



Regulatory Scrutiny Board

Eighth Annual Conference
on Regulatory Scrutiny
12 May 2026 - Brussels

SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES

Valdis Dombrovskis, European Commissioner for Economy and Productivity, as well as Implementation and Simplification.



Valdis Dombrovskis has been the European Commissioner for Economy and Productivity, as well as Implementation and Simplification, since December 2024. His portfolio includes the coordination and implementation of the EU's economic policies, as well as overseeing the reduction of administrative burden and ensuring better implementation of EU rules.

From 2019 to 2024, he served as the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for An Economy that Works for People and was also in charge of Trade. He previously served as Vice-President of the European Commission from 2014 to 2019, overseeing the Euro and Social Dialogue, as well as Financial Stability, Financial Services, and the Capital Markets Union. Before that, from 2009 to 2014, he served three consecutive terms as Prime Minister of Latvia, becoming the longest-serving elected head of government in Latvia's history. Before becoming a European Commission Vice-President, Dombrovskis was elected for the second time as a Member of the European Parliament in 2014 (having first served from 2004 to 2009) and was also the Head of the Latvian Delegation in the EPP Group. He served as a Member of the Saeima (Parliament) of Latvia (March 2004–June 2004; January 2014–June 2014) and was Latvia's Minister of Finance from 2002 to 2004. Valdis Dombrovskis was born on 5 August 1971 in Riga, Latvia. He graduated with a degree in physics from the University of Latvia (1993) and a degree in economics from Riga University of Technology (1995). He received his master's degree in physics from the University of Latvia in 1995. In 1995–1998, he worked as a research assistant at Mainz University, in Germany, at the Institute of Solid-State Physics in Latvia, and at the University of Maryland (USA).

Prior to entering politics, he worked as a senior economist and Chief Economist at the Bank of Latvia (1998–2002). Together with Anders Aslund, he co-authored the book "How Latvia came through the financial crisis", which was published in 2011. In November 2014, Valdis Dombrovskis was awarded the Order of the Three Stars (*Triju Zvaigžņu ordenis*), the highest state decoration of the Republic of Latvia.



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Kurt Vandenberghe, Director-General for Climate Action (DG CLIMA), European Commission



Kurt Vandenberghe was appointed Director General of DG CLIMA on 16 January 2023. Until then, he was the Green Deal and Health advisor to President Ursula von der Leyen since 1 December 2019.

He had joined the cabinet of the President coming from DG Research and Innovation where he was Director for Policy & Programming since 1 February 2016 and Acting Director for Research & Innovation Outreach since 1 June 2019. Before that, he was Director for 'Climate action and resource efficiency' at DG Research and Innovation since July 2013. He served in the Cabinet of Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin (1999-2004) and as Head of the Cabinet of Janez Potočnik, who was Commissioner for Research and Innovation (2004-2009) and subsequently for Environment (from 2010). Kurt joined the European Commission in 1996 as co-ordinator of the Commission's Intermodal Transport Task Force and of the Transport Research Programme.

Before entering the Commission, Kurt worked for 4 years as a manager at Ernst & Young Association Management, where he set up, managed and represented international trade associations.

After reading French and Italian literature at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL) and obtaining a degree in Public and International Affairs at the University Catholique de Louvain-la-Neuve (UCL), Kurt gained a Master of Arts degree in International Relations at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (S.A.I.S.) in Bologna, Italy and Washington D.C., US.



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Pascal Leardini, Deputy Secretary-General (SG), European Commission



Pascal Leardini is Deputy Secretary-General and Chief Operating Officer of the European Commission.

He joined the European Commission in 1994 after working as a lawyer specialised in EU matters in the private sector.

Since then, he held different positions within the institution including being the Director in charge of the Relations with the other Institutions and the Director in charge of Institutional and Administrative Policies in the Secretariat-General of the European Commission



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Arianna Legovini, Development Impact Director, World Bank Organisation



Arianna Legovini leads the World Bank's Development Impact (DI) department, advancing evidence-based policymaking and adaptive public administration.

She pioneered approaches that embed experimentation, real-time learning, and AI-enabled evidence systems into the design and delivery of large public investment programs. Her work supports governments in improving regulatory design, public spending effectiveness, and policy delivery across Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America.



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Román Arjona, Head of Unit/Chief Economist for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), European Commission



Román Arjona is Chief Economist at the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs. In addition to his role at the European Commission, Román Arjona is Vice-Chair of the OECD's Committee for Industry, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE). He is also a member of CEPR's European Economic Policy Network. He was Chief Economist and Head of Strategy and Foresight at the Directorate-General for Research & Innovation, and Vice-Chair of the OECD's Committee for Science and Technology Policy (CSTP). He previously served in the Spanish government as Secretary-General for Science, Technology and Innovation, and before joining the Commission he was an adviser to the Spanish State Secretary and the Spanish Minister for Science and Technology. Mr Arjona worked for the European Investment Bank and the International Monetary Fund as well as for the OECD as an economist. He is a former member of the World Economic Forum's High-Level Advisory Group of the Europe Inclusive Growth and Competitiveness Lab, and of its Global Agenda Council on New Growth Models. Román graduated in Economics at the University of Valencia with a special distinction and holds a Masters' degree in European Economic Studies from the College of Europe in Bruges and a PhD in Economics from the European University Institute in Florence.



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Adam Baiz, Chief Data Scientist, French Court of Auditors



Adam Baiz is an Administrator of the French national Institute of Statistics and economic studies, He coordinated the evaluation of public policies at France Strategy (a Prime Minister service) and since 2022 at the French Court of Auditors.

After graduating from Ecole Polytechnique, he specialized in economics and social sciences.

At the General Commission for Sustainable Development, he first contributed to the evaluation of the energy transition, then led a division of studies and statistics.

At the same time, he led and defended a multidisciplinary thesis on innovation and the evaluation of public policies.



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Fredrik Hansen, Senior Economist, Swedish Implementation Council



Fredrik Hansen, Senior Economist at the Swedish Implementation Council.

Fredrik Hansen holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Lund University. He has more than 20 years of experience as a teacher and researcher on economic evaluation (especially cost-benefit analysis) and applied microeconomics from Lund University, Dalarna University and Jönköping International Business School; as well as making economic models work in interdisciplinary settings as a senior economist at the Swedish Competition Authority, the National Agency for Public Procurement, and the Swedish Board of Agriculture. Fredrik was also the Director of the Norwegian Better Regulation Council between 2016-2017. Fredrik is currently working as a senior economist at the Swedish Implementation Council (tasked with analysing new and revised EU-regulation and its implementation in Swedish law from a business perspective, to counteract unjustified regulatory and administrative burdens), responsible of the development of economic methods.



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Šimon Vydra, Czech Government Office Director of government analytical unit



Simon holds a PhD in public administration and data science from TU Delft and Leiden University. His research focus is primarily the use of big data and modern analytical approaches in public decision-making.

Simon currently works for the Government Office of the Czech Republic as Director of the Government Analytical Unit. His team coordinates the regulatory impact assessment system of Czech Republic, conducts impact assessments for select reforms, and provides evidence-based support to the Cabinet of Ministers and Government Office.



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Bas van der Klaauw, Professor in policy evaluation at the University of Amsterdam and Director of Tinbergen Institute



Bas van der Klaauw is professor in policy evaluation at the economics department of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Director of Tinbergen Institute, which is the joint research school of the Erasmus University Rotterdam, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam.

For his research, Bas van der Klaauw uses microeconomic methods for causal analysis in the field of labor, education and health.

His recent studies focus on the causes and consequences of school choice and on the randomized evaluation of active labor market programs. Therefore, he uses linked publicly available administrative data sets, surveys and self-collected data from for example randomized experiments.



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Arianna Vannini, Member of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board, European Commission



Arianna Vannini is a Member of the European Commission Regulatory Scrutiny Board since December 2024. Prior to her current role she was Chief Economist in DG Internal Partnership.

Ms Vannini was Economic Advisor in the Cabinet of Federica Mogherini, Vice President of the European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security and before she was a Member of President José Manuel Barroso Cabinet, where she was responsible for competition policy and economic and financial matters. Her career in the European Commission started in 1995 when she joined the Cabinet of Commissioner Mario Monti. She was subsequently responsible for enforcement of antitrust rules in the area of liberal professions and media in her role of Head of Unit in DG Competition. Before joining the European Commission, Ms Vannini was an official at the Bank of Italy in Rome. She graduated in Economics at Bocconi University in Milan where she served as teaching and research assistant at the beginning of her professional career. She has a Master in International Economics from Sussex University, UK.



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Marek Havrda, Member of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board, European Commission



Marek Havrda, Ph.D. is a Czech policy expert with extensive experience in evidence-based policymaking, impact assessment, behavioural insights, and socio-economic analysis at national, European and international levels. He is currently appointed as Principal Adviser – Member of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) at the European Commission. Formerly he served as Deputy Minister for European Affairs in Czech Government. In that capacity, he contributed to the coordination of the Czech Presidency at the Council of the EU in 2022, represented Czech Government in high-level EU fora, including meetings of the General Affairs Council, and was a lead negotiator of the Czech Recovery and Resilience Plan. He also served as Chair of the Regulatory Impact Assessment Board of the Czech Government and rotating Chair of RegWatchEurope. Before joining the Czech Government, he contributed to the design of international governance of Artificial Intelligence inter alia supporting the work of OECD, UNESCO and IEEE and served as Director of Impact at GoodAI, an Artificial Intelligence R&D startup. Previously he gained experience as a Strategic Policy Analyst within the European Commission covering health and consumer protection areas and held leadership and advisory positions in nonprofit and private sectors. He co-founded SCHOLA EMPIRICA, a think-and-do-tank focusing on scaling evidence-based approaches in education. In his early career, Marek worked with global materials companies (e.g. UMICORE) and telecoms. Marek holds a Ph.D. in Sociology (Social and Public Policy specialisation) and advanced degrees in economics, international studies, sociology and public administration from Czech and UK institutions including Charles University, Lancaster University and Warwick Business School. He also studies at Georgetown University and Johns Hopkins University (Fulbright Scholar).



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Rolf Höijer, Member of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board, European Commission



Dr. **Rolf Höijer** is a Swedish policy expert appointed as Principal Adviser — Member of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) of the European Commission since April 2024

In this senior advisory capacity, he contributes to the Board’s mission of providing high-level quality assurance for Commission impact assessments, major evaluations, and fitness checks — key analytical inputs that underpin major EU policy proposals and decisions.

Dr. Höijer brings to the Commission more than 25 years of professional experience in public policy analysis and evidence-based policymaking. His expertise spans regulatory policy, taxation, political economy, innovation policy, and public administration. Throughout his career, he has authored numerous articles, reports, and conference papers on these topics, demonstrating his analytical depth and thought leadership in both academic and policy circles. Prior to joining the European Commission’s Regulatory Scrutiny Board, Dr. Höijer served as a Senior Adviser in the Swedish Government Offices, where he was responsible for coordinating Sweden’s agenda on better regulation — a central element of public sector reform aimed at improving the quality and coherence of regulatory frameworks. During Sweden’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2023, he chaired the Working Party on Better Regulation in the Council of Ministers, helping to steer discussions among Member States on improving regulatory practices at the EU level. Dr. Höijer holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Oxford and a Master’s degree from the London School of Economics (LSE), where he also taught and conducted research in areas including international political economy.