



EESC, ULCIATI IN BRUSSELS FOR INT SECTION

The regular monthly meeting of the Single Market, Production and Consumption Section (INT) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), of which Councillor Ulgiati is a member, took place a few days ago in the Belgian capital, ending with the approval of important Opinions: "Digital Omnibus Package on Artificial Intelligence", "European Business Wallet", relating to a mechanism capable of proving the digital identity of a legal person, and the European Commission's "Strategic Foresight Report 2025", a document that outlines a long-term perspective for ensuring the resilience, competitiveness and stability of the European Continent in a global context marked by rapid change. It is therefore a high-level policy document based on key megatrends, developing a vision to help the European Union face future challenges and seize emerging opportunities. The Report also highlights important global developments, such as climate change, growing security threats and economic transformation, recommending a more innovative and forward-looking policy-making process. Councillor Ulgiati, speaking on the subject, stated that «all the issues addressed in the European Union's Strategic Foresight Report 2025 are important: autonomy in raw materials and energy, transition and the competitiveness of our businesses

and products». With regard to democracy, Ulgiati also stated that «we claim to be democrats and exporters of democracy, without even knowing whether our model is understood and well received». Finally, with regard to social cohesion, which is particularly important given the role played by the EESC representative, special emphasis is placed on «the protection of jobs and our workers, which is essential in order to provide coherent responses to all European citizens».



EU: INFORMAL SUMMIT ON COMPETITIVENESS

Although the Summit that just ended at Alden Biesen Castle, about 100 kilometres from Brussels, was not one at which EU leaders made concrete decisions, an effective result was nevertheless achieved: agreement on the urgent need to speed up efforts to untangle the knots that are holding Europe back. At the "retreat" of the 27 EU Heads of State and Government (preceded by a pre-Summit convened by Italy, Germany and Belgium, attended by 19 Countries and the President of the European Commission), economic issues were addressed with a focus on competitiveness and the Single Market. Guests of honour included Mario Draghi, who had recently spoken of the need for the European Union to embrace "pragmatic federalism" in order to avoid decline and become a global power, and Enrico Letta, who explained his view on how to make better use of the Single Market in a rapidly changing world. "One Europe, one market" is not only the title of the European Summit and the goal that the leaders of the European Union Countries have set themselves, but also what the European Commission is working on. The President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has announced and promised to present an action plan and a calendar with objectives and deadlines, a sort of roadmap, at the next European Council on the 19th and 20th of March with the aim of achieving a complete Single Market by the end of

2027, offering a preview of the draft agenda for competitiveness in Europe. The European Union is preparing for a historic change in competition rules. In April, new Guidelines for mergers will be published, with the aim of allowing mergers and acquisitions that will create large operators capable of competing on the global market and not just on the European market, enabling the creation of those "European champions" that have been lacking until now, hindered not only by EU rules but also by national Governments. Furthermore, before the next EU leaders' Summit, the Commission intends to present the Industrial Accelerator Act, the European draft law that authorises the creation of businesses more quickly, with rules that are the same everywhere and recognised in every EU Member State. In addition, the "28th regime", i.e. the regulatory framework for doing business digitally, will also be presented, while the first stage of the Savings Union is expected to be launched by June. With regard to the energy market, the European Commission will present several proposals for options at the next EU Summit. In conclusion, therefore, an informal European Council meeting was held in Flanders, Belgium, where the various leaders shared a "sense of urgency" and reached unanimous consensus on the need to push forward with the simplification agenda and achieve concrete results soon, because «there is no more time».