

MINUTES OF THE 19th EM - Budapest September 12-14, 2024

September 13, 2024, 9:00 am

Participants:

Austria-Czech rep.: Christine Bauer, Gabriele Schrumpf (Gaby)

Belgium and Luxembourg: Charlotte de Vos, Marie-Jeanne Laurent

Croatia: Sanja Pejić Rosko, Nives Sklepić Premus, Sandra Neretljakovic, Snježana Petrovic-Tkalcec

Cyprus: Evroulla Haroutunia, Tasoulla Voskou

Denmark: Brigitte Bach Jensen, Judy Ann Rieneck, Kirsten Møller

Finland: Eve Pylkkänen, Pia Helklö

France (F.A.M.A.T.): Isabelle Lobadowsky

GB&I: Anthea Tilsley, Karen Alun Davies

Germany: Carina Thomsen

Greece: Maria Nikolidak, Sissy Avgerinou

Italy: Donatella Nicolich, Daniela Soderi

The Netherlands: Anita Meerdinck, Nathalie Gruben

Romania-Moldova: Natalia Vavelina, Ana Stativa, Ira Cebotari

Sweden: Birgitta Sallmen

Switzerland: Angelika Walde

Budapest: Agnes Ottrubay, Andrea Petho, Rita Takats, Victoria Nemeth

The Agenda was as follows:

1. Welcome by the members of the host country and the mentors of EM
 2. Presentation of the participant and their countries
 3. Approval of the minutes of 2023
 4. Development and outcome of the European meetings
 5. Results of the Manchester Convention
 6. Proposals for Convention 2027
 7. Anita Meerdink (NL) : "Orange the world"
 8. The Contact Pool
 9. The UN and the position of IW in it
 10. Kirsten Möller (Past Board Director)
 11. NL: creation of a platform for all members born after 1963
 12. European Rally.
 13. Next European Meeting :
 - i. EM 2025 combined with European Rally in Denmark (see Montreux) ? or
 - ii. EM 2025 - Organised by Croatia in October 2025.
 - iii. Zoom for proposals in March 2025 (depending on the schedule Convention)
 14. Round tables:
 - i. IW Quiz
 - ii. Topics to be discussed
 15. Presentation of the Baltic Cruise for IW-friends May 2025
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1. Victoria Nemeth, on behalf of the local committee, welcomed all the participants in Budapest. The IWC of Budapest is honored to host the EM and hopes that the participants enjoy their stay in Budapest.

The Mentors - Charlotte, Gaby, Sissy, and Donatella - welcomed the participants, emphasizing that this is the first time that an ND club is hosting an EM. The hope is to bring clubs without a district closer to the rest of European countries with a District and an RN, giving them an impression of what is happening.

2. Charlotte asked the NRs and Deputies to introduce themselves and their countries.

Budapest: There are 3 clubs in Hungary; the Budapest club is 27 years old and has 32 members.

Denmarks has 4 districts, 77 clubs, and about 2400 members

The Netherlands has 3 districts and 53 clubs, and about 2000 members

Greece has 15 clubs, one district, and 300 members

Romania & Moldova have 8 clubs

Sweden 9 districts, 78 clubs and about 2800 members

Austria - Czech rep. one district, ten clubs 333 members

Cyprus has 11 clubs and one district, with 380 members

Eve Pykkänen—Finland—announced that, sadly, the NGB is closing in her country, and the two districts will be merged into one.

Belgium and Luxembourg 3 districts, 76 clubs and about 1900 members

Croatia has one district and 14 clubs

France (F.A.M.A.T.) has 5 districts, 122 clubs and 2200 members

Italy has 6 districts, 242 clubs, and 6000 members

GB&I has 28 districts, 400 clubs, and 7500 members

Germany has 7 districts, 9000 members, and 220 clubs

Switzerland has one district and 40 clubs

3. The minutes of the last EMs were circulated among the participants, and since there were no comments, the minutes were deemed approved.

4. Gabriele presented a ppt (attached): Handbook for Organizers of the European Meetings.

There is confusion between European Meetings, European Rallies, and Women For Europe, which are different things. European Rallye is a friendship Meeting to foster friendship and international understanding. Everybody can attend. Women for Europe It is a friendship Meeting dedicated to specific topics, and everybody can attend.

European Meeting is a business meeting to which NR, DNR, and some experts are invited. It is cyclical: After Convention Year: in September to discuss the convention's results and create the new 3-year vision; Before Convention Year: in July/August to discuss new Proposals for the next Convention; Convention Year: in September to discuss the accepted Proposals.

Invitations are sent to:

- National Representatives, their Deputies, or Past NRs of all European Countries
- District Chairman of countries without an NR
- ND-countries?
- The founders (Luisa Vinciguerra and Catherine Refabert)
- Some experts (IIW-Past Presidents, IIW Past Board Directors, Past NRS with good constitutional knowledge) as speakers
- The European Meeting has nothing to do with the International Inner Wheel. Therefore, the IIW-Governing Body is not invited (European BDs can be requested if they can contribute)
- Speakers
- The last Organizer of the European Meeting to present a minute of the previous EM.

The country organizing the EM should keep in mind that:

- Venue: it should be in an area that is easily reached by public transport

The program starts Thursday evening with a Get-together and continues for two Business days. It should be as economical as possible, covering the business section, the meals, and the excursions.

- Agenda: it should concern the current IW topics in Europe and IIW
 - Minutes: to send to all participants for correction for the final version and presented to the next EM
- The continuity is a serious problem, so last year, a team of Mentors (4) was elected for 3 years for support.

5. Luisa Vinciguerra was invited to speak on the Result of the Manchester Convention.

Unfortunately, she was not able to attend and sent a PowerPoint.

She thoroughly evaluated the results of the proposals and motions approved at the 19th Convention. Of the 32 proposals in the booklet, 30 were examined (2 were withdrawn), of which 4 had amendments. As a result, 12 proposals were carried out, and 18 were lost. Concerning the 4 general motions voted, 3 were approved. During the recent Ems, two years of significant and meticulous effort were put into preparing many proposals and motions. Of all this work, little remained because the CC only accepted some of it. Of those accepted and ended up in the booklet, only very few proposals were approved. A question arises: Does it make sense to put so much effort into achieving such a modest result?

Luisa then analyzed the parts of the Constitution affected by the changes approved.

She also considered the voting procedure, which caused an intense debate at the convention and the subsequent outcome of Proposal 7.

In the end, a reflection: What is the future of the second century of IW in light of the recent legislative changes? The only real innovation is the possibility of founding e-clubs. The impression is that there were few concrete changes and substantial improvements.

DISCUSSION

Sissy congratulated Luisa for her exhaustive and detailed analysis. Still, Angelika and Isabelle Lobadowsky feel it is superfluous here to go over what happened at the Convention as it is known to all and see Luisa's words as unhelpful. Sissy, Gabriele, and Charlotte, on the contrary, argue that it is essential to discuss and analyze the results since so much time was spent in the last EMs on the formulation of proposals and amendments.

6. Proposals for the 2027 Convention.

Angelika says that if the National Representative cannot attend the Convention, the Deputy National Representative cannot have the proxy votes of the National Representative and suggests presenting a proposal to amend this in the Constitution.

In the last EM, we worked in groups to write the proposals, and Gabriele suggested doing the same for the next Convention. Charlotte asked for suggestions for new proposals. The groups can then be formed based on the interest in working on the same proposal.

Karen Davies suggests that each member of the International Executive should have a Committee so that the responsibilities are shared. Currently, only the CC has a Committee.

Charlotte states that last year, proposals were prepared for each member of the Exec to have a Committee made of 4 BDs. However, the CC did not accept these proposals.

Gabriele says the proposals have already been written and can be easily brought in again.

Sissy notes that India, with its large number of votes, is decisive in the approval or rejection of proposals.

Moreover, it often has a very conservative attitude, being not open to innovation. She suggests that instead of making many proposals, focus on changing the majority for approval from 2/3 to simple.

Anita agrees with Karen and Sissy. Her idea is to have a Committee of 4 or 5 people to write a new Constitution.

Judy suggests thinking about the proposals and adjourn until tomorrow.

7. Anita presents the project Orange the World

Children who grow up in a violent environment take it with them, and they think it is normal and sometimes become violators themselves. Inner Wheel stands for children and women; we can be part of the solution. We are not professional helpers, but we can start a ripple effect. Violence against women is a problem of society, not a problem of women. We need men to support this campaign as, most of the time, they are violators, but most men are not, and we need them to talk to our boys or other men who misbehave.

The mission of our plan is that all women and their children deserve a promise and a safe environment. We want to show all the members the importance of the subject and clarify what we can do for our society and our Inner Wheel. The service is for fundraising but also to draw attention to the problem.

There are strengths and challenges. Strengths: All our members have an excellent local network, and cooperation with partner organizations will potentiate our efforts.

Challenges: in the Netherlands, we have a very high age (average 75 years old), but this subject is connected to every age. We made a plan to implement OtW using the strengths and challenges. IW the Netherlands planned to develop OtW first by connecting to UN women in the Netherlands, Soroptimists, Zonta, and many others, as well as professional helpers. This cooperation brings many advantages. Every year, we send the municipalities in the Netherlands a letter signed by the associations mentioned above, asking them to help participate in this campaign; we also became members of the NVR Dutch Society of Women, a network of 1000000 women in the Netherlands. This gives IW in the Netherlands a status in the society. All clubs and members must be informed, so we prepare a communication package every year a newsletter is sent. Our committee has a dedicated page on the IW The Netherlands website. Films, books, you can read anything you need to participate in this campaign. Webinars with experienced speakers allow the clubs to discuss what they did last year to exchange information. Launching the committee was made during the national event. Competition about the topic: A member connects with her club members and other clubs in each club.

UN women decide to participate, and people get to sign a pledge. If we all stand together, we can eradicate violence against women and girls from the world. Every time the name of IW comes back, there are updates on the project. What have the Dutch clubs made till now? Some clubs handed oranges, and others showed a movie and discussed or invited victims to tell stories; everything is possible.

The critical thing for IW is that many clubs go to the municipalities to raise the OtW with considerable publicity. Let's work together as IW Europe. Raising awareness doesn't cost anything.

DISCUSSION

Pia asks what practical action each club may pursue in addition to spreading awareness. Anita replies that awareness is the most essential thing one can do, as talking about the problem talking about it makes one aware that violence is not routine. For example, telling one's daughter you shouldn't go out at night because it is dangerous is unacceptable. Anita gave Carina the floor because she had started the project in Germany.

Carina explained she listened to Anita at the Manchester Convention, then came home and started attending the District Conferences. She talked about OtW and collected many questions and positive responses from the clubs.

Carina made it the theme of her year as the National Representative and believes that doing something together rather than discussing accepted or rejected proposals makes us stronger at the European level.

Karen informed that IW GB&I supports the White Ribbon Day, encouraging men to hold themselves accountable to women and to each other to affect positive behavior change.

Gabriele asked whether, in the Netherlands, only IW promotes OtW, and in Austria, Soroptimists support the movement.

Anita answered that they have a partnership with Soroptimist and Zonta. She said that the more associations involved, the better it is, and that she can organize Zoom meetings to spread the project inside

IW. Brigitte: we had an information meeting with UN women in August with all the districts, but it was more about fundraising and administrative management. Judy: did you involve IIW? Anita: I did a talk in Manchester, but there is no global organization that works intensively together with UN women on this subject. She thinks it is an opportunity for IIW to connect with the UN to make this our goal.

8. The Contact Pool

Carina presented the German Project Contact Pool, which was also presented during the European Rally in Berlin in 2022. At the Manchester Convention, she talked with friends in small groups and recognized that many were interested. The International Contact Pool aims to bring friends together. It is a quick and simple platform to connect with friends from different countries. Due to data protection regulations, the printing and distribution of the international directory has been stopped, making it difficult to contact friends and clubs in other countries. Using the platform helps with traveling as it makes it easier to suggest places and clubs to contact to have information and so on. The clubs do not organize the travel.

There is a community of 1000 friends and a particular contact member in each club to get in touch. She hopes to get more countries to participate in the International Contact Pool.

DISCUSSION

Tasoulla asked if the ICP is only for users of German members. Carina answered that they were restyling the German website and homepage, which will be translated into more languages. The clubs must decide whether they want to be part of the ICP, and then a person in the club must be chosen to be responsible for the connection. She will be in charge of arranging meetings and giving advice and help.

Pia: If a Finnish member wants to see information on other Finnish clubs, does she have to consult the German site?

Carina: For the moment, the ICP is in Germany, but the idea behind the ICP is to have many countries create their ICPs and then combine them. For example, if I travel to Italy, I look up the ICP reference on the Italian website.

Brigitte considers the costs because you incur very high additional costs every time you change something on the homepage. Do we have to change everything every time we add a club, or is it just one change?

Carina: We spent 5000 € on the website maintenance, but it was ancient.

Anita: Is this ICP only for members?

Carina: Anyone can click on it and get information about a club that is part of the ICP; then, you need to contact the club; if you are not an IW member, you need not connect.

Pia: It is very interesting. Our members traveling in other countries and wanting to get in touch with other clubs had to ask for contact information through Alan, as you don't find it on the website. With the ICP, it would be much easier, but it would require quite a lot of work.

Carina: Currently, we have 70 clubs in Germany participating in ICP.

9. Inner Wheel and the UN

Gabriele presented a report about the Inner Wheel and the UN. (PPT attached)

The United Nations was founded in 1945 to foster the international understanding of countries and to avoid wars. GS briefly explained the UN Charter. The headquarters is in NEW YORK; the other 4 places are VIENNA, GENEVA, and NAIROBI. The UN-System consists of 6 Main Institutions and many other institutions. The 6 central Institutions are:

The General Assembly, The Council of Security, The Economy and Social Council (ECOSOC), The Trusteeship Council, The International Court of Laws, The Office of Administration, and the Secretary.

International Inner Wheel has an observing status in ECOSOC. ECOSOC fosters economic and social cooperation to achieve stability and prosperity and guarantee peaceful living between countries. It has 54

member Countries and promotes working together in Culture, Health, Education, and Realizing Human Rights. It has expert commissions, a UN Human Rights Commission, a Women and Population Commission, and a Coordination of special UN Topics.

ECOSOC is the only way for NGOs to collaborate with the UN. Until 2014, more than 4000 NGOs had consultative status at the UN.

There are 3 different possibilities of Consultative Status but no right to vote.

1. The first status is for NGOs that can support the ECOSOC. 142 NGOs can participate in meetings, have the right to suggest agendas, and bring topics in written and spoken form.
2. Organizations with a special consultative status – this is the largest group – 2926 NGOs. They have a small spectrum of competence and few rights. They must send reports about their activities to the UN. Rotary is a member here.
3. They can only attend Meetings in their own activity space. They have no right to suggest topics for the Agenda. 977 NGOs—IIW is here.

Mrs Legarda, a Philippine board member, initially suggested that IIW apply to the United Nations for consultative status in 1970. Two years later, the ECOSOC confirmed the Inner Wheel's admittance to the Roster of Organization section.

Hinke Sunderman (IWC Wien-Nord-Ost) and Karoline Frauenlob (IWC München Europea) prepared a report for the EC meeting in June 1989, covering the topics of Introduction, Guidelines for the UN work, recommendations, Policy Matters, and Notes.

In the early 80thies, the first IIW UN Delegate was Jeanne Germain, an IWC Grenoble/France member in Geneva. In 1985, after the foundation of the two clubs in Vienna, UN Delegates were appointed in Vienna too. 1989, there were Myra Voves and Sallie Miller in NEW YORK, Aline Guerin in GENEVA and Hinke Sunderman, Annie Polsterer, Marie-Luise Lamezan-Salins and Karoline Frauenlob in VIENNA. Hinke Sunderman was the CO-ORDINATOR of the UN Delegates. At that time, the IIW Past President was responsible for the UN-Matters.

In consultation with the IIW President, the Co-Ordinator determines the years a representative is appointed and advises the IIW President on replacements or appointments of representatives.

She forwards reports to the IIW President (see. Guidelines for UN-Delegates at the UN Centers) with copies to the IIW admin of HQ and statements and draft statements to the IIW President for approval.

She distributes reports and approved statements to all representatives.

The IIW representatives join the relevant NGO Committees and pay annual fees. They attend sessions of the UN bodies on the chosen subjects three times a year (before every EC Meeting), prepare reports on meetings of NGO Committees and sessions of UN bodies, forward these reports to the Coordinator, and send statements or draft statements to the Coordinator.

The IIW PP appoints the IIW UN Delegates and ensures that each will be accredited to the respective UN Center. The IIW PP also appoints the Co-Ordinator. The IIW PP gives the time limits for the reports at the beginning of her year.

Expenses: For the IW years 1988/89 and 1989/1990, the IIW paid the NGO committees' stationary, postage, and membership fees. The IIW Executive Committee approves the representatives' expense accounts and arranges for payment by the IIW treasurer.

The topics are Human Rights, Rights of Children, Conditions of Women, Family, Elderly People, and Drugs. Our Constitution does not mention the function of IW UN Delegate, the necessary skills for the job, the procedure for applying, when to apply, or where to apply. It also does not say how long a term should be. We currently have three representatives in New York, three in Vienna, and one in Geneva.

It is also questionable whether the countries of the 3 cities in which we have UN Delegates should/could have a right to be involved (Switzerland remarked on this at the EM in Münster).

Last year, we prepared a proposal to insert a paragraph regarding the UN representatives in the Constitution, but the CCC did not accept it.

DISCUSSION

Tassoulla: What is the procedure for appointing the IIW delegates?

Angelika: Just write to IIW.

Charlotte: There are no rules.

Gaby: In Austria, some members are interested, but the representatives have been appointed for about 35 years, and you cannot ask for it.

Charlotte: Austria is a particular case as Vienna has a UN head office. In Geneva, finding someone to appoint as an IW representative was tough, and in New York, too.

Nives: If they don't live there, they must incur expenses to attend the meetings.

Charlotte: Suppose I have time, am interested, and want to pay for myself. Why can't I be the one?

Anita: We spoke this morning about attracting young members, and I think the post appeals to them. But if you expect members to get there for free, you limit access.

Gaby: Yes, young IW members may be interested in the position, and they should be put in a position to be able to attend the meetings. It is only a week in total per year. IIW has considerable resources and should pay them.

Charlotte: That's why we drew a proposal to have rules in the Constitution.

Gaby attended a meeting about family, and it was like an IW meeting: there was a speaker and about 12 listeners. It was interesting, but our status at the UN does not allow us to intervene.

Pia: have I understood right? Not every country can apply for UN representatives.

Gaby: I think each IW member can. So far, they have appointed members who live in Vienna, Geneva, or New York. However, Martine Gayond has to fly to NY from Florida. She is a very committed member and pays all out of her pocket.

Snjezana: I have asked many times in my country how these persons are elected, and I have not received the correct answer. Why is it so difficult to decide at the next IGB meeting and allot a certain amount of money for their expenses?

Charlotte: The nomination of the UN delegates was on the agenda of the board meeting at her time.

When she was IIW treasurer, a lady in Geneva sent her a huge bill, and she asked Elaine if she had to pay it. Elaine said yes, they have to be reimbursed for the effective costs. But now, in Vienna and New York, the UN representatives do not charge anything. It's up to you. The only thing is that there are no rules for applying for the post. As long as someone is in the chair, they stay there, and nobody changes it.

There is no procedure, so she advised those interested to email the headquarters stating they are candidates.

Nathalie: thinks you must have a particular qualification to apply for the post. She is confused because nothing is written about the function.

10. Kirsten speech

Kirsten has just finished her two-year term as a member of the international board as BD and would like to discuss IW's future and the necessary changes to secure it here.

In the Western part of the world, the average age in many of our clubs is very high, and many clubs are closed. There are also problems getting members to take responsibility at all levels of our organization.

To survive, we must examine our organization, analyze what's important to younger women, and determine what motivates them to get involved.

Selling products or membership in IW requires the same analysis and measures to succeed.

We need to use modern marketing for IW to survive.

What can we change IW to fit into this, and how can we change it?

To survive, we must attract the young generation, who want to be involved in something meaningful and well-known.

Our Organization has 114,000 Members, 4200 clubs, and 180 districts. There are 15 nations with an NGB, 21 with an RN, and 63 NDCs.

Kirsten then analyzes the duties and responsibilities of IIW GB and EC according to the Constitution and the guidelines.

The BDs work only with the NDC. They prepare reports not shared with the other BDs, and there is no handover at the end of the office with the BDs of the following year. She thinks BDs must work together and create guidelines for working with the NDC. Last year, she also suggested that the BDs from 2023-24 should have a Zoom meeting with the new BD to hand over the NDCs

. More of the others found it a great idea, but there was no reaction from the EC and no result.

She then presented four graphs showing the distribution of elected IIW officers (IIW president, treasurer, CCC, and BDs) in different countries over the last few years.

The IW organization can be represented by a triangle with the members at its base and the IIW president at the top. However, there is no IW without the members, so the triangle should be inverted!

The principle of rotation in management requires us to start from scratch every year. This may have been a good idea 100 years ago, but now, if you want to change things, doing so in one year is impossible.

We need to work together and stop starting from scratch every year. We should make plans for the next three years, use the three-year social project as a basis for what we want to achieve, make a handover every year with the incoming board, adjust goals together, make sure that the rules in the Constitution are also followed in IIW, and focus on branding IW.

It is possible to do great things together, working with Zoom meetings worldwide, so the board should exploit this possibility and have a meeting every month.

She advises creating groups to work on IW's future, ensuring that we will adapt to the modern world and that we can make a difference.

11. NL: creation of a platform for all members born after 1963

Anita: This speech is somehow connected with Kirsten's one. We know now that a healthy IW structure is founded on the clubs. Now, the average age in The Netherlands is 75 years. There are, of course, clubs with young members, but most of the clubs are struggling with the age of the members. Besides, older members combined with younger members may cause some issues in the clubs. In the Netherlands, we experienced that if we succeed in getting young members, they often leave the club after a few years.

In March, we celebrated 65 years of IW in the Netherlands, and the National Board decided we needed a big celebration to get all the members together. As the National President, it was my task to organize it. So, I consulted our members' information systems and started calling around randomly and talking to many people. I realized that we need young members to find younger members. So, I invited Nathalie as the incoming President of NC Netherlands and started focusing on the next generation in IW. The question to the younger members was, what do you need to find young members willing to join IW? And secondly, how do we keep them?

We then organized a Zoom meeting with members younger than born in 1963.

Anita: We made an invitation card handed during the 65th celebrations and by mail to members born after 1963. The response was good, and 48 members joined the Zoom. We divided the participants into 5 rooms to discuss about five questions. The conclusion was the members were enthusiastic about the idea of a next-generation IW. We also send out a survey with a series of questions. _The response was: 100% of participants participate in next-generation activities once to 4 times a year, and 75% prefer live meetings over virtual ones. If the meeting is live, 75% prefer to meet in a separate meeting not connected to another IW event. 60% would like to share their expertise with other next-generation members. They showed interest in Zoom meetings with motivational speakers on social and community subjects and other

organizations; 50% would like to help organize events occasionally. In conclusion, these are beneficial answers. The next step will be organizing a live or online event, and there is already a date. The next generation is a network that extends beyond the clubs and district boundaries. It could also be a European next-generation network.

12. European Rally (PPT attached)

Brigitte and Judy presented the European Rally, which will be held in Aarhus (Denmark) from September 25th to 28th, 2025. The theme will be 'Diversity – Inclusion – Integrity.' Registration fee is Euro 479 for the Early Bird Fee - from the 1st of November 2024 to the 1st of March 2025 and from the 2nd of March until the 1st of September 2025; the Normal Fee is Euro 539.

The program is as follows:

25 September 2025

14.00 – 16.00 Registration at the Music House in Aarhus, Thomas Jensens Allé 2, 8000 Aarhus
16.00 – 18.00 Welcome Reception
18.00 – 22.00 Meet and Greet Dinner - Aarhus by Night – accompanied by Danish Inner Wheel hostesses
Reception with bubbles, snacks, and dinner in a restaurant at an additional price of 73€

26 September 2025

9.00 – 10.30 Registration at 'Radisson Blue Scandinavia Hotel' Margrethepladsen 1, Thomas Jensens Allé, 8000 Aarhus
10.30 – 12.30 Lectures based on theme – Keynote speaker to be announced later
12.30 – 13.30 Lunch and socializing
13.30 – 15.00 Workshop 1
15.00 – 15.30 Coffee with sweets and socializing
15.30 – 16.30 Workshop 2
16.30 – 18.30 Experience Aarhus on your own
18.30 – 22.00 Dinner and entertainment

27 September 2025

9.30 – 12.30 Theme morning – 'Diversity, Integrity and Inclusion' Exciting Presentation by Keynote speaker to be announced later
12.30 Lunch to go
13.30 – 17.00 Individual tour options as an additional purchase to different places in Aarhus (on a first-come, first-served basis)
19.00 – 23.00 Gala Dinner with speeches, entertainment, and announcement of where the next European Rally 2028 will be held

28 September 2025

9.30 – 11.30 Presentations and Workshop 3
11.30 – 12.30 Closing Ceremony and Farewell of the 3rd Inner Wheel European Rally
12.30 Lunch to go

13. Next European Meeting (presented on the following day)

14. Presentation of the Baltic Cruise for IW-friends May 2025

Gabriele presented the 6th IW Cruise, which will be held from 10 to 17 May 2025 and is open to all European IW members, their families, and friends.

It is intended for participants to meet each other and have fun together, attend a good sightseeing program, promote IW friendship/IW Meetings on Board, and exchange experiences.

She said that if you are interested, she will send you all the information.

September 15 - 9:30

Charlotte came again to discuss the proposals to be prepared for the next Convention and asked if we wanted to have more proposals or concentrate only on one or two.

Anita thinks that Sissy's proposal about changing the majority for approval has to be supported.

Snjezana: We already agreed this morning that it is unproductive to scatter over many proposals, but it is better to concentrate on one or two significant ones. Another proposal or general motion could be to change the constitution from head to toe.

Charlotte: We already agreed on two significant proposals (a change in the majority for approval of the proposals and Committees for each Executive member), and we can add the general motion to rewrite the Constitution. Who wants to work on it? Anita, Sissy, and Gaby will work on the majority proposal.

Charlotte asked if there were more topics to discuss

Anita: if there is interest in the project OtW and the next generation, she can organize Zoom meetings. She will create a WhatsApp chat and put a questionnaire to choose a date for the Zoom meetings. She urged to inform clubs and all the members interested.

Gaby: At the Convention, the proposal that every club should have training every year was carried out, and now she wants to know how this will be implemented in the different countries.

Carina: In Germany, the districts organize Zoom training sessions on the different positions of the incoming club boards. The Districts are very well connected.

Gaby: who is in charge of the training?

Carina: It depends on the topic. It could be the DC or a PDC. Sometimes, we also have professional trainers for topics not strictly connected with IW topics.

Eve: In Finland, we offer new members individual personal training to help them become confident with IW.

Snjezana: Where do you get the training material? From the IIW website?

Eve: we teach them how to start because sometimes they are scared at the beginning.

Nathalie: In the Netherlands, training is performed by the Districts and is mostly about leadership. Experts from outside IW or from other countries may also be called. Then, we have club-for-club meetings in which clubs talk about best practices, good communication, projects, and membership. We share the ideas and then upload them on the website so everybody can read them.

This year, we started something new with concise tutorials – videos of one and a half minutes covering all the subjects.

Karen: Two years ago, we realized that we needed a dramatic change in GB&I, so we appointed a new member professional trainer for the training. She worked closely with the executive board to implement the changes. Subsequently, there was a training session for all the district officers. The first part of the training is about the responsibilities as officers, and the second part is about how we can implement the change and what we can do. We're almost in the third year, and part of that is that everybody sits in different groups of 10 not together with friends and moves from table to table. Each table has a question posed, and the people express their thoughts. We bring these ideas back together and formulate a new stage. The first part was promoting IW and attracting new members; the idea was to have a professional help promote IW. So we moved to professional people to develop a standard way to use on FB and everywhere else. That's the stage we're in, and moving onto the second stage simplifying the Constitution – just what you have to do. Very simply: you have to do these things or whatever. The third stage will be launched next July. But it all depends on the succession and continuity.

Pia: In our club, the person who brings new members is a kind of mentor for them. Otherwise, the new members feel isolated, and after three meetings, they resign. The people involved have to share thoughts and problems with the club. You need to have a system, and then it works.

Karen: I forgot to say that we started with a metaphor - a book called Our Iceberg Is Melting. It's about penguins and the fissures in their iceberg, which cause them to look for a new one.

Carina: We invite new members (members for half a year) to the following districts' conferences to get an idea of what is going on, meet experienced members, and experience the spirit and feeling of the higher level.

Natalia: We have training every month on different topics.

Pia: We have to take into account differences between ages. The younger are keen to advance, while the older are more conservative.

Judy: We invite the new members to private houses for the first time to learn how we are doing, what we are doing, and why we are doing this. Each member offers hospitality in her house, and the others bring something. It worked very well, and we spared a lot of money; otherwise, we would have gone to restaurants.

Snejzana asked Donatella what is the training like in Italy.

Donatella: In Italy, we have been doing a lot of training for many years. I think we have experimented with all sorts of training. Generally, the districts are in charge of training the club's officers. We also have training on leadership, members' motivation, and communication with experts outside our association. Each district tested different types of training. For instance, training on demand, that is, every club asks what is needed, and experienced members will contact the club. The Tutoring and Mentoring Project has qualified and experienced members in each club. The Tutor is a reference figure for the Constitution, Rules, and Procedures and conducts training sessions during the IW year using the supplied material. The Mentor is a guide figure and facilitator for new members.

In addition, we usually have training days before and after the Conventions and National Conferences.

We do a lot in training, but the Constitution and Bylaws always have blank spots, and conflicts about the interpretation of the rules often occur.

The trainers change from time to time. In some districts, the trainers are the district officers, but sometimes, they are not sufficiently experienced and ask for other, more skilled members.

Brigitte: The districts have trained the clubs in Denmark for many years. Now, we're trying an innovative way. The clubs discuss one subject yearly and bring the result back to the district. For instance, one of the topics discussed was how to get the clubs interested in IW and international work. We wrote to the clubs, asking them to describe what they wanted to do, what was good, and what they wanted to change in IW. But they were not interested in international work and answered: we have good clubs and do not need new clubs. Some others asked for something new, a new home page; we must be interested in all of Denmark. Then, we analyzed 5 items we wanted to work on, including how to get new members.

We now have a good, even if expensive, homepage.

Evry asked about the e-clubs

Gaby answered that she knew what was decided at the Convention. She thinks the e-clubs follow the same procedures as the regular clubs. They have to be part of a district. They meet monthly via Zoom, and if they want, they can also meet physically. She would have loved it if e-clubs had also been for international connections and exchange experiences. Anyway, it is a first step.

Kirsten: Sometimes, long distances inside a District prevent people from having a normal club; in this way, e-clubs may be helpful.

Anita thinks that the proposal about e-clubs also offers a solution for members at large.

Donatella: At the beginning, four proposals for an e-club were drawn, including international connections and double membership. But IIW only accepted e-clubs inside a district. In Italy, we already have two next-generation clubs mainly meeting on Zoom. They are formed by young women engaged with work, family, and so on who usually meet on Zoom and sometimes physically.

Gaby: As I told you yesterday, we worked out 38 proposals, four of which concerned e-clubs national and international. However, the CCC only accepted and changed one. So this is the outcome, but it is a first step, and if we want, we can work on it.

Snejazana: If they are founded in our district in Croatia, they belong to the district, and it doesn't matter where the members live.

Sissy: sometimes we lose members, especially the young ones because they find work or go to study abroad. In this way, they can remain in their club without a problem.

Gaby: Thanks for all your answers. Training is essential, and all the bases are in the constitution. We are IW members because our Constitution is binding on all. I think each member should be familiar with it to avoid fights and focus on more likable and interesting things.

Sandra: Now that it is official, we must do training in Croatia.

Sissy: I have a topic that I want to discuss with you. How many of you voted in favor of the general motion regarding changing the name of IW? I'm asking you about this general motion brought 3 times at the Conventions. I was against this GM, and those who spoke against the motion said that if the brand works well, what is the point in changing it? But then I listened to those who spoke in favor and noticed they were all young new members. That's why I ask your opinion. If changing the name is more appealing for new members who have nothing to do with Rotary, we should try to find a new name, maybe changing Inner Wheel into Inner Will.

Donatella: but the GM was not carried with 88% against, which is a very large majority.

Charlotte: I have always voted in favor and received much criticism. But it isn't a proposal. It is a general motion that gives IIW a task to think about, and maybe some brilliant ideas will emerge.

Sissy: have you ever discussed with other members about it? What is your impression?

Charlotte: I didn't discuss it but seconded the GM in Melbourne and spoke in favor.

Anita: We are Inner Wheel and should be proud of ourselves. It's our image and how we present ourselves to the other.

Gaby: I agree with you, but I want to remember that in 1924, 27 women founded a women's club when they were not allowed to vote and had no rights. They were fearless and very modern. This is a point that, 100 years later, we must consider because tradition is vital, but we need some modernization.

Karen: Younger members, when they hear what we call, are not attracted by the name, as they think of a close group of people in the inner circle. They don't see the service; they just see it as a friendship group looking inward, as the name suggests that you are looking inside and not out and moving forward.

Nathalie: We are too humble to advertise our work on social media, newspapers, etc., to generate attention. Inner Wheel is not a strange name; we should brand it and be proud of being Inner Wheel.

Snježana: My name defines me. If I change the name, who knows who I am?

Anita: It is important to link the name IW to good practices and good examples and brand it. Let our services and good causes tell about us: that is branding.

Kirsten: Remember that the Inner Wheel is what makes the wheel run. And this is what we do. We make things happen. If you explain the name Inner Wheel, do not refer to Rotary but just say it is what makes the motor work.

Charlotte: We should not refer to Rotary but say we are women in action making a difference.

Gaby: Travelling in India, everyone knows what Inner Wheel is. When you arrive in a village at the beginning of the journey, there is a big signal with the IW logo that welcomes you. In addition to all their social work, they brand IW in society. They are in TV shows and newspapers. It is not easy in Europe, but we can try to go in this direction. In Italy, for example, IW services the national cultural heritage by restoring paintings or other works of art, and under the restored masterpiece, they put a plaque saying the IW club of XY restored this. This is also a way to brand IW.

Anita: We all agree that branding is necessary. if you connect to a big project such as OtW, you will reach millions and brand IW.

Gaby: We now have two items left. We prepared a little IW quiz (attached) that you should work on. It's just for fun.

Then, we will end the meeting with the announcement of the EM for the following year.

13. Next European Meeting (ppt attached)

Sandra presented the next EM, which will be held in Split (Croatia) from September 18 to 25. The NDCs will not be invited.

Closing remarks and thanks to the Organizing Committee.

Attachments:

A1: Handbook for Organizers of the European Meetings

A2: European Rally

A3: Next European Meeting

Due to their size, the remaining presentations will be sent upon request.