



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR JOURNALISTS ON EUROPEAN COMMISSION PREMISES

1. Introduction

Pursuant to Commission Decision [2015/443](#)¹, the European Commission ("the Commission") informs in this document about existing rules and procedures for journalists' access to Commission premises. This document covers areas of respect for privacy, good conduct and cooperation as well as security.

The [privacy statement governing European Commission media accreditation](#) constitutes an integral part of this code of conduct.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this particular document,

'Journalists' means written, radio and TV journalists, film crews and press photographers.

'Accredited journalist' means any journalist in possession of a valid media accreditation issued by the Commission.

'Media accreditation badge' means identification and access card stating that its owner has been granted media accreditation.

'Non-accredited journalist' means any journalist not in possession of such a valid media accreditation.

'Commission staff member' means any permanent official, contract agent, temporary agent and Seconded National Expert (SNE/END) of the Commission.

'Press zones' means dedicated zones for press activities on Commission premises, mainly in the Berlaymont and the Charlemagne buildings. In the Berlaymont building, the press zone comprises the Berlaymont press room, press meeting rooms, press bar and the DG COMM Spokesperson's Service offices zone. Journalists may have unaccompanied access to these zones.

'Administrative zones' means all offices of Commission staff and adjacent corridors, all meeting rooms as well as any other locations attributed to Commission staff. These zones are not accessible to journalists unless they are accompanied by a Commissioner or Commission staff member at all times.

'Filming and recordings' means any form of sound and/or image recording.

¹ Commission Decision 2015/443 on Security in the Commission was published in the Official Journal under L72 on 17/03/2015. As a legal act, it applies to every person accessing Commission premises. The rules and procedures described in this document are pursuant to Decision 2015/443 and therefore aim merely at informing journalists in more detail of the requirements and arrangements already in place.

'DG COMM' is the Directorate-General for Communication and units hereof; 'DG COMM SPP' is the DG Communication Spokesperson's Service.

'HR.DS' is the Commission's Security Directorate in charge of security matters in the Commission including access rights and procedures to Commission premises.

3. Access for accredited journalists

Media accreditation is granted by DG COMM SPP in agreement with the Inter-institutional Accreditation Committee. The conditions for media accreditation can be found [here](#). Accredited journalists will receive a media accreditation badge with which they may access designated parts of Commission premises as described in this document. They are required to present their media accreditation badge to security staff upon arrival on Commission premises and to wear their media accreditation badge visibly at all times while on site.

Accredited journalists may have **unaccompanied access** only to the following designated zones

- Berlaymont press zone as well as dedicated press zones in other Commission buildings, if existing
- Berlaymont and Charlemagne cafeteria, canteen and reception area on the ground floor
- Service Card Office and canteen in the Commission building located in Rue Montoyer 34

Accredited journalists may access the Berlaymont press zone from Mondays to Fridays from 08:00 to 20:00 local time. Access outside these hours will be granted only in exceptional and duly justified cases (e.g. EU Summit, Open Days, etc.) after prior approval by and under the responsibility of DG COMM SPP and/or HR.DS.

4. Access for non-accredited journalists

Any non-accredited journalist is considered as a normal visitor and will be treated subject to the rules and procedures applicable for visitors and therefore must

- announce their visit to DG COMM SPP (COMM-PRESSROOM-TEAM@ec.europa.eu), a Commissioner or a Commission staff member at least 24 hours prior to arrival on site; approval of late requests cannot be guaranteed
- present themselves at reception upon arrival on Commission premises
- be received by the DG COMM SPP representative, the Commissioner or a Commission staff member at the reception of the Commission building
- wear their visitor badge visibly at all times while on site
- return the visitor badge to the Commission staff at the reception desk before leaving the premises

Non-accredited journalists may have **unaccompanied access** only to the following designated zones

- Berlaymont press zone
- Berlaymont cafeteria, canteen and reception area on the ground floor

5. Respect for dignity, privacy and integrity of Commission staff and property

Journalists shall have due regard to the dignity, privacy and integrity of all individuals, Commissioners, Commission staff, visitors and any other individuals present on Commission premises as well as to the integrity of the Commission's property and equipment. Any violation may lead to the measures laid out in Commission Decision 2015/443.

6. Filmings and recordings

Unless stated otherwise by DG COMM or HR.DS, filmings and recordings by journalists are permitted in the Berlaymont press zone.

Any filming and recording in any other zone of Commission premises, including in all social zones, is subject to prior agreement by DG COMM Audiovisual Services. If granted, the film team must be accompanied by a Commission staff member at all times.

The intention to interview, film or record a conversation with a Commissioner or a Commission staff member is subject to prior agreement by the Commissioner or Commission staff member. Hiding recording or filming equipment and/or recording without or against the Commissioner's or Commission staff member's prior agreement are strictly forbidden.

For security reasons, it is forbidden to film and/or photograph security staff, the security gates in and around the building, any other security systems and/or installations as well as the reception areas in any Commission building.

Artworks exhibited in the interior of Commission buildings are subject to copyright; therefore it is advisable not to film and/or photograph them.

7. Security rules and procedures

All journalists must respect and comply with the Commission security rules laid out in Commission Decision 2015/443 and follow any security instructions received from mandated Commission staff and security guards.

Upon arrival in the building, all journalists must go through security control procedures, e.g. pass through a metal detector and pass their bags and equipment through an x-ray scanner in those Commission buildings where such equipment is provided.

Journalists must report any loss or theft of their media accreditation badge immediately to the HR.DS Duty Office +32 (0)2 29 22222 and must present themselves in person as soon as possible to the Access Card Service, DG HR.DS.4, Rue Montoyer 34, 1000 Brussels.

In exceptional circumstances, e.g. during heightened alert states or similar developments or situations, the Commission may temporarily issue specific instructions in response to these circumstances.

8. Breaches

Pursuant to Commission Decision 2015/443 and based on the principle of proportionality, non-compliance with that Decision may lead to the journalist being ordered to leave, being escorted from and/or in severe cases being temporarily banned from Commission premises.

In case of a banning from Commission premises, the Inter-institutional Accreditation Committee, the journalist and their media organization will be informed of this decision, its reasons and possibilities for being heard as well as for appeal.