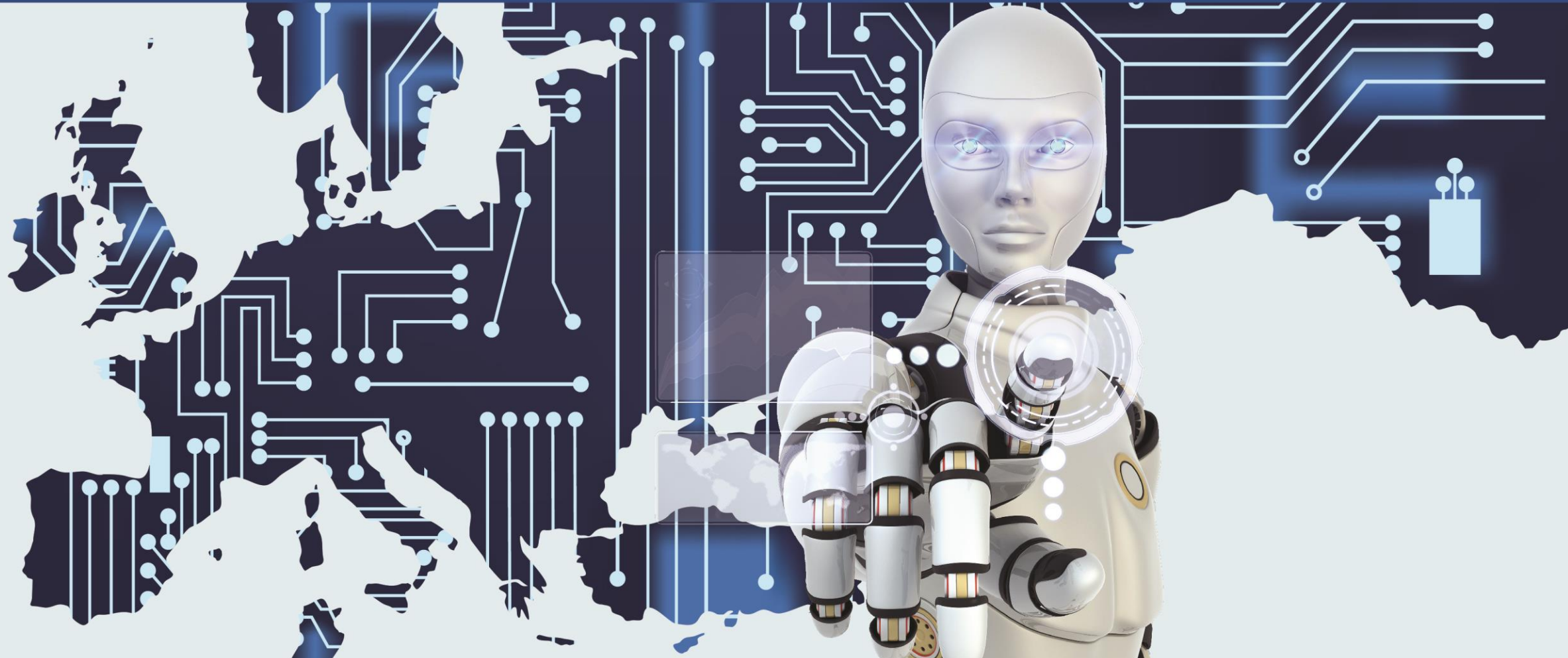


# INNOVATION AND FUTURE OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION



21/10/2016, Paris

## L'INNOVATION ET L'AVENIR DE LA PROFESSION D'AVOCAT



# **INNOVATION AND THE FUTURE OF LAW FIRMS**

**CCBE Conference on the future of the legal  
profession**

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## I. PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS

- The role of lawyers in society
- The nature of the legal services
  - Is the legal profession different from other professions?
  - The “telos” of the legal profession

## WHAT IS COMMODITISATION

- The real problem: legal services are becoming unaffordable to many
  - But this is not happening in all jurisdictions
- Describing the phenomenon of commoditisation
- Who decides what commoditisation is
- What commoditisation is not, or not so much.
  - The risk of treating as commodity what it is not, or not so much
    - Confusion of clients
    - Excessive price cuttings
    - An (even more) insecure sector
- The exact importance of **processes**

## INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

- Examples of innovation led by technology
  - Voice transcripts,
  - Software for managing M&A projects, or Due Diligence processes
  - Case law searchers
  - Paperless office
- Examples of other types of innovation
  - Using non legal experts (for example, psychologists)
  - Clever use of support staff
  - Clear processes for similar cases
- Processes and technological innovation
- Disruptive technological innovation in the future?

## THE REAL ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

- Technology is not an end in itself, is it?
- Do we really want to transform lawyering from professionals to capital intensive activity?
  - Risk of oligopolisation
  - Barriers of entry
  - Loss of Independence?
- What the experts say, and whether they are sufficiently clear on their own agendas.

## THE FUTURE OF LAW FIRMS

- The law firms of the future will be those that:
  - Are innovative on partner remuneration (or make sure it works)
  - Amalgamate talent through diversity
  - Incorporate good processes for parts of the work that really allow for them
  - Discriminate correctly what can and cannot be commodity
  - Educate young associates
  - Have a social sense of their roles and help dignify the profession as a whole
  - (Debatable) Rather than focusing purely on efficiency and maximising benefit (with some pro bono activities to counteract these effects), they also represent clients than cannot pay as much.
  - Pledge, and ensure, that they will ALWAYS decide in favor of their clients.

## CONCLUSION

SOCIETY AND THE RULE OF LAW NEED A RELIABLE PROFESSION