01.News

Scope of the rules for news type of content

News, by nature, is not meant to be permanent. News is "information about a recently changed situation or a recent event" [*collinsdictionary.com*]. Longer-term content that provides the context for that news should exist, for example on a DG's site. Users should not have to rely on press releases or post-event information, to address the task they are on the Commission's website to complete.

The criteria by which readers judge **news** are: timing, significance, proximity, prominence, human interest (http://www.mediacollege.com/journalism/news/newsworthy.html)

Types of News in the European Commission

In broad terms, the Commission publishes two types of news:

- **Political news**
    - *Covering*: institution's high-level political activities
    - *Content producer:* Spokesperson's Service or Cabinets
    - *Validation:* Spokesperson's Service validates if publication on Press corner
    - *Publication platform:* Press corner or Priority and Commissioners' pages

- **Policy news by DGs**
    - *Covering*: policy areas Directorates-General (DGs) are responsible for
    - *Content producer:* the relevant DG, according to its priorities
    - *Validation:* the relevant DG
    - *Publication platform:* DG site
    - *Examples*: press releases; fact sheets; announcements; statements; speeches; blog posts; publications; interviews; stories

These guidelines focus on **Policy news** and how DGs can help deliver a coherent news experience.

Purpose

The guidelines are intended to ensure that:

- **News** on the Commission's websites is presented in a consistent way, so that users become familiar with the approach, find the information they are looking for and can easily compare items.
- the organisational goals for **News** are met, namely to:
    - create news *once*, and re-use it where relevant
    - avoid manual interventions and the inherent risk of inconsistency they bring
    - be cost-efficient in news production
    - publish consistent, good quality and relevant news.

Rules

DGs should:

Guarantee good quality, relevant News content

- follow the *Content guidelines* available on the Europa Web Guide
- follow the *Interinstitutional style guide*
- Keep **News** short
- Keep in mind what online users find helpful:
    - *short title*
        - *start with a meaningful word to help users identify the subject, rather than the type of document or a description of the communications channel*
    - *short summary (teaser) with core points/ideas of the update, together with context*
    - *publication date*
    - *brief presentation of the facts*
    - *clearly identified author*
    - *testimonials and stories, where appropriate*
    - *press contact details: email; telephone*
    - *links to further information, eg context, explanations*
- Use:
    - *clear, straightforward language*
    - *bullet points*
    - *small tables :* if a table is needed, keep to max. 5 x rows; 5 x columns
    - *simple, easy-to-read graphs/figures/statistics only where they add value*

Use terms in the corporate taxonomy

The *Digital Europa Thesaurus* (DET), the corporate taxonomy, provides a range of dedicated terms to help content producers.

Using the DET terms will help ensure that:

- users and machine readers can easily find your news content
- your news appears, where relevant, across the Commission experience
- your news content can be recognised as relevant and more widely disseminated beyond the Commission.

The CMS presents DET terms via a dropdown, tailored to individual content producers, the department or agency they are part of, and, where appropriate, the thematic class on which they work.

Use the right tone of voice

Use a tone of voice that addresses the ec.europa.eu audience (see audience details below):

- give the audience information, not interpretation
- write Press releases to address journalists
- formulate positive rather than negative sentences where possible.

Keep audience needs in mind

News content must be relevant, coherent and effective for the relevant audience and their needs.
Research has shown that consumers of news from the Commission are:

- **88% professional**, with 70% working full-time, mainly with companies (50%); national governments (22%); non-profit and non-government organisations (12%); local, regional authorities (11%), as well as EU institutions (4%)
- **48% from academia, law, economics and media**: teacher, professor, researcher (academia) (17%); lawyer, legal professional (14%); economist (9%); journalist, media professional (8%); policy-maker (7%); lobbyist, interest representative (6%)
- **54% frequent** (at least weekly) users: daily (19%); weekly (35%); monthly (21%).

Unpublish and archive

The first element defining **News** is timing. **Pay particular attention to the option to set an 'unpublish' deadline for news articles**.

Content editors are responsible for unpublishing obsolete content.

News must be archived every 6 months.

Please see also the following CMS-specific pages:

- "News" on sites hosted on Drupal 7: use the Announcement content type.
- "News" on for sites hosted on EWPP: use the News content type.

Corporate tools for dissemination

Create **News** once and reuse it where relevant using existing platforms for dissemination.

The Commission's dedicated channels for publishing online news are:

- **EC press corner**: for press material coordinated by the Commission Spokesperson's Service (including Press Releases (IP), fact sheets, speeches, statements, daily news (Mex), commissioners' weekly activities (calendar), upcoming events (agenda), weekly meetings (WM), questions and answers, infringement decisions, country insights)
- **EU Newsroom**: the official news website of the institutions of the European Union (primarily for press released). It provides online access to the latest official press material released by all EU institutions, as well as practical information for journalists
- **Corporate Newsroom**: a Content Management System (CMS) focused on the creation and dissemination of information. The term "news" implies dynamic content (news, event, document, consultation, funding, information on programs, speeches, press releases, etc.) In terms of dissemination, the tool is used to provide content for websites managed by internal or external stakeholders, to publish newsletters and to send automatic notifications. In addition, it offers other services such as RSS and JSON feeds. The following services are covered:
- Central repository of news
- Newsletters
- Distribution lists
- Notifications
- API
- Multilingualism
- Connectors

For guidance on publishing all other types of updates, consult the communication unit in your DG. They can advise you on the channels, formats and dissemination strategies that are appropriate on a case-by-case basis, to ensure your content reaches its intended audiences, on the appropriate channels, in the appropriate format.

Channels appropriate for publishing updates that are relevant to specific audiences but not newsworthy for the general public may include:

- Social media channels
- Online stakeholder groups, forums and communities of practitioners
- E-mail newsletters
- Publications libraries and online document libraries.

Contact and support

Need further assistance on this topic? Please contact the team in charge of the Europa Domain Management (EU Login required).