

# Attending World and European Scout Events



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Attending an event organised by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), either at world or European levels is an enjoyable and very worthwhile experience.

Mostly, we take part in these events as part of a group: at Kandersteg or one of the literally hundreds of other Guide and Scout Centres in Europe and elsewhere. Preparation for these activities is vital and your Assistant Area/County Commissioner (International), supported by the International Commissioner and Office at Gilwell Park, will be glad to help.

Sometimes, however, the Association asks adult members to represent it as individuals or as part of a delegation at such events as seminars, courses or conferences.

These guidelines are designed to help people who represent our Association in this second way.

## **WOSM**

WOSM is made up of three bodies:

- The World Scout Conference (which meets every three years and elects the World Scout Committee). The UK always sends a delegation to the Conference
- The World Scout Committee (with twelve members elected for six year terms) which is responsible to the Conference

for the execution of the policies and plans of WOSM

- The World Scout Bureau (with its central office in Geneva and Regional Offices for each of the six Regions) which has a small number of permanent staff who carry out the decisions of the Conference and Committee.

WOSM is advised and supported by a number of other bodies, such as:

- The World Scout Foundation
- The World Scout Parliamentary Union
- Bodies representing religious faiths, including Catholicism, Islam, Orthodoxy and Judaism.

## **THE EUROPEAN SCOUT REGION**

The Region has a Conference (which the UK always attends) and Committee, supported by the European Scout Office. The functions are similar to those of the equivalent bodies at world level. The Committee has only six members, who are elected for three year terms (known as Trienniums); no member can serve more than two terms.

The European Scout Office is based in Geneva but it also has staff in Brussels and Belgrade.

The European Scout Region has the benefit of considerable funding from the will of the late Kenneth McIntosh. This is known as the Fund for European Scouting and enables Europe to

## **The Scout Information Centre**

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provide services which would otherwise be unaffordable.

The Region maintains close links with Kandersteg International Scout Centre in Switzerland – Kandersteg is popular with large numbers of UK Scouts every year as a base for summer and winter activities.

The European Region is the smallest but has a wide variety of countries, cultures and languages.

### **RELATIONSHIPS WITH WORLD GUIDING**

The Guiding equivalent to WOSM is the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), whose World Bureau is in London.

There have been many discussions about links between – and even merger of – the two world bodies. Pressure for greater co-operation often comes from European associations a large number of which (unlike in the UK) are merged Guide and Scout Associations, commonly known as SAGNOs (Scout and Guide National Organisations).

The two world bodies have a joint Consultative Committee and that group has evolved an approach which recognises that, at some time in the future, the two World Movements might unite in some form or another.

In their present work together, the Consultative Committee has agreed that the two Movements should do everything to strengthen their co-operation in a climate of mutual trust and respect. To achieve that purpose, projects and activities of common interest to the two Movements are identified. These projects and activities not only allow us to build a stronger relationship at various levels of our respective Movements, but also enable the general public to understand better the contribution which Guiding and Scouting are making to building a better society.

The UK Association supports this approach.

In Europe, there is a history of good co-operation with WAGGGS. Wherever appropriate, joint

events are held. The two Regional Committees meet together two or three times a year and there is a permanent Co-ordinating Group to make sure that joint work is effective. The two Committees propose a Joint Plan of work for each Triennium and, at the same time and place as the European Scout Conference and the European Guide Conference, the European Guide and Scout Conference is held, where joint work and matters of common interest are discussed and decided on. The atmosphere is always cordial and focussed on the needs of Guiding and Scouting in Europe.

### **RELATIONSHIP OF THE UK TO THE REST OF EUROPE**

The UK contributes its share towards WOSM and the European Region. However, it can sometimes be regarded as being insular in some of its attitudes – this no doubt is due in some part to geographical and historical reasons as well as of course to political ones!

Some points to bear in mind:

- UK Scouting is bigger than the other associations in Europe (but not in other Regions, such as Asia Pacific). The separation of Guiding and Scouting can sometimes be remarked on although people will often not realise the extent of co-education and equal opportunities in UK Scouting and the fact that the two Movements co-operate in the UK
- UK Leaders are often older than their counterparts from the rest of Europe - though we are working on this!

### **OPPORTUNITIES AT WORLD AND EUROPEAN LEVEL**

Members of our Association may have the chance to take part in:

- World or European Conferences
- Seminars and events organised jointly or separately by the Europe Region

WAGGGS and the European Scout Region

- Events open to European associations but organised by one or other national Scout organisation.

## **WAYS OF WORKING DURING THE EVENT**

The Association has a policy of providing opportunities for young adults to take part in international events and to represent the Association officially. Delegations will always have a high proportion of young people as members.

Preparation is important and the International Commissioner and Office are always keen to help. At the same time, the other relevant volunteers and staff at Headquarters (depending on the nature of the event being attended) will also want to be of service. If in doubt, ask!

If you are the only UK representative at an event, the responsibility for reporting back afterwards and taking follow up action is clear! Don't forget that there can be a real impact if there is good feedback after the event.

Where there is a delegation or group of people, the jobs can be shared out. A couple of meetings before you go are usually required to sort out such matters – and to expand on the guidance given in this fact sheet.

During the event, the delegation will meet (usually daily, often early in the morning) to plan activities and to check back on previous days.

After the event, the delegation may well meet to tie up any loose ends.

## **BEFORE DEPARTURE**

Don't get to the airport too late!

Have a great time, in the knowledge that good preparation will make your participation in what will be a unique experience all the more enjoyable and effective. And accept our thanks for all your efforts!

## PREPARATION FOR AN EVENT

### Before you leave home

Mentally rehearse your own role in the delegation	- Visualise the contribution you will be making to the team
List your personal objectives for the time you are away	- It's helpful to write them down
Ensure you have provided your travel details and emergency details to a home contact	- Just in case ....
Arrange your papers in some sort of logical form	- You won't get much chance when you arrive

### What to take

Plane bag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tickets</li> <li>○ Passport</li> <li>○ Diary/address-book</li> <li>○ Lap-top (including details for access to your Internet service by webmail or email client, eg Outlook Express)</li> <li>○ Mobile phone</li> <li>○ Camera and film</li> <li>○ Sunglasses</li> <li>○ Reading book</li> <li>○ Essential documents</li> <li>○ Emergency information</li> <li>○ Insurance policy</li> </ul>
Uniform clothes (as required for climate, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shirts (long sleeved; short sleeved)</li> <li>○ UK scarf</li> <li>○ Woggle</li> <li>○ Wood Badge beads</li> <li>○ Name badge</li> <li>○ Smart skirt/trousers</li> <li>○ Cargo trousers</li> <li>○ Shorts</li> <li>○ Belt</li> <li>○ Shoes for uniform</li> <li>○ Polo shirts</li> <li>○ Sweat shirt</li> <li>○ Fleece</li> <li>○ Outer garment</li> </ul>
Other clothes (as required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Smart shirt/blouse</li> <li>○ Scout tie/scarf</li> <li>○ Blazer/jumper/jacket</li> <li>○ Informal skirt/trousers</li> <li>○ Informal shirts</li> <li>○ Informal shorts</li> <li>○ Polo shirts</li> <li>○ Shoes</li> <li>○ Boots</li> <li>○ Swimming costume</li> <li>○ Gym kit</li> <li>○ Socks</li> <li>○ Underwear</li> </ul>

Other personal stuff (as required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wash-kit</li> <li>○ Medications, contact lens solutions, etc</li> <li>○ Items for International evening (possibly obtainable from duty free but it's better to plan ahead!)</li> <li>○ Gift for host</li> <li>○ Ear plugs (some places can be noisy when you want to sleep!)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Have a big enough bag so that you can bring back the stuff you will collect during the event!</p>
Paperwork/stationery (as required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conference bag/day-sac</li> <li>○ Conference documents</li> <li>○ Cables for laptop and modem connections</li> <li>○ Phone charger</li> <li>○ International plug adaptors</li> <li>○ Business cards</li> <li>○ Notepad</li> </ul>

### When you arrive

Fully unpack your bag	- <i>You won't have time later</i>
Open the bedroom window	- <i>You won't get much fresh air for the rest of the week</i>
Check the power supply and modem connection for your lap-top	- <i>If there's a problem, best to sort it early</i>
Go for a walk in the area around the hotel or centre	- <i>You'll need the exercise after travelling; identify the nearest shop, bar, etc (prices will be cheaper than the hotel)</i>
Buy some water, fruit, biscuits, etc for your room	- <i>You'll not have much opportunity later</i>
Walk to find the Conference /event venue	- <i>Identify the best route, as you'll be in a hurry the first morning</i>

### While you are there

Pace yourself	- <i>Don't underestimate the impact of late nights and early mornings on your body – physically, intellectually and emotionally</i>
Speak slowly and clearly in international groups (and listen carefully)	- <i>Most people will not have English or French as their first language – be patient</i>
Enjoy the social time in the evenings but give yourself at least one early night	- <i>Sleep deprivation impairs performance and health</i>
Drink lots of water	- <i>Prevent dehydration</i>
Keep notes as you go along	- <i>Leaving note-taking until "later" risks memory loss</i>
Attend delegation meetings	- <i>For group development and teamwork as well as for business and communication</i>
If you've got any questions, ask; if you've got any issues, raise them	- <i>Far better to resolve anything quickly than to let it grow</i>
Remember that other people and other cultures may do things differently	- <i>And remember that you may be doing things differently from them</i>
Keep receipts for expenditure	- <i>So that you can recover proper expenses where appropriate</i>

**Each morning**

Take five minutes before breakfast to review timetable and papers for the day	- <i>Be prepared</i>
Take another five minutes before breakfast each day just to step outside and see the sky	- <i>It's unlikely you'll see it much for the rest of the day</i>

**When you get back**

Thank those who need to be thanked	- <i>They deserve it</i>
Review your job list of action points, then action them	- <i>Your actions will be expected by others</i>
Contribute to any team review	- <i>This will help your successors</i>
Relax, catch up on sleep, and enjoy the memories	- <i>You deserve it</i>