



Transforming our online communication User survey and results

The digital transformation programme aims to create a more relevant, coherent and cost-effective online presence for the Commission. It builds on the political priorities of the institution, as expressed most recently in the [Political Guidelines of President Juncker](#) and on the needs of the people interacting online with the Commission. Its mandate is based on the Communication to the Commission on 'e-Commission 2012-2015'¹, the rationalisation of the Commission's IT systems² and the [mandate for the Working Group](#) "Pushing ahead with web rationalisation" set up by the Secretary General in February 2013.

To establish the main needs of people using Commission websites (their 'top tasks'), the digital transformation team³ has undertaken extensive and ground-breaking research. In May 2014, users of Commission websites were polled to establish the most important reasons why they interact with the organisation. The poll was done in 24 languages and close to 107, 000 responses were received.

The research is based on a rigorous methodology that has been used successfully with many companies and organisations over the past 10 years⁴. The methodology allows us to see in precise, statistical terms the main reasons, i.e. the 'top tasks' of people when they arrive at our sites. The analysis of the results constitutes an undeniable and irreplaceable evidence-based foundation for the new architecture of the Commission web presence.

How did we identify the needs of our audiences?

To prepare the poll, the digital transformation team built a **comprehensive list** of potential tasks from a wide range of sources, including:

- an analysis of the Commission's work programmes, working methods and procedures
- interviews with the communications and web teams of the DGs
- analysis of the top levels of the Commission's existing websites

¹ SEC(2012)492: The Commission's web presence, including the Europa website, will be reshaped around user-focused content; with better support for political communication and improved search, enhanced accessibility, access from mobile devices, and improved governance. The number of websites will be rationalised.

² Communication to the Commission 'Getting the Best from IT in the Commission', 7.10.2010 (SEC(2010)1182) and its follow-up from 30.11.2011 (SEC(2011)1500)

³ A cross-DG team (COMM-DGT-DIGIT) in charge of the digital transformation programme

⁴ Read more at: <http://www.customercarewords.com/about.html>

- top 100 search terms over 1 year (google trends & google adwords)
- top 100 most visited web pages on the Commission's website
- peer websites (homepages)
- user research & feedback, including calls and emails to Europe Direct call centre

The team worked intensively to reduce this list (from around 1700 tasks to 136) by removing duplicates and overlaps and merge main and subtasks. Over 20 workshops were held with the DGs which resulted in a final list of 77 tasks.

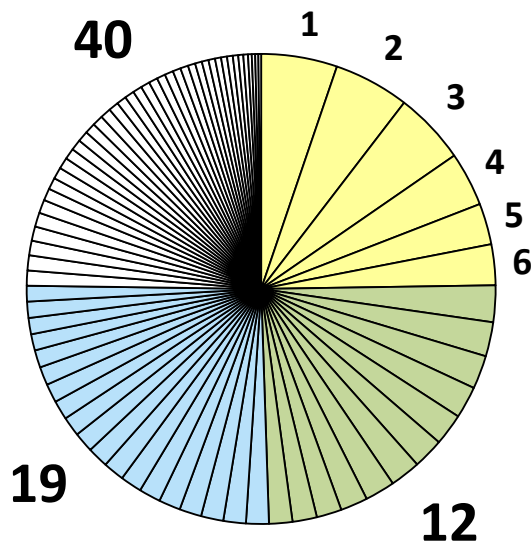
Polling: How was the survey organised?

Once the shortlist of potential tasks was agreed, it was time to get people worldwide to vote. The DGs were closely involved in identifying the key audiences. Their help was also vital in getting enough users to respond to the poll. The poll was launched in 24 languages on 12 May 2014 for 3 weeks. The poll was advertised extensively on Commission websites, in newsletters and through social media.

Key results

106,792 valid responses were collected for the survey from **211 countries**. **85%** of the participants were from **EU member states**. More than **40,000 people volunteered** to help with future tests and research.

Concerning the tasks, **six areas** stood out as being the most important for the respondents, irrespective of where they work and where they live:



6 Top Tasks

1. EU law, rules, treaties, judgments
2. Research and innovation
3. Funding, grants, subsidies
4. Education and training in EU
5. EU strategy, political priorities
6. Environmental protection

In terms of our audience:

⁵ Yellow – top task, green - medium task, blue - small task, white – tiny task

- 84% of the users come to our websites for professional reasons
- 74% are employed or self-employed and 12% are students
- 34% are from public sector organisations, 11% NGOs, and 43% from the private sector.

Concerning the **quality of our websites, user satisfaction is at 60%**. Satisfaction level is the lowest when it comes to clear menus and links, to the look and layout of the websites, and to helpful search results.

The results of the poll have turned out to be highly stable across socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. They therefore constitute a solid rationale to build a common new structure for the Commission’s web presence. The work is being done hand-in-hand with the DGs and the database of 40, 000 users is being used for the testing.

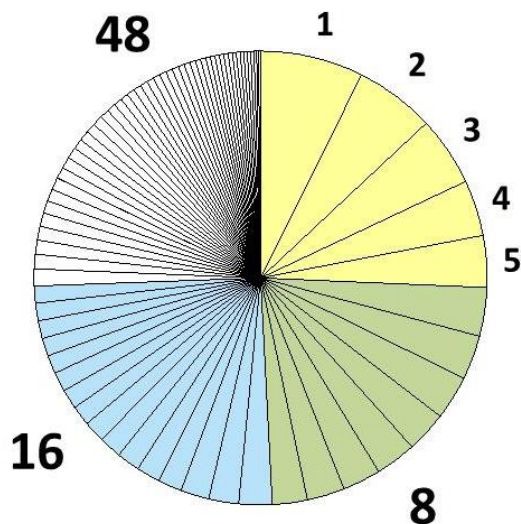
[Complete list of 77 ranked European Commission tasks](#)

What does Commission staff think about the user needs?

To complement the research on user needs and to understand better what our staff think about the needs of users visiting us online, we also conducted an internal survey among Commission staff.

Key results

Commission staff see **five areas** standing out as being the most important for the users of our digital channels:



5 Top Tasks according to staff

1. Funding, grants, subsidies
2. Working in an EU country (rights, permits, benefits)
3. Jobs, traineeships at the European Commission
4. Complaints to the European Commission
5. About the EU (role, structure, how it works, origin)

Top tasks - assumptions versus facts

⁶ Yellow – top task, green - medium task, blue - small task, white – tiny task

The comparison between the assumptions of Commission staff and genuine user needs shows that staff has high empathy when it comes to the interest of people for finding a job in another EU country, news or funding. On the other hand, staff has strongly overestimated the importance of jobs and traineeship at the Commission as well as the interest of people about the EU in general. Commission staff has strongly underestimated the importance of research and environment.

Tasks	% Customer Vote (106792)	% Team Vote (668)	Empathy
EU law, rules, treaties, judgments	5.2%	3.2%	60%
Research and innovation	5.2%	0.9%	17%
Funding, grants, subsidies	5.0%	7.4%	148%
Education and training in EU	3.7%	3.1%	84%
EU strategy, political priorities	2.8%	1.7%	59%
Environmental protection	2.8%	1.3%	47%
Jobs, traineeships at the European Commission	2.5%	5.0%	196%
Find a job in another EU country	2.4%	2.9%	124%
EU news, announcements, press releases	2.3%	2.4%	103%
Human rights, fundamental rights	2.2%	1.6%	73%
Working in an EU country (rights, permits, benefits)	2.2%	5.7%	261%
Order, download an EU publication	2.1%	1.3%	61%
Track policy and law making process, updates	2.1%	0.7%	34%
Statistics and forecasts	2.1%	1.0%	48%
About the European Union (role, structure, how it works, origin)	1.9%	3.7%	196%
Food and farming (production and safety)	1.7%	1.0%	57%
Climate change, global warming	1.7%	0.5%	33%
Regional, rural and urban development	1.6%	0.9%	54%

Quality of Commission websites

Staff perceive that users' have an overall negative experience with our websites (16% satisfaction as opposed to the 60% satisfaction rate of actual users). The main differences relate to up-to-date information, use of jargon and contact details, where staff see the situation more negatively than users. Both users and staff express a low level of satisfaction concerning the search results and confusing menus and links.

ANNEX

List of 77 ranked European Commission tasks

	VOTES
1 EU law, rules, treaties, judgments	83931
2 Research and innovation	83306
3 Funding, grants, subsidies	79414
4 Education and training in EU	59623
5 EU strategy, political priorities	45331
6 Environmental protection	44921
7 Jobs, traineeships at the European Commission	40358
8 Find a job in another EU country	37657
9 EU news, announcements, press releases	36809
10 Human rights, fundamental rights	35274
11 Working in an EU country (rights, permits, benefits)	34986
12 Order, download an EU publication	33794
13 Track policy and law making process, updates	33558
14 Statistics and forecasts	32983
15 About the European Union (role, structure, how it works, origin)	30065
16 Food and farming (production and safety)	27703
17 Climate change, global warming	26932
18 Regional, rural and urban development	25764
19 Freedom of information (transparency, access to documents)	25157
20 About the European Commission (role, structure, how it works)	24866
21 Product safety, conformity, certification	24660
22 National implementation of EU law, infringements	24326
23 Public health, disease prevention	23933
24 Culture (heritage, arts, films, Capitals of Culture)	23907
25 Doing business in the EU	23650
26 Economic growth, financial stability in EU (crisis, assistance to member states)	23215
27 Doing business with the European Commission (calls for tenders, bids)	23021
28 Conferences, summits, meetings, events	22111
29 Industry norms and standards	21474
30 Employing people (recruitment, terms and conditions, redundancies)	21103
31 Recognition of educational, professional qualifications	20677
32 Energy efficiency	20226
33 Travel within, to and from EU (documents, visa, consular help, currencies)	19166
34 Moving to another EU country (residence formalities)	17958
35 Banking and financial markets (reform, regulation)	17895
36 Relations with non-EU countries, international organisations (diplomacy, cooperation agreements)	17895
37 Languages in the EU (diversity, translation, interpreting)	17295
38 Competition (state aid, cartels, mergers, anti-trust)	16638
39 Development and humanitarian aid	16625
40 Healthcare in another EU country	16114
41 Contact European Commission, European Union	15716
42 Trade with non-EU countries (import, export, agreements, anti-dumping)	15546

43	Loans, access to finance, microfinance	14796
44	Initiate, contribute to law making (public consultations, citizen's initiative)	13256
45	Public procurement (contracts with public authorities, governments)	12850
46	Euro (coins, notes, eurozone, Economic and Monetary Union)	12703
47	Intellectual property, copyright, trademarks, patents	12411
48	Customs, tariffs, quotas, duties	12050
49	Privacy, data protection	11917
50	Consumer and passenger rights	11838
51	EU labels (eco labels, quality labels, audits)	11793
52	Immigration into the EU (asylum, reuniting family, integration)	11771
53	EU budget	11738
54	EU vocabulary and abbreviations	11076
55	Voting in the EU	10659
56	Crime, fraud, corruption, human trafficking	10528
57	Security, defence (terrorism, sanctions, critical infrastructure)	10043
58	Chemicals (approval)	9910
59	Volunteering opportunities	9692
60	Corporate social responsibility for business	9455
61	E-government	9448
62	Taxation, excise (not VAT)	8767
63	Accession of new countries to the EU, enlargement	8678
64	VAT (Value Added Tax)	8098
65	Judicial cooperation between EU countries, recognition of judgments	7549
66	Pensions, retirement in another EU country	7433
67	Transport safety (air, road, banned airlines)	7256
68	Complaints to the European Commission	6673
69	Resource security (oil, gas, raw materials)	6556
70	Family (marriage, divorce, partnerships, adoption)	6378
71	Emergencies, disasters, civil protection	5944
72	Visit EU institutions, guided tours	5530
73	European Commissioner profiles	5157
74	Goods allowed when crossing borders (alcohol, cigarettes, cash, pets)	4097
75	Driving licence validity in EU countries	3732
76	Vehicles (buying, selling, registration, taxes, insurance)	3473
77	President of the Commission (profile, agenda)	3042