

# EUROPEAN LYOUNG LEADERS

2015

Co-organised by



With the support of



Media partner



Follow us on Twitter

#youngleaders



## Ana Antunes

**Portugal**  
Microbiologist

Ana is a microbiologist and formerly a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institut Pasteur in Paris. After completing her PhD in Microbiology in 2010 at the University of Lisbon, she moved to Siena, Italy, where she was awarded a Marie Curie Fellowship and worked for Novartis Vaccines & Diagnostics.

Having also lectured in vaccinology and pharmaceutical clinical development, Ana has published in peer-reviewed journals and spoken at numerous international conferences. Over the course of her academic career, she has received various grants and fellowships, including from the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT). Ana is also co-founder and President of AGRAFr – The Association des Diplômés Portugais en France, which brings together Portuguese expats and French nationals.

 [Ana Antunes](#)



## Ricardo Baptista Leite

**Portugal**  
Member of Parliament

Ricardo is best known as a Member of the Portuguese Parliament, for the Social Democratic Party. He is also a medical doctor with specific training in infectious diseases, having studied at Johns Hopkins University and Harvard Medical School, and has an active role on a number of scientific and advisory

boards of health-related foundations and organisations – including his role as Head of Public Health at the Catholic University of Portugal. Combining his expert medical knowledge and political career, Riccardo is working towards a PhD in Public Health/Health Management at Maastricht University. Since his election in 2011, the Portuguese-Canadian citizen has expanded his focus beyond health issues and currently serves as Coordinator and Permanent Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee as well as President of the Portugal-Canada Parliamentary Friendship Group.

 [Ricardo Baptista Leite](#)  [Ricardo Baptista Leite](#)  [@RBaptistaLeite](#)



## Hanke Bruins Slot

**The Netherlands**  
Member of Parliament

Hanke is a Dutch politician, former military officer and hockey player. Immediately after graduating from university, Hanke joined the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations as a Senior Policy Officer. She remained in this position for four years before attending the Dutch Royal Military Academy (KMA) where she undertook officer training, and specialised as an artillery commander.

Assigned as a Tank Platoon Commander in 2007, Hanke served in Afghanistan and by 2009 was Acting Field Officer assisting the Director of Operations, Land Forces Commando Staff. In 2010, Hanke was elected to the Dutch House of Representatives where she currently serves as party spokesperson on health and defence issues for the Christian Democratic Appeal party, and also focuses on local government, medical law, psychiatry and sports. Hanke is a keen hockey player and was on the team that won the Rabobank Premier Division national indoor hockey championship in 2005.

 [Hanke Bruins Slot](#)  [@HankeBruinsSlot](#)



## Jane Burston

**United Kingdom**

Head of the Centre for Carbon Measurement at the National Physical Laboratory

Jane Burston has dedicated most her life to climate and environmental issues, serving first as a strategic consultant on low carbon policy to the Mayor of London and is now running a world-class climate science and low carbon technology centre at the UK's National Measurement Institute. In 2008, she founded Carbon Retirement, an award-winning social enterprise working with the EU ETS. Her dedication to sustainability and entrepreneurial drive was rewarded with being named as one of the 'Top 30 UK entrepreneurs under 30' by Real Business in 2010, a 'Social Entrepreneur of the Year' by Square Mile in 2011 and one of the 'Top 10 Outstanding Young Persons of the UK' by the Chamber of Commerce International in 2015, among others.

 [Jane Burston](#)



## Martin Buxant

**Belgium**

Senior Writer at L'Echo

With two master's degrees in Communication and European Integration (Economics), Martin first entered the world of journalism in 2002 initially as a European correspondent and later a political journalist. He has been a reporter for La Libre Belgique and De Morgen, as well as an editor for the television programme "Politiquement Correct" on RTL-TVI during the most recent legislative and regional elections in Belgium. He is currently a Senior Writer at the daily business newspaper L'Echo where he serves as both a political journalist and an editor. Martin appears daily on the Bel-RTL television channel where he conducts a political interview every morning. He is an accomplished author having most recently published a biography of the current Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Didier Reynders.

 [Martin Buxant](#)

 [@Le\\_Bux](#)



## Victor Capitanu

**Romania**

Managing Director of One United Properties

Victor is an entrepreneur and investor. He is the founder of Capital Partners, the leading independent investment banking company in Romania, which he continues to co-own with three other bankers. Victor is also the Managing Director of One United Properties, a property developer that focuses on exclusive residential compounds in Bucharest. Since May 2014, he has been a Board Director at SIF Oltenia SA, an investment company listed on the Bucharest Stock Exchange with a net asset value of €350 million. Victor has been the recipient of various awards including Acquisition International's M&A Award in 2013, Ziarul Financiar's Excellence Award in 2011 and Business Review's 2009 Financial Adviser of the Year Award.

 [Victor Capitanu](#)

 [Victor Capitanu](#)

 [@VictorCapitanu](#)



## Stefania Duico

### Italy

XBOX Marketing Director at Microsoft Italy

At Microsoft Italy, Stefania leads on all efforts to increase sales of Microsoft's interactive entertainment products. Since starting out as a PR specialist in 2000, she has shot up the career ladder joining Microsoft in 2002 as a Marketing Communications Specialist and later becoming a Senior Account Executive at Planners International Group, before returning to Microsoft and taking up her current position. Throughout her time there, Stefania has won 7 different awards for diligence and the many impressive marketing campaigns that she has run. Trained in information technology and business communication, she has a passion for creative writing.

 [Stefania Duico](#)

 [@sduico](#)




## Lukasz Dziekonski

### Poland

Member of the Management Board of the Marguerite Fund 2020 for Energy, Climate Change and Infrastructure

Lukasz is a Senior Manager responsible for European structured finance at the Warsaw-based PKO Bank Polski, where he works on projects related to energy, transport and the environment with budgets ranging from €50 million to €1 billion. He is also a member of the management board for the Marguerite Fund 2020 for Energy, Climate Change and Infrastructure in Luxembourg. There, Lukasz oversees the formulation of financial and operational strategies. He is also on the supervisory board of Pomeranka Development, InvestGas and Energa Operator in Poland, and of PZU Ukraine Insurance Company and Kredobank, also in Ukraine. Lukasz began his career as an adviser in the European Parliament, focusing on energy policy and security as well as EU relations with Russia and Ukraine.

 [Lucasz Dziekonski](#)



## Damien English

### Ireland

Teachta Dála, Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills

Damien is Ireland's Minister for Skills, Research and Innovation for the Fine Gael Parliamentary Party. He was first elected in the 2002 general election at the age of 24, when he was appointed party deputy spokesperson for Arts, Sport and Tourism. In October 2004, he became Deputy Spokesperson for Justice and Community Affairs with special responsibility for Drugs, Alcohol and Crime Prevention. From 2002-2007, Damien was a member of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly. He has also served as Fine Gael's Deputy Spokesperson for Enterprise with special responsibility for Small Business and Labour Affairs from 2007 to 2010, and from 2010 to 2011 was party Deputy Spokesperson for Finance with special responsibility for Banking and Credit.

 [@damien\\_english](#)



## Clémentine Forissier

**France**

Associate and Co-Founder of Contexte

Clémentine is a journalist who has gone from freelance reporting on the radio and in magazines to later becoming Chief Editor at EurActiv, France. She is now Chief Editor of Contexte, an online newspaper that focuses on French and European public policy which she co-founded in 2013. She is also Vice-President of Europresse, the association of French journalists who cover European affairs, and AJDE, an association for journalists who specifically report on energy issues. Educated in Paris and Brussels, Clémentine is a published author and was previously in charge of opening the Brussels office of the Robert Schuman Foundation.

 [Clémentine Forissier](#)

 [cforissier](#)



## Edvard Glücksman

**Sweden**

Senior Environmental and Social Specialist at Wardell Armstrong LLP

Edvard was until recently a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Environment & Sustainability Institute of the University of Exeter, and has been the recipient of numerous scholarly awards. He is a member and coordinator of the Emerging Leaders in Environmental and Energy Policy network (ELEEP) and Associate Editor of the peer-reviewed journal Mine Water and the Environment. Formerly an adviser at the UK Parliamentary Office of Science & Technology, Edvard has held postdoctoral positions at the European Geosciences Union and the University of Duisburg-Essen. Currently, his research focuses on water-based challenges to the mining industry. He was educated in Belgium, Canada and Scotland before attending the University of Oxford where he gained a Master's degree and a doctorate in Zoology.

 [Edvard Glücksman](#)

 [@edglucksman](#)



## Jamy Goewie

**The Netherlands**

Director of Ashoka

Jamy supports young entrepreneurs as a member of the European Leadership Platform's advisory board, and as the Country Director of Ashoka, the worldwide network of social entrepreneurs. She is also a board member of the Child at Venture Foundation, which she founded in 2005 and where she acted as Executive Director for over seven years, and established an office in the Philippines in 2010, where she remains chairperson of the Youth at Venture Foundation. She is also a board member of the Children of Bulgaria Foundation, which supports Bulgarian orphanages through food and educational programmes. She has a Master's degree in Geography and another in Pedagogical Studies as well as a Bachelor's in Policy, Strategy and Management for Non-Profit.

 [Jamy Goewie](#)

 [Jamy Goewie](#)

 [@JamyGoewie](#)





## María González Veracruz

**Spain**

Member of Parliament

María is a Spanish politician currently serving as a Member of the Congress of Deputies for the opposition Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE). María's background is in biochemistry, having earned a degree in the subject with research experience in molecular genetics. She entered politics at an early age, becoming Secretary General of the Young Socialists for the Region of Murcia in 2003, and was appointed Secretary for Housing and Quality of Life in the Federal Executive Committee of the party in 2007 when she was elected as Member of the Regional Assembly of Murcia. In the 2011 general election, María was elected to the Congress of Deputies, and has been Secretary of Innovation and New Technologies in the PSOE Federal Executive since then.

 [@mariagv](#)



## Oisín Hanrahan

**Ireland**

Co-Founder of Handybook

Oisín became an entrepreneur at the age of 18, when he set up the Clearwater Group, a real estate development company in Budapest while a student at Trinity College, Dublin. Oisín founded Handybook in May 2012 with Umang Dua to address the difficulty of finding a reliable handyman that Oisín experienced in Budapest. Oisín also established MiCandidate, which became the leading source for online election information across Europe in 2009, and set up the Undergraduate Awards, which has become the world's largest pan-discipline awards programme. Supported by Google, Microsoft and others, it is a global annual awards event hosted in Dublin with the award distributed each year by the President of Ireland.

 [Oisín Hanrahan](#)

 [@oisinhanrahan](#)



## Klen Jäärats

**Estonia**

Director for EU Affairs at the Office of the Prime Minister

As Director of the EU Secretariat in the Estonian government, Jäärats coordinates and develops all EU policy and acts as the chief European affairs adviser to the Prime Minister. A career civil servant, Jäärats started out in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, rising quickly to the position of Head of the Refugees Department. In this capacity, he dealt with a variety of NGOs and international organisations including the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He later moved to Brussels where he spent six years working at the Estonian Permanent Representation to the EU during which time he dealt with many issues related to the preparation, ratification and implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon.



## Kalliopi Kalaitzi

**Greece**  
Physician

“Popi” currently lives in Germany where she works as a doctor of physical medicine and rehabilitation. She aspires to become an expert in the field of anti-aging and age management medicine. Since the start of her university studies, Popi has worked and volunteered in a variety of NGOs to do with youth health and drug abuse. She later organised a special youth department in her local council when she served as the then youngest prefecture councillor ever to have been elected in Greece. She also held a variety of executive positions at the drug prevention centre, Serios, the Greek National Youth Council and the Cultural Union of Thessaloniki. Popi later spent four years as the Regional Commissioner of Lagkadas and is to this day the youngest person to have ever held the position.

 [@popikalaitzi](#)



## Riccardo Lattanzi

**Italy**  
Assistant Professor at New York University

Riccardo is a biomedical scientist who develops technology to improve the diagnostic power of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). Riccardo achieved his PhD in Medical and Electrical Engineering from Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 2008. An Assistant Professor of Radiology, Electrical and Computer Engineering, he is also a course director and research supervisor at New York University, and has written numerous conference papers, book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles. Riccardo holds the patents for the apparatus, method and computer-accessible medium for a high resolution magnetic resonance imager, and dipole array arrangement. For his scientific research, he has won the prestigious I.I. Rabi Young Investigator Award of the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine and an NSF CAREER Award.

 [Riccardo Lattanzi](#)



## Sandor Lederer

**Hungary**  
Co-Founder and CEO of K-Monitor

Sandor is the Co-Founder and CEO of K-Monitor, a non-profit public funds watchdog based in Bucharest. The NGO was founded to increase efforts to improve the current levels of democracy and the rule of law nationally. It does this by raising the awareness of corruption thereby increasing transparency in the Hungarian political system. K-Monitor operates open data websites, conducts research and advocates for legal reform. In 2012 K-Monitor developed a website called the Network, a database and an interactive map on political and economic elite networks, public procurements, farm subsidies and EU funding. Sandor holds an MA in International Studies from Corvinus University, Budapest.

 [K-Monitor](#)

 [@k\\_monitor](#)



## Sander Loones

**Belgium**

Member of the European Parliament

Sander is a Belgian MEP and member of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group, and is Vice President of Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (The New Flemish Alliance). In the parliament, Sander is Vice Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, and a member of Delegation for relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Sander has previously worked for the Belgian Ministry of Interior Affairs in the migration office, and as a scientific researcher at the Law faculty of Catholic University Leuven, where he had earned his Masters degree in Law.

 [Sander Loones](#)

 [Sander Loones](#)

 [@SanderLoones](#)



## Frédéric Mazzella

**France**

CEO and Founder of BlaBla Car

Frédéric is the Founder and CEO of BlaBlaCar, the leading European ridesharing community that connects drivers with empty seats and people travelling the same way, so they can share the cost. Today, with more than 20 million members worldwide and several million people transported per month, BlaBlaCar is making road travel social, money-saving and more sustainable. Frédéric holds an MBA from INSEAD, a Masters of Science in Computer Science from Stanford and a Masters of Physics from ENS Ulm (Normale Sup). Prior to founding BlaBlaCar, he worked for 3 years as a scientific researcher at NASA (USA), and NTT (Japan). Frédéric is a regular speaker at international conferences and in the media (CNN, Bloomberg, CNBC) on the theme of sustainable development, entrepreneurship, global marketplaces and building trust in online communities. He is also an accomplished classical pianist.

 [Frédéric Mazzella](#)

 [@mazaic](#)



## Sandro Mendonça

**Portugal**

Professor at the Lisbon University Institute

Sandro's work has focused on the economics of innovation and industrial strategies. He is a Fellow of the German Marshall Fund of the United States and was a Visiting Fellow at King's College London in 2012. He is a member of the Executive Committee of OberCom (Observatory of Communication) and is on the Management Committee of the European Network for Conflict Research. He has published in major international journals and been cited in various academic and reference manuals. Sandro's research has been used by various international organisations, including the United Nations, the European Commission and the US Senate. Sandro has a degree in Economics, a Master's in Science & Technology Policy and a PhD from the University of Sussex with a thesis in economic history.

 [Sandro Mendonça](#)





## Michał Olszewski

**Poland**

Deputy Mayor of the City of Warsaw

Currently Deputy Mayor of Warsaw, Michał has spent the entirety of his professional life in public service. He was already working as a senior expert in the Office of the Committee for European Integration while studying International Relations at Warsaw University. Michał rapidly rose to become Head of the EU Funds Department for the City of Warsaw in 2007, and simultaneously became Chairman of the European Policy Commission in the Association of Polish Cities, a position he remains in to this day. Tirelessly devoted to improving the city of Warsaw, Michał sits on six municipal councils and associations including the Warsaw Innovation Council and Labour Market Council, both of which he chairs.



## Giovanna Pancheri

**Italy**

Brussels Correspondent at Sky TG 24

Since 2009 Giovanna has been the Brussels Bureau Chief Correspondent for Belgium, France and Germany at SKY TG24, where she was previously a reporter and special correspondent covering the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Her work has covered interviews with the US President Obama, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, former ECB President Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz, and French President François Hollande. She has obtained two Master's degrees, the first in Political Science and International Relations at the Sapienza University of Rome, and the second in European Studies at the College of Europe in Bruges. She has authored numerous academic publications on Italian and international politics.

 [Giovanna Pancheri](#)

 [@giopank](#)



## Michael Printzos

**Greece**

Program Director at The Hellenic Initiative

Michael is Program Director at The Hellenic Initiative, a global, non-profit, secular institution aiming to mobilise support and investment for sustainable economic renewal in Greece. He is also a Committee Member at the American Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, dedicated to achieving Greek competitiveness through properly informing and adequately motivating business employees. Michael is the co-owner of Green Systems, an engineering procurement and construction company in Athens, and Brainomix, a start-up company that develops medical imaging software to assess the eligibility of acute stroke patients for life saving treatment. He completed his secondary education in Greece before attending the University of Oxford where he gained a degree in mechanical engineering.

 [Michael Printzos](#)

 [Michael Printzos](#)

 [@MPrintzos](#)



## Shazia Saleem

**United Kingdom**

Founder of Ieat Foods

Shazia founded Ieat Foods in January 2013, the first British ready meals brand offering halal dishes that are prepared in accordance with Islamic law. Her business aims to give Muslims in the UK more choice about their food and is already seeing great success; Ieat products can now be found in over 300 of the UK's leading supermarket locations. Shazia previously worked as a Business Development Manager for entrepreneur and businessman Peter Jones, star of the popular UK television programme *Dragons' Den*, and is now hungry for commercial success of her own.

 [Shazia Saleem](#)

 [@shaziafsaleem](#)



## Ivan Stefunko

**Slovakia**

Managing Partner and Investment Director of Neulogy Ventures

Ivan has been Managing Partner and Investment Director at Neulogy Ventures since 2013, where he was previously Chairman. He has impressive experience in building companies from scratch and is the co-founder of Diagnose.me, MONOGRAM Technologies, Pelican Travel and the Startup Awards, all of which are based in Bratislava. Ivan was nominated as a member of the New Europe 100 project, a list of outstanding leaders from Central and Eastern Europe and for Manager of the Year 2014 by TREND. Educated in Slovakia and France, he previously worked for EurActiv in Brussels before returning to his native Slovakia in 2010.

 [Ivan Stefunko](#)

 [@ivanstefunko](#)



## Kamilla Sultanova

**Denmark**

Equipment Sales Manager at Maersk Line

Kamilla has had a very successful professional career in corporate sales, having worked for a number of large companies in Scandinavia. From a young age Kamilla was a high-achiever and in 1999 was awarded a full scholarship from the American Councils for International Education to attend a high school in Texas, USA as part of the "Future Leader Exchange". One of Kamilla's achievements has been her work on gender equality. She regularly makes media appearances and writes on this topic and in 2013 was elected to represent Denmark as part of the European Women's Lobby in Brussels. In this role Kamilla lobbied heavily for the increased participation of women and ethnic minorities in European politics.

 [Kamilla Sultanova](#)

 [Kamilla Sultanova](#)

 [@Gairatiy](#)



## Xenios Thrasyvoulou

**Cyprus**

Founder & CEO of PeoplePerHour.com

PeoplePerHour.com is the UK's largest freelance marketplace for digital work. As Founder and CEO, Xenios is in charge of the overall operation of the company as well as its latest innovation, SuperTasker.com, which outsources small tasks efficiently to a pool of curated experts. With offices in Europe and the United States, the company is truly making a dent in one of the world's fastest growing markets. Xenios has been interviewed by and featured in a number of magazines and newspapers including The Financial Times, Business Insider and Bloomberg. An avid blogger, he is a regular contributor to such media outlets as the Huffington Post, Forbes and Wired Magazine. He is also a professional painter and obtained undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from the University of Cambridge.

 [Xenios Thrasyvoulou](#)

 [Xenios Thrasyvoulou](#)

 [@xenios](#)



## Krasimira Velichkova

**Bulgaria**

Executive Director at Bulgarian Donors' Forum

Krasimira has been the Director of the Bulgarian Donors' Forum since 2007 – the only association of foundations and corporate donors in Bulgaria. The Forum has a leading role in the development of philanthropy and civil society in the country by advocating for a better legal and fiscal environment, advising corporate and individual donors, developing fundraising platforms, supporting NGOs to partner with donors, and working with the media to change public opinion towards philanthropy and volunteerism in society. Prior to this she was a development officer in "Altera Cultural" association and grants manager of the "Workshop for Civic Initiatives" foundation. Krasimira is experienced in organisational development strategies, fundraising for social and cultural projects, as well as developing and implementing social and cultural policies. Krasimira is a vice-chair of the steering committee of DAFNE (Donors' Associations and Foundations Networks in Europe).

 [Krasimira Velichkova](#)

 [Krasimira Velichkova](#)

 [@KraSiVelichkova](#)



## Jan Veselý

**Czech Republic**

Director of Lean Startup CZ

Jan specialises in helping start-up entrepreneurs take their first steps. He is the Director of Lean Startup CZ, a Prague-based business that aims to assist new companies in achieving financial stability, efficiency and longevity. The initiative features an accelerator programme for non-profit and social businesses and a 10-city roadshow promoting entrepreneurship, networking and workshops. In addition, Jan owns Struct s.r.o., a business development consultancy that helps businesses to monitor, upgrade and exchange the services they use as they grow. Jan is also passionate about innovation in education which led him to found EduFórum, a network designed to promote action in this area. He has been Director of EduFórum since its creation in 2012.

 [Jan Veselý](#)

 [@janvesely](#)



## Bostjan Videmsek

**Slovenia**

Journalist and writer at DELO

Bostjan is a journalist, author and playwright. He is currently a foreign correspondent with Slovenia's largest daily newspaper, DELO. He has also written for major international media outlets including The New York Times, BBC World and the Atlantic Post. An experienced war reporter, Bostjan has covered major events ranging from conflicts in Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo to natural disasters in Southeast Asia. He has so far published three books including *21<sup>st</sup> Century Conflicts: Remnants of War(s)* in 2012, which was a national best-seller in his native Slovenia and was also published in the US. He has two ongoing projects: a book to be published in 2016 on immigrants and refugees, and his first stage play to be shown later this year.

 [Bostjan Videmsek](#)

 [Bostjan Videmsek](#)

 [@bosthi](#)



## Andi Wecker

**Germany**

Producer at Network Movie

After working in various jobs including as a camera assistant, electrician and assistant director in film and television, Andi joined the film production company Network Movie in 2002 as a producer. Projects then included the first series of the international co-production "The Team" for which Andi was Creative Producer, several series of the crime drama, "Soko Köln" (PD Cologne), several TV-movies including an adaptation of Frank Schätzing's bestseller, "Die Dunkle Seite" (The Dark Side). While fulfilling these responsibilities, he studied directing at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne and wrote and directed several short films and commercials.

 [@DickWeenar](#)



## Eberhart Wusterhaus Gomez

**Germany**

International Business Manager at Schmack Carbotech

Eberhart is an engineer specialising in energy generation for heating, power and vehicle fuel from both conventional and sustainable sources. He also has expert knowledge of the feasibility of the development and practical application of energy generation based on local conditions. Born in Mexico and educated in Germany, Eberhart has a vital understanding of industrialised and developing countries alike. He has been responsible for national renewable gas projects in Germany, and for the mechanical design and commissioning of gas processing plants in developing countries. He has a strong understanding of the global energy market, current obstacles and future perspectives, with experience of various multi-million euro investment contract negotiations around the world.

 [Eberhart Wusterhaus Gomez](#)  [Eberhart Wusterhaus Gomez](#)