

Europe Direct Contact Centre

Online information meeting

European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication

Jens Mester, Head of Unit; Morten Espelund, Head of sector; Ioan Vascan, Deputy Head of unit

Email contact: COMM-EDCC-TENDER-2025@ec.europa.eu

12 December 2024

The EU's contact centre



**EUROPE DIRECT
CONTACT CENTRE**

00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 • europedirect.europa.eu

- The Europe Direct Contact Centre (EDCC) replies to questions from citizens about any EU matter
- By phone, email and chat (instant messaging app(s))
- In 26 different languages (24 official EU languages, as well as Ukrainian and Russian)
- Is financed and managed by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communication



Activity level

- **Quantity:** The contact centre replies to +/- 175 000 questions in 2024 from citizens in Europe and beyond
- **Communication channels:** +/- 70% email; 25% telephone; 5% chat
- **Languages:** English 40-45%; German and French each 9-10%, plus 23 other
- **Topics:** Very wide range of topics.

Most are about individual rights and opportunities for citizens offered by the EU. Also some political hot topics.

All replies provide factual information, generally publicly available, but geared to individual situations as needed. No legal advice or administrative case handling, nor replies to press enquiries.



Task of operator

The European Commission outsources the operation of the contact centre as a complete service.

The main responsibilities of the operator are :

- **to employ the necessary staff**

All replies to citizens are given by human staff who speaks the language the citizen chose to use

- **to operate a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) IT system and the communication channels**

The CRM is the contractor's own choice

- **to operate a knowledge base**

The content to use in the replies are provided by the European Commission, but managed and updated by the contractor



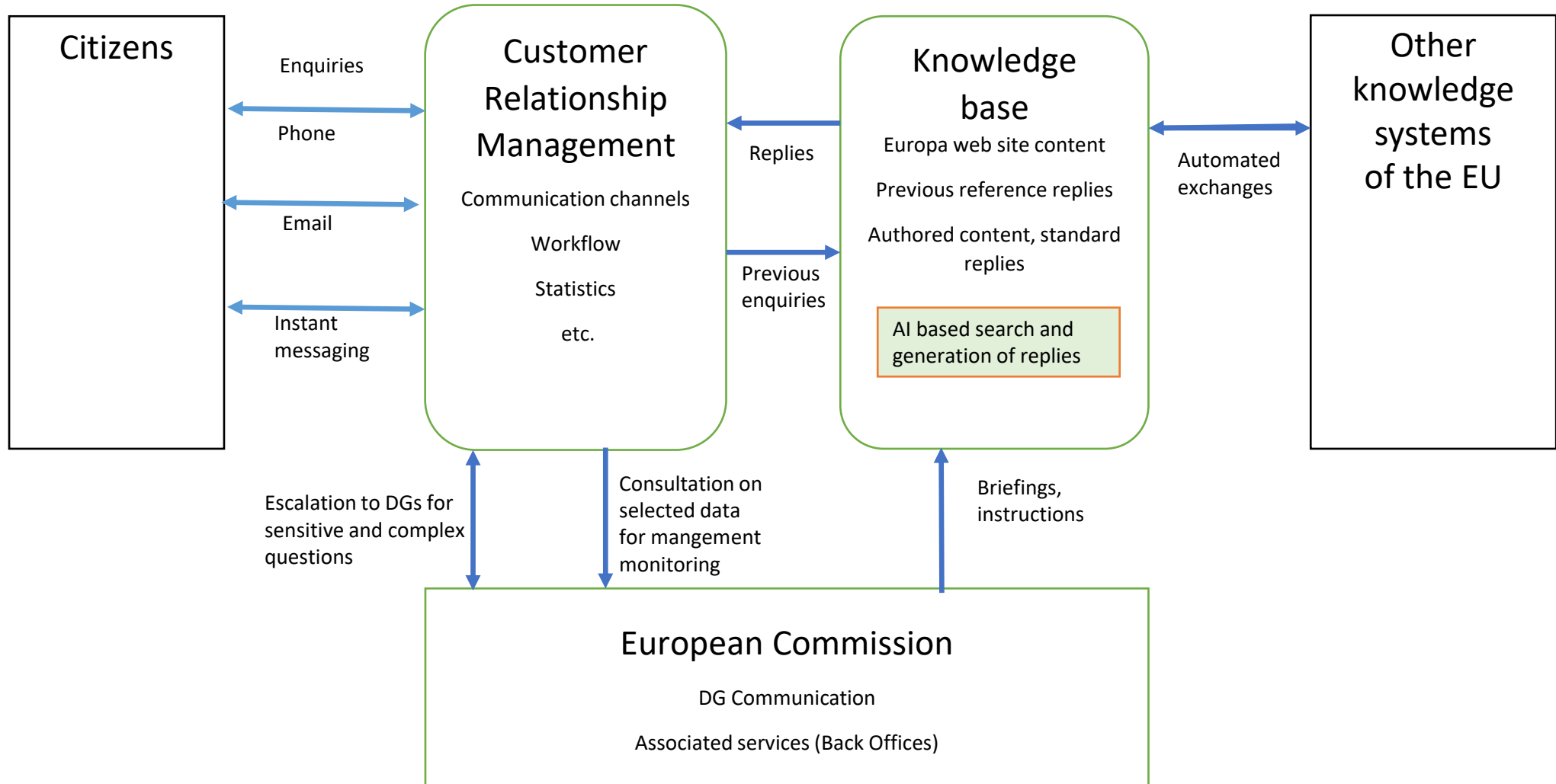
Type of procedure

The European Commission will employ an **open procedure** pursuant to article 167(1) (a) of the EU Financial Regulation:

- **Timeline:** publication and submission during Q1/Q2 of 2025
- Will cover the necessary volume based on current estimates
- Contract will be concluded for **5 years**
- Minimum **selection criteria:** the call for tenders will define the kind of economic operators that may apply
- Award using '**best value for money**': balance between reference price and quality score – with the aim to increase quality of service, efficiency and AI integration.



Overview of operations



Artificial intelligence (AI)

The operator runs state of the art AI Tools to

- find elements of reply in the knowledge base and generate draft replies (each validated by the human staff);
- support the efficiency of daily operations. E.g. classification tasks.

All AI tools are

- processed internally by the operator, without transmitting any data to commercial AI tools;
- flexible to adopt over time to connect and integrate with European Commission knowledge and AI systems.
- following EU data protection and AI rules (GDPR, AI Act, etc.)



Questions asked during the meeting

Timeframe about the publication of tender	<p>The call for tenders will be published and the submission will be expected in Q1/Q2 2025 with an appropriate submission deadline that takes into account the complexity of the services requested, in all likelihood more than the minimum submission period mandated by the EU Financial Regulation for EU budget execution.</p> <p>Please refer to the TED portal and EC webpage on business opportunities in communication as per links below:</p> <p>TED – EU Tenders, the Supplement to the Official Journal - TED</p> <p>Tender opportunities - communication - European Commission</p>
Is your service outsourced today?	Yes, the EDCC is managed by an external contractor for the Commission.
Would we receive any further information about the average handling time per channel and language?	The current handling times are not public. Please refer to the expectations of the Commission in the tender technical specifications once published.
The selection criteria apply to the consortium as a whole or only to the consortium leader?	Generally, the selection criteria apply to the tendering entity, whether it is an individual company or a consortium, in which case they can be fulfilled with contributions from all members of the consortium.
Would the services need to be fully delivered from inside the EU?	Please refer to the tender technical specifications once published.



<p>Is there a communication and events management component or is it more the operational set-up of the Centre?</p>	<p>The contract concerns the operation of the EDCC only. It is important not to confound the EDCC operations with the local outreach and engagement operations of Europe Direct centres in member states, which is managed differently and separately by the Commission.</p>
<p>Publication in TED: do we get a reminder or do we get the information directly?</p>	<p>We cannot remind individual market operators that the tender is published. Please refer to the TED portal or the Commission page of communication business opportunities (as per the links above), where an automatic mailing setup can be activated.</p>
<p>You mentioned that the operator should cover 26 languages (EU languages + Russian + Ukrainian): does this mean that the chosen should foresee Russian and Ukrainian speaking operators?</p>	<p>Yes, this is correct. For further details please see the tender documents.</p>
<p>Do you foresee any change in languages to be covered over the duration of the contract ?</p>	<p>We don't currently anticipate any changes in the current language setting. The language regime might however be subject to changes over the duration of the contract in view of the accession and preparation of new EU member states.</p>
<p>Will there be cascade planned or is this a single-contractor contract?</p>	<p>Please refer to the tender documents once published.</p>

<p>Is the service today a 24/7 service? What are the hours of operation?</p>	<p>The normal EDCC opening hours are from 9:00 to 18:00 CET on week-days. For further details, please refer to the tender technical specifications once published.</p>
<p>What is the size of the EDCC team? Do you expect to have bi- or trilingual agents?</p>	<p>Please refer to the tender technical specifications once published.</p>
<p>On the requested AI integration: is this meant for research purposes only or would you expect an automatic respond functionality?</p>	<p>AI features are meant to render the EDCC operations more efficient and take into account technological developments over the lifetime of the contract. An automatic respond function is not required.</p>
<p>Considering efficiency gains, AI integration and the complexity of managing 26 languages: do you have an intention to cover additional services within the EU?</p>	<p>Please refer to the tender documents once published.</p>
<p>Will the online automatic translation tool from the EC be available under this contract?</p>	<p>Yes. For further information please see https://commission.europa.eu/resources-partners/etranslation_en</p>

Thank you



© European Union 2024

Unless otherwise noted the reuse of this presentation is authorised under the [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license. For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders.

