Video: Watch the Purpose of the Corporation Conference

Click on the title of each session to watch in full or click an individual speaker’s name to watch their ten minute speech.

This event brought together a diverse range of stakeholders from academia, business, civil society and policy makers. To discuss the popular conception that corporations exist primarily to maximize shareholder value, consider how this relatively new concept became embedded in legal and social norms, debate the problematic implications of this approach from a management, economic, environmental and social perspective, and to start to think about what we can do about it in Europe generally and to share some concrete recommendations and examples.

The event was hosted by Mr Richard Howitt MEP and organised by Frank Bold in conjunction with the Modern Corporation Project, Cardiff Business School.

Session 1 Introduction

Filip Gregor, Section Head, Frank Bold and Professor Hugh Willmott, Research Professor in Organisational Studies, Cardiff Business School.

Simon Pickard, Director General, The Academy of Business in Society.

Professor Paddy Ireland, University of Bristol Law School.

Robert Madelin, Director-General, European Commission, Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology.

Session 2: Company Law

Professor Andrew Johnston, Professor of Company Law and Corporate Governance, University of Sheffield School of Law.

Jean-Philippe Robé, Ecole de Droit de Sciences Po.

Professor Lynn Stout, Distinguished Professor of Corporate & Business Law, Cornell University Law School. Author of “The Shareholder Value Myth: How Putting Shareholders First Harms Investors, Corporations and the Public”.

Company Law : Questions & Answer Session

Session 3: Economics, accounting, politics, sustainability.

Professor Gerald (Jerry) Davis, Wilbur K. Pierpont Collegiate Professor of Management, Ross School of Business and Professor of Sociology, The University
of Michigan. Author of “Managed By the Markets: How Finance Reshaped America” (via video).

**Professor William Lazonick**, Professor of Economics at University of Massachusetts Lowell and Director of the UMASS Lowell Center for Industrial Competitiveness. Author of “Sustainable Prosperity in the New Economy? Business Organization and High-Tech Employment in the United States”.

**Dr Dieter Plehwe**, Research Fellow, WZB.

**Professor Beate Sjåfjell**, University of Oslo, Faculty of Law, Department of Private Law and Project Leader for the research project ‘Sustainable Companies”.

**Session 4 Voices from practice 1**

**Richard Howitt, MEP**

**Session 5 Voices from practice 2**

**Susannah Haan**, Secretary General, European Issuers.

**Klaus Niederlander**, Director, Cooperatives Europe.

**John Montgomery**, Silicon Valley based corporate attorney, entrepreneur, executive coach and author of “Great from the Start: How Conscious Corporations Attract Success”.

**Marcello Palazzi**, Co-founder, B-Lab Europe.

**Question and Answers session** (Audio only)

**Session 6 Voices from practice 3**

**Susanne Stormer**, Vice President, Corporate Sustainability, Global Stakeholder Engagement, Novo Nordisk.

**Bennett Freeman**, Senior Vice President Sustainability Research and Policy, Calvert Investments, Inc.

**Pierre Habbard**, Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC)

**Session 7: What can be done about it?**

**Professor Andre Spicer**, Professor of Organisational Behaviour, Cass Business School.

**Mark Drewell**, CEO, Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative.

Read participants’ ideas about what can be done about it here.