

MEETING POINT OF NATIONS

IN HARMONY
WITH NATURE



LIONS EUROPAFORUM KLAGENFURT

October 26 – 28, 2023

FINAL REPORT

1. General Summary

The Lions Europa Forum 2023 has been held during the last week of October – Thursday 26th through Saturday 28th in the City of Klagenfurt, Carinthia, in the South of Austria, according to the Rules of Procedures.

The main venue was the Convention Center Klagenfurt with an exhibition hall and various spaces for workshops and presentations surrounding the magnificent arena with a beautiful stage where the ceremonial and main events like the EF committee meetings took place. Spaces at the beautiful Carinthian State Archives right across the street from the Convention Center were utilized for more presentations and meetings. The Gustav Mahler Private University for Music, just a short walk from the Convention Center offered a dignified frame for the European Lions Musiccompetition and the European Young Ambassador Awards as well as the Youth Exchange program.

The theme 'Meeting Point of Nations' was made obvious in the Parade of Nations where over 50 countries with their colorful flags marched in unison carrying the Lions-Spirit through the city center of Klagenfurt on Austrians National Holiday. The Forum motto 'In Harmony with Nature' was represented throughout the entire event from no plastic ID badges and no throw-away gastronomy services to use of special arrangements with public transportation services for all guests. Over 10 sessions of the program were dedicated to environmental protection subjects.

The Forum program offered over 120 sessions starting the day before the official opening with various internal meetings. All events required by the Rules of Procedures have been conducted accordingly: Opening and Closing Ceremonies, European Council I and II meetings along with the discussion meeting, and three social events: Get Together, Host Night and Gala Dinner.

Participants occupied over 7 hotels in Klagenfurt and surrounding areas, with the Headquarter hotel on beautiful Lake Wörthersee and used the especially for the EF guests coordinated shuttle busses between the hotels and the Convention Center throughout the event. With over 1,100 Participants from over 50 different countries this Europaforum was one of the largest organized.

Representatives of the Lions from Israel were unable to attend due to unexpected political events.

The Lions Europa Forum 2023 had a positive financial result thanks to the Lions and Leos in organizing teams and the over 140 volunteers.

2. Host Committee

PID Dr. Walter Zemrosser	President
PCC Gerhard Gschweidl	Vice-President
PDG Dr. Karl Brewi	General Secretary / Program Coordination
PCC Hubert Gärtner	Treasurer
PDG Markus Tschischej	Program Advisor
PDG Gerhard Pockenauer-Gramiller	IT Administration
CC Martha Umhack	Environment & Sustainability
DG Eva Gfrerer-Unterlerchner	Social Events
PDG Heinz Rottleuthner	Organization Controlling
Johannes Merl	Media and Translation advisor
MDB Hans Neubauer	LEMC Lions European Music Competition
MDB Ulrike Alena	YAA Young Ambassadors
MDB Friedrich and David Drobesh	YCE Youth Camps and Exchange
Ingrid Zemrosser	Registration & Services
Bettina von Alt-Stutterheim-Brewi	Registration & Services
Monika Darwiche	Secretary
Stefanie Lukanz	Travel and Accommodation

3. Supervisory Committee

ID Barbara Grewe	Designated ID and Chairperson
PID Walter Zemrosser	Forum President
PID Nicole Miquel-Belaud	Forum Vice-President 2023, Forum President 2024
PDG Markus Tschischej	Forum Program Director 2023
PDG Vanessa Horrod	Forum Program Director 2024
PID Miklos Horvath	Forum Archivist & Advisor
Permanent guests:	
PID Daniel Isenrich	Forum Accountant
PDG Karl Brewi	Forum General Secretary
PCC Hubert Gärtner	Forum Treasurer

Beginning with the 1st meeting on the last day of the Europa Forum in Zagreb, the Forum Supervisory Committee had held a total of 12 meetings, including a site inspection meeting in Klagenfurt in March, and the final meeting also in Klagenfurt the day before Forum start.

Besides the Supervisory Committee members, there were always members of the host committee present, reporting on the progress in their areas of responsibility.

4. Participants

In summary 1.113 participants (918 Lions and LEOs) from 52 countries (37 European) attended.

We were happy to welcome the executive board with

IP Dr. Patti Hill and spouse Gregory Holmes

1st IVP Fabricio Oliveira and spouse Amariles

2nd IVP A.P. Singh

IPIP, Chairperson of LCIF Brian E. Sheehan and spouse Lori

PIP Gudrun Yngvadottir and spouse PID Jón Bjarni Thorsteinsson

PIP Eberhard Wirfs and spouse Margit

Board appointees:

PID Teresa Dineen

PCC Stewart Sherman-Kahn

LCIF Trustee Sandro Castellana

LCIF Trustee Vijay Kumar Raju

All the 6 European International Directors attended the Forum:

Barbara Grewe MD 111 Germany (Designated ID Chairperson)

Pirkko Vihavainen MD 107 Finland

Jürg Vogt MD 102 Switzerland/Liechtenstein

Marcel Daniels MD 112 Belgium

Danyal Kubin MD 118 Turkey

Halldor Kristjansson MD 109 Iceland

Many other Lions high officers participated in the Forum, PID's, CC's, PCC's, DG's, PDG's and more.

5. Opening and Closing Ceremonies

Opening and Closing Ceremonies were structured in content and timing according to the recommendations of the Rules of Procedures.

The **Opening Ceremony** was accompanied by the Military Music Band of Corinthia. First the Forum President PID Walter Zemrosser welcomed all the dignitaries and guests, followed by CC Martha Umhack. Government representatives Lion Christian Scheider, Mayor of Klagenfurt and Lion Dr. Christof Zernatto, Former Governor of Federal State Carinthia addressed the audience. Keynote speaker was Othmar Karas, 1st Vice-President of the European Parliament and lastly International President Dr. Patti Hill shared her message of Lions changing the world.

In the Opening ceremony the following candidates for higher offices at LCI took the opportunity to present themselves:

For the office of International Director

PDG Guy-Bernard Brami MD 103 France

PDG Dr. Karl Brewi MD 114 Austria

PDG Lorena Hus D 129 Slovenia (presented by PID Miklós Horváth)

For International Third Vice President

PID Dr. Manoj Shah MD 411 Republic of Kenya

PID Alexis Vincent Gomes D 403 B1 Republic of Congo

The **Closing Ceremony** started with the performance of the finalists of the Music competition and clips from the Europa Forum movie created during the days before. Forum President Walter Zemrosser expressed his gratitude to all participants, especially to 140 volunteers from Austria and Slovenia and presented the decision of the European Council to support the candidacy for the 3rd International Vice-President to PID Dr. Manoj Shah.

European Coordinator Ingo Brookman presented the 6 finalists and awarded the three winners of the Lions European Music Competition Thomas Kuti.

Dieter van Hoyer presented the three winners of the Bert Mason Young Ambassador Award and took the opportunity to announce his retirement as President of the YAA, Europe.

Designated International Director Barbara Grewe addressed the audience, summarizing the Forum activities and expressing her appreciation for all the work and thanks to all participants.

In an official awards ceremony, IP Patti Hill honored the members of the Forum organizing committee, Forum leaders and all who had a major role in the coordination of the Forum.

The President of the next Europa Forum, PID Nicole Miquel-Belaud gave an insight in the plans for the Europa Forum 2024 in Bordeaux. The closing ceremony ended with the hand-over ceremony of the official Lions Europa Forum Flag.

6. Forum Program

The Forum Program offered a total of over 120 sessions, workshops and presentations from all areas of Lionism. It was structured according to the directions and recommendations from the Forum Rules of Procedures.

The activities for Wednesday, October 25th, before the official opening, were included in the program, such as the Forum Supervisory Board (SCEF 2023), the Long Range Planning Committee Europe (LRPCE), Mission 1,5 – GAT CA 4, and the Lions Task Force Europe (LTE). Also on this day, orientation and welcome sessions for youth programs were held.

The formal three Forum days, Thursday – Saturday, October 26th – 29th, were filled with a tight schedule of sessions, meetings and presentations. Many of Lions valuable activities of European Lions were presented including

8 sessions on the Global Action Team – including Mission 1.5

10 sessions covering environmental protection and sustainability

12 sessions on international cooperation – including refugees and water projects

6 large, translated seminars led by the executive officers.

Other sessions covered all various topics, including the LEO movement and all Global Causes.

In addition, there were several presentations in the so-called Speakers Corner.

The agora with 14 exhibitions was an absolute meeting point for the participants to talk and exchange ideas.

Youth Exchange MD and District officers had the opportunity to meet and present their youth camps.

Both youth competitions, LEMC Thomas Kuti and Young Ambassador competition Bert Mason were held successfully.

All the executive officers had plenty opportunity to address participants and share their mission and thoughts.

The three European Council meetings were held successfully and with valid conclusions and voting (formal meeting notes documented).

The opening and closing ceremonies were included in the program.

One of the program highlights was the **Special Olympics** presentation by ID Barbara Grewe and PID Phil Nathan. Since beginning of the partnership of LCIF and Special Olympics over 22,000 Lions volunteers participated in Special Olympics events. Over 6,500 athletes from 176 nations opened the 2023 Special Olympics World Games in Berlin. PDD Wolfgang Tiersch, and PCC Gerhard Gschweidl, who took part in the

Opening Eyes® program in Berlin, welcomed guests Eva Lodron from the Special Olympics Austria with 4 Special Olympics Athletes, who shared their experiences and special needs with the audience.

Included in the program was also **World Peace Day**; LC Friesach-Burgenstadt hosted the 24th World Peace Day 2023 in Klagenfurt; delegations of the participating Lions Clubs from Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, Turkey and Austria were called on the stage to present their message towards world peace, which was streamed worldwide. Mike Lackner from Austria, participant in the worldwide Lions Peace Poster Contest presented his Peace Poster.

A most cheerful highlight was the **Parade of Nations** where over 700 Lions and LEOs from over 50 countries accompanied by the Blasmusik Grafenstein brass orchestra carried the Lions-Spirit through the city center of Klagenfurt. The cheery crowd waving their colorful flags marched in unison, showing the internationality of Lions from the Convention Center to Klagenfurt's prominent landmark the Lindwurm, where it was welcomed by Ulrike Herzig, in her function of 'EU and Partner-City alliances' representing the City of Klagenfurt.

The complete Forum program is attached to this report.

7. LEMC Thomas Kuti

Lions Ingo Brockmann und Johann Neubauer coordinated the 31. European Lions-Music Competition in the beautiful setting of the Gustav Mahler Private University for Music, just a short walk from the Convention Center. This year, trombone was the instrument of choice, and 16 trombonists from the same number of countries presented their talents. After the first round, the jury nominated six finalists (from Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, France) , who played a piece called 'urolig/rolig' from the Austrian composer Tina Geroldinger (participant in a new competition event of young composers from the Anton Bruckner Private University) plus a piece of their choice in the final round.

The three winners were:

- 1 – Sophie Rebecca Bright – Switzerland-Liechtenstein
- 2 – Jonas Gassner – Austria
- 3 – Francesco Maffei – Italy

For the first time in 31 years the entire competition was transmitted via livestream worldwide.

8. Bert Mason Young Ambassador Award Competition

European Coordinator Dieter Van Hoye and Ulrike Alena, MDB for the YAA, were in charge of this competition. After presentations by finalists from 9 different countries (UK, Germany, Ireland, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Switzerland, Romania, Austria), a jury of 5 board members selected the winners in a closed session, and presented the winners in an open awards ceremony on Saturday.

The three winners were:

- 1 - Flossie Donnelly – Ireland
- 2 - Ines Isenegger – Switzerland
- 3 - Maria Zikido – Greece

In addition, a Jury Special Prize, sponsored by MD 111 was awarded to Lena Schöps from Germany.

Two resolutions concerning the YAA (raise of the age limit to 19, raise of the prize money to EUR 7,500) were adopted during this Forums European Council.

Great thanks were given to Dieter Van Hoye, who largely contributed to the grows of the YAA program for many years. He announced his retirement from this function in the Forum closing session.

9. Lions Youth Exchange

Delegations from 22 countries participated in the YCE chairperson meeting led by David Drobesh, Chairperson Europa Forum 2023, as well as in workshops and presentations at the Gustav Mahler Private University for Music. A wide range of topics such as application and acceptance forms and process improvements, database exploration and more were discussed. 21 nominations were received to be evaluated for the YEC top 10 awards.

IP Dr. Patty Hill also visited the traditional Bazar during the YEC awards ceremony.

10. Social Events

All three major evening social events took place in the magnificent arena of the Convention Center Klagenfurt and were enjoyed by a large number of Forum guests. Thanks to the organizing team and many Lions and LEOs

volunteers from the host country under the lead of DG Eva Gfrerer-Unterlerchner the social events were a huge success.

Starting with a casual Get Together party with a great buffet, guests had lots of opportunities to meet old and make new friends on Thursday, October 26th.

On the second day's evening, Friday, October 27th, the host night 'Carinthian Night' took place with a fashion show in traditional Austrian outfits, lots of Carinthian musical and dancing performances and excellent food made this a wonderful enjoyable event.

On the final evening, Saturday, October 28th, the traditional Gala Dinner was held. Dinner was served at the tables and the over 730 guests had again the opportunity to hear the LEMCC Thomas Kuti finalists perform and the Kelag BIGband provided a good atmosphere for dancing.

11. Agora

An exhibition hall was created right by the main entrance of the Conference Center, where all participants passed through frequently. The 14 exhibitions covering a wide range of topics were an absolute meeting point for participants to talk and exchange ideas.

We had 12 booths with following paying users:

- Bordeaux (2)
- Dublin
- Italy
- Romania
- Sweden (BQL)
- LCIF
- MD114 – Diabetes
- MD114 – Environmental Protection
- MD114 – Sustainability
- MD114 – Stammzellspende
- D 114M – Environment Projects Austria

and 2 tables at no cost:

- MD111 - Lions Senior
- MD111 – KDL (Congress German Lions)

12. European Council

All 3 sessions of the European Council were held according to the Rules of Procedures.

This year, 13 resolutions were proposed, all of which were adopted, 10 of them unanimously, by 28 member delegates present in the voting session.

The most important decisions were the adoption of the so-called Europa Forum Manual, which replaces the old Rules of Procedure. Two decisions concerned the rules of the Burt Mason Young-Ambassador competition. The report (also financial) of the last two European Forums 2021 in Thessaloniki and 2022 in Zagreb were adopted. The hosts for the 2027 (Venice, Italy) and 2028 (Budapest, Hungary) European Forums were determined. The resolutions concerning initiatives to increase the possibility of participation in, and dissemination of knowledge gained from, international Lions events and the Marching Order at the Parade on International Conventions were adopted. In addition, the European Council expressed its confidence in the Board of Directors with regards to the decision of the Endorsement for PID Dr. Manoj Shah to run for the 3rd IVP at the International Convention in Melbourn 2024.

13. Financial Statement

The Lions Europa Forum 2023 in Klagenfurt had a positive financial result, thanks to the large number of Lions and Leos that volunteered their time, skills and talents, working in teams on planning, organizing, implementing hands on, serving in the spirit of LIONS.

The main income categories were the participant fees, such as registration, meal tickets and social events paid by the participants and booth rental fees.

The details are outlined in a separate document, the Final Financial Statement according to the Rules of Procedures.

14. Conclusion

We are happy to report that it was a very successful Forum, exceeding the expectations of most participants in all aspects:

- Remarkably interesting presentations, workshops and meetings
- Presence of the most LCI high officers
- Interesting and highly knowledgeable guest speakers
- Successful European Council meetings
- Successful LEMC Thomas Kuti and Bert Mason Young Ambassador competitions
- Successful Youth Exchange presentations and bazaar
- World peace theme honored with sessions finding great reminiscence.
- Glamorous and entertaining social events
- Forum Motto 'In Harmony with Nature' successfully implemented throughout the event in aspects like no plastic, ID badges made of dried grass, streamlined transportation, low waste, plus 10 sessions on the theme
- The Parade of Nations - an absolute highlight and making the internationality and Spirit of Lions visible.
- Excellent overall organization of the conference including Logistics
- Overall positive result

We, the members of the host committee, believe it was an exciting memorable event for all participants that will strengthen the Lions spirit and inspire Lions from all corners of the world.

PID Walter Zemrosser
Forum President

PDG Karl Brewi
Forum General Secretary