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New MEP joins EFA Group

Press release from the EFA Group

The European Free Alliance Group in the European Parliament has welcomed **Mark Demesmaeker** from Flemish nationalist party Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (N-VA) as its newest MEP.

The N-VA is the largest party in Flanders, and in Belgium, and works for an independent Flanders in a strong European Union.

Mark replaces Frieda Brepoels who has stood down to become Mayor of Bilzen in the Flemish province of Limburg.

Up until now a member of the Flemish parliament, Mark will serve on the European Parliament's Committees on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, and on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety. He is also a member of the parliament's Delegation for Relations with Japan.

Jill Evans MEP (Wales), President of the EFA Group, said:

"I'm pleased to welcome Mark to the EFA Group, and to pay tribute to Frieda Brepoels for her outstanding work in the European Parliament over many years.

"This is a crucial time for Europe's stateless nations with many exciting constitutional developments taking place across the continent. It's more important than ever for nations like Flanders and Wales to have a strong voice in Europe, and I look forward to working with Mark on a range of issues."

Mark Demesmaeker MEP said:

"I look forward to working with my colleagues in the EFA Group during what is a crucial period for the European Union and of course for Flanders.

"I believe in a European project that respects the diversity of languages and cultures, the identity of every national community, and genuine subsidiarity. As a resident of the Vlaamse Rand (the Flemish ring of municipalities around the capital, Brussels) I have always campaigned passionately in defence of the Dutch language, and for a truly green and open environment. I now look forward to continuing that work at

European level.

"Also, in my first week the current economic crisis has been of course high on the agenda. I strongly believe that budgetary discipline and adherence to the EU's recommendations for structural reforms are crucial in order for Europe to emerge stronger from the economic crisis. This is what I will argue for during my mandate."

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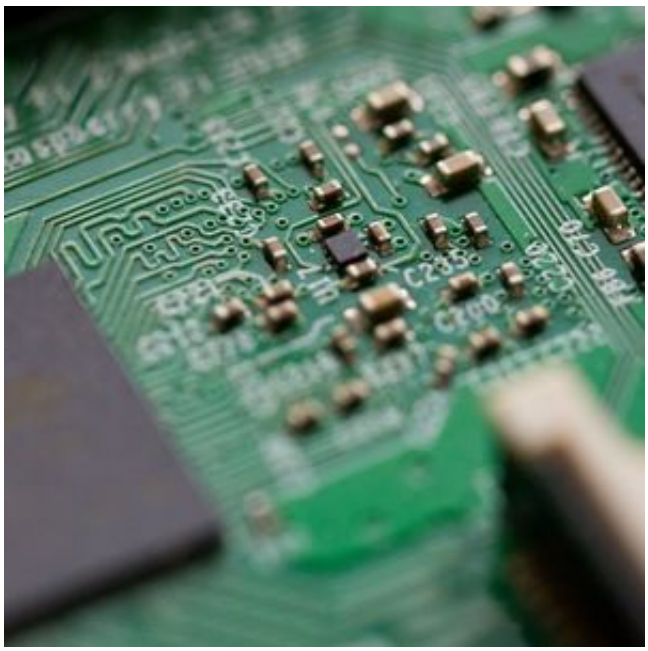


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Jill Evans

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