



European Research Council
Executive Agency

Established by the European Commission

Use of languages by the European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA)

1. INTRODUCTION & KEY PRINCIPLES

This document contains the principles and rules on language use that ERCEA follows when communicating externally. As part of its commitment to providing a high-quality public service, ERCEA makes its best efforts to ensure that its contact with citizens is effective and efficient.

Due to its area of work, most exchanges are with people working in the fields of research, where international communication mainly takes place in English. In this context, most actors who need information from ERCEA in the context of ongoing application procedures are likely to prioritize the speed of the information over its language, given the time needed for translation.

Therefore, most material that ERCEA uses in research programme implementation only exists in English. In particular, this applies to any documents intended for the experts, which is justified because experts need a single working language to evaluate proposals in multinational teams.

The way ERCEA implements the rules established by the European Commission on language use is described in the section below. In addition, ERCEA complies with the linguistic requirements of the European Ombudsman and European Court of Justice if it is involved in cases treated by those institutions.

2. APPLICABLE RULES

2.1 Code of good administrative behavior for staff of the European Commission in their relations with the public¹

Section 4 of the Code states that:

“In accordance with Article 21 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, the Commission shall reply to letters in the language of the initial letter, providing that it was written in one of the official languages”.

This provision also applies to other correspondence such as e-mails, not only letters. The official EU languages are listed [here](#).

Please note that correspondence covered by the rules stated in sections 2.2 - 2.5 below follows the language provisions of those rules, which may differ from the provisions of the Code of good administrative behaviour, [available at this website](#).

2.2. Language regime of the EU Research Programmes delegated to ERCEA

The announcement of the calls for proposals for funding is published in the official journal and available in all official languages. All calls for proposals are channeled and managed via the common Funding and Tenders portal of the European Commission.

Proposals may be submitted in any of the official EU languages, which are listed [here](#). The model grant agreement for Horizon 2020 beneficiaries is available in 23 languages and the model grant agreement for Horizon Europe beneficiaries is available in English only. It states that all reports (scientific and financial reports, including financial statements) must be submitted in the language of the grant agreement.

However, as explained in section 1 above, communication with experts and applicants only takes place in English and most documents are only available in English.

2.3. ERCEA content on the European Commission website

In accordance with the [language policy of the European Commission website](#), [basic information about ERCEA](#) is available in multiple languages. However, dynamic or detailed content (news stories, annual activity report etc.) is mainly written in English.

In addition, in communication activities carried out also in collaboration with the European Commission spokespersons service, the EC representation and EU delegations, the relevant information and some specific communication materials are translated in the language of the audience we are targeting. Similarly, on the ERC social media channels, we post on ad-hoc basis in national languages.

¹ OJ L 308/32, 8.12.2000, [Code of Good Administrative Behaviour and complaints | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

2.4. Selection and recruitment of ERCEA staff

In accordance with the [Conditions of employment of other servants of the European Communities \(CEOS\)](#), it is an eligibility condition for recruitment that candidates have certain linguistic competences². If English is generally considered to be the *lingua franca* in the field of expertise sought, and/or is essential for any tasks to be performed, this is also stated in the call text. Language requirements such as these are assessed during the selection process. The [European Personnel Selection Office \(EPSO\)](#) may assess linguistic competence as a part of some ERCEA selections.

2.5. Procurement

The [Financial Regulation](#)³ specifies the documents relating to ERCEA procurements that must be published in all language versions of the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

3. RELEVANT CONTACT POINTS

If you consider that ERCEA has breached the European Commission *Code of good administrative behaviour* in dealing with the public, you can file a complaint. For further information please see [this web page](#), which also explains how you may complain to the European Ombudsman.

Please address any questions or requests on language use when applying to/participating in EU research programmes to the [Research Enquiry Service](#).

² Stated in Articles 12(2) and 82(3) of the CEOS, Regulation 31 (EEC) 11 (EAEC) of 14.6.1962

³ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union of 18.7.2018