



Sixth Meeting of the High-Level Reflection Group on the Future of the Commission's Civil Service

2 September 2026, Brussels & Online

Meeting minutes

Main objectives of the meeting

The aim of the sixth meeting was to discuss the first draft of the final report along with a deeper discussion on three key areas: portfolio-management, de-prioritisation and leadership.

The Chair of the High-Level Reflection Group, Catherine Day, opened the meeting by welcoming all members. The chair then opened discussion on the three main points on the agenda: portfolio-management, de-prioritisation and leadership.

Portfolio-management

In the discussion on cross-departmental working and portfolio-management, members agreed that improving cooperation across departments and harnessing expertise leads to better policy delivery. They identified some key conditions for success, including appropriate incentives, strong support from leadership, common objectives with clear prioritisation, and a clear governance framework. The need for the centre to steer the cooperation was also highlighted as important, as was the requirement for a single clear owner even when several departments collaborate on a project.

De-prioritisation

Regarding de-prioritisation, members stressed that the process should be centrally driven yet closely linked to services, with mechanisms such as sunset clauses embedded by design. They noted that adaptive capacity is essential in all organisations today to free up space for the required capabilities and skill sets needed to continue to deliver effectively.

Leadership

On the topic of leadership, members highlighted the importance of defining the leadership capabilities necessary to operate effectively in today's complex and volatile environment. They underlined the need for systems that enable and support talent to the greatest possible extent.

Next steps

The chair outlined the proposed timeline and process for drafting the final report, along with suggested dates for the remaining meetings.

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place on the 30 September.

List of participants

Chairperson

Catherine Day

Members

Mirosława Boryczka

Luukas Ilves

Darja Isaksson

Luis Romero Requena

Giorgios Pitsilis

Maria Schack Vindum

Theresa Twachtmann

Absent

Marco Daglio

European Commission

Stephen Quest

Paul McAleavey

Ana Carrero

Lauren O'Hanlon