

**Fulvio Pastore - Alinante (SILS's managing partner)
has issued a presentation at the conference held on 21 June 2018,
organized by the Italian Lawyers Pension Funds Association
on the following topic**

**"The present and the future of the legal profession
between Italy and Europe"**

To begin the President of the Italian Lawyers Pension Fund Association, Nunzio Luciano, introduced the issues to be discussed during the day, emphasizing the need to "give answers to the Italian legal profession, especially to its weaker side: not just pensions, but also assistance today for those who are more in need, such as our female colleagues and young people who are taking up the legal career".

Mr. Luciano also pointed out the role that the Presidents of the different Regional Italian Lawyers Pension Fund Associations can jointly play also by interacting at a regulatory level within the European Institutions: "with one million and six hundred thousand professionals represented in Italy", added Mr. Luciano addressing directly to the Undersecretary for Justice, who was in the room, "it is necessary to have an organization and to put pressure on authorities in order to better use the (few) economic resources available".

Following the Secretary of Censis, Giorgio De Rita, and his colleague, Andrea Toma, showed the results of the "Italian Report on the Legal Profession 2018".

The numerical increase of the members of the Italian Lawyers Register is noteworthy: in 1995 there were 83,000 lawyers (62,000 men and 21,000 women) which have tripled in a little over twenty years, up to about 243,000 in 2017 (127,000 men and 116,000 women, the latter with a growth of six to one in comparison to 1995). In spite of such increase, the average income of lawyers has suffered a significant reduction (from 55,092 Euro in the year 2008 to 38,437 Euro in the year 2017).

De Rita pointed out the "polarization" phenomenon of such incomes, with a "strong growth dynamics for male lawyers, coming from central-northern Italy,

who work in big cities", against "a less favorable future for young people than that of their own parents", as highlighted by the Censis survey, according to which the legal profession is increasingly less attractive to young people because "it forces them to precariousness for too long" (44% of the answers) and "it no longer ensures appropriate professional opportunities" (21% of the answers).

This is confirmed also by the general decrease of enrollment at law universities, which entails, among other things, "greater difficulty in finding trainee lawyers", as noted by the President Luciano, who also recalled – with regard to the nowadays legal profession – that today Italians get much more information through the Internet, but they "demand transparency, fairness and involvement from lawyers".

The conference also focused on the topic of lawyers' companies with the participation of shareholders which are not professionals. The Censis survey about this matter highlighted, among the concerns of those who answered, that "the partner who is not a professional, by bringing capital, could influence the activity of its professionals partners for its own interests" (36% of replies) and that "the participation of shareholders who are not professionals increases, in any case, the risk of conflict of interest" (22% of replies). Another element of serious concern refers to the "drop of prestige of the legal profession", a phenomenon observed by 76% of those who answered to the survey, highlighting also that "the reduction of incomes has generated lawyers' opportunistic behaviors, affecting the image of the legal profession".

Mr. Francesco Giorgino (renowned journalist and moderator of the conference) reminded that during the event "Right to the Future" organized in Milan on 18 May 2018 by ASLA-Associazione Studi Legali Associati, besides anticipating a part of the results of the Censis Report discussed so far, in that occasion other issues has been tackled with particular attention, such as the topic of "diversity" and the diffusion of discrimination, like the gender one (the most perceived), the discrimination against disabled people, against individuals' sexual identity and more.

The second part of the conference began with a round table with the participation of the lawyers Donatella Ceré for the National Lawyers Council,

Giovanni Malinconico for the Lawyers Congressional Body, Alberto Vermiglio for the AIGA-Italian Association of Young Lawyers, Luigi Pansini for the National Lawyers Association and Riccardo Santi for the National Union of Civil Chambers.

Ms. Ceré replied to the incitement proposed by Mr. Giorgino ("here is the problematic trinomial: woman, young and from the South") and to the often mentioned example of the current logistical difficulties of the Court of Bari, saying that the legal profession must be able to grab "the fastest opportunities to solve conflicts: the legal professional should be more like an entrepreneur in the sense that he/she should concretely deal with and quickly solve the problems of the client" and Mr. Malinconico emphasized the need for "modernization of the legal profession, also with reference to the phenomenon of the so-called monocommissioning"; this is an essential value that has been ascribed by everybody to the concepts of "prestige, income, perspectives and updating".

After that, the conference continued with the participation of five regional Council Members (Lombardy, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia Romagna, Molise and Apulia) who explained their respective programs in favor of professionals and the related forms of financing, assistance and support: from direct contribution lines (non-repayable amounts, subsidized loans, guarantees and counter-guarantees) to free replacement of our colleagues on maternity leave and support for young lawyers in order to help them to complete their studies also abroad, for their training and self-employment activities, up to innovative projects also about technological development in the legal sector, all this by using also the European funds that can be accessed.

Following, the President of the European Parliament, Mr. Antonio Tajani, started his speech that focused on the invitation to all Italian professionals – and to the Institutions and organizations that represent them – to constantly keep themselves updated, to equip themselves and to promptly participate in the numerous European initiatives, taking all the opportunities they offer.

The second round table led by Mr. Franco Smania – again with the presence of the regional Representatives – highlighted many innovative intervention forms (as well as the great usefulness of different points of discussion and

comparison, like today among the Regions themselves, in order to share projects and refine the tools used), with further speeches given by other female and male colleagues who play important roles within the Italian Lawyers Pension Fund Association (including the "CFLabEuropa" Commission). Such round table concluded a fruitful day, with a large and attentive participation in the conference room.