

Opening & Keynote speech



Mark Vaessen

Mark Vaessen is a partner with KPMG in the Netherlands, where he heads the Department of Professional Practice. Mark is also involved in working with, predominantly global, clients in both an audit and advisory capacity.

Until September 2017, Mark was the global head of IFRS for KPMG International, leading KPMG's International Standards Group in London and the related network of reporting specialists from around the world.

He is a board member of Accountancy Europe, where he also chairs the Corporate Reporting Policy Group.

Mark is a Dutch national, married with three children. Since October 2017 he is based at KPMG HQ in Amstelveen, after having worked and lived for nearly 20 years in London. He holds a master's degree in business economics and a post-graduate degree in accountancy, both from Tilburg University. He is a member of the Dutch institute of accountants (NBA) since 1991.



Valdis Dombrovskis

Valdis Dombrovskis is the Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union.

His responsibilities include supervising the economic and fiscal policy coordination in the European Union, as well as developing and negotiating proposals to further strengthen Europe's Economic and Monetary Union. In this role, Vice-President Dombrovskis was involved in managing the 2015 Greek crisis, and is responsible for Macro-Financial Assistance programmes to Ukraine. As the EU finance chief, he is working on the completion of the Banking Union and on the setting up of a genuine Capital Markets Union for Europe by 2019. VP Dombrovskis leads the European Commission's initiatives related to the future of finance, including FinTech, crypto assets and sustainable finance.

Prior to becoming European Commission Vice-President, he served three consecutive terms as Prime Minister of Latvia, becoming the longest serving head of government in Latvia's history. Valdis Dombrovskis was Latvia's Minister of Finance from 2002 to 2004. He was twice elected a Member of the European Parliament (2014; 2004-2009) and Head of the Latvian Delegation in the European People's Party Group. He served as a Member of the Saeima (Parliament) of Latvia (March 2004 - June 2004; January 2014 - June 2014). Prior to joining 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.

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 economics from Riga University of Technology (1995). He received his master's degree in physics in 1995 from the University of Latvia. In 1995 -1998, he worked as a research assistant at Mainz University, Germany, at the Institute of Solid-State Physics in Latvia and at the University of Maryland (USA).

European Lab highlights



Jean-Paul Gauzès

In July 2016, Jean-Paul Gauzès became the EFRAG Board President. He was nominated by the European Commission following a consultation with the Council and the European Parliament. He is also the Chairman of the European Lab@EFRAG Steering Group.

From 2004 till 2014, Jean-Paul Gauzès was a member of the European Parliament. Throughout this period he was a member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON). From 2008 till 2014 Jean-Paul Gauzès was the Coordinator of the European People's Party (EPP) Group in ECON.

Reflections on corporate reporting



Richard Howitt

Richard Howitt is Chief Executive Officer of the International Integrated Reporting Council.

Richard leads initiatives that advocate for the Global adoption of integrated reporting in policy and investor communities as the norm. He is a member of the B20 group of international business leaders who dialogue with G20 governments.

Richard has been involved in the evolution of integrated reporting from the outset, as a member of HRH The Prince of Wales Annual Forum on Accounting for Sustainability, and was at the original meeting of the Forum which led to the setting up of the IIRC in 2009.

Prior to being appointed to the IIRC, Richard served as an elected Member of the European Parliament for over twenty years and was rapporteur on corporate responsibility. In this capacity, he was key architect of the EU's non-financial information directive, one of the biggest transformations in corporate disclosure anywhere in the world.

Overcoming challenges in corporate reporting



Nancy Kamp-Roelands

Nancy Kamp-Roelands is a Royal NBA certified public accountant combining international client practice with (international) standard setting and guidance development, teaching and research. She is an associate partner at EY and a professor non-financial information, integrated reporting and assurance at the University of Groningen.

Nancy has a long history of involvement in new reporting developments in organizations like the International Integrated Reporting Council, Global Reporting Initiative, Accountancy Europe, UNCTAD-ISAR, the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, the Dutch Accounting Standards Board and the Dutch Auditing Standards Board. She followed closely the developments by the European Commission on corporate reporting. She is working with leading edge clients. She also teaches on these new reporting developments, in particular in the ESG Assurance postmaster in Groningen.



Bastian Buck

Bastian has worked in various capacities for GRI since 2006, after graduating from Erasmus University Rotterdam with a Master in Business Administration, focusing on sustainable development. He has in-depth institutional knowledge of GRI's technical development history and played a key role in the successful development and launch of GRI's G4 Guidelines in 2013. He became Director Reporting Standard Department in December of the same year. Since that time has led the introduction of the GRI Standards in 2016.

Bastian has presented and lectured on sustainability reporting in more than 30 countries and has a vast experience in the moderation of consensus-seeking processes and the facilitation of international multi-stakeholder expert working group procedures.



Claudia Kruse

APG manages over EUR 450bn on behalf of Dutch pension funds. As Managing Director Global Responsible Investment & Governance Claudia Kruse is part of the management team of APG Asset Management reporting into the CIO/ Board. Her fifteen people strong team implements the responsible investment policy on behalf of APG and its clients across all asset classes. The focus is on active ownership, ESG integration tailored to the specific investment strategies and investing in solutions that contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Before joining APG in 2009, she worked on the buy (F&C, now Bank of Montreal) and sell-side (JPMorgan) in London for almost a decade. She was appointed to the German Corporate Governance

Code Commission in 2016 and is a member of the EU Expert Group on Sustainable Finance since January 2017. She is on the Board of the International Corporate Governance Network (ICGN), and also served on the Board of Eumedion, the Dutch Corporate Governance Platform (2011-2017). In 2016 she was voted CIO Europe's Next Generation CIO Award winner. In a personal capacity she is a member of the Dutch Sustainable Pensions Investing Lab (SPIL).

Claudia holds a MA in International Management and Chinese, as well as an MSc Tourism & Development (UCL, London), and has lived and worked in China in the 1990s. She has inter alia published on the Governance of Sustainability and the integration of sustainability into remuneration which reflects her strong belief in the connection between good governance and sustainability.



Mardi McBrien

After graduating from Melbourne University with a double degree in Forest Science / Environmental Science, Mardi pursued a career in international forestry.

Her eclectic career to date includes roles as President of an international students' association, public-private partnership management, leading flagship campaigns including for the Campaign to Protect Rural England (and the author Bill Bryson), managing WWF-UK's Earth Hour switching off the lights of London in 2010 and carbon market policy for the UK's Department for Energy and Climate Change.

Mardi has an MSc in Agricultural Economics and Development from UCL. Mardi is currently enjoying the challenge of working with companies, investors and regulators across the world to drive mainstream corporate reporting.



Massimo Romano

Massimo is an “evangelist” of Integrated thinking: with his team they are implementing the Generali Integrated reporting framework. Thanks to integrated thinking and continuous innovation they are supporting the top management’s decision-making process. His mantra is “Integrated thinking is improving our personal and professional live”.

In the last 15 years Massimo has evolved his role in the financial reporting area starting as project manager of the IAS implementation in Generali Group back in 2005.

Today he is leading FINANCE NEXT, the new transformation program of the Group CFO finance platform, focused on streamlining the reporting process and implementing the IFRS 17 and IFRS 9. He is also project leader of the implementation of the NON FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE DIRECTIVE in Generali Group.

Massimo is also active in the international working groups on corporate reporting issues: since 2006 member of the European Insurance CFO Forum (‘CFO Forum’) a high-level discussion group formed by the major European listed insurance companies. In 2014 he set up and co-chaired with Aegon the Insurance Business Network under the IIRC (International Integrated Reporting Council) to spread the “gospel” of Integrated reporting and thinking among the Insurance Sector. He is also member of Management Commentary Consultative Group of IASB.

He is a frequent speaker at professional and academic events sharing his experience of his integrated thinking journey. Since 2017 Massimo is part of the Adjunct Faculty of MIB Trieste School of Management (Italy) in INTEGRATED REPORTING AND THINKING.

Achieving innovation in corporate reporting



Alain Deckers

Alain Deckers has almost 20 years of experience in public service at the European Commission. He has been responsible for policy reviews and policy development in areas including trade in goods, environmental policy, public procurement and financial services regulation. He currently heads a team of responsible for corporate reporting, including both financial and non-financial reporting; audit; and credit rating agencies as part of DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union. He is also the Vice-Chairman of the European Lab@EFRAG Steering Group.

Alain graduated in physics and holds a masters in the economics of technical change, both from the University of Manchester (UK).



Olivier Boutellis-Taft

Olivier has been Accountancy Europe's CEO since 2006. He benefits from a diverse professional experience, having been a public prosecutor in France, a director with PricewaterhouseCoopers, a board member of the European Policy Centre, a director of XBRL international and a business and policy consultant.

He regularly speaks on issues related to European affairs and the impact of technology on accountancy. A lawyer and economist by training, Olivier started his professional career in equestrian sports (jumping).



Bertrand Janus

Bertrand Janus has been with Total for 36 years. He is a computer science engineer and he worked at the Information Systems department of the Refining & Marketing division during the first 20 years of his career. In 2002, he moved to the corporate Internal Audit department of Total where he became a manager in charge of supervising internal audit assignments carried out at the Holding level of the Group and in the Chemicals division.

In 2009, he moved to the Sustainable development and Environment department where he was in charge of sustainability reporting and relations with ESG rating agencies. Since the fall of 2016, Bertrand is now Head of CSR Reporting within the Investor Relations department of Total, dealing with investors on CSR-related issues.



Giovanna Michelon

Giovanna holds a personal Chair in Accounting at the University of Exeter Business School. She currently serves as Director of Research for the Departments of Accounting and Finance and of the “Firms, Markets and Value” Research Cluster.

Giovanna is a well-established international scholar in the field of corporate governance and sustainability accounting and reporting, with more than 40 publications in leading academic journals such as the Accounting Auditing and Accountability Journal, British Journal of Management, Critical Perspective on Accounting, European Accounting Review and Journal of Business Ethics. Her work mainly relates to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and governance, including building upon a stakeholder-oriented approach to governance, the role of governance in shaping CSR activities and exploring the role of sustainability information for market participants and other stakeholders.

Giovanna is highly engaged with both the academic community and practitioners. She is currently Editor-in-Chief of the European Accounting Association Research Centre, Co-editor of Accounting Forum, a Council member of the Centre for Social and Environmental Accounting Research (University of St. Andrews) and Chair of the ACCA Global Forum for Governance, Risk and Performance.



Sirpa Pietikainen

Ms Sirpa Pietikäinen is a Finnish member of the European People's Party (EPP) in the European Parliament and a former Finnish Minister of Environment (1991-1995). She is a member of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee and the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety. Ms Pietikäinen has been a strong advocate of an ambitious sustainable finance agenda and harmonised accounting and reporting standards on sustainability. She is currently a co-rapporteur for the legislative proposal to develop an EU sustainability taxonomy for financial products, and shadow rapporteur on the proposal to strengthen disclosures by financial market participants relating to sustainability risks. She was also the EPP negotiator for the European Parliament own initiative report on Sustainable Finance and led an own-initiative report on Circular Economy in 2015, as well as was a member of the high-level European Resource Efficiency Platform (EREP'9).

Takeaways from panels



Andrew Watchman

Andrew Watchman joined EFRAG as CEO and TEG Chairman in April 2016.

Prior to joining EFRAG Andrew Watchman was the Global Head of IFRS for Grant Thornton, leading a team supporting the application of IFRS across the international network and chairing the firm's global IFRS expert group. Responsibilities included consulting on technical issues, developing publications, delivering training and responding to IASB proposals. Between July 2013 and joining EFRAG he also served as a member of the IFRS Interpretations Committee.

Prior to joining Grant Thornton Andrew served as Accountancy Adviser to the UK's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), providing expert advice on public policy in financial reporting and the transition to IFRSs in the UK. Prior to that Andrew Watchman spent fourteen years in the audit practice of an international accounting firm, up to partner level.