

# The State of European Public Affairs



Data, insights and case studies  
from industry leaders on  
public affairs management  
in Europe

2025



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## Section 1 | Executive Summary

**F**or the first time, the Public Affairs Council has conducted a comprehensive survey of public affairs structures, strategies, budgets and activities for European public affairs functions.

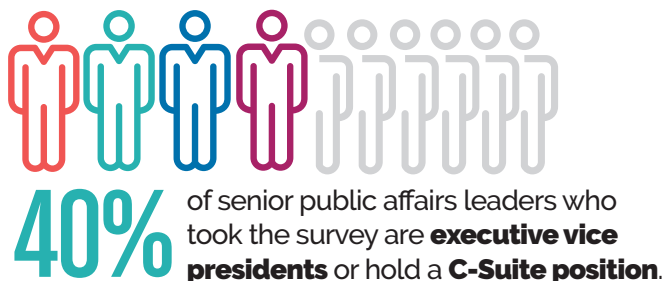
Our **State of European Public Affairs Benchmarking Report 2025** arrives at a critical juncture. As geopolitical tensions rise, regulatory pressure intensifies, and protectionism gains ground, public affairs leaders need smarter tools and sharper strategies to stay ahead. Based on in-depth data from top companies and associations across Europe, this report offers an essential snapshot of how the function is evolving—what's working, where the gaps are, and how to build influence in a volatile environment.

Our findings are clear: public affairs is no longer perceived as a support function, but as a strategic driver. Leaders are closer to the CEO, budgets are growing, and teams are expanding their reach into ESG, risk, and reputation. But the pace of change is relentless, and emerging tech like AI is reshaping the game. This report is both a mirror and a playbook for international public affairs leaders seeking to lead with confidence in an era of uncertainty.

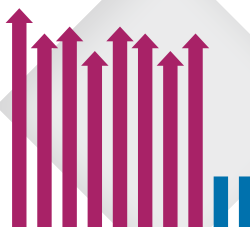
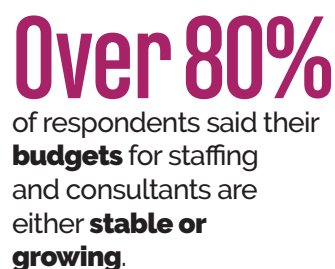
This report builds on the Public Affairs Council's existing research in both Europe and the United States, enabling us to compare trends on both sides of the Atlantic. We received responses from stakeholders in associations and corporations working in Brussels and throughout Europe.

Here is an overview of our findings:

### Organization and leadership

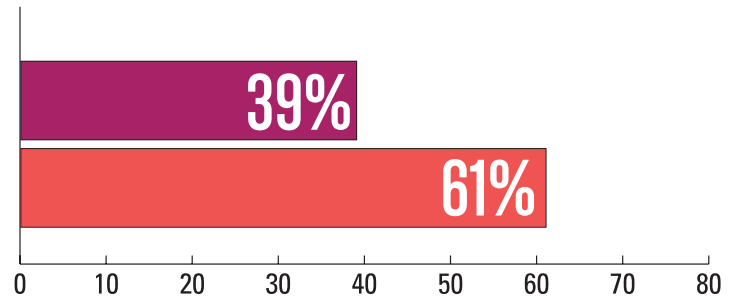


### Budgets and Staffing

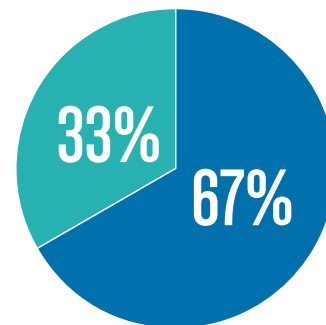


## Strategies and Tactics

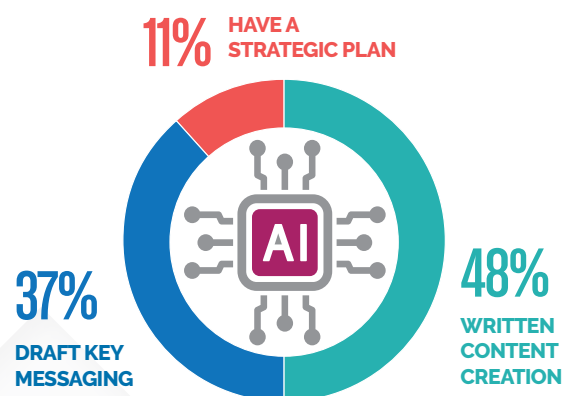
- A majority of organizations (61%) report **their CEO is extensively or moderately involved** in government relations.



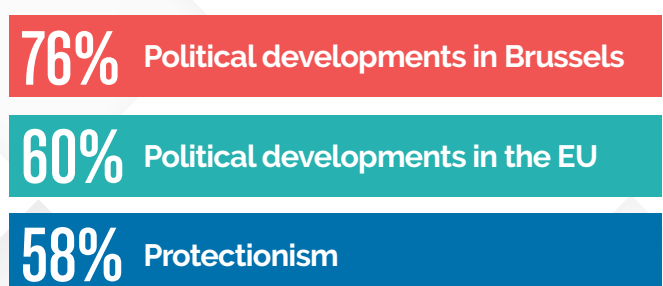
- More than two-thirds of responding companies **rely extensively on their trade associations** to assist with public affairs tasks.



- Respondents use **artificial intelligence (AI)** primarily for written content creation (48%) and to help draft key messages (37%), but only 11% have developed a strategic plan for building AI into workflows.



- Issues topping the list of **factors that most impact organization's operating environment**.







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### **About the Public Affairs Council**

Both nonpartisan and nonpolitical, the Public Affairs Council is the leading association for public affairs professionals worldwide. The Council's mission is to advance the field of public affairs and to provide its 750+ member companies and associations with the executive education and expertise they need to succeed while maintaining the highest ethical standards.

