



European Flute Council

Strategic Plan 2019-2024

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1. The European Flute Council.

The European Flute Council (EFC) was established in 2015 following an initial meeting of European Flute Associations in Nice in October 2014. Membership of the EFC is open to all European Flute Associations.

Since its inception it has been run by the same group representing flute societies in the UK, France, Switzerland, Germany, Norway and Sweden.

Annual conferences have been held since 2014 in Germany (Wiesbaden, Mainz and Würzburg) and France (Paris and Nice).

In April 2019 the EFC was involved in its first major event (“Flute Ensembles across Europe”) in collaboration with our Polish colleagues in Poznan. This was a great success, involving 14 flute ensembles from 10 different countries including Portugal, France, Germany, the UK, Sweden, Turkey, Israel, Switzerland, Spain and Poland (see [appendix 1](#) for more details).

The EFC has its own constitution (see the full version in [appendix 2](#)), which allows for new members of the Council to be elected annually at the EFC conference.

(The EFC’s) goal is to work through collaboration and coordination to support the quality of flute playing and teaching at all levels throughout Europe via conferences, shared expertise and advocacy.

The Council believes that it is vital that national educational systems allow individuals at all levels to develop their full potential. It is therefore the EFC’s aim, within the field of flute playing, to provide active support for strategies to improve such systems.

The EFC will work to encourage strategic links between national education systems and member organisations’ educational programmes, at the same time working to facilitate and stimulate the exchange of best practice internationally.

Given the Council’s links to the best in pedagogical and strategic thinking in music teaching both across Europe and worldwide, it is in a potentially unique position to transform the landscape with regards to flute playing via effective advocacy of the power of music and links to the best flute players and teachers on the planet.

2. Environmental Scanning.

The flute scene in Europe, and the roles of national flute associations.

- a) There is at least one organization representing the interests of flute players in most European countries. Many of these are membership organisations, and some are linked to particular festivals or conventions. (See [appendix 3](#) for further details).
- b) Since the 1970s, the (silver) flute has traditionally been an extremely popular instrument to learn at school age. The impact of major artists such as James Galway and Jean Pierre Rampal has been profound. However, there is a corresponding lack of opportunity to match demand for playing opportunities at all levels in most countries.
- c) Music education systems are organised in many different ways in European countries. In general, far more flute players are produced than there are opportunities to play after leaving school. There is growing interest in flute choirs which is being matched by an increase in

available repertoire. This could go some way to solving this problem, but there is a need to develop suitably trained conductors/ directors of these ensembles.

- d) Standards of playing at professional level have never been higher and European flute players can be found around the world in key orchestral positions. Virtuoso playing of the whole flute family can be found around Europe in all styles and genres.
- e) At the highest student level, although excellent teaching is being provided, there is often a disconnect between the training offered by Conservatoires and Universities and the opportunities available to highly skilled musicians in the workplace. This lack of vocational “fit” creates significant problems in a world of decreasing professional playing opportunities.
- f) There are significant folk and traditional flute playing heritages in many parts of Europe with their own cultural resonance. This can be seen for example on the island of Ireland in the marching band traditions of the North and the folk traditions of the South.
- g) European flute players and associations often have links to the national associations in other parts of the world (the USA and Japan for instance). This potentially opens up wider opportunities to network and to share good practice.

The well documented positive benefits of the arts.

The arts are under constant threat in countries whose governments seek to reduce public expenditure. Those involved in the arts sector have repeatedly pointed to the following advantages of a thriving arts scene:

- a) **The financial arguments.** The arts contribute significantly to the GDP of most if not all developed countries. For instance, a 2019 report on the arts in the USA said that in 2015 the arts sector contributed \$763bn annually to national GDP (4,2%, more than agriculture or transportation), and that this contribution was growing at a rate of 2,6% per annum. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/nea-arts-economic-study-1484587>. In the UK in 2017 it was reported that the Creative Industries contributed £101,5bn (5,5% of GDP), an increase of 53% since 2010. <https://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/statistics>
- b) **Non-musical benefits.** It has been demonstrated frequently over many years that exposure to music, most importantly by performing it, improves levels of mental health, cognitive ability and self-esteem amongst people of all ages. It has also been claimed that music can transform the outlook of whole communities, for instance those in deprived parts of the world. There have been some high-profile examples of educational programmes that claim to be “transformational” on a number of levels, such as “El Sistema” in Venezuela.
- c) **The power of music as music.** From a purely musical point of view, music has a huge value in its own right and a significance on many cultural and social levels. In many countries traditional music is deeply embedded within national identity. Music is a non-verbal language that is universally understood.

3. SWOT Analysis (the European Flute Council)

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Expertise● International reputation and networks● Access to world class artists and teachers● Experienced and well-balanced team within the Committee● Positive support from parts of the trade (manufacturers and retailers)	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Potential lack of skills to manage relationships effectively on a strategic level● Potential lack of engagement from flute societies, some of which are run by very few people
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Helping to raise standards in flute playing and teaching across the continent via networking, advocacy and research.● Harnessing the varying expertise and skillsets of flute associations across Europe to help enhance the roles of others.● Using existing contacts to prepare credible financial applications to big funders such as the EU.● Potential political leverage in talking to individual governments on the power of music.	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Financial austerity/ recession in European countries leading to further underfunding of the arts● Political instability within and beyond the EU region● Failure of the EFC to engage many societies at a strategic level of dialogue● Lack of support from key stakeholders

4. Strategic priorities for the EFC

Based on the SWOT analysis above, the following strategic development priorities have been agreed:

- a) To develop a **series of high-profile European events** biennially in partnership with flute societies and higher education institutions enabling the showcasing of good practice in playing and teaching the flute.
- b) To seek **to support smaller projects** where possible, for instance in regions and countries in need of specific support.
- c) To work **to develop more effective relationships** between everyone within the wider “flute system” (be they players at all levels, teachers, potential players, audiences, the music industry {including manufacturers and retailers}, or decision makers within national education systems).
- d) To seek **to bring in expertise to the EFC** not presently available to it, for instance in areas such as the preparation of large grant applications to bodies such as the EU.
- e) To research the most effective means of leveraging **financial support** to the flute world.
- f) To seek **to develop the EFC’s advocacy and influencing skills** in terms of supporting the arguments for state support for music education in general and flute playing in particular.
- g) To seek **to support academic research projects** into topics of interest to the flute world.

5. Timeline, detailed plan 2019-24

Strategic Priority	Actions	Dates
a) Develop high-profile events	Support events in 2021 in Portugal and Albania	April and August 2021
	Based on the experience of the 2019 and 2021 events, develop further options for future years	Ongoing
b) Support smaller projects	Invite European Flute Societies to propose collaborative projects	Ongoing
c) Develop more effective relationships	Outline a more detailed approach to this, picking out certain parts of the system for priority work	During 2020
d) e) Bring in expertise, seek advice on financial options	Identify the skills deficits and individuals/ organisations who/ which might help	During 2020
f) Develop advocacy and influencing skills	Depending on the priorities agreed in c), develop contacts and approaches as appropriate.	Ongoing
g) To support academic research	Identify one or more projects that can be effectively supported by the EFC.	During 2020

Notes:

1. There is no allocated funding from the EFC for any of these activities. The EFC board will work in their own time on these priorities, with or without support from their employers as appropriate.
2. All projects will be self-financing, and the EFC is not in a position to take on any financial risk.
3. More detail will be added to this timeline when available.

6. Risk analysis

Risk	Mitigation	RAG
Financial problems with supported events	A risk-averse approach: cancellation is an option of last resort.	XXXXXX
Resistance to proposed improved strategic links and collaboration	Seek compromises and maintain a realistic approach	XXXXXX
Lack of availability of suitable external expertise willing to work with the EFC	Seek to “piggy-back” on existing projects, adding value to them and learning	XXXXXX
Economic and/ or political instability gets worse, leading to further cuts in arts education funding	Although this makes advocacy harder, the arguments for investment in the arts remain the same and should continue to be made	XXXXXX

Appendix 1: Flute Ensembles across Europe 2019

The European Flute Ensemble Event (5th – 7th April)

The city of Poznan was the venue for the first event to be put on by the European Flute Council (EFC) since its formation in 2015. The EFC collaborated with Professor Ewa Murawska and her Polish colleagues to stage a festival which showcased fourteen flute ensembles containing flute players of all ages and experience from Poland, Portugal, Spain, France, the UK, Germany, Turkey, Israel and Sweden. In addition, professional artists from around Europe were featured in two concerts, there were workshops, masterclasses, trade stands and a very well supported Festival Flute Choir conducted by Sophie Dufeutrelle. The EFC organizing team included Jørn Schau (Norway), Torleif Ander (Sweden), Ruth Wentorf (Germany), Carole Reuge (Switzerland), Sibel Pensel (France), Gitte Tangen Dulat (France) and Malcolm Pollock (UK).

Our Polish hosts were most hospitable and provided some fine examples of the high standard of flute playing in the country. The weekend featured performances by leading Polish flautists Antoni Wierzbiński, Ewa Murawska and Łukasz Zimnik, and the festival opened with a presentation featuring a new book on the life and career of the distinguished player and teacher Barbara Świątek-Żelazna who attended the event throughout the weekend. In addition, we were treated to some truly excellent performances from student ensembles from Łódź and Warsaw, including two world premiere performances of works specially written for the occasion.

The energy generated throughout the weekend was in no small measure down to the quality and variety of the ensembles and the repertoire they chose. We had sophisticated performances from players of all ages; students, professionals, teachers and amateurs alike. Some performances (from Catalonia's "Flaustaff" and Portugal's University of Aveiro Flute Ensemble) incorporated theatre and dance elements. Others displayed very high levels of sophistication in terms of changing colours, ensemble and intonation. We heard folk music from Poland, Israel, Portugal, Sweden and Turkey, tango by Piazzolla and Gade, jazz from Bill Evans, music by Freddy Mercury, Marin Marais, Bernstein, Mozart and Grieg, and many contemporary works and first performances.

Participating ensembles included:

Flautando (Sweden)
University of Aveiro Flute Ensemble (Portugal)
Rarescale Flute Academy (UK)
Munich Flute Orchestra (Germany)
Les Vents Blancs (Switzerland)
Mälardalens Flute Ensemble (Sweden)
Les Flûtes d'Azur (France)
Flaustaff (Catalonia, Spain)
Istanbul Flute Ensemble (Turkey)
Israeli Flute Choir (Israel)
Guards Flute Ensemble (UK)
Marmara Flute Orchestra (Turkey)
Fryderick Chopin University of Music in Warsaw Flute Orchestra (Poland)
Flute Orchestra of the Music Academy in Łódź (Poland)

The excellent Friday night concert featured fine performances from Antoni Wierzbiński, Ewa Murawska, Łukasz Zimnik, Sibel Pensel, Lars Asbjørnsen, Ruth Wentorf and Sophie Dufeutrelle as well as the Marmara Flute Orchestra from Turkey and the Guards Flutes from the UK.

In the Saturday gala concert at the Paderewski Music Academy Gudrun Hinze and Millica Milojevic-Bogdanovic (piccolo), Carla Rees and Stefan Keller (alto flute) and Matthias Ziegler (bass and contrabass flutes) provided a superb concert in a recently built concert hall with excellent acoustics. As you would expect from these artists, we heard a great variety of styles. Carla and Millica performed Bach Two Part Inventions for alto flute and piccolo, plus one of Carla's own compositions and the world premiere of a work by Daniel Kessner. Stefan revisited both CPE and JS Bach's unaccompanied flute sonatas on the alto flute in a jazz style with a drum kit. Gudrun performed both Damaré's "La Cracovienne" and the European premiere of Amanda Harberg's Piccolo Sonata, whilst Matthias Ziegler played his own music for bass and contrabass flute superbly.

We were also fortunate to have lectures and workshops on particular aspects of flute ensembles given by the international artists, including the problems of arranging for this combination, interpreting and communication, founding a flute ensemble, technical aspects of playing, improvisation and contemporary music for flute ensemble.

Throughout the festival our colleagues from the trade provided valuable support to the event. These included Adams, Flutissimo, Eva Kingma, Jarmula Music, Jan Junker, Mancke flutes, Piotr Smietana, Silesia Music Centre, Edition Svitzer, Alec Music and Merakel.

The Festival Flute Choir was rehearsed and directed by the indefatigable Sophie Dufeutrelle, and made up mainly of local students, some of which also took part in masterclasses. Their final concert which included a work featuring Matthias Ziegler and his contrabass flute, was a fitting end to a memorable event.

The weekend was well received by those who attended. Matthias Ziegler commented "I have great memories of the Poznan event. The atmosphere was very different from many flute meetings I attended before. To see all these young players wide eyed, fascinated by the things that were presented was a great feeling. I enjoyed very much playing for this crowd." Stefan Keller added "Thank you very much for the wonderful flute event last weekend in Poznan. The gala concert in that great sounding hall was just fantastic!!" And finally, Oriol Falques from Catalonia: "It was our pleasure to be there, sharing the days with the other groups and being part of this large "flutist" family. One week after the concerts, the sessions, the dinner and the visits to Poznan, we are still remembering these days, it was really an unforgettable experience."

This was a very successful event, combining great networking opportunities for flautists from a wide variety of cultures, showcasing fine playing at all levels via the ensembles and international artists, and providing opportunities to think about some of the musical challenges of playing in and arranging for flute ensembles. The EFC will be looking into the possibility of working elsewhere in Europe in the future on other pan European projects, maybe repeating the opportunity for flute ensembles to perform to each other, as well of course as furthering our links with our Polish friends!

Appendix 2: EFC Constitution 2019

Goals - Mandates

Membership of the European Flute Council (EFC) is open to all European flute associations. Its goal is to work through collaboration and coordination to support the quality of flute playing and teaching at all levels throughout Europe via conferences, shared expertise and advocacy.

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The EFC will work to encourage strategic links between national education systems and member organisations' educational programmes, at the same time working to facilitate and stimulate the exchange of best practice internationally.

Organisation – Guidelines

All national and European flute societies and associations are invited to nominate **one representative member and one deputy member of the EFC per country.**

The EFC will be notified of the appointments by the end of February each year. With this notification should come a photograph and biographical summary for each delegate of no more than 150 words for the EFC website.

The EFC has no budget of its own. Each national organisation must cover the expenses of their own delegates.

The EFC will organise a meeting every year to name a new board and an annual conference to be held no later than the last day of April, called the *European Flute Council Conference* (EFCC).

At this conference five people will be selected to form the board, whose responsibility it is to organise the annual EFC activities, with active help from other delegates.¹

¹ As the EFC is not a registered company or association, it will not have a permanent chair, nor any other permanent function.

After the annual conference, delegates will report back to their national organisation and forward questions from the conference to their membership.²

Activities

Board

The board will meet twice a year, and one of these meetings will be held at the EFCC.

The geographical locations for these meetings will rotate between the board members' home countries.

A chair and a secretary for the present and subsequent meeting will be selected in advance each time.

The board will plan the EFCC and plan and carry out other initiatives or common projects decided at the EFCC. The chair and secretary are responsible for arranging locations for the meetings and for suggesting options for accommodation and travel to the remaining board members.

Since the EFC does not have any financial means, it is up to each member organisation to fund the expenses of their representatives and members.

Every board meeting will be documented through a protocol which will be published on the EFC website.

Annual conference (EFCC)

The conference will be held annually in various member countries. Each national organisation will be invited to present (according to EFC's main goals and objectives):

- National projects
- National initiatives
- Reports of current status
- Suggestions for common EFC projects

The conference will enable discussions and presentations to promote regional and common artistic and pedagogical projects. The conference will also discuss how the EFC, on the

² All reports should be made publicly available through the board protocol, in a national publication or through the national organisation's website.

member organisations' behalf, can provide active support for development of applications for funding for artistic and pedagogical projects.

Information

Member organisations' national activities will be publicised through the EFC website as well as through e-mail based newsletters.

Coordination

The EFC will seek to help their members in coordinating regional and common projects. 'Coordination' can include the organisation of meetings and the facilitation of national or multi-national bids for international funding.

Appendix 3: List of European Flute Societies, conventions and festivals