

## PRESS RELEASE

### Upgrade – Connect – Reach Out project launched



General Secretariat  
c/o Haus Der Kultur  
Weberstr. 59A  
53113 BONN – Germany

Phone +49 228 9125663

Fax +49 228 9125658

Mail [info@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org](mailto:info@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org)

Web [www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org](http://www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org)

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### **“Upgrade – Connect – Reach out: Raising Awareness for Collective Singing in Europe” launched with successful events around the General Assembly and Membership Day in Tallinn (EE)**

The project “Upgrade – Connect – Reach out: Raising Awareness for Collective Singing in Europe” started on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017. The project was selected for funding through the EU Creative Europe Programme under the strand for network projects for a four year support from September 2017 to August 2021.

The project aims at strengthening the network of the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat, offering capacity building and developing new (digital tools) under the keyword “Upgrade”, cooperating with other players in the sector of Collective Singing and enlarging the scope of the network under the keyword “Connect”, and reaching out beyond the sector under the keyword “Reach Out”.

The EU funding allowed the association to start the project in September 2017 by increasing its staff and restructuring the office, so that the association now has a full-time communication officer who can focus on internal and external communication and help the association reaching out to a wider audience with upgraded communication tools.

Concrete activities within the project started in October 2017 with the activities connected to the General Assembly of the association in Tallinn, which several (potential) members from Central-Eastern and South-Eastern Europe were able to attend thanks to grants offered as part of the project. Before the Conference “sing outside the box”, also co-funded by the EU Creative Europe programme as part of a small cooperation project, the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat offered its members a Membership day with professional moderators, where they discussed the needs of the sector in the field of capacity building, new ways of connecting with and engaging individual conductors and composers, new activities to be developed in the future in order to better serve the sector, and creative ways of increasing peer-to-peer cooperation.

The discussions were followed by a project presentation with inspiring projects and the opportunity to present a short pitch about a project for which members may be looking for potential partners. This session included a presentation of 2018 as EU Year of Cultural Heritage and the Baltic Song Celebrations as prominent example of Intangible Cultural Heritage recognized by UNESCO. In addition members had the opportunity to meet informally on Sunday morning, to exchange ideas and tips and tricks, or to start new cooperation projects.

At the General Assembly the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat announced further activities foreseen in year one of the project, such as a staff exchange programme, a capacity building workshop on digital communication, a singtank developing future strategies and an increased cooperation with other sectors.

**Stay tuned to hear more about the project on [www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org](http://www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org) or through our newsletter.**

