

EUROPA FORUMS

AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO MEET UP WITH LIONS FROM EUROPE AND BEYOND AND TO EXCHANGE IDEAS AND VIEWS

With the exception of Australia/New Zealand etc., each Constitutional area holds an annual Forum, the USA/Canada Forum attracts several thousand attendees, the European Forum up to 1,000 annually.

The Forum was intended to be a bridge between the respective Multiple District Conventions (Single District probably originally) and the International Convention. Although recognised and supported by LCI they are in no way funded by LCI through the annual subscription, as is the International Convention, for example.

The Forum provides an opportunity for the Lions of the British Isles & Ireland to engage with our fellow Lions from throughout Europe, to learn from each other, to debate the issues that face Lions across Europe and beyond. It is possible at a Forum to take part in more debate than is possible at a Multiple District or International Convention, and, to ask questions of the International President as there is always a session entitled 'Meet the International President'.

I believe passionately that this Multiple District, for all the difficult issues we face, has an important voice, provides Lionism, in the broadest sense, with projects and programmes which are both innovative and highly beneficial. I also believe that we do not, as the fifth largest MD in Europe, 'punch' our weight in terms of hosting the Forum.

Why should we be listened to if we do not participate? How can we expect to be taken seriously when small (in numbers of Lion's) nations such as Turkey & Cyprus can each host the Forum twice between 1991 and 2003 when we haven't managed it once in 29 years? We are also one of the wealthiest nations in Europe which again means European Lions do not understand why we do not participate.

Council 2000/2001 came to the same conclusion and decided, after 24 years, that MD105 should again host the Europa Forum A bid was successfully submitted to host the 2006 Forum, in Bournemouth. When the 2000/2001 Council decided to approve a bid to host there was a genuine belief that sponsorship would be forthcoming, that has, sadly, proved not to be the case and in fact has been very revealing in the context that, as an organisation, nationally, we are not marketable. We lack people strategically placed in major corporate bodies, organisations with major sponsorship programmes and it was a very real struggle to generate any sponsorship of significance.

As may be imagined, the programme for the Forum reflects the culture and tradition of the Host Country and in Italy, for example, the Seminars were highly intellectual and academic with presenters and facilitators to match.

The Europa Forum is open to **all** Lions and usually lasts three days, Thursday lunchtime to Saturday afternoon with social events being arranged each evening.

The 2006 Host Committee, on behalf of the Lions of MD105, organised an outstandingly enjoyable and successful Forum which was both educational and informative, providing learning opportunities in a variety of different Seminars and Workshops.

The next Forums will be held as follows:

2007 Bucharest, Romania, 17th - 20th October
2008 Cannes, France
2009 Tel Aviv, Israel - subject to confirmation.

Past Council Chairman Lion Philip Goodier
District Europa Forum Officer.
District 105BN, 2006 - 2007