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EUROPEAN
CHORAL
ASSOCIATION



■ Our Network

■ Multiannual Projects

■ Activities and Events

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

ONE VOICE FOR COLLECTIVE SINGING!

EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION | ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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we reach out to

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

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

We are a network of organisations, choirs and individuals 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 continental Europe active in the field.

www.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.

www.FriendsOfEca.org

In 2022, the European Choral Association had around **60** regional and national organisations as **members**.

Our members are actively involved through:

- Membership Days
- Working groups
- Consultations
- Online voting

www.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

www.SingingEurope.org

Dear readers, members and friends of the European Choral Association

As I write this welcome note during 2023, we think back on the first year since the pandemic where it was possible to have 'normal' activities and the first year where the collective singing world could raise their voices together again. We have seen a return to choral singing continue into 2023 which is such a joyful reality and shows so obviously to us all the great power and many benefits of singing together.

I also know that whilst we are all busily activating plans that were stalled during Covid times, we also have as a community had time to reflect and to think about what is needed for the sector and for us all individually and collectively in the coming months and years. We wonder what the best way to come together to celebrate collective singing is and how can we positively contribute to people's lives through this activity. The European Choral Association is considering this strategically with the effects of Covid in mind, alongside many other societal issues such as diversity, equality and inclusion, alongside the ever important and increasingly urgent issue of sustainability.

As 2022 progressed the European Choral Association delivered many of its face-to-face activities, which was particularly gratifying after the years of the pandemic. I am delighted to report on Leading Voices which took place in July 2022. The Association has worked on this and

formulated a strategy for this event in collaboration with the membership for many years. It was such an exciting moment to be in Utrecht and celebrate the conductors and leaders of collective singing. We are indebted to the City of

Utrecht and to the brilliant team at ZIMHIC, and to Martine Spanjers and her team for expertly organising the event, as well as to the dedicated music commission who ensured such a wide variety of content for participants. The Europa Cantat junior festival in Vilnius was another wonderful event for the Association. After a difficult birth and such a challenge for the organisers to get the festival ready and planned during the years of the Covid-19 pandemic, and repeated forced postponements. However, in spite of those challenges we saw an incredible determination from the festival team and local organisers to make sure that this event would go ahead no matter what. A sincere thank you to the Lithuanian Cultural Centre and the Lithuanian Choral Association, alongside all of the local organisers. Another highlight of 2022 was a wonderful EuroChoir session in Switzerland. The choir saw 50 singers, made up of 30 different nationalities, come together and sing under the talented conductors Yuval Weinberg and Marco Amherd. This session culminated in performances in Lenk, Basel, Flims and Rheinau. Thanks so much to the Swiss Federation Europa Cantat and all of the organisers and funders.

I would like to thank my fellow board members for their dedication and inspiration in the work of the Association. I would also like to thank the wonderful youth committee of the Association for their invaluable contribution to our success. I'd also like to say a very special thanks to the wonderful staff of the Association led by Secretary General Sonja Greiner, who worked tirelessly and with great talent to ensure that events could proceed in 2022. As we greet the years ahead, we do so with a lot of optimism and as we see a vivid re-emergence of collective singing across Europe and the world. We have much to look forward to and much to be grateful for. We have secured EU Creative Europe network funding and to roll out IGNITE that activates our strategy.



We look to the coming years with great optimism and knowing that the new landscape for the choral sector post-pandemic presents many challenges and opportunities to celebrate and strengthen our collective voice.

Dermot O'Callaghan
President

Welcome to this sixth edition of our Annual Report in which we are looking back at the year 2022 which was a year rich in events, a year in which choral life slowly but surely emerged from the restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic. At the same time the war in the Ukraine and the global financial crisis had a significant impact and it was difficult to predict how many people would register for the different events.

The highlight of 2022 was our new event Leading Voices, the European Days for Vocal and Choral Leaders in July in Utrecht, The Netherlands. It was an exciting process to prepare a completely new event, and to try out new ideas. For Leading Voices we cooperated with many partners including the International Federation for Choral Music (IFMC), TENSO – the association of professional chamber choirs, EAS – the association for music in schools, AEC – the association of conservatoires and music universities, and many more. Those who attended the event were inspired by a broad range of interesting sessions for conductors & vocal leaders, composers & arrangers, music educators, managers, and students. They also experienced concerts which brought together professionals and amateurs, choirs, and vocal ensembles, as well as different singing traditions, and involved the audience. A second highlight was the Europa Cantat junior festival in Vilnius, Lithuania, which was originally planned for 2020 and had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Even though, because of the war,

the number of participants was lower than planned, it was a highly successful event with great ateliers and concerts.

EuroChoir also had a session in Switzerland, the third and last session with Yuval Weinberg who was joined by Swiss conductor Marc Amherd, gathering 50 singers from 30 countries.

And in November we met our members and friends at the Membership Weekend in Novi Sad, Serbia, where we could see the first concrete results of our regional development strategy. There were many new faces and many young people at the event.

And there were events under the label of the European Choral Association such as the Choralies festival in France, the Singing Bridges Festival in Serbia and the F. Corti Competition for Conductors in Italy.

2022 was a special year also in other ways: It was the first full year in the IGNITE project co-funded by the EU Creative Europe programme, the Friends of the European Choral Association recruited new members and started with a new strategic approach, and we welcomed two new team members.

On the following pages you will find reports and pictures that will take you back to events you attended in 2022 or will give you an idea of what you missed. In addition, you will be able to read background articles on youth participation, our regional development strategy and the Culture for Health project. Enjoy!

Sonja Greiner
Secretary General





©: Katarzyna Polubinska for EC Junior 2022



OUR NETWORK 2022

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 Sängerkongress 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

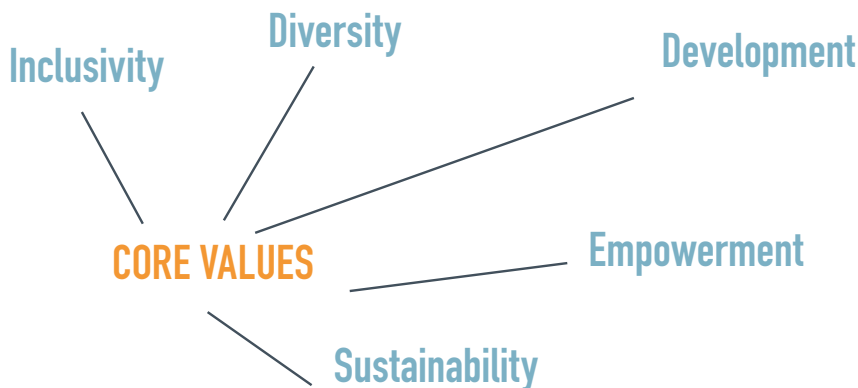
Incorporation of the archives and the history of IDOCO (Internationale des Organisations Culturelles Ouvrières) which dissolved at the end of 2013.

www.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, singers, vocal leaders/conductors, music creators/composers, educators/teachers, 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.

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/about-us/our-strategy/

MEMBERS

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)

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.

GERMANY | Deutsche Chorjugend e.V.

GERMANY | Bundesvereinigung Deutscher Chorverbände e.V. (BDC)

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

THE NETHERLANDS | Landelijk Kennisinstituut Cultuureducatie en Amateurkunst (LKCA)

NORWAY | Norges Korforbund

NORWAY | Norsk sangerforum

NORWAY | Ung i Kor

NORWAY | Ung kirkesang (Young choristers)

PORTUGAL | Coros Portugal – Portuguese Association for Choral Music

ROMANIA | Asociația Națională Corală din România (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 | 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

BOARD 2021-2024



DERMOT O'CALLAGHAN (IE) | President
MARTINE SPANJERS (NL) | 1st Vice-President
and Treasurer
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Vice-President
RAUL TALMAR (EE) | 3rd Vice-President
DAPHNE WASSINK (NL) | Representative of the
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XAVIER DEVILLERS (BE)
TAMARA ADAMOV PETIJEVIC (RS)
CÔME FERRAND COOPER (FR)
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BEN JACOB (IE)
AUGUSTAS KVEDARAVI ČIUS (LT)

JOANA COSTA (PT)
KERTU SÜLD (EE)
NERIS ÖZEN (TR)

youthcommittee@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

ARTISTIC STRATEGY GROUP IN 2022

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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 PROKYTĖ (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

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SIMON GRIBLING (NL)

JOOP DAALMEIJER (NL)

MARTÍ FERRER BOSCH (ES)

DERMOT O'CALLAGHAN (IE)

LOTI PIRIS NIÑO (ES/BE)

SILVIJA PROKYTĖ (LT)

TIDO VISSER (NL)

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

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SONJA GREINER (DE)

JEROEN KEYMEULEN (BE)

MARLEEN MOORTGAT (BE)

SILVIJA PROKYTĖ (LT)

JEAN SMEETS (BE)

PEOPLE

ADVISORS IN 2022

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URBAIN VAN ASCH (BE)
XAVIER BAULIES (ES)
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DAPHNE WASSINK (NL)
ANNELIESE ZEH (AT)
JULIA BLANK (NO/DE)
MARTÍ FERRER (ES)
DÓRA HALAS (HU)
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SIMONA ROŽMAN STRNAD (SI)
LOTI PIRIS NIÑO (BE/ES)
MARTIN WILDHABER (CH)
JEAN-CLAUDE WILKENS (FR)
FLANNERY RYAN (DE)
CARLO PAVESE (IT)

MUSIC CONSULTANTS IN 2022

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)
JOSEPH LIA (MT)
ANGELINA NICOLAIDOU (CY)
DOMINIKA SEMANÁKOVÁ (SK)

KRZYSZTOF SZYDZISZ (PL)
SASHO TATARCHEVSKI (MK)
Consultant for cooperation with the Russian Federation:
PAVEL BROCHIN, BONN (DE/RU)

PERMANENT STAFF



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SecretaryGeneral@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

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Sylvia.Kerutt@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

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Local Project Manager – *until January 2022*

Alfred.Jurgens@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

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Project and Fundraising Manager – *until June 2022*

Freelancing Project Consultant – *from July 2022*

Sophie.Dowden@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

ESTERA MIHAILA (RO)

Communication and Marketing Manager – *until March 2022*

Estera.Mihaila@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

HEXIN WANG (CN)

Communication Assistant

hexin.wang@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

INCOMING STAFF IN 2022

Alfred Jürgens and Estera Mihaila left between January and June 2022 and new staff members joined our team:

JOZI VOVK (SI)

Regional Development Assistant – *from February 2022*

jozi.vovk@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

BEATRICE BONFÉ (IT)

Communication & Marketing manager – *from March 2022*

beatrice.bonfe@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/about-us/who-we-are/

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 2022

DAPHNE WASSINK (President)

FLANNERY RYAN (Vicepresident)

ALFRED JÜRGENS (Treasurer)

REIJO KEKKONEN

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.

In 2022 there was a focus 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 9 applications and 4 were from target countries.

17 applications received from **13** different countries

(among these, **9** from target countries of our Regional development strategy).

9 approved applications from Turkey, Lithuania, Poland, Japan, Latvia, Germany, Ukraine.

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/activities/financial-support-schemes/noel-minet-fund-scholarship

www.FriendsOfEca.org

NETWORKING

we are members of

International Music Council (IMC)



Culture Action Europe (CAE)



European Music Council (EMC)



Musica International



International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM)



Choral Festival Network (CFN)



World Youth Choir Foundation



In 2022 we had representatives on the Boards of IMC, EMC, IFCM and the World Youth Choir Foundation, we attended the general assemblies and membership fora of all organisations above and are partly involved in their working groups and projects.

NETWORKING

in 2022 we cooperated with

Amateo



IETM



ELIA



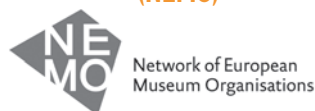
Jeunesses Musicales International
(JMI)



European Association for Music in Schools
(EAS)



Network of European Museum Organisations
(NEMO)



European Theatre Convention
(ETC)



ON THE MOVE



TENSO



Trans Europe Halles
(TEH)



Network of Cantat festivals

advocacy work

In 2022, the European Choral Association supported the advocacy work of the major European networks such as Culture Action Europe and the European Music Council. In addition, Sonja Greiner applied and was accepted for the Voices of Culture Brainstorming Meetings on Youth, Mental Health and Culture. Finally, the European Choral Association published advocacy statements on collective singing.

Secretary General Sonja Greiner was supported in the advocacy work by project manager Sophie Dowden who previously worked in this field and who also coordinated most of the work in the EU-funded projects of the European Choral Association.

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/resources/our-advocacy-work

regional development strategy

In the frame of the IGNITE project that started in December 2021 (see page 26), 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.

The main objectives this strategy pursued in 2022 were:

1. To establish new contacts in Central-Eastern and South Eastern Europe and strengthen the relation to existing contacts.
2. To gain knowledge about the choral life in these countries and regions, the existing associations, the choral landscape, examples of good practice and challenges and wishes of the sector.
3. To support the creation of an association in the target country/region where there is a desire and interest.
4. To support the creation of new international activities or the internationalisation of existing national activities.
5. To increase the visibility of the European Choral Association and its activities and encourage participation.

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/activities/regional-development



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MULTIANNUAL PROJECTS

2022

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

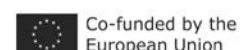


IGNITE is a project of the European Choral Association, dealing with collective singing at the heart of the revitalisation of post-pandemic Europe, due to its effects on the health and wellbeing of the individual and society. From December 2021 until November 2024, IGNITE shall contribute to the European 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 2022 the European Choral Association within the IGNITE project:

- offered the Membership Weekend 2022 in Novi Sad, Serbia and online gatherings
- enhanced youth participation and peer-to-peer trainings
- grew the network with a regional development strategy
- held physical and online trainings on environmental issues, inclusion, gender equality, fair remuneration and digital tools
- disseminated guidelines and handbooks on these topics
- offered grants for the internationalisation & inclusivity of events
- collected and disseminated data on collective singing through a survey addressing the target countries of the regional development strategy
- built on the #BenefitsOfSinging awareness campaign from 2021 and curated the research database on collective singing
- advocated for music, singing in music education, amateur arts and other topics together with other European and international networks
- raised awareness for the UN Sustainable Development Goals
- started developing a strategy for the years 2025 – 2030 with the Singtank

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/ignite



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, and partly had to be adapted to the Covid-19 situation. The first partners' meeting took place in October 2020 online.

Events in the frame of the project in 2022:

- Leading Voices 2022 | Utrecht, Netherlands | 27-31 July 2022
- Study Tour at Choralies | Vaison-la-Romaine, France | 3-11 August 2022
- International Competition for Choral Conductors | Turin, Italy | 21-23 October 2022
- Conference at the Membership Weekend of the European Choral Association for Dissemination and Discussion of Results of Project | 18 November 2022

PARTNERS

ZIMIHC (Coordinator)

www.zimihc.nl

European Choral Association (Co-coordinator)

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

À Coeur Joie

www.choralies.org

Feniarco

www.feniarco.it

JSKD

www.jskd.si

Europa Cantat Utrecht

www.TrainingLeadingVoices.org



Co-funded by the European Union

RESOURCES AND RESULTS FROM EARLIER PROJECTS

SINGING EUROPE

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

www.SingingEurope.org

www.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)

www.SingMeIn.eu

EP:IC - EMERGING PROFESSIONALS / INTERNATIONALISATION OF MUSIC CAREERS

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

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/cooperation-projects/epic-emerging-professionals-internationalisation-of-music-careers

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

www.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

www.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

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/about-us/who-we-are/youth-committee

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

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In 2023 the European Choral Association submitted an application under the EU Creative Europe Programme for a multi-annual cooperation project under the title Choral TIES. The project deals with training for conductors and vocal leaders, within Europe and beyond, partners are IFCM, the Estonian Choral Association, the Croatian Cultural Association and Carus-Verlag. In addition the European Choral Association is partner in the project SWAN - Singing with Additional Needs, for which Norsk Sangerforum submitted an application. It will be known by August / September 2023 whether the projects have been successful.

Guidelines and handbooks can be downloaded here:

www.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







Membership weekend 2022 © European Choral Association

ARTICLES

2022

REACHING OUT TO CENTRAL EASTERN AND SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

by Joži Vovk, Project Assistant at *European Choral Association*

At the beginning of the year, we wondered how to approach regional development in countries with which the European Choral Association has little or no contact. The basis for our work was a new regional development strategy, followed by the preparation of an action plan and the setting up of a working group on regional development.

By networking with existing contacts, through online meetings and a personal approach, we managed to establish a large number of new contacts and strengthen existing ones. The decision to hold the Membership Day in Novi Sad, Serbia, proved to be very successful as we managed to attract and connect by far the largest number of participants from the target countries of the regional development strategy compared to earlier similar events.

As a result of our Membership Weekend and networking, the Montenegrin Choral Association was founded and will be joining the European Choral Association in 2023, contacts to the Bulgarian Choir Union were re-established, the idea of a study tour to Armenia and Georgia in 2024 was developed, and a potential EuroChoir 2024 will be organised in Bulgaria. We also contributed to connecting the Cyprus Singing Crossroads project with the Singing Bridges Festival in

Novi Sad.

During the year, we also paid a lot of attention to include favourable conditions for participants from regional development target countries in our calls and invitations, so that member organisations from South-Eastern and Central-Eastern Europe countries, as well as non-member organisations and individuals were encouraged to apply for funding.

At the end of 2022, we carried out a survey on choral life in the target countries and on the effectiveness of our work in the first year. The survey showed that, although a lot has been done already, there is still a need for further dissemination of information on the strategy, events, activities and possible opportunities for cooperation. As limited financial resources are a common reason preventing international cooperation, it was confirmed that it is important to continue distributing funds to participants from target countries through our financial schemes. The survey also showed that there is a strong interest in organising and hosting events of the European Choral Association such as EuroChoir and the World Youth Choir.

We are looking forward to further exchanges, actions and cooperation with old and new friends in our target countries.

These are some of the reflections we collected about the Membership Weekend in Novi Sad from participants from regional development target countries to whom we granted financial support:

At a time when - after the closed borders due to the pandemic, the terrible tragedy happening in Eastern Europe between Russia and Ukraine, the logistical difficulties in transport, and the impossibility of obtaining a visa without problems, - I was incredibly pleased to meet again with the representatives of national choral associations and organisations.

Novi Sad is an excellent location for a meeting of friends and members of the European Choral Association. Attending the concerts and meeting the musical life of the city complemented the educational direction of my trip. Every speech and discussion at the Membership Weekend and General Assembly was meaningful and full of plans for the future. The choral world can and should be closer.

Inessa Bodyako - President of the Belarusian Choral Directors Association



The Membership Weekend in Novi Sad was a much needed experience for the Croatian Cultural Association as well as for myself. Besides meeting new colleagues and making fruitful contacts, the Membership Weekend was a learning experience about different infrastructures of music amateurism and I realized what exactly is due for improvement in our Croatian models.

During the "Regional development" discussion I had the chance to meet with Hungarian, Bulgarian, Norwegian and Spanish representatives in a small focus group, in which we talked about solutions for our lack of connection in the regional network of choral groups. Connections with colleagues from neighbouring countries (Serbia, Slovenia, Hungary and Italy) were also extremely beneficial, as they understand Croatian needs in the choral field. I am grateful that the European Choral Association gave me the opportunity to attend this event as the Croatian Cultural Association wouldn't be able to fund my participation in whole.

Sara Blažev - Croatian Cultural Association

WHY AND HOW WE AS YOUTH SHOULD BE ASKING FOR MORE INVOLVEMENT

by **Joana Costa & Kertu Süld**, members of the *European Choral Association Youth Committee 2022 – 2024*

Often we have heard the older generation complain that there are not enough young people growing up to take their place in certain fields. But what if the problem is actually the other way around? As youth, we are the new force that has yet to learn the insights and collect various experiences (both good and not so good). This is the place where we have to be the ones who ask to be involved. Why and how? Keep reading and you will find the answers.

Youth involvement is much more than just having a few slightly younger people around. It actually needs a mindful approach and dedication. Therefore, youth involvement can be a set of policies, practices, activities or attitudes but all with the same final goal – to increase the amount of young people in the organisation's work and to support its younger decision-makers. The keywords here are "work" and "decision makers". If the sector is serious about youth taking the lead and taking up responsibilities in the future, then it is today that places and situations for experimentation and learning must be provided.

There are a lot of benefits that go with opening your organisation to youth. Not only does it give the possibility to help young people learn from current leaders and their stories, but it also works the other way around. We as the youth can be the advocates of what trends are relevant now and what the future decision makers think. The only people who can bring the youth perspective and fresh ideas are young people themselves. However, most importantly, if we want our traditions and organisations to carry on and flourish also after

10, 20 or 50 years, then we as youth must already be seen as the future of these organisations today.

To include the youth into an organisation there are youth policies as well as both short- and long-term strategies.

With policies focused on youth, we can ask the everyday world to be more accessible and approachable. One solution is through financial stimuli: discounts or special rates for participation or membership fees reduce the burden for students or those who are just starting out career-wise. Another financial solution is to open up money for youth through scholarships, grants or travel support to provide aid to gain knowledge and new experiences. However, more demanding policies ask for actual involvement possibilities or platforms: internships, job fairs, youth organisations, roundtables or conferences. These opportunities have a good advantage that merely financial support cannot provide: real-life activities bring youth together and give them the possibility to network and make friends with one another.

Short-term commitments can be divided into two categories: volunteering and junior decision-makers. These may be the easiest steps when we are asking for more from an organisation who has never had any experience with youth involvement. While both give hands-on experience, especially in the context of actual events and activities, the junior decision-makers also ask for slightly bigger responsibilities. As these two are both not paid but demanding tasks, it is important to

keep in mind that we, the youth who asked for these and are now welcomed to the organisation, also have to keep our promises and not let down the organisers.

Regarding long-term commitments, we can talk about involving young people as members of a project team, board members or creating a youth committee of your organisation. This is about permanent or long-term collaboration, not just for one event or project. Although these strategies might carry some additional challenges as well as ask for commitment and more availability, it is definitely here that we feel that we have something to say while our opinions and ideas can really make a difference in the future of organisations and projects. If your organisation chooses one of these options, be aware that for some people in the organisation it might not be easy to accept young people as equals and you may have to ask the team or board to prepare them to receive the youth!

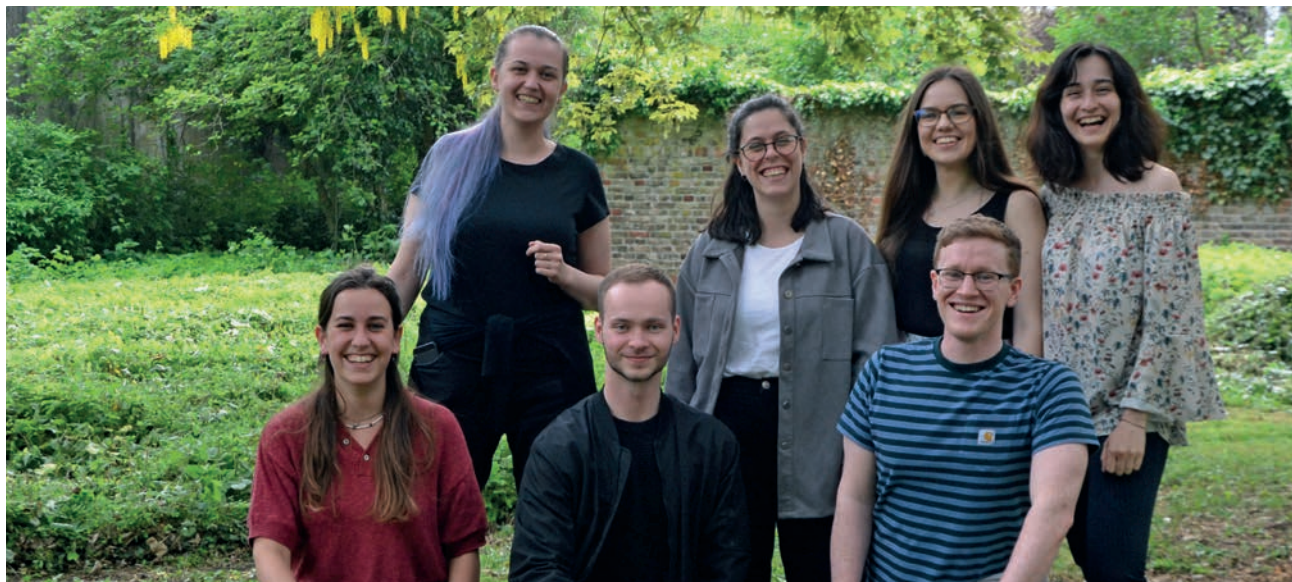
From our side, as youth, it is important that if we are given these opportunities, we take them, put effort into everything we do, prepare the best we can for every task, and learn as much as we can with every experien-

ce. No one will ask us to do everything right from the very first time and that is why these opportunities are so important: so we have the chance to share our ideas and projects, make mistakes, be supported on the way and learn with the experienced people that have been doing this for a long time now.

If an organisation is open and available to receive us and help us during our initial steps and the beginning of our career, that is the organisation we will want to give back to when we are at our best. That is a win-win situation both for organisations and the youth!

As a young person that is wishing to enter the cultural management field, we encourage you to be aware about the organisations that exist in your region or country, that you can possibly get involved in, and also get to know international organisations and programmes that you can join! You can also follow our blog, where you can get to know our activities, tasks as well as ideas and advice for (young) cultural leaders and organisations.

www.ecayouthcommittee.wordpress.com/
[www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/
about-us/who-we-are/youth-committee/](http://www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/about-us/who-we-are/youth-committee/)



SINGING IN MODERN DAYS. A NEW APPROACH TO HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

by Kornelia Kiss and Libby Farrel, *Culture Action Europe*

The experience during COVID-19 has highlighted how fragile our health and wellbeing is. It has shown us that living a healthy life means more than the absence of illness. Culture's contribution to well-being (and well-living) was chosen as one of the focus areas in Culture Action Europe's (CAE) 2022-24 Strategy by its membership, including the European Choral Association. Through this focus, CAE aims to "address the relationship of culture to social cohesion, community building and participation, democracy, diversity and equality and health, with a specific focus on access to culture and cultural rights." CAE's work on the 'CultureForHealth' project began in this context.

'CultureForHealth'¹ is the implementing project of the "EU Preparatory Action: Bottom-Up Policy Development for Culture & Well-being in the EU", and thereby receives high political attention as it was initiated by the Members of European Parliament. Through the compilation of evidence on culture's contribution to health and wellbeing, the development of policy recommendations, the mapping of over 700 projects across the EU and the development of 6 pilot projects, CultureForHealth aims to trigger a true policy change by promoting the incorporation of culture into a holistic approach to health and well-being. A recent publication, The CultureForHealth Report, 'Culture's contribution to health and well-being. A report on evidence and policy recommendations for Europe,' gathers evidence from

310 scientific studies on culture's contribution to individual and community well-being and builds on the work of the World Health Organization (WHO) in its 2019 report entitled 'What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and wellbeing? A scoping review'², which gathered 3000 pieces of scientific evidence on the more narrow topic of Arts' contribution to Health. Thus, the CultureForHealth report aimed to widen the discussion from the role of arts to health to the role of culture to health and well-being. The CultureForHealth report additionally formulated policy recommendations for the EU and its Member States. Among others, it calls for a shift towards health promotion and disease prevention, the incorporation of culture in the upcoming EU Comprehensive approach to mental health strategy, awareness raising, the development of trainings and peer-learning, and the development of long-term structures and cooperation across sectors in order to move away from project-based interventions to long term policies.

There is clearly political momentum now, triggered by the growing body of evidence, the experiences during covid and the awareness raising activities. EU Member States have recently selected Culture and Health as one of the topics to work together on in the context of the Work plan for Culture 2023-2026. Mental health also appears as a key topic, as the 'Comprehensive Approach to Mental Health' is currently being drafted by the

1 <https://www.cultureforhealth.eu>

2 <https://bci-hub.org/documents/what-evidence-role-arts-improving-health-and-well-being-scoping-review>

European Commission - to be unveiled on 7 June 2023. CAE submitted the CultureForHealth report and policy recommendations in the stakeholder consultations and is actively contributing to the process.

The CultureForHealth Report itself synthesises existing evidence on the positive effect of arts and cultural activities on health and well-being, explores the breadth of literature and studies that exist on the topic, and gathers policy recommendations for 8 key challenges for the EU and society in general. Throughout the report there is a strong presence of singing and choral interventions, in the forms of management and treatment of illnesses, as well as preventative and promotional measures for health and well-being. With the impressive amount of evidence and studies about the positive impacts of singing and choral activities included in the report, singing-based activities have distinguished themselves as one of the most effective cultural activities and interventions in demonstrating culture's immense potential in bettering health and well-being.

The benefits of singing-based activities, whether through individual or group and choral participation, are wide-ranging and far-reaching. Speaking of more generalised benefits across the board, singing helps to alleviate stress and anxiety, and promote social engagement and connection, among other physical, psychological, and social benefits. Targeted approaches to singing and choral activities tailor-made and targeting specific

health outcomes boast with impressive health and well-being outcomes. For example, singing for individuals and groups experiencing physical and mental illnesses, singing for elderly to support active aging, children and youth, as well as singing for caregivers and other workers.

The world is facing the ever-present challenge of a growing mental health crisis. More than 85 million citizens in the EU were affected by mental health problems before the COVID-19 pandemic, and this situation has only been exacerbated by the spread of the pandemic, as well as the war in Ukraine.³ Systematic reviews have found that group singing has the potential to improve emotional states, sense of belonging, self-confidence, and improved mental health.⁴ Further research has also demonstrated that group singing participation contributed to lower anxiety and depression scores, particularly for older people.⁵ Those who participated in choir singing activities also reported reduced levels of stress and tension. Fascinatingly, both face-to-face and online group singing participation styles have shown improved confidence and depression scores.⁶ Children and young people, in particular, have benefitted from social and mental improvements related to singing activities. One powerful skill that has resulted from these activities is the development of resilience, where singing has acted as an emotional coping mechanism.⁷ Choir singing has also demonstrated increases in confidence and self-value as an added benefit, especially for young

3 EPRS. (2021). Mental health and the Pandemic. European Parliament. Retrieved from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/696164/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)696164_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/696164/EPRS_BRI(2021)696164_EN.pdf)

4 Hagemann, V. (2021). Benefits of Collective Singing: An International Systematic Review on "Choral Research".

5 Coulton, S., Clift, S., Skingley, A., & Rodriguez, J. (2015). Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of community singing on mental health-related quality of life of older people: randomised controlled trial. *The British Journal of Psychiatry: The Journal of Mental Science*, 207(3), 250–255. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.bp.113.129908>

6 Philip, K. E., Lewis, A., Jeffery, E., Buttery, S., Cave, P., Cristiano, D., Lound, A., Taylor, K., Man, W. D.-C., Fancourt, D., Polkey, M. I., & Hopkinson, N. S. (2020). Moving singing for lung health online in response to COVID-19: experience from a randomised controlled trial. *BMJ Open Respiratory Research*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjresp-2020-000737>

7 Corvo, E., & De Caro, W. (2020). COVID-19 and spontaneous singing to decrease loneliness, improve cohesion, and mental well-being: An Italian experience. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice and Policy*, 12(S1), S247–S248. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000838>

children.⁸ Cultural participation in activities such as singing may also lead to the development of creative skills, contributing to the personal and educational development of children and youth, building on the life skills of empathy, communication, and collaboration to name a few. Beyond the mental health benefits of singing-based activities, there have also been positive associations between adolescent creative engagement and the promotion of healthy lifestyles, such as engaging in physical activity.⁹

There are several physical and neurological illnesses that can benefit from the positive outcomes of singing and choral activities, especially among older populations where these illnesses might be more present. For example, singing has been found to bring physical, psychological and social benefits for people with various respiratory, cardiovascular, and noncommunicable diseases, including chronic structural heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases.¹⁰ Through singing, people battling these diseases can experience increases in respiratory muscle strength, improved maximal respiratory pressure, and the reduction of dyspnea and perceived respiratory symptoms.¹¹ One study showed that people with Parkinson's could experience improvements in speech and prevention of

deterioration in speech function as a result of singing interventions and therapies.¹² Other neurological diseases, particularly neurodegenerative diseases that are common in elderly populations such as Alzheimer's and dementia, have seen positive associations between choral singing and improved cognitive functions, such as memory stabilisation. Additionally, older populations who participate in community singing activities can experience improved states of mental health and quality of life, including decreased levels of stress and anxiety.¹³ With the rapidly rising ageing population in Europe, now is the time to invest in the elderly's active engagement in singing and cultural activities, to enable a longer period of active ageing and improved wellbeing.

Two other subsets of the population that stand to benefit greatly from singing and choral activities are professional caregivers and mothers. Notably, participation in singing activities has been shown to provide emotional and social support to caregivers and medical staff; these workers reported reductions in depression, enhanced social connectedness, personnel engagement, and enjoyment.¹⁴ Similarly, evidence suggests that there are strong links between maternal mental health and well-being and participation in singing activities. One of CultureForHealth's pilot projects is the "Group singing for maternal

- 8 Hansen, E., Sund, E., Knudsen, M. S., Krokstad, S., & Holmen, T. L. (2015). Cultural activity participation and associations with self-perceived health, life-satisfaction and mental health: The Young HUNT Study, Norway. *BMC Public Health*, 15(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-015-1873-4>
- 9 Bungay, H., & Vella-Burrows, T. (2013). The effects of participating in creative activities on the health and well-being of children and young people: a rapid review of the literature. *Perspectives in Public Health*, 133(1), 44–52. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1757913912466946>
- 10 Skingley, A., Clift, S., Hurley, S., Price, S., & Stephens, L. (2018). Community singing groups for people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: participant perspectives. *Perspectives in Public Health*, 138(1), 66–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1757913917740930>
- 11 Bonilha, A. G., Onofre, F., Vieira, M. L., Prado, M. Y. A., & Martinez, J. A. B. (2009). Effects of singing classes on pulmonary function and quality of life of COPD patients. *International Journal of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease*, 4, 1–8.
- 12 Elefant, C., Baker, F. A., Lotan, M., Lagesen, S. K., & Skeie, G. O. (2012). The effect of group music therapy on mood, speech, and singing in individuals with Parkinson's disease – a feasibility study. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 49(3), 278–302. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jmt/49.3.278>
- 13 Camic, P. M., Williams, C. M., & Meeten, F. (2013). Does a "Singing Together Group" improve the quality of life of people with a dementia and their carers? A pilot evaluation study. *Dementia (London)*, 12(2), 157–176. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1471301211422761>
- 14 Fancourt, D., Warran, K., Finn, S., & Wiseman, T. (2019). Psychosocial singing interventions for the mental health and well-being of family carers of patients with cancer: results from a longitudinal controlled study. *BMJ Open*, 9(8), e026995. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2018-026995>

mental health” implemented by Cluj Cultural Centre and Central Denmark Region in partnership with the World Health Organisation and University College London. Within Romania, the pilot project consisted of two singing groups for mothers suffering from postnatal depression, one for Romanian speaking mothers and another one for Hungarian speaking mothers, who attended with their babies and participated in 10 consecutive weekly one-hour singing sessions. The programme aimed to help alleviate depression symptoms in mothers, helping participants to transform negative emotions and self-perceptions, experience positive emotions, lower cortisol levels, cathartic release, peer support and mother-infant bonding.¹⁵

Despite the abundance of literature and studies on the topic of culture and health and well-being, including the many examples of singing-based health interventions and activities, the campaign to mainstream culture in health policies remains an ongoing battle. The CultureForHealth innovative Mapping Database, which

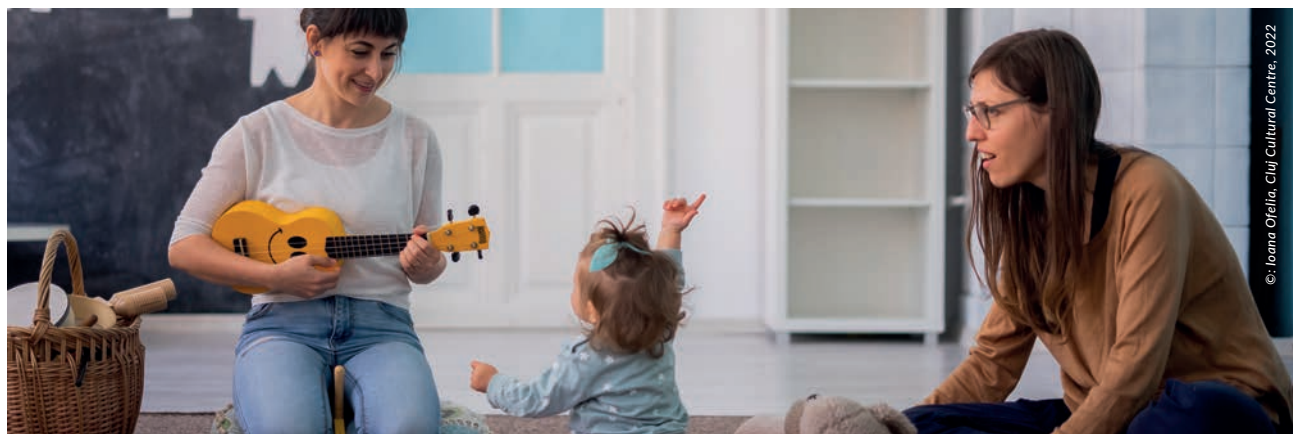
acts as a directory of initiatives on culture, well-being and health across the European Union and other non-EU countries has already collected over 780 projects and is growing day by day. The directory also contains many examples of singing-based and choral initiatives, which further demonstrate the power that these kinds of cultural activities have in improving health and well-being. For example, ENO Breathe, a breathing and well-being programme, focuses on breathing retraining through singing for people recovering from COVID-19. Creative Dementia Arts Network is working to improve the health and well-being of people with dementia through various arts activities including singing. As the CultureForHealth directory is continuously expanding, the visibility of singing-based health initiatives will increase. The CultureForHealth consortium encourages you to submit your projects and make use of the directory, as the examples gathered can serve as inspiration to anyone planning to start an artistic initiative for health and wellbeing.

www.cultureforhealth.eu

CultureForHealth is co-financed by the European Union and is implemented by a consortium consisting of Culture Action Europe, Trans Europe Halles, Central Denmark Region, The Northern Dimension Partnership of Culture, Cluj Cultural Centre, and Društvo Asociacija.

**CULTURE
FOR —
HEALTH**

15 Warran, K., Smith, C., Ugron, H., Carstens, L. F., Zbranca, R., Ottow, M., Blaga, O. M., Ladegaard, N. L., Davis, R. E., Fancourt, D., & Fietje, N. (2022). Scalability of a singing-based intervention for postpartum depression in Denmark and Romania: protocol for a single-arm feasibility study. *BMJ Open*, 12(12), e063420. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-063420>





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ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

2022

EVENTS OF THE EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION

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.



leading voices 2022



27-31/07/2022

UTRECHT, THE NETHERLANDS



ORGANISERS

EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION

IN COOPERATION WITH ZIMIHC

participants and session leaders from at least **28 nationalities**

350 participants in the **international programme**

150 online participants

3252 participants in the **local side programme**

50% of participants described themselves as **conductors or vocal leaders**

60% of participants were **under 40 years old**

85% of participants felt the event **enhanced** their **professional skills**



©: Anna van Kooij for Leading Voices 2022

“

It was a necessary event, gave a lot of opportunities for networking with peers, both national and international, and was a great input of ideas and thoughts to bring back home.

Music teacher from Spain

From 27-31 July 2022, Leading Voices – European Days for Vocal and Choral Leaders - presented a unique 5-day programme of workshops, masterclasses and lectures for conductors as well as choral and vocal professionals, along with many other social, educational and musical events. The event brought the latest developments in collective singing together in **one European platform**, providing a central space to learn, co-create and experiment. The event presented many inspiring forerunners as well as established artists.

Leading Voices, held in Utrecht, the Netherlands, presented **70+ sessions** designed to explore collective singing from a social and artistic perspective. It covered all genres and skill levels, and provided a dynamic platform for **conductors, vocal leaders, music teachers, managers, artistic leaders and composers & everyone interested in these professions** from all over Europe and beyond. The programme was designed around five themes and divides sessions into five different formats and subformat.

FIVE THEMES

Explore the future of collective singing

The main theme of Leading Voices 2022 concerned the future of collective singing from a social and artistic point of view. The main theme was further divided into 5 subthemes, which relate to the different roles of a conductor, vocal leader, music educator, manager, creator, composer or student in these fields:

1. Develop your artistic skills
2. Discover your inner leader
3. Learn new management tricks
4. Unleash your potential as a teacher
5. Connect your work to society

FIVE FORMATS

The programme of Leading Voices was designed around these five formats:

1. **LAB:** Unique to Leading Voices, this concept provided a space where participants and LAB-leaders were given the opportunity to experiment, with undefined outcomes.
2. **LEARN:** A more traditional way of learning from your peers: lectures, masterclasses or workshops led by one of the invited leading voices from various fields.
3. **LET'S MEET:** This format included lounges where participants and attending experts could meet. The sessions often focused on a particular topic or genre, and some were hosted by partners.
4. **LITERATURE:** Unmissable in any event by the European Choral Association is the marketplace, where composers, publishers and other choral organisations from all over Europe come together to display their wares. Informal presentations and sessions were hosted around this marketplace, freely accessible for participants as well as inhabitants of Utrecht.
5. **LIVE:** Apart from the daily headline concerts, there were also many presentations from the LABs and workshops, as well as plenty of choir-2-choir concerts by various choirs in the side programme.

www.LearningVoices.nl

Part of the programme of the festival were supported by the European Union in the frame of the Training Leading Voices project (p.27).



europa cantat junior festival 2022



15-24/07/2022

VILNIUS, LITHUANIA

ORGANISERS

EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION IN COOPERATION
WITH THE LITHUANIAN CULTURAL CENTRE

Europa Cantat Junior festival rocked Vilnius, Lithuania, after a difficult period of the pandemic and the beginning of the war in Ukraine. More than **400 participants** from **21 choirs** were so eager to sing that no challenges seemed big enough for them!

During the festival week, **5 Ateliers** took place, as well as **6 Creative Labs**, an **Opening Concert** at the Lithuanian National Philharmonic, **3 Choir-to-Choir Concerts**, **Short Atelier Concert**, **Final Concert** at St Catherine's Church, and, of course, the beloved **Open Singing**!

The theme of the festival was "**Smart Singing**", and the participants explored it from various angles: they created a smartphone orchestra, learned how to use music for mindfulness, found out about ways their body can help them sing, tried performing with sign language, talked about how music can be a tool for activism.

The festival was organized by the **Lithuanian National Culture Centre**, 5 core team members, 7 steering committee members, 18 volunteers and assistants.

www.EuropaCantatJunior.org



This was a feast and I have never thought that so many kids from other countries enjoy singing as much as I do!

Ugne, 12-year-old participant from a local choir



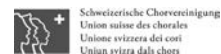
eurochoir 2022

7-18/07/2022

ORGANISERS

SWITZERLAND

EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION IN
COOPERATION WITH SCHWEIZERISCHE FÖDERATION
EUROPA CANTAT – SFEC AND WITH SUPPORT FROM
THE SCHWEIZERISCHE CHORVEREINIGUNG SCV



EuroChoir is a special choir project to promote the networking of talented young singers at the European level, and to foster the emergence of the next generation of talents.

Organised every year in a different country, EuroChoir offers the opportunity to young singers to get together to rehearse a challenging program with renowned conductors, improve their vocal skills and present the results of their work in public concerts.

In 2022, the choir conducted by Yuval Weinberg and Marco Amherd presented their programme at four successful concerts in Lenk, Basel, Flims and Rheinau and met young and ambitious local choirs on the way. The project showed once again, how important musical, cultural and social exchange across nations can be and how music can deeply connect people with different backgrounds with each other.

Conducted by Yuval Weinberg (DE/IL) and Marco Amherd (CH)

50 singers between the age of 18 and 30 from 28 countries:

Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Britain, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Malaysia, Russia, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, USA, Thailand, Turkey

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/events/our-events/eurochoir/



membership weekend 2022



17-20/11/2022

NOVI SAD, SERBIA

ORGANISERS

EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION IN COOPERATION
WITH THE SERBIAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION

110 participants from **26 countries** all over Europe met in Novi Sad to look back at the previous years, shared their thoughts for the future of the association, as well as their ideas, plans and wishes. Participants had the chance to discuss and brainstorm on important topics for the collective singing sector, such as fair remuneration, climate action and regional development. And last but not least, they could listen to choral music from Serbia and the Balkans, sing, dance, meet old friends and make new ones.

MEMBERSHIP DAY DISCUSSION SESSIONS

Participants met in parallel groups to learn about old and new projects, get inspired, and add their opinion and their ideas. The available sessions were: "Evaluation of Leading Voices"; "Activities from the network"; "What strategy for the future of choral music?"; "Youth participation and Fair Remuneration".

TRAINING LEADING VOICES CONFERENCE

Participants had the chance to get to know more about the activities that took place in the frame of Training Leading Voices (p.27): conductors competitions, conductors conferences, study tours in festivals and much more.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As usual, we looked back at what we have achieved in 2022 and ahead at our plans for the next years.

PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

- "Environmental sustainability and collective singing" with Sophie Dowden (FR/UK), Sonja Greiner (DE) and guest speaker Caro Overy from Creative Carbon Scotland (UK)
- "Choral Music from Serbia and the Balkans Region" with Tamara Adamov Petijević (RS)

DISCOVERING SERBIAN CHORAL MUSIC

- Concert by the "Belgrade State Radio Choir"
- Serbian folk dances performed by the "Vila Folk Ensemble" of the "Železnica" cultural and artistic society

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/events/our-events/membership-weekend/

This event was organised in the frame of the iGNITE project co-funded by the EU (p.26).

ONLINE ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

WEBINARS

- **SINGING WITH DISABILITIES**
with Micha Stafford (FR) | 18/05/2022
55 registered participants from 19 countries
25 live participants on Zoom & Facebook
317 views post-event on Youtube & Facebook (as per November 22)
- **DIGITAL TOOLS AND HYFLEX**
with Jim Daus Hjernøe (DK) | 22/09/2022
34 registered participants
99 live participants on Zoom & Facebook
402 views post-event on Youtube & Facebook (as per November 22)

MEMBERS' ONLINE PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

- **PROJECT PRESENTATION SESSION | 10/11/2022**
4 projects from Germany, Norway, Georgia, and Turkey were presented
37 registered participants from 17 countries
111 live participants on Zoom & Facebook
382 views post-event on Youtube & Facebook

INFORMAL ONLINE GATHERING

- **ENDING THE YEAR TOGETHER | 14/12/2022**
30 registered participants from 19 countries

www.youtube.com/c/EuropeanChoralAssociation/videos

These activities were organised in the frame of the iGNITE project co-funded by the EU (p.26).



FINANCIAL SUPPORT SCHEMES

In the framework of the IGNITE project , we offered the following financial support schemes:

IGNITE GRANTS FOR THE INTERNALISATION AND 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.

In 2022, the first IGNITE grant invitation was launched. After the call we received 9 applications from 8 different countries.

The Commission awarded 3 financial grants to the following projects which were successfully realised:

- Lisbon Choral Conducting Masterclass | Lisbon, Portugal - 26-28 August 2022
- IV Feria de Coro (4th National Choral Fair & EXPO) | Burgos, Spain - 1-2 October 2022
- Madrigal Ensemble Conducting Masterclass | Sofia, Bulgaria - 22-26 February 2023

www.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 trainings 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.

No peer-to-peer exchanges happened in 2022, but we approved some applications for 2023 which were set up in 2022.

www.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. 23) 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 2022, we had one connector in Sofia (Bulgaria) who helped us to promote our activities and introduce our Association.

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/activities/regional-development/

These activities were organised in the frame of the iGNITE project co-funded by the EU (p.26).



EVENTS IN PARTNERSHIP

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.

CHORALIES

3-11/08/2022

Vaison-la-Romanie, France

ORGANISERS

À Cœur Joie France in partnership with the European Choral Association

A great international singing festival where one can discover and exchange all kind of music and practices.

www.choralies.org

F. CORTI INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION FOR CHORAL CONDUCTORS

21-23/10/2022

Turin, Italy

ORGANISERS

Feniarco in collaboration with Associazione Cori Piemontesi and Conservatorio G. Verdi di Torino in partnership with the European Choral Association

One of the most important European Competition for choral conductors, aiming to stimulate vocal and choral leaders to improve their skills and competencies.

www.feniarco.it

Parts of these events were organised in the framework of the Training Leading Voices co-funded by the EU (p.27)



EVENTS PROMOTED BY US

Different types of choral events that the European Choral Association has decided to promote since they follow the three principles (non-competitive, educational & international). 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.

57TH BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL CHORAL FESTIVAL

4-10/07/2022

Barcelona, Spain

ORGANISER

Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corals

SINGING BRIDGES CHORAL FESTIVAL

19-23/07/2022

Novi Sad, Serbia

ORGANISER

Serbian Choral Association



BEYOND 2022

This list includes the events taking place after 2022 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.

2023

January	22-28/01/2023	Walter Strauss Choral Conducting Masterclass	Ankara (TR)
April	13-15/04/2023 19-22/04/2023	Festival di Primavera	Montecatini Terme (IT)
	25-30/04/2023	World Symposium on Choral Music	Istanbul (TR)
June	3-11/06/2023	World Youth Choir alumni session	Croatia, Slovenia and Hungary
July	5-13/07/2023	Europa Cantat Junior Festival	Ghent (BE)
August	1-6/08/2023	Africa Cantat	Yaoundé (CM)
September	27/08-3/09/2023	European Academy for Choral Conductors	Fano (IT)
October	11-15/10/2023	America Cantat 10	La Plata (AR)
November	17-19/11/2023	Membership Weekend 2023	Vilnius (LT)



Cooperation event of the European Choral Association



Event under the label of the European Choral Association



International event supported by the European Choral Association

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	TBC	EuroChoir	Varna (BG)
	2-7/07/2024	Study Tour to the 100th Anniversary of the Lithuanian Song Celebration	Vilnius (LT)
	8-14/07/2024	International Choral Festival Barcelona	Barcelona (ES)
	14-21/07/2024	European Seminar for Composers	Aosta (IT)
	21-28/07/2024	Singing Bridges Festifal	Novi Sad (RS)
August	7-11/08/2024	Arctic Boys Choir Festival	Bodø (NO)
	18/08-8/09/2024	World Youth Choir summer session	Germany and Italy
September	13-15/09/2024	(Inter)national Congress for Choral Conductors	Puteaux (FR)
	14-20/09/2024	Study Tour to Georgia and/or	Tbilisi (GE)
	20-26/09/2024	Study Tour to Armenia	Yerevan (AM)
October	25-27/10/2024	Fosco Corti International Competition for Choral Conductors	Turin (IT)
November	15-17/11/2024	Membership Weekend 2024	Flanders (BE)

2025/2026

October	3-27/10/2025	RelaxSing Costa Barcelona	Santa Susanna (ES)
TBC	2025	Leading Voices	TBC
TBC	2026	Europa Cantat Junior Festival	Girona (ES)

Your personal memories from 2022...





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www.youtube.com/ecaec



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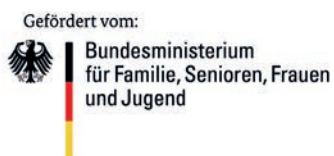
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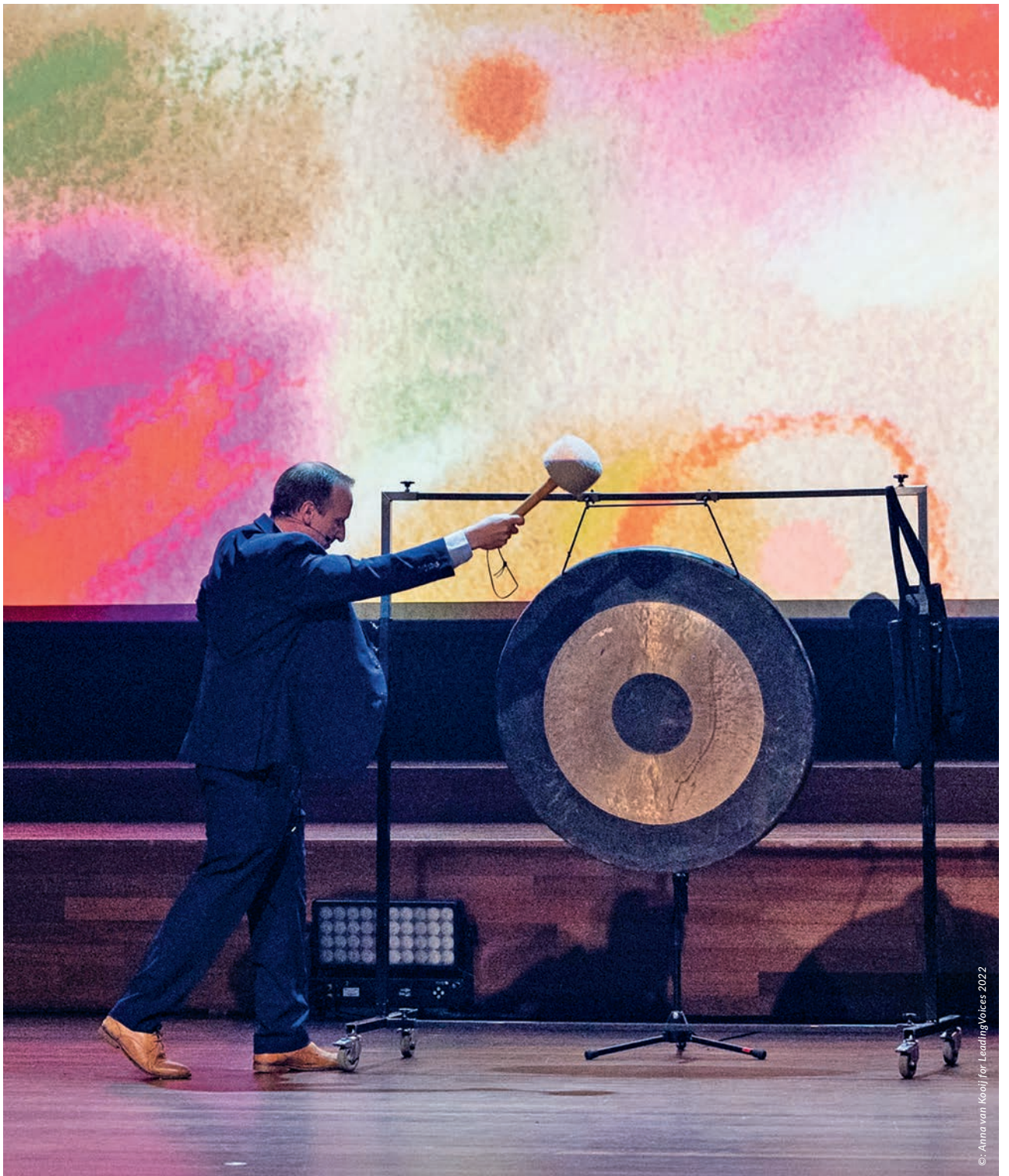
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