COMMUNICATION TO THE COMMISSION

Synergies and Efficiencies in the Commission - New Ways of Working
1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Commission's staff is shrinking, but the challenges faced by the EU are growing. A succession of crises has increased the pressure on the Commission to deliver efficient results to the citizens. While progress has recently been made to lower overheads, the modernisation of support processes and the establishment of improved working methods should free precious resources and help shoulder a burden that is reflected in much higher average working time than what is foreseen in the Staff Regulations.

The above led the President to request to the Vice-President responsible for Budget and Human Resources to carry out a review of possible synergies and efficiencies. The present Communication results from this review and proposes ways for the support communities in the Commission to be more efficient. This has been done on the basis of the work of Directors-Generals, refined and transmitted by the Secretary-General to the Vice-President responsible for Budget and Human Resources.

The four domains covered in detail are human resources management, information and communication technologies (ICT), communication, logistics, events and meeting room management. For each of them a central service, as corporate domain leader¹, will:

- be responsible, without prejudice to the unchanged responsibilities of Directors-General, for the professionalisation of their domain community, thereby contributing to its efficiency and effectiveness and its organisation, e.g. by leading related networks, issuing simplified or consolidated rules and guidelines, providing lean and performing processes, workflows and IT systems, assessing the domain performance and making proposals for continuous simplification and improvement;
- oversee and coordinate all related spending of DGs in their domain, whether from operational or administrative budgets, and frame related procurement activities through the central provision of framework contracts²;
- rely on the functional reporting of domain managers in the DGs to the corporate domain lead service, to ensure alignment and efficiency, and be involved, without prejudice to the established Appointing Authority powers, by participating in the procedure for filling of these functions (participation in selection panels for appointment of domain managers) and by contributing to the appraisal of their performance, without however assuming the role of reporting officer.

In addition, actions for specific support communities are set out. The resulting estimated targets for efficiencies and synergies gains should be read as resources³ liberated for redeployment towards political priorities. No action in this Communication aims at going beyond the agreed reduction of 5% by 2017, as this would jeopardise the Commission's ability to deliver. In several of the domains listed in the previous sections it will be necessary to invest resources (Full-Time Equivalent – FTE - and budget) up-front, as of 2016, in order to implement the various actions and enable savings in the medium term.

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¹ DG HR for human resource management, security and logistics (for the latter with OIB/OIL) and internal communication; DG Interpretation for room management and conference organisation; DG COMM for external communication and information; DIGIT for informatics (with established IT governance bodies).

² Legal assistance contracts with external lawyers, ruled by a specific regime, are excluded.

³ Full Time Equivalents, all staff types and intra-muros service providers. The breakdown will be determined by each domain leader in agreement with DG HR, based on the distribution of the domain population.
**Human Resources management:** the new HR delivery model is based on the setting up of Account Management Centre Units inside DG HR, offering support to several Business Correspondent teams in each DG.

**Information and Communication Technologies:** as domain leader, the Directorate-General for Informatics (DIGIT) will implement a digital transformation agenda, with common tools, common business architecture and digital enablers. Other synergies and efficiencies gains will come from the workplace of the future programme, local data centres, standardised ICT equipment as well as from improved ICT security and financing⁴.

**External and internal communication:** synergies and efficiencies will be reached through a reviewed governance model (new Corporate Communication Steering Board, merged external and internal communication networks), a digital transformation programme (reduced number of websites, centralised information architecture), the reduction and centralisation of framework contracts, and the professionalization of the networks.

**Logistics, events and meeting room management:** synergies and efficiencies gains will come from a new logistics delivery model, from centralized meeting room management and a revised conference organisation.

The actions outlined in this Communication will be implemented by the respective domain leaders, under the supervision of a group of Directors-General where foreseen, supported by the Group of Resource Directors, the IT Board (for the ICT domain) and the Information System Security Board (ISSB, for the IT Security actions) and with regular reporting to the ABM Steering Group.

Taking into account the impact on colleagues, both in the various coordination and administrative support communities and in local DGs, a professional change management plan will be put in place by each domain leader. In implementing the changes, the aspirations of individual staff members regarding their future career will be taken into account.

2. **CONTEXT**

The present Communication concerns the functioning of Commission coordination and support communities, as well as measures to simplify and rationalise working methods and ensure efficient use of scarce resources. It should be read in conjunction with the College decision on the 2016 resource allocation⁵.

While the resource allocation decision takes a vertical, DG-by-DG approach, the present Communication takes a horizontal approach, looking at Commission coordination and support functions across DGs. These two approaches are complementary and both are necessary to ensure an efficient use of resources, clearly aligned with priorities.

The purpose of the measures outlined here is to launch a new, more modern organisation of coordination and support communities in the Commission, by defining their main organisational principles and specifying arrangements for their efficient working.

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⁴ Some actions in the ICT areas will generate savings beyond the ICT domain (e.g. introducing e-Procurement will save time of staff in operational or financial domains).

At the beginning of the current Commission’s mandate, the President asked the Vice-President responsible for Budget and Human Resources to assess the synergies and efficiencies gains achievable in the Commission and to draw conclusions for each service by summer 2015. The report by the Vice-President contained a number of proposals covering:

- DG-specific analyses to align structures with priorities;
- Modernising support communities, including through clear domain leadership;
- Better working together; and
- Securing effective implementation and organisational performance.

The report received positive feedback from the President, and the Vice-President responsible for Budget and Human Resources was mandated to consult services in view of implementing the proposals.

DG-specific analyses were shared with the respective DGs and Services and bilateral dialogues took place on that basis. These analyses, updated, have informed the parallel College decision on the 2016 resources allocation, which contributes to organisational fitness.

Concerning the modernisation of support communities with professional leadership, consultations took place in the second half of 2015. Groups of Directors-General were set up covering:

- Human resources;
- Information and communication technologies;
- External and internal communication;
- Logistics, events and meeting room management.

Each group produced a report that was discussed and refined at meetings of all Directors-General. The Secretary-General then transmitted the final report and a summary of the discussions to the Vice-President responsible for Budget and Human Resources, as a basis for her proposals to the College that are the subject of the present Communication.

Finally, the Commission should get more accurate data regarding the use of resources per political priority and per activity with a view to improve performance.

3. **Actions to Boost Efficiency and Effectiveness of Support Communities**

In the different domains each central service, in their capacity as corporate domain leader\(^6\), shall:

- Be responsible, without prejudice to the unchanged responsibilities of Directors-General, notably as authorising officers by delegation, for the professionalisation of their domain community, thereby contributing to its efficiency and effectiveness and its organisation. As part of this, domain leaders shall lead related networks, issue simplified or consolidated rules and guidelines (binding, where necessary), provide lean and performing processes, workflows and IT systems, assess the domain performance and make proposals for continuous simplification and improvement;
- Oversee and coordinate, through an annual planning process, all related spending of DGs in their domain, regardless of whether from operational or administrative budgets, and frame related procurement activities through the central provision of framework contracts\(^7\).

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\(^6\) DG HR for human resource management, security and logistics (for the latter with OIB/OIL) and internal communication; DG Interpretation for room management and conference organisation; DG COMM for external communication and information; DIGIT for informatics (with established IT governance bodies).
Rely on the functional reporting of domain managers in the DGs to the corporate domain lead service, to ensure professional alignment and efficiency, and be involved, without prejudice to the established Appointing Authority powers, by participating in the procedure for the filling of these functions, (participation in selection panels for appointment of domain managers) and by contributing to the appraisal of their performance, without however assuming the role of reporting officer.

In addition to the efficiency gains in administrative support and coordination, domain leaders shall take measures to optimise the staff structure. Where appropriate, making more use of Offices such as the PMO, the OIB/OIL, EPSO, or the European School of Administration can be examined. This will not only reduce the cost of support functions, but also provide better career opportunities for contract agents.

The following actions shall apply to specific coordination and support communities.

### 3.1 Human resources management

In the domain of Human resources management:

- The level of quality of HR services shall be at least equivalent to the one currently guaranteed, while efficiencies shall be sought to reduce the overall size of the HR community;
- At the beginning of the exercise, a re-engineering of business processes across the whole HR domain will take place. As part of this re-engineering, some processes characterised by single-rule applications shall be fully centralised;
- As a general rule, decision-making powers of Directors-General regarding HR matters shall not be impacted. Only in some cases, where the processes are characterised by single-rule applications, will full centralisation, including moving decision-making powers, be considered;
- Each DG shall have an HR business correspondent function for strategic HR issues. The size of the HR business correspondent teams shall be proposed by DG HR, after consultation of the DGs and taking into account the outcomes of the pilot phase, according to objective parameters including the size of the DG, its business complexity and the number of sites where it operates. During a pilot phase in 2016 the minimum efficient size of these local teams will be determined;
- Account Management Centre Units shall be created within DG HR, providing administrative support for day-to-day HR management to groups of DGs. The final grouping of client DGs shall be determined at the end of the pilot phase. Their initial staff shall be selected on the basis of a call for expression of interest. Their optimal size shall be determined on the basis of the existing shared services in DG HR for EPSO, IAS and the College, on top of which further efficiency gains shall be sought and account taken of the results of the pilot phase;
- DG HR shall reinforce its role as Centre of Expertise, offering a modern range of services in domains such as talent management and organisational development;
- The above changes shall be tested during a pilot phase, with volunteer DGs, in the second half of 2016. Lessons drawn shall inform the implementation of these changes across all DGs and services of the Commission as soon as possible in 2017;

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7 Legal assistance contracts with external lawyers, ruled by a specific regime, are excluded.

8 The functional reporting relationship, in application of the provisions set out in the Communication on Organisation Charts of Commission DGs and Services (SEC(2006)1702 of 13 February 2007) is based on the specialised nature of the function for which a mutual responsibility is shared. The domain lead service provides guidance and support to the domain community and focuses on objectives, delivery and performance. The appointment and promotion of domain managers in the DGs takes place under the authority of the relevant Director-General, however with contributions to the appointment procedure and to the appraisal by the domain leader DG.

9 Standard rules applying to the whole Commission, without need for tailoring to DGs' specificities.
A user-friendly entry point for administrative HR transactions shall be established. Its purpose is to enable staff and managers to find HR-related information. Depending on their needs and regardless of the DG or office responsible, it will allow them to rapidly and effectively connect with the person best placed to reply to their question or provide advice. Alternatively, it will allow direct access to the relevant HR IT tool for the desired transaction. The system will build upon existing tools and bring them together in a single portal, encompassing services offered by DG HR, PMO, OIB/OIL and DIGIT;

The estimated target for efficiencies and synergies gains in the whole HR community is to reach a HR ratio of 1:40, corresponding to a reduction of 380 FTEs\textsuperscript{10}, by 2019.

3.2 Information and communication technologies (ICT)

In the domain of information and communication technologies (ICT):

- DIGIT shall define and execute a Digital Transformation Agenda in full partnership with business domain leaders and impacted DGs, with actions along three dimensions: business processes, a common business architecture, and IT building blocks\textsuperscript{11};
- Core corporate business processes that could be automated by common IT solutions shall be identified through the Commission IT governance. Once a process has been identified as such, the corresponding IT tool will become mandatory for all DGs and services and an adequate financing by all users will be set up, avoiding complex charge-back mechanisms;
- In this context, e-procurement and SEDIA\textsuperscript{12} shall become mandatory as from 2017 onwards, the new e-Grants solution shall be extended to all direct grants and where applicable to indirect grants as of 2019 and used by default for all new grants, for which business processes shall be harmonised over time; e-signature shall be mandatory as of 2018 or synchronized with the adoption of e-Grants where appropriate;
- An internal working group on the workplace of the future shall be created in order to explore ideas for the future working environment of the Commission, and present concrete proposals in terms of human resources, IT and office set-up in early 2017;
- IT solutions allowing for full mobile work and enabling a more collaborative "workplace of the future" shall be explored and tested in pilot projects based on experience gathered both in the Commission and other EU Institutions;
- The existing local data rooms managed by the Commission Services shall be consolidated in the two corporate data centres managed by DIGIT in Luxembourg by 2019;
- IT equipment provisioning and management shall be centralised in DG DIGIT, including a new policy for standardised PC configurations, standardised corporate mobile devices and standardised printing devices, with careful consideration of security concerns;
- DG DIGIT shall analyse the possibility to (partially) centralise currently decentralised IT security functions (LISO) and provide "LISO as a service" to DGs;
- Data analytics solutions shall be explored and tested in pilot projects based on experience gathered both in the Commission and in the Member States;

\textsuperscript{10} Source: Job Listing 20 January 2014, all staff types included and including external contractors. The final size of the Business Correspondent teams and Account Management Centres might have an impact on the savings.

\textsuperscript{11} IT standard building blocks that should be reused when developing new IT tools.

\textsuperscript{12} SEDIA (Single Electronic Data Interchange Area) aims to fully automate and integrate the process for handling procurement and grants information, limiting to the strict minimum the manual input of data, and promoting the alignment and reuse of such data along the whole process.
The estimated target for efficiencies and synergies gains in the whole Commission, i.e. also beyond DG DIGIT and the local IT units\(^{13}\), is 692 FTEs by 2019\(^{14}\).

### 3.3 External and internal communication

In the domain of communication, both external and internal:

- The communication functions in each DG shall remain responsible for the creation of communication content, albeit under increased coordination by DG COMM and DG HR. A more strategic approach to the planning of communication activities shall be implemented through the strategic and management plans;
- Planning will be subject to regular monitoring throughout the year. DG COMM shall consult DGs in a timely manner on corporate communication decisions, in particular when they contribute to the funding of corporate communication activities through budget lines under their responsibility. Similarly, DGs shall consult the domain leader in a timely manner on their planned communication actions and related budget allocations;
- Heads of Communication units shall be the focal points for all communication activities in their DGs\(^ {15}\). Similarly, Internal Communication correspondents shall be the focal points for all internal communication activities in their DGs;
- Without prejudice to existing roles and political responsibilities, a Corporate Communication Steering Committee shall be set up\(^ {16}\) to enable better synergies, including between internal and external communication. It shall be composed of senior managers and shall advise on planning and implementing major communication actions, both for internal and external communication. It shall be chaired by DG COMM and co-chaired by DG HR (for external communication matters), or chaired by DG HR and co-chaired by DG COMM (for internal communication matters). It shall also steer the work of a merged External and Internal Communication Network on strategic matters;
- In the area of web technologies, synergies between internal and external communication shall be sought over time, including the use of the same web platform for digital content and adjusting information systems to allow easy access to information;
- Central communication framework contracts shall gradually replace sectorial communication framework contracts. DG COMM shall issue binding guidelines, including rules for the granting of exceptions from centralisation;
- The Commission’s web presence\(^ {17}\) shall be thematically organised according to one single information architecture. Central web services provided by DG COMM, DIGIT and DGT for external communication shall gradually replace local web services in the areas of information architecture, design, language coverage, development, hosting and support. A new web governance shall be put in place by DG COMM;
- Under the oversight of the Corporate Communication Steering Committee, and with the guidance of domain leaders – DG COMM and DG HR for internal communication – a pooling of staff and budgetary resources shall gradually be put in place to provide streamlined and modern services, starting with the creation of a web team and a framework contract team, and extending to other areas if deemed useful;

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\(^{13}\) Some actions in the ICT areas will generate savings beyond the ICT domain (e.g. introducing e-Procurement will save time of staff in operational or financial domains).

\(^{14}\) This figure includes external contractors.

\(^{15}\) In line with the Working Methods of the European Commission 2014-2019, COM(2014)9004 (see Annex V, point 2, para ix).


\(^{17}\) Currently on europa.eu and ec.europa.eu.
• For other budgetary resources in the domain, DG COMM will put forward proposals for thresholds and a procedure to permit a "right of consent" by DG COMM. The ABM Steering Group shall endorse the proposals, and the new model shall be in force before the end of 2016;
• The estimated target for efficiencies and synergies gains in the whole communication community is 75 to 105 FTEs\(^{18}\) by 2020. DG COMM together with DG HR shall carry out an inventory of existing resources in communication functions across DGs by summer 2016 to update this estimate.

3.4 Logistics, events and meeting room management

In the domains of logistics, events\(^{19}\) and meeting room management:

• Service delivery standards shall be established in agreement with DGs and services, in order to ensure that the proposed changes do not affect the ability of the Commission to deliver;
• A professional Office Space Design team shall be set up within OIB. It will act as a consultant for the DGs when planning office moves and similar changes, and it will be staffed partially by moving part of the Gestionnaires des Biens Immobiliers (GBIs) to OIB;
• The mail delivery system shall be progressively rationalised to reflect the steady decrease in the amount of mail, so as to combine central management of mail clerks with the progressive introduction of new delivery modes and the set-up at term of central mail delivery points per building;
• In view of the set-up of Logistics Proximity Centres, managed by OIB and delivering local logistics services to DGs, an in depth analysis on the adequate number and scope of new proximity teams considering the variety of Commission buildings shall be conducted and recommendations shall be presented to the ABM Steering Group;
• The above changes regarding mail delivery and the Logistics Proximity Centres shall be tested in pilot projects with volunteer DGs, and then progressively implemented across the Commission. During the pilot phase, to be carried out in 2016 and estimated at around six months, a deeper analysis of the adequate staffing size and scope of the proximity teams shall be performed;
• Once the new Logistics Delivery system has been implemented across the Commission, the DGs should not keep any local logistical functions (except for specific cases motivated by the interest of the service that should be duly notified to, and agreed by, DG HR and OIB) and either move the staff employed in the area of logistics to OIB or redeploy them to other areas of activity, for instance in the room management area, according to their profile and capacity;
• Meeting rooms, technical equipment and technical operations shall be managed centrally by DG SCIC. This shall be done by registering all rooms in a modernised, central, room management tool developed by DG SCIC, which will become a common IT solution for meeting room management (see point 3.2 above). DG SCIC will provide centralised framework contracts to DGs for meeting room technical equipment and technical services;
• The organisation of conferences shall be supervised centrally by DG SCIC. Conference-related expenditure shall be allowed, in cooperation with DG BUDG, only for events registered in a central database to be set up by DG SCIC;
• Framework contracts related to conference organisation shall be gradually centralised in DG SCIC, which will act as a focal point and disseminate best practices and harmonise procedures.

\(^{18}\) Full Time Equivalents, all staff types. The breakdown by staff type (including external staff) will be determined by each domain leader in agreement with DG HR, based on the distribution of the domain population. All targets in the documents have to be read as reductions in the domain for redeployment towards operations. No net reduction of the Commission’s workforce is planned with these actions.

\(^{19}\) Conferences, meetings and other events organised by the Commission or agencies. These do not include "comitology" meetings or meetings organised by the Spokespersons Service in DG COMM or by the Representations of the Commission in the Member States.
Due attention shall be paid to the design of the central offer, splitting as necessary into smaller and more targeted service contracts to trigger more market competition and respond to DGs’ needs;

- The estimated target for efficiencies and synergies gains in the logistics community is 100 FTEs by 2030. A target for events and meeting room management shall be identified by DG SCIC in cooperation with DG HR, and communicated to the Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources by the end of 2016 on the basis of an inventory of the current use of resources;
- A Steering Board hosted by DG SCIC, with OIB, OIL, DG DIGIT, DG HR, DG BUDG, SG as well as policy DGs shall be set up to advise on improvements in the areas under SCIC’s responsibility, in particular the common room management system, technical adaptation or needs, and assessment of the needs of the institution.

3.5 Other areas

In addition, this Communication calls for the establishment of further expertise in the areas of financial management, accounting and control and possibly other areas, without necessarily centralising these functions.

A High Level Reflection Group of Directors-General produced a report on data, information and knowledge management in the Commission. It set out a number of recommendations covering inter alia governance, accessibility of data, collaborative tools and methods, data management and organisational and cultural issues. Two pilot projects using different collaborative technologies are ongoing. Proposals in this area will be the subject of a separate follow-up.

4. Conclusions and Implementation

It is proposed to the College, in agreement with the President, the First Vice-President and the Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources, to decide that the actions outlined in the Communication shall be put in place.

4.1 Domain leadership

Each domain leader shall:

- Implement the measures outlined in this Communication, enabling the estimated targets for efficiencies and synergies gains detailed in section 3;
- Communicate to the ABM Steering Group any adjustment to these targets that should become necessary;
- Deliver the corresponding reductions within their DG;
- Monitor and report to the ABM Steering Group on the efficiencies and synergies gains in the whole community.

Where pilot projects are foreseen, the domain leader shall put forward proposals for further College decisions as necessary, taking into account the results and experience of those pilots.

The actions outlined in this Communication shall constitute the basis on which further fine-tuning shall be done at the level of the services, under the supervision of a group of Directors-General where foreseen, supported by the Group of Resources Directors, the IT Steering Board (for the ICT domain) and the ISSB (for the IT Security actions) and with regular reporting to the ABM Steering Group.

The synergies and efficiencies gains generated by the various measures will be used for redeployment from coordination and support activities towards operational activities. For each project, the gains collection mechanism shall be proposed by the domain leader in coordination with central services,
taking into account the relative weight of the relevant population in each DG. The proposals shall be presented and monitored by the ABM Steering Group. Central services will collect the savings from DGs in the context of the College decisions on allocation.

The Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources shall supervise the implementation and regularly inform the College of progress and of any adjustment to the targets at the moment of regular HR allocation decisions. The Vice-Presidents and Commissioners shall be consulted.

4.2 Change management measures addressed to staff

The proposed changes will impact many colleagues in the various coordination and administrative support communities, in terms of potential change in tasks, responsibilities, career, location, etc. Also management teams and Directors-General in local DGs will be impacted, regarding ways of interaction and contact persons.

A professional change management plan encompassing all relevant aspects (people, processes, governance, responsibilities, IT adjustments, adjustment of legal bases, staff engagement, capability building programmes including mentoring and job shadowing, internal communication plan, etc.) shall be put in place by each domain leader.

In implementing the changes, the aspirations of individual staff members will be taken into account. Staff of the current support communities, including colleagues at local DG level, will be consulted on their wishes regarding their future career. They could express their interest in pursuing their career in their domain under the new arrangements, either at local or corporate level, or leaving the support function and pursue a career somewhere else (i.e. as an administrative assistant making a critical contribution to frontline activities). In the latter case, a transparent redeployment mechanism shall be put in place by DG HR.

Within the framework of structured Domain Professionalisation Programmes, specific measures such as individual and team coaching sessions shall be planned and put in place in order to enable the current teams to transition more easily to the new models at a later stage and ensure continuity of service for their clients.

DG HR is mandated, in close collaboration with the domain leader DGs, to exchange with staff representatives in line with applicable rules on social dialogue.

5.3 Resources for up-front investments

In several of the domains listed in the previous sections it will be necessary to invest resources (FTEs and budget) up-front, as of 2016, in order to implement the various actions and enable savings in the medium term.

The College decision on the 2016 resource allocation shall take into account the needs for these initial investments, where necessary by reducing the taxation burden on the domain leader DGs and services, so that each of them has sufficient resources for implementation.

In addition, after discussion between the domain leaders and central services, any remaining needs could be met by the temporary attachment of existing staff with adequate skills to the domain leader, for the time necessary. Once savings start materialising, the temporary attachments will be phased out and investments shall be financed through the savings.