

Volt Luxembourg adds two more candidates for the European elections

Today Volt Luxembourg deposited its list of candidates for the European elections in May 2019. In addition to the four previously announced, Julia Pitterman and Christopher Lilyblad have been elected to complete the list, now consisting of (in alphabetical order):

- Fiona Godfrey
- Marthe Hoffmann
- Christopher Lilyblad
- Julia Pitterman
- Daniel Silva
- Rolf Tarrach

“The two extra candidates bring huge value to our campaign,” says Volt Luxembourg President George Penn.

“Julia has been at the heart of everything that has gone well for Volt Luxembourg in the past few months. She is a change-maker who has brought Volt Luxembourg to the point where we are able to run, who is passionate about our vision for change, and a Franco-Italian who has fallen in love with Luxembourg’s multi-culturalism. She is very dynamic and a huge asset to our list.”

“Christopher is a true reformer with a clear track record of doing politics differently, be it as elected member of the Betzdorf Municipality or as Program Manager at the European Commission. His experience, as public servant, strategic consultant, and academic, make him precisely the kind of dynamic force that Europe needs if it is to work for all its citizens once again. I am really pleased to be welcoming him to Volt.”

A candidate press kit with presentations and images can be found on the following pages.

Clarification regarding signature collection and depositing the list

“Since some weeks back Volt Luxembourg has been collecting signatures for the original list of **four candidates**. We managed to reach the required threshold of 250 signatures and would like to thank everyone involved, both those who have volunteered collecting signatures and those who signed, showing they either believed in our cause and/or in every party’s right to participate in the elections,” says George Penn.

“However, when the opportunity presented itself to bring on two extra candidates to enter a full list, starting another round of signature collection would not have been possible in order to meet the deadline. Therefore we explored the alternative procedure for entering the elections, namely by acquiring the signature of one Luxembourg Député or MEP, and this proved successful. The list consisting of six candidates that we deposited today was thus not validated through the 250+ signatures collected, but through the signature of one Luxembourg Député.”

Media contacts

For candidate related or general press inquiries, please contact:

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Volt Luxembourg EU candidate press kit

Volt Luxembourg is running in the 2019 European elections. Our candidates are:

- Fiona Godfrey
- Marthe Hoffmann
- Christopher Lilyblad
- Julia Elisabetta Pitterman
- Daniel Silva
- Rolf Tarrach

Each candidate is presented in detail on the following pages.

Hi-res photos of the candidates and the Volt logo can be downloaded [here](#).

Our programme for the European elections can be found [here](#).

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About Volt Europa

Volt is a progressive pan-European movement that strives to create a Europe that works for you. Coming from all walks of life, we share the belief that many of the local, regional and global challenges we face across our continent require European solutions. Putting aside national interests, we can build a truly inclusive union that serves all its citizens.

Volt was founded by Andrea Venzon (Italy), Colombe Cahen-Salvador (France) and Damian Boeselager (Germany) as a reaction to the right-wing populist uprisings that culminated in the Brexit referendum. With tens of thousands of members and presence in all member states, our target for the European elections is to win at least 25 seats in 7 different countries in order to create our own parliamentary group. Our [programme for Europe 2019-2024](#) is centred around three overhead objectives:

- Fix the EU
- Make Europe an economic powerhouse
- Build a just and sustainable society

Find out more about us on volteuropa.org

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Fiona Godfrey, 53

Occupation: Secretary-General of a pan-European public health NGO

Nationality: Luxembourgish and British

Languages spoken: English and Luxembourgish

Brief motivation:

“My very first political memory is connected to the EU. I was watching BBC news. The “EEC” was mentioned and I asked my mother what the “EEC” was. She told me it was a peace project to stop war breaking out in Europe again and something that would make it possible for me to go and live, study and work abroad when I was older. This 9 year old was sold – the EEC was the project for me.

I am a perfect marriage of the EU and its member states. I come from a working class family in a poor northern English city. The UK gave me a good state education at school and university level. The EU – through free movement - gave me my German/Chilean husband and family, a fascinating career in EU public health and social mobility. I am living proof of the fact that the EU project can work when member states and the EU share competences and come together to develop policies that benefit not just the economy but individuals.

Unfortunately, due to austerity, Brexit and the rise of populism future success stories like me are threatened. The EU as a peace project doesn't have the same resonance as it did for me as a 9 year old. And 25 year olds on endless internships, zero hour work contracts or no job contract at all don't see or benefit from the opportunities that were available to me.

As the Chair of British Immigrants Living in Luxembourg and the Co-Chair of British in Europe I have spent three years campaigning against Brexit and for EU citizenship rights. I have learned the hard way that we need to reformulate a positive story of what the EU is and what it can be. But I also realise that politicians at the highest levels of the EU don't understand what makes individuals tick, what makes them want to embrace the EU project and what we need to do if the EU is to survive. I think I can help do this and I want to do it, hand in hand with Volt, which is a new and much needed fresh voice in EU politics. I am therefore delighted to be standing as a candidate for Volt in the European Parliament elections.” – Fiona Godfrey

**Marthe Hoffmann, 23**

Occupation: Lawyer specialised in EU competition law

Nationality: Luxembourgish

Languages spoken: Luxembourgish, French, German, English

Brief motivation:

“Growing up in Luxembourg, in the cradle of the EU, I believe that I have benefited from the European venture in a very idiosyncratic way which pushes me to stand up for it now as it is teetering on the edge of a precipice.

My family is from the picturesque village Machtum in the Mosel Region, where I also spent my childhood. My mother tongue is therefore Luxembourgish but I had the chance to complete my education at the European School of Luxembourg in a French-speaking class, which means that I grew up trilingual, among school friends from almost every country in the EU.

This experience forged my truly European identity and drew me to complete a trilingual Law School Program in France, Germany and the United Kingdom.

However, I am largely unsatisfied with the current framework mainly because it is undemocratic. I am convinced the European Union needs a structural reform which should in the first place aim at creating a European demos. Volt, a dynamic community of Europeans, represents the opportunity for me to actively try to shape the future of the EU in this respect.” – Marthe Hoffmann



Christopher Lilyblad, 30

Occupation: Consultant and academic researcher in sustainable development, elected member of municipal council

Nationality: Luxembourgish and American

Languages spoken: Luxembourgish, French, German, English

Brief motivation:

“As a candidate for Volt Luxembourg in the upcoming European elections, I am first and foremost an ambassador for the principles of the Amsterdam Declaration, which offers a bold new vision for a reformed, integrated, and united European Union.

Only a united Europe can solve the many urgent crises of our times, within our borders and beyond, from social inequalities and democratic deficits to climate change and forced migration. And only Volt is truly committed to fending off the threats posed by populism, nationalism, and corruption, and to shaping the way politics is done in a strengthened Europe.

I joined this movement because I believe in people-powered change. As an elected member of local government in the Municipality of Betzdorf, I have spent years at the critical intersection of Luxembourgish politics and EU-policy. I have seen firsthand the positive contributions Luxembourg can make to the European discourse, and I am confident that Volt’s pan-European approach can help amplify Luxembourg’s voice in the next European Parliament.

I am proud to be a product of so much that makes Luxembourg a shining beacon of European virtues. Our national community is based not on citizenship but on shared values, and allows someone like me to balance multiple identities without shame or contradiction. My ancestors came to Luxembourg from many different corners of the earth, and I, in turn, am proud to be the father of two children who are entitled to four different passports.

Now more than ever, the dream of Europe – open, prosperous, and free – depends on all of us to mobilize in its defense, and I am proud to be serving this cause as a member of Volt Luxembourg.” – Christopher Lilyblad



Julia Elisabetta Pitterman, 25

Occupation: Strategy and operations consultant for the public sector

Nationality: Italian, French and American

Languages spoken: Italian, French and English

Brief motivation:

“Despite being born in Africa and having lived in other continents for some years, the pan-European sentiment that I want to fight for is what led to me to come back to Europe. I wanted to be part of a movement that leads to action rather than only words so I decided to join the political scene with Volt Luxembourg.

My dedication to working for society dates back to my years as a student in Israel, where I had the opportunity to understand what it means to push for change, such as peace-building, in a complex environment. Today, I want to push for a change in the political discourse as we all know that some issues, such as climate change, need to be dealt with now – there is just no time to waste.

Being Italian, French and American I can say without a doubt that Europe’s potential still remains untapped and Volt Luxembourg will be a leader in making sure that Europeans are being heard at a European level.

I’m ready to commit to fixing Europe as well as making it become an economic powerhouse while building a just and sustainable society. Three key pillars that need to be addressed in a period of high complexity and transformational change due to the technological advances.”

– Julia Elisabetta Pitterman



Daniel Silva, 35

Occupation: IT Trainer

Nationality: Luxembourgish and Portuguese

Languages spoken: Luxembourgish, Portuguese, French, English

Brief motivation:

“I have always considered myself to be “European”. Youth exchanges enabled me to have my first travel opportunities at a young age, and actually I met my wife through a European initiative while she was pursuing an EVS in Luxembourg. Europe has given me wonderful moments, and I feel it’s time to give back.

In my opinion, politics is about wanting to get involved, to thrive to change the status quo, to offer an alternative solution and not just criticise from the comfort of inaction.

Thanks to Volt I have found a thrilling, vibrant and diverse community from all corners of the continent. Just after signing up online, our president George got in touch. Very soon after, I had a Volt branded email.

While working in Volt Luxembourg I connect with various members across Europe, get active on different fronts, read and discuss policies with established members of the movement and much more. There are no boundaries, I feel empowered, electrified and I believe that it is this positive energy we all carry within our movement that will give us the opportunity to achieve great victories.

Every country has a role to play in Europe's future, but we believe that it is as a unified voice that we can help shape today’s and tomorrow’s future. I look forward to representing you and thanks for your time.” – Daniel Silva



Rolf Tarrach, 71

Occupation: President of the European University Association

Nationality: Luxembourgish and Spanish

Languages spoken: Luxembourgish, French, German, English and Spanish

Brief motivation:

“Towards a Knowledge-based progressive and democratic European federation.

After 27 years of teaching and research in quantum physics and 18 years of leading research and academic institutions in Spain, Luxembourg and Brussels, I would like to spend the next years putting my experience to good use for Europe. Volt offers the right frame for doing so.

Nous avons besoin d’une nouvelle dynamique pour l’Europe. Au Parlement Européen la pensée dominante est nationale, pas européenne. L’Europe est le second choix. Volt veut changer cela. Le Luxembourg, le pays le plus européen qui soit, est le pays idéal pour impulser, voire mener ce changement.

Volt kann es ändern, denn wir sind zuerst europäisch und dann national. Wir werden also Europa im Europäischen Parlament verteidigen, auch weil das das Beste ist was wir für Luxembourg machen können. Wir leben in der Zeit der Dämmerung des nationalen Denkens.

When you vote for a national party, you have to look at the parties of the other countries that are in the same political group, because you are empowering them too, and some of them are openly anti-European and even anti-democratic. You do not need to do this with Volt, because for us Europe comes first.” – Rolf Tarrach