



European Young Leaders

Class of 2020

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. The programme was initially conceived in a joint partnership with EuropaNova.

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Samir Abdelkrim

FRANCE

Founder of EMERGING Valley

Samir is not only a French entrepreneur but also an author and a tech reporter. Passionate about all things digital, he founded EMERGING Valley as an international summit on African innovation to connect tech start-ups with investors, thinkers and decision-makers across continents. He also leads StartupBRICS, a company that provides insights on entrepreneurship in emerging economies. Samir is a former chronicler on African tech entrepreneurs for Le Monde and has also featured in the Huffington Post, Le Point and Les Echos. His book, Startup Lions, chronicles his experience travelling the African continent in search of the most interesting and innovative tech start-ups. With French President Emmanuel Macron's initiative "Summit of the Two Shores of the Mediterranean", Samir was amongst 10 selected to make proposals to relaunch European and Mediterranean cooperation.



Charles-Pierre Astolfi

FRANCE

Secretary-General of the French Digital Council

Charles-Pierre is a French engineer and cybersecurity specialist leading the organisation that advises the French government on digital matters. Previously, seeking to combine his technical skills with public service, Charles-Pierre worked at the French National Cybersecurity Agency (ANSSI), where he was tasked with finding offensive viruses, tracing their source, and identifying contaminated computers to neutralise the threat. Charles-Pierre's diverse career has also included him supervising the deployment of an electric vehicle (EV) fleet in the United States and co-authoring a book on 3-D printing.



Anne Kjær Bathel

GERMANY

CEO of ReDI School of Digital Integration

Anne is CEO of the ReDI School of Digital Integration, a vocational training programme in Germany that teaches programming and tech skills to asylum seekers. Previously, while working as a corporate social responsibility consultant, Anne developed and implemented Samsung Electronics' award-winning corporate social responsibility strategy for Scandinavia. She then spent two years in Japan, researching open social innovation and received the prestigious Rotary Peace Fellowship. In 2012, Anne set up the Berlin Peace Innovation Lab, which focuses on how technology is facilitating emerging and measurable social change toward global peace.





Alexander Betts

UNITED KINGDOM

Professor of Forced Migration and Associate Head of the Social Sciences Division at the University of Oxford

Alexander is an award-winning British academic, whose research focuses mainly on the politics and economics of refugee assistance, with a focus on Africa. In addition to his academic work, Alexander leads the IKEA Foundation-funded Refugee Economies Programme. Previously, Alexander served as Director of the Refugee Studies Centre and co-authored *Refuge: Transforming a Broken Refugee System*, which the Economist labelled as one of the Best Books of 2017. Alexander was also named a 'top 100 global thinker' by Foreign Policy. His TED talks have been viewed by over three million people.

Velibor Bošković

MONTENEGRO

Managing Director of Science and Technology Park Montenegro, President of the Center for development and entrepreneurial society

Velibor is a Montenegrin economist, recently appointed as Managing Director of his country's first Science and Technology Park – one of Montenegro's most significant scientific research and innovation projects. Velibor comes with extensive experience in both the private and the public sectors. Before taking up his current post, he directed Montenegro's first business incubator and served as a director at the entrepreneurship and innovation centre 'Technopolis'. He has also worked as the General Director of Montenegro's biggest football club 'Budućnost'. Velibor has worked on developing the entrepreneurial ecosystem and enhancing SMEs in Montenegro, and is currently President of the 'Center for development and entrepreneurial society'.



Fjoralba Caka

ALBANIA

Albanian Deputy Minister of Justice

Fjoralba is the Albanian minister covering European integration and anti-corruption policies. Having started her career as an academic teaching EU Law, she has maintained an ongoing cooperation with civil society organisations. She also served as a lawyer on issues related to strategic litigation and offered legal aid for people in need and for marginalised communities. In addition, she has led projects focusing on youth and national anti-corruption campaigns, including "Fighting Corruption in the Higher Education System" and "Bookworm Project – outdoors mini-library".

Matthew Caruana Galizia

MALTA

Journalist and Lead Engineer for the Paradise Papers Investigation

Matthew is a renowned Maltese journalist and software engineer with a distinguished career that spans over a decade. Having previously worked for the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), he co-founded the organisation's Data & Research Unit in 2014 and was a lead engineer on six major investigations, namely Offshore Leaks, Swiss Leaks, Luxembourg Leaks, Fatal Extraction, Panama Papers and Paradise Papers. The Unit's core work on the Panama Papers notably won a Pulitzer Prize for explanatory reporting in 2017. He left the organisation in 2018 to continue working on the case around the assassination of his mother, Daphne Caruana Galizia.



Mila Carovska

NORTH MACEDONIA

Deputy Prime Minister of the North Macedonian government

Mila is a North Macedonian politician that has been in government since 2017. Mila is an avid promoter of human rights whose professional career to date has been marked by a commitment to social work on behalf of the most vulnerable and threatened citizens, whether it be Roma, disadvantaged youth, drug addicts, victims of domestic violence and so on. Projects she has managed over the years include organising drama workshops with children housed in institutions, hosting educational workshops, offering consultations for drug users and their families, and conducting field research. Mila has used her platform as Minister to advocate for gender equality, the elimination of violence against women, and anti-discrimination.



Armin Cerkez

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Founder and CEO of Youth Power

Armin founded Youth Power, an influential Bosnian NGO which pushes for non-violence, human rights and tolerance in the country. The inspirational work he did on Program Y led to the inclusion of gender-based violence prevention in school curricula. Coming from a region that has historically suffered from religious violence, Armin has championed the need for more inter-faith dialogue. He has also brought his message directly to citizens, providing lessons to prevent alcohol abuse, sexually transmitted diseases and violence in schools.





Thomas Dermine

BELGIUM

Researcher, political advisor

Thomas is a Belgian researcher and political advisor, currently heading l'Institut Emile Vandervelde, a research centre for the Francophone Social Democrat Party (PS). Well involved in the Belgian political environment, Thomas is also the Chief of Staff to Paul Magnette, chairman of the social democrat party. Aside to his political work, Thomas previously held a managing role at CATCH, a public start-up aimed at coordinating and accelerating local projects in and around Charleroi, an economically modest area in Belgium. Thomas is also an affiliate of the Harvard Government Performance Lab where he leads research on Social Impact and a lecturer at Université Libre de Bruxelles.

Karoline Edtstadler

AUSTRIA

Austrian Minister for Europe

Karoline is an Austrian lawyer and politician who has been serving in the government of Chancellor Sebastian Kurz since 2020. She has held a number of senior positions at the European level, including at the European Court of Human Rights, as State Secretary and most recently as ÖVP Head of Delegation in the European Parliament. In her current portfolio, she has boldly called for European treaty change, to ensure a clearer separation of powers between the EU and national governments. She has also made a name for herself by combating anti-Semitism and calling for a common European asylum system.



Agnėsta Filatovė

LITHUANIA

Executive Director of the Vilnius International Film Festival (VIFF)

Agnėsta is a Lithuanian image and executive specialist with extensive knowledge of the creative industry and public advocacy. She currently heads Lithuania's annual Vilnius International Film Festival (VIFF) 'Kino Pavasaris', one of the biggest film festivals in the Baltic States. In 2019, VIFF screened around 170 films in 17 cities, 34% of which were made by women directors. Agnėsta's long career in the cultural environmental also extends to the role of coordinator at the European Commission's 2007 MEDIA programme office in Lithuania, as well as a number of cultural projects, including the Latin American culture festival 'In Latino' and the educational cinema project for youths 'Cine Book' in Lithuania.

Jasna Gabric

SLOVENIA

Mayor of Trbovlje, Slovenia

Jasna is the mayor of Trbovlje, a former mining town in Slovenia. A member of the municipal council since the age of 25, she was the youngest Slovenian mayor when elected. Unemployment in her town has fallen by almost half thanks to her role in implementing a successful incubator for start-ups. Her effort also focussed on reforming the municipality to make it more efficient and responsive. These achievements have received widespread recognition, in particular from the City Mayors Foundation which named her Mayor of Distinction. She is seen as a role model for young female politicians.



Moha Gerehou

SPAIN

Spanish journalist, anti-racism activist

Moha is a Spanish journalist and activist. He writes for eldiario.es, a leading online newspaper in Spain, where he contributes op-eds as well as creates video content explaining and analysing issues related to race and discrimination. Moha served as president of SOS Racismo Madrid, a prominent organisation that seeks to combat racism and xenophobia. In addition, Moha is active on the speaker circuit and is a lecturer at the University of Syracuse and the University of Stanford's campuses in Madrid. Moha is known for utilising both print and multimedia content to advance his message: he is the creator of the audiovisual monologue 'How would be my life if I were a black character in a movie' and one of the writers of the book 'Lost in media: migrant perspectives and the Public Sphere.'



Paolo Giordano

ITALY

Bestselling author, theoretical physicist

Paolo is an award-winning Italian writer and theoretical physicist. His first novel, The Solitude of Prime Numbers, is a critically acclaimed worldwide bestseller, selling over a million copies and being translated into thirty languages. It also received an equally successful cinematic adaptation. Paolo also wrote the critically acclaimed The Human Body and Like Family. He has been widely recognised for his work and was the youngest winner ever of Italy's most prestigious literary award, the Strega Prize, as well as the Premio Campiello, a highly competitive annual prize.





Karoli Hindriks

ESTONIA

Founder and CEO of Jobbatical

Karoli is an Estonian entrepreneur and creator of the forward-looking global mobility company Jobbatical. On a mission to make immigration more resourceful, Jobbatical is changing individuals' lives and building high-performing teams by relocating exceptional people to impactful tech jobs around the world. Since founding her first company at the age of 16, officially making her the youngest inventor in her native Estonia, Karoli has been on a fast-track to setting up innovative initiatives. She is regularly counted amongst today's most influential women, having received numerous awards and speaking at notable international events. Thanks to her influence, she also led the launch of seven television channels in Northern Europe, including National Geographic Channels and MTV.

Hera Hussain

UNITED KINGDOM

Founder of CHAYN

Hera is a Scottish activist, feminist and tech expert. Passionate about empowering women, she created CHAYN as a global project run by volunteers that crowdsources online resources to address gender-based violence. CHAYN has reached more than 300,000 people through its projects targeted to helping survivors of abuse. Hera is a fervent believer in the power of open source technology and open data as a tool to solve the world's pressing issues. When she is not busy running CHAYN, Hera works with governments and civil society seeking to open data sets as a way to fight corruption.



Qëndron Kastrati

KOSOVO

Mayor of Kamenica, Kosovo

Qëndron is the youngest mayor in Kosovo, having been elected to lead the town of Kamenica at only 29. He is known for his progressive approach, having a predominantly female cabinet. As mayor, he has been resolute in his mission to make his town a genuinely multi-ethnic community and to bridge existing ethnic divides. He reformed the local education system and created a joint multi-ethnic school for Albanians, Serbs and Roma children. He has also walked the talk by installing translation booths in the municipal assembly, so Serbs can participate fully in meetings.

Kamal Kharmach

BELGIUM

Belgian stand-up comedian

Kamal is one of the rising stars of the Belgian stand-up comedy scene, winner of several awards. He openly tackles sensitive and personal issues, such as obesity, discrimination and social injustice. Kamal was previously the Director of the Flemish-Moroccan culture house Daarkom. This cultural organisation seeks to bring about cultural exchange between diverse groups. Kamal is also a well-known TV host. An immigrant and stand-up comedian, he uses his platform to bring light to social abuses through a positive and humorous approach. His mix of television shows range from providing economic guidance for struggling companies, to blending comedy with politics.



Meeri Koutaniemi

FINLAND

Photographer, Documentary Film-maker, Cinematographer

Meeri is an internationally renowned Finnish photographer and journalist, admired for her coverage of and portraits on human rights, minorities and empowerment. She garnered significant attention for her work on female genital mutilation in Kenya. This won her the Visa D'or Daily Press Award at France's most prestigious photojournalism festival, Visa pour l'Image, and the Freelens Award at the Lumix Photo Festival in Hannover. She is also a seasoned documentary filmmaker, focusing her attention on disadvantaged groups such as the 'Findian' community in the US or transsexual Mayans in Mexico.

Ivan Lesay

SLOVAKIA

Co-Founder and CEO of Slovak Investment Holding, fiction writer

Ivan is a political scientist, economic advisor and writer from Slovakia. Shortly after joining the Slovak Ministry of Finance as advisor to the minister, Ivan instigated the setup of the Slovak Investment Holding (SIH). Since being appointed its CEO in January 2017, Ivan has led this state-owned fund in investing in strategic sectors of the economy, and driving economic development throughout the country. He previously served as deputy finance minister, and held leading roles during the Slovak Presidency in the EU Council. Ivan is a keen writer and has seen the publication of a number of his works, including a popular study of the 2008 Financial Crisis he co-authored and a children's book.





Domna Michailidou

GREECE

Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Greece

Domna is a Greek deputy minister and economist working on growth strategy, capital markets and public finance. She was previously reforms' advisor to Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Leader of New Democracy and Greek Prime Minister. Domna has advised several governmental and non-governmental institutions including the UN Development Programme, the British Council and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). She has also worked for the OECD in Paris and Athens as an economist and competition expert. In addition to her governmental work, Domna teaches economics courses at Cambridge and University College London and has written a number of publications and books.

Bálint Misetics

HUNGARY

Civil activist, Founder of 'The City Is For All'

Bálint is a Hungarian social policy specialist whose work integrates research, advocacy and fieldwork. As of 2020, he is the senior advisor on social and housing policy for the Mayor of Budapest. Involved in civil activism since his teens, Bálint co-founded The City Is For All, a community organisation dedicated to empowering homeless people and advancing housing justice. A fervent believer in the need to address the root cause of housing and economic inequality rather than the symptom of homelessness itself, Bálint has succeeded in significantly impacting the discourse and politics surrounding homelessness and housing poverty in Hungary. He also set up and coordinates an emergency service combining social work and non-violent resistance to prevent the eviction of impoverished families.



Alexandre Pérez Casares

SPAIN

Co-Founder of Fever, President of The Altius Society

Alexandre is a Spanish engineer and entrepreneur. He is President and Co-Founder of The Altius Society, a renowned international non-profit which combines the knowledge of Nobel laureates, leading researchers and policymakers to better understand the impact of technology on future societies. He also co-founded Fever, a tech start-up which is disrupting the 'experience economy' as it allows its users to browse and book nearby events from a curated collection of places and pop-ups in over a dozen cities around the world. Alexandre has been recognised for his work by the Spanish Ministry of Education with the prestigious National Prize, awarded to Spain's top three engineers.

Tomáš Petříček

CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs

Tomáš is a leading politician from the Czech Social Democratic Party. A long-time activist, he quickly climbed through the ranks, rising from MEP assistant to deputy minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. In his current portfolio, Tomáš has gained a reputation as a firm supporter of the European project and a strong advocate for human rights. He has notably been vocal about the Jamal Khashoggi assassination, Russia's annexation of Crimea and Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights. He has also called for the adoption of the UN Global Migration Pact, to ensure safe international immigration.



Jonathan Petrides

CYPRUS

Co-Founder and CEO of AllPlants

Jonathan is an innovative Cypriot serial entrepreneur who is convinced that the best thing to do for the planet is to inspire far more people to eat plants. He launched a successful vegan ready meals business in 2016. From their kitchen in London they use bold flavours and hyper convenience to bring more plants onto plates across the UK. With chef-made plant-based food delivered nationwide, they are inspiring more people to eat healthily and in turn are helping the planet. Since launching the company, he has received a number of culinary awards for pushing the boundaries. Constantly striving to bring innovative people together and easing citizens' lives, Jonathan previously launched a Kenyan mobile banking app and a network of rural health centres.

Cristina Pozzi

ITALY

Co-Founder and CEO of Impactscool

Cristina is an Italian businesswoman and social entrepreneur pursuing the world-changing challenge of bringing awareness to the impact of emerging technology. After co-founding and eventually selling her company Wish Days, she started Impactscool, a non-profit devoted to stimulating reflection and critical thinking on the ethics of the fourth industrial revolution and its new technologies. To this end, it encourages citizens to adopt a more forward-thinking approach on the true meaning of technological change. Cristina's motto of "the future is open source" is a hint to the understanding that our future is something we have to build together. Possible future scenarios and their impacts on our everyday life were explored in her book "Welcome to 2050".





Mate Rimac

CROATIA

Founder of Rimac Automobil

Mate is a Croatian innovator, entrepreneur, and founder of the car company Rimac Automobili. He started off at the age of 19 in a borrowed garage, tinkering, dreaming, and already thinking several years ahead of the traditional car industry. Soon enough, he built a global name for himself, crafting battery tech for the likes of Aston Martin and Renault. He also created the world's first electric 'supercar', the Rimac Concept One. In 2012, he set out to prove that electric cars could be faster than conventional fuel. His dream became reality, as Mate's 'Green Monster' electric car won a Guinness World Record for the fastest ¼ mile.

Anne-Solène Rolland

FRANCE

Director of national museums at French Ministry of Culture

Anne-Solène heads the department of museums at the French Ministry of Culture. A fierce advocate for history and heritage, she has shaped her career around showcasing the societal benefits of cultural conservation. As a curator of heritage, she has held leading positions at the prestigious Quai Branly Museum and the French National Museum of Immigration History. Anne-Solène has also been director of research and collections at the Louvre Museum, where she oversaw the acquisition and lending of the museum's artwork. She played an instrumental role in increasing the availability of the world's finest art to a greater number of people.



Marcelino Sambé

PORTUGAL

Principal dancer with The Royal Ballet in London

Marcelino, from Portugal, is a principal dancer with The Royal Ballet in London. Born in the outskirts of Lisbon, Marcelino discovered from an early age a talent and passion for dance, and was accepted to the National Conservatory of Lisbon, before joining The Royal Ballet Upper School. He rapidly made a name for himself in the ballet world, garnering rave reviews from critics for his portrayals in Don Quixote and Les Patineurs. Sambé's dance awards include a silver medal at the Moscow International ballet competition, first prize at the Youth American Grand Prix and a gold medal at the USA International ballet competition.



Monica Semedo

LUXEMBOURG

Member of the European Parliament Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Monica is a Luxembourgish TV presenter and politician, and was elected as a Member of the European Parliament in 2019. Having worked as a journalist and TV presenter for over two decades, Monica is well-known amongst Luxembourg's public. Having won a seat in the European Parliament for Luxembourg's Democratic Party and serving as a full member of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, Monica has expressed her intent to prioritise equal opportunities for children and young people in particular as well as an equal platform for entrepreneurs. Monica has been actively engaged in charity work, including for cancer research and as a former ambassador for SOS Children's Villages and Fairtrade.



Baiba Skride

LATVIA

Classical Violinist

Baiba is an award-winning Latvian classical violinist who has performed around the world with prestigious orchestras and renowned conductors. Baiba has previously performed with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. In 2019, she made an appearance at the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal's Classical Spree festival and the Grafenegg Festival with Vienna's Tonkünstler Orchestra. An internationally sought-after chamber musician, Baiba also sings as part of a long-established duo with her sister Lauma. She is anticipating the release of her Bartók recording with the WDR Sinfonieorchester and Eivind Aadland.

Diva Tommei

ITALY

Founder and CEO of Solenica, inventor of smart lighting robot 'Caia'

Diva is an Italian scientist and entrepreneur with a fervent interest in robotics and sustainability. She channelled her passion by creating a home robotics start-up Solenica and developed an AI-powered smart mirror that reflects natural light around the home. The idea to transform indoor spaces came to Diva while working towards her doctorate in Computational Biology in Cambridge, where she spent much of her days inside craving sunshine. Diva is also a graduate of the Singularity University programme on exponential technologies at NASA in 2010. She was awarded the Premio Giovane for the Environment and the Young Global Innovator Award by the MIT Tech Review for Italy, as well as the Pleiade International Award for Innovation and New Technologies.





Małgorzata Tracz

POLAND

Polish MP, President of Poland's Green Party

Małgorzata is a member of Poland's Green Party and one of the first of her party to be elected to the Polish National Parliament. As president of the Green Party, she has successfully promoted a stronger climate agenda and has spread awareness of environmental issues amongst Polish citizens. A vocal activist for the rights of women and minorities, she has regularly denounced rule of law issues in her country. Małgorzata is also seen as a champion for cleaner air, notably through her actions of pushing for the reduction in smog in Polish cities.

Kristina Tsvetanova

BULGARIA

Co-Inventor of BLITAB

Kristina is an acclaimed Bulgarian tech entrepreneur. As co-inventor of BLITAB, the world's first tactile tablet for blind and visually impaired people, Kristina has drawn the world's attention to the role of digital innovation in easing people's lives. Having cemented herself as a leader in the digital field promoting the needs of children, women and people with disabilities, her work has received wide recognition throughout the world. She was previously involved as an innovation consultant to the G7 for Technology, Research & Innovation, and was named Rising Innovator for 2017 by the EU Prize for Women Innovators.



Johannes Schildt

SWEDEN

Co-Founder and CEO of KRY/LIVI

Johannes is a Swedish serial entrepreneur and Co-Founder of KRY, which he plans to develop into the world's leading healthcare provider by combining medical expertise with state-of-the-art technology. Currently available in Sweden, Norway, France and the UK, the business has pioneered the digital healthcare model by enabling people to see a medical doctor or a psychologist via remote video connection, thereby replacing the need for in-person consultations. To date, the app has delivered over 1.1mn appointments and is set to launch in more markets this year. Long part of Europe's start-up scene, Johannes is also the founder of a number of other initiatives including Tieday Group and Wowallets.

Wietse van der Werf

THE NETHERLANDS

CEO of Sea Ranger Service

Wietse is an award-winning Dutch social entrepreneur and conservationist, pioneering regenerative blue economy ventures. Wietse has received wide recognition for his innovative approach to mobilising businesses, governments and citizens to form uncommon partnerships for the social, economic and ecological regeneration of European coastal and ocean areas. His current venture, the Sea Ranger Service, trains unemployed young people from port cities with the help of navy veterans to manage Marine Protected Areas in European seas. A new type of professional sailing vessel has been developed for the Sea Rangers, with cost-effective sea operation and zero emissions.



Dobrica Veselinovic

SERBIA

Founder of 'Ministry of Space' and the Institute for Urban Policy

Dobrica, from Serbia, has been active in the civil sector in Belgrade for the past decade, working for various NGOs and jumpstarting projects related to urban development and education. He has made it his particular mission to advocate for public spaces and to mobilise citizens to participate in the politics of city life. Dobrica is the founder of the collective 'Ministry of Space' and 'Institute for Urban Policy,' as well as the new political network 'Civic Front' – a network of grassroots initiatives and organisations from more than 20 cities in Serbia. He is also the leader of the citizen movement 'Don't Let Belgrade D(r)own,' an initiative that formed in immediate opposition to the Belgrade Waterfront redevelopment project, but one whose broader aims include encouraging sustainable development and giving voice to citizens about the fate of their urban environments.



Vlad Voiculescu

ROMANIA

Politician, economist and patient advocate

Vlad is a Romanian politician, health policy expert and patient advocate. After pursuing a career in finance, Vlad became active in public service, serving as the Romanian Finance Minister's Chief of Staff and then as Minister of Health in the Dacian Cioloş government. Since 2008, Vlad has been involved in patient advocacy, both at the national and European level. He is the founder of an international network of volunteers that helped over 2,500 cancer patients receive essential medicines that were missing in Romania, a story that featured in the HBO documentary 'The Network'. Vlad is also the Co-Founder of MagiCAMP, which seeks to provide support to children diagnosed with cancer and other serious illnesses. For this work, the European Parliament awarded Vlad its 'European Citizen's Prize.'





Lea Wermelin

DENMARK

Danish Minister for the Environment

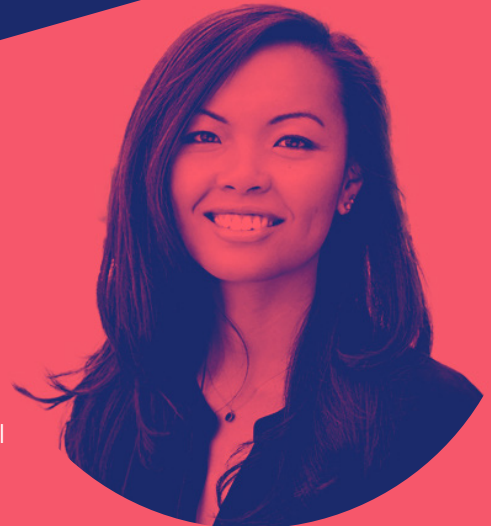
Lea is the Danish Minister for the Environment in the Mette Frederiksen government. She describes herself as a 'classic Social Democrat' who strongly believes in equality and the power of community. As the daughter of a primary school teacher, she is passionate about the role of education as an instrument for social change. Lea became a passionate environmental advocate growing up in Bornholm, a community-tight Danish island with leading policies on circular economy, waste reduction and recycling. She has been involved in politics for the past decade, originally serving as a Board Member of the youth wing of the Social Democratic party. She has also worked in Tanzania on local democracy projects.

Chanyu Xu

GERMANY

Founder and CEO of her1

Chanyu is a German serial entrepreneur, passionate foodie and start-up mentor from Berlin. In 2009 she co-founded her first successful 'software as a service' (SaaS) start-up Customer Alliance which is currently used by over 3,500 hotels in 35 countries. Chanyu has since co-founded several food-tech start-ups, including eating.de backed by star investor Peter Thiel and her1, which offers tips and products for a healthy and nutritious lifestyle. Her latest start-up, ONO LABS, provides women with 100% natural nutrition before, during and after pregnancy.



Darya Yegorina

IRELAND

Founder and CEO of CleverBooks

Darya is an Irish entrepreneur and influential global pioneer of the role that 'augmented reality' (AR) can play in education. She recently created CleverBooks to provide personalised educational content for students by utilising three-dimensional AR technologies. Darya has been widely recognised for her work, having won the Digital Female Leaders Award in Entrepreneurship as well as being named an Innovator by the Irish Times and a Young Irish Entrepreneur. She has been featured in Inc.com, Forbes, CBS and many other global media platforms for her efforts to bridge the technology gap in classrooms around the world and boost student outcomes.



Friends of Europe

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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.

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