Speakers' Bios

Pietro Francesco De Lotto, President of the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change

Pietro Francesco De Lotto is the President of the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI) since October 2020 and was appointed as EESC Group I member by Italy in 2010. Throughout the previous mandate, he was General director of Confartigianato Vicenza (the Italian Confederation of Artisans), spokesman of the SMEs Category and President of Eastern Neighbours Follow-up Committee. During his career, Pietro Francesco De Lotto has been in charge of various positions related to the development of SMEs.

The European Economic and Social Committee is an institutional consultative body established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The Committee has 329 members from across Europe. It represents the various economic and social components of organised civil society. Its consultative role enables its members, and hence the organisations they represent, to participate in the Union's decision-making process.

Janez Potočnik, Co-Chair of UNEP International Resource Panel

Janez Potočnik is Co-Chair of the International Resource Panel. He is also Partner at SYSTEMIQ and advisor to several institutions such as the European Forest Institute. From 2009 until 2014 he was European Commissioner for the Environment, and previous to that he served from 2004 to 2009 as European Commissioner for Science and Research. Mr Potočnik has an academic background in economics, and has served in several governmental offices in his native Slovenia, including Minister for European Affairs. In September 2013 he received the United Nation's Champions of the Earth Award.

The International Resource Panel (IRP) was launched by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 2007. The Panel consists of over 35 eminent scientists with expertise in resource management issues, providing advice and connections between policymakers, industry and the community on ways to improve global and local resource management. Its Steering Committee has 27 governments, the European Commission, and UNEP.
Peter Handley, Head of Unit Energy Intensive Industries and Raw Materials, DG GROW

Peter Handley is Head of the Energy-Intensive Industries and Raw Materials Unit in the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Growth. He was previously Head of the Resource Efficiency Unit at the Secretariat-General, where he was responsible for coordination of Energy Union, 2030 climate and energy package, low emission mobility strategy and the circular economy.

The European Commission is the EU’s executive arm. It is responsible for drawing up proposals for new European legislation, it implements legislative decisions of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU and monitors the application of EU law in the Member States.

Hildegard Bentele, Member of the European Parliament, Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

Hildegard Bentele is since 2019 a Member of the European Parliament, where she sits in the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and that on Development. She is currently the rapporteur for an own-initiative report on A European strategy for critical raw materials. Between 2016 and 2019 she was a Member of the Berlin House of Representatives, and previously she pursued her career in the German Foreign Office as of 2002. Ms Bentele has an academic background in political science, history and public law.

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.

Kęstutis Kupšys, Member of the European Economic and Social Committee

After a decade of engagement in the consumer activist movement, Mr Kęstutis Kupšys became a member of the EESC in 2020. In addition to consumer rights, his work in the EESC primarily relates to climate change and sustainability at large, financial services, and especially sustainable finance dossiers. Mr Kupšys has been serving as a Vice-President of the Lithuanian Consumers Alliance – an umbrella organization of Lithuanian consumer NGOs – since July 2019. Before joining the consumer movement, he pursued his professional career interests in finance, political consulting and public relations sectors. Kęstutis Kupšys graduated from Vilnius University with a degree in Economic Cybernetics/Systemic Analysis of Economy. At the same time, his supplementary study interests encompassed Financial Markets and Business Administration (via Catholic University Eichstätt, Germany, 'Gaststudium' program) and Philosophy.

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**Dumitru Fornea, Member of the European Economic and Social Committee**

Dumitru Fornea is Secretary General of the National Trade Union Confederation MERIDIAN from Romania and since 2007 is Member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). Within the EESC he is an active member of the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI), member of the Section on Transport Energy and Information Society and member of the Section on External Relations. In the period 2007-2010 he was furthermore member of the Governing Board of Eurofound. He graduated from the Faculty of Law, University of Bucharest, Faculty of Transport, Polytechnic University of Bucharest and a Master on "European Public Space", National School of Political and Administrative Studies, Bucharest.

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**Michal Pinter, Delegate of the European Economic and Social Committee**

Michal Pinter works as Director of Governmental and EU Affairs at U.S. Steel Kosice since January 2007. In his function, he represents U.S. Steel in the leadership of the Slovak National Union of Employers (RUZ), as Vice President in the American Chamber of Commerce in Slovakia as well as in the European Confederation of Iron and Steel Industries (EUROFER). He has been member of the European Economic and Social Committee since 2010 and named Vice President of Employers Group as of 2013. Since 2015 he is a Delegate within CCMI, coordinating the Delegates from Category 1 and sitting in the CCMI Bureau. Mr. Pinter holds a M.A. in International Business from the University of Bratislava, and has previously worked as a senior-level Economic Specialist at the United States Embassy in Bratislava, Slovakia.

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**Diego Marin, European Environmental Bureau**

Diego Marin is working with the Global Policy team of the European Environmental Bureau. He previously worked for the Red Cross EU Office. He obtained his master's in international development with a specialization in political strategy and communication from the University of Kent, Brussels School of International Studies. He spent some time in Cajamarca, Peru where he completed his thesis on the impact of extractivism and link to poverty exacerbation in the region. At EEB, he is focusing on environmental justice issues linked to green extractivism, the EU’s material footprint, and impacts of energy transition policies on marginalised groups in society.

The EEB is Europe’s largest network of environmental citizens' organisations. EEB brings together over 160 civil society organisations from more than 35 European countries. EEB stands for sustainable development, environmental justice & participatory democracy.
Corina Hebestreit, Secretary General, European Carbon and Graphite Association

Dr Corina Hebestreit has been the Secretary General of ECGA, the European Carbon and Graphite Association, for 20 years. In parallel, until December 2020, she also held the position as director of Euromines, the European federation of mining industries. She was previously environmental manager for Eurometaux, the European non-ferrous metals association in Brussels, and has also held various managerial positions linked to health and environment within the European Aluminium Association. Dr Hebestreit has an academic background in literature (degree) and studies in business administration and law.

ECGA is the interface between the European carbon and graphite industry and the European authorities as well as international or intergovernmental bodies. It represents 30 companies in Europe involved in the production of carbon and graphite from raw materials (petroleum coke, coal tar pitch, natural graphite mining and processing, producing carbon fibers).

Judith Kirton-Darling, Deputy General Secretary of industriAll Europe

Judith Kirton-Darling is Deputy General Secretary of industriAll Europe, representing manufacturing, mining and energy workers from 38 European countries. She was formerly a Labour Member of the European Parliament for the North East of England (2014-20). Before entering parliament, she was active for 15 years within the Labour and trade union movement, notably she was elected Confederal Secretary at the European Trade Union Confederation in 2011.

IndustriAll European Trade Union represents manual and non-manual workers in the metal, chemical, energy, mining, textile, clothing and footwear sectors and related industries and activities. It represents overall 7 million working men and women united within 180 national trade union affiliates in 38 European countries.

Monika Sitarova, Co-President of the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change

Monika Sitarova is Co-President and coordinator of the delegates Group II at the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change within the EESC. She is also the head of the International Department of the Metalworkers Trade Union OZ KOVO in Slovakia coordinating the international relations on the European and Global level. Within IndustriAll Europe, she is member of the Company Policy Committee, dealing with the European Work Councils, and member of the IndustriAll Europe Executive Committee, as well as of the Industrial Policy and Automotive Committees.

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