



Management Plan 2021

DG COMMUNICATION

Contents

INTRODUCTION 3

PART 1. Delivering on the Commission’s priorities: main outputs for the year 6

PART 2. Modernising the administration: main outputs for the year 14

 A. Human resource management 14

 B. Sound financial management 15

 C. Fraud risk management 15

 D. Digital transformation and information management 16

 E. Sound environmental management 17

 F. Example(s) of initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities 18

ANNEX: Performance tables 21

INTRODUCTION

DG COMM MISSION STATEMENT:

Listen – Advise – Engage

***DG COMM, as a corporate communication service,
brings Europe closer to its citizens.***

DG Communication is the corporate communication service of the European Commission (Commission).

Acting under the authority of the President, DG Communication leads the Commission's communication about the headline ambitions of the College and about EU policies. It aims to inform and engage citizens on the role of the EU, based on common values and enable them to fully participate in European democracy.

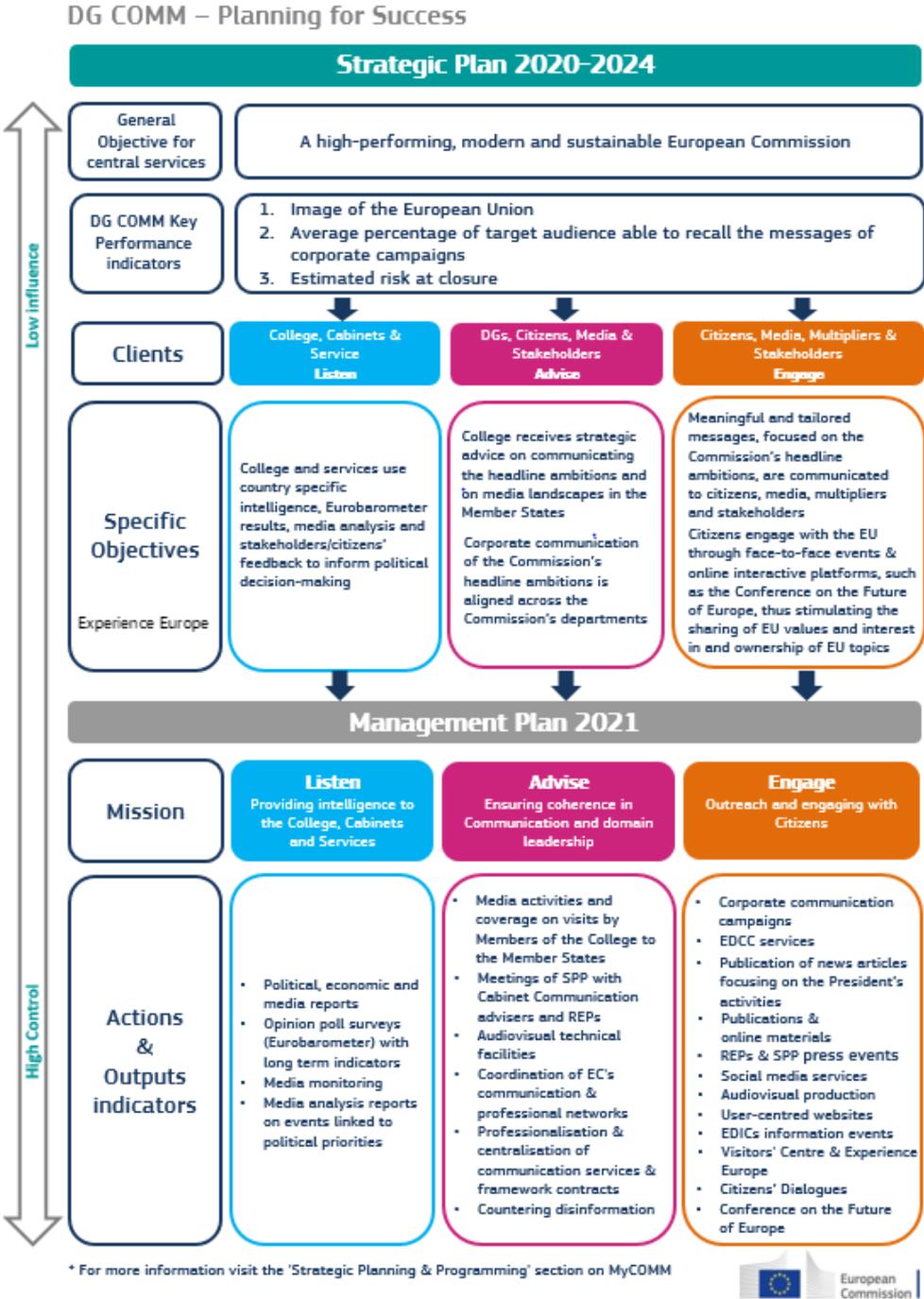
In 2021, DG Communication will provide the President and the College with evidence-based corporate communication actions, media advice, state-of-the-art communication products and services, both centrally and in all Member States. As domain leader for external communication, it will coordinate the communication activities of other Commission services¹ and will assist them in professionalising their communication activities. Furthermore, through the European Commission Representations in the Member States (in 27 capitals and six regional offices), DG Communication will engage with citizens, national authorities, media and stakeholders on the ground, supporting the President and the College with political and economic reporting, informing policy and communication as two sides of the same coin.

In 2021, DG Communication will be continuing the implementation of its core activities in the external communication domain, founded on communication around the von der Leyen Commission's six headline ambitions. At the same time, the COVID-19 crisis has added the challenging task of communicating the Commission's and the EU's response through a full range of communication tools, products and services and in increasingly close cooperation with the other Commission services and EU institutions.

Being a Presidential service, in 2021, DG Communication will contribute to achieving the general objective of a modern, high-performing and sustainable Commission through the strategic objectives defined in its Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and the objectives, outputs and actions defined in this 2021 Management Plan, as illustrated in DG Communication's intervention logic (see page 4).

¹ In this document the word 'service' is used to refer to Directorates-General, offices and other services.

The 2021 Management Plan of DG Communication is aligned to its 2021 Work Programme / Financing Decision² supporting the main headline ambitions identified in the President’s political guidelines as well as in the 2021 Commission Work Programme³ in its revised version and the programme statements for the 2021 budget.



² C(2020) 8492 – 7.12.2020.

³ COM(2020) 690 final - 19.10.2020.

The first part of this Management Plan identifies DG Communication's main communication priorities and challenges for 2021 and shows how the main outputs contribute to the relevant objectives.

The second part of this Management Plan defines priorities and challenges for 2021 on the management side, illustrating how these horizontal activities support the operational units and Representations in achieving their specific objectives.

PART 1. Delivering on the Commission’s priorities: main outputs for the year

“We need to show also with strong communication that Europe can bounce forward through green, digital, strong recovery from the crisis, making sure that nobody is left behind. NextGenerationEU will power Europe’s transformation. As the President said: *‘The future will be what we make it. And Europe will be what we want it to be.’*”

Work will now focus on following up on all the commitments, with Commissioners mobilising around concrete political initiatives, the Representations reporting and preparing publications, interviews, articles, debates, social media engagement and audiovisual products, and Headquarter services reframing the political and strategic communication and messages to sustain the momentum and focus after the speech⁴.”

(Message from Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen to staff on the follow up of the 2020 State of the Union Address, Director-General of DG Communication, 17 September 2020).

Communication on the EU response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be essential in 2021, in particular addressing the impact of the crisis on public opinion, as it is affecting the levels of trust in the European Union and its perceived capacity to deliver for citizens. DG Communication will continue to ensure, also in 2021, that the public is served with all pandemic and recovery-related information as fast as possible, including notably on the EU’s role in securing vaccines for all Europeans and globally, and building trust in vaccination in support of Member States’ efforts. This will be done through the dedicated coronavirus and recovery web presences, through the media via the Spokesperson’s Service and through increasingly important social media activities and dedicated campaigns.

The recovery from the coronavirus-induced crisis will also be the subject of a particular citizen-focused corporate communication effort. **A NextGenerationEU-branded campaign will run from 2021 to 2024.** Communication on NextGenerationEU and on recovery will be done as much as possible in cooperation with the other EU institutions and Member States in the spirit of shared responsibility for communicating on what the EU does, aiming at aligned narrative, messages, signature, web presence and visual identity.

The recovery campaign will be the headline campaign, under which the other two communication priorities - the **European Green Deal** and **Europe fit for the Digital Age**

⁴ President von der Leyen’s first State of the Union address on 16 September 2020.

- will be developed. Communication activities to support the recovery plan will focus on raising awareness about the EU's added value and rekindling a European sense of solidarity and trust.

In addition, DG Communication will continue its work on planning, designing and implementing short and medium-term communication activities linked to the major political initiatives of the President and the College. Under the long-term budget 2021-2027 and in the context of NextGenerationEU, the Commission will implement for the first time a set of corporate minimum requirements for communication and visibility, which will not only streamline the Commission's approach across all EU programmes but co-involve recipients of EU funding in EU communication in a spirit of joint responsibility, increasing the EU's visibility on the ground. As domain leader for external communication, DG Communication will monitor the roll-out of the requirements by services, continue awareness-raising and provide corporate guidance where needed, in close cooperation with DG Budget.

In this context, DG Communication will be stepping up its work on the fight against disinformation and misinformation, which have been specifically pronounced in the COVID-19 context. The approach followed in this field comes in three steps: first, detect and report on misleading and false EU-related narratives that are arising in the media and online; second, assess their potential impact; and third, create positive and compelling evidence-based narratives to counteract them, and distribute those through social media, and/or the press. In this regards, the Representations have an important role to play.

Concerning communication governance and corporate communication, DG Communication works closely with the Secretariat-General of the Commission. Whilst the Secretariat-General chairs the Corporate Communication Steering Board, the secretariat of the Steering Committee is provided by the DG Communication, in association with the Secretariat-General and the DG Human Resources. DG Communication manages the relevant operational networks and, if applicable, task forces on corporate communication and on coronavirus response communication specifically. This will ensure, also in 2021, on the one hand, that the Commission's messages are aligned and coherent across all services and, on the other hand, that they have an increased impact by leveraging all corporate communication channels and networks.

Corporate and interinstitutional EU communication contributes to achieving a better image of the Commission and the European Union. With this in mind, the development of an EU branding strategy, as defined in the strategic plan of DG Communication, is instrumental and will be kicked off in 2021, building on discussions in 2020 and a recent study⁵. It will *"consolidate the Commission's corporate communication strategy - beyond individual campaigns and changing headline ambitions. It will clarify fundamentally how the*

⁵ [Synthesis Study of the Corporate Communication Campaigns - Final Report, 14 November 2019; Deloitte, Coffey, IPSOS.](#)

Commission wants to communicate and grow the EU's core identity in all its communication and outreach activities, with the aim of (re)building the EU's reputation and image in the medium and long-term. A brand strategy, developed by the Commission, building on state-of-the-art expertise from various sources, could potentially be co-owned by the other institutions and serve to strengthen the joint responsibility for EU communication." This will need to be articulated in consistency with the branding strategy underpinning the NextGenerationEU campaigns.

Taking into consideration that EU citizens expect an ambitious EU response to the COVID-19 multidimensional crisis, DG Communication is also increasing its cooperation on communication actions with the other EU institutions. Starting from the principle of solidarity and highlighting the role of citizens as both actors in and beneficiaries from the EU and its policies, external EU communication (including for example in the case of Europe Day on 9 May) adopts, when possible and appropriate, the approach of joint messaging and EU branding. This interinstitutional cooperation will be further exploited and consolidated in the course of 2021.

Cooperation with the European Parliament builds on the principles set out in a joint statement signed by the Directors-General of the two communication departments in December 2019 and implemented through a concrete set of actions, taking the cooperation commitment of both services to a new level. In this context, DG Communication will put in place jointly with the European Parliament interactive exhibition projects, Europa Experiences, which will be gradually rolled out in all Member States. By the end of 2021, the joint statement engages both sides *'to take stock of our cooperation and develop it with the aim to maximise strategic and operational synergies in view of the 2024 European elections.'* Cooperation with the Council of the European Union is being strengthened notably through the Working Party on Information⁶.

When it comes to delivering on the ground, the Commission will also step up its outreach, with the Conference on the Future of Europe playing a central role. With this forthcoming Conference, DG Communication together with the Secretariat-General intends to translate the joint declaration on the Conference, once agreed between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, with its partners in the European institutions, in Member States and in civil society, into concrete action.⁷ The Conference will be sustained by other forms of citizens' engagement, including Citizens' Dialogues in new and innovative

⁶ Following the invitation by the Integrated Political Crisis Response to the Working Party on Information to launch a work strand on the coordination of communications efforts in the context of COVID-19, a newly created Communicator's Portal was launched beginning of October 2020. This interinstitutional portal hosted on the Rapid Alert System platform is a repository for communication material to be shared between the EU institutions (Council, European Commission and Parliament) and the Member States. In 2021, the Commission will continue the sharing of relevant communication materials and editorial planning and expects the Secretariat-General of the Council to enable the monitoring of its use by Member States.

⁷ Being an interinstitutional project, it depend also on the other Institutions for delivering on all the targets.

formats, as such dialogues will continue to be a first line outreach activity of the Commission, in social media and – when again possible - on-site.

In 2021 DG Communication will further improve the user friendliness and coherence of the Europa websites, by transitioning a large number of websites, including the Commission's corporate website, the websites of the Representations and the inter-institutional EU website to a new, state of the art web publishing platform. It will continue preparing the opening of the new Commission's flagship interactive information centre 'Experience Europe' at Rond Point Schuman 14.

Moreover, DG Communication will consolidate its professionalisation efforts for the external communication domain within the Commission while continuing its close collaboration with DG Human Resources to foster the professionalisation of the Commission's communication community.

The promotion of the European Green Deal urges DG Communication to practice what it preaches, in 2021 DG Communication will become an even greener service, both in headquarters and Representations, with sustainability being part of its corporate culture.

Complementing the work done in the Commission headquarters, the Representations, managed by DG Communication, are reporting on the situation on the ground across the Member States to inform EU's actions. Moreover, they are at the centre of the European engagement and communication efforts, maximising outreach at national, regional and local level. In 2021, they will continue playing a key role in amplifying the Commission's response to the COVID-19 crisis and enable targeted communication in the Member States hardest hit, for example by adapting outreach, facilitating priority interviews and promoting the political messages of the President.

Specific objective 1: College and services use country specific intelligence, Eurobarometer results, media analysis and stakeholders'/citizens' feedback to inform political decision-making

In 2021, DG Communication will contribute to the Commission being a high-performing organisation by providing state-of-the-art communication-related products to the College and other Commission entities. Such services are complemented by country specific information and analysis, such as country specific reporting on the COVID-19 crisis, major political milestones such as European Council meetings, key political developments in Member States, economic, social and other issues under the European Semester, on the multiannual financial framework and on the Recovery Package and other major Commission initiatives.

The above services are complemented by political, economic and media reports and analyses, such as ad hoc political reports on topical issues (from domestic and EU politics, to COVID-19, social and economic trends); regular COVID-19 reporting; dedicated reporting

on economic recovery (under which NextGenerationEU and Recovery and Resilience Facility, including green and digital transitions), on the European Semester; the rule of law and migration, or Member States positioning on important international issues like arising conflicts in neighbouring countries or global challenges. DG Communication will also conduct comprehensive Eurobarometer surveys as well as a specific surveys (on the Future of Europe and on public opinion at regional level), while continuing monitoring, analysing and reporting on media coverage, both in traditional media and on social media platforms.

Furthermore, in 2021, DG Communication will provide analysis reports aggregating EU wide data resulting from media coverage and, where available, think tanks research papers, and opinion polls, to investigate correlations and identify trends related to crisis response measures and to events linked to the headline ambitions of the Commission.

Lastly, in their country strategies, steered through guidance by headquarters, Representations will assess the political and communication environment in their Member States and will design activities that match communication objectives at European level, while also being anchored in the local context, tailored to the local media environment and responding to local needs.

Specific objective 2: College receives strategic advice on communicating the headline ambitions and on media landscapes in the Member States

DG Communication contributes to the Commission being a high-performing organisation by providing strategic advice to the College, based on its expertise in communication as well as on its knowledge of the different media landscapes in the Member States.

In 2021, this work will focus on communicating in an impactful and positive way on recovery measures and on the green and the digital priorities, with health being a crucial component of the communication tryptic. In practical terms, measures that will support achieving this objective will include preparing and disseminating press and social media materials (data visualisation, snippets from factsheets, animated explanatory content), delivering midday press briefings and other media events, creating social media campaigns (for example, continuing the Ask the President series or developing new social media posts on priority topics like vaccination, recovery, the new 2030 climate target), and compelling visual identities, managing audiovisual facilities and ensuring media coverage of visits by Members of the College to the Member States and developing new online and offline publication materials for the general public and for children, teenagers and their teachers.

It will also include the preparation of specific reports on key political priorities of the Commission for 2021, as described in the Commission work programme, with information collected from Representations with a view to inform major policy initiatives of the College and adapt communication to the national and local environment.

Specific objective 3: Corporate communication of the Commission's headline ambitions is aligned across the Commission's departments

DG Communication will also contribute to the Commission becoming a more modern and high-performing organisation by aligning corporate communication across the Commission. This corporate service is vital to increase efficiency and to assist the services to align better their sectoral communication to the Commission's headline ambitions. In this context, for 2021, DG Communication will continue to ensure the consistency in Commission messages related to the ongoing Coronavirus crisis in areas such as the recovery, public health, research and innovation, and travel. Through its operational networks (such as the graphic design, social media and audiovisual networks) and ad-hoc task forces (which can be created quickly when the need arises, such as the coronavirus communication task force which was operational in March-July 2020), DG Communication will facilitate the overall alignment of Commission services activities on various communication channels, such as social media, audio-visual or the web. The governance bodies and networks related to the Europa web presence will concentrate their work in 2021 to the transition of website to the new web publishing platform, web accessibility and machine translation (implementation of DG Translation's e-translation tool on all Commission websites).

In 2021, DG Communication will work closely with other Directorates-General on one hand to include the examples from their policy areas in order to contribute real life stories to corporate campaigns such as NextGenerationEU and the European Green Deal and Digital strands. On the other hand, DG Communication will collaborate with the services and ask for their support in the dissemination of our communication products through their own channels as well as via their networks.

Last but not least, in 2021, DG Communication will continue and intensify its work in leading the internal network against disinformation and reinforcing a shared understanding across the Commission's communication community of the challenges posed by disinformation and misinformation in the EU member states and at European level. It will also continue its effort in awareness raising, in close coordination with European External Action Service, the European Parliament and other relevant bodies.

Therefore, the main outputs and other relevant indicators for 2021 will range from the coherence of the Commission's web and social media presence to the number of participants and meetings organised by the several professional networks (for example, communication network, disinformation network, social media network). Via steering such networks, DG Communication ensures continuous guidance professionalisation and performance management across the Commission's 'external communications family'. In 2021 the Graphic Design Network will benefit from two hands-on workshops: accessibility of online documents and copyright of visual material.

Specific objective 4: Meaningful and tailored messages, focussed on the Commission's headline ambitions, are communicated to citizens, media, multipliers and stakeholders

DG Communication works on communicating the Commission's headline ambitions to wider European audiences both in headquarters and in the Member States through the Representations. A variety of channels and tools are used, ranging from producing and disseminating online content, print publications, social media and audiovisual material, to organising press events, managing a relevant and coherent web presence, driving the strengthened interinstitutional cooperation in a spirit of shared responsibility (for example, around Europe Day and to amplify the Commission's corporate campaigns) and managing the Europe Direct network and Contact Centre and the replies to citizens' enquiries. Following the success of the interinstitutional [Learning Corner website](#) launched in 2019, DG Communication will enhance online access to its publications for the general public by [launching](#) a general public section of the Learning Corner website in 2021. DG Communication will also increasingly focus on developing and maximising the outreach of the digital formats of its publications, while reducing the proportion of printed copies.

In 2021, DG Communication will continue delivering on all of the above-mentioned fields. Corporate communication campaigns will focus on the launch of the multiannual campaign NextGenerationEU, which serves as a thematic umbrella for communication priorities such as the recovery, the European Green Deal and making Europe fit for the digital age.

The NextGenerationEU campaign will run from 2021 to 2024 and, at least initially, target younger age segments between 16 and 24 years. The campaign will cover all Member States. Starting as an awareness-raising campaign, NextGenerationEU may include calls to action at a later stage as the campaign progresses.

Social media and visual communication work will support the NextGenerationEU corporate campaign. As a complement to the major messages in the campaign, we will run specific targeted social media campaigns. These social media campaigns will focus on new legislative proposals in the Commission's 2021 work programme and on testing communication's approaches and visual assets to fine-tune and optimise the production and distribution work. The main topics will be green, digital, health, economic recovery.

The role of online, in particular audiovisual, communication will be important in all these communication actions, if the sanitary confinements makes face-to-face gatherings impossible. Video communication will probably have to continue to replace large in person meetings and will remain a privileged means of communication for the President and the College in 2021.

Specific objective 5: Citizens engage with the EU through face-to-face events and online interactive platforms, such as the Conference on the Future of Europe, thus stimulating the sharing of EU values and interest in and ownership of EU topics

By interacting and engaging on a daily basis with citizens, DG Communication is actively contributing to the Commission being both a modern and a high-performing organisation. Furthermore, DG Communication participate in the democratic debate about EU policies and Europe's future

This, in practical terms, translates into many different communication activities and outputs on which DG Communication will continue to deliver in 2021. To name just a few: the organisation of Citizens' Dialogues online or – when possible again - also face-to-face; online direct engagement with citizens via the Commission's various social media accounts; a variety of events organised by the Representations, the Europe Direct Network and visits organised by the Visitors' Centre (in both face-to face and online modes).

Due to the COVID-19 crisis in 2020, the Visitors' Centre shifted its offer to virtual format in a record time. In 2021, seeking synergies with Experience Europe in Rond Point Schuman 14, the Charlemagne Visitors' Centre refurbishment will provide digital interactive communication tools. Moreover, the ongoing renovations will make facilities conducive not only to resuming physical visits but also to new hybrid ones.

The 'Experience Europe' Centre in Rond Point Schuman 14 is scheduled to open in 2021. Coordination tasks and preparatory work related to the activities⁸ are taking place. The Centre will present the European Commission, its roles and activities in an easily understandable, relatable and interactive way thorough eight multimedia communication stations including virtual reality.

After the launch of the Conference on the Future of Europe, 2021 will see the major part of the activities of this interinstitutional initiative taking place (online, on-site or in hybrid formats). The Conference will reinforce deliberative democracy in Europe by encouraging citizens to have a greater role in shaping the future policies and ambitions of the Union.

Communication, and especially ensuring that the Conference reaches wide and far, will be one of the most important keys to its overall success. DG Communication (both in the headquarters and in Representations) in cooperation with the Secretariat-General will build on its extensive experience with Citizens' Dialogues, while developing other methods of engagement at the same time, such as deliberative panels. It will also work on a powerful visual identity and an online platform that will ensure the transparency of all the events and outcomes of the Conference.

⁸ Such as fit out works, IT/Audiovisual installation, programming and testing of communication content.

PART 2. Modernising the administration: main outputs for the year

The internal control framework⁹ supports sound management and decision-making. It notably ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are taken into account and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls.

DG Communication has established an internal control system tailored to its particular characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of the service's internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and be subject to a specific annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

In 2021, the priority is given to the areas of talent management, data protection and control and anti-fraud strategies, with their respective action plans.

Human resource management

As for all Commission services, the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 for DG Communication sets targets in the areas of female representation in middle management and staff engagement. As of 1 November 2020, DG Communication stands at 43% women in middle management positions and misses only one more first time female appointment by the end of 2022 to reach its specific target set by the Commission.

On staff engagement, in 2021 DG Communication will continue implementing its strategies for talent management and learning and development, as well as its policy of active internal communication and engagement with staff. DG Communication will emphasise, in particular, two-way communication and make full use of new digital collaborative videoconferencing tools to foster the participation and engagement of remote-working staff.

In 2021, the Human Resources Business Correspondent and Internal Communication teams will focus on the following priority actions:

- actively supporting DG Communication staff and managers through the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath, through guidance on learning and professional development, internal communication actions, participatory events and flexible solutions for *ad hoc* service reinforcements;
- drafting a Human Resources strategy for the next years consistent with the overall corporate Human Resources strategy (once available) and business needs;
- supporting DG Communication's domain leader role.

⁹ [Communication C\(2017\)2373 - Revision of the Internal Control Framework](#).

Sound financial management

Sound financial management indicators (for example, timeliness of payments, budgetary execution, cost of controls, and number of detected errors) in recent years in DG Communication have been overall satisfactory.

In 2021, DG Communication plans to further refine the financial procedures dashboard, containing information broken down by unit or Representation, which will allow managers to monitor and rationalise the number of procurement procedures and financial transactions. This will also be facilitated by the use of the corporate Public Procurement Management Tool, which will become compulsory for all procurement procedures above EUR 1,000. The verification of selected high-value procurement procedures by the Procurement Board of DG Communication, established in 2020, will contribute to making the controls more effective on certain categories of procurement and financial operations. Additional efforts will also be made to reinforce the segregation of duties in the financial circuits by ensuring the formal appointment of all actors in the financial circuits, along with certain requirements (compulsory and recommended trainings), and informing actors on their exact responsibilities. This will be complemented by a further step in ensuring fully paperless financial transactions. Finally, an in-depth assessment of possible ways to improve the efficiency of existing systems will be carried out in 2021.

Together with targeted training actions, these developments will allow managers to increase their awareness of potential issues and risks in the processes they supervise and to improve further internal processes and procedures.

Fraud risk management

Fraud prevention is essential to ensure sound financial management of the budget.

In 2021, DG Communication will continue to implement the actions described in the action plan of the new anti-fraud strategy of DG Communication, adopted in 2020, focusing on reinforcing staff awareness of ethics principles, and fraud patterns, while optimising effectiveness and efficiency of preventive and detective measures. Periodical analysis of data on procurement procedures stored in ABAC Datawarehouse and systematic verification of red flag indicators will be carried out to detect potential fraudulent behaviours and support targeted ex ante and ex post controls. Encouraging adequate rotation of staff participating in evaluation committees, verification by the procurement board of the high-value strategic procedures, reviewing situation of actors in the financial circuit, who have been in the same function for many years and setting-up a register for financial actors will contribute to enhancing awareness of DG Communication's staff and management about rules and procedures in the management of contracts and will reduce the risk of non-compliance events related to procedures (ICP12). The reporting towards senior management on the action plan linked to the strategy will be done on annual basis.

Digital transformation and information management

In 2021, DG Communication will pursue the modernisation of digital solutions in its portfolio, as well as in digital communication and collaboration. This is the convergence of several corporate programmes ongoing for some years already, from the Commission's Synergies and Efficiencies, through the ColdFusion Transformation Programme, to the European Commission Digital Strategy (ECDS).

The deployment of collaboration tools in the Representations is now more aligned than ever with the Headquarters. The COVID-19 crisis spurred a generalised adoption of collaboration tools (primarily Skype for Business, but also Microsoft Teams, for which the full deployment in Representations is expected in 2021).

At the same time, collaboration is reaching out the Commission's perimeter and merging with Citizen Engagement. Both Representations and headquarters (Visitors Centre) are adopting solutions to allow external remote attendance to virtual meetings, or conferences.

The Representations are also set to experience a change in their working practices by the deployment of ConRep (formerly known as Contact Management Tool), which will allow a common management of external contacts and support the compliant processing of personal data with the Commission's Data Protection Action Plan (C(2018)7432).

One of the key projects (linked to the Digital Strategy Communication objective and to the corporate Data Ecosystem) that, DG Communication has undertaken, is the implementation of the platform for the Conference on the Future of Europe, which will start in 2021. This project is linked to the strategic objective of reaching out to and engaging with EU citizens. In 2021, DG Communication will continue IT projects linked to this directive, as well as to knowledge management and more articulated data analytics. More specifically, these IT projects will share these requirements:

- instances of interactive and user-centric web-presence;
- Artificial Intelligence-based virtual assistance;
- knowledge management (Eurobarometer and Europe Direct Contact Centre);
- data analytics (Social Media Analytics and Campaign Data Analysis);
- implementation of the data protection rules (data protection compliant system to manage contact details in Representations).

In line with the objectives set by the President in her Political Guidelines, DG Communication will continue to preserve privacy, notably as regards the use of digital platforms and tools, bearing in mind the Schrems II judgement¹⁰ and the recommendations of the European Data Protection Board and the European Data Protection Supervisor.

¹⁰ [EDPS Statement following the Court of Justice ruling in Case C-311/18 Data Protection Commissioner v Facebook Ireland Ltd and Maximilian Schrems \("Schrems II"\)](#).

Mapping and monitoring contractual relations with possible personal data transfers to third countries will be part of the exercise, in close cooperation with the Data Protection Officer and the European Data Protection Supervisor.

DG Communication will work to achieve the objectives set out in the Review of the Data Protection Action Plan C(2020)7625) adopted on 9 November 2020. In particular, it will:

- clarify the roles of processors and controllers with regard to contracts with external entities;
- raise further awareness of staff in general, and middle and senior management in particular, to the challenges of activities and contracts involving data transfers;
- provide tailored assistance to the Representations, finalise the event, and contact management IT tool to automatise the handling of personal data in full compliance with the Regulation.

In addition, DG Communication will cooperate with the network of Data Protection Coordinators to set up a data protection community based on good practice. It will also continue to serve other Commission services with corporate records in the area of external communication, such as that covering social media activities, which will be based on a risk impact assessment.

Lastly, DG Communication, in the context of launching the new generation of the Europe Direct Contact Centre on 1 February 2021, has already laid the base to contribute to crosscutting knowledge management via the new Europe Direct Contact Centre framework contract and a Memorandum of Understanding with DG Informatics. As of 2021, the knowledge base of the contact centre will be structured to interact with other databases and will invest in helping to set up specific cooperation, e.g., with the social media unit and the Commission's document management, as well as the development of Artificial Intelligence assistance. This should, among, other things, allow the replies that the contact centre gives to individual citizens to be re-used for other purposes.

Sound environmental management

DG Communication will support the Commission's commitment to implement the objectives of the European Green Deal for its own administration, including becoming climate neutral by 2030. To support this target, DG Communication will increase in 2021, efforts related to the Commission's Eco-Management and Audit Scheme and initiate new actions related to both its area of business and its ways of working. These include the roll-out of the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme certification of Representations in two pilot Representations and the launch of the process in another two sites; the shift towards electric and hybrid cars when renewing the car fleet in Representations; the reduction in the number missions, and the further implementation of Green Public Procurement through training and the incorporation of green criteria in all relevant calls for tender, focusing on (but not limited to) high-value procurement procedures.

DG Communication will pursue and further develop a digital and paperless strategy through the further promotion of existing electronic processes (e-signatories, electronic financial workflows, e-Invoicing), and those launched in 2020, such as those related to inventory management in the Representations. The rollout of the qualified electronic signature for contracts will be accompanied with relevant training and coaching of authorising officers and other financial actors.

Staff engagement is an important element to achieve behaviour changes in this area and other Eco-Management and Audit Scheme priorities, to which DG Communication will contribute with awareness-raising campaigns and activities. These initiatives will strengthen the Commission's position as a modern and green institution and workplace.

Examples of initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities

Efficiency gains in governance of external communication domain

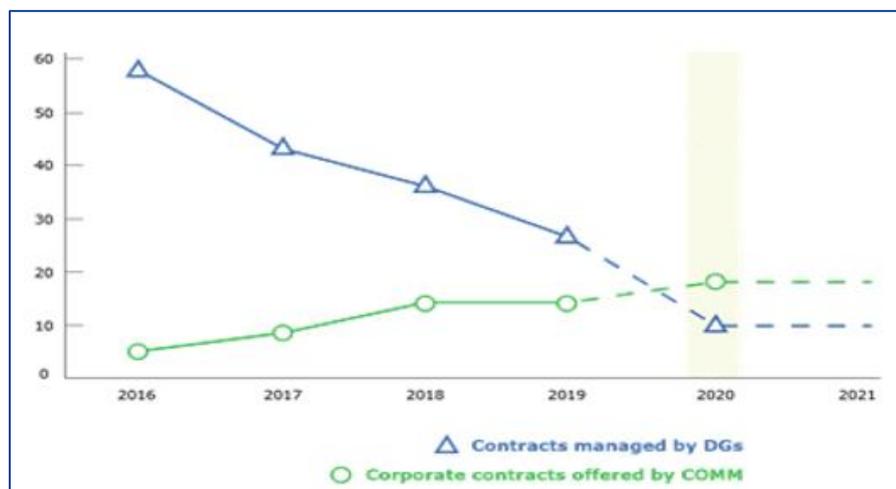
As a Presidential service and as leader of the external communication domain, it is one of DG Communication's central tasks to improve the economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities.

As described in specific objective three, DG Communication aims at aligning corporate communication of the Commission's headline ambitions across the Commission's services. This implies an overview and assessment of communication expenditures, and DG Communication is mandated to grant or withhold consent for external communication actions of a value exceeding EUR 1 million. Key to a successful governance system is the effective coordination and steering, together with DG Human Resources and Security and the Secretariat-General.

Efficiency gains in the context of running a Corporate Communication Contracts Team (i.e. a one-stop shop) for centralised Framework contracts

DG Communication has achieved significant progress in the area of the centralisation of corporate communication framework contracts and is about to complete the process. The original number of 58 framework contracts in 2016 was reduced to 27 in January 2020 and to 24 in October 2020, bringing the Directorate-General closer to the goal of 22 framework contracts by 2021. These contracts include both DG Communication framework contracts and "derogated" framework contracts managed by other services as agreed by domain leaders DG Communication and DG Interpretation and approved by Corporate Communication Steering Committee, in line with the original planning. All these derogated framework contracts are becoming corporate assets, available to all services, with the support of DG Communication. No further centralisation is deemed necessary because the Commission's communication needs can be best met in this set up while maintaining a

necessary degree of diversity of contractors. The focus will now move to the increased modernisation, quality, speed, and range of the provided services.



The centralisation of the framework contracts has been bringing economy and efficiency gains in four main areas:

- human resources: It allows communication units to concentrate on their core activity, rather than deal with procurement procedures;
- corporate communication: It allows to align messaging and communication spending to major Commission priorities and 2021 Commission work program;
- better procurement practice: It allows the gradual implementation of measures to mitigate some of the supply-side distortions in the communication market around the Commission in cooperation with Legal Unit of DG Communication and DG Budget;
- quality/clients satisfaction: stepping up quality of service delivery by completing the Corporate Communication Contracts Team, professionalisation through the running of a communication procurement network and regular meetings and newsletters, developing a streamlined IT request system in SharePoint for Framework contracts, and measuring satisfaction of client Directorates-General through EUSurveys as one of the main key performance indicators.

Efficiency gains from enhanced governance of replies to citizens questions via the Europe Direct Contact Centre

A new Europe Direct Contact Centre charter decided by the Corporate Communication Steering Committee in 2020 laid down coherent, transparent and fair rights and responsibilities for all parties involved. In 2021, the implementation will:

- transform the Europe Direct Contact Centre into a corporate tool, better equipped to deal with the public's queries, so that Directorates-General can focus on their core business and save further resources;

- streamline and further professionalise the way the EU deals with citizens by continuing to provide speedy, relevant and factually correct replies, thus contributing to a positive image of the EU among the public;
- improve operational services via the new framework contract entering into force in 2021, in knowledge sharing, reporting and the opening of instant messaging apps as communication channel for citizen.

Efficiency gains in web communication

DG Communication provides technical enablers to realise the editorial strategy of its web presence that should render it more relevant, coherent and cost-effective. These are:

- Europa Component Library: providing technology agnostic, standardised design to be used on online solutions;
- Europa Web Publishing Platform: off the shelf content management system, allowing for setting up websites within a matter of days;
- webtools: various technology agnostic visualisation or other technical solutions such as machine translation, maps, charts, etc.

By using these tools, other services are saving important resources, as they reuse existing solutions and do not pay for custom IT development. In 2021, DG Communication will transition 57 websites to the new web publishing platform and 20-30 further new websites can be set up by this state of the art, reusable tool. A new technical solution proposed by DG Communication under webtools will allow Commission services to install DG Translation's e-translation services on their websites, saving important resources in human translation for the Commission and proposing better services to the citizens.

ANNEX: Performance tables

General objective: A modern, high-performing and sustainable European Commission		
<i>Specific objective 1: College and services use country specific intelligence, Eurobarometer results, media analysis and stakeholders/citizens' feedback to inform political decision-making.</i>		<i>Related to spending programme:N.A.</i>
Main outputs in 2021		
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Political, economic and media reports ¹¹	Number of reports (source: database C2)	1 060
Opinion poll surveys ('Standard Eurobarometer surveys') with long term indicators	Number of comprehensive Eurobarometer surveys	3
Additional opinion poll surveys (other Eurobarometer surveys) on specific issues	Number of Eurobarometer surveys	2
Media monitoring	Number of comprehensive media monitoring reviews	365
Media analysis reports on events linked to headline ambitions	Number of media analysis reports	20

General objective: A modern, high-performing and sustainable European Commission		
<i>Specific objective 2: College receives strategic advice on communicating the headline ambitions and on the media landscapes in the Member States.</i>		<i>Related to spending programme:N.A.</i>
Main outputs in 2021:		
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Meetings of Spokespersons with Cabinet Communication advisers and Representations	Number of weekly meetings of Spokespersons with Cabinet communication advisers and Representations per year	35
Lines to Take prepared daily for the College members	Number of Lines to Take prepared daily by Spokespersons	6
Media activities and coverage related to visits by Members of the College to the Member States	Number of visits by Members of the College to the Member States with Representations' involvement (including virtual visits)	300
	Number of media and press activities related to visits by Members of the College to Member States	150
Management of audiovisual technical facilities	Number of hours provided in Electronic News Gathering Television Crews, 'Very Important Persons' video/photo-shooting and video editing	8 500

¹¹ As European Semester Officers are attached to SG RECOVER as from 1 October 2020, their reports should no longer be counted as DG Communication, but as SG RECOVER reports.

	Number of audiovisual products provided to the College (messages, interviews, statements, clips)	850
Analytical reports based on Representations' assessment of local communication needs and opportunities	Number of analytical reports on outreach adapted to local needs	20

General objective: A modern, high-performing and sustainable European Commission

Specific objective 3: Corporate communication of the Commission's headline ambitions is aligned across the Commission's departments. *Related to spending programme:N.A.*

Main outputs in 2021:

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Coordination of Commission's communication networks (Corporate Communication Steering Committee and Communication Network)	Average percentage of member Directorates-General attending Corporate Communication Steering Committee meetings with at least one participant	80
	Adoption of a new mandate	1
	Average percentage of Directorates-General attending Communication Network meetings with at least one participant	80
Coordination of communication professional networks (graphists, audiovisual, social media, media monitoring and analysis, communication procurement experts, Europa web governance bodies, Europe Direct Contact Centre Back offices, etc.)	Number of meetings of professional networks organised per each network separately per year:	
	Network against disinformation (targets: 6 meetings per year + adoption and the first workplan for the Network in 2021)	6
	Network of communication procurement practitioners	2
	Community of practice of Europe Direct Contact Centre back-offices	2
	Europa cross-editorial board, Europa Forum, Europa Steering Board	4
	Audiovisual Correspondents networks meetings	3
	Social Media Network meetings	2
Graphic Design Network meetings	2	
Professionalisation and centralisation of communication services.	Number of workshops on the Commission's visual identity	3
	Percentage of logo exception requests handled within 4 weeks ¹²	Over 60%

¹² Logo exception requests are handled through a complex procedure coordinated by the DG Communication and involving the Secretariat-General, the DG Human Resources and the requesting service(s). The objective is to establish the need for a logo, examine alternatives and provide guidance and graphic design support.

	Number of training sessions (data clinics) on the central social media publishing and monitoring tools	Over 40
Centralisation of communication framework contracts ¹³	Number of Corporate Communication Framework Contracts (maximum)	22
	Number of specific contracts concluded using Corporate Communication Framework Contracts ¹⁴	300
Professionalisation of external communication communities	Number of LinkedIn Learning licences taken up by the external communication communities for online learning actions in the field of communication	300
	Learning paths for the nine distinct communities of practice within the communication domain	4 ¹⁵
	Formal launch of additional communities	2
Reduction of reliance on intra-muros service providers in the external communication domain	Guidance for client Directorates-General	proposal available
	Item presented to Communication Network meetings:	
	Proposal	1
	Monitoring	2
Countering disinformation	Reach of awareness-raising activities ¹⁶ fighting disinformation	1 000 000 ¹⁷
	Number of visits to anti-disinformation web pages	50 000
Consultation of Eurobarometer surveys on Europa	Number of visits to Eurobarometer web page	200 000 ¹⁸
Representations support to Directorates-General in outreach actions coordinated through DG Communication	Number of requests from line Directorates-General for support dealt by the Representations	40

¹³ The smart recentralisation of the corporate communication framework contracts was established in the 2016 Synergies and Efficiencies Communication and was confirmed and reinforced following the audit and political stocktaking of the process in 2019. The number of these contracts was reduced from 58 (baseline on 1 January 2016) to 27 in January 2020, and will decrease even further to around 20 framework contracts by 2021.

¹⁴ Corporate Framework contracts managed by DG Communication Corporate Communication Contracts and Evaluation teams.

¹⁵ Media and public relations, Spokespersons and related services; Social media; Speechwriting and political communication; Visual Communication; Audiovisual production; Project management, governance and guidelines; Webmasters and web design; Communication procurement; and Monitoring and evaluation.

¹⁶ Ranging from the production of communication products (including videos and social media posts) to the coordination of the relevant Commission Disinformation Network, etc.

¹⁷ The figure sums the reach for all the awareness-raising activities related to disinformation: webpages, social media posts, download of toolkits, etc.

¹⁸ Based on the new method of calculation of number of visits used by the Commission.

General objective: A modern, high-performing and sustainable European Commission		
Specific objective 4: <i>Meaningful and tailored messages, focussed on the Commission's headline ambitions, are communicated to citizens, media, multipliers and stakeholders.</i>		<i>Related to spending programme: N.A.</i>
Main outputs in 2021:		
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Corporate social media communication complementing NextGenerationEU	Reach: Number of contacts made during 2021	3 billion ¹⁹
	Number of targeted social media campaigns ²⁰ focusing on the Commission's headline ambitions	4
Europe Direct Contact Centre response to users' enquiries	Number of replied inquiries	130 000
Publication of news articles focusing on the messages and activities of the President of the Commission	The overall annual number of news articles published on Europa website by the Spokesperson Service, focusing on the activities of the President of the European Commission ²¹	48
Publications ²² and online materials for the general public and for young people	Number of static and animated visuals developed for backdrops/social media	100
	Number of readers / visits to publications and online materials	5 800 000
	Number of publications / online materials produced by DG Communication / other Commission services for which testing panels ²³ provided advice	15
Press events organised by Representations	Number of press events (physical or virtual)	120
	Number of journalists during press events	75

¹⁹ Contacts counted in terms of impressions. Target based on the assumption of a media buying budget of EUR 12 million and an average CPM (cost per thousand impressions) of EUR 4.

²⁰ A targeted campaign means a series of posts on the same topic, cross-platform, supported by an advertising budget.

²¹ News articles represent multimedia content, tailored to convey messages and explain events or policies to non-expert audiences. Published on Europa website by the Spokesperson Unit, they are frequently used to highlight and promote President's activities and messages, and usually contain photos and videos. [Some examples](#).

²² All paper publications are printed on 100% recycled paper from 100% post-consumer waste, using a totally chlorine-free process. The total number of copies of publications printed will be significantly reduced in 2021 compared to 2020, while the readership of online publications and materials is expected to continue increasing, leading to a small net reduction in the overall target.

²³ "The Teachers' Testing Panel and Europe Direct Information Centres' Testing Panel are both coordinated by DG Communication. The Teachers' Testing Panel, comprising 54 primary and secondary school teachers, tests materials produced by DG Communication, by other Directorates-General, and by other EU Institutions for children, teenagers and their teachers. The feedback provided by the panel enables the services to optimise their materials for use in schools. The Europe Direct Information Centres' Testing Panel, comprising 27 managers of Europe Direct Information Centres, provides a similar service for materials produced for the general public."

Press events organised by the Spokesperson's Service	Number of press events of College members (physical or virtual): - press conferences: - press points	150 45
Visits to the webpages promoting the six Commission priorities, and the relevant material (factsheets, fact pages)	Average number of visits to the webpages promoting the six Commission priorities, and the relevant material (factsheets, fact pages)	220 000
Social media following of the President of the Commission on Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn	Number of followers on the President's social media accounts	150 000 Instagram 478 000 Twitter 100 000 LinkedIn
European Commission central and local social media accounts	Number of followers on European Commission central and local social media accounts	7 100 000
Audiovisual and multimedia productions, Europe by Satellite (EbS) news coverage and media library	Number of Corporate Video Productions	175
	Number of items downloaded (Audio/Video/Photo)	85 000
	Number of hours transmitted by EbS	2 100
	Number of TV uptakes from EbS (in minutes)	55 000
User-centred websites.	Number of visits to the European Commission core site ²⁴	42 000 000
	Number of visits to the Europe Union website	31 000 000
	Number of visits to all Commission owned websites enrolled in Europa Analytics ²⁵	355 000 000

²⁴ The Commission core site (ec.europa.eu) includes information on the Commission's headline ambitions, organisational structure and functioning, stable information common to most Commission departments. It serves as a hub for onward navigation to further thematic or specific content that are either hosted in the site or on other more specialised websites.

²⁵ +/-330 websites.

General objective: A modern, high-performing and sustainable European Commission		
<i>Specific objective 5: Citizens engage with the EU through face-to-face events and online interactive platforms, such as the Conference on the Future of Europe, thus stimulating the sharing of EU values and interest in and ownership of EU topics.</i>		<i>Related to spending programme: N.A.</i>
Main outputs in 2021:		
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Events organised by Representations	Number of outreach activities (physical and online)	6 000
	Number of participants at events and actions	400 000
Information events organised by Europe Direct Information Centres	Number of events	3 500 ²⁶
	Percentage of users who would recommend the Europe Direct Information Centres service	90%
Information visits organised by the Visitors' Centre	Number of visiting groups to the Commission per year	800 ²⁷
	Number of visitors per year	24 000
Experience Europe / Brussels Rond-Point 14 ²⁸	Number of visitors Experience Europe / Brussels Rond-Point 14	30 000 ²⁹
Citizens' Dialogues ³⁰	Number of Citizens' Dialogues on-site and online	300
Conference on the Future of Europe ³¹	Number of participants of the Conference and its side events	10 000

²⁶ The current Europe Direct Information Centres generation's "shelf life" has been extended until 30 April 2021. The next generation EUROPE DIRECT (note change of name) will start operations on 1 May 2021. The management process of the next generation hinges upon the organisation of events with long-lasting impact, targeting wider sub-sets of the population. Higher quality, involving significant organisation efforts, will inevitably lead to fewer events as compared to the numbers produced by the current generation on yearly basis. In addition, the unprecedented sanitary situation will result in fewer events staged by the current generation as compared to previous reference periods. The 2021 target figure is therefore combining the targets set for the two generations (current generation ending the operations end of April 2021 and next generation starting beginning of May).

²⁷ Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, physical visits will not take place in the same way during 2021 with a significant impact on the numbers of groups and visitors. When resuming, it can be expected that the physical visits will have to respect the social distancing measures which may further affect group sizes. However, DG Communication expects this to be somewhat counterbalanced by a new strategy on virtual visits.

²⁸ The 'Experience Europe' centre in Rond-Point Schuman 14 is scheduled to open in 2021.

²⁹ Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, the target is subject to change.

³⁰ The mission letters of President von der Leyen call upon all Members of the Commission to visit the Member States and participate in Citizens' Dialogues, in particular under the umbrella of the Conference on the Future of Europe. Hence, Citizens' Dialogues will be considered also as actions of the Conference, in particular when Members of the College are involved.

³¹ The mission letters of President von der Leyen call upon all Members of the Commission to visit the Member States and participate in Citizens' Dialogues, in particular under the umbrella of the Conference on the Future of Europe. Hence, Citizens' Dialogues will be considered also as actions of the Conference, in particular when Members of the College are involved.

	Number of Conference contributions via the online platform	5 000 000
Social media engagement with citizens (Community management)	Number of social media replies published	25 000

Objective: DG Communication employs a competent and engaged workforce and contributes to gender equality at all levels of management to effectively deliver on the Commission's priorities and core business

Main outputs in 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Gender-balanced management in DG Communication	First time female appointments in middle management ³²	Net increase by one by 31.12.2022
Healthy staff engagement	Staff engagement index in Survey 2021	In line with corporate average
Human Resources Strategy for DG Communication	Draft Human Resources Strategy for DG Communication	Document available by 31.1.2021
Active two-way communication with staff	Number of participatory events	Five staff meetings (virtual or real) during 2021 targeting both HQ and representations staff
	Number of senior management debriefs to staff (with open questions)	Minimum of 20 online debriefs in 2021

Objective: The authorising officer by delegation has reasonable assurance that resources have been used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that cost-effective controls are in place which give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of underlying transactions

Main outputs in 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Effective controls: Legal and regular transactions	Risk at payment	Remains < 2 % of relevant expenditure
	Estimated risk at closure	Remains < 2 % of relevant expenditure
Efficient controls	Time-to-pay	Becomes >97% of payments within contractual delay
Economical controls	Overall estimated cost of controls	Remains <7% of funds managed
Efficient controls: Budget execution	Percentage of the commitment appropriations, for the operational budget delegated to DG Communication, committed with respect to the annual forecast	Close to 100% commitment appropriations for the operational budget delegated to DG Communication
	Percentage of the payment appropriations, for the operational	More than 95% payment appropriations for the

³² Target set in SEC(2020)146.

	budget delegated to DG Communication, paid with respect to the annual forecast	operational budget delegated to DG Communication
--	--	--

Objective: The risk of fraud is minimised through the application of effective anti-fraud measures and the implementation of the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS)³³ aimed at the prevention, detection and correction³⁴ of fraud

Main outputs in 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Targeted awareness-raising actions for DG Communication managers, capacity-building seminars and presentations during ex post controls missions.	Number of participants	>40% of managers and staff in concerned unit or Representation
Periodical analysis of data on procurement procedures stored in ABAC Data Warehouse to detect possible fraud patterns	Presentation of the reports to Authorising Officer by Delegation and Authorising Officers by Subdelegation	Annually
Systematic verification of red flags indicators in ex-ante and ex post controls	Periodic reporting on number of events identified	Transactions identified as containing potential 'red flags' do not exceed 2% of all transactions checked

Objective: DG Communication is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policy-shaping, information management and administrative processes to forge a truly digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission

Main outputs in 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Knowledge Management and Data Analytics	Progress of the involved projects (Eurobarometer, Europe Direct Contact Centre, Social Media Analytics and Campaign Data Analysis)	50%
Data-protection compliant tool to manage contact details in Representations	Percentage of Representations with a tool deployed	100%
Collaboration tools for Representations	Percentage of Representations with tools deployed (Skype for Business, Microsoft 365, Webex)	80%

³³ Communication from the Commission "Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: enhanced action to protect the EU budget", COM(2019) 176 of 29 April 2019 – 'the Commission Anti-Fraud-Strategy Communication' – and the accompanying action plan, SWD(2019) 170 – 'the CAFS Action Plan'.

³⁴ Correction of fraud is an umbrella term, which notably refers to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

Records approved and published on the Data Protection Officer public register	Number of records specific to DG Communication	100%
	Number of identified corporate records needed by the communication community	100%
Staff awareness about data protection	Number of trainings and other awareness-raising activities per year	2

Objective: DG Communication takes full account of its environmental impact in all its actions and actively promotes measures to reduce the related day-to-day impact of the administration and its work

Main results and outputs in 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Paperless DG Communication	Reduction of the average number of printed pages per user against the 2019 baseline	10%
Greening of the car fleet in the Representations	Percentage of new cars purchased that are electric or plug-in hybrid ³⁵	50% of new cars purchased in 2020 are electric or plug-in hybrid ³⁶
Green public procurement for supplies and services	Percentage of relevant ³⁷ high-value calls for tender incorporating green procurement criteria	50%
Staff engagement	Number of participatory events or awareness-raising actions on Eco-Management and Audit Scheme priority areas	2
Enrolment of Representations to the Commission's Environmental Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)	Number of completed audits and related reports	2
	Number of Representations for which the preparatory stage is concluded	2
Reduction of emissions caused by missions	Reduction of the number of missions performed by DG Communication staff against the 2019 baseline	10%

³⁵ In consideration of current market conditions, the purchase of electric or hybrid plug-in cars will initially focus on official cars (saloon type), which represent 50% of the Representations' fleet.

³⁶ In consideration of current market conditions, the purchase of electric or hybrid plug-in cars will initially be focussed on official cars (saloon type) which represent 50% of the Representations' fleet.

³⁷ Depending on the nature of supplies and services, relevant calls for tender are those where green criteria can and should be used.