

## The continuity of Ems – how to do?

Today I would like to share with you my experience of 13 Ems which I attended. I would like to talk about the history, the founders, the meaning and the outcome of EMs, whom to invite, which venue to choose and how to achieve more continuity.

First of all, I want to introduce the [differences of the 3 big European Events](#) European Meeting, European Rallye and Women for Europe.

- **European Meeting:** was founded as a Think Tank for committed and experienced IW-members by Luisa Vinciguerra and Catherine Refabert. It developed as a meeting for the NRs of Europe, giving Speeches about topics and information and to discuss European matters. All European countries should be included. The European Meeting is only to work for Inner Wheel, it is to discuss and develop the future and what could be done for this. It should be obligatory for all European countries to send 2 delegates.
- **European Rallye:** developed out of the Rallye Charlemagne, which was for all countries in which Charles the great acted (8 countries, 6 of them were organizers) and were founded by.....At the EM in Varese 2016 Charlotte de Vos brought the idea to change the Rallye Charlemagne into an European Rallye. Although the preparations for the next Rallye Charlemagne already have started, the organizer country asked for the agreement of the other participants to change the Rallye Charlemagne into the European Rallye, which was very successful held in 2019 in Rotterdam/Netherlands and organized by Marian Telleguen. It is a Friendship-Meeting and all European IW-members are invited to join and enjoy friendship and since Rotterdam also a Symposium with certain topics.
- **Women for Europe:** founded by Luisa Vinciguerra. It is a friendship meeting to discuss relevant topics of the European Union (sustainability, how to leave our children a world to live in and so on). Author and responsible for the Project Luisa Vinciguerra for the IWC Napoli Luisa Bruni – D210-Italy
- Goal: the contribution of the Inner Wheel Women for Women in Europe, in line with the Strategies of the European Union.

- 9 Editions – The beginning in Naples, 2008.
- Interactivity: workshops and debates.
- 3 Phases: “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment” - “The phase green” - “A Women's Project for Children”.

The country who invites gives a certain topic in agreement with Luisa Vinciguerra and the IWC Carla Bruni from Naples and calls then for papers. The contributions are presented in workshops at the meeting in presence. Sometimes even books were published about afterwards.

**After the differences I want to come back to the EM - why do I want to talk about this topic to you today?** Because the EM is a fantastic idea and tool for the future of IW Europe and I was the organizer of the 6<sup>th</sup> one. So I have an overview about the development and the advantages and disadvantages of the Ems. I have all Minutes and lists and even most presentations from all Ems – also the group pictures.

**Up to now, we had 15 European Meetings.**

2007 Tours informal first EM	2015 Bristol
2008 Cologne	2016 Varese
2009 Tampere	2017 Aalborg
2010 Montreux	2018 Stavanger
2011 Amsterdam	2019 Münster
2012 Graz	2020 Rhodes
2013 Luxembourg	2021 Rimini
2014 Malmö	

**The idea of European Meetings** – 2006 some very committed and experienced IW-members discussed the idea of IIW PBD Luisa Vinciguerra to meet at a European base once a year to discuss

European IW-matters and find solutions to work together. It was thought as a European THINK TANK to come forward, to discuss proposals and **to create a team, working together in needed topics**. And the exchange of what is going on in different European countries were also an important topic. Women for Europe started, The Langobards in Europe started, The European Cruises were presented and so on.

In the beginning the group consisted of IIW-Presidents, NRs, National Presidents, BDS and PBDs and even members from ND-countries like me and Gertie Munro from Austria.

### First results of EMs

The first 2 important successes were Proposal 17 of the Convention in Istanbul 2012 after the discussion and presentation of this proposal at the Ems before. The foundation of District 192 Austria in April 2013 was also a result of the participation of my colleague and me at the Ems before. Another result was to stop the Unicef Projects after the Convention of Kotakinabalu. A very important newer result is the change from the Rallye Charlemagne to the European Rallye which happened at the EM in Varese 2016!

After the first big results the Ems became larger and larger, Husbands started to participate more and more. Rules came now that NRs and their Deputies should attend or persons from the national level, but not more than 2 from one country, because the meeting should keep a dimension where discussion is still possible. Speakers were invited separately, sometimes the speakers also represented their countries.

**Remember – The European Meeting was created as a European Think Tank!** In fact, in a certain **3-year termination**: The Past Convention EM, the Middle-Convention year (the year, where the Proposals have to be send in and the Pre Convention EM). This is a very important fact! That`s why the participants of the 6<sup>th</sup> EM in Graz decided that the Proposal EM (the middle one in the period) has to take place in July, latest time 15<sup>th</sup> August, done the first time in Luxembourg. Why? Because the prepared proposals should be discussed in this meeting and even seconders and supporters could be found. Proposals with the same content should not be send in for several times, one Proposer was fixed and sometimes also the seconder. This is an advantage for us, but also for the international EC and CCC. Unfortunately, in Münster this agreement was not respected, although it was mentioned to the organizers. (Next year again it will be a Proposal EM)

Last year we had due to Covid the **first Virtual EM**, organized by Sissy Avgerinou and our Greek friends. This year, we will have the 15<sup>th</sup> EM in Italy – the **first Hybrid Meeting**. So new tools are used also for the EM. Zoom Meetings in smaller and larger groups are possible now. We got to use this tools now in a very common way – this is a new chance and possibility of course!

In the beginning some friends just offered to do the next one. The one in my country was important for the foundation of the District. But to be honest, it was very difficult for my colleague and me to find out whom we should invite as participants and as speakers. At that time, we were non districted. But we got support by the founders – by Luisa Vinciguerra and Catherine Refabert. That's why in Graz for the first time the Eastern European Countries were invited – another big and necessary step.

**So, there are now some important questions:**

- Who can invite for the EM? (the venue)
- Who decides, who will be invited? (participants and speakers)
- Who decides the topics? (not to have the same discussions every or every second year)
- How can we effort continuity?

**Now I reached one of the most important part – CONTINUITY!**

It would be very necessary to have a kind of **red line in the EMs**.

**Who can offer to organize the next EM?**

In former days IW friends just offered a verbal invitation for the next meeting; there was no video presentation about – it was just to invite for the next year; there was nothing official about

More and more it became in a way professional, with a logo and with an inviting film and so on, but still just offered by friends

Sometimes we had more offers and then we created a line

- ▶ Should we keep this system?

### Who will be invited?

- Of course representatives of all countries with NRs and Districts – 19 countries
- ND countries were only invited very seldom – we should think about how to get them in – 10 countries, which means 1/3 of European IW Countries
- Experienced members are also needed as speakers and for the discussions
- Should members of the international EC be invited?

### The Venue and the costs of European Meetings

The costs should be held as low as possible. Some of the participants have to pay the costs privately, so it would be very nice to find cost-efficient places and the same for the aside program. Social program is not in the foreground but of course it is very nice for the organizers to present a little bit their place.

- Of course it should be a nice place
- Easy to reach by plane directly, train and car
- It should be a reasonable place because members have to pay for it. The costs should be held as low as possible. Some of the participants have to pay the costs privately, so it would be very nice to find cost-efficient places and the same for the aside program. Social program is not in the foreground but of course it is very nice for the organizers to present a little bit their place. A very good idea, coming from France, could be, that in the year of the European Rallye – this is usually the year of the Proposals – the EM should be held virtual because not to be a financial concurrence to the European Friendship Meeting. If needed, there could be a second one.
- Need for an Agency (costs!)?
- The Middle Convention EM could be a virtual one, not to concurrent the European Rallye (this is the idea of France)
- Advantage of Virtual Meetings – they could be done easily more often, whenever needed

### Agenda of European Meetings – who decides about this?

During the years a certain way to handle Ems developed (Minutes presented by the former organizers, presentation of the countries by their representatives, invitation to the next EM at the end, and so on) – we can say, we have some nice traditions about it already 😊

- ▶ The Agenda depends on in which year of the 3 the EM takes place. In the Middle Convention Year, the most important topic is to discuss the proposals which will be sent to HQ for the Convention. If there are double Proposals, it can be decided, who will bring them in. Sometimes it needs more explanation for the meaning of proposals, the discussion could help to find the right text. Through the discussion new ideas might come up too.

The Agenda should be a mixture of European matters, ideas, challenges, speakers and experts

The Agenda should not repeat topics, but can give a summary of the discussions and results about topics before. Of course European friends also can ask for topics or presentation of certain events.

If Nrs think that they have to present a new idea or they want to discuss problems of their countries, they should ask to present their topic. It can be very interesting for all participants.

### Husbands

What else could be done for continuity? In the beginning, no husbands were there. This gave the fantastic possibility for a lot of exchange talks during lunch and dinner. In the last years the beloved husbands became more and more. In the countries raised up the impression that their NRs go on nice holidays – this is a bad image, because the Ems are **Working Meetings!** In the beginning the husbands stayed for lunch and dinner at different tables, even in different rooms, in the last years they were in between the IW-members, so real IW-exchange was not possible anymore. Our dear IIWPP Charlotte de Vos told me that it was the same at the IIWGBM in former days – husbands started to take too much space, so they decided that husbands cannot be in the same hotel as BDs and the EC anymore. Even breakfast is not unimportant. So, the suggestion for the future is, if husbands are there because they are the drivers for their women, they are welcomed, but have to be separated a little more.

### What to do now for Continuity?

We have heard about all the challenges of Ems before. As I attended all of them from 2009 on, I faced many problems, but also good ideas. I am thinking since years now, how we could bring more continuity into this really important meeting for Europe. Our Problem is the turning wheel and there are new IW-friends every year, only few stay longer because of different reasons.

#### **For continuity some stability is necessary and so the suggestion is:**

The success of WfE is that the founder is involved in the procedure. To get a kind of continuity there is the need to have some experienced persons there too, some who could guide and support – mentors, who stay for some years as experienced members side by side with the local organizers to give them support in the organization of the content of the EM.

It would be good to install a very small group (3 or 4) of experienced (in EMS) IW-members/Mentors **to get a red line into the EMs**. But, whom to choose?

Of course, **as a gesture of respect to the founders, Luisa Vinciguerra and Catherine Refabert** - and they choose one or two more. As Luisa and Catherine are from countries with a NGB, the others should be chosen of countries without NGB. The **Mentors** give support and advice in the organizing, so we all can benefit more of the European Meetings!

This could be a solution for a red line – what do you think about?

#### **September 2021, PBD Gabriele Schrümpf**

### Inhalt

<b>The continuity of Ems – how to do?</b> .....	1
<b>The idea of European Meetings</b> .....	2
<b>First results of EMs</b> .....	3
<b>Who can offer to organize the next EM?</b> .....	4
<b>Who will be invited?</b> .....	5
<b>The Venue and the costs of European Meetings</b> .....	5
<b>Agenda of European Meetings – who decides about this?</b> .....	6
<b>Husbands</b> .....	6
<b>What to do now for Continuity?</b> .....	7

