

Meet the guest speaker

Yanis Varoufakis is a member of the Greek Parliament and parliamentary leader of MeRA25, the Greek political party belonging to DiEM25 – the Democracy in Europe Movement, which he founded and is Europe’s first transnational pan-European initiative.

In his own words, Greek Member of Parliament Yanis Varoufakis was “thrust onto the public scene by Europe’s inane handling of an inevitable crisis”.

In January 2015 he was elected to Greece’s Parliament with the largest majority in the country and served as Greece’s Finance Minister between January and early July of 2015.

During those tumultuous six months he faced down the world’s most powerful institutions – the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission and the European Central Bank, three institutions that were determined to impose upon the poorest of Greeks the harshest austerity in history. Varoufakis resigned the finance ministry when he refused to sign a loan agreement that perpetuated Greece’s debt-deflationary cycle.

A year later, Varoufakis co-founded the Democracy in Europe Movement (DiEM25) and two years later, in 2018, he launched its Greek electoral wing (MeRA25). Also in 2018, together with US Senator Bernie Sanders, he established the Progressive International – a global movement whose affiliated members exceed 200 million people from around the world. He has also travelled extensively giving talks and



Photo courtesy of DiEM25

participating in various activist events and projects.

Varoufakis read mathematics and economics at the Universities of Essex and Birmingham and subsequently taught economics at the Universities of East Anglia, Cambridge, Sydney, Glasgow, Texas and Athens where he still holds a Chair in Political Economy and Economic Theory. He is also Honorary Professor of Political Economy at the University of Sydney, Honoris Causa Professor of Law, Economics and Finance at the University of Torino, Visiting Professor of Political Economy at King’s College, London, and Doctor of the University *Honoris Causa* at the University of Sussex.

He is currently completing a new book entitled *Technofeudalism: Capitalism’s stealthy successor* (to be published by Penguin in the UK) and is the author of a number of best-selling books including *Another Now: A novel* (Penguin UK & Melville House US); *Talking to My Daughter About the Economy: A brief history of capitalism* (London: Bodley Head, 2017); *And the Weak Suffer What They Must?: Europe’s Crisis and America’s Economic Future*

(London: Bodley Head, 2016); and *Adults in the Room: My struggle against Europe’s Deep Establishment* (London: Bodley Head, 2017).

In a 2019 review of *Adults in the Room* by former IFAA founder, the late Professor Ben Turok, he was described as “outspoken on the condition in which Greece found itself in relation to Europe.”

Prof Turok wrote in the review published in *New Agenda* issue 72: “The troika [the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund] was determined to force new loans on Greece, which was unaffordable, so Varoufakis fought a sustained battle for debt restructuring to give Greece some breathing space, which was vigorously denied. What the troika wanted was to impose further austerity in the name of ‘restoring competitiveness’ and attracting investment from other countries.

“Varoufakis engaged in intense discussions with the troika across Europe during which he recorded many conversations. This provides the meat of the book which must be unique in international finance.

“What he reveals is that the troika actually did not want to be repaid as much as they wanted to teach Greece, and indirectly Spain and others, a lesson about pursuing independent policies and to insert EU officials in the Greek government to take control.”

Varoufakis has also published *Europe, Austerity and the Threat to Global Stability* (London: Bodley Head and NY: Nation Books, 2016); and *The Global Minotaur: America, Europe and the Future of the World Economy* (London: Zed Books, 2011, 2015). His academic books include *Economic Indeterminacy* (London: Routledge, 2014); *Game Theory: An introductory Text* (London: Routledge, 2003), *Foundations of Economics* (London: Routledge, 1998); and *Rational Conflict* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).