



High-level Governance of the Commission's Web Presence

INTRODUCTION

Taking into account the latest developments of the Commission's corporate web presence, and of its corporate governance, this document shall replace the proposals of the Directorate-General Communication endorsed by the Corporate Communication Steering Committee as regards the high-level web governance in January 2017¹.

Adaptations to the previous high-level governance set-up are necessary for the following reasons:

- Evolution of the Commission's corporate governance²;
- Evolution of the domain leadership role of the external communication domain;
- Implementation of the smartly de-centralised strategy for the Commission's web presence;
- Merger of the homepages of the corporate political and information sites;
- Evolution of the technical governance of the corporate web publication platform.

In line with the rules in place since 2005, and as reminded by the Corporate Management Board in January 2019³, all Commission owned websites must be hosted on the europa.eu domain, independently on whether they are 'EC' or 'EU' branded⁴. The web governance therefore applies to all of them. The governance, compulsory rules, procedures and guidelines for working on the web in the Commission are outlined in the [Information Providers' Guide](#)⁵.

The Commission's web presence is thematically organised. Depending on the communication need, online communication can be either 'EC' or 'EU' branded.

The 'EC' branded content (ec.europa.eu) includes both political and corporate information.

The political information features the institution's political priorities, political leadership and news. In line with long-standing practice and the Commission's working methods, the Spokesperson's Service is in charge of deciding the communication lines to take and therefore of the political content. It relies on DG COMM for the related services.

¹<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/connected/servlet/JiveServlet/download/5747-201727/CCSC%20Europa%20decision%202%20high%20level%20governance.docx>

² "Streamlining and strengthening corporate governance within the European Commission" (C(2018) 7704 final)

³ Minutes of the CMB: https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/sg/senior/Documents/20190125_minutes_cmb_en.pdf

⁴ The top, genuinely inter-institutional EU website (europa.eu) is out of scope of this document, as it is owned by the Inter-institutional Online Communication Committee and managed on the Committee's behalf by the Commission: [Governance/Committees](#)

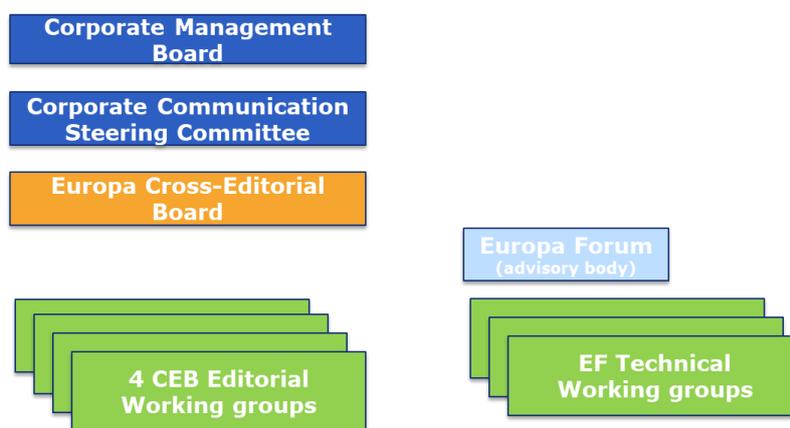
⁵ [Ec.europa.eu/IPG](https://ec.europa.eu/IPG)

The corporate part features information and services on the Commission's policies and activities in a user-centred manner. It is composed of a core [site](#)⁶ owned by DG Communication and websites owned by the Directorates-General embedded in the thematic structure.

'EU' branding is generally used, when the mission and content of the online communication go beyond the activities of one single EU institution or cover a policy, activity or campaign which is either institution-agnostic or common to the different EU institutions and bodies.

As a consequence of the thematic structure, DGs have to work collaboratively. The governance bodies described below provide the frame for this cooperation and ensure that the Commission's web presence as a whole is relevant, coherent and cost-effective and is in line with the relevant legal provisions on data protection and accessibility.

Overview of governance bodies



Europa Cross-Editorial Board (CEB)

Composition: Heads of Unit of the Communication Units of each DG/Service. Heads of Unit in charge of units that have an important stake in website creation/management that cannot be represented by the Head of the Communication unit, may become members with the latter's agreement. The board is chaired by the Head of Unit 'Europa Web Communication' (COMM B3). DG Communication ensures its secretariat.

Role:

- Ensure that Commission services co-create the institution's web presence in a relevant, coherent and cost effective manner, in full respect of valid legal provisions and guidelines as published on the Information Providers Guide (IPG)
- Promote synergies among Commission services by sharing assets and knowledge
- Promote the building of the community of web practitioners across the Commission

Functioning: the Cross-Editorial board meets twice a year, ad-hoc meetings can be organised when needed or upon request. To ensure the coherence of the corporate thematic structure of the Commission the Cross-Editorial Board has four Editorial Working Groups, encompassing all themes of the corporate web presence:

- Editorial Working Group 1: About the EC; Law; Funding, Tenders; Strategy; Jobs at the EC, Statistics, News, publications, events;
- Editorial Working Group 2: Energy, Climate change, Environment; EU regional and urban development; Food, Farming, Fisheries;

⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu>

- Editorial Working Group 3: Business, Economy, Euro; Live, work, travel; Education;
- Editorial Working Group 4: Aid, Development cooperation, Fundamental rights; Research.

Europa Forum (EF)

Composition: Web communicators (editorial and technical) of all DG/Services. Two co-Presidents chair the forum. DG Communication is a permanent one, co-chairing with another DG on a rotating basis for terms of six months. DG Communication ensures its secretariat.

Role:

- The EF is an advisory body on web solutions providing recommendations and input to the Cross-Editorial Board;
- The EF is a user-representative group for gathering the requirements for corporate web solutions;
- Forum to exchange information, best practices, share knowledge, assist members.

Functioning: the Europa Forum meets two-four times a year. To ensure the continuity of the work on its different roles, Technical Working Groups are set up (WG of user-representatives for the Europa Web Publication Platform, WG on accessibility, WG on web design, WG for Europa Search).

Relations with other governance bodies

Communication Network (CN)

Composition: Heads of Communication units of the DGs and DG COMM, including the Spokespersons Service and Heads of Representation.

Role:

- the Communication Network promotes effective corporate communication between DGs and services in support of the political priorities of the Commission
- It provides advice on any subject to the Corporate Communication Committee

Links with Web presence Governance: the Communication Network communicates with the Europa Cross Editorial Board and vice-versa in any matter related to Europa editorial aspects that could be of interest for the whole Commission.

Europa Steering Board (ESB)

Composition: Director-Generals of DG Communication, DG Informatics and DG Translation

Role:

- Acts as a high-level governance body of all activities under the “Europa web presence” Memorandum of Understanding⁷, assessing the progress of the projects and services against objectives, addressing issues escalated to its level, agreeing on strategic orientations and taking decisions on strategic direction and resource matters.

Links with Web presence Governance: the Europa Steering Board communicates with the Corporate Communication Steering Board in any matter related to the implementation of the “Europa web presence” that could be of interest of the whole Commission.

⁷ Memorandum of Understanding on the "EUROPA WEB PRESENCE" between DGs COMM, DGT and DIGIT [Ares\(2017\)6342321](#)