

Creating maximum benefit for meetings in Europe

Europe is a leading destination for business conventions. The European industry body is working to make organising conferences in Europe even easier, and creating new links with Australia, writes Nicolas Le Brun, President of EFAPCO.



Nicolas Le Brun, President of the European Federation of the Associations of Professional Congress Organisers (EFAPCO)

The contribution of congresses, meetings and business events to global economic and social development needs to be further underlined every day. Our industry is steadily evolving and helping the world understand the concrete impact our sector has on progress – technological innovation, medical advances, social improvement, exchange of best practices, networking...in fact communication and exchange in all sectors of human progress.

The European Federation of the Associations of Professional Congress Organisers (EFAPCO) has a key role to play within this drive. We are dedicated to helping the world's convention and business travel organisers gain the maximum benefits from holding their events in the globe's leading destination continent.

Improving professional development opportunities

We are researching and working in many areas of professional development to make it ever easier for global organisations to come to Europe. We now have a special committee dedicated to establishing increasingly effective pan-European professional standards for professional congress organisers (PCOs).

'The contribution of congresses, meetings and business events to global economic and social development needs to be further underlined every day.' Nicolas Le Brun



Below: Europe is a leading destination for conferences, meetings and other business events. Image Big Stock Photos.



Studies are also being undertaken to help EFAPCO campaign for consistent and more easily understood VAT regulations as they impact the meetings and events industry. We are also examining the regulations that cover the conduct of medical meetings in member countries.

The national associations of PCOs, which compose our full membership, are elemental to us. Eleven associations to date, they represent well over 1000 companies active in the meetings industry and each association holds an equal weight within the Federation's board.

They are all specialists who can help overseas planners to gain maximum benefit from bringing their events to Europe.

This representation and the ongoing work of the board has enabled EFAPCO to confirm the validity of its mission and establish itself as a recognised voice for, and among, Europe's decision-makers.

New links with Australia

EFAPCO now has a new and special link with Australia's own conventions industry.

We have become the 12th major conference industry organisation to join the worldwide membership of the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC). The President of JMIC is Australia's leading industry mover and shaker, Mr Leigh Harry, Chief Executive Officer with the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre.

EFAPCO's progress within Europe can now be felt around the globe, particularly in countries like Australia, which have their own professional and remarkably successful conventions and business events industry.

About EFAPCO

The European Federation of the Associations of Professional Congress Organisers (EFAPCO) is a non-profit institution headquartered in Brussels. The Federation complements the national activities of its members enabling professional conference organisers to have a single strong voice in Europe. It represents well over 1000 companies active in the meetings industry across 11 member countries.

Web

www.efapco.eu

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Advancing the industry in Europe and worldwide

In just six short years, EFAPCO appears to have made great progress in forging strong links with the European Union, and we hope that will help to reinforce JMIC's drive to gain greater recognition for the meetings and events industry, worldwide, as well as across Europe. We are looking forward to making an active contribution to the work undertaken by JMIC.

Mr Harry has said: 'We want to ensure that JMIC has the ability to represent the interests of the full spectrum of international industry organisations, and the addition of EFAPCO to our ranks is a further strengthening in that regard. As we have said previously, it is important that we can, as an industry, present a strong and united front when the need arises, and our sense is that time is now.

'JMIC's primary role and opportunity is to create an overall voice for the industry and to provide a mechanism for collective action in areas where this is required. In this regard, the access and relationships that organisations like EFAPCO can bring to the table will be extremely valuable in advancing overall industry interests.' ■

Left: The conference industry contributes to global economic and social development.

Image: Big Stock Photos.



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