

PRESS RELEASE

European lawyers celebrate European Day of Justice

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Brussels, 25 October 2017 – To mark the European Day of Justice, Europe’s lawyers have invited policy-makers and regulators to reflect on the opportunities for safeguarding the Rule of Law in the EU.

To celebrate the European Day of Justice on 25th October and the close connection between lawyers and justice, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) has decided for the first time to organise European Lawyers’ Day on the same day. This year, European Lawyers’ Day is dedicated to the evolving relationship between lawyers, clients and citizens in the context of the fast-moving modernization and technological transformation of our society and, inevitably, of the legal profession. The CCBE’s member bars and law societies will organise public events and initiatives across Europe to mark this important day.

“The legal profession welcomes the positive effects of new technologies in assisting citizens to access a lawyer and – through their lawyer – to access their rights, and to access justice. It is indispensable for the Rule of Law and the legal profession to adapt to new technologies and changing times”, said Philip Buisseret, Secretary-General of the CCBE.

In addition to new technologies, new laws and regulations are also affecting the role, duties and organisation of the profession. The profession welcomes such laws and regulation when they strengthen the profession’s role in society and enable it to adequately carry out its duties towards citizens and respect their rights. However, laws must continue to be cautiously analysed and understood, to make sure they do not limit the free and independent exercise of the legal profession, as this would negatively affect citizens’ rights.

In the wake of this evolution, the CCBE emphasises the importance of safeguarding the essential role that lawyers play in providing access to justice for citizens and maintaining the Rule of Law. This is especially pertinent in view of the Commission’s plan to launch an initiative on the Rule of Law next year, as announced this week in its 2018 Work Programme.

“The CCBE calls upon policy makers to engage in dialogue with lawyers and their organisations and to make sure that the fundamental democratic principles, that uphold citizens’ rights to seek legal advice and the fair administration of justice, are safeguarded throughout the modernization of justice, legal services and law enforcement.”, said Ruthven Gemmill, President of the CCBE.

About the CCBE:

The CCBE represents the bars and law societies

of 45 countries, and through them more than 1 million European lawyers. Founded in 1960, the CCBE is recognised as the voice of the European legal profession by the EU institutions, and acts as the liaison between the EU and Europe’s national bars and law societies. The CCBE has regular institutional contacts with those European Commission officials, and members and staff of the European Parliament, who deal with issues affecting the legal profession. The CCBE is an international non-profit-making association incorporated in Belgium.

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