

28 November 2018

LIBERAL PROFESSIONS DAY

On 27 November 2018, the EESC hosted an event on Liberal Professions, focusing on Sustainable Transformation of Professional Features

The event, entitled ***Liberal Professions 4.0.: Sustainable Transformation of Professional Features***, aimed to gain fresh insight regarding a **future-proof definition of the liberal professions in a digitalised professional world**.

The meeting was opened by the President of the Diversity Europe Group, Arno Metzler.

In their capacity as spokespersons of the Category of Liberal Professions and in line with [the manifesto](#) adopted last year at [the liberal professions conference in Rome](#), Mrs Calderone and Mr. Kolbe presented a **summary of achievements** and forthcoming action.

After the event, President Metzler and Spokespersons Calderone and Kolbe met with the President of European Parliament **Antonio TAJANI**. They jointly discussed the **next steps** to infiltrate the common definition of liberal professions in the European law making process, in order to fully unfold their potential and thus improve the competitiveness of EU economy.

The discussions were divided into **three thematic panels**:

- Moving away from the cliché of 'protectionism' and adapting the definition of 'public interest' to societal developments;
- Does digitalisation change the essential needs of mankind and how does this affect the liberal professions?
- Restrictions on equity participation: no longer required or more necessary than ever? Investor interests vs. professional regulation requirements.

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The European Economic and Social Committee is an institutional consultative body established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The Committee has 350 members from across Europe, who are appointed by the Council of the European Union. It represents the various



*****INTERESTING QUOTES *****

Antonio TAJANI, President of the European Parliament

European Parliament President Antonio Tajani expressed his full support regarding the work carried out by the Diversity Europe Group and the Liberal Professions' Category, which agreed on a joint definition and reaffirmed that the **Liberal Professions Day was organised under his patronage**.

"We need to strengthen our Professions in order to improve EU competitiveness. Indeed, the Liberal Professions represent a unique opportunity when it comes to **job creation**, especially for young people. With the populist forces gaining power all over Europe, the Liberal Professions are a **bastion against populism**, which must be developed to its full potential."

Arno METZLER, President Diversity Europe Group, EESC

"For the Liberal Professions the time of conflictive communication with the European Commission should come to an end. We call for an open dialogue with the European institutions and relevant stakeholders. This is why we are now **addressing all the delicate topics**, such as accusations of protectionism, public interest in a digital world, the trusted relation between quality and lower fees, the role of service industry, the gender balance, and external investments.

We now need a joint understanding of the Professions in this changing world of civil society and to discuss how Liberal Professions **must** be regulated, how Liberal Professions **could** be regulated, how to develop their full potential for growth without at the same time losing quality, trust, identity."

Marina CALDERONE, President of the National Council of Labour Consultants

"The liberal professions are an integral part of European civil society, builders of trust and growth engines. According to sociological surveys, in Europe the free professions are the trusted partners of citizens: in the future they could be an **essential pillar for building trust in the European Union**.

Professions, company 4.0, digitalization: the professions are open to the challenges inherent in modernizing processes, make them their own and use them to improve the quality of the performance of individual professionals and contribute to the processes of simplification and rationalization of bureaucracies."

Rudolf KOLBE, Austrian Federal Conference of the Liberal Professions

"The development of a fruitful future of our society would not be possible without the Liberal Professions. Therefore **we need to and we will adapt our professions** to the changed frame and conditions."

