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MUTUUS : FINAL CONFERENCE

The 28th of March, the consortium of the European Project MUTUUS held its final conference within the premises of the European Parliament, concluding two years of studies and research. The event was the opportunity for CEPLIS, Confprofessioni, UNAPL, MFPA, and Equal Ireland, to present the results of this project that focused on the issue of extending social security for the self-employed.

As social rights are one of the priorities of the European Commission, the MUTUUS project had the task to research on the compliance of the current social protection standards in different EU Member States with the new realities of the world of work.

In order to achieve this objective, various national seminars were organised in Italy, Malta, Belgium, and France. These events enabled the consortium to identify precisely the challenges and realities of the protection systems in force.

The analysis of the social protection schemes for the self-employed led to several proposals for improving these systems with a view to building a common framework that could be applied in the 27 countries of the European Union. The Final Conference was therefore an opportunity for all partners to present the results of this study and to open the debate on the issue of this extension. Several experts from the European Commission and MEPs were invited to exchange views on the subject and draw inspiration from the results presented by the consortium.



EXODUS OF SPANISH PHYSICIANS: WHY DO THEY LEAVE?

It is reported that in the last ten years, more than 18,000 Spanish medical graduates have emigrated, and this situation aggravated the deficit of medical specialists in their country. Lack of recognition and dissatisfaction with the national healthcare system are pointed out as some of the main reasons behind this situation.

The phenomenon does not concern Spain alone. Throughout the EU physicians are indeed leaving their countries in search of better job opportunities and higher salaries in other places, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden, the United States or the Nordic countries.

The lack of medical specialists means that many patients do not receive the care they need in critical areas such as pediatrics, oncology and anesthesiology. In Spain, it is estimated that between this year and 2026 almost 16,000 physicians are due to retire, further exacerbating the situation.



Primary care is also of particular concern since it constitutes the gateway to national health systems for the vast majority of patients, and provides solutions to 70% of health-related problems. Despite its importance however, primary care tends to be neglected by public health systems and receives in general much less budget than hospitals. In Spain some 200 vacancies were left empty in this sector, notably in specialties such as Family and Community Medicine, which are still not very attractive to young physicians.

In Spain, according to *El Mundo*, physicians are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the practice of their profession. The work/care load and the level of demands are the most influential factors in this dissatisfaction, which leads more than half of the physicians interviewed to express emotional fatigue. This obviously adds to the reasons of emigration, which include the quality of working conditions, remuneration, stability, social esteem, and professional flexibility.

That drain of physicians not only aggravates the deficit of medical specialists, but also has an economic and social impact on the country. In addition, the lack of investment in primary care, and the lack of measures to retain physicians within the borders naturally impacts on the quality of medical care proposed to the citizens. El Mundo underlines the need to invest in the training and retention of medical specialists in Spain and to make primary care more attractive to young physicians. If no action is taken, the deficit of specialists and the lack of investment in primary care will continue to be a growing problem in the Spanish healthcare system.

For further information, we invite you to listen to this podcast on the question published by *El Mundo*.

Listen to the podcast
[here](#).

EUROPEAN PROJECT SP4SE

The 13th of March, the European Commission has officially accepted the project proposal submitted by Confprofessioni as leader of a consortium composed by CEPLIS, the Maltese Federation of the Professional Associations (MFPA), and Equal Irland. These associations will thus become the beneficiary partners of this EU-funded Project focusing on **social dialogue**. The partners will benefit from the expertise of the Belgian National Union of the Liberal Professions (UNPLIB), the French National Union of the Liberal Professions (UNAPL), and the Council of European Professional and Managerial Staff (EUROCADRES).

The general objective of this new project is the strengthening of social dialogue at sectoral level by building the capacity of national social partners to tackle the need of self-employed and professionals to be covered by social protection floors. Another objective is to give stakeholders, including social partners, the tools to contribute to the design of social protection schemes reforms by the Member States, and to autonomously set up and manage social protection schemes, in line with Council Recommendation 2019/387.

The role of CEPLIS in this project will be multiple, as beyond the day-to-day cooperation with the partners, our Council will be the leader of the Work Package focusing on the awareness-raising campaign targeting the actors identified by the mapping report. CEPLIS shall also collaborate towards the success of an online campaign by promoting project activities through its social media and by organising a seminar towards this end in Brussels.



European Union
European
Social Fund

WEBINAR ORGANISED BY UNAPL ON THE DIGITAL SIGNATURE

The 18th of April, CEPLIS participated in an interesting webinar organised by our French colleagues of the National Union of the Associations of the Liberal Professions (UNAPL) focusing on the **current state of regulation regarding digital signature**. Several French experts on the issue were invited to comment on the state of affairs and on the challenges it entails.

The electronic signature is a process that guarantees the identification of the signatory parts, and the authenticity of the document, to ensure that the terms of the latter have not been changed between the time of signing and the time of reading. It is thus an indispensable tool for liberal professionals in a context of increased digitisation and cross-border provision of liberal services.

The **European Electronic Identification, Authentication and Trust Services (eIDAS) Regulation**, which came into force in July 2016, organises the recognition of the legal value of electronic signature within the EU according to three levels of security adapted every time to specific needs.

Most of the speakers insisted on the fact that in the liberal professions sector, security and reliability in terms of identity and electronic signature must meet the highest possible requirements. In that context they have identified challenges regarding confidentiality and traceability of digital exchanges, as well as the danger from existing loopholes.

The webinar was the opportunity to deepen our understanding of the European dimension of the issue, while discussing concrete approaches focusing on the needs of liberal professional exercise. Participants were helped to become more familiar with the legal, conceptual and practical framework for using electronic signatures, whilst the speaker from the French national certification authority has enriched the e-meeting by addressing concretely the procedure of issuing digital identities.



To learn more, visit UNAPL's webpage [here](#)

CONFPROFESSIONI CONFIRMED AS MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND LABOUR COUNCIL OF ITALY FOR A NEW TERM

The 27th of April, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy, confirmed Confprofessioni, represented by its President, **Mr. Gaetano Stella** amongst the members of the National Economic and Labour Council (CNEL) for the 2023-2028 term.

Mr. Gaetano Stella, expressed satisfaction for this recognition of Confprofessioni's works towards the development of the liberal professions in the country, and the betterment of the advice and services provided to their clients and patients, as well as to the country as a whole, and noted: *"In the last Council term, CNEL proved to be the privileged seat of social dialogue. The continuous confrontation with the social partners has allowed it to intervene on the country's most relevant economic and social issues, fully respecting the role that the Constitution attributes to it"* *"The reconfirmation of Confprofessioni for a new term represents an important stimulus for us to give new impetus to the dynamics of the labour market and the liberal professions, always through an innovative and shared vision."*



You may find more information about Confprofessioni [here](#).