



## European Union Youth Orchestra

### Biography

The European Union Youth Orchestra is one of the world's pre-eminent symphony orchestras. Described by the UK Guardian as having “gripping, exhilaratingly good orchestral playing, surging with energy, laser-sharp focus and collective daring... [and] a technical prowess that is downright terrifying”; by the New York Times as “one of the elite organizations of its kind”; and by former EU commission President Jean-Claude Juncker as “the best possible ambassador for the European Union”, the EUYO has provided an exceptional bridge between conservatoires and the professional world for generations of Europe's finest musicians.

The Orchestra has worked with many of the world's greatest conductors and soloists including Daniel Barenboim, Leonard Bernstein, Herbert von Karajan, Mstislav Rostropovich, and particularly its Music Directors to date: Founding Music Director Claudio Abbado, former Music Director Vladimir Ashkenazy, former Music Director and Conductor Laureate Bernard Haitink, former Chief Conductor Vasily Petrenko, and current Music Director Iván Fischer.

Every year, around 3000 applicants aged 16-26 throughout all 27 EU Member States audition for approximately 120 places. Many of the Orchestra's now 4000 alumni have become notable conductors, soloists, teachers, and instrumentalists working with the major orchestras of Europe and throughout the world.

A truly global brand, the EUYO has performed in most of the world's major concert halls and festivals, including the BBC Proms, New York's Carnegie Hall, and Vienna's Musikverein. From Amsterdam to Abu Dhabi, Moscow to Mumbai, Seoul to São Paulo, the Orchestra has appeared in many hundreds of venues across five continents. Recent prizes include the Medal of the President of the Italian Republic Sergio Mattarella for performances at 2023's Bolzano Festival Bozen, the Golden Prague International Festival Crystal Award for the best-televised concert of 2022, the European Cultural Brand of the Year 2020, the European Orchestra Award TAURUS, and an Abu Dhabi Culture Summit Cultural Diplomat of the Year Award. In addition to its administrative seat and operational home in Grafenegg, Austria, the Orchestra is also Ensemble-in-Residence at Cremona's Accademia Stauffer and an annual presence at the Bolzano Festival Bozen.



Honorary President Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament | Co-Founders Lionel & Joy Bryer  
Founding Music Director Claudio Abbado | Music Director Iván Fischer | Conductor Laureate Bernard Haitink  
Chair Ewa Bogusz-Moore | Advisory Council Founding Chair Sir Ian Stoutzker CBE | Executive & Artistic Director Marshall Marcus

Head of Honorary Patrons Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission  
Postal address: Grafenegg 10, 3485 Grafenegg, Austria - info@euyo.eu

European Union Youth Orchestra Association (seat)  
Grafenegg 10, 3485 Grafenegg, Austria  
ZVR-Zahl: 1112083318

European Union Youth Orchestra Foundation (Italy)  
Comune di Bolzano – Ufficio Cultura, Vicolo Gumer 7, 39100 Bolzano  
Foundation Reg. 1560724

In 2024 alone, press has reported “there’s really only one acceptable opinion to be held about the European Union Youth Orchestra; namely, that they’re brilliant” (ArtsDesk), and described the EUYO as “a magnificent ensemble that is worth every effort and every penny” (Klassik Begeistert); “convincing artistically, and also on a human level” (Luzerner Zeitung), “bringing the audience viscerally to its feet” (ConcertoNet), and “astonishing...with nothing to fear from the most renowned international ensembles” (Giornale della Musica).

Cultural Ambassadors to the EU for almost 50 years, the Orchestra’s Honorary President is Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen is the Head of its Honorary Patrons. In April 2025, the Orchestra’s *Inspiring the Future* tour constitutes a major appearance as part of the cultural programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU. The EUYO will also perform at three Europe Day events in 2025: in Moldova; as part of Remembering for the Future in Sankt Pölten, Austria; and at Expo 2025 Osaka.

The 2025 Summer Tour begins in the Orchestra’s home of Grafenegg, both in the multifaceted Summer Sounds series and the prestigious Grafenegg Festival and under the batons of Vasily Petrenko and Iván Fischer respectively. The three-week Summer Residency in Grafenegg will also see the EUYO carry out in-depth ‘side-by-side’ activities with music school pupils in partnership with the Lower Austrian Music Schools Management (MKM), and a wide range of chamber music, upskilling, and community music activities. All these are part of *Music Hub Austria*, as is a special tribute to Schoenberg and Berio performed in iconic venues throughout Vienna in collaboration with the Arnold Schönberg Center. The success of Music Hub Austria has led the Orchestra to expand the model to *Music Hub Italia*, launching in Bolzano this year, and *Mobile Music Hub Europe* launched in Belgium in 2024: 2025 brings it to Amsterdam, in a mini-residency in association with the Concertgebouw and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. The Summer Tour will also visit Germany and Bolzano Festival Bozen.

The EUYO’s strong commitment to professional development for its exceptional young musicians is reflected not only in its tour and residency programmes, but its creative partnerships. Its fifth year of partnership with Accademia Stauffer, Cremona welcomes not one, but two projects in 2025: Stauffer Concerts in March and *Suoni delle Dolomiti*, a music festival in the unusual and spectacular setting of the Dolomite mountains, in the Autumn. Shortly afterwards, in October, the Orchestra will hold its annual online Model Sharing Symposium and release its *Frontrunners* online learning series throughout the year. No EUYO season would be complete without its *Café Bauhaus Awards*, which support its musicians and recent alumni to launch their own creative entrepreneurship projects.

The EUYO is supported by the European Union’s Creative Europe Programme, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport, Grafenegg, the Department of Art and Culture of the Provincial Government of Lower Austria (St. Pölten), the Italian Ministry of Culture, the Comune di Bolzano, and the European Union’s 27 Member States.

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Biography as of March 2025.

To confirm edits, please contact:

Helen Leitner  
Head of Communications & Advocacy  
[helen@euyo.eu](mailto:helen@euyo.eu)

The concluding paragraph regarding EUYO’s supporters must please be retained in full in all biographies of any length.