



Class of 2024

European Young Leaders

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 the Board of Trustees of Friends of Europe.

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Class of 2024

Position held at the time of nomination

Ahmed Abdirahman

SWEDEN

Founder & CEO of Järvaveckan

Ahmed Abdirahman is founder and CEO of The Global Village Foundation, a non-profit promoting inclusivity in all aspects of social, economic and political life. It hosts Järvaveckan, a pivotal event in the Swedish political calendar with more than 300 participating organisations that draws over 60,000 people to summer gatherings designed to bridge the gap between citizens, politicians, civil society, business leaders and authorities. The Foundation aims to cultivate a society where diversity is universally acknowledged as a strength, and everyone can shape its progression. Somali-born Abdirahman was previously policy expert on social sustainability at Stockholm Chamber of Commerce, tasked with promoting integration.



Madeleine Darya Alizadeh

AUSTRIA

Founder & CEO of dariadéh, author, activist

Madeleine Darya Alizadeh, known as dariadaria, is an Austrian content creator and entrepreneur. She founded dariadéh, a fashion label trying to be more size-inclusive and sustainable. The company also hosts a second-hand platform for customers to resell their 'preloved' purchases. She wrote a green lifestyle column for *Wienerin* magazine and produced and hosted a *mindful* mess podcast, which discussed personal development and sustainable living. She authored the book, "Starkes weiches Herz" ("Strong soft heart"), which ranked on a *Literatur-Spiegel* bestseller list, among others. Now with over 335k followers on Instagram, Alizadeh became a leading voice in the world of sustainable fashion through her popular fashion blog, *dariadaria*.



Ryyan Alshebl

GERMANY

Mayor of Ostelsheim

Ryyan Alshebl is the Mayor of the village of Ostelsheim and the first mayor of Syrian origin in Germany. Having left his home country of Syria and sought asylum in Germany, Alshebl's pursuit of a career in politics has challenged traditional notions of integration. As mayor, the progressive, independent local politician prioritises digital access to public administration services, as well as early childhood, public transport and environmental protection. Upon his arrival in Germany, Alshebl completed a vocational programme on government administration and an internship at the Althengstett town council, in which role he was responsible for day care management and digitalisation.



Lefteris Arapakis

GREECE

Co-Founder & Director of Enaleia

A Greek social entrepreneur, Lefteris Arapakis founded Enaleia to improve the sustainability of the marine ecosystem and fishing industry. Enaleia is at the helm of Greece's first-ever fishing school, which aims to strengthen the fishing sector and empower fishers through the provision of eco-friendly, ethical training and education. Enaleia's Mediterranean CleanUp collects and facilitates the upcycling of plastic bycatches from fishers in return for compensation, incentivizing sustainable fishing and supporting local economies, while also preventing further pollution through collecting their used fishing gear. Working with over 3,000 fishers in the Mediterranean, the programme has collected over 1M kilogrammes of marine plastic. Arapakis is a UNEP Young Champion of the Earth and Ambassador for the Mediterranean Coast.



Jason Arday

UNITED KINGDOM

Professor of Sociology of Education at the University of Cambridge

A British sociologist and scholar of race, inequality and education, Jason Arday is a Professor of Sociology of Education at the University of Cambridge. He is one of the youngest people ever appointed to a professorship at the prestigious institution. Growing up unable to speak, read and write, Arday is committed to tackling the systemic inequalities that Black, Asian and minority ethnic students often face in education. Acclaimed for his research on race and structural racism, Arday's work aims to overcome the underrepresentation of people from disadvantaged backgrounds in higher education. He is also a longstanding Trustee of the Runnymede Trust, a leading race equality think tank. Outside of academia, Arday has raised over £5 million pounds for charity over a 20-year period.



Anna Ascani

ITALY

Vice-President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies

Currently serving as the Vice-President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Anna Ascani is an Italian politician whose career is best defined by her successes in European affairs, education and youth policies. The former Democratic Party vice-president has also served as the state secretary for economic development and the deputy education minister, in which role she tackled inequality between schools in different regions through peer-to-peer exchange and through building and digital infrastructure investments. When first elected to the national parliament, Ascani was among its youngest members and served on the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.



Marcos Baghdatis

CYPRUS

Tennis Player and Coach

Marcos Baghdatis is a sporting legend from Cyprus. The former top 10 tennis star was runner-up at the 2006 Australian Open and semi-finalist at the Wimbledon Championship that same year. In the 2010 season, he was the only player to score victories over both Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal when they were World No. 1. Baghdatis won four ATP singles tournaments before injury forced him into retirement in 2019. Since then, he has worked to help promising young players. In August 2023, he was appointed Ambassador for the Professional Tennis Players Association (PTPA) with the goal of empowering new generations of players.



Takoua Ben Mohamed

ITALY

**Co-Founder & Executive Producer
at BM Entertainment**

Takoua Ben Mohamed is an Italian-Tunisian graphic designer and journalist specialised in illustration and animation cinema. Largely depicting refugees and Muslim women, her works address social issues concerning xenophobia, racism and stereotypes. She is the Co-Founder and Executive Producer of the film production company BM Entertainment, which produced the "Hijab style" documentary film for Al-Jazeera. The storyteller has published several graphic novels and was the art director of the animated sport for the 'Look Beyond Prejudice' campaign against the discrimination of Muslim women. She has received the Evens Journalism Prize for best graphic journalist and the Muslim International Book Award for best comic book for interreligious and intercultural dialogue.



Marijus Briedis

LITHUANIA

Chief Technology Officer at NordVPN

A childhood fascination with the cult movie 'Hackers' led Marijus Briedis into a cybersecurity career with a global mission to shape a trusted and peaceful online future for people everywhere. He helped design the innovative NordLynx virtual private network (VPN) technology. As chief technical officer at NordVPN Briedis leads a team exploring technology that aims to detect malware before it lands on devices, block third-party trackers, and offer a single application to cover all essential areas of consumer security. Claiming to be the fastest VPN on the planet, NordVPN confidently assures customers "It would take the world's most powerful computer billions of years to unencrypt your data."



Zarah Bruhn

GERMANY

Commissioner for Social Innovation at the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Founder & CEO of socialbee

A multi-award social entrepreneur passionate about impact-entrepreneurship equality and diversity, Zarah Bruhn is the Commissioner for Social Innovation at the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. To address the systemic barriers to job market integration and develop sustainable pathways to employment for refugees, Bruhn founded socialbee, a non-profit that supports companies in hiring refugees and migrants, as well as further qualifying them for the primary labour market. Bruhn seeks to shift mindsets by demonstrating the social value of long-term labour market integration and reimagining industry norms for temporary employment. She is also a member of the German Council for sustainable development and an Ashoka Fellow.



Ella Dvornik

CROATIA

Blogger, content creator

Ella Dvornik is an award-winning luxury travel, fashion and lifestyle blogger from Croatia. Her blog, *I Am Ella*, was voted among the top three blogs at the UK Blog Awards. She is also the Founder of Manijak, a digital media service for influencers. She has worked with over 400 brands worldwide to create creative content and has featured in nearly all media outlets in Croatia and the Western Balkan region. Since she first created her Facebook profile over a decade ago, her online audience has grown from strength to strength and now includes more than 370k Facebook followers and over half a million Instagram followers.



Megi Fino

ALBANIA

**Albanian Deputy Minister for
Europe and Foreign Affairs**

Since 2021, Megi Fino has been Albania's Deputy Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs. She is at the forefront of advancing her country's European Union membership process as a negotiator for the acquis Chapter 31. Fino has been engaged at the UN and regional bodies to promote support for Ukraine and regional cooperation. She was previously an Integrity Consultant for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) focused on local governance reform and worked as a regulatory expert at Vodafone Albania. A lawyer by training, she includes Chinese among her many languages.



Rodrigo García González

SPAIN

Co-Founder & Co-CEO of Notpla

Rodrigo García González is an inventor, designer, architect and engineer. His London-based startup Notpla has a simple goal: making packaging disappear. Among its biodegradable products are home-compostable containers made from seaweed. Notpla's mass-produced packaging have replaced over 6.5 million units of plastic food containers. That number rises every minute, and the aim is to reach 500 billion by 2030. Notpla's list of seaweed-based products keeps growing, moving into paper, cutlery and toothpaste. In 2022, Notpla scooped the £1 million Earthshot Prize for its efforts to free the world from waste-free.



Tanguy Goretti

BELGIUM

Co-Founder and CTO at COWBOY

Tanguy Goretti was co-founder in 2017 of COWBOY, a Brussels-based start-up making the world's most-connected electric bikes. With the goal of revolutionising urban micro-mobility, it has sold over 60,000 e-bikes in Europe and the United States, saving over 15 million tons of CO2. COWBOY bikes' smart look, easy usability and heaps of integrated software have earned an 'Apple of e-bikes' tag and scooped armfuls of innovation and design awards. Navigating an e-bike market expected to be nudging US\$120 billion by the turn of the decade, COWBOY is on track to hit profitability in 2024 in line with its mission to 'build a better bike, create a better self and leave a better world'.

Sally Hayden

IRELAND

Award-winning journalist, photographer

Sally Hayden is an award-winning Irish journalist and photographer, whose work focuses on migration, conflict and humanitarian crises. Reporting from across Africa, the Middle East and Europe, there are few major outlets in which Hayden's work has not featured. In 2023, she was named Journalist of the Year by the Irish Journalism Awards. Her first book "My Fourth Time, We Drowned: Seeking Refuge on the World's Deadliest Migration Route", focuses on human rights abuses fuelled by European anti-migration policies, particularly in Libya. It was awarded the Orwell Prize for Political Writing, the Michel Déon Prize and the Irish Book Awards' Overall Book of the Year. It has also been published in Italian and Dutch, and is forthcoming in Spanish, French and Polish.



Valeriya Ionan

UKRAINE

Deputy Minister at the Ukrainian Ministry of Digital Transformation

Valeriya Ionan is the Deputy Minister for Eurointegration at the Ukrainian Ministry of Digital Transformation, where she oversees European integration and international relations, the national digital literacy programme, regional digital transformation, as well as the development and growth of SMEs. Her top projects at the ministry include Diia.Education, a national edutainment platform for reskilling and digital literacy; award-winning Diia.Business, a national project on the development of SMEs; WinWin platform for growing global Ukrainian innovation vision; Future Perfect, a national language programme; CDTO Campus, an education project for digital leaders, and many others. Her efforts focus on launching Ukrainian digital products to speed the process of national digitalisation and to help solve complex challenges.



Disa Jironet

THE NETHERLANDS

Public Prosecutor at the Dutch Public Prosecution Service

Disa Jironet is a Dutch Public Prosecutor and author with a background in Dutch and international law. Specialised in the role of justice in society, her work adopts a new approach to criminal law by examining how societal systems and institutions can be shaped compassionately to better serve humanity. Her book "Crime and Compassion" argues for a more humane criminal climate. Acknowledging the complexity of human behaviour, Jironet remains critically optimistic that justice reform can move beyond the debate of hard or soft punishment and towards an evidence-based conversation about long-term sustainable justice and security.



Lubomila Jordanova

BULGARIA

Founder & CEO of Plan A

Berlin-based Lubomila Jordanova is one of Europe's leading Greentech entrepreneurs. On a mission to fight climate change, she founded Plan A in 2017, developing ground-breaking software that enables businesses to monitor and reduce emissions, while improving their environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) performance. Plan A has developed a global network of over 1,500 companies with the yearly target of cutting CO2 emissions by 1 gigatonne. In addition, she is co-founder of the Greentech Alliance, uniting more than 3,000 stakeholders to harness the power of technology for a sustainable future. She is passionate about wildlife, with a special soft spot for lemurs.

Anna Jørgensen

PORTUGAL

General Manager of Cortes de Cima

A winemaker from Portugal, Anna Jørgensen heads the Cortes de Cima wine estate in its mission to realise sustainable and organic production with minimal environmental impact. She champions low-till and no-till regenerative approaches, reduced watering practices and polyculture crops to increase the vineyard's long-term resilience, especially as the Alentejo region faces heightened climate change challenges, such as water scarcity. In two years, Jørgensen led the winery to reduce its hectares of vineyard by half, making use of the land more wisely to produce fewer grapes, but of higher quality, while also introducing biodiverse animals and plants to land that is no longer used for production.



Petr Kapoun

CZECHIA

Founder & CEO of TRL Space

A space enthusiast from Czechia, Petr Kapoun founded TRL Space to strengthen the country's budding space industry. He is Chairman of the Brno Space Cluster, Deputy Chairman at the Brno Regional Chamber of Commerce and Head of the Association of the Czech AeroSpace Industry's space section. His work at the Brno Regional Chamber of Commerce focuses on the improvement of the local community. Passionate about gender equality in tech, Kapoun is an Ambassador for Women in Space. His involvement in educational activities led him to contribute to the creation of the first master's programme on space applications at the Brno University of Technology. Throughout his career, Kapoun also notably managed over 12 space missions.



Inga Lāce

LATVIA

Chief Curator of the Almaty Museum of Arts

Inga Lāce is a Latvian curator and the Chief Curator of the Almaty Museum of Arts in Kazakhstan. Her research centres on transnational connections and the legacies of politics of friendship and international solidarity within the realms of eastern Europe and Central Asia. Lāce was the CMAP Central and Eastern Europe Fellow at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and previously held the position of curator at the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art for a decade. She has co-curated exhibitions in Riga, Kaunas, Ljubljana, Paris, New York, Malmö, Amsterdam and Łódź, among others. Lāce was the co-curator of the Latvian Pavilion of the 2019 Venice Biennale with the artist Daiga Grantina. Her collaborative 'Portable Landscapes' project examines the stories of exiled Latvian artists and her '(Re)construction of Friendship' project, which took place in Riga's former KGB house, focused on the complicated relationship between superpowers and small countries.



Ari-Pekka Liukkonen

FINLAND

Olympic swimmer, Member of the Jyväskylä City Council

A professional swimmer and local politician from Finland, Ari-Pekka Liukkonen represents the Green party at the Jyväskylä City Council. He chairs the Culture and Sports Committee, championing the construction and development of sports facilities. At the height of his swimming career, the three-time Olympic athlete publicly came out as gay ahead of the Sochi Winter Games in protest of Russia's anti-gay legislation, after which he was named Finland's Sports Role Model of the Year. A flag bearer at the Tokyo Summer Olympics, he holds the Finnish records for 50m and 100m freestyle, as well as European Championship gold and bronze medals.

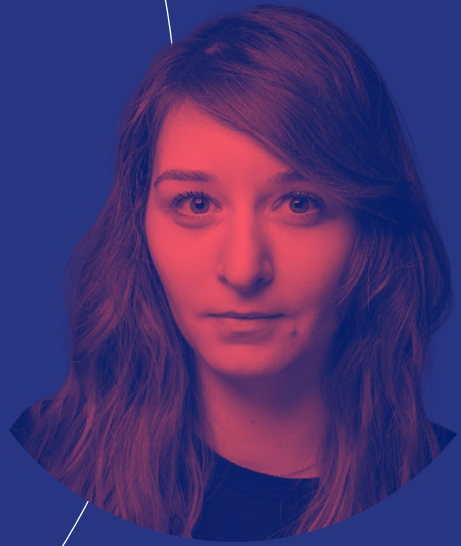


Besa Luci

KOSOVO

Co-Founder & Editor-in-Chief of Kosovo 2.0

A journalist from Kosovo, Besa Luci is the Co-Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Kosovo 2.0, an independent print and multimedia magazine creating journalism that listens to people's experiences, explains complex realities and provides context. The outlet sheds light on injustice, discrimination, human rights and current affairs in Kosovo and worldwide. Dedicated to establishing cross-cultural links, as well as explanatory, contextual and narrative journalism, K2.0 is the only medium in the country that publishes in Albanian, English and Serbian. Besa has also produced and co-written feature documentaries, including the "Drums of Resistance" and "REXHEP – What Killed the Architect", and has worked as a researcher at the Foreign Policy Club think tank and Youth Initiative for Human Rights.



Marko Maraš

MONTENEGRO

Founder of Seljak.me

A Montenegrin farmer-turned-agricultural entrepreneur, Marko Maraš founded Seljak.me, a 'digital village' platform for farmers to connect and share information, as well as buy and sell agricultural products and equipment. Maraš is on a mission to boost the farming sector and engage young farmers in agriculture production through innovation and sustainability. Welcoming over 60,000 visits per month, the platform seeks to increase the procurement of modern technologies, such as blockchain and GPS, that can enhance productivity and proximity to livestock markets. Seljak is famed for being the first to sell a farm asset of any kind for Bitcoin in the Western Balkans.



Vladimíra Marcinková

SLOVAKIA

**Vice-Chair of the Slovak National Council
Committee for European Affairs**

A Slovak parliamentarian, Vladimíra Marcinková, member of the Freedom and Solidarity parliamentarian club, is the vice-chair of the Committee for European Affairs. Under her leadership, the Committee for European Affairs was the first in EU member states to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and call for a unified EU response to support the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. A staunch supporter of human rights and the rights of minorities and other vulnerable groups, she has sponsored legislative initiatives to expand children's rights and social assistance to mothers and families, as well as defended the expansion of the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community. Marcinková is also actively dedicated to improving the position of women and mothers in the labour market.



Luka Mesec

SLOVENIA

**Slovenian Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Labour,
Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunity**

Luka Mesec is a Slovenian politician and activist who currently serves as the Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunity, and as Deputy Prime Minister. He has served in the national parliament for nearly a decade and is the former leader of the eco-socialist party, The Left. Throughout his political career, he has championed participatory economics, social corporate governance, improved social benefits for the poor, labour rights and the abolition of tax havens. Mesec also initiated the establishment of a Ministry of Solidarity-Based Future, in charge of developing social housing, long-term care and economic democracy. Prior to entering politics, he was notably active in various initiatives that promoted the welfare state and workers' rights.



Uk Nihad

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Prime Minister of the Sarajevo Canton

A local politician from Bosnia & Herzegovina, Uk Nihad currently serves as the Prime Minister of the Sarajevo Canton. Nihad envisions Sarajevo as a European metropolis that offers its inhabitants, especially young people a high quality of life. He champions forward-thinking transport, housing and education policies, and the promotion and enhancement of culture and art. Recent successes have included a project aimed at building Sarajevo's first museum of modern art, as well as the provision of free textbooks for all primary school students and free public city transportation for all students.



Péter Pető

HUNGARY

Editor-in-Chief of 24.hu

Péter Pető is a Hungarian political journalist, who currently works as the Editor-in-Chief of 24.hu. Previously, he was the deputy editor of the left-wing political daily *Népszabadság* until it was shut down following the publication of articles revealing scandals that implicated politicians close to Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. Soon after its dissolution, he was shortlisted for the Reporters Without Borders' Prize of Independence. Having started his career in sports journalism, Pető became increasingly politically engaged as the country's media landscape became growingly turbulent. He aims to uphold independent journalism through the preservation of traditional and the adoption of new approaches to journalism to reach diverse audiences. He has also authored eight books, including novels and political essays.



Olga Rudenko

UKRAINE

Editor-in-Chief of the Kyiv Independent

A stalwart of independent journalism, Olga Rudenko is a Ukrainian journalist and the Editor-in-Chief of the Kyiv Independent, an award-winning media start-up that was launched by the former editorial team of the Kyiv Post, where she was the deputy chief editor. Under Olga's leadership, the Kyiv Independent covers Russia's war against Ukraine, does investigative reporting about corruption and Russian war crimes. The recipient of the Hanns-Joachim Friedrichs Award for excellence in journalism, Rudenko was also named among the Next Generation Leaders by Time magazine, and featured on the publication's cover in 2022, shortly following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.



Alina Şerban

ROMANIA

Roma Actress, theatre and film director

Alina Şerban is an award-winning Romanian Roma actress, playwright and director, whose work promotes social justice by tackling sexism, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination. Named Best Actress by the German Actors Guild for her leading role in "Gypsy Queen", the film is one of three in which Şerban starred that highlighted the experiences of Roma women. A pioneer of Roma feminist political theatre, her play "The Great Shame", which addresses the taboo topic of Roma slavery, became the first play by a Roman woman director to be included in a Romanian state theatre's permanent repertoire. Şerban also made her debut as a film director with "Letter of Forgiveness", the first film about Roma slavery written from a Roma perspective.



Heïdi Sevestre

FRANCE

Glaciologist, Deputy Secretary of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)

Heïdi Sevestre is a French glaciologist, specialising in glacier dynamics, tropical glaciers and ice shelves in Antarctica. She aims to make scientific knowledge more accessible and motivate concrete, effective climate action. Sevestre is the Deputy Secretary of AMAP, an Arctic Council working group that coordinates research on climate, pollutants, contaminants, and human and ecosystem health in the Arctic. Her research on glacier surges, which was featured in *Science* magazine, strengthened our understanding of climate change's impact on glaciers. Sevestre regularly leads scientific expeditions to polar and high mountain regions and was notably awarded the inaugural Shackleton Medal for the Protection of Polar Regions.



Jovana Spremo

SERBIA

Advocacy Director of Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM)

A human rights lawyer from Serbia, Jovana Spremo is a fierce advocate of the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights, whose work focuses on supporting the EU negotiation process. As the Advocacy Director of YUCOM, she leads the development and implementation of advocacy strategies aimed at promoting its research and policy recommendations on the rule of law and human rights. Spremo coordinates the Working Group for Chapter 23 of the National Convention on European Union, which deals with Serbia's policies related to judiciary and fundamental rights, and monitors access to justice pertaining to the Belgrade – Pristina dialogue.



Anders Storgaard

DENMARK

Member of the Frederiksberg City Council

Anders Storgaard is a Member of the Frederiksberg City Council. A social conservative, he aims to make his municipality Denmark's greenest through sustainable wood construction, CO2 tax and green urban development and infrastructure policies. Storgaard is also a consultant for renewable energy at Green Power Denmark and a radio host on the talk radio channel, 24syv. He contributed to the push for Denmark to drop an eighth bidding round for North Sea oil and increase CO2 taxes, while serving as the national chairperson of Conservative Youth, a Danish political organisation.



Tobias Stüber

LUXEMBOURG

CEO of Flibco

A pioneering businessman from Luxembourg, Tobias Stüber is the CEO of Flibco, a digital company specialised in the niche of airport to city transportation. He is an expert in change management and digital transformation, who champions progressive working models to boost productivity and employee motivation. Stüber was the first CEO in the country to successfully implement a four-day, 32-hour work week that maintains a full-time salary. Under his leadership, Flibco has expanded with new connections to 12 airports, with plans to become Europe's leading digital sales platform for airport shuttles. In addition to his role as CEO, Stüber has successfully worked as a strategical and digital consultant for election campaigns in German national and regional levels.

Johannes Tralla

ESTONIA

Journalist at Estonian Public Broadcasting

A household name and 'the face of the EU' for many Estonians, Johannes Tralla is a journalist at Estonian Public Broadcasting. As the host of the "Esimene studio", "Välisilm" and «Aktuaalne kaamera» news programmes, Tralla plays a key role in explaining what is happening in Brussels at the EU level to audiences at home. Travelling by motorbike and later motorhome, Tralla has taken viewers on journeys across EU member states for three seasons of "Johannese lähetamine", a travel show that offers insights into what citizens expect and hope to gain from the EU. He is currently working on the new show "Mis värvi on majandus" that delves into the green transition and digital economy. Previously, he worked as Estonian Public Broadcasting's EU correspondent in Brussels.



Ousman Umar

SPAIN

Founder & President of NASCO Feeding Minds

Ousman Umar is an activist, who settled in Spain five years after leaving his village in Ghana at the age of 12 and embarking on a life-threatening journey across the Sahara Desert by foot and the Mediterranean Sea by dinghy. Steadfast in the belief that education is the key to societal change, Umar founded NASCO Feeding Minds to reshape the paradigm of humanitarian aid by empowering individuals through the provision of technological equipment and ICT education in his home country. Since 2012, over 66,000 students in 58 schools have passed through the programme, and 17 ICT learning centres are now active in Ghana.



Chris Umé

BELGIUM

Co-Founder and Chief Creative Officer of Metaphysic

One of the world's prime technology experts in generative AI and visual effects, Chris Umé has taken the industry to a whole new level as Co-Founder and Chief Creative Officer of Metaphysic, the leading generative AI company for photorealistic content at internet scale. Blending a mastery of VFX techniques with evolving AI models, Umé's creativity was the driving force behind the ground-breaking live television moment that shocked audiences when Elvis Presley was brought back to life on *America's Got Talent*, and is now taking Tom Hanks and Robin Wright through time in Miramax's *Here*. Prior to the launch of Metaphysic in 2021, he gained experience at DeepVooDoo and Medialaan. He was also the lead creator on South Park's *Sassy Justice* series and several world-famous commercial production campaigns.



Aleksandra K. Wiśniewska

POLAND

Member of the Sejm

Aleksandra K. Wiśniewska is a Polish politician, political scientist and humanitarian, serving as a member of the Civic Coalition political alliance in the national parliament. Prior to politics, she specialised in humanitarian response to war-driven crises. Following Russia's re-invasion, Wiśniewska led evacuation of Ukrainian orphanages to Poland and served as the Head of Mission for INTERSOS in Ukraine. Wiśniewska has notably also served as the Head of Mission for Polish Humanitarian Action in Yemen in response to cholera and COVID-19 outbreaks. Earlier, she worked for RNVDO in Iraq, at UNDP in Turkey and Jordan in response to the Syria crisis, and volunteered and conducted field research on human rights in refugee camps across Europe.

Monika Zajkova

NORTH MACEDONIA

Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of North Macedonia

The first-ever woman to lead the LDP, Monika Zajkova is the youngest party president and the second youngest national parliamentarian in North Macedonia. Zajkova is rebuilding trust in politics by overcoming gender stereotypes in patriarchal societies. She sits on the parliamentary committees regarding European affairs, foreign policy and equal opportunities for women and men. As a Delegate to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Zajkova is the Special Representative on Youth Engagement. Previously, she has served as the cabinet chief to the minister of local self-government and as the president of the LDP's youth wing.



Steve Zammit Lupi

MALTA

Councillor at the Haż-Żebbuġ Local Council

Steve Zammit Lupi is a Councillor at the Haż-Żebbuġ Local Council in his hometown, elected as an independent candidate at the age of 23. He champions initiatives that seek to protect the environment and promote sustainable transport and mobility. Zammit Lupi is well-known for cycling 4,400km across Europe from Malta to Stockholm in 41 days in summer 2023. Raising awareness about embracing greener lifestyles and reducing carbon footprints, his journey showcased the potential for cycling as an alternative mode of transportation on his home island. Zammit Lupi was involved with Rota, a local bicycle advocacy group, and active with Birdlife Malta, an organisation which strives to protect birds and their habitats on the island.

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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.

