



## Press release

### **ESAE Annual Congress brings together opportunities in the new Europe**

October 2009

On October 22, 50 association and meetings professionals gathered at the Hotel Amigo in Brussels, Belgium under the auspices of the European Society of Association Executives to discuss the changes in the European Institutions resulting from the fast-evolving landscape of European policy and institutions. The event was chaired by ESAE President and Director General of the International Fertilizer Association Luc Maene.

Following a gala networking dinner on the evening of 21 October, the day began with Martin Selmayr, Spokesperson of the Information Society and Media (Commissioner Viviane Reding) who suggested that EU Institutions need to welcome and even encourage associations to be part of the dialogue in order to help the EU make the best possible decision for the citizens. Jeroen Jansen, International Director, DLA Piper UK LLP looked at the participation of stakeholder groups in the decision-making process as a key factor in Europe's multi-part democratic system. Filippo Addarii, Executive Director of Euclid Network spoke about his organisation's support for the third sector – support that works by fostering partnerships with national bodies in Europe sharing knowledge on good governance, sustainable funding and 'soft power.' Julia Bateman of the EU Office of the Law Society of England and Wales used her organisation as a living example of the way members can be given direct help navigating through today's economic crisis. John Graham, President and CEO of the American Society of Association Executives and the Center for Association Leadership also used the example of his own powerful association to highlight how lobbying efforts benefit a range of non-profit groups in the US, aiming to support thousands of associations by protecting tax status and encouraging strong partnerships..

Afternoon sessions opened with Mark Carrigan of Brakeley Fundraising and Management Consultants who gave his insights on successful fundraising campaigns and how to apply global fundraising lessons to even the smallest association; he comments, "Wealth is still out there and can be tapped into but it needs to be done with increasing professionalism and focus." Esa Härmälä, Director General of the European Fertilizer Manufacturer's Association, led a discussion on how the power balance in Europe is being redefined in the face of ever looming question of enlargement.

A panel discussion followed, led by Tim Caswell of UIA (who also provided visual minutes for the event) and Marcel Vissers, Editor in Chief of *Headquarters* magazine. The day's major themes were outlined as a way to stimulate debate on the future of European associations and ESAE's role – starting with a discussion of the role of research statistics and culminating with an audience debate on priorities, goals, and our roles in shaping the future of associations and their influence in Europe.

Presentations can be found on the Institute's website: [www.esae.org](http://www.esae.org)

The full report on the event can be found at <http://www.esae.org/archive-09congress.htm>

Ends

**Notes to Editors:**

ESAE - the European Society of Association Executives - is the premier, European association supporting and representing association managers in Europe. ESAE provides an international framework for round-tables and presentations throughout the year, highlighted by keynote speakers from senior levels in industry, government and association management.

ESAE members enjoy a range of opportunities to learn and exchange ideas and insights with other association executives across the continent and beyond. Throughout the year, members can access a wealth of events, seminars, networking initiatives and educational activities supporting their ongoing requirements for continuing education, professional recognition and information exchange.

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