

Communicating Europe in Partnership

Objectives and principles

1. The European Parliament, Council and the European Commission attach the utmost importance to improving communication on EU issues in order to enable European citizens to exercise their right to participate in the democratic life of the Union, in which decisions are taken as openly as possible and as closely as possible to the citizens, observing the principles of pluralism, participation, openness and transparency.
2. The three Institutions wish to encourage the convergence of views on the communication priorities of the European Union as a whole, to promote the added value of an EU approach to communication on European issues, to facilitate exchanges of information and best practices and develop synergies between the Institutions when carrying out communication relating to these priorities, as well as to facilitate cooperation among the Institutions and Member States where appropriate.
3. The three Institutions recognise that communicating on the European Union requires a political commitment of EU Institutions and Member States, and that Member States have their responsibility to communicate with citizens about the EU.
4. The three Institutions believe that information and communication activities on European issues should give everyone access to fair and diverse information about the European Union and enable citizens to exercise their right to express their views and to participate actively in the public debate on European Union issues.
5. The three Institutions promote the respect of multilingualism and cultural diversity when implementing information and communication actions.
6. The three Institutions are politically committed to achieving the above objectives. They encourage the other EU institutions and bodies to support their efforts and to contribute, if they so wish, to this approach.

A partnership approach

7. The three Institutions recognise the importance of addressing the communication challenge on EU issues in partnership between Member States and the EU institutions to ensure effective communication with, and objective information to, the widest possible audience at the appropriate level.

They wish to develop synergies with national, regional and local authorities as well as with representatives of civil society.

They would like for that purpose to foster a pragmatic partnership approach.

8. They recall in this respect the key role of the Inter-institutional Group on Information (IGI) serving as a high-level framework for the Institutions to encourage political debate on EU-related information and communication activities in order to foster synergy and

complementarity. To that purpose, the IGI, co-chaired by representatives of the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission, and with the participation of the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee as observers, meets in principle twice a year.

A framework for working together

The three Institutions intend to cooperate on the following basis:

9. Whilst respecting the individual responsibility of each EU institution and Member State for their own communication strategy and priorities, the three Institutions will, in the framework of the IGI, identify yearly a limited number of common communication priorities.

10. These priorities will be based on communication priorities identified by the EU Institutions and bodies following their internal procedures and complementing, where appropriate, Member States' strategic views and efforts in this field, taking into account citizens' expectations.

11 The three Institutions and Member States will endeavour to promote appropriate support for communication on the priorities identified.

12. The services responsible for communication in Member States and EU institutions should liaise with each other to ensure successful implementation of the common communication priorities, as well as other activities linked to EU communication, if need be on the basis of appropriate administrative arrangements.

13. The Institutions and Member States are invited to exchange information on other EU related communication activities, in particular on sectoral communication activities envisaged by the Institutions and bodies, when they result in information campaigns in Member States.

14. The Commission is invited to report back at the beginning of each year to the other EU Institutions on the main achievements of the implementation of the common communication priorities of the previous year.

15. This political declaration has been signed on *[date]*.