2023 we could already see first concrete results:

1. We have strengthened certain collaborations from 2022 and managed to establish good connections with new countries such as Poland, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Albania.
2. Interest from the region increased for becoming members both of the European Choral Association and Friends. Two new associations joined as members (The Montenegro Choir Association, Bulgarian Choir Union) and two further associations announced their application for membership just after the Membership Weekend 2023.
3. We established collaborations in organising events in the target countries of regional development, which will be implemented in 2024 (study tour to Georgia and Armenia, EuroChoir session in Bulgaria, Singing Bridges Festival) and offered grants for internationalisation and greater inclusivity to some events in the region.
4. First Survey on Collective Singing in target countries of regional development was conducted.
5. We had a strong participation from the target countries at the 2023 Membership Weekend, which means that we managed to increase the visibility of the European Choral Association and its activities in the region and encourage more participation.

EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/activities/regional-development

Your personal memories from 2023 ...





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www.youtube.com/ecaec



@EuropeanChoralAssociation

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und Jugend

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JOY.
JOIE.
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