

Press release, 1 September 2020

Stephan Kurmann named President of Hostelling International

At the global conference of Hostelling International, the former President of Swiss Youth Hostels (SYH) Stephan Kurmann has now been elected President of the international network of Youth Hostel Associations. He succeeds Rob McGuirk (AUS), who has held the post since 2018.

Today, 1 September 2020, Stephan Kurmann was elected the new President of Hostelling International with 61 of 100 votes. Due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the election was conducted electronically. Kurmann has served as Vice President of the worldwide network of Youth Hostel Associations since September 2016.

“With Stephan Kurmann, we are delighted to have a president of our international network who has exceptional professional expertise and extensive experience in the area of youth hostels. The fact that Stephan Kurmann has made it to the top of Hostelling International as former President of Swiss Youth Hostels shows that Swiss Youth Hostels also enjoy a high international reputation,” says Janine Bunte, CEO of Swiss Youth Hostels (SYH). “Especially in times of crisis such as these, it is all the more important for us as Swiss Youth Hostels, but also for all other country representatives, to have a strong international association with a network that will enable us to boost the influx of foreign guests again in the near term. This makes us optimistic about the future.”

Stephan Kurmann has already actively contributed to crisis management in his previous position as Vice President. In addition, he has been committed to socially-responsible and sustainable tourism for many years, representing the values of the Swiss Youth Hostels on the international stage. The “enthusiastic youth hostel fan” was a member of the SYH Board of Directors from 1995 to 2018, becoming its President in 1999, and was also nominated by the Swiss Youth Hostels for the Hostelling International Board of Directors.

Hostelling International was founded in 1932, then as the “International Youth Hostel Federation”. At that time, there were already twelve Youth Hostel Associations in Europe. The aim was to improve contact between them and to introduce common standards. Switzerland was a founding member. Today, Hostelling International is the only global network of Youth Hostel Associations with operations in 81 countries and one of the largest youth organisations in the world with more than 3.7 million members.

Hostelling International

Hostelling International is the umbrella brand of 63 Youth Hostel Associations in 81 countries, operating round 3,600 hostels world-wide. Within the network there is a wide range of accommodations abroad, which offer cheap accommodation of unique quality. The Swiss Youth Hostels are members of Hostelling International. www.hihostels.com

Swiss Youth Hostels

The Swiss Youth Hostels Association operates a network of 52 hostels, consisting of 46 of its own and 6 franchise operations, ranging from a romantic castle to an urban designer hostel, all the way to a wellness hostel. The non-profit organisation with around 73,000 members focuses on quality-conscious, sustainable and affordable youth and family tourism. In 2019, a total of 736,511 overnight stays were generated in the company-owned operations www.youthhostel.ch



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