

## **REPORT ON A VISIT TO BRUSSELS – DECEMBER 2023**

### **Purpose of Visit**

The purpose of the visit was to attend the European Prayer Breakfast which occurs on an annual basis, and consists of around 500 people from all over the world, most of whom are connected with their respective parliaments. I was a first time attendee, and there were a series of events over the 2 days I was present. . This included a women's event, smaller events with parliamentarians and focused discussions on key issues such as involvement of young people in politics and the role of faith in politics.

### **Role of prayer breakfasts**

The Welsh Parliament hosts a prayer breakfast around St David's Day in the Senedd, with around 100 people attending – again from all over the world. I learned about the importance of prayer breakfasts to all people of faith whilst visiting Brussels, with presentations at the Breakfast event from Muslims from the West Bank and Jewish people from Israel. The events all over the world are essential events to bring together people connected to politics who are of all faiths and none, and allow the opportunity to meet and to discuss openly the importance of learning from each other and the role of faith in different parliaments.

### **Specific events/learning opportunities**

- Working collaboratively with people of different faiths on common issues such as investment an finances
- Impact of leaving the European Union on Wales and the issues for other parliamentarians in other countries
- The importance of integrity and ethics in politics and parliaments
- Practice in supporting young people and young families to remain in their local communities

### **Possible areas of ongoing collaboration**

- I made contacts with young people who are working with their peers to promote political involvement in Germany, and was able to ensure there will be ongoing learning and working together.
- Working with female politicians, I was able to learn more about women in politics and to talk about the developments here in Wales, but also the work of other women parliamentarians in promoting a more balanced gender representation in parliaments
- I learned about ethical investments and the role of finances in parliaments in Europe, particularly in the Netherlands

Jane Dodds

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