



PRESS RELEASE

HERE IS PROMETHEUS, A SOUTHERN EUROPEAN VOICE TO SHAPE THE EU DIGITAL AGENDA

- The Digital Conference that took place yesterday marked the debut on the EU stage of PromethEUs, a new network of four think tanks committed to bringing a Southern European perspective into the EU-wide debate on the digital revolution
- The event provided a forum to debate on the two major EU digital policy initiatives of the coming years: the AI legislative framework and the Digital Services Act
- The conference gave the floor to 20 high-level speakers, including EU and national key decision-makers, and brought together more than 100 stakeholders from Brussels and the national capitals

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PromethEUs - a new network of four Southern European think tanks – marked its debut on the EU stage hosting yesterday its first Digital Conference, entitled “*A new framework for Europe’s digital rules. Leading the path towards AI and digital services revolution*”.

As the European Commission is preparing to put on the table in the coming months two of the main legislative packages of the current institutional cycle – the Artificial Intelligence legislative framework and the Digital Services Act – and the debate on those issues has been intensifying within the European Institutions and in the national capitals, PromethEUs provided a forum for an open and high-level discussion in order to take stock of the Commission’s Digital Strategy in view of the next institutional steps.

The conference gave the floor to 20 high-level speakers, including EU and national key decision-makers, and brought together more than 100 stakeholders from Brussels and the national capitals, including representatives from EU and national institutions, research and business organisations, trade and consumer associations and other relevant stakeholders.

Among the speakers, there were **Roberto Viola**, Director General, DG CNECT, European Commission, who delivered a keynote speech on “*Setting European Rules for the Global Digital Era*”; **Mirella Liuzzi**, Undersecretary of State, Italian Ministry of Economic Development; Members of European Parliament **Eva Kaili** (Chair of the Panel for the Future of Science and Technology, STOA); **Alex Agius Saliba** (Rapporteur on DSA), **Pablo Arias Echeverría** (Shadow Rapporteur on DSA), **Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques** (Vice-Chair IMCO Committee); AIDA Special Committee Members **Edina Tóth** (Vice-Chair), **Brando Benifei** and **Susana Solís Pérez**. Speakers also included the current and future chairs of the EU Council Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society, **Robert Dehm**, Permanent Representation of Germany to the EU and **Ricardo Castanheira**, Permanent Representation of Portugal to the EU.



PromethEUs was represented by **Stefano da Empoli**, President, I-Com – the Institute for Competitiveness; **Óscar Fernández**, Senior Researcher, EsadeGeo; **Aggelos Tsakanikas**, Scientific Advisor, IOBE.

In his keynote speech, Roberto Viola said:

“The fingerprint of digital made-in-Europe is a human-centre approach: first and foremost, digital shall aim at advancing our human interaction, our quality of life, and our society as a whole. Europe’s ambitions shall consist both in investing in excellence and in using the EU’s political capital to set clear rules (data governance, digital services, human-centric AI). This could give a European direction to the digital transformation and making digital the solution for a long-lasting growth”.

Mirella Liuzzi said in her address:

“The Italian way to AI is to conduct the ecosystem towards a more desirable combination of competition and cooperation. For Europe, it is crucial to create the basis for a valid, trustworthy and transparent AI capable of generating trust in users. On the DSA package, as stated in the PromethEUs’ remarks, the regulatory framework should guarantee a trustful level playing field, without overbearing platforms and hindering new entrants and SMEs from entering their marketplaces”.

In the closing remarks, Eva Kaili said:

“In order to play a significant role in the digital transformation and foster its competitiveness at global level, the EU will first need to ensure that its industry, particularly SMEs and startups, has the access to high quality data. On the other hand, when it comes to digital policy, Europe’s essential role on the global scene should consist in creating the standards, working on the governance issues, and influencing its global competitors (US and China)”.

On the future AI legislative framework, PromethEUs’ representatives stated:

“A EU-wide regulatory approach is preferable in order to avoid major risks of internal market fragmentation and therefore Member States should refrain from unilateral moves and look for agreements and alliances at a EU level. Also, EU objectives to increase R&D and productive excellence should not jeopardize the possibility for EU citizens and companies to have access to the best available AI technologies at a competitive price – and therefore a balanced approach should be used fully taking into account the interests of all the concerned parties, including the vast majority of citizens and companies that would be adopters rather than R&D and/or commercial producers in the AI ecosystem.”



On the upcoming Digital Services Act, PromethEUs' representatives said:

“In redesigning the rules, it is important to ensure an effective system of protection for users, but it is essential, at the same time, to avoid the risk that the regulatory system hinders the entry into the market of new companies (intermediaries and sellers) and discourages innovation and the provision of new affordable services to citizens and businesses. Therefore, the regulatory framework should guarantee a trustful and reliable playing field, without overbearing platforms and hindering new entrants and SMEs from entering their marketplaces. At the same time, full liability should be required for platforms selling their own labelled products.”

WHAT IS PROMETHEUS?

PromethEUs is an independent network of four Southern-European think tanks active in their respective countries and at EU level in the fields of economic, business and geopolitical research. Its mission is to constructively contribute to the current European policy debate on the digital revolution by providing a perspective from Southern Europe. PromethEUs aims at being engaged in the debate surrounding the EU Institutions' digital agenda, with a special focus on SMEs and citizens' and employees' skills.

PromethEUs brings together [I-Com, Institute for Competitiveness](#) (Italy), [EsadeGeo - Center for Global Economy and Geopolitics](#) (Spain), [IOBE - Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research](#) (Greece) e [Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos](#) (Portugal).

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