

WFWP Europe and Eurasia: Annual European Women's Leadership Executive Meeting

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MOVING FORWARD IN 2024

23-25th February 2024 Colle Mattia Italy, Hosted by the WFWP South Region. See photo gallery below.

In the serene and picturesque setting of the South region of Italy, under the gentle Mediterranean breeze, the Women's Federation for World Peace Europe convened for a Board Meeting from the 23rd to the 25th of February, 2024.



As the day unfurled on the 23rd of February, the atmosphere was filled with an air of anticipation and camaraderie as participants arrived, each bringing with them a unique tapestry of experiences and perspectives. The evening commenced with a dinner that served as a runup to the enriching discussions that lay ahead. Guided by the hostess, Elisabetta Nistri, with introductions and sharing about each other's favourite colours then networking, weaving together exchange of ideas, Brigitte Wada encouraged everyone to think about a written brainstorming on three pivotal topics that lie at the heart of the WFWP Europe's mission for 2024.



The stage was set, the journey had begun, and the spirit of unity and collaboration resonated

The morning session on February 24, 2024, began with morning readings and meditation led by Tina Coombs WFP advisor and exercise session by Marcia de Abreu.

The session one was overseen by moderator Kasia Minollari, the President of WFP Albania. The first part of the session involved a comprehensive review of the plans and accomplishments of 2023 by representatives from various regions. Britta Houston presented on behalf of the North Region, Elisabetta Nistri for the South, Brigitte Wada for the West, Kefilwe Lebepe for the Central region, Marilyn Angelucci for the Middle East, Maria Riehl for the UN, and Olga Vakulinkaya for Eurasia.



Each representative had 9 minutes to discuss their region's achievements and compare them to the plans for 2024. It was very impressive to hear about all the incredible programmes been conducted in each region. Following the presentations, a discussion and feedback session took place, allowing attendees to engage with the information presented and provide input.

A brief coffee break allowed participants to refresh before the next session.



Brigitte Wada, Vice President of WFP Europe, moderated the second session. The session began with an overview of the 2024 plans and goals by Mitty Tohma, the President of WFP Europe, and Marcia de Abreu, the International Secretary General of WFP Europe shared about the annual calendar and the clear reporting system . Carolyn Handschin, International vice president representing WFWPI at the UN Offices, also shared insights on goals, plans, strategies, and collaboration, via a video recording.

This was followed by a group discussion on the international focus areas for 2024. The group sessions were structured around key themes:

1. Women Peace and Security - led by Renate Amesbauer, WFP Austria President

- Discussion on empowering women to contribute to conflict prevention and resolution efforts.

2. Women's Leadership through GWPN - led by Lubica Magnuson, WFP Slovakia President

- Exploring ways for GWPN to collaborate with other organizations and stakeholders to amplify women's voices in peace-building initiatives.

3. Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability - led by Amanda Toumangelov, WFP Ireland President

- Deliberation on how women can enhance sustainable and resilient responses to environmental challenges.



Afternoon Session: Lunch and Relaxation / Free Time, Participants enjoyed a leisurely lunch and had free time to go out for a walk in the beautiful countryside and recharge for the upcoming sessions.

During session three moderated by Erica Pina, Kefilwe Lebepe leader of the Young Professionals International emphasized engaging young professionals, developing programs, and improving recruitment strategies. She highlighted the importance of having proper documentation for easy onboarding. Subsequently, participants split into four groups led by facilitators Erica Pina, Carmen Rizzi-Haugen, Kyung in Van De Ven and Speranta Gaina to discuss opportunities and barriers to youth engagement. The session concluded with recap reports from each group leader, fostering a collaborative and insightful discussion on enhancing youth participation within the organization.



During the session four led by Oksana Torok, Secretary General WFP UK, and facilitated by Lilly Gundacker, the focus was on social media, outreach, and public relations strategies for enhancing the visibility and impact of WFP Europe. Following this, a group discussion took place.

The session was followed by a brief coffee break. In the subsequent session moderated by Marcia de Abreu, International Secretary General - Europe, the annual European Women's Leadership Conference was discussed, with potential venue suggestions including Armenia, Poland, Croatia, and Latvia. Further deliberations are planned to explore hosting possibilities in these nations for the upcoming conference.



Through the conversation, key European projects were discussed with a primary focus on WFP curriculum and humanitarian efforts. Marilyn Angelucci presented a curriculum she teaches to Afghan women in India, emphasizing its positive impact. The availability of the curriculum was reviewed, with a decision made to continue with current materials while working towards a finalized version. Regarding humanitarian projects, support for the Ukraine project for women and girls' rehabilitation will persist. Brigitte Wada introduced the "1% Love Share Project" aimed at supporting vulnerable women and children, initially focused on Korean reunification. The conference agreed to adopt both the Ukraine project and the 1% Love Share Project, emphasizing the commitment to the humanitarian causes.

Carmen Rizzi, Vice President of WFP Germany, hosted an engaging evening programme featuring entertainment, relaxation, and opportunities. Participants enjoyed dancing, singing, and quiz games, followed by indulging in delicious Italian cakes and coffee. The evening was a fun and lively time for attendees to mingle, fostering camaraderie and collaboration among the group.



The morning of the 25th, commenced with readings and meditation guided by Amanda Toumangelov and Marcia de Abreu, setting a serene tone for the day ahead before attendees enjoyed a hearty breakfast. Session 5, moderated by Carol Brunnock Kim, Vice President of WFP Ireland, featured a financial update prepared by Rie Handshin and 2024 plans presented by Vigdis Parkins, WFP North Regional Leader and Webmaster. Discussions centered on financial standing, national membership status, and strategies for fundraising, including creative approaches like merchandise sales and fee-paying events.

Vigdis Parkins provided guidance on goal setting to drive financial success. After a brief coffee break, Session 6, led by Magda Haugen, President of WFP Germany, highlighted the conference conclusions.

Kyung-In Van De Ven summarized key discussions, and Brigitte Wada presented action items and follow-up plans. The event concluded with reflections and a wrap-up by Tina Coombs, Marilyn Angelucci, Olga Vakulinkaya, Marcia de Abreu, Mitty Tohma, and young professionals sharing their insights. A group photo session captured the camaraderie and spirit of the conference, with participants enjoying the scenic venue for memorable snapshots and videos. The gathering culminated with a final lunch, providing a last opportunity for networking and farewells as participants departed, marking the conclusion of a successful and enriching conference experience.



This report summarizes the activities of the European Women's Leadership Executive Meeting on February 23-25, 2024. The sessions discussions on 2024 plans and goals, Youth

on boarding, financial updates, membership status, goal setting, and generating funds. The conference concluded with reflections, action items, and future plans discussed by key figures and participants. The event provided a platform for productive discussions, idea exchange, and reflections, promoting women's leadership and empowerment within the WFWP community. For further details and action items resulting from the conference session, stay tuned for upcoming reports.

By Mitty Tohma

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