

Speaker Bios EUFORES IPM – 20 March European Parliament

Keynote

Bertrand Piccard

Psychiatrist and explorer, Bertrand Piccard made history by accomplishing two aeronautical firsts – flying around the world non-stop in a balloon, and more recently in a solar-powered airplane plane without fuel. Pioneer in his way to consider ecology through the lens of profitability, he began working in the early 2000s to promote renewable energies and clean technologies. His new project, Climate Impulse, aims to demonstrate the potential of green hydrogen in aviation.

Session 2

Nina Neumann

Nina Neumann is a team leader of the buildings team in DG ENER. She has overseen the legislative proposal and the negotiations on the recast Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and is now working on its implementation. Before joining the Commission, she worked in the European Parliament for many years, notably in the Secretariats of the ENVI and ITRE committees. As a legal clerk, she worked at the European Court of Justice, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment and law firms specialized in energy and environmental law.

Nina Neumann is a fully qualified lawyer and holds an LLM in European law from the University of Cambridge.

Mirella Vitale

Mirella Amalia Vitale is the Senior Vice President of Marketing, Communication and Public Affairs for the ROCKWOOL Group.

Mirella joined ROCKWOOL in February 2016 and leads a business area that includes Corporate Communication, Product Management, Commercial Excellence, Public Affairs, Marketing & Branding, Digital Sales & Marketing and Sustainability across all the five ROCKWOOL brands. Since her appointment ROCKWOOL has become one of the strongest Danish brands, according to Brand Finance. Mirella's focus on sustainable cities and buildings is consolidated through partnerships with the Climate Leaders Group, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the United Nations action platform and SDG Network, where she is an active member.

In 2021 Mirella received the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic (OMRI) for her career as a leader in international business.

Before joining ROCKWOOL, Mirella spent 15 years with Vestas Wind Systems A/S in various leadership positions in Taranto, Rome, Madrid, Aarhus, and Copenhagen. In 2012 she was appointed Global Vice President for Marketing and was also part of a business development team for emerging renewable energy markets such as Turkey, Middle East, and Latin America. Prior to joining Vestas, Mirella Amalia Vitale worked with Shell Offshore Inc. for nine years, based in Taranto, Italy.

Thibault Girardot

Thibault Girardot is a Sustainable Finance Policy Officer at the WWF European Policy Office. He works on the development and implementation of EU policies aimed at aligning the financial sector with the EU's environmental and climate objectives.

Before joining WWF, he was a Policy Consultant at Better Europe Public Affairs, advising civil society organizations on legislative files related to environmental issues, corporate responsibility, human rights, and socio-economic policies. He closely monitored political and legislative developments within the EU institutions and developed advocacy strategies.

He holds a Master's degree in Environment and Resource Management from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and a Master's in European Affairs from Sciences Po Lyon.

Ciaran Cuffe

Ciarán Cuffe is an architect and urban planner, currently serving as Co-Chair of the European Greens. He is also a Board Member at the Buildings Performance Institute Europe (BPIE). From 2019 to 2024, he was a **Member of**

the European Parliament, where he served on the **Transport (TRAN) and Industry, Research & Energy (ITRE) Committees**. During his mandate, he championed policies for greener transport, energy efficiency, and renewable energy deployment across Europe. He also served as **President of EUFORES**.

Session 3

Mechthild Wörsdörfer

Mechthild Wörsdörfer is the Deputy Director-General of the Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER) at the European Commission. She previously held the position of Director for Sustainability, Technology, and Outlooks at the International Energy Agency (IEA) from 2018 to 2021. Before joining the IEA, she was Director at DG ENER, overseeing renewables, research and innovation, and energy efficiency. Mechthild also led energy policy development, including the Energy Union Framework Strategy, and worked on international relations and economic analysis at DG ENER.

Eva Chamizo

Eva Chamizo is the Director of European Affairs at IBERDROLA and serves as the Secretary of the Board of Directors for IBERDROLA Internacional S.A. She is also a Member of the Board of Directors of the Spanish Chamber of Commerce in Belgium and Luxembourg. Eva has a background in law and was a State Attorney. From 2001 to 2015, she served as the Head of the Legal Service at the Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU, where she represented Spain as Agent to the Court of Justice of the European Union. Eva was involved in the Intergovernmental Conferences for the Constitution and Lisbon Treaty (2003/2004) and contributed to the drafting team of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination, and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (2012). Before her public sector roles, she worked as an Attorney in the private sector.

Paul Kenny

Paul Kenny is the CEO of the European Heat Pump Association (EHPA). A mechanical engineer with a Master's in energy, Paul has extensive experience in energy policy across Ireland and the EU. He led a local energy agency for eight years, driving clean energy transitions and establishing a successful one-stop shop for home energy upgrades. As policy advisor to the Irish climate and energy Minister, Paul contributed to Ireland's energy transformation, achieving a 6.8% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in 2023 and supporting heat pump deployment. He founded a retrofit company focused on heat pumps and has actively influenced policy development.

Julia Poliscanova

Julia Poliscanova is the Director for Vehicles & E-mobility at Transport & Environment (T&E), leading the organization's work on vehicle emissions, electrification, and supply chains across Europe. She oversees policies on EU car CO2 standards, sustainable batteries, and critical raw materials, and represents T&E on the Global Battery Alliance. Before joining T&E, Julia worked as Senior EU Environment Expert for the Mayor of London and as an advisor to an MEP, focusing on renewables, energy efficiency, and sustainable transport. She holds a Bachelor's in European Politics and French from Goldsmiths College, London, and an MSc in Energy Engineering from Heriot-Watt University, specializing in batteries and fuel cells.

Keynote

Walburga Hemetsberger

Walburga Hemetsberger is the CEO of SolarPower Europe since 2019. She has been working in Brussels for more than 20 years, mostly in the energy sector. Before joining SolarPower Europe, Walburga headed the VERBUND Representation Office in Brussels and was a Board Member of Hydrogen Europe. Walburga holds a degree in Law and Business Administration from Leopold-Franzens Universität Innsbruck.

Session 4

Yolanda Garcia Mezquita

Yolanda Garcia holds a PhD in Economics from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. From June 2001 to April 2009, she worked as an economic advisor at the Spanish National Regulatory Authority, focusing on regulation

and competition issues in the electricity and gas sectors. Since May 2009, she has been with the European Commission in the Directorate General for Energy, where she currently serves as Head of Unit TF2, overseeing "Relations with the Member States and the Energy Community" within the Energy Platform Task Force.

Christiane Egger

Christiane Egger is Deputy General Manager of the OÖ Energiesparverband, the energy agency of Upper Austria, and Manager Cleantech-Cluster Energy, a network of 250 companies. She is the Vice-President for Climate Neutrality of FEDARENE, the European network of regional energy and environment agencies and director of the World Sustainable Energy Days conference. She is a member in the management board of the Austrian R&D platform for the decarbonisation of industry (NEFI).

Christiane Egger is a leading expert in energy transition market and policy development. As a practitioner, she is in daily contact with businesses and organisations of all sizes providing support on their sustainable energy projects. She holds a law degree and a post-graduate degree in environmental engineering.

James Watson

James Watson is the Director General of Eurometaux, the European Metals Association. Previously, he was the Secretary General of Eurogas, the European Gas Industry Association. He also served as the Chief Executive Officer of SolarPower Europe. Before these roles, Watson worked as Director of Public Affairs at Weber Shandwick, specializing in energy and trade policy. Earlier in his career, he worked for the Commonwealth Secretariat on a European Commission project on trade and sustainable development in Ethiopia. He has also worked for various UK government bodies and as a lecturer in environmental law at the University of Manchester. Watson holds a Ph.D. in international trade and environmental law from the University of Leeds and was a Visiting Professor at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.