

Elevate Your Influence: EU Stakeholder Engagement in an Election Year

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Stakeholder engagement is a critical aspect of political processes, particularly during election years. Elections bring about significant changes in leadership, policies, and priorities, making it essential for stakeholders to actively participate in the democratic process.

“Within the EU, public affairs professionals are poised to play a crucial role in shaping policy outcomes and navigating the political landscape. In this context, stakeholder engagement emerges as a cornerstone strategy for effective advocacy and influence,” says Geraint Edwards, managing director of FiscalNote in Europe.

In this report, we explore the importance of stakeholder engagement during an election year and highlight the significance of implementing the right strategies and tools to enhance engagement efforts.



Stakeholder Engagement: A Cornerstone in EU Public Affairs

As the EU election year unfolds, stakeholder engagement remains a cornerstone strategy for public affairs professionals seeking to navigate the political landscape and drive impactful change.

“Effective stakeholder engagement is not just a strategy; it’s a commitment to democratic principles and inclusive governance,” says Sebastian Rodriguez, campaign strategist and founder of the **European Campaign Playbook**. “In this EU election year, engaging diverse stakeholders is crucial for driving meaningful change and ensuring that policy decisions reflect the needs and aspirations of all citizens.”



Here are some key impacts of effective stakeholder engagement:

✓ Understanding Stakeholder Needs

Engaging with stakeholders is a crucial part of a successful government affairs strategy because it allows you to better connect with all parties involved in your issues and understand their needs and goals. You can achieve this through interviews, surveys, and feedback sessions, to name a few. By understanding your different stakeholders' needs, you can find the commonalities and tailor your strategy and language to get buy-in, meet those needs, and ensure that all stakeholders are satisfied with the outcome.

✓ Policy Impact

Elections often lead to shifts in political power and policy priorities. Engaging with new policymakers early helps them understand the implications of proposed policies on different sectors of society and protect your organizations' interests.

✓ Showcase Progress and ROI

Effective stakeholder engagement demonstrates ROI by clearly showcasing project progress and impact. Regular communication and feedback align stakeholder expectations with outcomes, ensuring transparency. This fosters trust, highlights achievements, and validates the value of your efforts, ultimately justifying investments and facilitating continued support.

✓ Representation and Advocacy

Engaging with a diverse set of stakeholders such as other businesses, non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, employees, and customers ensures that your message reaches policymakers through different and diverse voices, giving it a better chance at being considered in policymaking and electoral decisions. Through active participation, stakeholders can help you advocate for your key issues and influence political agendas.



The Role of Public Affairs Professionals to Engage With Decision-Makers

"In an EU election year, engaging with stakeholders becomes paramount for shaping policy agendas and ensuring that key issues are addressed," says Rodriguez. Stakeholder engagement enables public affairs professionals to build relationships, garner support, and influence decision-makers, thus increasing their impact and protecting their organizations' interests.

One of the most important and challenging jobs of a government affairs professional is to engage and communicate with stakeholders effectively. Creating a coherent plan to manage the people and data that can help move your issues forward can ensure an organised, successful strategy for the rest of the year and well into the future.

Perhaps the most important way to connect with stakeholders is to stay on top of the issues that matter most to them. This isn't necessarily a constant — issues can change rapidly, so it's vital to stay up-to-date on stakeholder issues.

"Whether you're the head of EU affairs, a policy director, secretary general, advocacy officer, or regulatory affairs manager, you know the importance of effectively engaging with legislators, offices, and agencies working in the EU. Ensuring your organisation's objectives are consistently voiced to key stakeholders is essential to advancing your public policy agenda," shares Edwards. "Keeping track of, engaging with, and managing relationships with these individuals is arguably one of the most important aspects of your role."



Stay Ahead With Policy Alerts and a Complete Directory of EU Stakeholders Driving Decisions

With so many stakeholder relationships and issues to manage, it's important to stay organised and have the most up-to-date information at your fingertips.

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By leveraging tools such as EU Issue Tracker and its stakeholder directory, you can effectively engage with key decision-makers and shape policy outcomes in the European Union



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