



## High Level Advisory Group

*Unique Nordic-Baltic cooperation to support Ukraine's closer ties to the EU – launched on 10 April 2024. Minister for Foreign Affairs Tobias Billström launched a high-level group that will provide expert support to Ukraine's Government during its EU accession process.*

*"We are proud to jointly offer the most experienced experts from our countries. They will play a crucial role in supporting Ukraine in its EU accession process. This initiative under Sweden's coordination of the NB8 cooperation format provides a genuine opportunity to facilitate Ukraine's journey towards EU membership," says Mr Billström.*



**Alar Streimann:** Alar Streimann has served as Estonian Ambassador to France, Germany and Sweden and as Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe and OECD. He was the Secretary General of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2011-2015. Alar Streimann was also the chief negotiator in the Estonian accession negotiations with the European Union.



**Algirdas Šemeta:** Algirdas Šemeta's career includes notable roles such as serving as the European Commissioner for Budget from 2009 to 2010 and for Taxation, Customs, Anti-Fraud, Statistics (from 2011) and Audit from 2010 to 2014. Before becoming Commissioner, Algirdas held high-level positions in the Lithuanian government, including Minister of Finance from 1997 to 1999 and from 2008 to 2009. He served as the first Business Ombudsman of Ukraine between 2014 and 2019.



**Andris Piebalgs:** Andris Piebalgs is a highly experienced international politician, educator, and researcher with over 35 years of management experience and 20 years in global energy affairs. He was European Commissioner for Energy between 2004 and 2009, and for Development between 2010 and 2014. He played a central role in Latvia's accession process as Ambassador to the EU (1998-2003) and as Deputy State Secretary for EU affairs (2003-2004).



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**Cecilia Malmström:** Cecilia Malmström served as the European Commissioner for Trade from 2014 to 2019, where she played a key role in shaping the European Union's trade policies and negotiations. From 2010–2014 she was also European Home Affairs Commissioner. Prior to her time as Commissioner, Cecilia was Minister for European Affairs from 2006 to 2010, and was a Member of the European Parliament from 1999 to 2006



**Högni S. Kristjánsson:** Högni S. Kristjánsson is an experienced diplomat who was acting Deputy Head of the Icelandic EU Mission in Brussels 2002, and a College Member at the EFTA Surveillance Authority from 2018 to 2021. Between 2008-2013 he was Director for European Affairs and was heavily involved in the accession negotiations.



**Katarina Areskoug:** Katarina Areskoug has extensive experience in EU affairs as the head of the European Commission in Sweden from 2015 to 2020. She also served as state secretary for EU and international affairs to the Swedish PM between 2010 and 2014. Prior to that she was posted to Brussels for 10 years as a diplomat at the Swedish representation in Brussels, as well as a civil servant at the European Commission. At the European Commission, she was, among other roles, desk officer for Latvia during the country's negotiations for EU membership.



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**Laimonas Čiakas:** Laimonas Čiakas is a former Director General of the National Land Service of Lithuania (2017-2021). From 1998 to 2010 he was deputy director, and then director of the Department for Agriculture. There he was instrumental in implementing agricultural policy and reforms as well as leading European integration at the Ministry of Agriculture. He was also a director at the National Audit Office between 2011 and 2017.



**Lykke Friis:** Lykke Friis Lykke Friis, a former Danish Minister of Climate, Energy, and Gender Equality (2009-2011), is a distinguished expert in European affairs. She has previously been Director of European Affairs at the Confederation of Danish Industries (DI), followed by two periods as Prorector for University of Copenhagen. She is currently director of the Lykke Friis is the director of Think Tank EUROPA.



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**Marja Rislakki:** Marja Rislakki was a career diplomat with special expertise in the EU affairs. She served as the Finnish Permanent Representative to the EU from 2017 to 2021 chairing the Coreper during the Finnish Council Presidency 2019. She was the Finnish Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU from 2008 to 2013 and the Finnish Representative in the Council Enlargement Working group between 2000 – 2003. During the Finnish accession-negotiations she was the diplomatic adviser to the Finnish Chief negotiator 1993-1995. She has also served as the State Secretary for the Finnish Minister of Economy between 2013 -2015.



**Rolf Einar Fife:** Rolf Einar Fife has served as ambassador of Norway to the EU from 2019-2023. From 2002 to 2014 he was director general for legal affairs and chief legal adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He chaired the Council of Europe Committee of Legal Advisers on international law (CAHDI) 2009-2010. He has headed Norwegian teams in a number of negotiations, including those concerning the Economic Area and rule of law at the UN. He is an elected member of the UN International Law Commission (2023-2027).



**Stefán Haukur Jóhannesson:** Stefán Haukur Jóhannesson was the chief Negotiator for Iceland's accession process to the European Union from 2009 to 2013. In this capacity, he led Iceland's negotiation with the EU. He was also Iceland's Ambassador to the EU (and non-resident Ambassador to other countries) from 2005 to 2011. He has experience from working in Ukraine as Team Leader in the Special Monitoring Mission in 2014.