



Rome, 25/09/2020

Press release – The European Liberals send a strong message of unity from Rome

Hilde Vautmans is the new President of the European Liberal Forum. Over 36 liberal organisations across Europe came together to elect new representatives, physically and online, hosted by the Luigi Einaudi Foundation in Rome. Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, this autumn's General Assembly sent a strong message of unity and advancement for the liberal movement.

"Thank you all for the support. Now time to connect our many liberal voices and make our ideas stronger throughout Europe!", was the first message of Hilde Vautmans, who is also member of the Renew Europe Group in the European Parliament.

Vautmans succeeded Dr Jurgen Martens, member of the Bundestag, who has been at the helm of the European Liberal Forum for the past years. "The European Liberal Forum has grown exponentially in reach and impact throughout the past years", he said. "We have developed a European policy exchange platform; we have strengthened communications with members, and we work closer than ever with our political partners. Thank you for your cooperation and your engagement", concluded Dr Martens.

A diverse, inclusive new Board: Who is who?

Apart from a new president, the European Liberal Forum has a brand-new Board balancing gender, age, and geographical reach. Here are the members:

- **Svenja Hahn, German**, Member of the European Parliament since 2019 with the Renew Europe Group (1st VP)
- **Dr Milosz Hodun, Polish**, international officer of Projekt: Polska Association and international advisor at Nowoczesna, Polish liberal party (2nd VP)
- **Mats Löfström, Finnish**, Member of the Finnish Parliament representing the Swedish-speaking Åland Centre (Treasurer)
- **Marco Mariani**, Italian, European Affairs Director, Fondazione Luigi Einaudi
- **Dr. Šárka Prát**, Czech, Executive Director at Institute for Politics and Society
- **Pieter Van de Stadt**, Dutch, VVD member

An inspiring opening

The day started with an inspiring opening by Jan Björklund, Ambassador of Sweden to Italy.

"The world has advanced because of a more open and free system of society. Today, these liberal European values are under threat", mentioned Björklund, after highlighting that the world today faces less poverty and war than any other time in history.

"The historical lesson for Europe is one: Each of us are too small. If we want to solve the big problems of our times, from climate change to challenges in our democracies, we have to cooperate."



THE END

About

The [European Liberal Forum](#) (ELF) is the official political foundation of the European Liberal Party, the ALDE Party. Together with 46 member organisations, we work all over Europe to bring new ideas into the political debate, to provide a platform for discussion, and to empower citizens to make their voices heard.

ELF was founded in 2007 to strengthen the liberal and democrat movement in Europe. Our work is guided by liberal ideals and a belief in the principle of freedom. We stand for a future-oriented Europe that offers opportunities for every citizen.

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