

ANNEX

Work programme for 2026 for communication

1. “*This must be Europe’s Independence Moment. I believe this is our Union’s mission. To be able to take care of our own defence and security. To take control over the technologies and energies that will fuel our economies. To decide what kind of society and democracy we want to live in*”.

–State of the Union Address, President Ursula von der Leyen, 10 September 2025.

Part I – General overview

Political context

The European Commission’s communication activities aim to inform citizens and stakeholders about the EU, its policies and the benefits it delivers for Europeans. They are carried out and financed within the Commission’s institutional prerogatives and administrative autonomy ⁽¹⁾. The 2026 work programme of the Directorate-General for Communication (DG Communication) draws on:

- the seven priorities set out in the Political Guidelines for the next Commission 2024-2029 ⁽²⁾, as well as the Mission letters addressed to the Members of the College;
- the Commission work programme for 2026⁽³⁾;
- the State of the Union 2025 - Letter of Intent to the European Parliament and the Council⁽⁴⁾;
- DG Communication’s management plan 2025 and the strategic outlook 2025-2029⁽⁵⁾.

The Political Guidelines for the 2024–2029 mandate set a clear agenda for the Commission, emphasizing a strong focus on defence and security, sustainable prosperity and competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, crisis, disaster and humanitarian response, and the protection of democracy and the rule of law. The overarching goal is to position the EU as a global leader while delivering tangible results for Europeans.

In its first year, the von der Leyen Commission II has advanced on these priorities. It launched the Competitiveness Compass to accelerate the twin clean and digital transitions, fostering innovation and driving Europe’s decarbonisation. The Commission has made progress in strengthening European security, defence and crisis preparedness. Social fairness has been advanced through targeted measures addressing energy affordability, inflation, and housing support. At the same time, the Commission is working to uphold democracy and the rule of law, reinforcing resilience in Europe’s institutions and societies. These efforts demonstrate the Commission’s commitment to delivering on its ambitious agenda and meeting the expectations of European citizens.

In the 2025 State of the Union Address the President of the Commission confirmed and reinforced the priorities outlined in her Political Guidelines. It also charted the course ahead putting a sharper focus on

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2024/2509, Article 58(2)(d) and (e).

⁽²⁾ [Europe’s Choice – Political Guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029, 18 July 2024](#).

⁽³⁾ COM(2025)870 final of 21.10.2025.

⁽⁴⁾ [State of the Union 2025 - Letter of Intent to President Roberta Metsola and to Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, 10 September 2025](#)

⁽⁵⁾ DG Communication Management Plan 2025 ([DG COMM 2025 Management Plan](#))

the current challenges, notably competitiveness and innovation, geopolitical resilience, social cohesion and continued commitment to democracy, rule of law, and values.

Communication activities for 2026

President's von der Leyen's Political Guidelines for the Commission 2024-2029 presented a vision of a stronger Europe that delivers prosperity, security, that protects and empowers people and defends democracy. To make these priorities a reality, DG Communication works in cooperation with key stakeholders across the Commission as well as beyond to deliver on these priorities operating on three key fronts:

1. Supporting the President and the College with high quality communication products, services and insight, including at national and local level: DG Communication develops and provides the President and the College of Commissioners with around-the-clock integrated communication and political insight services. As part of DG Communication, the Spokesperson's Service (SPP) provides key political and strategic communication on Commission policies and initiatives to the press and media, in coordination with the other relevant teams. European Commission Representations in Member States complement this support to the President and the College with country-specific political insights and policy analysis to the College and senior Commission management. DG Communication also monitors citizen's perspectives on priorities and topics of significance for the EU through the analysis of public opinion, media and social media.
2. Providing strategic steer to the Commission's external communication efforts: DG Communication strives to bring the EU closer to its citizens by making the Commission visible in the information landscape across all Member States, promoting core European values and highlighting the impact of EU initiatives on the daily lives of citizen, *inter alia* via corporate and local campaigns, social media and other communication activities, web-based communication and collaborating with content creators.
3. Promoting engagement with European citizens and fostering their participation in EU policymaking: DG Communication works to connect the EU with its citizens, providing accessible tools for dialogue and engagement and reliable sources of information, as European Citizens' Panels, EUROPE DIRECT centres, EU Local Councillors, and other networks.

DG Communication will develop a communication strategy to reach out to and engage with citizens, businesses, stakeholders and external partners. This will be based on:

- a definition of core values, a mission, messages and tonality to deliver strong and consistent communication across channels and to different audiences; and
- an integrated and coordinated method to work with relevant services and other EU institutions, ensuring the whole Commission's communication activities are joined up, coherent and have more impact.

The communication activities will focus primarily on:

- boosting **Europe's competitiveness and prosperity guided by the Competitiveness Compass**. This entails implementing the Clean Industrial Deal, simplifying regulations to make doing business easier and deepening the Single Market. This includes fostering a more circular and resilient economy, boosting research and innovation, reaping the potential of digital technology, in particular AI, to build tech sovereignty, investing in sustainable competitiveness and tackling

skills and labour gaps; making it simpler for business to invest and thrive; communicating the ‘Choose Europe’ brand to make Europe an even more attractive place to invest and innovate;

- championing a new era of **European defence and security** by reinforcing the EU’s defence industry, enhancing capabilities, and boosting preparedness and resilience in a challenging geopolitical landscape;
- **supporting people by strengthening our societies and our social model**, taking into account people’s concerns and promoting initiatives that ensure social fairness, affordability, equal opportunities and quality jobs;
- promoting and **sustaining our quality of life** by ensuring food security, promoting the quality of European food, protecting water resources and preserving nature; building a resilient, sustainable environment that safeguards the health and wellbeing of current and future generations;
- **protecting our democracy, upholding our values** by continuing rolling out value-driven corporate communication campaigns, such as the democracy campaign, stepping up work on countering foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) through the European democracy shield. This includes promoting citizen participation through proactive communication, promoting digital and media literacy, boosting participatory and deliberative democracy, and engaging citizens -especially youth- in EU policymaking, via citizens’ panels on key policy topics and youth policy dialogues, in close cooperation with DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and other and other Commission services;
- supporting outreach to partner countries in the context of **a global Europe** through effective and targeted communication on the EU’s role in the world, particularly towards citizens in partner countries, with a focus on the Global Gateway investment strategy, outreach and engagement on enlargement, in both the EU Member States and candidate countries and potential candidates, trade, as well as the EU’s engagement and investment in the neighbouring countries and the Mediterranean; and
- delivering together **and preparing the EU for the future**, by making a strong case for the ambitious, dynamic and flexible long-term investment budget for 2028-2034 proposed by the Commission, while continuing to showcase the impact and added value of NextGenerationEU and the Recovery and Resilience Facility; and preparing future enlargement and a potential Treaty change strengthening the Union’s capacity to act effectively in a changing world.

In addition, DG Communication will continue communicating on the EU’s solidarity with Ukraine, continued humanitarian assistance to Palestinians, support to the two-state solution and reconstruction of Gaza, the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, the delivery of projects funded by NextGenerationEU in the Member States, as well as the 40th anniversary of EU membership in Portugal and Spain.

DG Communication will continue working closely and upstream with the responsible departments in a matrix format to develop integrated communication plans, narratives and communication material about these priority topics.

DG Communication will also implement corporate communication as the Commission’s main tool for reaching out to Europeans and informing them about the EU policies that directly affect their lives. It plays an important role in showing the added value of the EU as well as more generally making the EU better known. Corporate communication will focus on the priorities identified in the Commission’s political guidelines, particularly on EU values. The branding strategy will be finalised and consistent strategic communication campaigns will be implemented.

Another priority of corporate communication will be to support the Commission's strategic communication capabilities, including its response to FIMI and actively contributing to the European Democracy Shield. More efforts need to be invested in factual communication and in timely responses that are conveyed through the appropriate communication channels.

Policy initiatives linked to Europe's security and defence, sustainable prosperity and competitiveness, and protecting democracy and upholding EU values, or to strengthening our societies and social model will require a dedicated communication effort. Corporate communication will continue to highlight the effort to maintain and improve quality of life and support people and society.

It will also be important to highlight to EU citizens the EU's extensive engagement with neighbouring and partner countries across the world to reduce dependencies and build reliable partnerships and tackle global challenges such as climate change, poverty, conflict, humanitarian crises and migration, as well as the EU's commitment to international law and human rights – work that benefits both the EU's partners and the EU itself.

As in previous years, corporate communication will enable us to share our messages both inside and outside the EU. We will use digital channels as well as traditional media but also dedicated partnerships.

Citizens' participation and direct communication through major events, physical meetings and visits, for example in the context of Europe Day, may also be used to convey our messages.

In 2026, DG Communication will also:

- provide high-quality press relations and communication services to the President and the College of Commissioners;
- proactively address the risk of FIMI, including by contributing to boosting societal resilience and promoting digital and media literacy;
- support the planning and delivery of policy priorities through modern and innovative communication products, including through a diverse set of social media platforms, impactful corporate and localised communication campaigns and improved web presence;
- monitor and analyse media and social media as well as public opinion, intercept new trends and pressing points, and use this knowledge to shape proactive and reactive communication;
- engage with the local level in the Member States and their regions and local communities. Adapt key messages to suit local contexts and sensitivities, as well as running local communication campaigns. This will enable the communication to be tailored to specific audiences, making use of Commission Representations, EUROPE DIRECT centres⁽⁶⁾ and the new network of EU Local Councillors, among others. The aim is to increase the public's knowledge and awareness of the Commission's activities and its policy priorities, and gather opinions and feedback to analyse contributions and inform the decision-making process;
- collaborate with multipliers, including content creators, mainly through the study trip and pro bono model;
- encourage citizens' engagement activities in partnership with policy DGs and the Secretariat-General, in line with the policy priorities. It will focus in particular on young people, making sure they can use their voice to help shape our future;

⁽⁶⁾ Previously called Europe Direct Information Centres

- monitor the impact of our communication to continuously refine and adapt its approach, achieving even more effective engagement with different audiences.

As domain leader in external communication⁽⁷⁾, DG Communication will continue to ensure the coherence, consistency and coordination of communication activities across the Commission. It will do so by:

- ensuring governance of corporate communication, together with the Secretariat-General, and close engagement and alignment of communication actions with the other Commission services and EU institutions;
- steering and preparing corporate communication campaigns and actions;
- coordinating the Commission's social media presence on the Commission central account and the Representations' and other local accounts, and ensuring consistency of messaging with services' social media accounts;
- leading a whole-of-Commission approach to visual communication, and enforcing visual identity rules for priority initiatives;
- streamlining communication procurement through quality centralised framework contracts, as well as continuously improving assistance to other DGs, including EU delegations;
- ensuring, improving and rationalising the Commission's web presence on europa.eu with a view of providing access to information about the EU and Commission's action to the citizens and stakeholders and further improving user experience; and
- improving the visibility of the Commission's engagement activities with citizens, in partnership with policy DGs, including through corporate social media, web and other channels.

If the funds allocated to these or other activities cannot be spent as planned, the flexibility clause provided for in Article 3 of the Decision on the financing of DG Communication's operational activities and on the adoption of the work programme for 2026 gives the DG the possibility to reallocate the funds between the different actions up to 20% of the total amount of the financing decision.

Part II – Grants, prizes and procurement

1. Introduction

Legal basis: Article 58 (2) FR -The Commission's communication activities fall within its political autonomy as an institution and within its institutional prerogatives⁽⁸⁾.

Based on the budgetary remarks of budget lines below under Article 07 20 04 and Heading 2B 'Investing in People, Social Cohesion and Values', of the Draft Budget of the European Union for the financial year 2026⁽⁹⁾ and the objectives set out in DG Communication management plan 2025 and the strategic outlook 2025-2029, the work programme sets out the actions to be financed and the budget breakdown for 2026:

⁽⁷⁾ Communication to the Commission on Synergies and Efficiencies in the Commission – New Ways of Working, SEC(2016)170 of 4 April 2016, and Communication to the Commission – The Synergies and Efficiencies Initiative: stock-taking and way forward, C(2019)2329 of 26 March 2019.

⁽⁸⁾ See Footnote 1.

⁽⁹⁾ The Union's annual budget for the 2026 financial year, COM(2025)300 of 9 July 2025.

Budget line	Activity	Grants (point 2)	Prizes (point 3)	Procurement (point 4)	TOTAL (in EUR)
07 20 04 02	Executive and corporate communication services	500 000		48 692 000	49 192 000
07 20 04 03	Commission Representations	1 350 000	58 900	27 160 100	28 569 000
07 20 04 04	Communication services for citizens	16 833 000		14 974 000	33 657 000
Sub-total				90 826 100	111 418 000
14 20 04 03	Information policy and strategic communication for external action ⁽¹⁰⁾			4 475 000	4 475 000
TOTAL		18 683 000	58 900	95 301 100	115 893 000

Funds will be delegated to DG Digital Services (DIGIT) from two of the budget lines mentioned in the table above to be implemented through service contracts and to co-finance corporate IT systems and services. The amounts correspond to 5% of the allocation of each line. As announced in the Commission's Communication on the guidelines on financing of information technology and cybersecurity (IT) ⁽¹¹⁾, budget line 07 20 04 02 will contribute to the corporate IT budget with EUR 2 459 600 and budget line 07 20 04 04 with EUR 1 678 350.

2. Grants

The global budgetary envelope reserved for grants under this 2026 work programme is **EUR 18 683 000**:

	Budget line	Activity	2026 (in EUR)
2.1	07 20 04 02	Strategic communication and digital and media literacy	500 000
2.2	07 20 04 04	Information centres (EUROPE DIRECT centres)	16 833 000
2.3	07 20 04 03	Communication by Representations	1 350 000
Total			18 683 000

These budget lines also cover possible evaluation and professionalisation as well as digital and artificial intelligence tools, infrastructure and services of the communication activities described below.

2.1 DG Communication – strategic communication and digital and media literacy – EUR 500 000

⁽¹⁰⁾Communication on Corporate communication action in 2024-2027 under the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework, C(2023)6467 final of 29.09.2023.

⁽¹¹⁾Guidelines on Financing of IT, C(2020)6126 final of 10.9.2020, C(2020)6126 of 10 September 2020.

Objectives

In line with the Political Guidelines and in order to mobilise civil society in boosting societal resilience and tackling FIMI and disinformation and raising awareness of it, DG COMM will support innovative solutions, in the form of grants for 2026, for organisations working in particular on:

- identifying via independent research gaps in disinformation responses left unaddressed by current strategic communication activities;
- promoting community building and digital and media literacy outreach based on the results of the 2025 grants' pilot

Type of applicants

Civil society groups, youth organisations, public authorities, associations and foundations, and other organisations at national, regional and local level with their own legal personality, registered in an EU country.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication.

2.2 Information centres (EUROPE DIRECT centres) – EUR 16 833 000

EUROPE DIRECT centres remain a key instrument for EU outreach to citizens at regional and local level, in conjunction with other EU outreach networks and channels such as EU local councillors, the joint network with the Committee of the Regions.

Following calls for proposals launched in 2025 by the Representations of the European Commission in the Member States for selection of partners to host EUROPE DIRECT centres during the next five years (2026-2030), a new generation of EUROPE DIRECT centres will start its activities as of 1 January 2026.

Set up in 2005, the EUROPE DIRECT network has been at the forefront of the communication strategy of the European institutions, and it constitutes a unique tool to engage with citizens on EU-related topics at local and regional level. The mission of the EUROPE DIRECT network is to bring the EU closer to its citizens. EUROPE DIRECT centres are well connected with local communities (e.g. civil society associations, local networks, local media, schools, libraries, youth centres, business associations, local influencers and local councillors, other EU outreach centres, etc.), know the topics of interest and sensitivities in their area, are experienced in communication and outreach and have the capacity to connect to citizens and engage in a dialogue about the EU and its benefits at general and local level.

Objectives

EUROPE DIRECT centres' objectives are to:

- to inform about EU policies and actions, in particular those that have an impact at local level, thus increasing the visibility of such policies and actions;
- to listen to the concerns of citizens on issues that fall under EU responsibility and relay those concerns to the European Commission Representation in the relevant country,

- to engage with citizens in an open dialogue about the EU and its impact in their everyday lives to reinforce and/or create ownership of the European project and stimulate participation in the European democratic process;
- to contribute to European civic education;
- to contribute to the creation of a European public sphere.

Type of applicants

Depending on the Representation, the eligible applicants hosting the individual centres include public bodies, private bodies with a public mission, federations/associations of local authorities, non-profit organisations, social partners, and educational or training establishments.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication.

Each year, under the signed Framework partnership agreements, the Representations will sign a specific grant agreement (the grant agreement for year 2026 is included in the signed Framework partnership agreement) with these partners following an invitation to submit proposals and subsequent evaluation of their proposals, for which they receive an annual grant to implement their annual communication plans (provided they are successful).

2.3 Communication of Representations – EUR 1 350 000

2.3.1 Calls for proposals for citizens' engagement, events and awareness raising

Description, objectives pursued and expected results

In 2026, these activities will focus on the Commission's priorities, as set out in the Political Guidelines 2024-2029 and the Commission work programme for 2026. Communication and media actions will focus on what the EU delivers in terms of real benefits for Europeans. The aim is to increase the public's knowledge and awareness of the Commission's activities and its political priorities, to gather opinions and feedback, to analyse contributions and feed them upstream into the decision-making process. These activities will help increase knowledge about the EU among citizens, including young people, and fight against disinformation, including through raising awareness and promoting digital and media literacy.

The activities should help to forge closer links between the public and the EU, particularly by informing citizens about the roles and activities of the various EU institutions and helping to increase their engagement with the EU. Regional, local and civil society partners, including members of the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, and members of the EU Local Councillors network, will also help to forge closer links with the public.

Types of applicants

Civil society groups, youth organisations, public authorities, associations and foundations, and other organisations at national, regional and local level with their own legal personality, registered in an EU country.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication

2.3.2 Increasing awareness of the values of European democracy and the rule of law

Description, objectives pursued and expected results

This activity aims to increase pupils'/students' understanding of European democracy, how it functions and how it interacts with national decision-making by emphasising the EU dimension in policymaking.

2.3.2.1 Framework partnership agreement with the House of Democracy and Rule of Law

This partnership agreement with the House of Democracy and Rule of Law (ProDemos) in the Netherlands aims to increase awareness about the values of European democracy and the rule of law, and to promote debate and political participation among young people. It will allow students to learn how the EU's decision-making process works and how it connects to the national process. The positive response of the public and the feedback received by the students participating in this initiative justify the continuation of this exclusive partnership.

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award

Description of the activities to be funded by the specific grant(s) directly awarded under framework partnerships, as well as of the objectives pursued and the expected results.

Created by a ministerial decision by the Dutch government in 2008, ProDemos opened its doors in 2011. Its objective is to increase knowledge about the principles of democracy and the rule of law and improve understanding of how democracy works at national level and in the European context. It also aims to promote active political participation of a broader section of society by targeting pupils/students and young adults. It is the only body tasked by the Dutch government with organising a national programme of visits from schools to the national institutions. It also has a high degree of technical competence and specialisation within the meaning of Article 198(f) of the Financial Regulation, having built up specific expertise in developing modern techniques to explain how democracy works. The framework partnership agreement creates a unique space encompassing the local, national and European levels of political debate and decision-making, which could be used as an example in other Member States.

Implementation

The initiative is implemented directly by DG Communication through a multiannual framework partnership agreement without a call for proposals and through specific action grants. The grant is awarded following an invitation to submit a proposal to ProDemos. The justification for the direct award must also be included in the award decision.

3. Prizes

The global budgetary envelope reserved for contests under this 2026 work programme is **EUR 59 900**:

Budget line	Activity	2026 (in EUR)
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07 20 04 03	Communication of Representations	59,900
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This budget line also covers possible evaluation and professionalisation as well as digital and artificial intelligence tools, infrastructure and services of the communication activities described below.

Communication of Representations

Description, objectives pursued and expected results

In 2026, these activities will focus on the Commission's priorities as set out in the Political Guidelines 2024-2029 and the Commission work programme for 2026. It will cover contests to promote or stimulate reflection on European integration or EU policies and is addressed in particular to schools and journalists. The activities will follow the guidance issued by the Corporate Communication Steering Committee (12). Prizes may take the form of non-financial contributions, such as vouchers, trips or tickets, etc. In these cases, same rules and principles apply.

Types of participants targeted by the contest

The target group is mainly Europeans, particularly students, journalists and influencers, visual artists, and possibly civil society organisations (non-governmental organisations, associations, etc.).

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication.

4. Procurement

The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement contracts in 2026 is **EUR 95 301 100**.

Budget line	Activity	2026 (in EUR)
07 20 04 02	Executive and corporate communication services	48 692 000
07 20 04 03	Commission Representations	27,160,100
07 20 04 04	Communication services for citizens	14 974 000
Sub-total		90 826 100
14 20 04 03	Information policy and strategic communication for external action	4 475 000
TOTAL		95 301 100

These budget lines also cover possible evaluation and professionalisation as well as digital and artificial intelligence tools, infrastructure and services of the communication activities described below.

(12) Note on the follow-up actions for a more coherent approach for the next generations of EC prizes: [Ares\(2023\)6690409](#).

4.1 Budget line 07 20 04 02 ‘Executive and corporate communication services’ allocates EUR 48 692 000 for 2026

DG Communication’s executive services are provided to the President and the College of Commissioners to support the Commission’s communication to and engagement with citizens, stakeholders and other external partners. These services include high-quality general and country-specific information and analysis from a variety of sources to inform the Commission’s decision-making process. This includes political and economic intelligence, media monitoring and analysis, social media listening, including monitoring of mis- and disinformation and related advice, and public opinion surveys. This leads to better-informed EU policymaking with concrete benefits for citizens and stakeholders, communicated in an effective way.

DG Communication’s corporate communication products and services support the Commission’s external communication and reflect the DGs role as domain leader in external communication. DG Communication ensures that the messages of all Commission communication services are aligned to achieve consistent and effective corporate communication on the political priorities. This leads to better coordination and strategic planning, clearer corporate messages and narratives aligned with the policy priorities, a distinctive and impactful visual branding and economies of scale. This contributes to a better image for the Commission and the EU.

The procurement activities under this budget line cover social media expenditure, AV productions, online multimedia and written information, and corporate communication tools relating to the EU. The aim is to provide citizens with access to the relevant general and thematic information on the work of the EU institutions and on EU policies and decisions.

In 2026, these activities will focus on the Commission’s priorities as set out in the Political Guidelines 2024-2029, the mission letters and the Commission work programme for 2026, and on key deliverables.

Activities supporting citizens’ engagement ⁽¹³⁾ include the organisation of new European citizens’ panels and online debates on the new Citizens’ Engagement Platform, which is part of the revamped ‘Have Your Say’ portal.

Climate and biodiversity Commission action— description of how the action(s) included in this work programme contribute to climate and biodiversity mainstreaming in qualitative and quantitative ways.

- In 2026, DG Communication will continue to communicate on climate action and sustainability as a way of promoting growth, competitiveness and prosperity, notably through initiatives linked to the new Clean Industrial Strategy as an opportunity to preserve our future prosperity, with a strong net-zero industry and a fair and just transition.
- DG Communication will continue to track and counter misleading narratives on climate change through a dedicated sub-group of its Commission-wide network against disinformation.
- The Commission’s graphic design unit supports a broad range of communication actions that promote climate and biodiversity by providing visual materials on the topic to the Cabinets, the Spokesperson’s Service and the DGs.
- The Commission’s AV service supports a broad range of communication actions that promote climate and biodiversity (both online and offline) by providing AV material on the topic to the

⁽¹³⁾ In line with COM(2022) 404 final on the follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe ‘Putting Vision into Concrete Action’.

Cabinets, the Spokesperson's Service and the DGs. These AV productions include explanatory video clips, teasers for legislative packages, news coverage of press conferences and events on climate and biodiversity, as well as the production of video stock footage and illustration photos made available to media wishing to report on the topic.

- Being the single repository for the Commission saves resources and energy by avoiding copies on different servers. All external communication materials on climate and biodiversity are available in the AV Portal.
- DG Communication also contributes to preserving climate and biodiversity by prioritising energy efficiency. This is achieved by selecting cloud providers and IT solutions that use green energy sources or demonstrate a commitment to the environmental impact when making technology choices.

Description of the main activities covered under budget line 07 20 04 02

4.1.1 Europa web communication

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, DG COMM will continue to strengthen and modernise websites hosted on the Europa web domain in order to provide clear, accessible and engaging information to citizens, policymakers, media and other stakeholders. The focus will be on explaining and promoting Commission's political priorities and improving the overall quality and governance of the web presence. Key activities include:

- developing and publishing new multilingual content that explains the Commission's 2024-2029 priorities in a comprehensive, engaging and user-friendly way, helping audiences better understand the Commission's strategic goals and policies;
- maintaining the prominent web presence of the President and the College of Commissioners, offering up-to-date information on their roles, responsibilities and activities, thereby increasing transparency and public awareness;
- Supporting new priority initiatives and communication campaigns by developing engaging web content, including by using visual storytelling to increase citizen understanding;
- providing strategic guidance and support to Commission departments to optimise web presence, ensuring political and specialised content are seamlessly integrated without duplication in a user-friendly, accessible way;
- Coordinating the Representations' websites to guarantee seamless navigation from to corporate sites' content to the localised content, for better targeting European audiences, and to reach out to a broader range of users;
- Enhancing the overall web experience through content rationalisation, strengthened multilingualism and better navigation;
- Ensuring robust governance of the Europa web domain, including the regular monitoring of the performance and compliance of websites with the relevant rules and standards (e.g. data protection, web accessibility);
- operating and improving the corporate tools that support the web presence, including the Europa Web Publishing Platform, the European Component Library, the Digital Europa Thesaurus and the Web Tools;
- Monitoring websites usage, analysing user feedback and conducting user research activities to continuously improve the user experience.
- stepping up the use of AI technology to support web communication;

- monitoring the implementation of the 2022-2025 web accessibility action plan and determine follow-up actions for 2026.

The expected results will help to increase the consistency, compliance and relevance of the Commission's web presence.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.).

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations e.g. with DGs BUDG, DGT, DIGIT, RTD, EAC, OP, OIB, and PMO.

4.1.2 Eurobarometer and data analytics

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, the main activities include:

- In line with the priorities of the Commission, Eurobarometer contributes to analysing perceptions about European public policies and helps to better understand European public opinion on major priorities. These include competitiveness and prosperity, European defence and security, supporting people and strengthening our societies and social model, sustaining quality of life, protecting democracy and upholding values, the global role of Europe, including enlargement, and solidarity with Ukraine.
- Eurobarometer surveys are conducted as regular surveys and analyse trends in public opinion in the Member States and, when relevant, in candidate countries and/or in other countries. This includes generic or ad hoc surveys linked to the Commission's priorities – on specific themes and/or for specific target groups, as well as qualitative studies. These insights, combined with the other monitoring and listening tools, provide key information to the political leadership and feed into important decisions on implementing the EU priorities. DG Communication will continue conducting the flagship standard Eurobarometer surveys that focus on long-term trends and headline priorities as well as ad hoc surveys to monitor emerging priorities. It will also continue to closely work with other DGs using the Eurobarometer framework contracts to ensure that the public opinion data collected are consistent and of high quality.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.), framework contracts for Eurobarometer surveys, including a new one for Standard Eurobarometer surveys and a new one for the Eurobarometer Qualitative studies. Memoranda of understanding have been concluded with other institutions (e.g. European Parliament) and Commission departments (e.g. DG Digital Services, Joint Research Centre).

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication.

4.1.3 Television studios and European Broadcasting Service

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, these activities will focus on the Commission's priorities as set out in the Political Guidelines 2024-2029 and the Commission work programme, taking into account the changing political and geopolitical context. The Audiovisual Service will continue improving its IT systems, with a focus on improving planning and scheduling tools, workflows for photos, metadata creation and enhanced accessibility.

The procurement activities under this budget line aim to:

- ensure the operation of the Commission's AV installations;
- lease the satellite that provides television stations with images and information on the activities of the EU (EBS) to share this information with the media and the public.

The activities carried out are:

- operating the AV installations in the Berlaymont building in Brussels ⁽¹⁴⁾ to provide AV services, including the production of news, videos and statements, and assist television and radio teams when filming/recording on the Commission's premises;
- maintaining, repairing and upgrading the AV service's technical infrastructure;
- purchasing AV equipment and supplies for the radio and television studios when needed;
- introducing AI proof of concepts (POC) for automatic metadata creation and improved search functionality;
- exploring AI solutions for production and editing images;
- transmitting EBS, including leasing bandwidth; and
- producing AV programmes and video clips for social media and live streaming to corporate and VIP social media accounts (YouTube, Facebook, BlueSky, X, LinkedIn and Instagram).

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.).

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication.

4.1.4 News coverage, AV media library and AV production

Description, objective pursued and expected results

⁽¹⁴⁾Two television studios (one new studio was created in 2022) and one radio studio, a master control room and editing and graphic suites.

In 2026, the main activities are:

- (1) Video and photo news coverage
 - producing video and photo news about the Commission's initiatives, covering College Members' official appearances and missions. This footage is mainly intended for use by media (TV, online, print) and social media;
 - producing thematic/illustrative videos and photos on current EU affairs;
 - producing illustrative images specifically intended to accompany communication actions on the new Commission's political priorities and initiatives.
- (2) Video production
 - increasing and diversifying video production for the public, adapted to the requirements of social media platforms and to new communication trends;
 - producing videos in 2026 for different platforms and channels, explaining the Commission's priorities and initiatives.
- (3) Dissemination and promotion
 - organising information events and visits to the Commission studios, providing AV content and technical support to journalists;
 - improving the dissemination of AV and multimedia products through the satellite TV channels EBS, EBS+, the AV Portal and various technological platforms, including social media. Paid promotion can be used for flagship events and dissemination can be boosted through partnership with the European Broadcasting Union (EBU)
 - In 2026, continue to develop the Commission's YouTube channel by creating attractive content tailored for this platform for an increased outreach, including for young people, also aiming for more EU-based subscribers.
- (4) AV media library and portal
 - consolidating the central deposit of the Commission's AV production as part of the Commission's 'synergies and efficiencies' approach;
 - cooperating with the Publications Office of the EU, making the AV Library the repository for the Legal Deposit for AV products;
 - organising the AV Portal as the single point of distribution in order to create a more user-friendly interface;
 - continue to promote the AV archive content and ensure its dissemination
 - making all Commission podcasts available as audio files on the Commission's portal;
 - continuing the work on preserving, digitising and documenting the media library;
 - continuing to work on copyright issues around the European anthem;
- (5) AV archiving, copyright checks, distribution and web development;
- (6) enhancing the work of AV documentalists with AI analytic tools;
- (7) integrating AI tools into the MAM (Beluga) workflows and checking the archive to improve its accessibility
- (8) ensuring the use of AI tools complies with copyright, personal data and image rights guidelines;
 - streaming, transcoding, hosting and content delivery;
 - consolidating and improving the tools for measuring the use of AV material produced by the European institutions;
 - measuring the use of AV material produced by the European institutions;
 - managing the AV Library and AV central deposit;
 - translating metadata;

- optimising accessibility for video/audio/multimedia content by harnessing AI technologies;
- managing the digital and technical services;
- managing AV production, subtitling and the purchase of photos.

(9) AV expertise shared with other departments

- coordinating the network of AV correspondents to share good practice and trends, in line with its domain leadership role;
- supporting DGs and agencies by managing the corporate AV framework contracts.

Specific attention will be given to ensuring AV communication on the new political initiatives and the EU's answer to global challenges.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.), including new framework contracts for metadata indexation of AV material, photographic and video news coverage and licences for historical, editorial and stock photos and videos as well as related services.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs (e.g. Translation (DGT) and Research and Innovation (RTD)).

4.1.5 Media and social media monitoring and analysis

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, the main activities are:

- providing traditional media and social media monitoring to ensure continuous feedback on the media coverage of the Commission and the EU in all Member States (and selected non-EU countries, including candidate countries and potential candidates) on issues of European interest and on major international and national policies and political developments, as well as real-time information/alerts on major world news (this includes providing press agency breaking news and live social media alerts for key political events such as G7 and G20 summits, European Council meetings, major policy announcements);
- ensuring that copyright licences are put in place to allow Commission staff to use media monitoring products;
- providing quantitative and qualitative media analysis on the media impact of the Commission's policy priorities and its initiatives in Member States and beyond, covering all media types (print press, online media, AV media as well as social media); results of media analyses are provided to the College and to senior management in different types of reports and summaries;
- contributing to integrated reporting on major Commission proposals, priorities and events;
- detecting and following up on media and social media narratives linked to the main political priorities.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.), framework contracts for media monitoring, media analysis, and social media monitoring and analysis; copyright licences, subscriptions to press agencies new platforms; memoranda of understanding have been concluded with other institutions and Commission departments (e.g. DG Informatics, Joint Research Centre).

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication.

4.1.6 Subscriptions

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, the main activity is providing access to online information sources such as press agencies and (aggregated) news providers to Commission staff in order to complement the media monitoring services and/or cover specific needs.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.) and new calls for tender, including new framework contracts for subscriptions and copyright services.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs (e.g. DG EAC).

4.1.7 Graphic design and communication support

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, the main activities of graphic design are:

- developing further and putting into use the visual identity of the 2024-2029 Commission;
- delivering graphic design products to illustrate the Commission's priorities;
- developing visual concepts, infographics and interactive content while constantly developing and updating it to reflect emerging trends;
- organising external communication actions, including outdoor promotional banners, cooperating on the preparation of external communication events;
- advising on visual identity, notably in connection with refreshing the Commission's visual identity approved in 2024 and implementing the updated corporate branding guidelines, advising the DGs on the necessary adjustments linked to the update of the Commission logo; as well as on the rules related to the use of the EU emblem;
- advising the Representations on graphic design related to their major communication events;
- coordinating the Commission's graphic design network, increasing the professionalisation of its graphic design community by organising workshops with graphic design professionals;

- exploring AI for graphic design;

Concerning the communication support the main activities planned for 2026 are:

- facilitating access to speedy, agile and flexible contractual solutions for the communication needs of the new Commission, using a set of well curated and managed framework contracts and other contractual tools such as dynamic purchasing systems, while ensuring business continuity through detailed procurement planning and monitoring;
- leading the visual implementation of strategic political communication on Commission priorities and crisis communication.

Budget under this line could also be used to review the quality and design of campaigns by other Commission services in order to ensure alignment with political priorities and corporate standards. The budget also allows to provide contractual solutions to help Commission services running integrated campaigns, using strategic campaign services and media planning and buying services. These contractual solutions are based on corporate framework contracts that cover a wide range of communication services that ensure consistent quality delivery in line with corporate standards and priorities.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services), including contracts concluded with individual experts.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs and services (e.g. BUDG, OP).

4.1.8 Social media

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, the main activities involve developing social media strategies and managing the Commission's central and local corporate social media platform presence by:

- leading social media planning for Commission priorities, including crisis communication;
- focusing on the priorities of this Commission mandate and on the benefits the EU delivers for citizens;
- creating and sharing content on the Commission's central social media accounts;
- supporting the President's and the College's social media activities in collaboration with line DGs;
- steering the social media presence of Commission Representations in Member States and DGs;
- providing tailored guidance and training to the Members of the College and their Cabinets, to Commission Representations in Member States and to DGs;
- engaging with various audiences and through community management and community building (linking up with the activities of the Representations);
- monitoring and fact-checking harmful narratives;

- promoting social media literacy and adapting to the influence of AI; improving data analysis and evidence building on social media developments and trends;
- adapting to the evolving social media environment, optimising presence in relation to platform profiles;
- improving central and local social media collaboration;
- coordinating and supporting the Commission's social media network;
- exploring emerging platforms and content also in view of developments in AI;
- extending the reach of Commission initiatives through an established content creator programme for multipliers and cultivating a thriving community, increasing the data base and integrating multipliers as part of most communication activities;
- developing suitable AV content for social media platforms, such as reels and other new formats;
- supporting corporate communication campaigns (e.g. NextGenerationEU, democracy campaign).

Types of contracts

Service contracts (incl. technical assistance, studies, evaluations, surveys as well as digital tools, infrastructure and services), mainly drawing on existing framework contracts that address the needs of DG Communication's Headquarters and Representations, including for local social media, cooperation with multipliers and outreach.

Implementation

Implemented by DG Communication.

4.1.9 Resilience building and countering disinformation

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, the main activities to shape the Commission's strategic communication and to boost societal resilience to effectively counter FIMI and disinformation, including through awareness raising, proactive communication and promotion of digital and media literacy, are:

- monitoring, analysis and reporting of key disinformation narratives to inform communication responses;
- acquiring tools and advanced technological solutions, including data analytics, to fight mis- and disinformation;
- organising actions and campaigns to raise awareness of the risks of disinformation and building resilience against disinformation by promoting digital and media literacy;
- advising the Representations and DGs on disinformation related to their communication events or priorities;
- coordinating the Commission Network Against Disinformation, including its permanent and ad hoc groups, promoting professionalisation, sharing best practices and latest innovations, including the organisation of workshops and collaborations with experts;
- facilitating capacity building for REPs and DGs in the spheres of situational awareness and resilience building.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services), mainly drawing on existing framework contracts, including contracts concluded with individual experts.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs (e.g. BUDG, DIGIT, DGT and the OP).

4.2 Budget line 07 20 04 03 ‘Commission Representations’ allocates EUR 27 160 100 for 2026

The Representations in the capitals and the regional offices act as the eyes, ears and voice of the Commission in the Member States. They serve the interests of the Commission and the EU by connecting with national, regional and local authorities, media, stakeholders and citizens in general. They support the President and the College, as well as the Commission’s senior staff, by contributing to the preparation, conduct and follow-up of visits to the Member States. Moreover, they provide the Commission with in-depth, accurate and timely analysis and reporting on key political, economic and communication-related issues, and can provide targeted advice on how key policy initiatives may be received on the ground, informing the policymaking process.

This budget line funds general information and communication/engagement activities addressed to citizens in all Member States mainly through the Representations, and covers possible evaluation and professionalisation, as well as digital tools, infrastructure and services of these communication activities.

Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming contribution:

- all planned actions follow the guidelines on organising sustainable meetings and events at the Commission.

Description of the main activities covered under budget line 07 20 04 03

4.2.1 Communication by the Representations

Description, objective pursued and expected results

The activities under this budget line aim to implement decentralised communication actions by the Representations.

In 2026, the Representations’ communication efforts will centre on the key Commission priorities at national, regional and local levels. This includes communicating its policy initiatives and priorities, results of the NextGenerationEU recovery plans, and engaging with citizens through initiatives such as youth policy dialogues, European citizens’ panels and the ‘Have Your Say’ platform, as well as through EU networks (e.g. EUROPE DIRECT centres, network of EU local councillors). Representations will also support corporate communication campaigns and tailor their activities to national, regional and local audiences.

There will be a strong emphasis on digital communication, combating misinformation and disinformation through effective community management, in coordination with the Task Force. Representations will engage more closely with local stakeholders including think tanks, fact checkers, non-governmental organisations, journalists, members of EU Local Councillors network and political figures, and online content creators.

The Representations will organise information events for journalists, visits to the EU institutions, bodies and agencies, Commission studios, AV content and technical support for journalists, produce information kits for journalists, newsletters and organise press briefings. They will also continue to engage with online content creators as opportune.

Representations will work with policy DGs, the European Parliament, Member States, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee to improve information and communication activities in a coordinated way. They will also engage with stakeholders to gather political and economic intelligence, and with citizens to gauge public opinion on priority topics.

This budget line will cover various communication activities, such as conceiving and implementing national and local communication campaigns, collaboration with media, developing AV content, managing digital content –by reinforcing the existing community managers network-, developing local social media campaigns, monitoring and countering misinformation, organising outreach events etc.

These priorities will be reflected in the Representations' country communication strategies, setting out a wide range of activities tailored to national, regional and local audiences.

Procurement under this budget line also covers the Representations' written information and communication tools relating to the EU. The aim is to provide citizens with access to the relevant general and thematic information on the work of EU institutions and on EU decisions. All activities will be carried out in close cooperation with DG Communication's Headquarters.

Activities include:

- carrying out local communication campaigns;
- supporting corporate communication campaigns;
- organising citizens' engagement activities;
- managing editorial tasks related to Representations' websites;
- developing local social media strategies and managing corporate social media accounts, including community management;
 - communicating on social media (e.g. organic outreach, paid promotion, using various content formats, working with online content creators);
- monitoring and responding to misinformation and disinformation as well as raising awareness about the EU's efforts to combat disinformation;
 - organising outreach events for citizens and stakeholders (online and in person);
- drafting and disseminating online content and online publications;
- visits to EU institutions and other visits for journalists and online content creators;
- organisation of press briefings and other events for journalists and other multipliers;
- AV content

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.) and new calls for tender, including new framework contracts at the level of the Representations.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs and services (e.g. BUDG, DIGIT, DGT and the OP).

4.2.2 Local outreach and cooperation between Representations and European Parliament Liaison Offices

Description, objective pursued and expected results

Joint communication projects by the Representations and European Parliament Liaison Offices (EPLOs) in the Member States will focus on increasing awareness of the European project, in particular on policy priorities of the new Commission and the European Parliament. The Europa Experience centres (¹⁵), where they are up and running, will play an important role in this cooperation.

The Representations and the EPLOs aim to boost cooperation with national, regional and local authorities, mobilise communication networks of the Commission and the European Parliament, and involve opinion leaders and other key stakeholders in communicating about the EU. Messaging will be consistent with the Commission's communication priorities and the projects will complement corporate campaigns.

Joint communication projects by the Representations and EPLOs will stimulate cooperation on outreach based on jointly agreed priorities as well as joint work plans.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.), including new framework contracts and building contracts.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through interinstitutional co-operation and co-delegations with other DGs (e.g. BUDG, DIGIT, DGT and the Publications Office).

4.2.3 Networks and local outreach

Description, objective pursued and expected results

⁽¹⁵⁾ Europa Experiences, launched by the EP, are interactive centres designed to introduce visitors to the EU through exhibitions that combine innovative design and multimedia stations. In 2019, the European Parliament Bureau endorsed the strategy of setting up interactive Europa Experience centres in all Member States. So far, there are Europa Experiences used by Representations and EPLOs already in place in Athens, Berlin, Budapest, Copenhagen, Dublin, Helsinki, Ljubljana, Luxembourg, Paris, Prague, Rome, Stockholm, Tallinn, Warsaw, Vienna and Zagreb.

The procurement activities cover training and support for the following networks:

- EUROPE DIRECT centres;
- EU Local Councillors;
- European Documentation centres; and
- Team Europe Direct conference speakers ⁽¹⁶⁾.

The above mentioned networks run by DG Communication, are instrumental to reach local audience via different types of activities. They inform and engage with citizens at local level about EU policies and priorities pertinent for their area, considering the local context, directly involving citizens or using media, social media, etc. In 2026, each Representation will provide support to its national networks' members, including cross-network meetings, by offering in-person and online training, timely information, and tailored services synching local networks with its country communication strategy. These efforts aim to deepen understanding of EU policies in the national context, keep members updated on Commission priorities, and strengthen their role as multipliers at the local level.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.).

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs (BUDG, DIGIT, DGT and the OP). The EU Local Councillors network is run together with the Committee of Regions.

4.3 Budget line 07 20 04 04 ‘Communication services for citizens’ allocates EUR 14 974 000 for 2026

DG Communication’s products and services are designed to inform and engage the public by sharing clear and understandable messages. They help citizens to access up-to-date and user-friendly information on EU policies and values and increase their awareness and understanding of European affairs so that they are more likely to engage with the Commission, either online or in person.

This budget line is intended to fund general information and corporate communication and citizens’ engagement activities in all Member States, including their possible evaluation and professionalisation, as well as digital tools, infrastructure and services ⁽¹⁷⁾.

Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming contribution:

- For the climate mainstreaming contribution, DG Communication provides a wide range of support to the networks through a major shift to online services. For example, webinars, meetings or surveys. Some of the EUROPE DIRECT centres have moved part of their activities online.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Previously called Team Europe.

⁽¹⁷⁾ See point 4.2, 4th paragraph.

- When choosing transport arrangements, Representations and visitors should consider greener modes of transport if they are a cost-efficient option. Visit materials and catering are provided in a sustainable manner.
- DG Communication continues to promote paperless publications in line with the corporate objectives to reduce its environmental impact.

Description of the main activities covered under budget line 07 20 04 04

4.3.1 Networks – management and support

Description, objective pursued and expected results

The procurement activities cover training and support for the following networks:

- EUROPE DIRECT centres;
- EU Local Councillors;
- European Documentation centres; and
- Team Europe Direct conference speakers ⁽¹⁸⁾

The above mentioned networks run by DG Communication are instrumental to reach local audience via different types of activities. They inform and engage with citizens at local level about EU policies and priorities pertinent for their area and considering the local context, via direct involvement of citizens or indirectly via media, social media, etc. To increase the network members' knowledge of EU policies and to keep them up to date, particularly on the Commission's policy priorities as well as to create opportunities to exchange best practices among different Member States or spark cooperation via cross country initiatives, DG Communication provides the networks with *inter alia* in person or on-line training seminars, meetings, timely information services and materials.

Coordination with the EC REPs, other EC services and EU institutions will be duly ensured when delivering on the above.

In particular for the ***EU Network of Local Councillors***, the main objectives and activities in 2026 involve:

- Developing a better understanding of the local councillors' interests and strengths in order to improve our tools and support to them;
- Enhancing a stronger and more efficient connectivity/collaboration between the local councillors, as well as with the Committee of the Regions within the network's Joint Management Team;
- Boosting the local councillor's participation in EU-supported activities

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.

Implementation

⁽¹⁸⁾ Previously called Team Europe.

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs (BUDG, DIGIT, DGT and the OP). The EU Local Councillors network is run together with the Committee of Regions.

4.3.2 Information services for citizens

Description, objective pursued and expected results

The procurement activities under this budget line cover the operation and development of the EUROPE DIRECT Contact Centre (EDCC), which provides free-of-charge, general, multilingual information services on EU matters. As it has done since 2022, the EDCC will continue to provide information also in Ukrainian and Russian.

These activities aim to provide citizens with quick access to high-quality, understandable information on the work of the EU institutions and on EU decisions.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.), including specific contracts based on the existing framework contract for the EDCC.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication.

4.3.3 Citizen engagement

Description, objective pursued and expected results

Under this budget line, procurement activities are directed at financing both physical and digital methods of engaging with citizens, including European citizens' panels and youth policy dialogues. These initiatives will be jointly overseen by DG Communication, which will lead on citizen engagement, and the relevant DGs responsible for policy matters. Furthermore, DG Communication will manage, together with the Secretariat-General, the 'Have Your Say' portal, which is an online one-stop shop for citizens to participate and engage with the Commission. This portal comprises an interactive Citizens' Engagement Platform that hosts online debates in support of citizens' panels and other forms of citizens' engagement (e.g. youth policy dialogues and other initiatives foreseen in the citizens' engagement guidebook – see below). It also gives access to other channels of citizens' and stakeholders' engagement, namely the European Citizens Initiative (ECI) and public consultations and feedback online.

The contracts to boost citizen participation and facilitate processes to support these innovative participatory formats are established through a dynamic purchasing system, which is at the disposal of all DGs and departments.

DG Communication, as the domain leader in citizen engagement, has developed a corporate guidebook on citizen engagement⁽¹⁹⁾ together with the Joint Research Centre's Deliberative Democracy Centre, and chairs an interservice group focused on citizen engagement.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical and logistical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.).

Implementation

Implemented by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs (e.g. BUDG, PMO).

4.3.4 Commission services for visitors (Visitors' Centre and Experience Europe exhibition)

Description, objective pursued and expected results

The European Commission Visitors' Centre and the Experience Europe exhibition in Brussels have a key communication role, giving visitors an insight into the work of the Commission and explaining EU policies through presentations and interactive AV displays. Both premises together host over 80 000 visitors each year.

The Visitors' Centre receives many high-profile and multiplier groups (elected representatives, journalists, social media content creators and other key multipliers), and offers them presentations on the Commission's work and priorities in several formats (depending on the degree of specialisation and interest of visitors)⁽²⁰⁾.

Experience Europe is the Commission's permanent walk-in interactive exhibition centre in Brussels, targeted at a wider audience. Visitors should see Experience Europe as an interactive way to discover what the Commission is doing and how the EU impacts people's lives.

In 2026, this budget line is intended to cover the cost of organising physical visits and will also cover the operational, development and running costs of Experience Europe and the Visitors' Centre, such as the management and development of the equipment providing communication content, technological upgrades, content creation, update and adaptation, promotion of the offer, as well as other support and maintenance services.

(19) [CORPORATE GUIDANCE Citizen Engagement December 2023 \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/corporate-guidance/citizen-engagement-december-2023_en)

(20) 1. General information visit – 90 minutes. A presentation on the role of the Commission in the EU followed by a Q&A session. Aimed at people such as secondary students with little or no previous knowledge about the EU.
2. Specific information visit – 2½ hours. An introduction to the role of the Commission in the EU, followed by a presentation on a specific EU policy of direct interest to the group. Aimed at undergraduate students and specific interest groups.
3. Tailored visit – up to 1½ days. A programme specifically tailored to the interests of the group with an introduction to the role of the Commission in the EU, followed by up to four presentations on specific EU policies given by Commission staff dealing with those issues. Aimed at journalists, national, regional and local parliaments and governments, business associations, public and private sector professionals, trade unions, academics, including postgraduate and research students.

It also covers the development of content provided by the Commission to the Europa Experience centres already set up in the Member States, as well as those set to open in other EU capitals in 2026 (e.g. The Hague, Sofia and Bratislava).

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical and floor staff assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, logistics services such as travel, hotels, restaurants, local transport, etc., as well as preventive and evolutive maintenance of the communication stations, etc.) and in 2026 a new framework contract for visitors' assistants for the Brussels based services.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs (e.g. BUDG, DIGIT, DGT and the OP).

4.3.5 Youth and General Report

Description, objective pursued and expected results

In 2026, procurement activities will cover spending on audience analysis, production of communication materials and implementation of outreach activities targeting primarily young people.

This budget line also finances:

- the production of the General Report on the activities of the EU (which is a Treaty obligation),
- studies and feedback and testing activities to further improve the quality of publications and online materials as well as any necessary studies,
- the maintenance and updating of the Learning Corner website, a multilingual and interinstitutional one-stop shop for materials produced by all EU institutions for children, young people and teachers.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.), including new contracts for any emerging needs under the unit's new mission.

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication and, where relevant, through co-delegations with other DGs (Publications Office and DGT).

4.4 Budget line 14 20 04 03 'Information policy and strategic communication for external action' allocates EUR 4 475 000 for 2026

Description of the main activities covered under budget line 14 20 04 03

4.4.1 Corporate communication

Description, objective pursued and expected results

This budget line covers contributions from other departments to the 2026 corporate communication actions (common foreign and security policy, external relations, international partnerships including through Global Gateway, European Neighbourhood Policy, enlargement, conflict prevention and humanitarian policies/programmes) as specified in the Communication on corporate communication action in 2024-2027 under the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework ⁽²¹⁾. The main objective is the planning, preparation, management and evaluation of corporate top-layer campaigns.

Corporate communication will contribute to develop a comprehensive branding strategy that highlights and embodies core European values. The strategy will influence future corporate campaigns and will ensure that the brand resonates with audiences across Europe.

In addition to the overall objectives described above, corporate communication could help to highlight to EU citizens the extensive work of the EU with partner countries across the world in tackling global geopolitical and geoeconomic challenges such as the clean and digital transitions, economic growth and resilience, poverty, conflict, and migration – to the benefit of both the EU and its partners – as well as the progress made by candidate countries and potential candidates on the path to EU membership, their readiness for accession and the benefits of enlargement to both EU member state and candidate country citizens.

Corporate communication will enable DG Communication to share the messages both inside and outside the EU using digital channels as well as traditional media but also dedicated partnerships.

Participation in physical meetings and events such as exhibitions, for example in the context of Europe Day, might also be used to disseminate our messages.

An important part of corporate communication will be to further step up the Commission's response to disinformation, which is becoming increasingly weaponised in the battle of narratives that prevail in times of crisis. More work is needed on convincing, factual and positive communication and to ensure timely responses, including the production of messages and content conveyed through the right communication channels.

Types of contracts

Service contracts (including studies, technical assistance, evaluations, surveys, digital tools, infrastructure and services, communication services, etc.) including new framework contracts for integrated campaigns, media relations, campaign strategy and creative services, communication consultancy as well as media buying and other similar services.

This also covers the possible evaluation and professionalisation of the communication activities as well as digital and artificial intelligence tools

Implementation

Implemented directly by DG Communication.

⁽²¹⁾ COM(2023)6467 final of 29.09.2023.