02. Logos and icons

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**European Commission logo**

**Rules**

Use the logo in line with the [European Commission Visual Identity](#) guidelines.

The visual identity gives the European Commission a recognisable and coherent image. A full [manual on the EC’s visual identity](#) is available. It sets out the basic principles. [Guidance for agencies and partners](#) is also available.

The EC visual identity is constructed around the European Commission's logo. This logo is based on 2 key elements: the European flag and a graphic element inspired by the headquarters of the European Commission.

**Usage**

Third parties may only use the European Commission logo where:

- permission is requested and granted before the logo is used
- there is no likelihood of the user of the logo being confused with the European Commission
- it is used only in connection with objectives and/or activities that are compatible with the aims and principles of the European Commission
- it is not used to imply or suggest unintended endorsement or promotion by the European Commission of the objectives and activities of the user of the logo

**Request permission**

To request permission for the use of the European Commission's logo, please [email the unit responsible for visual identity](#).

**European Union emblem**

**Rules**

The European Union emblem, based on the flag, is a recognisable element that provides coherence and reassurance for users. Use the European Union emblem in line with the [Graphics guide to the European emblem](#) (Publications Office).

When using, please consult the [Guidelines on how to use the EU emblem](#).

**Other logos**

**Rules**

- no other logo can be created or used (apart from those on the [list of logo exceptions - EU login required](#))
- for more information on the use of logos on websites, please refer to the [Specific design rules and guidelines per type](#) of site

**Icons**

This section explains when and how to use icons. Icons are available from the [Europa Components Library](#).

**Rules**

Apart from those commonly representing functionalities, try to avoid using icons:

- users find words easier to understand – icons can be ambiguous
- icons can add to ‘visual clutter’, making it harder for users to find relevant content
- users from different cultures may interpret icons in different ways
- defining, testing and validating an icon to represent a particular subject can require a great deal of time and effort
- icons’ accessibility needs careful assessment – users’ capacity to deal with them needs to be checked
- icons can easily become unsustainable – as a new category is added, it can be challenging to find an appropriate, unique icon to add to the set
- do not use icons to replace labels or navigation items

**Common icons** covering functionalities (e.g. *print, close, tweet*) are available in the Europa Components Library.
Contact and support

If you require further assistance, please contact:
Comm Europa Management
European Commission
DG Communication
Unit B.3
Europa Web Communication