



EESC: COUNCILLOR ULGIATI AT THE TEN SECTION ON DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY

Europe's sovereignty is achieved through the production of goods and services and energy self-sufficiency, but data management has become a strategic issue. The European Union's digital sovereignty is threatened by structural dependencies on non-EU providers of cloud services, software, platforms, chips and AI systems. Cyber-attacks, insecure supply chains and the extraterritorial reach of foreign legal systems further weaken the EU's control over data and digital processes. Having cloud services independent of the seven US "Big Tech" companies and possessing the capacity to manufacture chips within European Countries are therefore essential prerequisites for achieving independent management of Artificial Intelligence, a tool with which every infrastructure must now contend. According to Councillor Ulgiati, who attended the meeting of the TEN

(Transport, Energy and Infrastructure) Section of the European Economic and Social Committee, held in Brussels on the 6th of October, at which the Opinion TEN 878 on EU sovereignty in the cloud was adopted, «democracy, information and the organisation of work are all made possible precisely through the guarantee of independent data management, with the foundation and control of such management residing in Europe». The EESC calls on the Commission to build on its existing work by providing clear guidelines on the interaction between the AI Act, the GDPR and the current social acquis. AI must improve working conditions, not replace or monitor workers. Social dialogue, skills development and the fair sharing of productivity gains are key prerequisites for successful digitalisation. «Through AI, we must improve workers' conditions, make jobs less monotonous and safer - said Ulgiati

- but we must pay attention to data security and to who makes the final decisions, bearing in mind that it cannot be a machine devoid of personality, or an algorithm, that decides, but rather a human being. Finally, we need investment not only in technology but also in training the workers of the future, because – he concluded – jobs are also safeguarded through the acquisition of new skills».



EU: TRIPARTITE SOCIAL SUMMIT

On the eve of the European Council, the Tripartite Social Summit took place in Brussels on the 14th of October. This is a biannual forum for dialogue that brings together the leaders of the EU Institutions and the European Social Partners. The discussion centred on the theme "steering Europe towards the future", with particular focus on the new Multiannual Financial Framework, which is intended to strengthen business competitiveness and support quality jobs, and on the Single Market, which must benefit both workers and businesses. The President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, linked competitiveness to social equity, setting out the priorities to be achieved: affordable energy costs, a strong Single Market that protects workers' rights, quality employment and a long-term European budget that preserves Europe's "social DNA". Translating Europe's economic ambitions into concrete improvements is "more urgent than ever" for businesses, which are overburdened by rigid regulation and in need of investment to create quality jobs. For the Trade Unions, Europe must have the courage to increase its own resources, including through a European digital tax, whilst the next budget must maintain a strong, separate European So-

cial Fund with increased resources. Reference was also made to the "Quality Jobs Act", a forthcoming EU legislative proposal, which is set to introduce binding rules to put an end to precarious work and exploitation, as well as to the social unrest spilling onto the streets, with workers suffering because their wages are out of proportion to the exorbitant costs of housing, energy and food. Social dialogue, an essential part of the European Social Model, remains the way forward to ensure that a strong economy and a just society go hand in hand.

