



Press Release

Renata Trottmann Probst is first Swiss Soroptimist in 30 years to take the helm of Soroptimist International of Europe

The law graduate is determined to support both continuity and change to secure women's rights in a fast changing world.

Geneva, 1 October 2017 – Soroptimist International of Europe (SIE) announced today that Renata Trottmann Probst has succeeded Maria Elisabetta de Franciscis as President of the European Federation of the world's largest service organisation of women in business and the professions. She will lead Soroptimist International of Europe for two years under the motto, "We Stand Up for Women."

Responding to new challenges

"In the face of growing pressure on our lifestyle and challenges to our values, I have chosen to focus on protecting and advancing women's rights in my biennium," says Swiss Soroptimist Renata Trottmann Probst. "Trafficking, FGM, domestic violence, stalking and child and forced marriage are all very real threats which need to be addressed. We have to respond to these threats under dynamically changing conditions in our times of digitalisation." Soroptimists will work to defend women against all violations, not only violations in the physical sense, but also the violations of basic women's rights, such as the right to education, the right to equal pay and the right to equal access to justice.

International leadership and business experience

Renata Trottmann Probst gained Masters degrees in Law from the University of Bern in Switzerland and McGill University in Montreal, Canada, after which she attended a Senior Executive Programme at Columbia University in New York. She served in the voluntary Swiss military from 1976-1999 and was the first woman in the army to become a member of the Military Justice in 1993. From 1983-2005 she worked at various banks in managerial positions. In 2008 she founded her own property and legal consulting company.

Passionate about women's rights

Joining the women's organisation in 1995, Renata Trottmann Probst held several positions in SI Club Zug until she was elected to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee of SI Switzerland in 2002. She became a member of the SIE Constitution and By-Laws Committee in 2011 and went on to act as Chair from 2013-2015. In her [video](#) clip to the membership posted on the website, SIE President Renata Trottmann Probst says, "I am passionate about women's rights and hope to motivate Soroptimists in our Federation to be a powerful force for these causes."

About Soroptimist International

Soroptimist International was founded in Oakland, California in 1921. Today, there are more than 74,000 members worldwide in some 3000 clubs in 123 countries. Derived from Latin *soror* (sister)



optima (best), the name describes what Soroptimists aim to achieve: ‘the best for women’. Indeed, Soroptimist International sees itself as a global voice for women. With more than 1,250 clubs and some 34,000 members in 61 countries, Soroptimist International of Europe (SIE) is the largest of SI’s four Federations.

As a non-governmental organisation, SI holds consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and has its own representatives at WHO, UNHCR, ECOSOC, UNIDO, ILO, UNEP, UNESCO and UNICEF. Through projects and personal commitment at local, regional, national and global levels, Soroptimists have played an active role in improving the lives of women and girls for nearly a century.

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