



## Speakers' Bios

### Luca Jahier, President of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)



Luca Jahier has been the president of the EESC since April 2018. A member of the EESC since 2002, he has worked extensively on the European Union's social and cohesion policies, as well as on international issues. From 2008 to 2012, he was president of the National Council of ACLI (a Christian association of Italian workers). He served as president of FOCSIV, the Italian Federation of NGOs for International Voluntary Service, from 1994 to 1999. Luca Jahier has previously worked with the CISV (an Italian voluntary service organisation) and other Italian and European NGOs that are active in the field of international cooperation. He is a former journalist and international political analyst, and has numerous years of experience in social advancement development programmes in developing countries, mainly in Africa.



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### Herman Van Rompuy, President Emeritus of the European Council, Minister of State, President of the European Policy Centre



Elected as the first full-time president of the European Council in November 2009, Herman Van Rompuy took office when the Lisbon Treaty came into force on 1 December 2009. In 2012, he was re-elected for a second (and final) term running until November 2014. At the time of his first election, Herman Van Rompuy was prime minister of Belgium. Prior to that, he had served in Belgium as speaker of the House of Representatives (2007-2008) and in several government positions, including as deputy prime minister and budget minister (1993-1999). He was appointed minister of state (2004) and secretary of state for finance and small businesses (1988). A former economist at the National Bank of Belgium, Herman Van Rompuy began his political career in 1973 as national vice-president of his party's youth movement. He was president of the Flemish Christian Democrats (1988-1993). He served in the Belgian Parliament, first as senator (1988-1995) and then as member of parliament (1995-2009). He is now professor at UCL (the Catholic University of Louvain) and the College of Europe in Bruges and president of the European Policy Centre. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy, and a Master's in Economics from K.U. Leuven university.

In July 2015, Belgium's King Philippe announced that Herman Van Rompuy would be honoured with the title of Count and his wife the title of Countess.



The European Council is the EU institution that defines the general political direction and priorities of the European Union. It consists of the heads of state or government of the Member States, together with its President and the President of the Commission.

### **Ulla Engelmann, Head of Unit for Advanced Technologies, Clusters, and Social Economy, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission**



Ulla Engelmann is head of the Social Economy unit within DG GROW, the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs. Since 2017, she has covered European cluster policy, the social economy as well as female entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. In October 2018, advanced technologies including artificial intelligence and digital transformation for industry were added to her responsibilities. Previously, she worked at the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the in-house science service of the European Commission. She started in the JRC in Ispra (Italy) in 1993 as a post-doctoral fusion researcher, and moved on to manage various units (communication, international relations, and others) in Ispra and Brussels. Dr Engelmann holds a PhD in analytical and radiochemistry from the National Research Centre in Karlsruhe.



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### **Juan Manuel Sinde Oyarzabal, President of the Arizmendarrieta Foundation**



Juan Manuel Sinde is the president of the Arizmendarrieta Foundation and a member of a number of social and cultural organisations in the Basque Country. He previously worked as president of the Gaztempresa Foundation and as advisor for Seguros Lagun Aro y Lagun Aro Vida, Servired and Sermepa. He also worked in the Spanish Banca Industrial and was a member of the board of directors of Laboral Kutxa (1983-2011). In this latter capacity, he was a member of the Permanent Commission of the Mondragón Corporation, the Board of Mondragón Investments and the Mondragón Foundation.



The Arizmendarrieta Foundation was set up in tribute to the Basque priest that promoted the Mondragón experiment, which is now the number-one group of companies in the Basque Country, with 250 enterprises and 86 000 employees (40 000 owners). The foundation's vision: playing a transformative role in society based on the values of Christian humanism. The foundation's mission: developing a cooperative economy, fostering cooperation at company, business, public and private sector level and in the area of social inclusion. Focused in particular on company reform, it proposes a participatory model that seeks to reconcile business competitiveness and the human development of its members.

### **Isabel Caño Aguilar, Vice-President in charge of Communication, EESC**



Isabel Caño Aguilar, from Spain, is a member of the Workers' Group and one of the two vice-presidents of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) for the two-and-a-half year term from 2018 to 2020. She is responsible for communication matters.



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### **Sven Giegold, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance**



Sven Giegold is a German politician and member of the European Parliament from Germany. He is the economic and financial spokesperson of the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance and head of the German Green delegation. Sven Giegold is a founding member of Attac Germany, became a member of the Greens in 2008, and was first elected to the European Parliament in the 2009 elections.



The European Parliament (EP) is the only directly-elected EU body and one of the largest democratic assemblies in the world. Its 705 members represent the EU's 450 million citizens. They are elected once every 5 years by voters from across the 27 EU countries. Its representatives are called members of the European Parliament - MEPs.

### **Juan Antonio Pedreño, President of Social Economy Europe (SEE)**



Juan Antonio Pedreño holds a BA in Chemistry from the University of Granada (Spain). He is an expert on the social economy and cooperatives. He started his professional career as a secondary school teacher and became a founding member of the education cooperative Severo Ochoa, of which he assumed the presidency for more than 20 years. Currently, he is the president of Social Economy Europe, CEPES (Spanish Business Confederation of the Social Economy), COCETA (Spanish Worker Cooperatives Confederation), UCOMUR (Murcia Region Worker Cooperatives) and UCOERM (Murcia Region Education Cooperatives). Furthermore, Mr Pedreño is the general coordinator of the ESMED network (Euro-Mediterranean Social Economy) and a member of the Spanish Economic and Social Council. He is the author of articles and papers on the social economy enterprise model.



SEE is the voice of social economy enterprises and organisations in Europe. Its members are European organisations of mutual and cooperative insurers (AMICE), non-profit healthcare players, health mutuels and health insurance funds (AIM), industrial and service cooperatives (CECOP); foundations (EFC), associations of general interest (CEDAG), work integration social enterprises (ENSIE), paritarian institutions of social protection (AEIP), ethical and alternative banks and financiers (FEBEA), and the cities and regions for the social economy (REVES). At national level, SEE represents the national social economy organisations of France (ESS-France), Italy (National Third Sector Forum), Portugal (CASES), Spain (CEPES) and Belgium (ConcertES).

### **Gonçalo Lobo Xavier, EESC member and representative of the Confederation of Portuguese Business (CIP)**



Gonçalo Lobo Xavier is a member of the EESC since 2011 and represents the Confederation of Portuguese Business (CIP). He was previously adviser to the board at AIMMAP – the Association of Portuguese Metallurgical, Mechanical Engineering and Similar Industrial Companies – and Executive Director of RECET– the Portuguese Technological Centres Network. He has a long-term experience in managing R&D+i international projects with partners from Spain, France and other EU Member States. He is currently General Manager of the Association of Portuguese Retail Companies (APED).



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**José María Zufiaur Narvaiza, EESC member and representative of the Spanish General Workers' Union (UGT-Spain)**



José Zufiaur Narvaiza has been a member of the European Economic and Social Committee since 1986 and was president of its External Relations section from 2013 to 2015. He represents the Spanish General Workers' Union (UGT-Spain), where he is a member of the International Relations Department and the Confederal Studies Department. Between 1977 and 1994, he was a member of the Executive Committee of UGT. In 2001, he joined the High-Level Group on Industrial Relations and Change in the European Union set up by the European Commission. He has also worked as a consultant for LABOUR Associates, and as technical director of the Department of International Labour Relations at the Complutense Institute for International Studies, Complutense University, Madrid.



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**Carlos Trias Pintó, EESC member and representative of the Spanish Council of Consumers and Users**



A Spanish member of the European Economic and Social Committee since January 2009. In this capacity, representative of the Spanish Council of Consumers and vice-president of the Section for the Single Market, Production and Consumption. Rapporteur for several EESC opinions, most recently on the European Commission's *Action Plan on Sustainable Finance* and on *The role of consumers in the Circular Economy*.



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**Signe Ratso, Deputy Director-General of DG Research and Innovation, European Commission**



Signe Ratso has been Deputy Director-General of DG RTD of the European Commission since 2018. She previously worked in a number of senior management positions in DG TRADE, beginning in 2006. Before joining the Commission, Signe Ratso served as Deputy Secretary-General (from 1994 to 2005) at Estonia's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. She has two university degrees. In 1983, she graduated from Tartu University in Estonia in English philology, in 1993 in International Trade and International Economics.



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