

EUROPEAN YOUNG LEADERS (EYL40) PROGRAMME

Join the 2024 class of European Young Leaders

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

The programme acts as a forum for those who have already established themselves at the forefront of their professions to meet, discuss and collaborate with their counterparts from other fields of expertise. Previous candidates include: government ministers, CEOs, Michelin-starred chefs, international film directors, investigative journalists and artists.

For examples of current and previous European Young Leaders, please see the last two pages of this document.

OVERVIEW OF THE SELECTION PROCESS

Since the launch of the programme, we have gradually taken steps to ensure the diversity and exceptional quality of its selection process. We have made sure that its comprehensive and competitive nature ensures the identification and selection of remarkable individuals.

We aim to select up to 48 European Young Leaders of diverse backgrounds in order to enable a broad exchange of ideas, creating the basis for a new generation of engaged European leaders.

Candidates can either apply or be nominated for the selection process of the programme.

1. NOMINATION GUIDELINES

Individuals can be nominated to the European Young Leaders programme by completing **the online form** [via this link](#) or by sending their nomination(s) to eyl40@friendsofeurope.org.

- Institutional partners

A wide network of European organisations is called upon to recommend high-profile individuals to Friends of Europe.

- Friends of Europe's Board of Trustees¹ and other outstanding personalities

Our Board of Trustees and a limited selection of outstanding personalities from different sectors (business, politics, media, science and the arts) are asked to nominate young leaders that could be considered in the selection process

- Alumni

Every year, the alumni network of the European Young Leaders programme is called upon to send in recommendations to Friends of Europe. Given their experience of the programme, we consider the alumni extremely knowledgeable about who is the best fit for such a leadership programme.

- Citizens

Engaged and motivated citizens are invited to nominate leaders who inspire them.

¹ For a list of Friends of Europe's Board of Trustees, please [click here](#).

2. PERSONAL APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Candidates should complete **the online application form** [via this link](#).

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Candidates must be **between 30 and 40 years of age** (born on or after 1 January 1984);
- Candidates must be a **national of an EU member state, the UK, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo², Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, or Ukraine**;
- Candidates should have established themselves at the highest levels of their chosen profession, or be on track to do so;
- Candidates must be committed to serve society at large through noteworthy contributions and have demonstrated a record of significant achievements and outstanding professional experience;
- Candidates are also evaluated based on their ability to contribute to the enrichment of the programme as a whole;
- Candidates are required to be **fluent in English** as it is the working language of the programme.
- Candidates must commit to participating in **at least one seminar** during the programme year.

TIMELINE

To be considered for the 2024 selection process, all applications and nominations must be submitted by the **application deadline, i.e., Friday, 28 April 2023**.

AGENDA

Spring 2024	a seminar in a European city (starting Thursday lunchtime – ending Saturday lunchtime)
Autumn 2024	A seminar in a European city (starting on Thursday lunchtime – ending on Saturday lunchtime)
Ongoing	European Young Leaders are involved in working groups (both virtually and in person) throughout the year, allowing their input from afar into the topics and projects of their choice (based on their availability and interest).
October 2024	Exclusive invitation to the President's Gala Dinner and Friends of Europe's annual State of Europe 'high-level' roundtable.
October 2024	Participation in the European Young Leaders alumni meeting in Brussels, open to all current and previous European Young Leaders.



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² *References to Kosovo here are used without prejudice to positions on status and are in line with UN Security Council resolution 1244/99 and the International Court of Justice Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence*

European Young Leader alumni include:

Eneko Atxa

Chef at 3-Michelin-starred Restaurant 'Azurmendi'

Eneko opened his now-renowned restaurant 'Azurmendi' in the Basque country. Within five years, the restaurant had been awarded three Michelin stars and has been named among the best and most sustainable 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 local Basque identity.

Roberta Metsola

President of the European Parliament

Roberta is the youngest ever and third woman President of the European Parliament. Prior to this, she served as Vice-President of the European Parliament, also as a member on the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, among several other parliamentary committees and delegations. A lawyer by profession, Roberta is a member of the European People's Party Group (EPP) and among the first female members of parliament to represent Malta. She is a two-time recipient of Parliament Magazine's MEP Award, receiving recognition for her work on justice and civil liberties, and hosted the awards ceremony in 2017.

Juan Mata

Professional footballer, Co-Founder of Common Goal

Juan is a Spanish professional footballer and the Co-Founder of Common Goal, a charitable fund that aims to generate sustainable and equitable social change through the cultural force that is football. The movement motivates stakeholders in the football industry to pledge 1% of their income to a collective fund that supports active projects worldwide. Mata currently plays midfield for Galatasaray in Istanbul. Having previously played for Manchester United and Chelsea, he is considered among the best attacking midfielders to have played in the Premier League. Before moving to the United Kingdom, Mata played for Castilla in Madrid and then Valencia CF, where he won his first professional title, the Copa del Rey. He helped secure Spain's win at the FIFA World Cup in South Africa. Notably, alongside a Chelsea teammate, Mata was the first footballer to hold the Champions League, Europa League, World Cup and the European Championship simultaneously.

Emine Dzhaparova

Ukrainian Deputy First Minister for Foreign Affairs

Emine serves as the First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. She is responsible for policy planning, cooperation with international organisations, public diplomacy and the Ukrainian Institute's activities, representing Ukrainian culture to the world. She joined the MFA as the First Deputy Minister with the idea to establish the Crimea Platform aimed at the de-occupation of the Crimean peninsula. Today, this unique diplomatic tool unites over 60 countries and international organisations. Dzhaparova is also a Chairperson of the National Commission of Ukraine for UNESCO and

coordinates cooperation with the organisation. Prior to this, she was a journalist in Crimea and witnessed the 2014 occupation of the peninsula by Russian invaders. As a Crimean Tatar, she has dedicated her life to the liberation of her homeland and her compatriots. After being forced to leave the peninsula, Dzhaparova served as the first deputy minister of information policy of Ukraine and considerably contributed to strengthening Ukraine's strategic communications both domestically and abroad. Dzhaparova was awarded the Mark Palmer Prize for her support of the Ukrainian people, especially Crimean Tatars, and her leadership in the fight against Russian aggression.

Francesca Cavallo

Bestselling Author & Serial Entrepreneur

Francesca is a bestselling author of children's books, entrepreneur, founder and Chief Creative Officer of Undercats Media, and founder of Timbuktu Labs. She is the co-creator of 'Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls', a collection of 100 tales of extraordinary women that has become a publishing sensation. Francesca's career began in theatre, where she worked as both a manager for a theatre company and as a playwright. In 2012, she moved to California to co-found a children's media start-up called Timbuktu Labs, Inc. Since then, she has authored nine picture books that have been translated in more than 47 languages. Her most recent international bestseller is the children's book "Doctor Li and the Crown-wearing Virus".

John Collison

President & Co-Founder of Stripe

John is an entrepreneur and Co-Founder and President of Stripe, a software development company that is expanding Internet commerce by making it easier to process transactions from anywhere in the world. John has been passionate about coding from a young age and has a proven track-record of applying his knowledge and skills to develop ways to improve online business infrastructure.

Liesje Schreinemacher

Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation

Liesje is the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation in the Netherlands. She supports development cooperation to assist regions that face poverty, climate change, terrorism and migration challenges. Notably, Schreinemacher has fostered a new partnership with UNICEF to ease the food and nutrition crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa. She currently represents the Netherlands at several regional development banks and international financial institutions, including the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Joint World Bank-IMF Development Committee. While serving as a member of the European Parliament, she was the vice-president of the LGBTI Intergroup and supported the proposal for common charging ports as a shadow rapporteur. A lawyer who specialises in construction and contract law, she has also served as an advisor at the

Dutch Ministry of Defence and worked as an assistant to two members of the Dutch parliament.

Raphaël Liegeois

Career Astronaut at the European Space Agency (ESA)

A Belgian biomedical engineer, physicist and neuroscientist, Raphaël is a Career Astronaut at the European Space Agency (ESA) and one of five to be selected among over 22,500 applicants in the agency's latest class of astronauts. He is also a Research and Teaching Fellow at the University of Geneva, where he teaches courses in neuroengineering and statistics. Liégeois views science as truly beautiful and believes that it will be central to meeting humanity's collective challenges. His academic career has also brought him to École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Stanford University, the National University of Singapore and the University of Liège. His research has focused on studying brain dynamics in health and disease, developing dynamic models of brain function and defining new neuroimaging markers of neurodegenerative diseases. An aviation enthusiast, he also pilots hot air balloons, gas balloons and gliders.

Maria Lucia Hohan

Fashion Designer and CEO of Fashion Brand Maria Lucia Hohan

Maria Lucia is an internationally renowned fashion designer, who has seen her clothes worn by the likes of Beyoncé, Taylor Swift, Jennifer Lopez and Madonna. After working several years in Paris and Milan as a textile designer, Maria Lucia returned home to Romania to open her own shop with a modest 800 euros investment and two second-hand sewing machines. After gaining a substantial number of followers on social media and being discovered by Hollywood, she currently runs her celebrated fashion brand with 70-woman employees from Bucharest. Additionally, Maria Lucia is a strong advocate for women's rights and has publicly criticised the excessive consumerism upon which the fashion industry thrives.

Maïmouna Doucouré

French Filmmaker, Director of "Mignonnes"

A filmmaker, Maïmouna is the Screenwriter and Director of "Mignonnes" ("Cuties"). The critically acclaimed film follows the coming-of-age story of a Senegalese-French girl and premiered at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, where it won the Directing Jury Award. It also won the International Jury Mention at the Berlinale. Based on Maïmouna's own experiences and having spent nearly 18 months researching the hyper-sexualisation of adolescents, the script was awarded Sundance's Global Filmmaking Award. Through her artwork, Maïmouna unapologetically sheds light on alarming societal issues to spark dialogue and challenge the status quo. Among her first projects is the short film "Maman(s)", which screened at over 200 film festivals and won nearly 60 awards, including Best Short Film at the Toronto Film Festival, Best International Short Film at Sundance and the César for Best Short Film. In recognition of her contribution to the film industry, Maïmouna is the

recipient of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' Gold Fellowship for Women.

Kaja Kallas

Prime Minister of Estonia

As of January 2021, Kaja Kallas is Estonia's first female Prime Minister. A competition lawyer by profession, Kaja was elected Member of the Estonian Parliament and Chair of the Committee on Economic Affairs in 2011. After being elected to the European Parliament in 2014, she became a prominent proponent of innovation and frequently emphasised that regulations should not hinder the technological revolution. She authored five reports in the European Parliament, including of an own-initiative report on the Digital Single Market. Kaja left the European sphere in 2018 to become leader of Estonia's Liberal Reform Party.

Bastian Obermayer

Pulitzer-prizewinning investigative journalist

Bastian is a Pulitzer-prize winning investigative journalist, who during his time at the Munich-based newspaper 'Süddeutsche Zeitung' (SZ) was the reporter that received the Panama Papers in 2014 - then the largest leak of offshore documents in global history - and the subsequent Paradise Papers, published in 2017.

Tea Jarc

President of Sindikat Mladi plus, President of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) Youth Committee

Tea is a grassroots youth activist from Slovenia, who campaigns for social justice and actively engages in various social movements. As President of the ETUC Youth Committee, she leads the organisation in its mission to amplify the voice of the European youth workforce. Tea is also the President of Sindikat Mladi plus, a Slovenian youth trade union that represents working and unemployed Slovenian young people and students, including high school students, and seeks to protect their social and labour rights. A freelance educator, trainer and facilitator, Tea also hosts a podcast, which covers labour issues and explores labour policy alternatives that prioritise the well-being of citizens and the environment.

Gustaf Göthberg

Member of the Swedish Riksdag

Gustaf is a Swedish politician and represents Gothenburg in the national parliament, where he belongs to the Moderate Party and sits on the Committee of Defence. Passionate about foreign and security policy, he supports stronger EU policies towards Russia and China, as well as defence cooperation and migration policy. Göthberg serves on the Swedish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, where he also sits on the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights. He is committed to reducing poverty through trade, specifically free trade agreements, and increasing human rights protection for persecuted groups. Prior to being elected to the Riksdag, Göthberg worked on development in Belarus, Russia and eastern

Europe at the Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation. He has served in several departments within the City of Gothenburg's administration, as well as the Stockholm County Council. He began his career in politics as a political advisor to the Moderate Party. Additionally, Göthberg maintains a long-standing background at the Moderate Youth Association, where he held roles as the international secretary and foreign policy spokesperson.

Daumantas Dvilinskas
Co-Founder and CEO of TransferGo

A serial entrepreneur and fintech expert from Lithuania, Daumantas is the Co-Founding CEO of TransferGo, a London-based, high-growth and purely digital global money transfer service. Its innovative digital 'local in, local out' business model works with banks worldwide to enable cheaper, faster and safer cross-border money transfers. TransferGo's main goal is to increase the accessibility of transfers to migrant workers, who make regular payments to their families back at home, by reducing costs and facilitating same-day purchasing power. Dvilinskas challenges monopolies in the banking industry by targeting niche customers with a superior product experience. He has also co-founded Pinevio, a social content discovery platform that enables users to discover content from people with shared interests. Dvilinskas is a recipient of the Global Lithuanian Award, which is bestowed upon Lithuanian diaspora professionals in recognition of their contribution to the economy, science, culture and international presence of Lithuania.

Tahereh Pazouki
Founder of Magrid Learning Solution, CEO of LetzMath

An Iranian-Luxembourgish entrepreneur, Dr Tahereh Pazouki founded Magrid, a pedagogical programme that develops and improves cognitive and math abilities by removing language as a barrier to learning, in order to support equal educational opportunities for all learners. The award-winning project was inspired by Pazouki's research on children with migrant backgrounds and language disorders in Luxembourg's public school system, which concluded that adapted training can support children who are disadvantaged by an education system in reaching their full potential. The Magrid programme now helps thousands of students in schools across Luxembourg and Portugal with early childhood development in math, visual-spatial and cognitive abilities. It will soon be available for parents all over Europe. Pazouki also founded a start-up, LetzMath, to continue the research and development of educational solutions that champion equal opportunities. In recognition to her innovative contributions to the field of education, she has been the recipient of the World

Summit Awards, the European Investment Bank's social innovation prize, the Creative Young Entrepreneur award and the MIT Solve award.

Jasminko Halilović
Founder and CEO of the War Childhood Museum

Jasminko is a leading conflict researcher from Bosnia and Herzegovina, who compiled short recollections from people who experienced the Bosnian War as children into "War Childhood". The award-winning book has now been translated into six languages. He went on to establish the War Childhood Museum in Sarajevo, the world's only museum exclusively dedicated to childhoods affected by armed conflict. Awarded the Council of Europe Museum Prize, the museum aims to raise awareness of the specific experience through archived materials, from drawings to personal belongings, and motivate adults to consider the consequences of war. Halilović has developed the museum from a small local initiative into an international non-profit with offices in Sarajevo, Kyiv, The Hague and New York City. A serial entrepreneurial since his teenage years, Halilović has co-founded several companies. His passion for peacebuilding and entrepreneurship has earned him spots as a keynote speaker and guest lecturer at universities and conferences in over 15 countries.

You can find all alumni [HERE](#).