



EUROPEAN
CHORAL
ASSOCIATION

MEMBER SHIP WEEKEND

2024

LEUVEN | BELGIUM
14-17 NOVEMBER

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INTERNATIONAL SINGING WEEK

Ghent - Belgium
12-18.07.2025

choir ateliers
start-to-conduct
open singing
choir-to-choir concerts

www.singingweekghent.be

WELCOME

Dear friends,

We are happy to have you here and hope you quickly feel at home in this beautiful city, known for its rich cultural heritage, with highlights such as the Gothic town hall, St. Peter's Church, and the centuries-old university library.

Leuven also hosts the House of Polyphony, a center dedicated to the study and performance of Renaissance polyphonic music, further enriching its musical tradition, and is home to the Lemmens Institute, a renowned conservatory with a strong choral tradition that has trained many influential choir conductors and singers.

So, we couldn't have found a more suitable place for the Membership Weekend of the European Choral Association!

Koor&Stem is proud to host this event, and we look forward to working with you on the future of choral music in Europe.

We hope you will find plenty of inspiration and make new connections during these days in Leuven.

Jeroen Keymeulen
Manager Koor&Stem



TO LEUVEN!

Welcome to Leuven for our 2024 Membership Weekend!

It is a great pleasure for us to be in Leuven for this year's membership weekend as guests of our member organisation Koor&Stem which hosted Europa Cantat *junior* together with the Flemish Federation of Young Choirs in 2023. This festival offered many children's and youth choirs last year the opportunity to return to an international festival after the pandemic, meet young singers from other countries, sing together with Tom Johnson and learn new repertoire in many great workshops. The final concerts in the Opera of Ghent were livestreamed and are still available online. We would like to thank the team of Koor&Stem for inviting us to Leuven and for co-organising and preparing the weekend together with our own team.

Our Membership Weekend will offer a lot of options to our members and friends, including enough time for networking and bilateral talks, or time to sing together at different times. We look forward to meeting you at our second hybrid project presentation session on Friday morning where you can get inspired by the numerous projects and initiatives from across Europe. On Friday afternoon we will present some topics to you in short presentation sessions, and then offer parallel sessions with more time for discussion than at previous membership weekends. As usual, we will hold our annual General Assembly for members on Saturday morning, ending with the elections of the new board and our financial auditors, before offering you a choice of two workshops, a hands-on practical workshop on funding facilitated by Sophie Dowden, and a workshop on contemporary Flemish choral music with Luc Anthonis. In the evenings you will have the opportunity to listen to very different concerts, have dinner together and enjoy a drink at the hotel bar afterwards, offering you more time to deepen friendships or develop new projects.

We look forward to sharing wonderful days with you in Leuven!



Dermot O'Callaghan and Sonja Greiner
President and Secretary-General
of the European Choral Association

DISCOVER



©VISIT LEUVEN

Centuries-old heritage and beer, education and youth sum Leuven up nicely. The rich history of this city, just a stone's throw from Brussels, is visible in its Great Beguinage, Gothic town hall, Baroque Saint Michael's Church with its unique outdoor altar and the numerous artistic treasures of Museum M. Its youthfulness can be seen in countless terraces crowded with students.

When you say Leuven, you say "unief".

The Catholic University of Leuven is inextricably linked with the city. It was founded back in 1425, making it one of the oldest universities in Europe. This gives the city a special prestige.

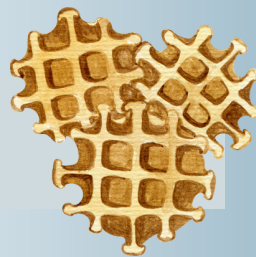
There are beacons of knowledge, such as the impressive university library and Bell Tower.

Beer and entertainment can be found here as well. That's only to be expected of a university city. Its great Stella Artois brewery, home to over 600 years of brewing expertise, is a prime example. Who's to say education and drinks can't go together, after all?

There is a lot to explore in your free time in Leuven, and you can find the best recommendations here:

[visitflanders.com/en/
flemish-destinations/leuven](https://visitflanders.com/en/flemish-destinations/leuven)

FLANDERS



TERRITORY

Leuven is the capital of the region Flemish Brabant, with a surface of 56,63 km²

POPULATION

100,000+ inhabitants

LANGUAGE

Dutch

CHORAL MUSIC IN FLANDERS

Koor&Stem is a non-profit organisation that works tirelessly to support choirs and singers across the region, bring people together through song, and promote fresh perspectives on the future of choral life. Its cultural mission has created a network of 1000 choirs across Flanders, giving it direct access to more than 35 000 amateur singers, conductors and musicians.

+1000 choirs

+1000 conductors

+35 000 singers

+200 volunteers

www.koorenstem.be/en



MUST SEE

► GROTE MARKT

The Grote Markt, the city's beating heart. This square gained its current form in the 14th century and is marked by stately Brabantine Gothic architecture. The monumental Town Hall is a prime example. It is remarkable for its enormous wealth of detail. Its amazing façade is decorated with an impressive 236 unique sculptural elements.



► ST PETER'S CHURCH

The 15th-century Saint Peter's Church is a classic example of Late Gothic architecture. From the Dirk Boutslaan, you can clearly see the towers have never been completed due to an unstable soil. The church with belfry was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage in 1999.

Dieric Bouts (ca. 1410-1475), who might be mentioned in the same breath as Jan Van Eyck or Rogier Van der Weyden, was one of the Flemish Primitives and city painter of Leuven. His masterpiece 'The Last Supper' is the outstanding artwork of the church and hung in the chapel for which it was painted almost 600 years ago until 2023. Mixed reality brings Bouts' triptych truly to life.

► UNIVERSITY LIBRARY AND BELL TOWER

If you want to learn more about the university library's turbulent history and its impact on the city, you have to climb the five floors of the library tower. A photo exhibition takes you to five significant periods in the library's history.

► M LEUVEN

The museum displays old and new art inspired by Leuven's versatility. The collection is mainly focused on the art production in Leuven and Brabant from the Middle Ages to the 19th century. It includes Constantin Meunier, Jef Lambeaux and Georges Minne. In addition to the permanent collection, M also presents temporary exhibitions of both old masters and contemporary artists. And don't miss out on the enclosed garden and roof terrace!



IN LEUVEN



► GREAT BEGUINAGE

Centuries ago, groups of beguines lived here. Unmarried women and widows who wished to dedicate their lives to God, but without taking vows. Together, they formed enclosed communities all over Flanders and in parts of France. These were characterised by networks of small alleys and courtyards, gardens, parks and dwellings. Leuven's Grand Beguinage has 300 homes distributed over three hectares or so, making it one of the largest and possibly the most picturesque of its kind. Historic buildings, small bridges over the Dyle and a Gothic church with splendid stained-glass windows; all are still here. These fairytale surroundings are a lovely setting for a peaceful walk.

The Great Beguinage was listed as a UNESCO world heritage site in 1998. You can visit it free of charge.

Tip: take a look at the Small Beguinage as well. It's not so well known and is something of a hidden gem.



© VISIT LEUVEN



► STELLA ARTOIS BREWERY

Stella Artois is part of the world's largest brewery concern, AB InBev, and is still firmly rooted in its home base of Leuven. Experience the brewery in action and enjoy a wonderful Stella Artois after your visit.

► PARK ABBEY (Abdij van het Park)

Park Abbey is an exceptionally well-preserved heritage site which dates from the 12th century. Wander around this Norbertine abbey, of which the most important historical spaces are accessible to the public and immerse yourself in its philosophy and history. Feast your eyes on its unique stucco ceilings and cloister with 20 marvellously executed stained glass panels. Both hail from the 17th century. The abbey site also houses the PARCUM museum, which focuses on the confluence of religion, art and culture. In addition to all that heritage, Park Abbey is also just a lovely place to relax.



PRACTICAL

CURRENCY

EURO

LOCAL TIME

GMT + 1 (CET)

HOW TO GET AROUND

All locations for the membership weekend are within walking distance of each other. Moving from one location to another on foot is the easiest way. Other options:

- De Lijn (public transport)
- Uber (taxi app)

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

112 (ambulance and police)

If you have any problem while in Leuven, please try to get help from one of the following numbers :

Sonja (European Choral Association): 0049 170 489 4444

Valerie (Koor & Stem): 0032 498 21 32 12



INFORMATION



WORKING HOURS

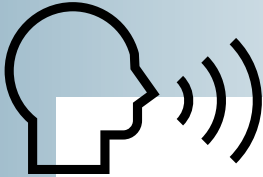
- Shops are usually open from 10 AM to 6 PM
- Shopping malls are open all week from 10 AM to 8 PM
- Supermarkets are usually open between 8 AM and 8 PM
- Nightshops are open until morning
- Most shops are closed on Sunday, except for some smaller supermarket



TIPS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

- If you know in advance, please let us know if you are planning NOT to attend a meal so that we do not need to waste so much food.
- Please try to walk, cycle or use public transport to move around within Leuven and avoid using your own car or taxis as much as possible.
- Your hotel may not have an official eco-label. However, you can contribute to reducing your carbon footprint by asking the reception not to clean your room every day or use the “do not disturb” sign to signal this.

SPEAK DUTCH



Hello	HALLO
Goodbye	TOT ZIENS
Thank you	BEDANKT
Sorry/excuse me	SORRY/ EXCUSEER
Please	ALSTUBLIEFT
Let's sing	ZINGEN MAAR
Red wine	RODE WIJN
White wine	WITTE WIJN
Beer	BIER
Coffee	KOFFIE
Tea	THEE
Cheers	PROOST/ SCHOL/ GEZONDHEID
Help	HELP
Doctor	DOKTER
Ambulance	AMBULANCE/ ZIEKENWAGEN

EVENT'S VENUES



1. PUBLIC LIBRARY
2. IRISH COLLEGE
3. NOVOTEL LEUVEN CENTRUM
4. IBIS LEUVEN CENTRUM



PUBLIC LIBRARY

1



Rijschoolstraat 4

Main venue for the Membership day and Friday's concert, General Assembly on Saturday morning and one workshop in the afternoon

The Leuven city library building was designed by renowned Belgian architect Henry van de Velde. It was built between 1936 and 1942. In 1990, this former Technical School was protected as a historically valuable ensemble. It is the last building Henry van de Velde realised in Belgium. It is one of the few examples in Leuven of modern contemporary building in the years 1935-1975. The city chose to house the city library and the city archives in this building.

13 min. walking distance from the railway station

IRISH COLLEGE

2



Janseniusstraat 1

Venue of one workshop on Saturday afternoon and Saturday evening's concert

The Irish college has been a centre of Irish learning on the European continent since the early 17th century.

23 min. walking distance from the railway station

11 min. walking distance from Public Library

NOVOTEL LEUVEN CENTRUM

3



Vuurkruisenlaan 4

Accommodation, breakfast

Meeting point on Thursday evening

Meeting point after the concerts

8 min. walking distance from the railway station

13 min. walking distance from Public Library

RESTAURANT DOMUS Tiensestraat 8

RESTAURANT MYKENE Muntstraat 44

HET DEPOT Martelarenplein 12

Dinner on Friday

Dinner on Saturday

New Board's meeting on Sunday

IBIS LEUVEN CENTRUM

4



Brusselsestraat 52

Accommodation, breakfast

17 min. walking distance from the railway station

6 min. walking distance from Public Library

SCHEDULE IN SHORT

THURSDAY 14.11.

WELCOME!

Time to discover Leuven and meet your peers!

Dinner not organised.

*Meeting point to join other participants:
Novotel Leuven Centrum | 19.00*

FRIDAY 15.11.

MEMBERSHIP DAY

PROJECT PRESENTATION SESSION

Public Library / online | 11:00

Introduction to the afternoon session

Public Library | 12:30

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS ROUNDS

Public Library | 14:15

One 30-minute presentation slot
and one 90-minute discussion slot.

MODERATED NETWORKING TIME

Public Library | 16:30

PERFORMANCE BY "THEATER VAN A TOT Z – DAG VREEMDE MAN"

Public Library (auditorium) | 20.00

SATURDAY 16.11.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY WITH ELECTIONS

Public Library | 09:30

Reporting on the projects and activities in 2024 and looking ahead, with the election of the new board, financial auditors and Friends board members

WORKSHOPS

Different locations | 15:00

Two parallel workshops:

- Exploring Avenues for Financial Sustainability | *Public Library*
- Discover contemporary choral music from Flanders and sing along | *Irish College*

CONCERT BY "MAVIS"

Irish College | 20:00

SUNDAY 17.11.

PARTICIPANTS DEPARTURES MEETING OF THE NEW BOARD

Het Depot | 9.30

DETAILED SCHEDULE

THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER

Arrival

Discover the city if you have time!

19:00 Meeting point for members who wish to join others for dinner (dinner as such not organised for participants and members) | Novotel Leuven Centrum

FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER

Membership Day

10.30 Registration for Membership Day | Public Library

11:00 Hybrid Project Presentation | Public Library

12:30 Introduction to presentations and discussion rounds | Public Library

13.00 Lunch | Public Library

14.15 Presentation rounds | Public Library

15:00 Discussion rounds | Public Library

16.30 Moderated and free networking time | Public Library

17.00 Hybrid General Assembly of the Friends | Public Library

18:30 Dinner | Restaurant Domus

20:00 Performance "Theater van A tot Z – Dag vreemde man" | Public Library Auditorium

SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER

General Assembly with election

09:00 Registration opens for General Assembly | Public Library

09:30 General Assembly (for members) | Public Library

13.00 Lunch | Public Library

15:00 Parallel workshops | Public Library / Irish College

18:30 Dinner and election's result announcement | Restaurant Mykene

20.00 Concert "Mavis" | Irish College

SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER

Departure

Departure of participants - see you next year!

09:30 Meeting of the newly elected board with Executive Board election | Het Depot

****Please note that no organised transportation is provided. All venues are within walking distance but you can also use taxi or Uber in case you do not want to walk (see p.10).*

PROJECT PRESENTATION SESSION

During this sessions you will be able to get to know several interesting, innovative and inspiring projects from our members, friends and target countries of our Regional Development Strategy

PROJECT	ORGANISATION
From Choir Girl to Professional Singer: Fundraising Ideas for German Girls' Choirs	MATHILDE SANCHEZ (DE)
The intelligibility of texts sung by choirs	UNIVERSITY OF STRASBOURG (FR)
Turkish Choral Library	CHORAL CULTURE ASSOCIATION (TR)
International Campaign Music Supporting People in Depression	SILESIAN ASSOCIATION OF CHOIRS AND ORCHESTRAS (PO)
Coral Allegro ONCE Valencia - 40 years singing for inclusion!	CORAL ALLEGRO ONCE VALENCIA (ES)
"Dag vreemde man" & Start to Sing Course	KOOR&STEM (BE)
CHORAL LEGACIES: harmony of voices for an inclusive world!	FENIARCO (IT)
EuroChoir 2024 Varna & International choir festivals and competitions in Bulgaria	BULGARIAN CHOIR UNION (BG)
Choralies 2025	A COEUR JOIE (FR)

MEMBERSHIP DAY

Discuss the future of our association, bring in new ideas and develop new models with your peers. During each round you can decide in which session take part

1. PRESENTATIONS ROUND: 14.15-14.45H

YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

1.a

What this means, which tools are available and how you can suggest candidates for the next youth committee of the European Choral Association

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION

1.b

First recommendations, future plans

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY AND POLICIES

1.c

What we have already achieved, which are the next steps, and how you can work on your own strategy and policies

2. DISCUSSIONS ROUND: 15-16.30H

WHAT IS THE "PYRAMID" OF AUDITIONED YOUTH CHOIRS?

Discuss and learn more on the World Youth Choir, the European Youth Choir (fka EuroChoir) and the network of national youth choirs

2.a

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF OUR EVENTS?

Exchange on the result of the strategy retreat of the board, youth committee and team on future events (including results of choir survey)

2.b

WHAT MATTERS TO OUR MEMBERS?

Brainstorm on topics that are important to our member organisations and share your wishes for future discussion rounds

2.c

PERFORMANCE

"THEATER VAN A TOT Z - DAG VREEMDE MAN"



© THEATER VAN A TOT Z

In 2015-2016, a group of foreign-language newcomers performed the theatre production "*Gelukkig zijn*", which literally means: "be happy".

The musical theatre project played more than 60 times across the country. Newspapers, radio and TV covered it extensively.

After the tour, the actor-singers continued as the choir Koruso and the Ancienne Belgique, together with 'Theater van A tot Z', started organising monthly sing-along sessions where non-native speakers could practise Dutch for free.

Due to the great success, and the demand for more, almost 10 years later 'Theater van A tot Z' brings a new performance with non-native speakers learning Dutch: 'Dag vreemde man' - named after a famous Dutch song.

A group of people of different ages and backgrounds take us on a journey through the world of Dutch-language music and through their own lives. The actors all have a different mother tongue or cultural background. The combination of life stories and songs sung in four voices will give everyone a warm feeling.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Full detailed agenda will be available on site

0. OPENING
1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
2. MINUTES GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023
3. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
4. ACTIVITIES' REPORTS 2024
5. REPORT OF THE TREASURER
6. REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL AUDITORS
7. DISCHARGE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
8. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS
9. PRESENTATION OF THE "FRIENDS OF THE EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION"
10. A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE:
 - 10.1 Membership Fees and Country Groups 2025-2027
 - 10.2 EU-funded projects
 - 10.3 Activities 2025 – 2027
11. PRESENTATION BY THE YOUTH COMMITTEE
12. INVITATION TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2025 IN GIRONA (ES)
13. PRESENTING OTHER EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS
 - 13.1 Culture Action Europe
 - 13.2 Choral Festival Network
14. ELECTIONS
 - 14.1 Explanation of voting system and procedure
 - 14.2 Presentation of candidates (before the coffee break)
 - 14.3 Election of financial auditors
 - 14.4 Election of board members
 - 14.5 Announcement of results (at dinner)
 - 14.6 Announcement of Executive Board elections (by email after the Membership Weekend)
15. MISCELLANEOUS

PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

EXPLORING AVENUES FOR FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Led by

Sophie Dowden (FR/UK)

*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion &
Belonging Consultant*

& other speakers to be confirmed



Public Library

Looking for financial sustainability? Then it's time to talk about diversifying funding streams.

Our speakers in this session come from different countries, work at different scales and have different types of successful experiences in securing funding. They will share with us what worked for them and how they made it happen. After this, we will have our chance to discuss together.

What do funders want? How can we best frame our activities for funding? And what challenges may we face along the way?

DISCOVER CONTEMPORARY CHORAL MUSIC FROM FLANDERS!

Led by

Luc Anthonis (BE)

*Choral Conducting Professor at the
Royal Flemish Conservatory of
Antwerp*



Irish College

During this active workshop, discover gems by young, contemporary choral composers and sing parts of them too!

Works by Noah Thys, Vigdis Hansa Elst, Lara Denies, Hans Helsen and Noah Senden will be discussed and sung.

Luc Anthonis teaches choral conducting at the Royal Flemish Conservatory of Antwerp, is a much requested jury member at various national and international choral competitions, and is regularly asked to work with the Flemish Radio Choir.

Saturday 16 November | 20:00 | Irish College

CONCERT

MAVIS

MAVIS is a five-voice vocal ensemble that performs extremely varied programmes in an exceptionally communicative manner. The group does not focus on a particular genre or style period but performs programmes with a story. The repertoire ranges from polyphony to new music and light music, composed and arranged to suit the ensemble.

Thanks to a strong shared vocal vision, MAVIS is a young ensemble with enormous potential and an enchanting timbre.

MAVIS performs the programme 'Love is a thing with feathers' entirely by heart to fully connect with each listener. With great enthusiasm and ambition, MAVIS works on its mission to make vocal music accessible to the widest possible audience.

MAVIS believes in the universal beauty of the human voice and the power of music to connect and inspire people.





NEXT STOP FOR 2025

GIRONA, SPAIN

November 2025

exact dates to be announced

europeanchoralassociation.org



Co-funded by the
European Union

**FREUDE.
JOY.
JOIE.
BONN.**

Gefördert vom:



Bundesministerium
für Familie, Senioren, Frauen
und Jugend