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EUROPEAN YOUNG LEADERS

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CLASS OF 2017

ABOUT THE EYL40 PROGRAMME

The European Young Leaders (EYL40) programme, led by Friends of Europe, is a unique, inventive and multi-stakeholder programme that aims to promote a European identity by engaging the continent's most promising talents in initiatives that will shape Europe's future.

The European Young Leaders represent promising European leadership from all over the continent, with a wide variety of backgrounds including politics, business, civil society, academia, arts, science and the media.

EYL40 is organised under the patronage of Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, and the Board of Trustees of Friends of Europe.

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ELENI ANTONIADOU

Greece

Co-Founder of Transplants without Donors

Eleni has been working on artificial organ technology and regenerative medicine in hospitals in Greece, the United Kingdom and the United States. After graduating in biomedicine, she participated in the first successful artificial trachea transplant operation on a late-stage cancer patient. In 2009, she co-founded the London-based start-up Transplants without Donors, the aim of which is to develop tissue-engineered organs that are transplanted into sick patients. Eleni also studied the effects of changes in atmospheric pressure on the nervous systems of astronauts at the NASA Mars Exploration Lab and trained NASA astronauts in biomedical experimentation for the International Space Station. She is the recipient of multiple prestigious awards and is part of the 2015 Forbes 30 under 30 for healthcare and the BBC's 100 Most Powerful Women.

Eleni Antoniadou Eleni Antoniadou @E_Antoniadou

ANDREAS ARAOUZOS

Cyprus

Actor, Director and Producer

Andreas completed courses at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. In 2002, he founded a theatre productions company, Alpha Square, to enhance theatre in Cyprus and provide spectators with an inspirational selection of plays. Andreas has already directed 14 stage productions in his country, including several award-winning plays and his own musical-comedy adaptation of Cinderella, which will tour Greece in 2017. Andreas has also written several plays, such as 'The Rich Also Cry', which was staged by Theatro Ena in 2007. He has translated numerous theatre texts from English to Greek and published a collection of articles in Philelefteros, the biggest-selling newspaper in Cyprus.

Andreas Araouzos Andreas Araouzos @araouzos

INÉS ARRIMADAS GARCÍA

Spain

Leader of the Opposition in the Catalan parliament

Inés started her career in the private sector working for an industrial services company. In 2010, she attended a Ciudadanos rally with a friend and joined the party shortly afterward as the youth section spokesperson. In 2012, she was elected to the Catalonian parliament as deputy spokesperson. She sat on the Committee on Business and Employment, where she focused on socio-economic issues such as the fight against inequalities and unemployment. Throughout her mandate, she was actively involved in different programmes at local, regional and national level. In 2015, she was appointed Leader of the Opposition as Ciudadanos won second place in the Catalan parliamentary election.

Inés Arrimadas García Inés Arrimadas García @inesarrimadas

ENEKO ATXA

Spain

Chef at three-Michelin-starred restaurant Azurmendi

Eneko is a leader in international cuisine. In 2007, he opened his now-renowned restaurant Azurmendi in the Basque country. Within five years, the restaurant – located in the beautiful town of Larrabetzu – had been awarded three Michelin stars. Azurmendi was named Most Sustainable Restaurant in the World by the World's 50 Best in 2014 and as number two on Elite Traveler's 2016 list of the best restaurants in the world. Eneko has a creative mind, skilled hands and a work ethic based on care, precision and speed. His intense cuisine is deeply rooted in the local Basque identity. He has been named Champion Young Chef in Spain and Best Chef of the Year by the prestigious French gourmet club Fourchettes.

Eneko Atxa @eneko_atxa

MARGUERITE BÉRARD-ANDRIEU

France

CEO for Finance, Legal Affairs and Strategy at Groupe BPCE

A graduate of the Paris Institute of Political Science and the University of Princeton, Marguerite began her career in 2004 as an auditor at France's General Inspectorate of Finance, where she was responsible for auditing public bodies. She then served as an adviser to the French President on questions related to employment and social protection before heading the private office of the French Minister of Labour, Employment and Health. In 2012, Marguerite joined Groupe BPCE, the second-largest banking group in France. Four years later, she became a member of its Management Board and was appointed as Chief Executive Officer for Finance, Legal Affairs and Strategy. She has been a member of the French High Council of Public Finances since 2013.

Marguerite Bérard-Andrieu

KIRSTEN BROSBØL

Denmark

Member of Parliament

Kirsten has represented the Social Democrats in the Danish Parliament since 2005. She was a rapporteur on research and higher education as well as on gender equality and food. She was appointed as Denmark's Minister of the Environment in 2014, in the government of Helle Thorning-Schmidt. In that position, she facilitated the development of sustainable solutions and contributed to the development of industrial growth and workplaces in Denmark. In the 2015 general election, she was re-elected to the Danish Parliament. Kirsten is the co-founder of the Bilateral Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. The network operates across party lines in the Danish Parliament to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights at a national and international level.

Kirsten Brosbøl Kirsten Brosbøl @kirstenbrosbol

EDOARDO CAMILLI

Italy

Co-Founder & CEO of Hozint

A young entrepreneur and security expert, Edoardo started working as a political and security risk consultant after graduating from the University of Bologna. In 2010, he established the International Security Observer, a web-based think tank seeking to foster the next generation of security experts. At the time, he was also working as a research analyst at the Italian Institute of Strategic Studies Niccolò Machiavelli, where his activities focused on insurgency, intelligence, national security policies and organised crime. Edoardo is the co-founder of Hozint (Horizon Intelligence), a consulting firm providing location-based media and social media monitoring services on political, safety and security risks. He is frequently interviewed on security issues by media in Italy and across Europe.

Edoardo Camilli Edoardo Camilli @camilliedoardo

CIARA CLANCY

Ireland

CEO of Beats Medical

Ciara is a chartered physiotherapist and experienced researcher who has worked alongside people with Parkinson's disease for many years. She is passionately dedicated to improving the management and treatment of people with Parkinson's disease and other neurological conditions. At the age of 22, she launched Beats Medical, a medical application available on smartphones, which aims to help people with Parkinson's disease take control of their condition through technology. Her efforts have been recognised internationally. Beats Medical came top in Google's Adopt a Start-Up programme in 2015. Ciara also received the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists Anne O'Brien Prize for Clinical Excellence and the Cartier Women's Initiative Award.

Ciara Clancy Ciara Clancy @ciarapt

SILVIA CONSOLE BATTILANA

Italy

Co-Founder & CEO of Auctionomics

Silvia is a young economist and entrepreneur specialising in game theory and interest groups. She has extensive experience as a strategist in auction design. In 2008, she co-founded Auctionomics, a high-stakes auction consulting and software firm with clients ranging from governments to Fortune 500 companies. Silvia has acted as project manager on several high-stakes auctions in Australia, Canada and the United States, in many European countries, and in Africa and Latin America. She is also the co-founder of xSwan, an interactive version of eBay that allows charities to raise more money via online auctions. Silvia frequently speaks at major universities both in the United States (including Berkeley and Harvard) and around the world.

Silvia Console Battilana Silvia Console Battilana

MANUEL COSTESCU

Romania

Secretary of State for Foreign Investments and Public-Private Partnerships

In his current position, Manuel heads the directorate in charge of implementing infrastructure projects and stimulating foreign investment and public-private partnerships in Romania. Before joining the government, he worked as an executive director at J.P. Morgan, a multinational banking and financial services holding company, where he was responsible for the relationship with various public sector clients in Europe, including central banks, debt management offices, development banks and government agencies. Manuel also worked as an independent consultant on business and development projects in Australia, South Africa, Tanzania and Peru, as well as at the Brattle Group, where he was a research analyst with a focus on risk management and strategies in the energy sector. He holds a MBA from the MIT Sloan School of Management.

Manuel Costescu Manuel Costescu

XAVIER DAMMAN

Belgium

Founder & CEO of OpenCollective and Co-Founder of Storify

Xavier is an engineer in computer science who is passionate about the digital renaissance. In 1999, while still at secondary school, he founded Tribal, a site that gathered student content from around Belgium for publication in a magazine that was distributed to 30,000 students nationwide. Ten years later, he co-founded Storify, a social media curation platform that enables users to create stories or timelines using content from social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Storify is now used by top brands, organisations and publishers around the world, including CNN, the New York Times, the United Nations and the White House. More recently, he co-founded OpenCollective, another successful company that enables groups to collect and spend money transparently without having to create a new bank account.

Xavier Damman Xavier Damman @xdamman

CAROLE DIESCHBOURG

Luxembourg

Minister of the Environment

Carole Dieschbourg served as a municipal councillor in Echternach from 2011 to 2013, when she was appointed to the government as Minister of the Environment. At the time she was the youngest member of the cabinet and the only Green Minister of the Environment in Europe. Carole represented the European Union during the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP21) in Paris, which coincided with Luxembourg's Presidency of the EU Council. Her role was to ensure that the EU had a coordinated position during the conference. In the run-up to the COP21, she also represented the EU at many bilateral meetings and high-level conferences such as the Petersberg Climate Dialogue and the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate (MEF).

Carole Dieschbourg @dieschbourgc

XAVIER DUPORTET

France

CEO & Chairman of Eligo Bioscience

Xavier is a synthetic biologist and entrepreneur who was named French Innovator of the Year by MIT Technology Review in 2015. He co-founded Eligo Bioscience, where he has developed a system that uses genetic editing techniques and nanotechnology and designs new types of medicine to eliminate specific bacteria and leave the others intact. After winning several start-up competitions, the company has recently raised €2.4m in seed funding. Xavier also co-founded Hello Tomorrow, a global non-profit organisation that aims to accelerate science and tech innovation by empowering start-ups and offering cash prizes and connections with industrials and investors. Xavier is a senior adviser to the French government on emerging technologies and their impact on industry.

Xavier Duportet Xavier Duportet @duportet

MUNA DUZDAR

Austria

Secretary of State for Diversity, Public Service and Digitalisation

A lawyer by training, Muna is passionate about politics. During her studies, she was the international secretary of Socialist Youth Austria and worked for the French Socialist Party. After graduation, she became a local councillor in the Vienna-Donaustadt district at the age of 23. In 2010, she joined the Austrian Federal Council where she became the Social Democrat spokesperson on foreign policy. Six years later, she was nominated as Secretary of State in the Office of the Federal Chancellery. Muna is also the President of the Palestinian-Austrian Society, a group that aims to deepen exchanges between Austrians and Palestinians and play an active part in Austrian society by promoting anti-racist, democratic and transnational programmes.

Muna Duzdar

COLUM EASTWOOD

United Kingdom

Leader of Northern Ireland's Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)

Colum has been at the heart of the post-conflict success story in Derry, the second-largest city in Northern Ireland. He was only 27 years old when he was elected as the city's mayor in 2010. In this position, he championed Derry as a city of culture and transformed its image. Throughout the years, Colum continuously stood against dissident republican violence and steadfastly called for an end to terrorist activities by armed groups. Following his election to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2011, Colum was appointed as the SDLP representative on the committee overseeing the work of First Minister and Deputy First Minister. He currently sits on the Committee for Communities, which plays a key role in debating and developing legislation.

Colum Eastwood @columeastwood

ADIL EL ARBI

Belgium

Film Director and Screenwriter

Adil co-directed three movies, one TV series and two award-winning short movies. His two first feature movies, 'Image' (2010) and 'Black' (2015), co-directed with his friend Bilall Fallah, are set in run-down districts of Brussels. 'Black', which features non-professional young actors, premiered at the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival. The plot brings a 'Romeo and Juliet' love story to street gangs in modern-day Brussels. Adil became a celebrity by winning 'The Smartest Person in the World' quiz on Flemish television. In 2016, the renowned American producer Jerry Bruckheimer entrusted him and Bilall Fallah with the direction of 'Beverly Hills Cop 4', the latest in a series of movies starring Eddie Murphy.

@adilelarbi

AARON FARRUGIA

Malta

CEO of Malta Freeport Corporation

Aaron runs the Malta Freeport, which was established in 1988 as the first transhipment hub in the Mediterranean. The company has experienced remarkable growth and currently ranks twelfth among the top European ports. Aaron served as president of the Labour Youth Forum and was elected deputy mayor of Ta' Xbiex in 2005. During the international financial crisis, he was appointed to a team of economic experts set up by the Young European Socialists and was elected as Education Secretary in the Maltese Labour Party's Central Administration. Aaron also chaired the progressive think tank IDEAT, the party's political foundation. In 2014, he founded the Anton Buttigieg Foundation, which seeks to promote social awareness in Malta, focusing on education as the primary tool for economic and social development.

Aaron Farrugia Aaron Farrugia @farrugiaaaron

MYRIAM FRANÇOIS-CERRAH

United Kingdom

Columnist for the New Statesman

Myriam is an academic, broadcaster and writer specialising in issues related to the Middle East. As correspondent for the Huffington Post, she broke a headline story on an exclusive 36-page document written by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the Al-Qaeda militant behind the 9/11 attacks. In 2015, she presented a BBC documentary on the Srebrenica massacre, which was nominated for a Sandford St Martin Award for best religious programming. She is currently working at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, where her work focuses on issues related to integration and racism. Myriam also teaches Middle East politics at the Oxford University Department for Politics and International Relations and is writing a doctoral thesis on Islamic political movements in Morocco.

Myriam François-Cerrah Myriam François-Cerrah @myriamfrancoisc

MARKUS FREIBURG

Germany

Founder & Managing Director of FASE

Markus is the founder of the Financing Agency for Social Entrepreneurship (FASE), a leading financial intermediary that helps social enterprises scale their social impact by helping them raise hybrid growth capital. FASE has built an open pipeline of investment-ready social enterprises and closed sixteen transactions leveraging around €6m in impact investments. Markus is also a member of the Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES), a consultative multi-stakeholder group on social business that examines the progress of measures foreseen by the European Commission. He has experience of working with many social enterprises in finding appropriate financing solutions and scaling-up the impact of proven business models. Markus worked for seven years as a management consultant at McKinsey & Company, where one of his roles was providing pro-bono consulting for social entrepreneurs.

MEHDI HASAN

United Kingdom

Broadcaster, Journalist and Presenter at Al Jazeera International

Mehdi is an award-winning journalist and political commentator. He is the presenter of 'The Café', 'Head to Head' and 'UpFront' on Al Jazeera English. He was previously political director at Huffington Post UK. Mehdi was named as one of the 100 most influential Britons on Twitter and was included in the annual global list of the 500 most influential Muslims in the world. In 2013, his debate-winning speech in an Oxford Union debate on Islam and peace went viral online, winning more than two million views. He is also the author of two books: a biography of former Labour Party leader Ed Miliband and an eBook on debt and the financial crisis.

Mehdi Hasan @mehdirhasan

OWEN JONES

United Kingdom

Columnist for the Guardian

Owen is an author, commentator and political activist. He writes a weekly column for the Guardian, having previously written for the Independent. He has made several television appearances on the BBC, Channel 4 and Sky News as well as on ITV's Daybreak and BBC One's 'Question Time'. His work also appeared in several publications, including the Sunday Mirror and Le Monde diplomatique. In 2011, Owen published his first book, 'Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class', which received favourable critical reviews, including from the New York Times. He was named one of the top 50 Britons of the year by the Independent on Sunday in 2011 and was awarded the Young Writer of the Year prize at the Political Book Award in 2013.

Owen Jones @owenJones84

KAJA KALLAS

Estonia

Member of the European Parliament

Kaja started her career as a lawyer in Estonia. In 2011, she was elected Member of the Estonian Parliament and Chair of the Committee on Economic Affairs. In 2014, she was elected to the European Parliament, where she sits on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy. A member of the ALDE Group, Kaja is also part of the European Parliament Intergroup on the Digital Agenda, an informal network of MEPs interested in digital technologies and how they can benefit society. She is a proponent of innovation and frequently emphasises that regulations should not hinder the technological revolution. Kaja has been the author of five reports in the European Parliament, including of an own-initiative report on the Digital Single Market.

Kaja Kallas Kaja Kallas @kajakallas

ZANDA KALNINA-LUKASEVICA

Latvia

Parliamentary State Secretary for European Affairs

Zanda started her professional career at Jurmala's city council in 1998. She then worked at the Ministry of Regional Development before joining the Strategic Analysis Commission, where she advised Latvian President Valdis Zatlers on strategic planning. She was elected to the Latvian Parliament in 2011. During her mandate, she chaired the Committee on European Affairs and the Reform Party parliamentary group. In 2014, Zanda was appointed Parliamentary State Secretary in the Latvian government. Her role is to ensure cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Latvian Parliament and the European Parliament – a crucial role during Latvia's Presidency of the EU Council in 2015.

Zanda Kalnina-Lukaševica @zklukasevica

NEZA KOGOVSEK SALAMON

Slovenia

Director of the Peace Institute

Neža is a human rights advocate working at a national and international level. Since 2012, she has been the Director of the Peace Institute, a non-profit research body that aims to create and preserve an open society capable of critical thought and based on the principles of equality, human rights, responsibility, solidarity and the rule of law. Her work at the institute includes lecturing, legal analysis, project management and research. Neža is a member of several legal expert networks advocating for anti-discrimination, social inclusion and the promotion of better representation of immigrants. She was voted as one of the ten most influential lawyers in Slovenia in 2016.

Neža Kogovšek Šalamon Neža Kogovšek Šalamon @neza_ks

EVA MAYDELL

Bulgaria

Member of the European Parliament

Eva is the youngest EPP Group member in the European Parliament. She sits on the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection, where she works to reduce barriers to economic trade and simplify legislation to enhance competitiveness across the Single Market. In 2015, she was named the European Parliament's best newcomer by the Parliament Magazine. Before the 2014 elections, Eva supported the leadership of her Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (GERB) party in fostering and maintaining contacts with political leaders across Europe. In Bulgaria, she helped set up education programmes such as Education Bulgaria 2030, which aims to connect young people with employers. Eva was awarded, at the age of 17, the Queen of Light Santa Lucia award by the Swedish Embassy in Bulgaria for young social leadership.

Eva Paunova Eva Paunova @evapaunova

FATIMA MOREIRA DE MELO

The Netherlands

Olympic gold medal-winning Hockey Player

Fatima is a professional field hockey player. She has played for the Dutch national team in international tournaments and for several teams such as Tempo '34, HGC and HC Rotterdam in Dutch national competitions. She was a member of the Dutch national team that won the 2006 Women's Hockey World Cup and the 2007 Hockey Champions Trophy. After a bronze medal in Sydney in 2000 and a silver medal in Athens in 2004, Fatima won a gold medal at the 2008 Games in Beijing. In 2006, she was named Rotterdam Sportswoman of the Year. In addition to field hockey, she presented TV programmes on local and national networks.

Fatima Moreira de Melo @fatimademelo

KATARZYNA ANNA NAWROT

Poland

Assistant Professor at the Poznan University of Economics

In addition to her position at the Poznan University of Economics, Katarzyna is a member of the Committee for Future Studies at the Polish Academy of Social Sciences. Her research interests include development and international economics, with a focus on East Asian markets. Katarzyna also explores the challenges to global development. She led several research projects for the National Bureau of Research in Poland and finalised a recent project on the economic potential of developing countries in Africa. Her academic achievements have been recognised by numerous awards, including one for outstanding young scholars from Poland's Minister of Science and Higher Education in 2012. Katarzyna has published numerous articles and books on issues relating to development, governance, integration and regional cooperation.

Katarzyna Anna Nawrot

AOIBHINN NÍ SHÚILLEABHÁIN

Ireland

Lecturer at the University College Dublin School of Mathematics and Statistics

Over the past ten years, Aoibhinn has promoted mathematics and science with a particular focus on encouraging more girls to study these subjects. She lectures at University College Dublin as part of a programme that addresses the growing need for qualified mathematics and science teachers in post-primary schools. In 2011, she was awarded the prestigious Ussher Fellowship from Trinity College Dublin for her doctoral thesis on mathematics teacher learning. Named as one of the Top 50 Women in Science in Ireland by Silicon Republic, she is renowned for her role as a science communicator and for promoting STEM subjects in Ireland through various media outlets, including radio and TV. In 2005, she won the Rose of Tralee contest, an international festival celebrated by Irish communities all over the world.

Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin @aoibhinn_ni_s

JULIA OBERMEIER

Germany

Member of Parliament

Elected at the age of 29, Julia has been a Member of the German federal Parliament since 2013. Her political work focuses on defence and security policies in the Committee on Defence, which plays an important part in the adoption of the defence budget and the procurement of materiel for the armed forces. In 2004, Julia joined the centre-right Christian Social Union (CSU), the counterpart of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in Bavaria. Julia started her career as a lecturer at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich before joining the office of the CSU Secretary General. She then held several political positions at a local level and various functions in the CSU. As a member of the CSU policy committee, she played an important role in drafting the new party manifesto.

Julia Obermeier Julia Obermeier @julia_obermeier

SÉBASTIEN PILARD

France

Member of the Pays de la Loire Regional Council

Sébastien is a young businessman and entrepreneur. He is the Chief Executive Officer of Terminal du Grand Ouest (TGO), a port operations company in the Nantes-Saint Nazaire port area that covers bulk, container and general cargo activities. He manages a team of more than 150 employees at TGO. Sébastien was former French President Nicolas Sarkozy's special representative on the economy and business during his campaign to win the Republican nomination for the 2017 presidential election. Sébastien is regional councillor in the Pays de la Loire region and will be an official candidate of the Republicans party in the upcoming 2017 legislative elections. He is also the co-founder of Sens Commun, a youth movement that defends conservative family values.

Sébastien Pilard Sébastien Pilard @spilard

EDUARDO PORTAL

Spain

Conductor and Founder of Antares Ensemble

Over the last few years, Eduardo has made a great impression on audiences and orchestras alike. Since graduating as conductor and violinist, he has conducted multiple orchestras across Europe and the Americas, such as the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra. In 2015, his presentation with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales included a broadcast on BBC Radio 3. For the third season in a row, he has returned on multiple occasions to the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra to conduct concerts all around England. Widely acclaimed by musical critics, Eduardo is particularly committed to the contemporary repertoire and is the founder of the Antares Ensemble in Spain, whose focus is on the performance of new music and research into its links with historical and rarely-performed masterpieces.

Eduardo Portal

VIRGINIA RAGGI

Italy

Mayor of Rome

Virginia is the first woman to become mayor of Rome after winning the 2016 municipal election with two-thirds of the vote. She is considered as a rising star of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S), a party that she joined in 2011, two years before being elected to Rome's city council. Called a talented debated by the Economist, Virginia vowed to end corruption, introduce a new level of transparency to the Roman government and revamp the city's failing infrastructure. Virginia fiercely campaigned against the proposed amendment to the Italian constitution in the run-up to the 2016 constitutional referendum. A lawyer by training, she specialises in intellectual property and new technology.

Virginia Raggi @virginiaraggi

LARA ROUYRES

France

Founder & CEO of Selectionnist

Lara is a serial entrepreneur. In 2009, she founded Dealissime, a website providing buyer groups with daily offers relating to products and services for women. By 2011 it had been acquired by LivingSocial, part of the Amazon group. In 2013, she launched Selectionnist, which seeks to bridge the gap between offline content and online experience by allowing users to find any item featured in French fashion magazines through a mobile application. Selectionnist is also a high-performance analytics tool for both advertisers and publishers and is currently working with more than 30 top magazines in France, such as Elle and Marie Claire. The venture raised €2m in seed financing. Lara is also a member of the French Digital Council, which aims to make recommendations on the impact of digital technologies on society.

Lara Rouyres Lara Rouyres @lararouyres

AGNIJA ŠEIKO

Lithuania

Choreographer

Agnija is an award-winning choreographer and dancer. She is the author of more than 20 choreography works, including dance films, installations and performances. Her compositions have been performed at dance festivals both in her native Lithuania and abroad. Agnija successfully collaborates with creators of various art forms, resulting in dance pieces that feature audio-visual art and sculpture installations. Along with choreographing, Agnija gives lectures at Klaipeda University and runs the dance company PADI DAPI Fish. She was named Best Choreographer of the Year in 2012 and in 2013 was awarded the Golden Cross of the Stage, the highest Lithuanian theatre award. Her most recent show, 'Dior in Moscow', was presented at the International Contemporary Dance Festival 'New Baltic Dance'.

Agnija Šeiko Agnija Šeiko

MICHAL ŠTENCL

Slovakia

Founder & CEO of Sygic

Michal started programming when he was just seven years old and developed his own operating system by the time he was 20. In 2004, he co-founded Sygic, a mobile navigation company focused on business and holiday travellers. It now has more than 20 million active users worldwide. The company became the first to offer navigation for iPhone and the second for Android. In 2015, Sygic reached the milestone of 100 million downloads of its navigation app. It ranks second in the App Annie Index Travel & Local category, just after Google. Sygic's automotive team cooperates with companies such as Honda, Jaguar and Land Rover to bring the latest connected driving innovation to cars.

Michal Štencl Michal Štencl @michalstencl

MATINA STEVIS

Greece

Africa Correspondent for the Wall Street Journal

Based in Nairobi, Matina covers economics and investment across Africa for the Wall Street Journal. She was previously based in Belgium, where she covered the eurozone crisis from the WSJ Brussels bureau. Before joining the WSJ, she wrote for the Economist, where she won the 2010 Marjorie Deane financial journalism award. Matina is particularly interested in migration-related issues in Africa, Europe and the Middle East. In 2015, she was one of the few foreign journalists reporting from Eritrea as part of an exclusive investigation into Eritrean refugees. She has written for other top media outlets such as Eleftherotypia and the Guardian and has appeared as a political commentator on European and Greek affairs on Al Jazeera English and the BBC.

Matina Stevis Matina Stevis @matinastevis

EWA SZMIDT-BELCARZ

Poland

President of the Management Board of Empik

Ewa runs the largest entertainment and media retailer in Poland. In this position, she combines her love of books and her managerial experience in consumer goods companies. She previously worked for eight years at McKinsey & Company, where she became the first woman in Poland to be promoted to the position of Global Partner and to lead the retail and consumer goods division. During her career, Ewa has overseen the UK's largest chocolate brand, Cadbury, and developed the Schwarzkopf brand portfolio in international markets. She also worked as a Product Manager in the Polish branch of L'Oréal. She successfully helped companies to develop strategies, improve operational efficiency and optimise sales.

Ewa Szmidt-Belcarz

CEZARY TOMCZYK

Poland

Member of Parliament

Cezary began his political career on Sieradz's city council in 2006. One year later, he was elected as a Member of the Polish Parliament at the age of 23. He sat in the Committee on National Defence and the Committee on EU Affairs in addition to chairing the Permanent Subcommittee on the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020. In 2010, he was awarded the Medal of Merit for National Defence by the Polish Minister of National Defence in recognition of his services to the development and strengthening of the defence of his country. In 2015, he was appointed as a Secretary of State and spokesperson in the government of Ewa Kopacz. After the 2015 parliamentary elections, he was nominated as shadow Deputy Minister of National Defence for the Civic Platform.

Cezary Tomczyk @ctomczyk

DAVOR TREMAC

Croatia

General Manager for Southeast Europe at Uber

Holding a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Zagreb, Davor co-founded and served as COO of Gourmeo, a web start-up dealing in premium restaurant space, which expanded across Brazil, Germany and the United Kingdom. It partnered with the best restaurants in major cities across Europe, South America and Asia. Davor then worked for a leading consultancy firm where he managed media, technology and telecom projects in Europe and South-East Asia. He is now a General Manager at Uber, where he is responsible for developing the transportation network company across South-East Europe. Davor is also a member of the Board of Governors of the American Chamber of Commerce in Croatia.

Davor Tremac Davor Tremac

OZAN YANAR

Finland

Member of Parliament

Ozan is an economist and politician born in Turkey. He is a specialist in labour economics with a focus on issues relating to unemployment and wage differences. He has worked at the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) and conducted research at both the Labour Institute for Economic Research and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. He was elected to the Board of Directors of the Helsinki Greens in 2014 and became Co-Chair of the Federation of Green Youth and Students in 2015. At the age of 29, he was elected as a Green League Member of the Finnish Parliament. As an MP, he campaigns for social equality and spearheads the fight against discrimination.

Ozan Yanar Ozan Yanar @yanarozan

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Friends of Europe is a leading think tank that connects people, stimulates debate and triggers change to create a more inclusive, sustainable and forward-looking Europe.