



7th EU MEETING OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMUNITY OF EUROPE (P.A.C.E)

ATHENS, 12TH – 13TH May 2017

PRESS RELEASE

The Public Affairs Community of Europe (PACE), which gathers national associations of lobbyists and public affairs professionals across Europe, has held its 7th EU annual meeting on May 12th-13th in Athens, Greece, hosted by the Greek colleagues of **Palladian Communications**.

This year's debate focused on the current legal developments on lobbying regulations across Europe, where new provisions are under discussion in many Countries such as Czech Republic, Spain and Romania.

The increasing attention on lobbying activities and the strict link with transparency, integrity and the decision-making process, has determined a growing number of legislative proposals which also led to the setting up of many lobbyists national associations in Europe, passing from 10 national associations in 2010 to 15 associations in 2017.

The phenomena don't concern just EU Countries, but it is spreading across Europe. For this reason, PACE has decided to invite national associations established outside the EU boundaries, such as in Switzerland and Serbia, as well as the Brussels-based organizations, EPACA and SEAP, adopting therefore an inclusive approach to share a common view on such issues, in order to promote a more homogeneous framework.

PACE is committed with the values of *Transparency and Professionalism*. For this reason, as in the past three years, Transparency International, represented by Mr. **Daniel Freund** this year, took part in the event. We were also honoured with the presence of Mr. **Charis Kountouros** of the Greek EP Representation, and Prof. **Yannis Panusis**.

Considering therefore the expansion of the Community and its increasing representativeness, the PACE community has decided to take a major step forward and register an **international non-profit association (AISBL)** in Brussels, while maintaining its Secretariat in Rome.

Additionally, Ms. **Maria Rosa Rotondo** (Spain) was elected as President of the new AISBL, with Mr. **Giuseppe Mazzei** (Italy) as Honorary President, and Ms. **Laura Florea** (Romania), Mr. **Dominik Maier** (Germany) and Mr. **Vaclav Nekvapil** (Czech Republic) as Vice-presidents. Mr. **Eric Schell** (France) accepted the role of Treasurer, and Ms. **Micol Bertoni** was confirmed as Secretary General.

According to the new President, Ms. Maria Rosa Rotondo "*Setting up an international association in Belgium, while maintaining our traditional Secretariat in Rome, is a major step forward for the PACE Community, who wants to raise attention of the European institutions and the national Governments on the critical importance of fostering a balanced framework of rights and obligations for lobbyists across Europe.*"

The next PACE meetings will be held in May 2018 in Cyprus (Nicosia) and in May 2019 in the Czech Republic (Prague).

PACE - Public Affairs Community of Europe

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About PACE

PACE is a Europe-wide community of National Lobbyists Associations and public affairs professionals committed with the enhancement of the positive role that transparent lobbying can provide to democratic participation.

Current participants represent national public affairs associations of Austria (OEPAV), Bulgaria (Bulgarian Association of Public Affairs Specialists – BAPAS), Czech Republic (APAA), Cyprus (Cyprus Association of Lobbyists and Public Affairs Professionals Ltd - LPAP), Croatia (HDL), France (AFCL), Italy (Il Chiostro), Germany (de'ge'pol), Romania (RLRA), Spain (APRI), The Netherlands (BVPA), Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland (SSPA) and public affairs professionals of Greece, Portugal or Estonia, among other Countries.

PACE was launched as a joint Initiative of The Italian Association "IL Chiostro" and the Spanish APRI on the 7th of May 2011 in Rome as a common platform of national organizations of European public affairs professionals and lobbyists. In the following years annual meetings were organized in Madrid (A.P.R.I. - 2012), in Paris (A.F.C.L. -2013) and in Berlin (DE'GE'POL - 2014), in Vienna (OePAV-2015), in Bucharest (RLRA-2016) and in Athens (Palladian Communication – 2017)

More info ([click](#))

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