

Press Release – Bonn, 18/11/2024



The new board:
(from left to right)

*Dermot O'Callaghan
Joži Vovk
Joana Costa
Kjetil Aamann
Côme Ferrand-Cooper
Silvija Pročkytė
Xavier Devillers
Susanna Kantelinen
Marco Fornasier
Martine Spanjers
Raul Talmar
Yiğit Deniz*

The European Choral Association elects a new board and president and looks ahead to continuing the promotion of the benefits of collective singing and supporting the choral community in Europe.

The European Choral Association is happy to announce that Dermot O'Callaghan from Ireland was re-elected president of the association on November 17th 2024, in Leuven, Flanders.

On November 16th the general assembly elected a board of 11 people from 11 European countries which in turn, co-opted a 12th board member as representative of the Friends of the European Choral Association, and, following open and wide-ranging conversation within the board on the needs of the association, elected the new executive board:

President: Dermot O'Callaghan (Ireland)
1st vice-president: Silvija Pročkytė (Lithuania)
treasurer: Martine Spanjers (The Netherlands)
2nd artistic vice-president: Raul Talmar (Estonia)
3rd vice-president: Joži Vovk (Slovenia)

Dermot O Callaghan, President



Further members of the board are:
Kjetil Aamann (Norway), Joana Costa (Portugal/Belgium), Yiğit Deniz (Türkiye),
Xavier Devillers (Belgium), Côme Ferrand-Cooper (France), Marco Fornasier, (Italy)
and Susanna Kantelinen (Finland, representative of the Friends of the European Choral Association)

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Also, on November 15th, the members of the **Friends of the European Choral Association** gathered during a hybrid general assembly where the results of their online elections were announced. The elected board in turn elected an executive board on November 16th: Daphne Wassink (The Netherlands) was confirmed as president, Alfred Jürgens (Germany), appointed by the European Choral Association, was confirmed as treasurer and Susanna Kantelinen (Finland) elected as vice-president. Other board members are Marine Alaverdyan (Armenia), Flannery Ryan (Germany) and Henrike Schauerte (Germany). The members of the Friends also elected Susanna Kantelinen (Finland) as their representative to the board of the European Choral Association.

The European Choral Association gathered members and partners in Leuven, Belgium, this past weekend for its **membership weekend** with general assembly, hosted by the Flemish association Koor & Stem. The event provided a platform for members and friends of the association to engage with the association's projects, offer feedback to the board and team, and contribute to discussions shaping the future of collective singing in Europe.

The weekend highlighted key themes, including the future of events for the association, building on the thinking and reflection of the 2021-2024 board, including its strategy retreat in Bonn. Members explored how the Association's events could evolve to best meet the needs of the choral community, from large-scale gatherings to more targeted, smaller formats.

Sessions focused on understanding the aspirations of member organisations and how the association can contribute to the broader success of collective singing in Europe. Participants engaged in group discussions on pressing topics such as national youth choirs, youth engagement in choral work, and advancing diversity and inclusion initiatives. Another significant theme was the development of environmental strategies and policies, reinforcing the Association's commitment to sustainability. The Membership Weekend also included project presentations from member organisations and members of the Friends in the frame of peer-to-peer exchange and participants could attend workshops on Financial Sustainability strategies and ideas, as well as on Flemish choral music.

The event was complemented by inspiring performances and concerts, curated by Koor & Stem, showcasing a social theatre and singing project through which non-native speakers learn Dutch through monthly sing-along sessions and acting (Theater van A tot Z – Dag vreemde man) and the young vocal ensemble MAVIS which presented a repertoire from polyphony to new music.

Looking ahead, the association reaffirms its dedication to fostering well-being through collective singing, championing diversity, and addressing global challenges and the choral community's contribution to it.

The next membership weekend with general assembly (7-9/11/2025) will be hosted by the Secretariat de Corals Infantils de Catalunya (SCIC) in the beautiful city of Girona, Catalonia, Spain.

For more information, visit www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org

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