

CEPLIS TELEGRAM

European Council of the Liberal Professions



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 - European Parliament hearings with Commissioners-designate to start on 4 November
 - EU priorities for the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women to Be Discussed Within the EP

News from Our Members:

- Press Release of the European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (FEG)

European Court of Auditors reply to the letter of the President of CEPLIS about the implementation of the “Professional Qualifications” Directive

Following the release of a **Special Report on the implementation of the Directive on the automatic recognition of professional qualifications**, by the **European Court of Auditors (ECA)**, on the 1st of last July (*see our general mail of 08/07/2024*), assessing that the tools and dispositions provided by the Directive in question remain scarcely and imperfectly used by Member States, the President of CEPLIS, **Mr. Gaetano Stella**, has addressed a letter to ECA in order to transfer to the institution the feedback of our membership.

President Stella thanked the Court of Auditors for its report, pointing out our agreement with its conclusions and underlining that, at a time of looming labour and skill shortages, **CEPLIS strongly believes that the European Commission should carefully review available options to guarantee that the Directive is used to its full potential.**

The President highlighted that the report supports our view that the current Directive is not up-to-date and need to be updated, asking ECA to strongly exhort the European Commission to review the implementation of the Directive and to swiftly take all necessary steps, including legislative, to guarantee remedy to the shortcomings rightly highlighted by the Court of Auditors.

Mr. Stella noted that addressing the current failings of the Directive is crucial to ensure that our economy has the qualified professionals it needs for the challenges of the next decades, and that, further action from ECA would not only bring about the necessary reforms, but would also give this very important EU institution a positive image as a key contributor to the betterment of the European project.

Answering on behalf of the European Court of Auditors, **Head of Task, Ms. Laurence Szwajkajzer**, thanked our President for our positive appreciation about their special report.

Ms Szwajkajzer informed President Stella that at this point of the process, ECA is discussing its findings and recommendations with the European Parliament and Council in order to improve the functioning of the professional qualification mechanism, noting that It is of course up to the Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council, to choose the most appropriate way to address the issues raised.



Gaetano Stella



The Head of Task assured our President that the European Court of Auditors follows up on how its recommendations have been implemented, underlining that this ensures accountability and promotes better governance within the EU.

She has also shared with us that, although this particular audit did not focus on EU funds, the findings and recommendations from ECA's performance audits are designed to help improve the way the EU's institutions operate, and if applicable, optimise the use of the funds in question.

CEPLIS should of course follow up on this with the MEPs of our network and with the European Commission, as soon as the members of the College are confirmed by the EP.

European Parliament hearings with Commissioners-designate to start on 4 November



The 2nd of October, the EP Conference of Presidents (EP President and leaders of political groups) agreed on the calendar for the hearings of the Commissioners-designate.

The hearings will start on 4 November and take place until 12 November. The Conference of Presidents also decided on the division of responsibilities among committees for the confirmation hearings.

The detailed schedule of which Commissioner-designate will be heard at what time will be decided by the Conference of Presidents at its next meeting.

The European Parliament invites Commissioners-designate to appear before the appropriate committees for hearings in order to scrutinise if they are suitable for the posts they have been assigned to.

European Parliament President Roberta Metsola said: ***“The hearings for the Commissioners-designate are an important moment for European democracy. European Parliament members will thoroughly vet every candidate's competence, independence and European commitment before voting on the College as a whole. Democracy will cut no corners. With a new legislative term comes new expectations. Rightly so, citizens want solutions to their concerns. The European Parliament will continue playing its role to ensure that our European Union delivers.”***

The procedure

Ahead of the hearings, Parliament's Committee on Legal Affairs scrutinises the declarations of interests of the Commissioners-designate. In order for a Commissioner-designate to take part in a hearing, there must be no conflicts of interest.

Depending on the portfolio, a Commissioner-designate can be assessed by one parliamentary committee (committee responsible) or by more than one committee (joint committees). Other committees may be invited to participate, meaning they can contribute with oral questions while the final evaluation of candidates lies with the coordinators of the committee(s) responsible.

The hearings will be followed by meetings in which the committee chair and group representatives (coordinators) of the various committees will assess whether a Commissioner-designate is qualified both to be a member of the College and to carry out the particular duties they have been assigned.



Once all hearings are completed, the Conference of Committee Chairs will assess the outcome of the confirmation hearings and forward its conclusions to the Conference of Presidents. The latter will conduct the final evaluation and decide whether to close the hearings.

Election of the Commission in plenary

After the hearings have been concluded, Commission President-elect Ursula von der Leyen will present the full College of Commissioners and its programme in plenary.

Her statement will be followed by a debate, and any political group or at least one-twentieth of Members of Parliament (low threshold) may table a motion for a resolution.

The full Commission needs the consent of Parliament (by a majority of the votes cast, by roll-call).

Once elected by Parliament, the Commission is formally appointed by the European Council, acting by a qualified majority.

EU priorities for the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women to Be Discussed Within the EP

On Monday, 14 October 2024, the FEMM Committee of the European Parliament will debate the draft recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

The main focus of CSW 69 being the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the FEMM committee will consider its recommendation to the Council.



The rapporteur is **Ms. Lina Gálvez, MEP**, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (ES)

As a reminder, the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality is responsible for:

- 1. the definition, promotion and protection of women's rights in the Union and related Union measures;**
- 2. the promotion of women's rights in third countries;**
- 3. equal opportunities policy, including the promotion of equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work;**
- 4. the removal of all forms of violence and discrimination based on sex;**
- 5. the implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors;**
- 6. the follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women;**
- 7. the encouragement of awareness of women's rights**

Press Release of European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations

We would like to share with all of you a press release recently issued by our observer member the European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations:



PRESS RELEASE

We are proud to announce that our FEG 23rd European Tourist Guide Meeting and FEG Annual Delegates' Meeting will be held from the 19th to the 24th of November 2024 on Rhodes Island, Greece.

This annual event is open to certified tourist guides from Greece and from our FEG member associations from across Europe and is an excellent opportunity for colleagues to meet each other, to network, to get to know the sites and beauties of Rhodes during the low season, attend FEG life-long training seminars delivered by our FEG-accredited trainers, and also relax and enjoy the local gastronomy and Greek hospitality.

Our colleagues will attend guided tours offered by the Rhodes certified tourist guides of Greece who are the local ambassadors of their area trained by the Ministry of Tourism to show us Rhodes Island.

The meeting is organised by the Dodecanese Tourist Guide Association, a member of the Panhellenic Tourist Guide Federation (POXEN) which is the national FEG member-association for Greece. It is supported by the Region of South Aegean and the Municipality of Rhodes.

The European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (FEG) founded in 1986, represents many thousands of qualified Tourist Guides in most of the countries of Europe, and is the only European professional umbrella organisation, based in France. It is the European voice of qualified tourist guides in front of all European institutions and the European Union.

Efi Kalampoukidou
FEG Ex.Co. President