

How can Public Affairs professionals contribute to getting Europe out of the crisis?

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Europe's crisis is a crisis of confidence. Confidence in the banking system, in the Eurozone, in institutional policy making, and in European integration itself. Public affairs professionals can help to restore this confidence. How? By acting as the link between policy makers and the wealth and job-creators - a link which the crisis has undermined. If The European project is to get back on its feet, then each side must better understand the aspirations of the other.

Policy makers in key EU institutions need to define policies which can be effective and job creators have to implement them without damaging their ability to function. With the knowledge amassed during more than 50 years' experience in Europe, public affairs professionals can explain, encourage, simplify and stimulate the interface between the institutions and their clients. They are on hand to explain to clients what EU policies aim to accomplish and how they can be put into practice. On the other hand, they also debate with the institutions about what is achievable and what isn't.

Essentially, they form the filter between both sides with the aim of aiding the implementation of effective, non-bureaucratic solutions to the crisis. With their understanding of the arcane construction of both the institutions and their clients, they can design problem solving solutions to this often abrasive relationship. They know people on both sides and can give them a human dimension.

Some of the greatest achievements in human construction have been achieved through mutual trust and renewed confidence is what Europe needs today. The setting up of a think tank within EPACA, bringing together public affairs professionals of all ages, could contribute to this project by providing a platform upon which views, independent of client interests, could be shared.