

01. Using social media

Social media refer to social networks and practices that are used to share opinions and information, promote discussion, and build relationships. They use a variety of content formats, including text, pictures, audio and video.

The Commission uses social media platforms to reach out and connect with citizens and stakeholders in addition to the communication which takes place via more traditional channels such as written press, broadcasters and EU publications and websites.

DG Communication's Social Media and Visual Communication unit guides all staff in the use of social media. It is in charge of coordinating the Social Media Network and provides a weekly editorial planning, information on training opportunities, industry news, trends and innovation and practical guidance (e.g. data privacy on social media).

DGs require prior approval from DG Communication before opening a new social media presence, be it in the framework of a specific campaign or for political communication. For requesting authorisation to create a new social media account, the DG's web team or communication unit must complete a dedicated form and submit it to DG Communication's Social Media and Visual Communication Unit. Please refer to the Europa Web Guide [dedicated page](#).

Purpose

The Commission distinguishes social media use for the following purposes:

- a) communication on political priorities
- b) stakeholder and campaign communication
- c) use of social media in staff members' own capacity

a. Communication on political priorities

The purpose of this type of communication is relaying official announcements, press releases and statements in a consistent and coherent way. This communication will be done 'on behalf of the Commission' by a designated group of staff members, the [Social Media Network](#) (SMN).

This network of mandated staff in the DGs and Representations will therefore work closely together with the Spokespersons' Service (SPP).

The Commission is committed to supporting citizens in gathering information about the EU and in engaging in proper dialogue on social media with EU decision makers, wherever possible and relevant. For official enquiries and contact, please refer to: https://ec.europa.eu/info/contact_en.

b. Stakeholder and campaign communication

The purposes of this type of communication vary from:

- informing citizens about the EU added-value
- promoting policies or campaigns and
- engaging with stakeholders

This form of communication is conducted by the lead DG, service or agency in close coordination with DG Communication and in cooperation with the Social Media Network.

The lead DG entity develops and revises its own social media strategy based on common good practice guidance jointly developed under the auspices of DG Communication. Any decision to engage on social media must be preceded by a "fitness check", i.e. whether the planned action is "fit for purpose" including a thorough assessment whether the available resources match the envisaged level of ambition.

Social media have an important scope for interaction and engagement with interested groups on EU-related themes and activities, but each DG has to take into account the specific policy, its context, target audiences and the available resources.

c. Social media use by staff in their personal capacity

European Commission staff members are encouraged to be active users of social media in their personal capacity. If they mention in the profile where they work, they should note in their profiles that statements and opinions are personal and that they do not represent the official position of the Commission.

As Commission officials, the participation in social media is subject to the [Staff Regulations](#) (EU login required) and the [Code of Good Administrative Behaviour](#) (EU login required), in the same way as participation in other media. DG Communication and DG Human Resources and Security have made particular [guidelines for all staff on the use of social media](#).