



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

**Yana Toom**

European Parliament, Member

Dear participants of WEF Iceland!

Dear friends!

First of all, let me express my sincere regret that I cannot be with you today. I have mixed feelings. On the one hand, my political party won local elections in Estonia. As the most successful female politician in these elections, I am now taking part in the negotiation on the creation of a new ruling coalition. On the other hand, this deprives me of the pleasure of working with you in Reykjavik.

The world around us is changing rapidly. The voice of women becomes more audible in public and family life. However, women holding prominent political positions in Estonia have only recently ceased to cause surprise. In my country, last year, the first-ever woman became a democratically elected president. In Iceland it happened as early as in 1980. Unfortunately, women only hold four seats out of 15 in the Estonian government. A contradictory message from the country holding the presidency of the Council of the European Union, isn't?

In my family, I represent the third generation of female politicians. The women of my family have always fought for a new normality with equal opportunities for men and women in all spheres of public life. To ensure positive change, we need to expand female influence globally. I am sure that the Women's Economic Forum offers an excellent opportunity for networking and future collaboration.

Let me wish you a successful and productive event.

With regards,

Yana Toom

Member of the European Parliament

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