

## Overview

During the 2025–2026 reporting period, the European Forum on Urban Forestry (EFUF) continued to operate as a volunteer-driven network. Membership engagement, financial contributions and collaborative partnerships remained central to sustaining EFUF activities, particularly in preparation for the Malmö 2026 Forum and the development of several new initiatives designed to strengthen EFUF’s reach and impact.

## Membership Status and Trends

Membership income continued to represent an important element of EFUF’s financial base but has grown more slowly than anticipated. While income from membership fees exceeded revised expectations later in 2025, it remained below the more ambitious projections set earlier in the year. In response, the Board initiated renewed efforts to strengthen the membership base, including issuing a final call for renewals and promoting membership through the EFUF newsletter and other communication channels. By early 2026, membership fee income stood at approximately €2,500, reflecting a modest but stable level of engagement. The Board recognised that maintaining and expanding this base would be critical to EFUF’s sustainability and therefore emphasised the need to enhance the organisation’s visibility, outreach and overall value to members through improved communication and engagement strategies.

## Member Engagement and Participation

Engagement among the wider EFUF community during the reporting period was evident across a range of activities, most notably in relation to the Malmö 2026 Forum. The call for abstracts generated significant interest, with around 200 submissions received, of which 90 were accepted. Further evidence of growing engagement was seen in the activities of the EFUFNextGen network. The webinar for this held in March 2026 attracted 125 registrations and participants from 14 different countries, demonstrating both the international reach of the initiative and its appeal to early-career professionals. This momentum is expected to continue for future events. In parallel, the Board progressed plans to introduce a structured programme of webinars. These are intended to take place several times each year and will provide a platform for knowledge exchange, professional development and increased interaction among members. Together, these developments reflect a clear shift towards more continuous, year-round engagement beyond but not replacing the traditional annual forum.

## Supporters and Partnerships

Throughout the year, EFUF continued to benefit from the support of a range of partner organisations, highlighting its role as a collaborative platform within the urban forestry community. Support from the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) is a notable example of this cooperation. The European Forest Institute (EFI) was identified as a potential partner for co-hosting future webinars and related activities, reflecting a shared interest in advancing urban forestry knowledge and practice. In addition, EFUF is playing an active role in the Life METROFOREST project, participating in its initial stages and exploring opportunities for joint events such as webinars. A further possible contribution is to a broader European Urban Forestry Week. These partnerships underline the importance of collaboration in extending EFUF’s reach and enhancing the value it provides to both members and the wider professional community.

## Financial Contributions and Support

Alongside membership income, additional financial contributions remained limited. Cost of the Zurich forum in 2025 proved higher than anticipated meaning that there was no funding left for donation to the EFUF Association’s

running costs. This highlights an area for potential future development as EFUF seeks to diversify its income streams. At the same time, the organisation continues to rely heavily on the voluntary contributions of Board members and other supporters, whose time and expertise are essential to its operation. While modest allowances for administrative and management tasks were acknowledged as necessary, the Board remained mindful of maintaining a balance between financial sustainability and EFUF's fundamentally volunteer-led structure. Nevertheless, there is an acceptance that without some form of paid staffing the ability to grow the EFUF network and association will remain limited. The board of management agreed to build into each future year's annual forum budget an element to sustain some paid support. The intention is for this to kick in for EFUF 2027 and onwards.

### **Communication and Visibility**

Recognising the importance of strengthening both member engagement and external visibility, the Board initiated several actions aimed at improving communication. These included the development of webinars and blogs to share knowledge and raise the profile of urban forestry, as well as ongoing discussions regarding the creation of a new website to enhance user experience and provide improved services to members. In addition, attention was given to the need for more effective digital infrastructure, including the exploration of new platforms for document management and collaboration. These efforts form part of a broader strategy to modernise EFUF's communication approach and make it more accessible and attractive to current and prospective members.

### **Future Outlook**

Looking ahead, the Board identified several priorities for strengthening engagement with both members and supporters. Central to this is the expansion of the membership base through more targeted outreach and clearer communication of the benefits of involvement in EFUF. At the same time, there is a strong commitment to increasing year-round engagement through webinars, blogs and other initiatives, as well as to deepening partnerships with key European and international organisations. Further work will also focus on improving digital tools and platforms to support communication and collaboration, alongside the continued development of EFUF's Vision, Mission and Objectives to ensure a clear and compelling value proposition for members. With the Malmö 2026 Forum and future events already planned, including the 2027 Forum in Leipzig, EFUF is well positioned to build on its existing strengths and further consolidate its role as a leading network in the field of urban forestry.

### **Support**

We are working hard to continue the growth of EFUF in 2026-2027 and hope for your continued membership and support. Please transfer your contribution using one of the following methods

- Full Membership (with voting rights at the General Assembly)
  - Full fee – pay 50,00 EUR via <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/QT5EUTYB> (Visa or Master Card Credit or Debit)
  - Reduced fee (students, retired persons) – pay 35,00 EUR via <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/QZWC8FZW> (Visa or Master Card Credit or Debit)
- Supporter (no voting rights)
  - Full fee – pay 30,00 EUR via <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/Q6ADGEU1> (Visa or Master Card Credit or Debit)
  - Reduced fee – pay 20,00 EUR via <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/Q7HT5QDT> (Visa or Master Card Credit or Debit)
- Via bank transfer (WISE) – pay the amount mentioned above on European Forum on Urban Forestry, Remi Vlerickstraat 26, 9052 Gent, Belgium, IBAN BE53 9676 9309 3153, BIC – TRWIBEBBXXX
- In person at EFUF 2026 (credit or debit cards) – approach Rik De Vreese

Clive Davies, Chair of the Board of Management, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2026