

## 02. Logos and icons

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### European Commission logo

#### Purpose

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. 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 (the Berlaymont building).

#### Rules

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

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

#### Purpose

The European Union emblem, based on the flag, is a recognisable, element that guarantees trustworthiness for users.

#### Rules

Use the European Union emblem in line with the [Graphics guide to the European emblem](#) (Publications Office).

### Fraudulous use of the European visual identity

The European Commission will respond appropriately should a third part misuse the European Commission logo, the European Union emblem or make inappropriate use of the banner of any Commission website including the European emblem or the denomination European Commission, EU or European Union.

If you witness such case of misuse or use of a visual identity that is so close to the one of the EC or of the European Union that this company may appear to be part of our organisation, please contact [EC-EU-EMBLEM@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EC-EU-EMBLEM@ec.europa.eu) and [COMM-VISUAL-IDENTITY@ec.europa.eu](mailto:COMM-VISUAL-IDENTITY@ec.europa.eu) immediately.

### Other logos

#### Rules

No new logo can be created or used (apart from those on [the list of logo exceptions](#) (EU login required to access the list). To request for a logo exception, you need to send a well-justified request to [the Unit responsible for visual identity](#) (DG COMM A1). The request will reach the Secretary General and the Director-General of DG COMM, as domain leaders for external communication. After consulting DG COMM's visual identity team, they will take a decision by consensus.

If they allow the exception, the place for this logo is in the page header. The site header and footer must be compliant with [the Europa Component Library](#) and cannot hold any other logo but the EC or EU ones.

For more information on the use of logos on websites, please refer to [the design rules and guidelines per site type](#).

# Icons

## Rules

Apart from those representing commonly used functionalities, avoid using icons for the following reasons:

- users find words easier to understand – icons can be ambiguous
- users from different cultures may interpret icons in different ways
- icons can add to the 'visual clutter', making it harder for users to find relevant content
- 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.

Use Common icons covering functionalities (e.g. print, close, tweet) from [the Europa Components Library \(ECL\)](#).

## Contact and support

If you require further assistance on this topic? Please contact [COMM-VISUAL-IDENTITY@ec.europa.eu](mailto:COMM-VISUAL-IDENTITY@ec.europa.eu) or [Comm Europa Management](#).