

The European Economic and Social Committee's Brand Book



European Economic
and Social Committee

Consistent communication guidelines 1.0 for the EESC, its partners and contractors
Draft version December 2025

DRAFT VERSION

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Brand Book is to make the European Economic and Social Committee's identity recognisable across its communication channels and to reflect its personality and values. It provides guidelines and tools to help ensure the EESC communicates consistently.

This handbook is intended for the EESC's administration, communication professionals, colleagues involved in communication, and contractors working with the EESC.

The Brand Book does not apply to the communication activities of the EESC's Groups, but they may draw inspiration from it. Equally, individual Members are invited to make use of its principles and guidance where appropriate, in order to contribute to a coherent image of the Committee.

This is the first version of a work in progress. It will be regularly updated and expanded to reflect the evolution of communication in the EESC. The Brand team welcomes questions and suggestions for improvement on all brand-related guidance and assets. Please contact:
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PART 1

WHAT'S IN A BRAND

This chapter explores the essence of the EESC's identity, starting with **what it stands for** and its key positioning elements. It also sets out core branding principles, including the **brand archetype**.

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1. WHAT THE EESC STANDS FOR

To communicate effectively, it is essential to understand the EESC's identity, its unique role within the EU institutional architecture, and the added value it brings. **Only an organisation that knows its own story and purpose can communicate with clarity and impact.**

The basis of it all – the treaties

The EU treaties define the Committee and its **core role** as follows:

ART. 300 TFEU

1. The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission shall be assisted by an Economic and Social Committee [...], exercising **advisory functions**.

ART. 300 TFEU

2. The Economic and Social Committee shall consist of **representatives** of organisations of employers, of the employed, and of other parties representative of civil society, notably in socio-economic, civic, professional and cultural areas.
[...]

ART. 300 TFEU

4. The members of the Economic and Social Committee and of the Committee of the Regions shall not be bound by any mandatory instructions. They shall be completely **independent** in the performance of their duties, in the Union's general interest.

ARTICLE 304 TFEU

The Committee **shall be consulted** by the European Parliament, by the Council or by the Commission where the Treaties so provide. The Committee may be consulted by these institutions in all cases in which they consider it appropriate. It may **issue an opinion** on its own initiative in cases in which it considers such action appropriate.
[...]

The EESC's unique position in the EU's political landscape

As an advisory body, the EESC stands at the intersection of **EU institutions** and **organised civil society**. It uses a form of soft power that, while less visible, is no less important. Through its members' expertise and consultative mechanisms, it assesses legislative proposals through the lens of real-life needs, highlights overlooked aspects, and brings in the perspective of 'final users.'

Through own-initiative, exploratory opinions and studies, it also provides foresight – anticipating long-term policy challenges, suggesting new ideas, and warning about risks. Furthermore, its evaluation reports inform policy-makers on the implementation of laws and policies.



2. SHAPING A CLEAR AND COHERENT IDENTITY FOR THE EESC

Branding clarifies communication, builds trust, and increases engagement. It helps the EESC **stand out** in a complex environment, thus **raising recognition** of its contributions to EU policy and making its work more **visible, relevant**, and **understood**.

The role of branding in a coherent identity

Branding is more than a logo or visual style. For an institution like the EESC, it means **shaping a clear and coherent image that communicates** its purpose, role and values.

By clarifying communication, it builds trust and engagement, helping the EESC stand out in a complex environment, and making its work more visible, relevant, and understood by stakeholders and citizens.

To achieve this, branding draws on the concept of **identity**: how an organisation sees itself, how others see it, and how it wants to be seen. One useful tool in this process is the **brand archetype**.



The EESC's brand archetype: the Connected Advisor

A brand archetype defines an organisation's character and personality. It creates a **mental framework** to explain what makes it unique, gives it a clear 'voice' and ensures consistency across channels.

The EESC's archetype was defined through extensive reflection and consultation, capturing its uniqueness, its role within the EU institutional framework and its added value.

This work resulted in the concept of the **Connected Advisor**, which represents the EESC's archetype and defines its **personality**:

The term *advisor* highlights the EESC's role as a consultative body in the EU legislative process, where its members' grassroots expertise brings added value to its opinions and shapes EU policies and legislation. This link with the realities on the ground also gives concrete expression to the *connected* dimension of the brand archetype. The EESC, its members' organisations representing some 100 million people, is connected with a broad range of civil society actors and with the EU institutions.

CONNECTED

reflects that the EESC

- represents some **100 million people** through its members' organisations
- brings together the **different points of view** of the various components of society
- grounds its expertise in **national, local and sectoral realities**
- has developed numerous **consultation mechanisms**

ADVISOR

reflects that the EESC

- is a **consultative** body and an **opinion maker**
- has the **competence** and **expertise** to deliver high-quality, impactful **opinions**
- is neither an assembly of politicians nor a lobbyist or interest group driven by single interests

Both dimensions — *advisor* and *connected* — are embodied in the EESC's personality whose **main attributes** are:

KNOWLEDGEABLE

INCLUSIVE

COLLABORATIVE

The archetype is neither a signature nor a mission statement. It is also not meant to be used directly in the EESC's communication products. It is only a kind of "**compass**", a strategic frame of reference, guiding communication in all its forms, including the visual identity, so that every message consistently reflects who the EESC is, what it stands for, and why its contribution matters.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

represents the EESC's expertise, foresight, and ability to contribute meaningfully to EU legislation and policy with substance and clarity.

- Expert
- Credible
- Independent
- Quality-driven
- Forward-looking
- Wise

INCLUSIVE

represents the EESC's openness to a wide range of voices and realities, valuing a strong connection to the real-life concerns of civil society actors and, more generally, citizens at large. It highlights approachability, ethical grounding, and a strong human touch, leading to meaningful participation.

- Human
- Authentic
- Accessible
- Representative
- Cherishing diversity

COLLABORATIVE

defines the EESC's role as a networker, facilitator and enabler of dialogue. It shows how the EESC brings stakeholders together, synthesizes diverse perspectives, enabling better collective outcomes through participatory processes.

- Dialogue-driven
- Integrative
- Supportive
- Participatory
- Approachable

The EESC's core narrative

Every brand needs a **core narrative** that underpins its communication. The EESC's archetype and personality provide the foundation for a concise expression of its added value.

Building on this foundation, the EESC's narrative can be illustrated through the image of a catalyst within a dynamic network of civil society organisations, weaving together expertise and perspectives to help shape policies that are relevant for Europe's future.

This idea is further expressed in the **overarching concept** *Connecting civil society, shaping policy*. Not a slogan, but a unifying thread, it gives coherence to the EESC's communication.

CONNECTING CIVIL SOCIETY, SHAPING POLICY

EESC members represent diverse views of society and different interests, but they have one common goal: Serving the general interest and building trust in the EU.

By sharing their expertise, they contribute to better quality and effectiveness of EU policies. By searching for compromise, they promote the common good and increase the acceptance of EU policies.

3. BUILDING TRUST THROUGH RESPONSIBLE COMMUNICATION

Building trust through responsible communication means going beyond what is said to consider how and why it is communicated. By integrating **ethical, inclusive, accessible, and sustainable practices**, the EESC ensures that every message reflects its values, strengthens public confidence, and contributes to a transparent, trustworthy, and truly European public sphere.

What is responsible communication?

Responsible communication is a **strategic approach** that integrates ethical, social, and environmentally sustainable practices into how messages are created, shared, and received. Its aim is to **reduce environmental impact, promote diversity and inclusion, counter stereotypes, and ensure transparency and accuracy.**

At the EESC, responsible communication is central to its identity as a Connected Advisor. It reflects the Committee's commitment to communicating with credibility, empathy, and openness — making civil society perspectives accessible, strengthening dialogue between institutions

and stakeholders, and fostering a trustworthy, inclusive, and sustainable European discourse.

By embedding responsible communication practices in everyday communication, the EESC reinforces its role as a **model of ethical and sustainable messaging** in the public interest.

Through all its external collaborations, the EESC should always make sure that its commitments to responsible and sustainable communication are upheld.

Explore further

- [101 ways to practice sustainable communication – BeeCom Guide](#)
- [Code de la communication responsable – Institut Mines-Télécom](#)



Core principles

The following principles outline the foundations of responsible communication, ensuring that messages are ethical, socially responsible, inclusive, transparent, and environmentally conscious.

Ethics and transparency – Communicating with integrity and trust

- Ensure messages are accurate, verified, and reliable
- Be transparent about the EESC's role, mandate and institutional context
- Respect data protection and privacy (GDPR) and uphold high ethical standards in all content

Ethics and transparency uphold public trust and reinforce the credibility of every EESC message.

Inclusivity – Reflecting and respecting Europe's diversity

- Represent the diversity of cultures, social backgrounds, genders and abilities
- Use inclusive, non-discriminatory language
- Avoid stereotypes and biased representations
- Stay culturally aware to reflect Europe's diverse contexts and audiences
- Foster dialogue: promote participation and engagement from all stakeholders

Inclusivity reflects the EESC's collaborative nature — giving voice to every part of civil society.

Accessibility – Making information understandable and usable for everyone

- Use clear language: write simply, explain technical terms, avoid unnecessary jargon
- Design for all: follow recognized accessibility standards (e.g. WCAG 2.1): use readable fonts, strong contrast, and logical structures
- Offer alternatives: provide captions, transcripts, alt-text and accessible document formats

Accessibility demonstrates the EESC's expertise made understandable and its openness to all audiences.

Social responsibility – Communicating for the common good

- Consider societal impacts of communications
- Promote human dignity, equality, and social justice
- Support awareness of sustainability and responsible behavior

Social responsibility guides the EESC's communication, helping it foster engagement, promote equality, and support the shared values of European society.

Environmental responsibility and eco-design – Minimising our impact

- Design and produce materials sustainably, minimizing environmental impact throughout production
- Optimize digital content for efficiency, longevity, and reduced energy use
- Use audio-visual and AI tools responsibly by prioritizing sustainable development and transparent practices, considering their social and environmental impact
- Use eco-friendly materials and processes, and prioritize low-impact, energy-efficient production
- Consider the full lifecycle of communication assets, from creation to disposal

Environmental responsibility ensures that EESC communication practices support Europe's sustainability goals and minimize ecological impact.

PART 2

BRINGING THE BRAND TO LIFE

This chapter shows how our brand is expressed in words and visuals. It defines our **tone of voice** and outlines the **visual identity** assets that make our communication clear, consistent, and recognizable.

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1. TONE OF VOICE AND WRITING GUIDE

Tone of voice brings the EESC's personality to life.

It turns our values and expertise into communication that feels authentic and engaging.

A consistent tone helps us **speak as one organisation**, while adapting naturally to each audience and channel — ensuring our messages are always **credible, approachable, and grounded**.

More than words: why tone of voice matters

Language is a powerful tool for reflecting our attitudes and beliefs. It shapes how people think, feel, and behave. Therefore, choosing the right words matters. Yet the tone we use often leaves a stronger impression than the words themselves — the **emotional resonance** of a message can last far longer than its literal content.

Tone of voice is **not just what you say, but how you say it.**

It shapes your style in speaking and writing, making communication clear, recognizable and impactful.

The impact of tone of voice

A well-defined tone of voice ensures:

- a consistent style across all channels and authors – a shared understanding of the EESC's voice helps everyone to set aside personal style and speak as one, in line with the EESC's personality and values
- a distinctive and recognizable identity
- communication that is clear, impactful and aligned with our brand.

This fosters connection, trust, and engagement. A well-defined tone of voice is key to supporting our role. It strengthens credibility, maintains coherence, and helps the EESC stand out in the European landscape as an approachable, recognizable actor.

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Maya Angelou,
poet and civil rights activist

Translating the brand archetype into tone of voice

The EESC's brand archetype is the **Connected Advisor**, representing its role as a consultative body grounded in grassroots expertise and connecting civil society with EU policymaking. This archetype provides a strategic frame of reference that guides all communications. Tone of voice, alongside visual identity, is a key tool for concretely expressing the EESC's personality as shaped by the archetype, making clear who we are, what we stand for, and why our contribution matters.

The three attributes that characterize the Connected Advisor – **knowledgeable, inclusive, and collaborative** – provide the foundation and are reflected in three core qualities that give the EESC's voice its distinct identity:

CREDIBLE

APPROACHABLE

GROUNDED

CREDIBLE

Being **credible** reflects EESC's role as an authoritative advisor, whose voice carries weight because it is built on expertise, independence, and real-world insights

APPROACHABLE

Being **approachable** reflects EESC's inclusive and collaborative spirit, ensuring that communication is open, accessible, and inviting dialogue

GROUNDED

Being **grounded** reflects EESC's deep connection to civil society, guaranteeing that messages remain relevant, meaningful, and rooted in diverse perspectives and shared values

These tonal qualities form our **core voice** — the foundation that does not change, regardless of audience, channel, or purpose. The core voice is what makes the EESC recognisable.

What does change is the **tone** — we adapt our tone to the specific context: audience, channel, purpose of the message. It might be more formal and precise when speaking to policymakers, more engaging in public campaigns, or more conversational and dynamic on social media.

VOICE

The organisation's personality or character.
Defines who we are in every communication.

= FIXED
remains constant
across audiences
and channels



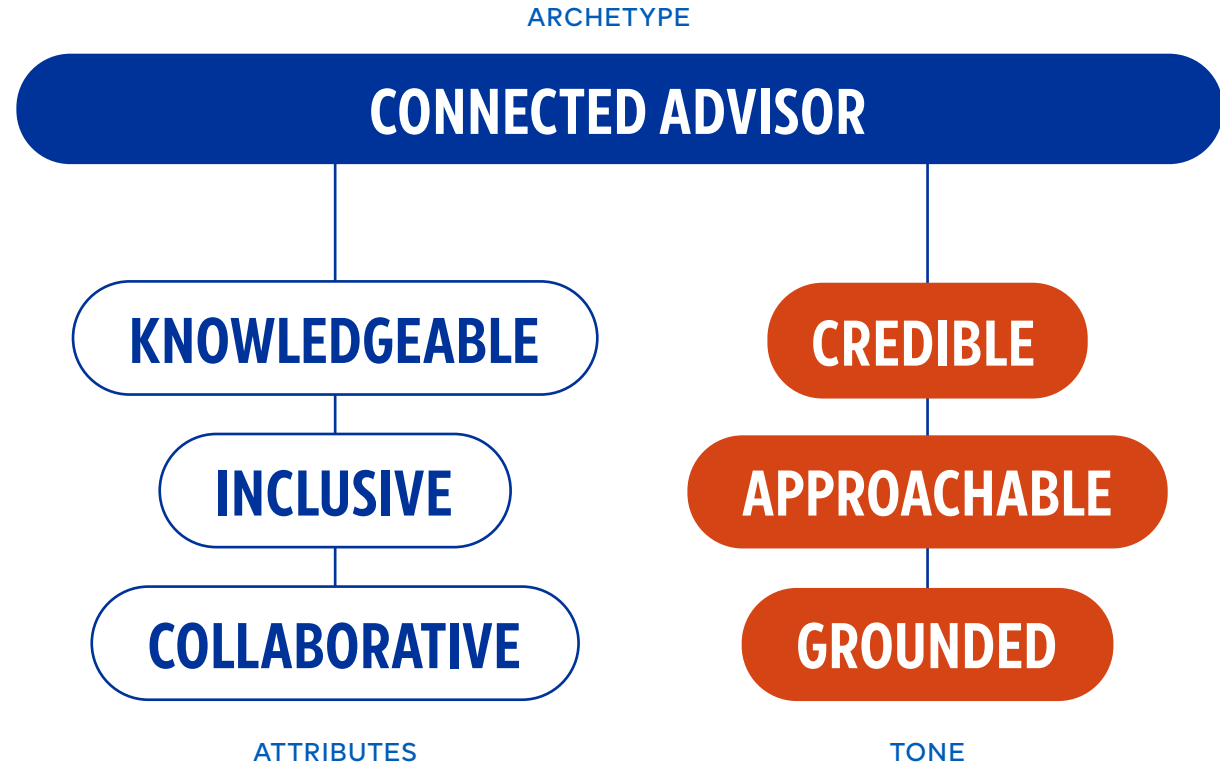
How the voice is expressed and adapted depending on the context, channel, audience or purpose.

= FLEXIBLE
adjusts to the situation
while staying true
to the voice

The EESC's distinctive voice

Each of the three tonal qualities – credible, approachable and grounded – has a role to play in how the EESC writes and speaks.

The EESC's voice applies primarily to **communication products**. It does not apply to **formal outputs** such as EESC opinions, resolutions, or administrative documents exchanged with institutions (e.g. HR reports, annual activity reports, discharge documents). However, elements of the EESC's voice may be used in opinion-related materials such as press summaries or key points.



TONAL QUALITY 1

CREDIBLE

LANGUAGE

- Is precise, evidence-based, and factually sound
- Demonstrates authority without arrogance
- Builds confidence and reliability

HOW TO APPLY IT

- Use confident, precise, evidence-based language
- Maintain a professional and objective tone; avoid hedging, vagueness, or buzzwords
- Write concisely, structuring arguments logically and clearly
- Acknowledge complexity without sacrificing clarity

Applying the **clear writing principles** will help you find the right tone of voice. Take a look at the [resources available on the Clear Writing website](#).

DON'T WRITE

The EESC stresses the central role of enforcement in reducing the fragmentation of the Single Market and calls on the Commission to implement a clear and coordinated approach between preventive, collaborative and remedial tools.

The EU must, first of all, ensure that a real universal right to housing is enshrined, particularly acting by means of a sector-specific regulation under the ordinary legislative procedure, to establish the principles and set the conditions for providing, commissioning and funding affordable and decent housing, in accordance with Article 14 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

INSTEAD WRITE

The EESC underlines that enforcement is key to making the Single Market less fragmented. It urges the Commission to adopt a clear and coordinated approach using preventive, collaborative, and remedial tools.

The EU must ensure that the right to housing is recognised as a universal right. This can be done through sector-specific regulations that define the principles and conditions for providing, commissioning and funding affordable and decent housing, in line with Article 14 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

WHY

- Confident language: verbs like “underlines” and “urges” convey clarity and authority without hedging
- Professional and objective tone: neutral, factual phrasing enhances credibility
- Concise structure: simplified sentences increase impact and readability
- Logical clarity: main idea is front-loaded; sentence split improves readability
- Concise phrasing: removed unnecessary words like “first of all” and “particularly acting by means of”
- Professionalism precision: legal reference retained while simplifying phrasing

TONAL QUALITY 2

APPROACHABLE

LANGUAGE

- Is clear, human, and inviting
- Encourages dialogue and engagement
- Makes the audience feel welcome and understood

HOW TO APPLY IT

- Use plain, clear language. Avoid jargon unless essential, and explain when used. Explain acronyms and technical terms before using them
- Keep the tone open, inclusive, and respectful
- Prefer short sentences and active voice
- Keep titles short
- Encourage engagement and invite dialogue (through questions, calls to action)

Make sure that the digital content – web pages, social media posts, PDF and Word documents – you are creating is **accessible to all**, including people with a disability. Please consult the [Publications Office's guidelines on accessible publishing](#).

DON'T WRITE

The EESC underscores the necessity of a robust social dialogue framework to ensure that EU policies are inclusive and representative of all societal groups.

As stipulated by Article 304 of the TFEU, the Committee may be consulted by the institutions whenever they deem it appropriate (through "exploratory opinions" and "optional referrals").

INSTEAD WRITE

We believe strong social dialogue is essential to ensure that EU policies are inclusive and that everyone's voice is heard.

The EU institutions can request the EESC's advice, for example through "exploratory opinions" or "optional referrals" (Article 304 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU).

WHY

- Human tone: "We believe" adds relatability and softens institutional language
 - Inclusivity: emphasises participation and diversity of voices
 - Concise, plain language: simplifies the original sentence while keeping the core meaning
-
- Plain language: replaces formal legal phrasing ("as stipulated by", "may be consulted") with clear, everyday words; spells out the acronym TFEU that non-specialist audiences understand the reference
 - Active voice: shifts from passive ("may be consulted") to active ("institutions can request"), making the sentence more direct and readable
 - Human tone: introduces "the EESC's advice", which feels more relational and less bureaucratic
 - Reader-friendly structure: places the legal reference at the end to maintain accuracy without interrupting the flow

TONAL QUALITY 3

GROUNDING

LANGUAGE

- Is concrete and tied to real-life experiences
- Reflects understanding of the audience’s context and perspectives
- Ensures messages are relatable and meaningful

HOW TO APPLY IT

- Reflect lived experiences and real contexts
- Show practical relevance and impact
- Use concrete, practical, everyday words.
- Lead with concrete examples before abstractions
- Keep the style natural and authentic.
Avoid inflated or overly institutional language
- Be transparent about challenges or compromises

When drafting, aim to apply the **principles of inclusive writing** so that language naturally conveys equality, respect, and diversity. Please consult the [guidelines on inclusive language](#).

DON'T WRITE

This year’s EMF, “Harnessing migrants’ skills in the EU”, will allow participants to discuss how to promote the skills of non-EU nationals, help companies address job shortages and protect migrants’ working rights.

The EESC considers that the right balance needs to be found between preserving the Earth’s biodiversity and meeting the necessary food requirements.

INSTEAD WRITE

This year’s European Migration Forum brings people together to find real solutions: how to promote the skills of non-EU nationals, how to help companies fill labour shortages and how to protect migrants’ rights at work.

The EESC calls for the right balance between protecting our planet’s biodiversity and ensuring food security for current and future generations.

WHY

- Concrete and real-life focus: emphasises tangible outcomes rather than abstract discussion
- Human tone: “brings people together” makes sentence more relatable and less institutional
- Plain language: simple verbs like “find” and “protect” replace formal terms

- Concrete and real-life focus: frames issue in terms of real-life outcomes (food security)
- Direct, human tone: “calls for” conveys urgency and engagement
- Plain phrasing: simplifies and smooths the sentence structure, replacing formal phrasing like “the right balance needs to be found” with clear, active language

How we refer to ourselves and address others

The EESC's voice should always sound credible, approachable, and grounded — adapting **perspective** (how we speak about ourselves) and **reader address** (how we speak to others) ensures that this personality remains coherent and recognisable across different contexts.

HOW WE SPEAK ABOUT OURSELVES

Use "we"

when speaking as the EESC in a participatory, consultative role – to invite dialogue, show openness, and collaboration

→ BEST FOR: social media, newsletters or direct engagement to feel inclusive and approachable

Use the 3rd person

when emphasizing independence, authority, or institutional positioning – to highlight credibility and objectivity

→ BEST FOR: press releases, or publications where authority and neutrality are emphasized (e.g. position papers).

HOW WE ADDRESS THE READER

Use "you"

when the goal is participation or dialogue – to make communication human, accessible, and action-oriented, and avoid impersonal phrasing such as "stakeholders are requested to...".

Adopt a neutral or collective address

when the aim is to inform or position the EESC as an authoritative source – to highlight credibility and objectivity, using 3rd person or actor-based phrasing such as "civil society organisations", "stakeholders", "partners", or "readers".

Alternate between "you" and neutral phrasing

for mixed audiences (institutional, civil society, and public) – to achieve a balanced tone that is both approachable and credible.

Using abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviations and acronyms can make communication more efficient – but only when used with **clarity and consistency**. Their use, especially for internal terms referring to our working bodies or related to our institutional jargon, should reflect our brand's tone of voice: credible, approachable, and grounded, while avoiding unnecessary barriers to understanding.

Clarity first

- Always spell out the full name the first time it appears, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses.
- Use the abbreviation alone only after it has been introduced.
- Avoid abbreviations in titles and headlines.

Keep it understandable

- Avoid abbreviations that might confuse or exclude readers.
- If there's any risk of misunderstanding, spell out the full name.

Consistency matters

- Once an abbreviation is established, use it consistently across all channels and documents.
- Do not switch between different forms within the same communication.

Avoid overuse

- Too many abbreviations can make text feel cold or overly technical.
- Use abbreviations only when they genuinely make writing clearer or more efficient.

CONSIDER THE AUDIENCE

External-facing communications

- Prefer full names over internal abbreviations.
- Introduce abbreviations only after defining them.
- In formal communications (reports, statements, speeches...), use full names in headings and introductions (even if the abbreviation is used elsewhere in the text).

Internal communications

- Established internal abbreviations can be used freely once clearly defined.

Adapting the tone

The EESC's voice is always a combination of the 3 tonal qualities: credible, approachable and grounded. This foundation remains constant, but the tonal emphasis is adjusted to fit the audience or communication channel (the tonal qualities can be accentuated or subtly modulated).

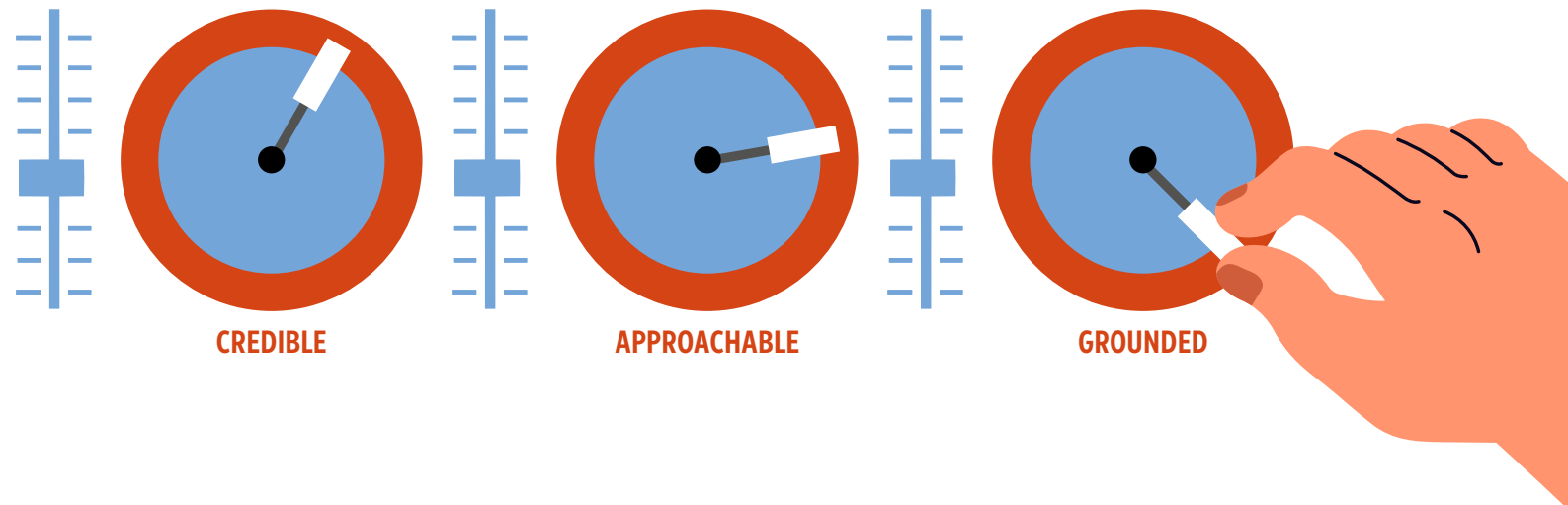
Adapting the tone to audiences

The EESC's **core audiences** are the **European institutions** and **civil society organisations** (CSOs) — including EESC member organisations and their networks, the National Economic and Social Councils (NESC), and other partner bodies such as those in the Liaison Group or established cooperation frameworks.

Within this landscape, **youth organisations** hold a special place, reflecting the EESC's commitment to engaging the next generation of civil society leaders.

Press and media also form a key audience — from the EU press corps in Brussels to media officers within CSOs and NESCs, as well as specialised sectoral media interested in EU and civil society affairs.

The **general public** is not a direct target audience, but rather a secondary or extended audience, reached primarily through CSOs that represent citizens.



EU INSTITUTIONS

Credibility and professional polish

- Use formal, policy-oriented, precise, and technical language
- Institutional language and EU jargon can be used when appropriate
- Prioritize structure and conciseness; information must be quickly digestible
- Perspective: "The EESC" for formal neutrality

CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANISATIONS

Approachability and inclusive dialogue

- Adopt a peer-to-peer, accessible, and inclusive tone
- Demonstrate expertise while remaining practical and actionable
- Make messages concrete and show how CSOs can use EESC work
- Emphasize collaboration and partnership
- Perspective: "we" is preferred to reinforce identification and collaboration

PRESS/MEDIA

Credibility and clarity

- Be clear, sharp, engaging, and story-driven
- Highlight quotable facts and key points
- Emphasize compelling narratives and sharp angles
- Use press-ready language: short sentences, headline-style
- Perspective: "The EESC" for authority

YOUTH

Human, relatable and engaging tone

- Use energetic, forward-looking, and optimistic language
- Focus on participation, innovation, and impact
- Incorporate visuals and storytelling; create shareable content
- Empower and inspire
- Perspective: "we" to show closeness; "The EESC" only to signal credibility

GENERAL PUBLIC

Translate expertise into concrete, human impacts

Adapting the tone for web and social media

Digital channels – such as the website and social media platforms – are where the EESC’s voice meets the public most directly. Here, tone should remain true to the EESC’s credible, approachable, and grounded personality, while adapting to the channel’s purpose, audience expectations, and format.

By adapting the tone of voice to each platform and balancing different types of content – from institutional messaging to lighter formats – the EESC can attract a broader and more diverse audience on social media, sparking interactions and enhancing visibility. To optimize outreach in the fast-evolving social media environment, maintaining flexibility in content and messaging is essential.

WEB

Credible and grounded tone, supported by approachability to ensure accessibility

- Keep the tone professional and structured, balancing authority with openness
- Write concise, scannable and digestible content with short paragraphs, headings, and bullet points for easy navigation
- Emphasize facts and logic while keeping language human and plain
- Ensure accessibility and inclusiveness by following clear writing and inclusive language principles
- Perspective: alternate between “The EESC” (for institutional authority) and “we” (for collaboration and openness)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Approachable and grounded tone, supported by credibility when presenting facts or institutional messages

- Use a conversational, human tone to engage and inspire
- Use active, energetic language while keeping credibility and factual accuracy
- Bite-sized content: keep messages short, rhythmic, and action-oriented, suited to the platform’s pace
- Focus on stories, people, and real outcomes to highlight societal impact
- Adapt the style to the platform. Social media is a fast-changing environment, and a strong dose of flexibility is needed to remain successful.
For example:
 - Facebook and LinkedIn: communication tends to be more straightforward and often more technical.
 - Twitter/X and Bluesky: the tone is more direct, allowing easier targeting of different stakeholders and interaction through short, catchy text.
 - Instagram: the tone is more dynamic and conversational, encouraging followers to engage with the content, often following current trends.
- Hashtags or mentions can be used strategically to increase reach but avoid jargon-heavy or overly technical terms
- Encourage interaction through questions and calls to action
- Perspective: use “we” to express openness and shared purpose
- Direct address: use “you” to invite engagement and create dialogue

Applying the EESC's tone of voice with AI

AI is a tool to enhance thinking, not replace it.

Stay curious, act ethically, and use every tool responsibly.

Share insights and lessons learned to help the whole organisation benefit and grow.

Principles

- Stay in control: AI assists, it doesn't replace your judgement
- Verify everything: check facts, data, and quotes before publishing
- Protect information: never share confidential or personal data with AI tools
- Be transparent: indicate when content has been AI-assisted
- Use trusted tools only

Writing effective AI prompts

- Define the goal: what do you want AI to produce?
- Provide context: audience, purpose, and relevant topic or policy
- Specify tone and style – refer to the tonal qualities (*credible, approachable, grounded*) and, where relevant, include nuances such as *professional polish* or *energetic, forward-looking, optimistic tone*
- Include key facts or references when relevant.
- Use precise language: avoid vague adjectives

A clear prompt include

- Goal
- + Context
- + Audience
- + Tone
- + Key Message

The **guidelines for the use of AI tools** at the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions are available on [intranet](#).

Use **only reliable AI tools from trusted sources**, like M365 Copilot, and avoid freely available AI systems, as they may not ensure data confidentiality or respect copyright – even for non-confidential documents.

The [DG DIGIT guide to AI tools](#) provides a comprehensive overview of Commission internal tools available.

Multilingualism and tone of voice

When communicating in multiple languages, the EESC's tone of voice should remain consistent across all language versions.

Translators play a key role in conveying the tone accurately and, where necessary, adapting it to the linguistic and cultural context of each language.

To support this, make the tone of voice in the original document clear and well-defined, and request that it be reviewed and edited before translation and publication.

GUIDELINES AND TOOLS

Additional resources to explore

- [Clear writing intranet site](#)
- [EESC guidelines on inclusive language](#)
- [Publications Office's Accessibility guidelines](#)
- [Interinstitutional Style Guide](#)



2. VISUAL IDENTITY

A strong visual identity does more than making the EESC recognisable. **It shapes how people feel about the organisation before a single word is read.** It signals who we are, how we work, and what we stand for – clearly, consistently, and credibly.

2.1.

MORE THAN A LOGO: WHY VISUAL IDENTITY MATTERS

A well-designed visual identity strengthens the EESC's role as a Connected Advisor – distinct yet firmly linked to the EU family – by bringing structure, consistency and adaptability across all communications. Just as importantly, it provides a shared framework that supports creativity and ensures every output contributes to a unified and trustworthy presence.

Introduction

For the EESC, whose work often happens behind the scenes of EU policymaking, visibility and trust rely on clarity and coherence. A well-designed visual identity strengthens the EESC's position as a Connected Advisor: a body that is both professional and inclusive, distinct yet rooted in the EU family.

The visual identity ensures that the EESC stands out among European institutions, without losing its institutional connection. It builds structure and coherence across all formats and languages, helping to eliminate fragmentation on how the EESC presents itself to the world. It offers a scalable system – one that grows with the organisation and adapts to new formats, new entities and new communication needs.

But just as importantly, it empowers creativity. The visual identity provides a shared framework that helps designers, editors and content creators work together with more ease and more impact. It encourages initiative, as long as the core rules are respected. That way, every publication, post or event contributes to **one recognisable, trustworthy and relevant brand.**

Much more than a logo, it's the visual expression of who we are – and how we connect. Every time the EESC shows up with the same visual clarity, it builds recognition, familiarity and credibility. Over time, this strengthens the organisation's reputation – not just as a source of advice, but as a reliable, inclusive and forward-looking actor in the EU ecosystem.



How is it linked to the archetype?

The visual identity is not a cosmetic layer. It is the visual embodiment of the EESC's brand personality as a Connected Advisor — an identity that is both professional and human, analytical and empathetic and rooted in society. Every design choice reflects this **dual DNA**.

The **CONNECTED** aspect lives in

COLOUR, PHOTOGRAPHY AND SHAPE

- **Warm, human** tones soften the institutional palette
- Gradients express **dialogue and compromise** — different views blending into shared purpose

The **ADVISOR** dimension comes through in

VISUAL CLARITY, PRECISION AND STRUCTURE

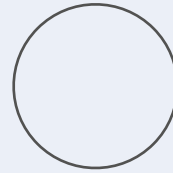
- Colour contrasts support **focus** and **legibility**
- Typography is **clean, calm and easy to read**
- Layouts feel **rational, spacious and well-organised**
- The overall look is **confident** — never dominant — supporting trust, credibility and expertise

The building blocks

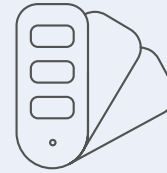
The correct use of the building blocks is what brings consistency, essential to a strong visual identity. The brand is built on a set of clearly defined building blocks. These elements form the core of a **flexible but coherent system**.

Each building block is described in the following pages, with clear guidance on how to use it effectively and correctly.

Further visual identity implementation details will be developed at a later stage in the graphic charter.



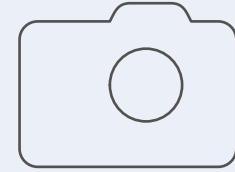
Logo



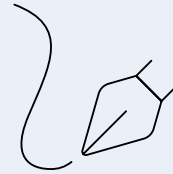
Colour palette



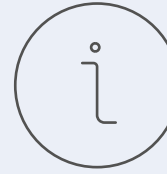
Typography



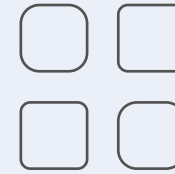
Photography



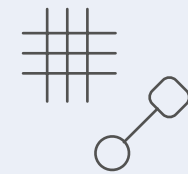
Illustration



Iconography



Design element



Grid and layout system

Making it work

The EESC's visual identity only works when applied with care and precision. There are a few **simple principles** to help you do just that — across all types of communication, print or digital.

These aren't extras — they're part of what makes the EESC feel as one.

1

Intention

Not every building block has to be used at once. Depending on the context and the feeling you want to convey, some elements may speak louder than others. A **well-chosen combination** — clean typography with a striking image, or a simple layout with a strong colour accent — often says more than complexity.

As a principle, our visual communications should remain **clear, simple, and uncluttered**, avoiding visual or textual overload (such as overly long titles and excessive secondary information).

What matters is that **each choice supports the message you want to send**.

2

Accessibility and inclusion

Create your design so that everyone can access, understand and relate to your message.

Think contrast, readability, clear lay-outs — and visuals that reflect the **diversity** of Europe's civil society.

→ For practical guidelines and accessibility standards, visit [Publications Office guidelines on accessible publishing](#).

3

Eco-design

Keep environmental impact in mind. Choose efficient formats, reduce unnecessary print runs, and avoid materials that create waste.

→ For detailed guidance on sustainable communication practices, consult [Beecom – Guide to Responsible Communications](#) and [Institut Mines-Télécom – Code de la communication responsable](#).



2.2.

LOGO

A CLEAR AND CONFIDENT SIGNATURE

The EESC logo is the most recognisable element of its visual identity. It consists of two fixed components: the **emblem** and the **wordmark** — always used together, never altered or separated. This signature ensures institutional credibility and visual consistency across all formats, audiences and languages.

Standard logo

This is the official and **primary version** of the EESC logo. It combines the emblem and wordmark in a **vertical** arrangement: the emblem appears above, the wordmark below and centered on the EU flag. The standard logo should be used in most applications — print or digital — where space allows.



The emblem is a symbol of balance and dialogue. It combines the **European Union flag** and a stylized graphic element symbolizing the dynamic of the search for consensus between the **three EESC's groups** – Employers (Group I), Workers (Group II) and Civil Society Organisations' (Group III) – representing the various sectors of “organised civil society”.

The wordmark displays the **full name** of the European Economic and Social Committee in a fixed layout and font. It always appears together with the emblem, and never on its own or in a different typeface.

Typography: Daxline Pro Bold 82% black

Logo colours



PANTONE Reflex Blue
CMYK 100 80 0 0
RGB 0 51 153
HEX #003399

PANTONE Process Yellow
CMYK 0 0 100 0
RGB 255 204 0
HEX #FFCC00

PANTONE Black 40%
CMYK 0 0 0 40
RGB 177 177 176
HEX #b1b1b0

PANTONE Black 82%
CMYK 0 0 0 82
RGB 82 82 81
HEX #525251

Horizontal logo

The horizontal logo is an **alternative** to the standard (vertical) version. Use it when the standard logo doesn't fit due to spatial or aesthetic constraints — for example, in digital banners, electronic newsletters or other **formats where the available logo space is too limited**. In this version, the wordmark is always centred to the right of the emblem.

Any **use of the horizontal logo** must be approved in advance by the EESC's Branding team.
Contact **branding@eesc.europa.eu**.



Mute logo

While the emblem is part of the official logo and must normally appear **together with the wordmark**, it may be used on its own in exceptional cases — for instance, when space is extremely limited and the full name of the Committee is clearly visible nearby such as **digital profile pictures**.

Any **standalone use** of the emblem must be approved in advance by the EESC's Branding team.
Contact **branding@eesc.europa.eu**.



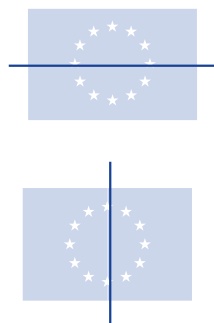
Protection area

GIVING THE LOGO ROOM TO BREATHE

To ensure clarity and impact, the logo must always be surrounded by a **minimum amount of clear space**.

No other element — such as text, images or other logos — should appear within this protected area.

This clear space must be respected in all formats and sizes, especially when the logo appears alongside other identities. The boundary frame is for measurement only and should never be printed.



The basic unit for the clear space area is based on half of the EU flag. The size of the clear space is variable and relative to the logo size.

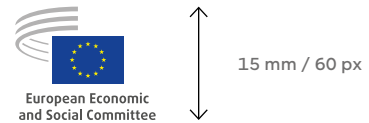


Minimum size

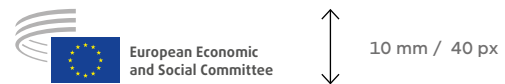
KEEPING THE LOGO READABLE AT ALL TIMES

To ensure **legibility** in every context, the EESC logo must never be used below its minimum size. Using the logo smaller than this compromises its clarity and visual authority. If space is too limited, consider adapting the layout — but never reduce it below the minimum threshold.

Minimum size for the **vertical** logo



Minimum size for the **horizontal** logo



Negative version

FOR USE ON DARK BACKGROUNDS

When the background is **dark or has insufficient contrast** with the standard logo, use the negative version. In this version, the EU flag remains in colour, while all other elements switch to white.

If contrast is still too low, use the fully white version of the logo instead (see p. 30).



Reflex Blue version

FOR SINGLE-COLOUR PRINT JOBS

This one-colour version is used when full-colour (CMYK) printing is not possible, but you still want to preserve the EESC's primary colour identity.

In this case, the logo is printed entirely in **100% Reflex Blue**. This version is ideal for use on materials such as **promotional items** (e.g. pens, folders, tote bags) or single-ink stationery.



Black-and-white version

FOR USE WHEN COLOUR IS NOT AN OPTION

Use the black-and-white versions of the logo for black-and-white documents, low-budget printing, or special production techniques such as embossing, engraving or laser cutting.

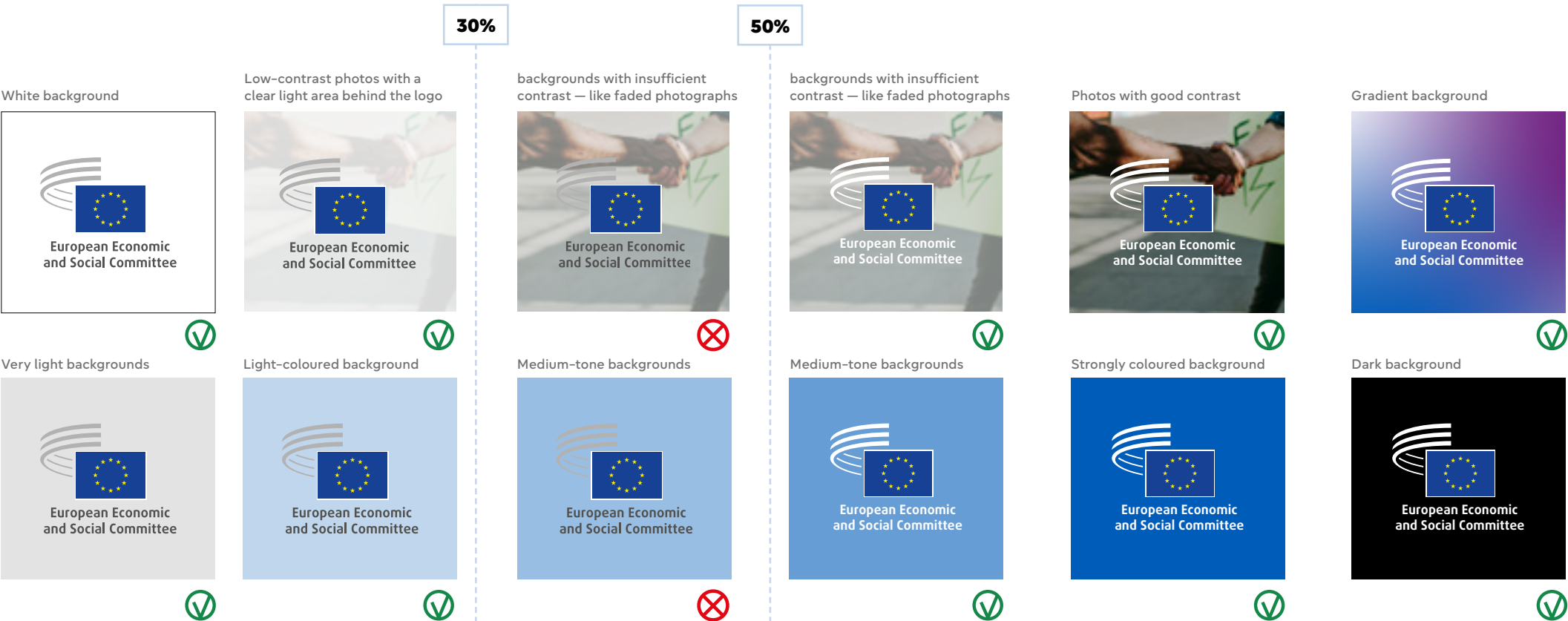
This version is also suitable when there is **insufficient contrast** to use the full-color (CMYK) or Reflex Blue versions (positive or negative).



Contrast and logo application

To ensure the logo always remains clear and recognisable, it must be used with **sufficient contrast**. Avoid placing the logo on backgrounds that are too close in tone or too complex such as medium-contrast colours, low-contrast photos, or detailed textures. Let contrast guide your decision — readability always comes first.

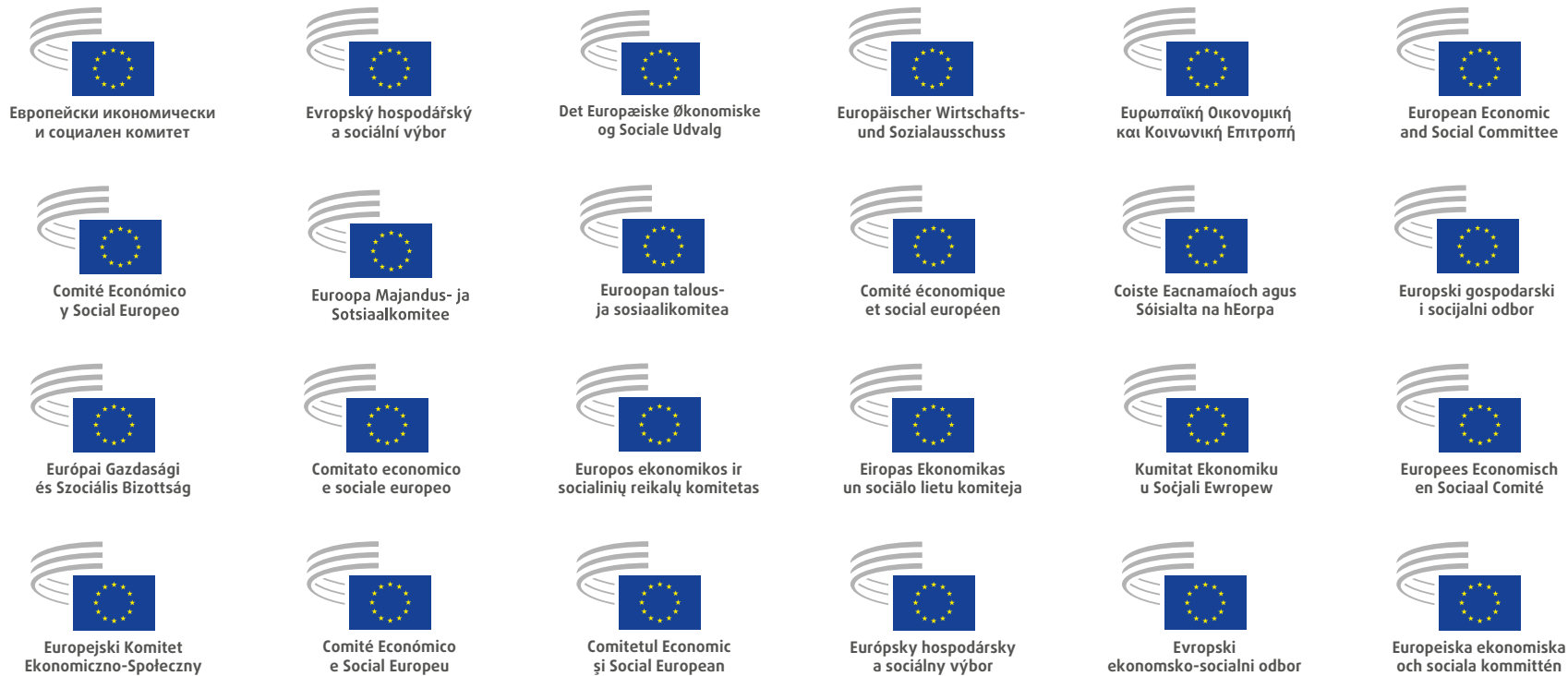
OPACITY TIP: If using a background colour at 30–50% opacity, switch to the negative logo to maintain legibility. This rule also applies when placing the logo over photographs.



DRAFT VERSION

Language versions

The EESC logo is available in **24 language versions**.



The language versions above appear in alphabetical order of the formal titles in their original written forms (according to the ISO codes 639-1).

Bilingual versions

When required, a version with **two languages** may be used. In this version, the languages appear stacked (one on top of the other) as the third element of the logo, with the text displayed in alphabetical order according to their formal titles in the original written forms (based on ISO 639-1 codes).

An **exception** applies for the bilingual logo used exclusively for **exterior signage** (building façades) and **interior decoration** (e.g., reception areas). In this case, the texts appear side by side, separated by a delineator.



European Economic and Social Committee
Comité économique et social européen

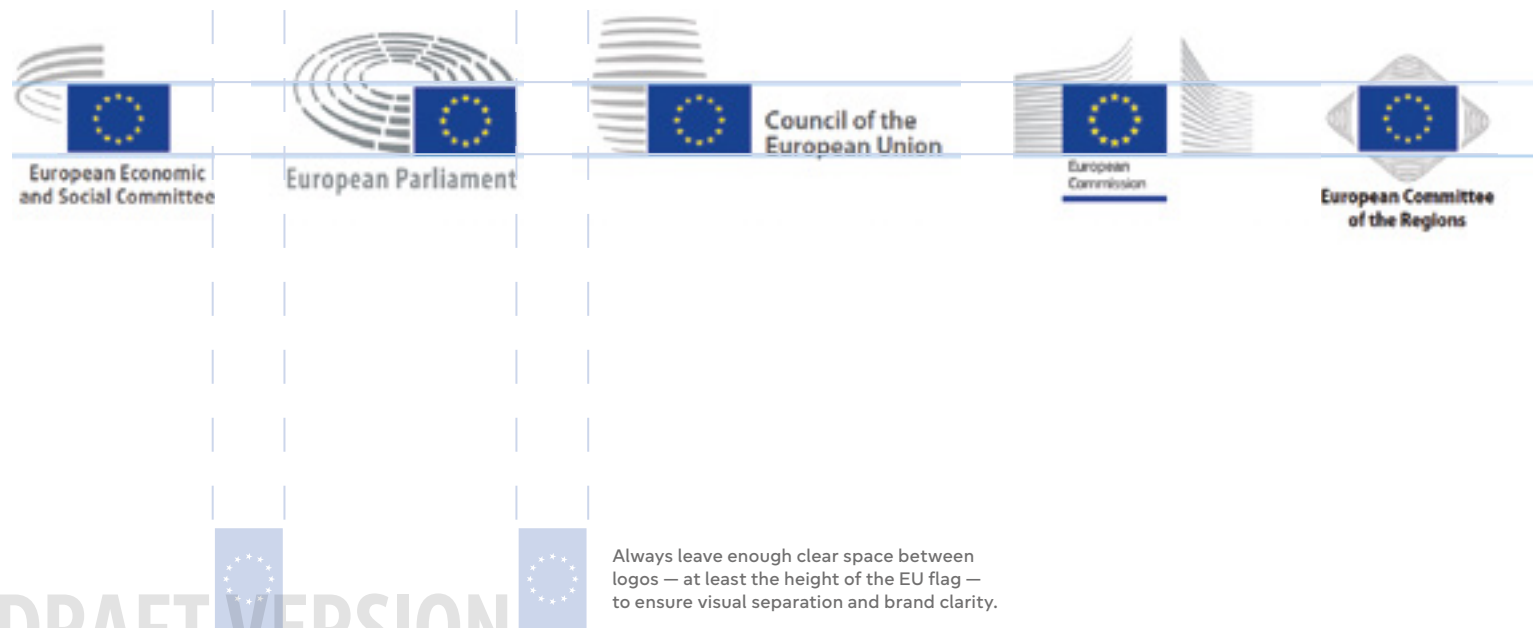


European Economic and Social Committee | Comité économique et social européen

Co-branding with the European institutions

When the EESC logo is placed alongside other EU institutional logos, **align their visual weight** by matching the size of the EU flag in each logo.

Always **place the EESC logo first**, unless protocol demands otherwise. Never merge or visually blend the EESC logo with others. When in doubt, contact the Branding team: branding@eesc.europa.eu.



Co-branding with partners

When the EESC co-signs a project, publication or event with external partners — such as NGOs, academic institutions, or civil society organisations — the logos must be arranged to reflect the actual level of involvement and avoid misinterpretation. Apply proper spacing. Always leave clear space between logos — at least the height of the EU flag — to ensure visual distinction.

- Ensure visual balance. If all partners are **equally involved**, use similar sizing.
- If the EESC is a **leader**, put the secondary partners smaller.

Respect the EESC logo's integrity. Always use the official logo files. Never merge, redraw or visually alter the logo in partner layouts.

Avoid endorsement confusion. Do not place the EESC logo in a way that implies sponsorship, funding or institutional backing unless explicitly agreed.

When in doubt about layout, hierarchy or usage, contact the Branding team: branding@eesc.europa.eu.



Do not do this

The EESC logo must always be used as provided. Do not distort, rotate, mirror, redraw or separate any of its elements. Never change its colours, fonts or proportions, or apply shadows, outlines or effects. The logo exists in multiple approved versions and formats. There is no need — and no excuse — to create your own.

 European Economic and Social Committee	 European Economic and Social Committee	 European Economic and Social Committee
 European Economic and Social Committee	 European Economic and Social Committee	 European Economic and Social Committee
 European Economic and Social Committee	 European Economic and Social Committee	 European Economic and Social Committee

Exceptional adaptations

In strictly exceptional cases, the EESC logo may be temporarily adapted to mark the celebration of a specific event or cause of high significance for the EESC (e.g. international days). Such adaptations must be approved by the Vice President for Communication and must preserve the recognizability and integrity of the logo.



**European Economic
and Social Committee**

Example of an add-on (International
Day against Breast Cancer)

2.3.

COLOUR PALETTE

COLOUR THAT UNIFIES AND EXPRESSES

Colour doesn't just decorate — it sets the tone, guides the eye and shapes **the feel of a message from the very first glance**. The EESC palette works on that **intuitive level**: it adds emotion, emphasis and structure, often without needing explanation. The chosen colours reflect who we are — firmly part of the EU family, but with a warm, human presence of our own. Built for balance, the palette is strong enough to unify, and flexible enough to adapt across contexts and audiences.

Primary colour

CREATING COHESION, ENSURING RECOGNITION

Our primary colour is aligned with the blue of the European flag. It visually anchors our identity within the EU family, reinforcing trust and recognition. This blue serves as a **unifying element** across all communications, allowing the rest of the palette to express our story. It should be used in formal, corporate-facing communication and in designs that require a strong, recognisable presence.

Corporate Blue

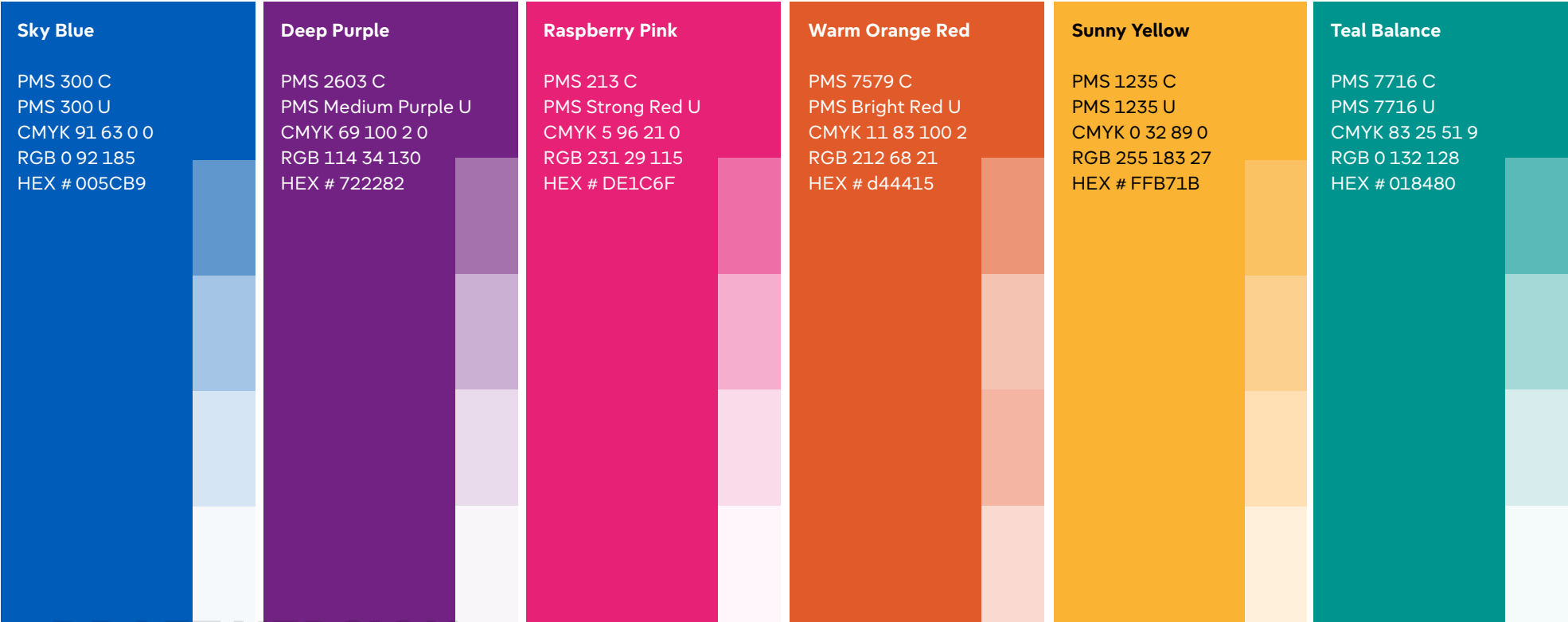
PANTONE Reflex Blue
HEX #003399
RGB 0 51 153
CMYK 100 80 0 0

DRAFT VERSION

Secondary colours

ADDING NUANCE, WARMTH AND FLEXIBILITY

The secondary palette adds **expression** and **emotional range** to the visual identity. These colours support storytelling, content differentiation and audience targeting. Use them to set tone or mood. Together, these colours allow **creative freedom** — while ensuring every design still feels unmistakably EESC.



Gradients

VISUALISING CONNECTION AND COMMON GROUND

Gradients express the EESC's identity as a Connected Advisor: two colours flowing into each other, meeting in the middle, with white hints suggesting **transparency**. They reflect **dialogue**, finding **compromise** and the **connection** of diverse civil society organisations. There are 15 official gradients, built from the secondary palette.

Apply gradients with purpose: in **backgrounds** or **transitions**. Use sparingly, and always in balance with clear structure.

EESC_gradient_green-purple



EESC_gradient_blue-pink



EESC_gradient_blue-orange



EESC_gradient_blue-green



EESC_gradient_blue-purple



EESC_gradient_yellow-blue



EESC_gradient_yellow-pink



EESC_gradient_yellow-orange



EESC_gradient_yellow-green



EESC_gradient_yellow-purple



EESC_gradient_orange-green



EESC_gradient_orange-purple



EESC_gradient_pink-orange



EESC_gradient_pink-green

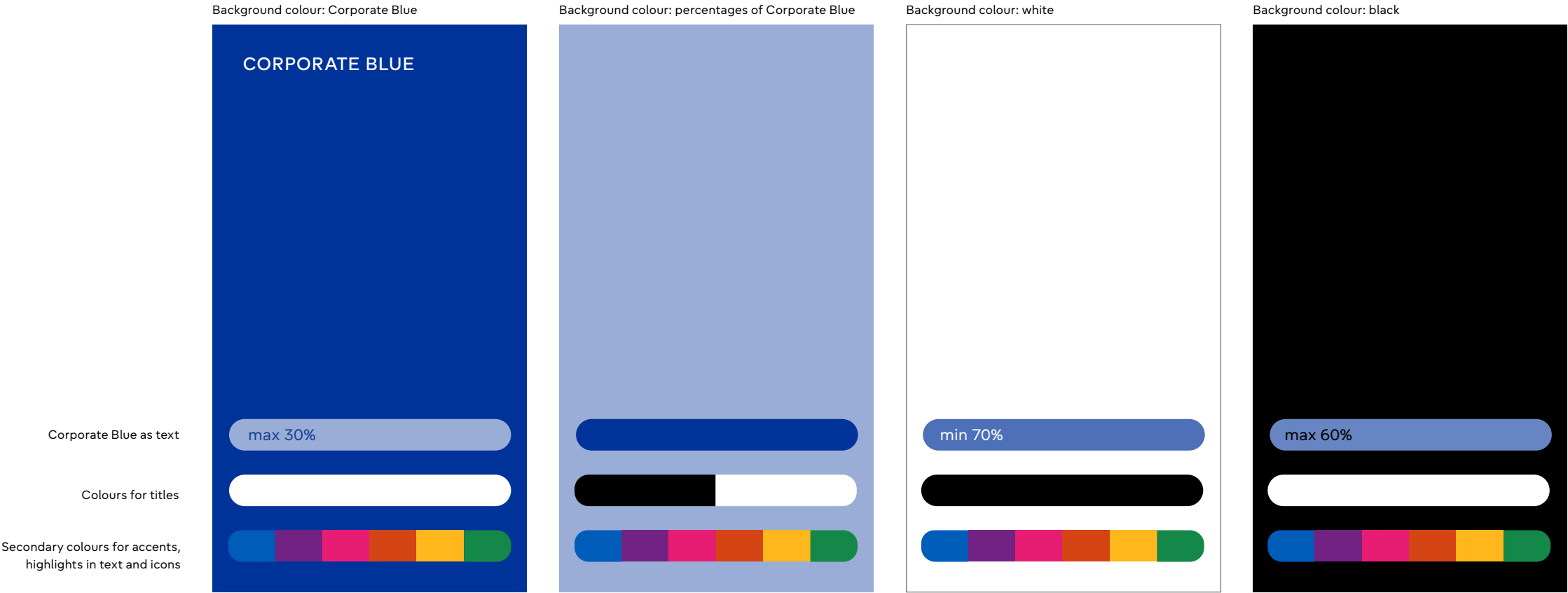


EESC_gradient_pink-purple



Primary colour combinations

The primary colour can be mixed with the secondary palette to add **greater variety**. In these cases, the secondary palette can be used to support the visual hierarchy — for example, in highlights, icons or accent elements.



Secondary colour combinations

The EESC colour palette is built for flexibility. You can combine colours from both the primary and secondary palette — and by using different tonal variations — you create a **wide variety of moods**. Some combinations feel fresh and energetic, others soft and warm.

Let the image guide your choices:

- **Match** colours to tones in the picture for a natural, cohesive feel.
- **Contrast** them to draw attention, highlight structure, or create energy.

Avoid random mixing — make sure the combination **supports** the message and visual clarity.

Don't use more than **three colours** in a single layout (excluding the neutral colours of white, black or grey).



Some examples of different colour groups

Use of tonal variations

Any colour can serve as a background, text or accent colour when you play with different tonal percentages.



Not all colour combinations shown meet the WCAG contrast standards for text. While they shouldn't be used for typography or essential information, they can safely be applied as **supporting visual elements** — such as background shapes, containers or accents. This approach preserves the richness of the visual identity.

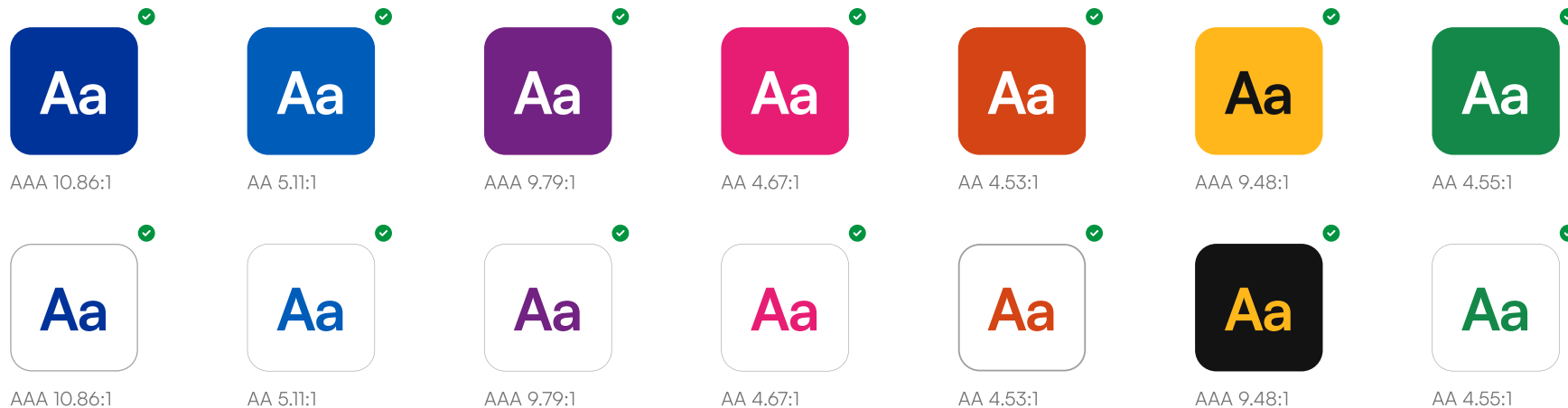
Colour contrast and accessibility

Contrast is a crucial aspect of digital accessibility and is expressed as a ratio, such 4:5:1 or 7:1. The higher the ratio, the better the readability.

To meet WCAG Level AA (minimum requirement), all foreground content must have sufficient contrast against its background (including images and gradients):

- **Normal text** (18 pt or 14 pt bold): minimum contrast ratio **4.5:1**
- **Large text:** minimum contrast ratio **3:1**
- **Non-text content that conveys meaning** (buttons and other interactive elements, icons, pictograms, or graphical symbols): minimum contrast ratio **3:1**

The following combinations using the primary and secondary colours (100% opacity) meet the WCAG minimum contrast requirement level AA.



Follow these **simple rules for text:**

- ✓ Use dark text on light backgrounds, or vice versa
- ✓ Keep text off busy images or complex gradients
- ✓ Use high-contrast colours for small text and interface elements

CHECK

When using colours in other combinations or gradients, it's essential to check the contrast ratios. You can easily do this with tools like webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker.

The **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)** are guidelines from the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) for creating accessible web content for people with different impairments, such as visual, auditory or cognitive limitations. A key part of WCAG is sufficient contrast, which is essential for readability and usability. This makes websites more inclusive and increases reach and engagement with a broader audience. Check the [website](https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/) for more information.

2.4.

TYPOGRAPHY

MAKING EVERY WORD WORK HARDER

Typography is more than design — it directs attention, sets the tone and makes information easier to absorb. When everything shouts, nothing is heard. When everything looks the same, nothing gets read. Good typography **guides the eye, adds structure, and makes the message land**. This chapter sets out the EESC's typefaces and explains how to use them with impact and intention.

Corporate font

Europea is the new typeface developed for use across European institutions. It reflects a **shared European identity** and strengthens the visual cohesion within the EU family.

The typeface comes in **four subfamilies** (Europea, Europea Narrow, Europea Eco, Europea Inksave) and an extensive set of custom **open type features**.

Europea

Thin
Extralight
Light
Semilight
Regular
Medium
Semibold
Bold
Extrabold
Ultra

Thin italic
Extralight italic
Light italic
Semilight italic
Italic
Medium italic
Semibold italic
Bold italic
Extrabold italic
Ultra italic

Aa

ECTUM FACCATUR?

Ugit illupta sperum volo quiam il mossund
ucimili ctiure sitinverum eostiis quia quosae.
Et velignam, omniti dignis rem sitibus aute pos
dolorryum ne et ullore eum sandae.

**Ectum *faccatur*? Ugit illupta sperum volo
quiam il mossund ucimili ctiure sitinverum
eostiis quia quosae. Et velignam, omniti
dignis rem sitibus aute pos dolorryum ne et
ullore eum sandae.**

Europea Narrow

Thin
Extralight
Light
Semilight
Regular
Medium
Semibold
Bold
Extrabold
Ultra

Thin italic
Extralight italic
Light italic
Semilight italic
Italic
Medium italic
Semibold italic
Bold italic
Extrabold italic
Ultra italic

Aa

AGENEM
DOLORITIS
ICABOREM

AGENEM
DOLORITIS
ICABOREM

DRAFT VERSION

Alternative typeface

THE FALLBACK TYPEFACE FOR EVERYDAY OFFICE DOCUMENTS

Arial has been selected as an **alternative typeface** (native) that serves as a substitute when Europea is not available on a user's computer or on a dedicate application. As a system font, it ensures **compatibility** across platforms and works well in MS Office applications.

Arial may be used in functional or digital contexts where Europea is unavailable, but it must not replace the brand typeface in fully designed materials.

Arial

Aa

Regular
Bold

Italic
Bold Italic

ECTUM FACCATUR?

Ugit illupta sperum volo quiam il mossund
ucimili ctiure sitinverum eostiis quia
quosae. Et velignam, omniti dignis rem
sitibus aute pos dolorryum ne et ullore eum
sandae.

**Ectum *faccatur*? Ugit illupta sperum
volo quiam il mossund ucimili ctiure
sitinverum eostiis quia quosae. Et
velignam, omniti dignis rem sitibus
aute pos dolorryum ne et ullore eum
sandae.**

DRAFT VERSION

Typographic hierarchy

GUIDING THE READER, STEP BY STEP

Typography isn't just about style — it's about structure. A clear typographic hierarchy helps readers navigate content intuitively. It creates rhythm, shows relationships between elements, and makes complex messages easier to digest.

Each level of the hierarchy has a distinct role. Use weight, size and spacing — not colour or decoration — to indicate importance. Good hierarchy feels effortless: it helps the message land, without making the layout look forced or busy.

All-caps in headings

Headings structure your content — they guide the reader and introduce sections.

All-caps can add emphasis, but reserve them for **short headings** and use them sparingly to maintain accessible reading.

For **longer headings**, aim for balance:

- Use **two font weights** to introduce structure
- Or **combine capitals with sentence case** to highlight key parts and adjust the line spacing.

Headings

Trade union
& employers:
**COLLABORATING
TOWARDS
ENHANCED
PRODUCTIVITY**

Subheadings

**Subheading consequere
erchit es rerchil**

Body copy

Text Dolessit elent et eum nulpa consed eratecti
cuptatur ratur? Enitia doluptamus int volo conem
si torrovid ex estiustrum utectur ectorum quias
exereca borehendio. Ut aut ut lantio ipiciat

2.5.

PHOTOGRAPHY

RELATABLE, HUMAN, AND ROOTED IN REALITY

As an organisation that connects institutions with civil society, the EESC communicates about **complex topics** — and **complex processes**. That makes photography both a challenge and an opportunity. To support the EESC's role as a Connected Advisor, we need more than symbols — we need **stories**.

Seeing people, telling stories

We don't show perfection. **We show people.**
Real moments, not staged ones. No stock clichés, no stiff poses — just images that feel lively, familiar, and close. That's how we visualise our role: grounded in reality, open to dialogue, and connected to everyday lives.

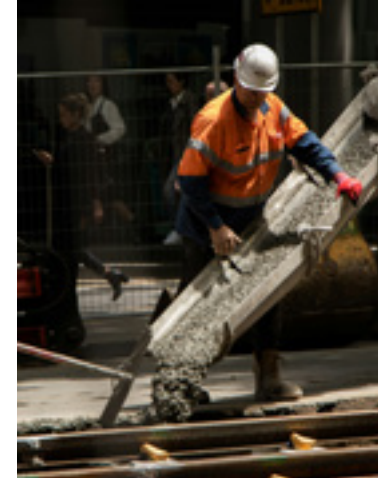
It's a style that matches the EESC's position in the EU: confident, human, and credible — never distant, never overdesigned.

Photography isn't just decoration.
It shapes how our message is felt.



RELATABLE MOMENTS

Images of everyday life help viewers connect. They show people not as abstract figures, but as citizens living the realities the EESC cares about. Whether it's commuting, learning, parenting or working, **these moments make big themes tangible**. When people recognise something of themselves, it builds trust and inclusion.



Show people in their work, learning, or community environments

Capture people actively engaged in shared, recognisable settings that reflect daily life.

Highlight interaction and human connection

Depict moments of collaboration, care or learning — situations where people are clearly doing something with or for one another. Look for gestures, expressions and body language that feel genuine and bring a sense of purpose into the frame.

Represent everyday diversity

Show people of different ages, backgrounds, and abilities in roles that reflect the dignity and diversity of society. Keep it natural — avoid tokenism or overly staged scenarios.



PEOPLE IN DIALOGUE

Dialogue is where **collaboration** begins. That's why we don't just show people — we show people interacting. These visual cues of connection, exchange and presence mirror the EESC's collaborative way of working. They make abstract processes feel tangible, and reflect the trust-based relationships at the heart of our mission.

Used consistently, these images signal that decisions are not taken in isolation, but shaped by listening, sharing and collective insight.

Show visible dialogue

Capture people mid-conversation, not just grouped together. Facial expressions, gestures and body orientation matter — they signal attention and connection.

Highlight informal exchange

Don't limit yourself to formal meeting rooms. Use outdoor settings, relaxed seating or walk-and-talk moments that reflect spontaneous interaction.

Make collaboration visible

Choose images where people clearly engage with each other: pointing, explaining, laughing, responding. These are signs of a real exchange.

Avoid staged or symbolic scenes

Skip the typical handshake or posed group photo. Instead, find those subtle cues — a smile, a nod, a pause — that show active listening and shared presence.

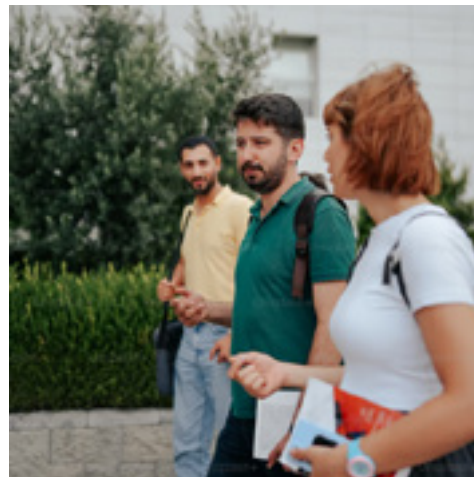


PHOTO-JOURNALISTIC STYLE

AUTHENTICITY OVER AESTHETICS

Characters

Capture real people, in real moments — not models. Look for sincere expressions, natural posture, and visible diversity. People should look relatable and grounded in everyday life.

Context and composition

Let the environment support the story. Choose real, recognisable locations with lived context — not sterile, overly styled settings. Compose images with calm: avoid clutter, focus on one subject where possible, and use framing to guide the viewer's eye without visual gimmicks.

Emotion and connection

Show visible interaction. Gestures, glances, and group dynamics can express more than words. Emotion brings credibility and makes your images relatable — it turns a topic into a story.

Colour and light

Always choose natural light if possible. Keep colours true to life — avoid filters, effects or retouching that flatten or distort reality. Honest colour grading adds warmth, not polish.

Attention and impact

Even subtle photos can catch the eye. Aim for moments that pull the viewer in: something unexpected, a visual rhythm, or a strong focal point can create instant recognition and interest.



Institutional presence

Institutional images give visual weight to the EESC's role within the EU. They show where and how the Committee acts: in formal settings, in dialogue with other institutions, and within its own recognisable space. These images reinforce the EESC's legitimacy and position as a trusted, credible body.

Used strategically, this type of photography strengthens visibility — showing that civil society has a seat at the table where European decisions are shaped.

Show formal settings

Capture moments from plenary sessions, consultations and official events that underline the EESC's political function.

Use recognisable architecture thoughtfully

Prioritise images that show people in action and engagement. Architectural elements can be included to reinforce context, but pictures of buildings are only effective when they convey dynamism, modernity, or symbolic meaning, and should support the story rather than replace the depiction of people.

Balance formality with human presence

Pair institutional elements with active, engaged members to show decision making in action. Not just settings, but the people shaping policy. Avoid staged group photos conveying little activity or engagement; instead, highlight authentic interaction and collaboration.



EXPERTS AT WORK

Images of people actively contributing to the EESC's work help express the Committee's expertise. They show reflection, discussion and decision-making in real time — **capturing the commitment behind every opinion.**

These visuals reinforce our role as a credible, knowledgeable advisor — built on the input of engaged individuals and organisations across civil society.

Show reflective moments

Focus on thinking, listening and taking notes — not just speaking or presenting. These subtle moments can express attention, intelligence and intent.

Visualise analysis and contribution

Choose images where people are clearly working: reading, annotating, collaborating with others. Hands on paper or laptops can signal real involvement.

Capture different roles and tasks

Not everyone is behind a microphone. Show a range of profiles — facilitators, observers, interpreters, rapporteurs — to reflect the full ecosystem of policy work.

Prioritise authenticity over performance

Avoid overly staged shots of 'serious' people. Look instead for scenes where people feel engaged: in discussion, in thought, in progress.



Check list

These simple questions help decide whether an image truly reflects the EESC's brand. If the answer is no to all of them, the image likely weakens the message.

- ?** **Is it relevant?**
Does it show a topic, setting or action that connects to the EESC's work?
- ?** **Is there human presence?**
Are people visible, active, engaged — not symbolic props or empty spaces?
- ?** **Is there context?**
Can we tell where this takes place and why it matters?
- ?** **Is it inclusive?**
Does it reflect the diversity of Europe in age, gender, background and ability?

IF THE ANSWER IS NO TO ALL OF THESE,
RECONSIDER USING THE IMAGE.



Do's & Don'ts

Do

- Show genuine emotion
- Capture real moments in recognisable settings
- Represent diversity without tokenism
- Let the context tell part of the story



✓ **Shows real labour in context.** Engaged worker, clear task, and a setting that feels lived-in. A true depiction of manual labour in Europe.



✓ **Visible collaboration and focus.** Genuine moment of teamwork. The interaction is clear, the task is specific — this tells a story.



✓ **Craft and concentration.** A hands-on task captured mid-action. No posing, no staging — just focused work.



✓ **Presence and pride.** No action, but body language and setting speak volumes. She belongs here — and it shows.



✗ **Staged and superficial** No real action or emotion. Feels like a model shoot in an industrial backdrop — lacks authenticity.



✗ **Lacks authenticity.** Forced smiles and no visible task. The setting is industrial, but nothing about the scene feels genuine.

Don't

- Use overly clean, generic stock images
- Stage model-like poses or fake expressions
- Flatten emotion or strip away real-world context
- Erase human presence from institutional scenes

Do

- Show genuine emotion
- Capture real moments in recognisable settings
- Represent diversity without tokenism
- Let the context tell part of the story



✓ **Calm, everyday reality.** Recognisable public setting with emotional authenticity — relevant to themes like inclusion and ageing.



✓ **Quiet inclusion.** Open, public space with natural light and minimal distractions. Captures age-related themes without clichés or overstatement.



✓ **Lived experience in context.** Strong sense of place, expression and connection. Street setting adds realism and visual interest — relevant for themes like ageing, cohesion and inclusion.

Don't

- Use overly clean, generic stock images
- Stage model-like poses or fake expressions
- Flatten emotion or strip away real-world context
- Erase human presence from institutional scenes



✗ **Emotionally warm, but lacks context** The image is pleasant, but feels posed and generic. No clear link to topic, place or EESC themes.



✗ **Feels staged and decontextualised.** Studio setting, stylised lighting and generic pose create distance. No link to real-life context or EESC topics — lacks authenticity and relevance.

Do

- Show genuine emotion
- Capture real moments in recognisable settings
- Represent diversity without tokenism
- Let the context tell part of the story

Don't

- Use overly clean, generic stock images
- Stage model-like poses or fake expressions
- Flatten emotion or strip away real-world context
- Erase human presence from institutional scenes



✔ **Tech in context, not in isolation.**
Shows innovation in a realistic setting with visible human presence — fits EU themes like digital transformation.



✔ **Human-technology interaction.**
Symbolises accessibility and inclusion in a tangible way. Real people, real moment, real relevance.



✘ **Abstract and over-symbolic.**
A cliché visual that lacks context, human presence and authenticity. Feels artificial and disconnected from reality.

Use of image banks

In stock libraries, it's possible to find images that match the EESC's tone. Each platform offers a distinct tone and style — here's how to choose based on photographic needs.

Use search terms that reflect emotion, interaction or setting — not just objects or topics — to find photos that align with the EESC's human-centred approach.

Adobe Stock

Best for polished, professional photography. Adobe Stock provides highly curated and stylised images with a clean, professional tone. This makes it a strong choice for formal publications or flagship communications that need a more refined visual look.

Shutterstock

Best for editorial and documentary-style photography. Shutterstock offers a wide range of realistic, everyday imagery. It's ideal for finding photos that feel natural and grounded — especially useful for institutional, thematic or citizen-focused storytelling.

Envato Elements

Best for creative and contemporary photography. Envato's photography selection tends to be more modern and expressive — often better suited for campaign visuals, digital formats or when a younger, trend-driven tone is needed.



stock.adobe.com



shutterstock.com



elements.envato.com

Responsible use of AI-generated images

The use of generative AI raises intellectual property and copyright concerns, as models are often trained on copyrighted materials that may be reproduced exactly or nearly exactly without crediting the original author. To reduce risks, avoid directly replicating AI outputs, reference sources, disclose the use of generative AI, and critically assess outputs for potential copyright violations. Always check the platform's terms of use before utilizing AI-generated content.

These recommendations are in line with [our AI use guidelines](#) to ensure responsible and compliant practices.



⊗ Watch out for misinterpretations
The central man has 7 fingers



⊗ Watch out for misinterpretations
both persons are pregnant

Copyright & credits

When using photographs across EESC materials, always credit the source when required — and do so discreetly. The copyright line should never distract from the image or disrupt the design.

Always **check** the licensing conditions of external photos (especially from stock libraries or freelance photographers) and ensure proper attribution if it's part of the usage agreement.

How to apply credits

Use the caption style or place the credit in a corner of the image, aligned left or right as fits the layout. Always keep it outside the main focus area of the photo.

Font

Set in Europea Regular.

Colour

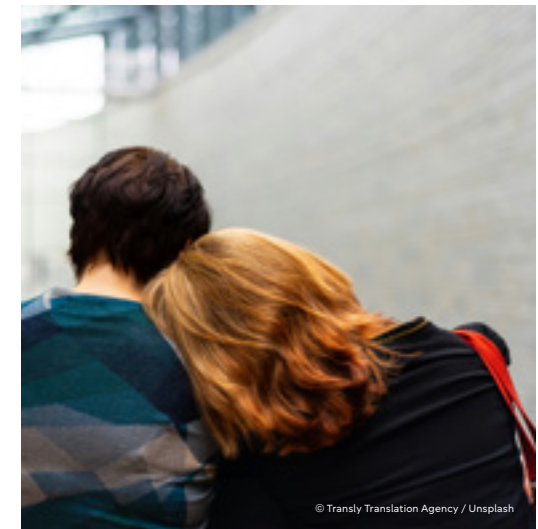
- White (if placed on dark)
- Black 82% (if placed on light), with enough contrast to remain legible.

Visibility

Keep it subtle. No bold, no italics, no extra spacing. If the layout allows, place it vertically aligned with the grid or margin. Avoid overprinting on key facial or emotional areas of the image.

Example

© John Doe / Unsplash



2.6.

ILLUSTRATION

SIMPLIFYING THE COMPLEX

Illustrations help communicate more effectively by supporting infographics, enriching informative content, and visually interpreting concepts in a way that is both meaningful and distinctive.

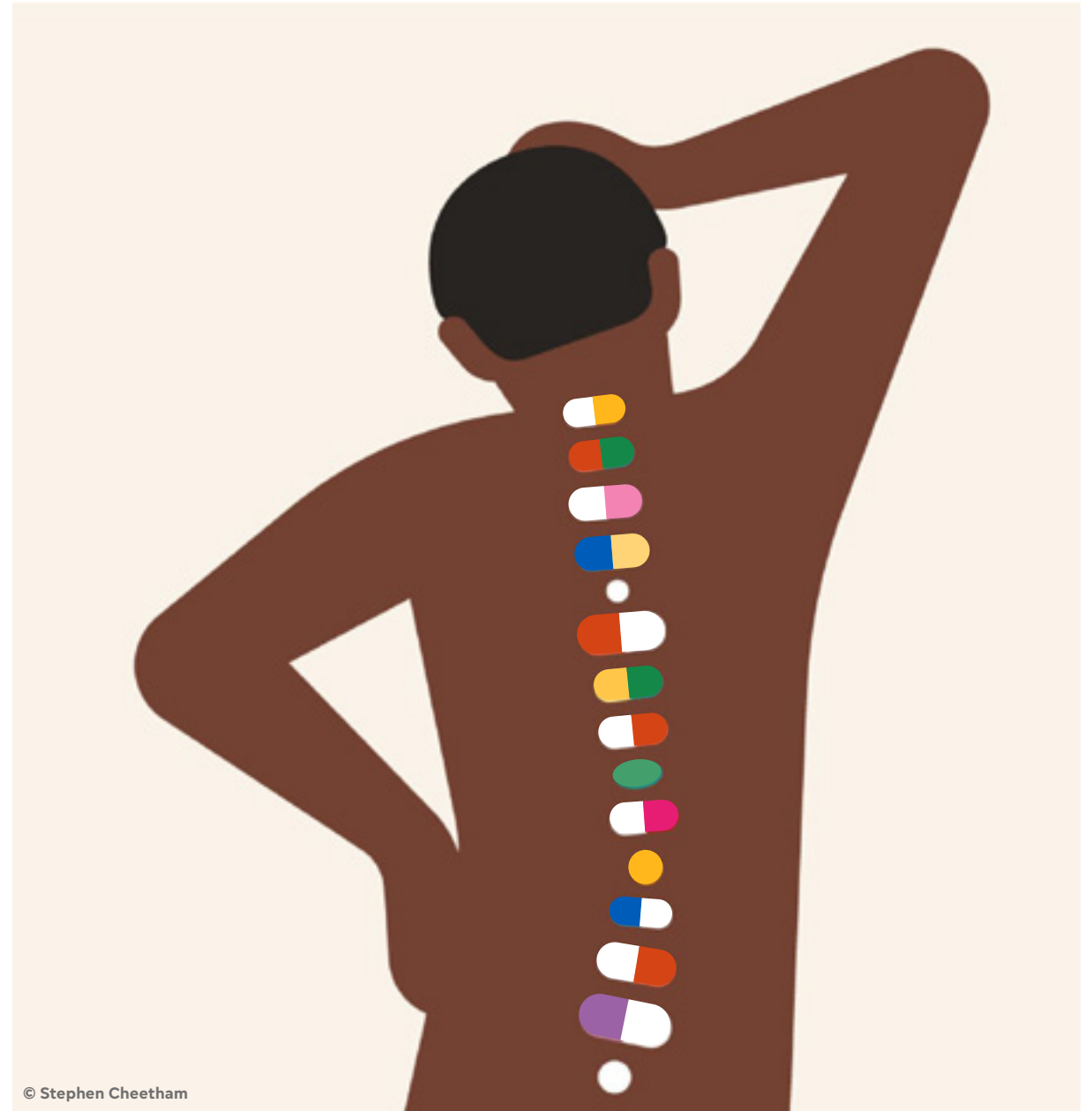
Purpose and use

Illustrations can be helpful tools that bring ideas to life, transforming complex information and abstract concepts into clear, engaging visuals. They are used to **simplify complexity, clarify meaning, and make abstract ideas approachable.**

Use illustration when a message cannot be easily expressed through photography — for example, when dealing with conceptual, process-based, or forward-looking topics.

Illustrations can typically appear in **the following contexts:**

- **Infographics:** to simplify complex data and processes
- **Informative content:** to support and enhance written explanations
- **Abstract concepts:** to visualise ideas that are difficult to capture photographically



© Stephen Cheetham

Illustration style

Our illustration style should be clear, warm, and purposeful, to support our visual identity by making abstract ideas feel accessible and human. It avoids distant or impersonal clip-art styles, instead favouring visuals that are engaging, structured, and thoughtfully composed.

Illustrations should:

- Clarify rather than decorate
- Centre human presence, even in abstract topics
- Maintain consistency through a recognisable style
- Reflect tone and intent through thoughtful colour and composition

The work of **Stephen Cheetham**, for instance, can serve both as inspiration and as a benchmark for selecting or creating illustrations that align with our visual identity. Cheetham's approach, reflecting a confident, contemporary voice, combines geometric shapes, strong outlines, and flat colours to produce visuals that are direct yet never dull, with compositions that are structured yet playful.



Reference image by @Stephen Cheetham



Use of image banks

Stock libraries offer a wide selection of **editable illustrations**. These are typically available in vector formats (such as .AI or .EPS), making them easy to customise and align with the EESC's visual identity.

Envato Elements

Best for creative and modern styles Envato stands out for its contemporary illustration sets — often dynamic, character-based and more expressive. Useful when a more informal, engaging tone is needed.

elements.envato.com

Adobe Stock

Best for professional, detail-rich visuals Adobe Stock provides high-quality vector illustrations with strong visual balance. Ideal for infographics, large-scale visuals where clarity and structure matter.

stock.adobe.com

Shutterstock

Best for clean, versatile vector sets. Shutterstock offers a large library of illustrations suited for explanatory graphics, icons and editorial visuals. Many sets are flexible and minimal, making them easy to adapt for institutional use.

shutterstock.com



Reworked image from Shutterstock

Adapting illustrations

Infographics live in the same visual world as our photography and design.

When using illustrations from image banks, adapt them to ensure visual and tonal consistency with the EESC brand.

Adjustments should include

- Matching colours to the EESC brand palette
- Removing unnecessary details to keep visuals clear and focused
- Simplifying characters and backgrounds for readability and consistency
- Avoiding filters, textures, or effects that clash with the clean, human-centred tone

Through these adaptations, illustrations remain cohesive with the broader EESC visual system — clear, contemporary, and approachable.

Colour application principles

- Use blue to anchor recognisability and coherence
- Add secondary colours sparingly — no more than three per illustration
- Keep tones flat and solid for clarity
- Use neutral tones (white, black, grey) and natural skin colours only for people

For editorial or reflective themes, illustrations can be **monochrome**. For more expressive communication, combine colours for vivid storytelling — always within the EESC brand look.



Reference image by @Stephen Cheetham



2.7.

ICONOGRAPHY

MEANING IN MINIMAL FORM

Icons improve navigation, structure and understanding. In multilingual or complex content, they offer **quick visual cues** that help readers grasp the message faster.

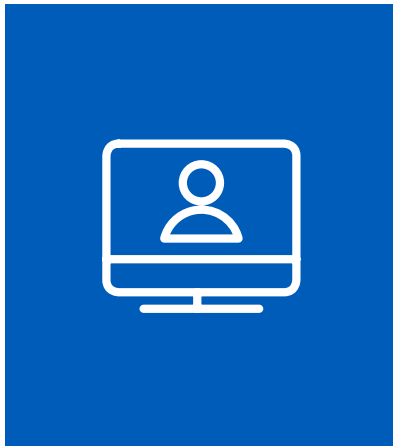
Use of image banks

Line-style icons with rounded corners are the most appropriate choice for maintaining a consistent and cohesive visual style.

The **Streamline Light 3.0** collection offers a unified, free-to-use set organized into themed subsets such as Interface, Social, Work, Communication, Technology, and Environment.

The **Noun Project** serves as an alternative source, provided that line-style icons are used to preserve visual consistency.

The recommended image banks for photography and illustration also include high-quality icon options consistent with this style.



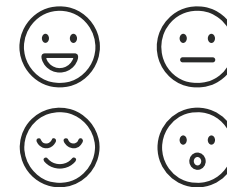
[Streamline Light 3.0.](#)



[thenounproject.com](#)



[elements.envato.com](#)



[stock.adobe.com](#)



[shutterstock.com](#)

Colour use

- Use blue or black as default
- Monochrome (neutral or white) works well on coloured or photo backgrounds
- Use a secondary colour only if it supports the content — never purely decorative
- Use no gradients in icons

for internal use



facial expressions



gestures



medical service



intranet communication



meetings



Icons and text

Icons add instant recognition, but words give precision. Always combine the two — especially when clarity or accessibility matters. Whether announcing an event, mapping a process or flagging a type of meeting, pair each icon with a clear, short label. Use icons to guide, not to replace.

09/12/2024
14:30 – 17:30
EESC – Jaques Delors building
Room JDE 62



HYBRID EVENT



VOTING STARTS



OPINION APPROVED

2.8.

DESIGN ELEMENT

WEAVING CONNECTION AND MEANING

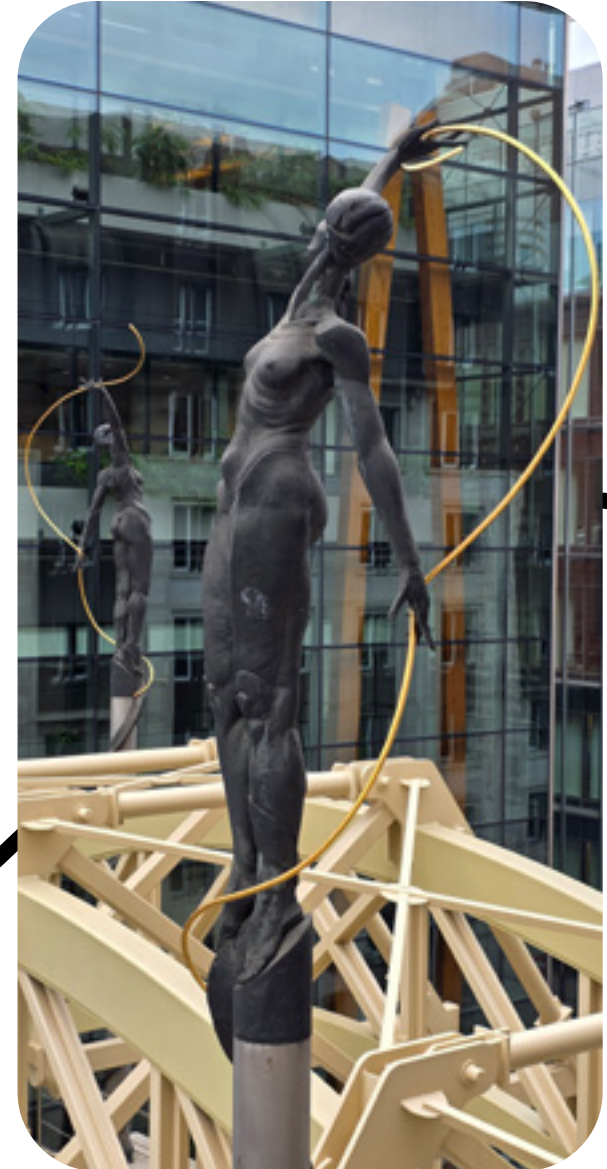
The central design element of our visual identity — **the thread** — symbolises **continuity and connection**, expressing the EESC's role as a **catalyst** within a dynamic network of civil society organisations, weaving together expertise and perspectives to help shape policies relevant to Europe's future.

The thread: expressing the connected advisor

A **single graphic line** runs through the EESC's visual identity. It represents connection and captures the essence of our brand archetype.

This motif subtly anchors our visual identity in the history and environment of our institution, giving the visual system a distinctive touch.

This simple graphic shape is the **unifying element** of our design system, and by weaving together images, colors, and messages, it creates a visual language of continuity and coherence.



Construction

As a design element, the thread is **simple**, ensuring clarity and adaptability across all formats. It is also **versatile**, taking on different forms – as an image container, a colour carrier, or a signature line – to connect and structure visual compositions.

In every use, the thread remains **continuous**, symbolising the ongoing exchange between people, ideas, and perspectives. Through this balance of consistency and flexibility, it stands as both a graphic and conceptual signature of our identity.

The thread is designed as an organic, flowing line that conveys movement and connection. Its construction follows simple **principles** to ensure consistency across all applications while allowing flexibility of expression.

Fluid rhythm

The thread balances curves and counter-curves, staying fluid to evoke natural motion and dialogue, while avoiding breaks or forms that feel too anthropomorphic or overly curvy

Continuity

The thread should always appear as a continuous movement, even when partially shown

Segment adaptability

Depending on the layout, the thread may appear as a longer visible segment or as a close-up, cropped detail. In all cases, it should suggest an ongoing line that extends beyond the visible area, maintaining a sense of continuous motion and flow. Zoomed-in versions should preserve the recognisable curvature and movement of the thread

Directional flexibility

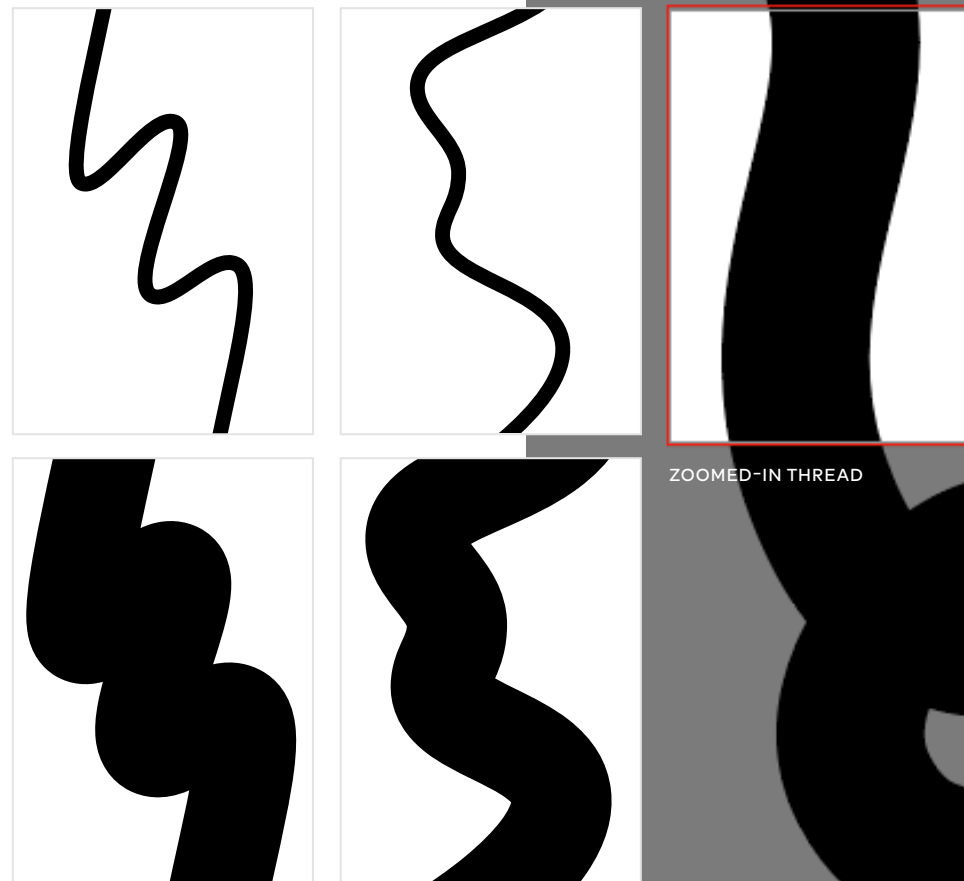
The thread can flow vertically, diagonally, or horizontally, depending on composition

Visual hierarchy

It should guide the eye through the layout – never dominate or obstruct the content

Functional versatility

The thread can be used as a filled shape – as **image** or **colour container** – or as a fine line – as a **graphic signature**.



The threads shown here are examples — not limitations. Each thread can be adjusted, reused or replaced to suit the layout or message. New thread variations may be created as long as they follow the established construction principles.

Applications

MAIN GRAPHIC USE

Depending on the content and layout, the thread may function as a filled container for imagery or colour, or as a fine linear signature to complement the design.

Thread as signature



A minimal presence, used to mark continuity across materials or signal EESC ownership in a subtle way.
Best for: short-lifecycle products such as one-shot events material or communication products that require a simple, streamlined design

Thread as image container



The thread defines a controlled space for photography allowing visual content to flow within its curves.
Best for: long-lifecycle products including flagship and recurring events material, and publications

Thread as colour container



The thread carries colour and shape while preserving clear recognisability.
Best for: communication products that do not require imagery, such as studies and reports

FUNCTIONAL USE

The thread can also function as a **supporting design element** – appearing as a linear accent, rhythmic detail, or container for key content such as hashtags or calls to attention – enhancing structure and guiding the viewer’s eye without dominating the composition.

MEANINGFUL APPLICATION

The thread element should be used purposefully rather than applied to every communication piece. In some cases, the brand’s identity can remain strong through the effective use of the logo, typography, color, and photography alone. Think of the thread element as a creative building block – one that can be used thoughtfully to add meaning and visual interest to the overall design and message.



Linear thread as supporting graphic



Attention grabber

Hashtag container



Plenary banner

2.9.

GRID AND LAYOUT SYSTEM

The grid and layout system ensure visual consistency across all formats and applications by providing a **flexible** yet **coherent framework** for structuring content.

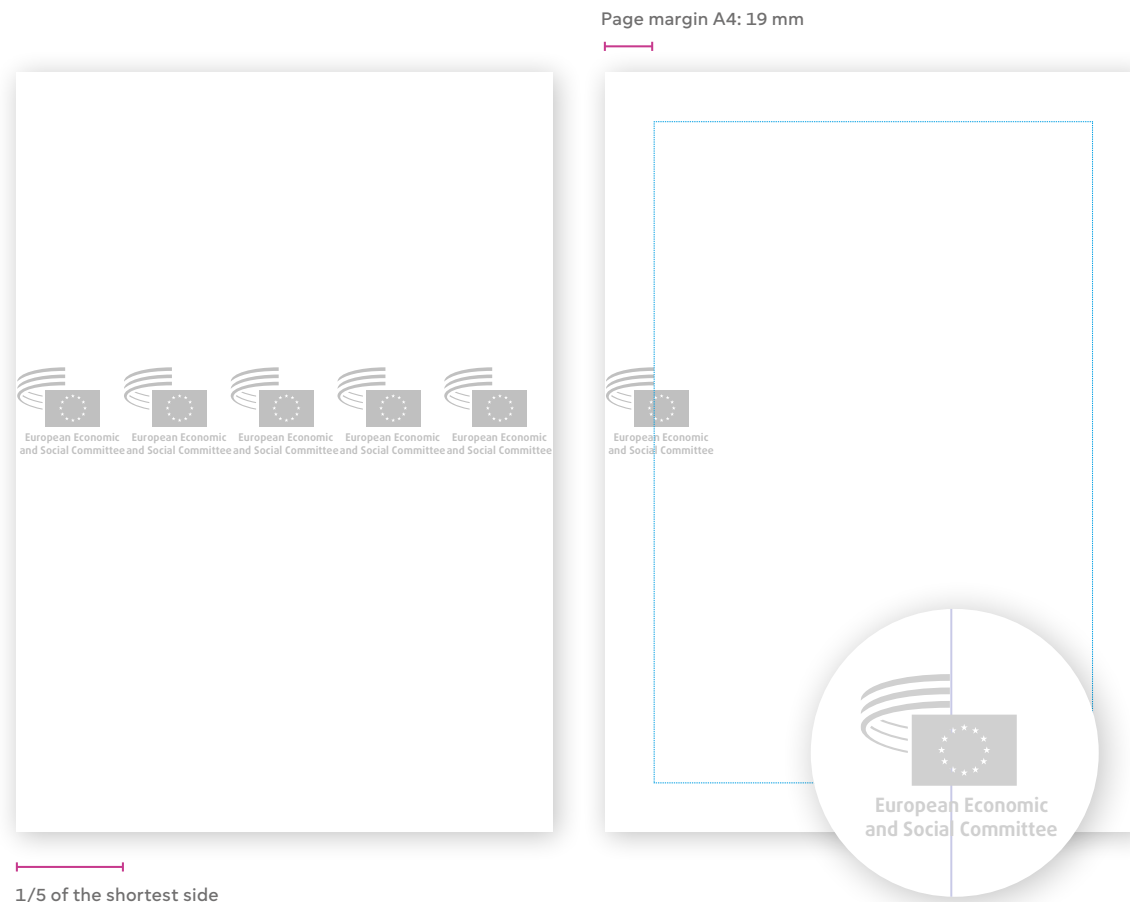
Logo size

The EESC logo, as the **most recognisable element of our visual identity**, must always be displayed at an appropriate and consistent size to ensure its **prominence and integrity** across all communications.

A formats

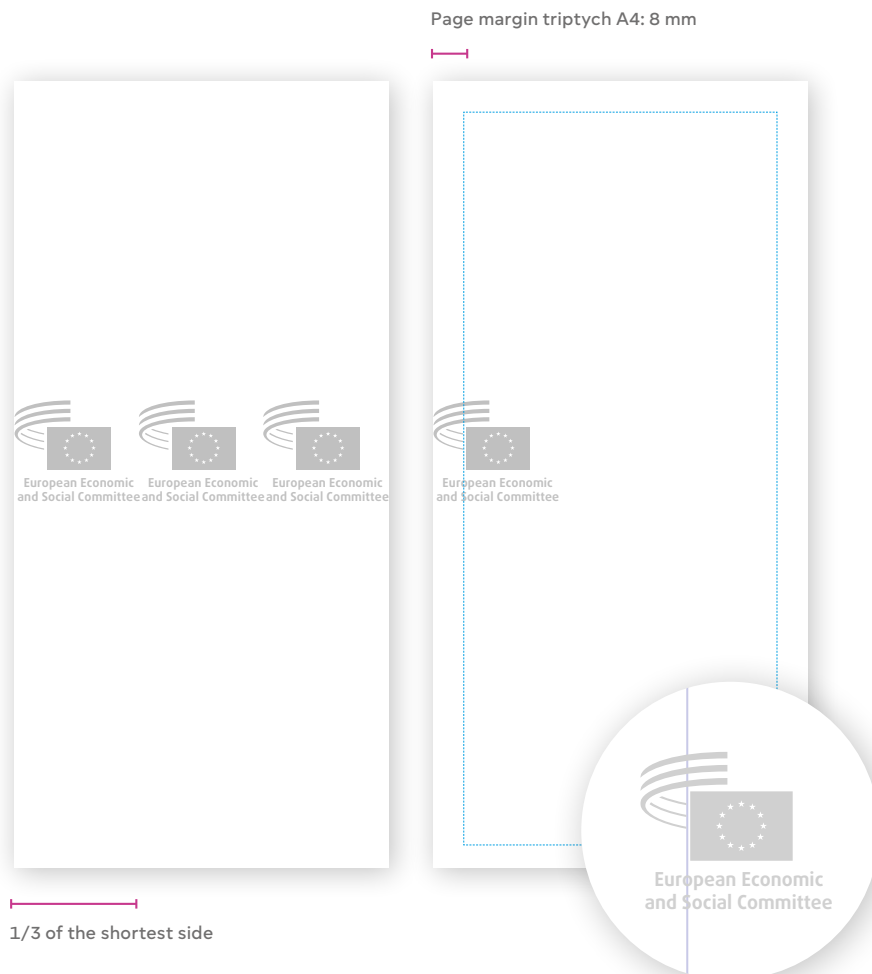
For applications with traditional proportions (A formats), the width of the standard logo is one-fifth of the layout's shortest side in both **portrait** and **landscape** orientations. The width of the emblem's graphical element defines the **page margin**, which in turn establishes the **type area** and grid structure.

Exceptions to this rule are possible to ensure readability and overall aesthetics. They should always be discussed with the EESC's Branding team. Contact branding@eesc.europa.eu.



Narrow and square formats

The standard logo is one-third of the shortest side. The distance between the left edge of the emblem's graphical element and the left edge of the flag defines the **page margin**, which in turn establishes the **type area** and grid structure.

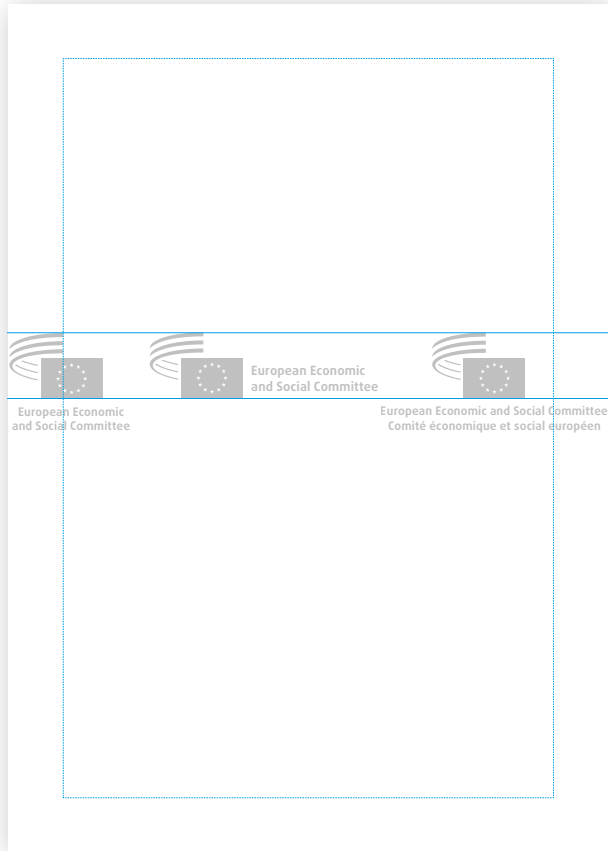


Exceptions to this rule are possible to ensure readability and overall aesthetics. They should always be discussed by the EESC's Branding team. Contact branding@eesc.europa.eu.

Logo language variations size

The margin and layout proportions are always defined using the **English standard** logo as reference.

When applying a language variation or horizontal version, adjust the **height of the flag** so that it matches the height of the emblem in the standard logo. This ensures visual harmony and **equal logo presence** across all orientations regardless of language.

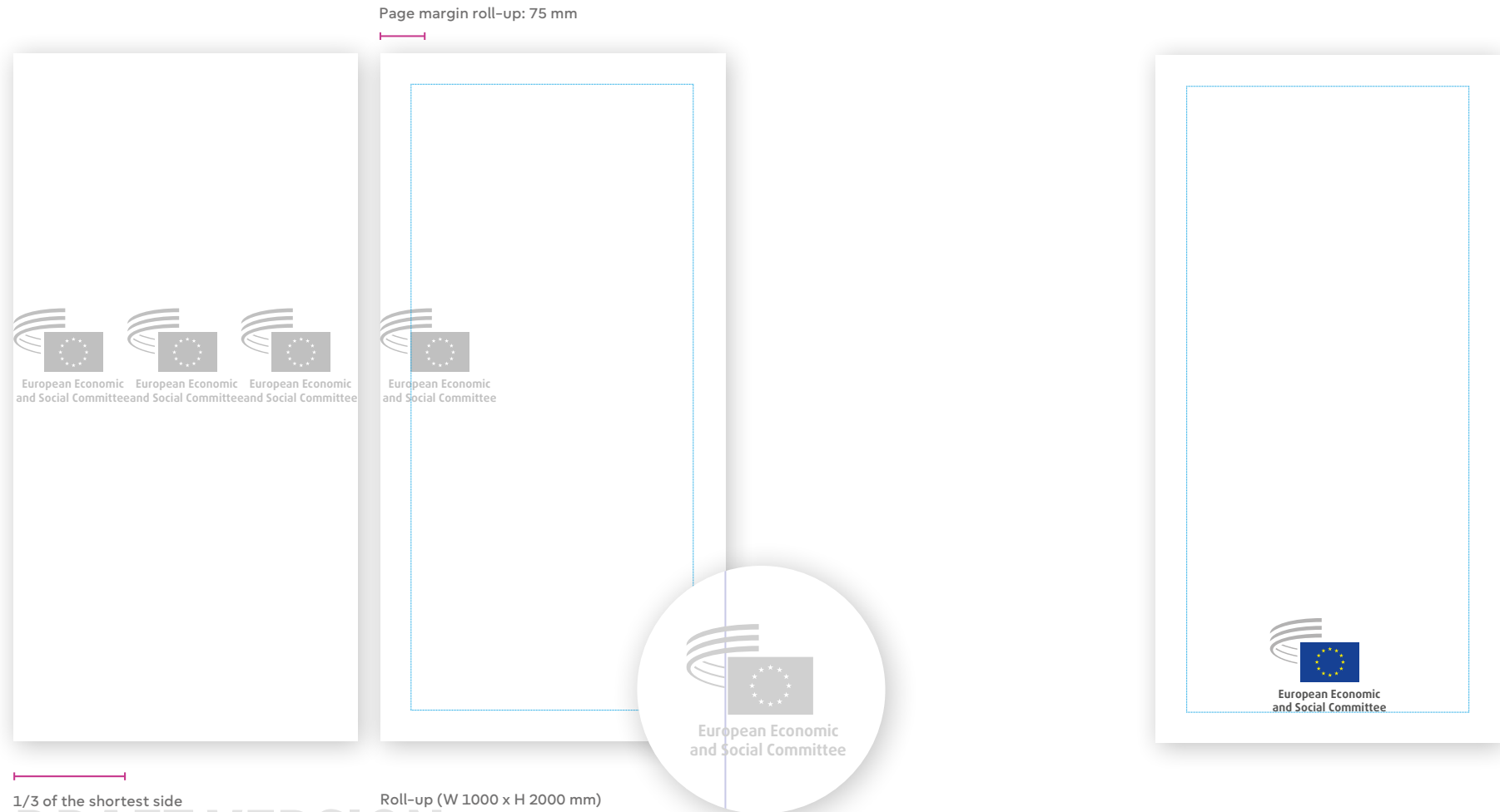


Logo position

The logo is, **as a rule**, positioned at the **bottom left**, aligned with the margin.
Use the vertical logo for portrait formats and the horizontal logo for landscape layouts.



For specific applications such as vertical banners and roll-ups, the logo may be centered when required by the composition. As in narrow and square formats, the width of the standard logo is set to one-third of the layout's shortest side. The distance between the left edge of the emblem's graphical element and the left edge of the flag defines the **page margin**, which in turn establishes the **type area** and **grid structure**.

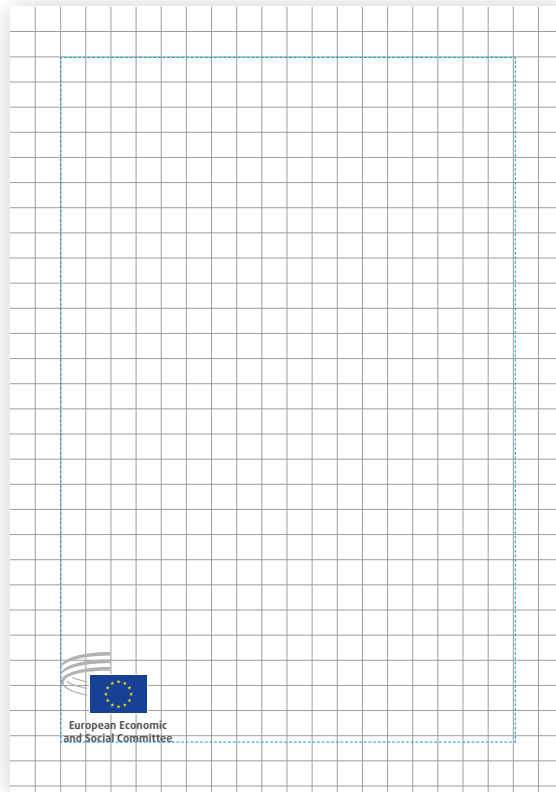


Layout grid

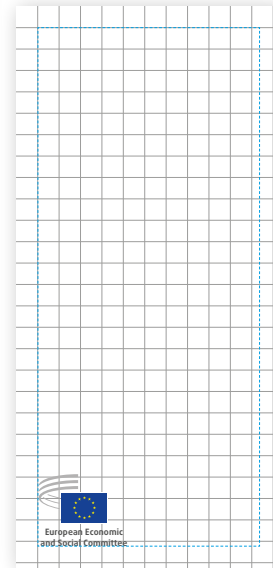
The layout grid is **based on the page margin** and depends on the format.

- For the traditional **A-formats**: the width of each grid column is set to half the margin width.
- For **square** or **narrow formats**: each grid column is equal in width to the margin.

This creates a flexible yet consistent structure across all formats.



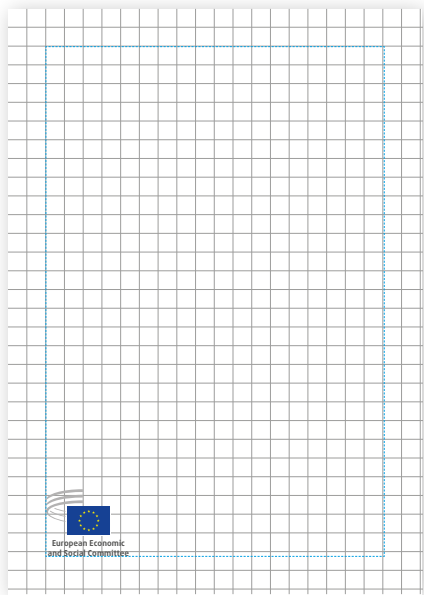
— grid = margin/2



— grid = margin

How to use the thread

THREAD AS SIGNATURE



Set your structure

- Define the logo size
- Determine margins
- Build your grid



Choose an image and add your text

- Place and align text within the grid
- Check hierarchy and readability

The image fits well but doesn't show an EESC context



Add a design element

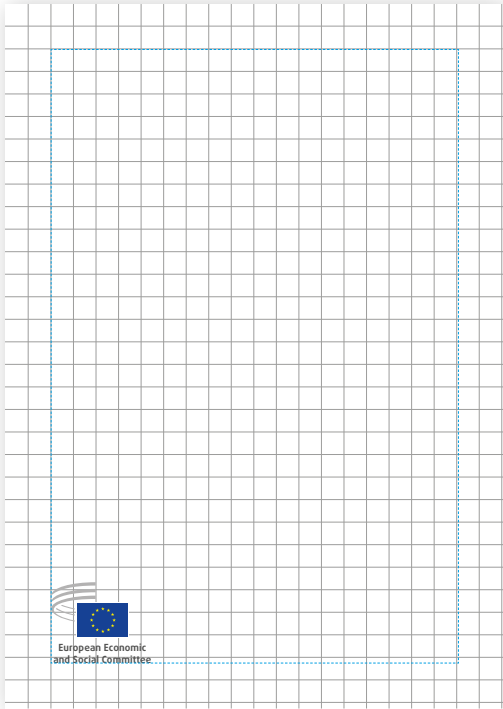
Combine a full-page image with the thread as a signature



Test the layout

The layout misses warmth?
Add colour

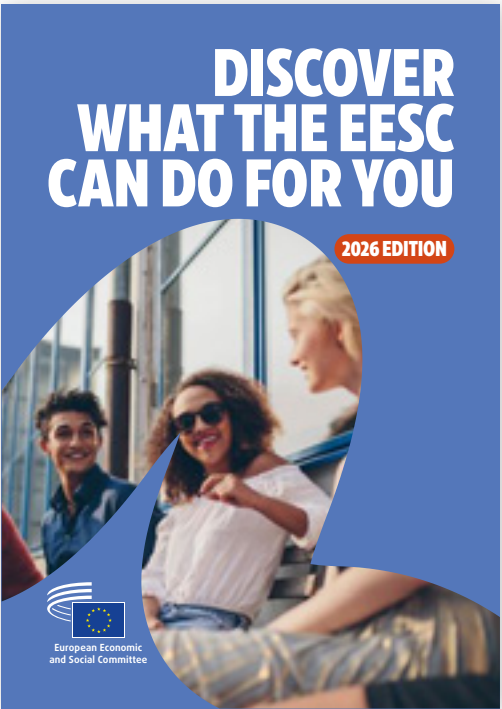
THREAD AS IMAGE CONTAINER



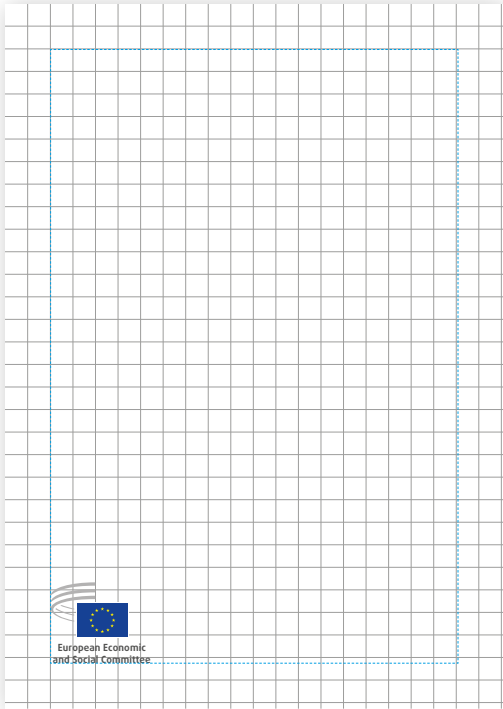
- Set your structure**
- Define the logo size
 - Determine margins
 - Build your grid



- Choose an image and add your text**
- Place and align text within the grid
 - Check hierarchy and readability



- Add a design element and test the layout**
- Add a background colour (optional)
 - Draw a thread shape to use as an image container
 - Place the image inside and re-evaluate



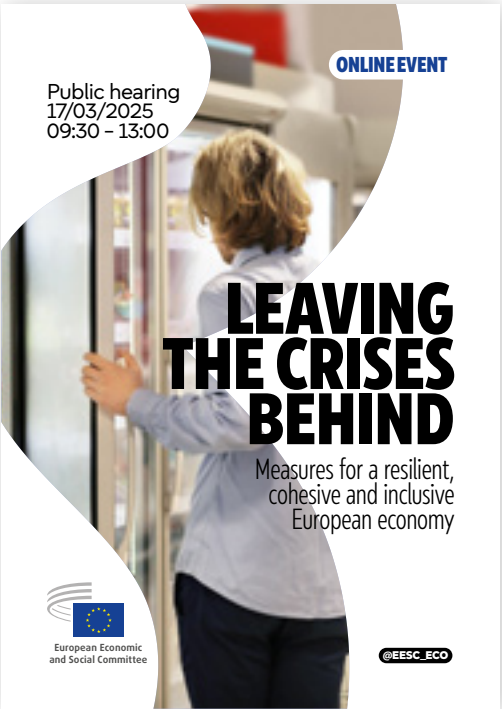
Set your structure

- Define the logo size
- Determine margins
- Build your grid



Choose an image and add your text

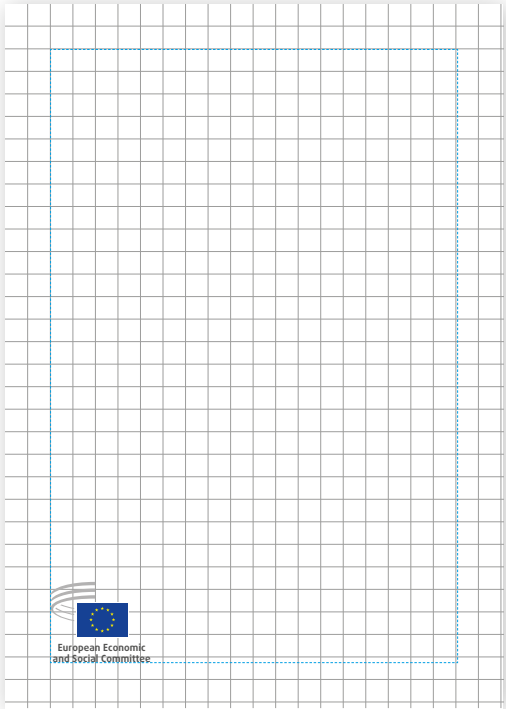
- Place and align text within the grid
- Check hierarchy and readability



Add a design element and test the layout

- Draw a thread shape to use as an image container
- Place the image inside and re-evaluate
- Add a background colour (optional)

THREAD AS COLOUR CONTAINER



Set your structure

- Define the logo size
- Determine margins
- Build your grid



Add your text

- Place and align text within the grid
- Check hierarchy and readability



Add a design element and test the layout

Draw a thread shape to use as an colour container

The layout misses warmth?
Add a background colour

PART 3

OUR BRAND IN ACTION

This chapter explores how our branding is **applied in practice** across a range of touchpoints — from publications and events to digital platforms, audiovisual and promotional materials. It also defines the principles that guide these applications, ensuring every expression of the brand remains clear, consistent, and distinctive.

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3.1.

PRINT-BASED APPLICATIONS

Publications



Get to know the European Economic and Social Committee



The EESC is not like other EU bodies. It is a unique forum for consultation, dialogue and consensus between representatives from all the different sectors of 'organised civil society'.

These organisations often act as intermediaries between decision-makers and the public, offering an avenue for people to play an active role in bringing about change or to support specific causes for the common good.

The EESC is an integral part of the EU: it was set up in 1957 by the Treaty of Rome to advise EU decision-makers and ensure that civil society organisations and networks across the continent have a say in Europe's development.

2

The EESC's mission ...

The EESC's aim is to help ensure that EU policymaking and legislation is more democratic and more effective and genuinely reflects the needs of EU citizens.

It has three key tasks:

- to advise the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission;
- to make sure the views of civil society organisations are heard in Brussels and to increase their awareness of the impact of EU legislation on the lives of EU citizens;
- to support and strengthen organised civil society both inside and outside the EU.

... and vision

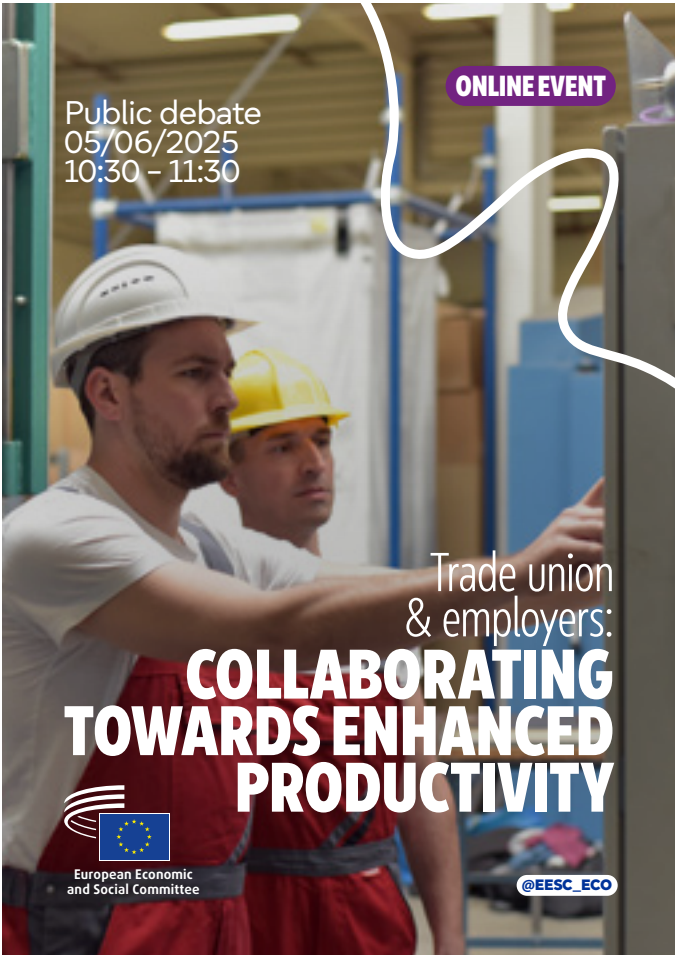
The EESC is dedicated to promoting participatory democracy, alongside parliamentary democracy, in Europe. The EESC's vision of society is one in which everyone is included and actively involved. This means citizens having a meaningful say in their own future and in the future of their children. It means young people believing they have the hope of a job and a decent life and it means people feeling empowered, engaged, equally respected and safe and secure in their daily lives.

"This means citizens having a meaningful say in their own future and in the future of their children."

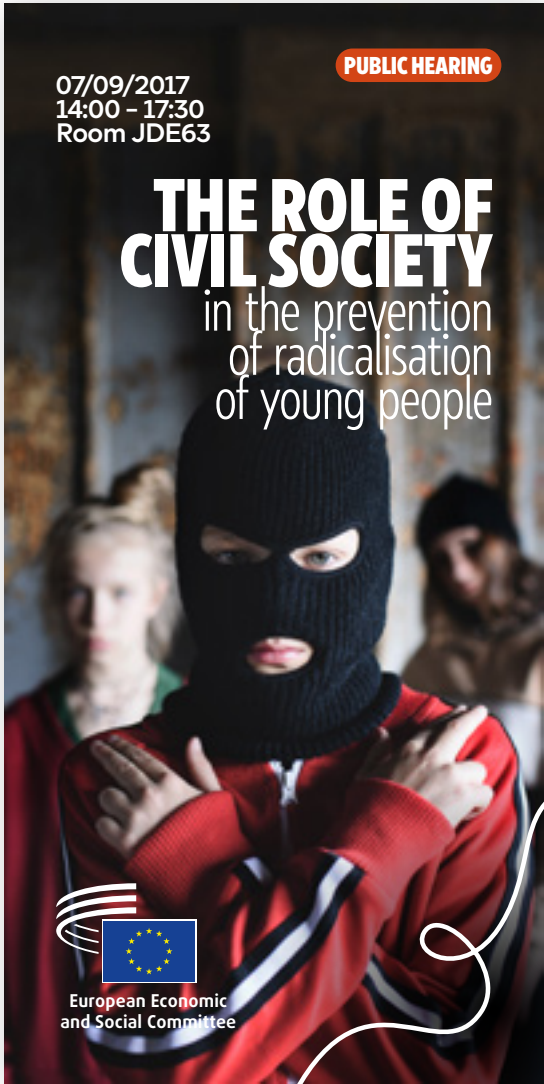
2

Events signage

A3 Posters



Banner (100 x 200 cm)



Plenary session signage

Banner (100 x 200 cm)



Internal signage



3.2.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is one of the EESC's key channels to reach its target audiences – EU institutions and civil society stakeholders, and, depending on the platform, citizens at large. It enables the Committee to communicate, listen, exchange, and advise in real time, translating its institutional voice into clear, accessible, and relatable communication that is open, engaged, and close to its audience.

A flexible approach to visual identity

The EESC's visual identity serves as a framework for consistency across all social media platforms. However, as social media communication is fast-evolving and fluid, it requires **flexibility** and **responsiveness**. The visual identity building blocks should therefore guide, not constrain, content creation. In short, it should not be a straitjacket.

All EESC section or policy accounts should align visually and tonally with EESC's branding. This ensures coherence across platforms and reinforces the perception of one unified EESC voice

Logo

- Use the the mute version of the EESC logo as the main element of the account avatar to ensure clear identification.
- On visuals, place the logo consistently but discreetly, typically in the bottom-right corner.
- The logo should never dominate or distract from the message.

Colours

- Use the EESC colour palette wherever possible, adapted for digital readability and contrast.
- The blue and yellow of the EU flag should appear where relevant to maintain institutional link.

Typography

- Use Europea as primary font. Alternative fonts may be used selectively for creative or trend-driven content, provided they align with the EESC's visual tone (clean, modern, readable).

Visual coherence

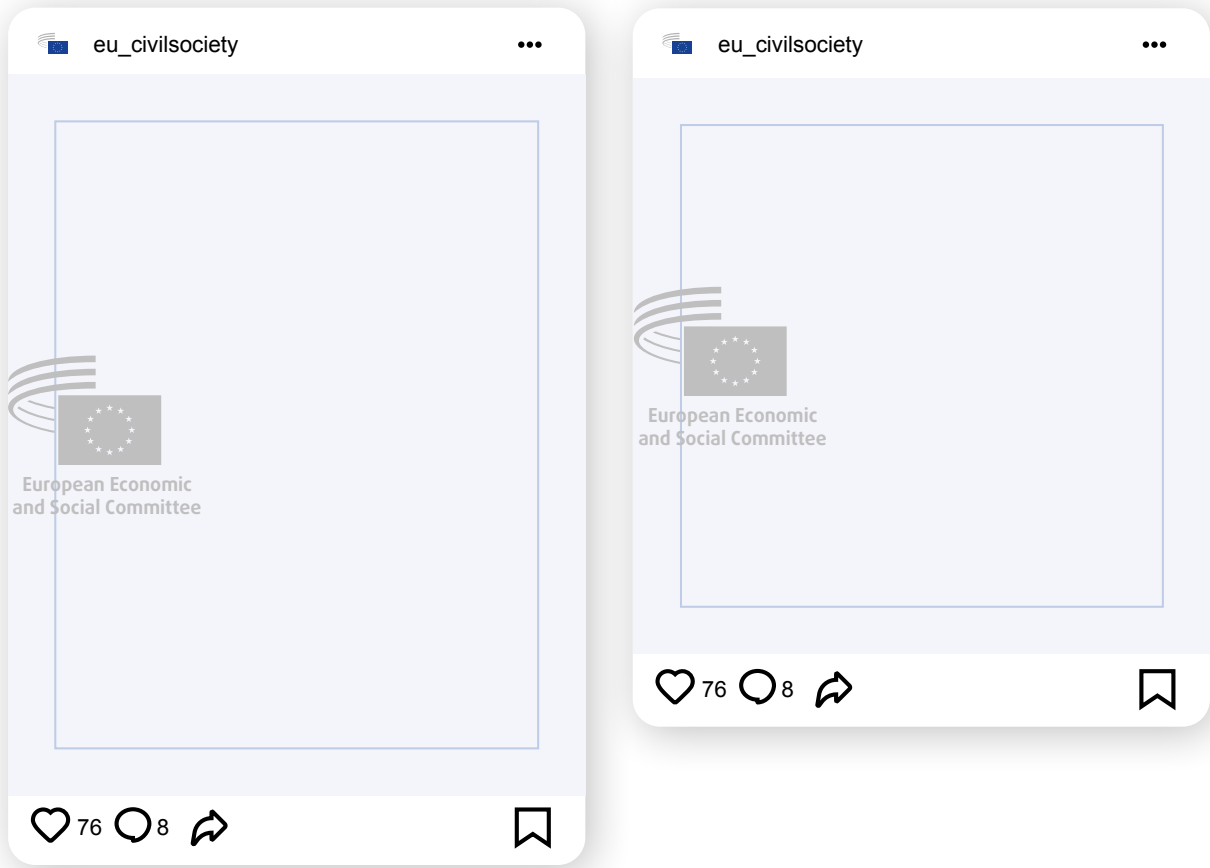
- Ensure all visuals align with the EESC identity while exploring creative expression, trend adaptations (memes and viral content), and platform-specific variation.



DRAFT VERSION

Digital formats

The digital formats follow the rules for the formats permitted by each platform.



DRAFT VERSION

Design and layout principles

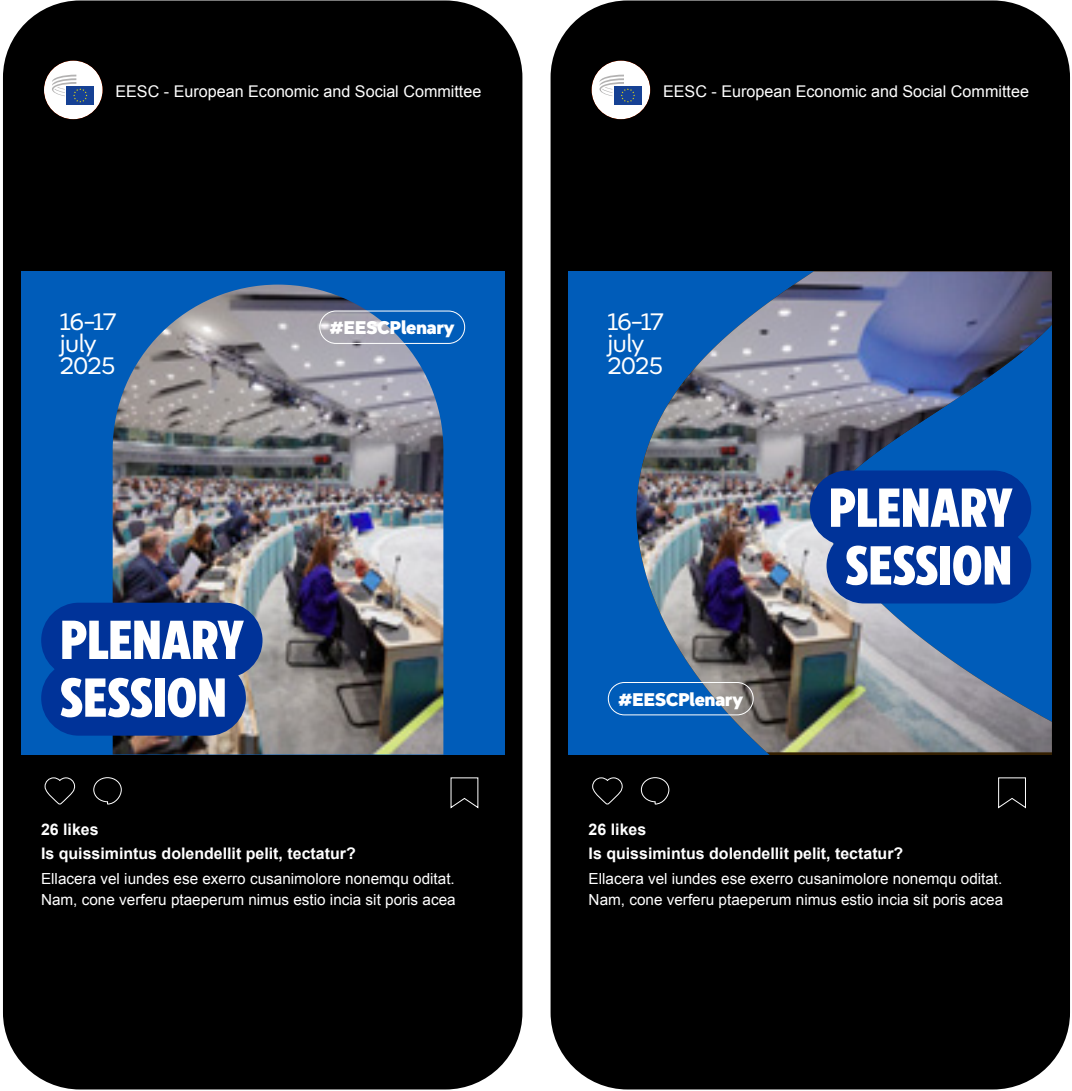
Social media visuals must communicate the main message immediately. Prioritize **clarity**, **legibility**, and **adaptability**.

- Keep layouts clean and focused, avoiding overcrowding.
- Design all social media content to be accessible: ensure high contrast, legible fonts, alt text for images, and subtitles for videos (mostly within the respective platform).
- Design each visual for the appropriate platform format (square, vertical, horizontal).
- Maintain consistent positioning, typography and colour logic across posts.
- Use adaptable templates for recurring content types such as plenary sessions, events, or campaigns.

MAKING CONTENT ACCESSIBLE

Design all EESC social media content to be readable and accessible. For practical guidance, see for instance the [accessible social media posts checklist](#) (Publications Office), which provides good practice for creating inclusive and user-friendly content.





Examples of applying the visual identity to a post

3.3.

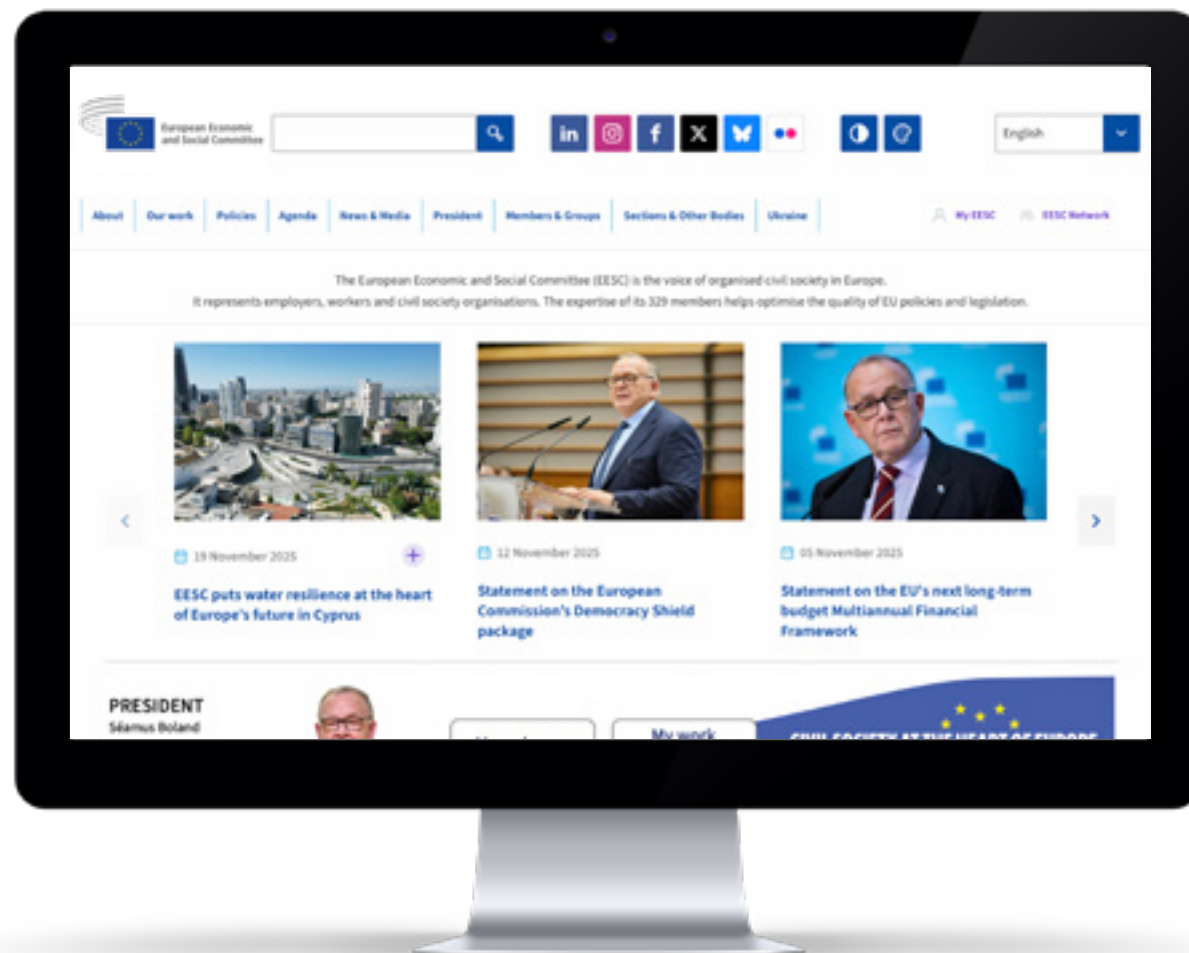
WEBSITE, INTRANET AND PORTALS

The EESC's digital platforms – its website, intranet, and various portals – are key channels to communicate with external audiences as well as internal audiences, including staff and members. These platforms enable the Committee to provide information, facilitate engagement, and deliver services efficiently, while consistently reflecting its institutional identity.

A minimal approach to visual identity

The EESC's visual identity provides a framework for consistent application across all digital platforms. For website, intranet and portals, it is essential to adopt a minimal branding approach to achieve a balance between brand expression and practical performance, usability, and accessibility.

This approach focuses using only the **essential brand assets – logo, colours, and typography** – while ensuring that all digital experiences remain clear, fast-loading, and user-friendly. The use of these minimal assets should remain **consistent** across the website, intranet and portals, reinforcing the EESC's identity while supporting effective and accessible communication.



LOGO

- Apply the EESC logo consistently across all digital platforms. Preferably use the **horizontal version**. On functional or internal platforms, the logo may appear smaller, more discreet, or in its mute version as appropriate.
- **Placement:** preferably in the header, typically in the **top-left or top-right corner**.
- **Clear space:** maintain sufficient space around the logo to preserve clarity. No other element — such as text, images or other logos — should appear within this protected area.
- Contrast and background: ensure readability against all backgrounds; use alternate versions when needed.

TYPOGRAPHY

- **Europea is the primary font for all digital platforms and should be used for both headings and body text to ensure a cohesive and recognisable visual identity.**
- Alternative font may be used when **technical limitations or compatibility issues** prevent the use of the primary font.
- Typography should remain **clear, legible, and consistent** across the website, intranet and portals.
- Maintain a **clear hierarchy of styles** for headings, subheadings, and body text to enhance readability and navigation.
- Use text styling (colour, weight, size) to support clarity and accessibility, not for decoration.

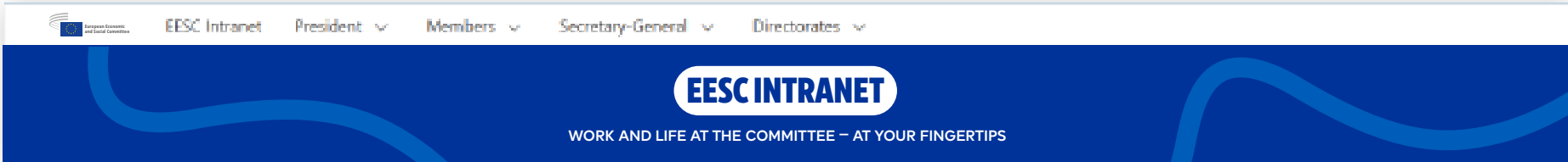
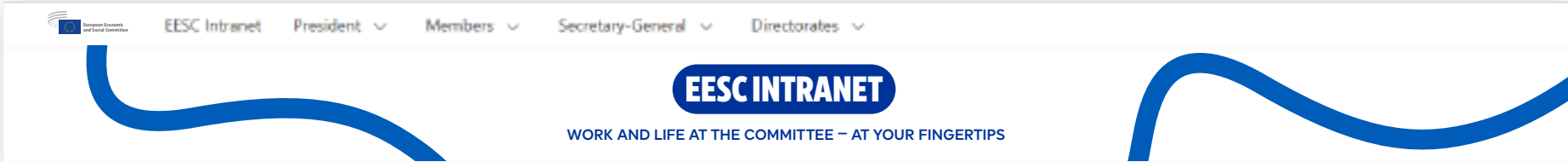
COLOURS

- The **corporate blue** should be used prominently across all digital platforms as the **primary brand colour**.
- **Secondary palette colours** may be applied selectively to support hierarchy, clarity, and user guidance, or as colour accents.
- Colours should be **adapted for screens and digital accessibility**, ensuring sufficient contrast for readability.
- Ensure **consistent use of colours** across website, intranet, and portals to reinforce the EESC's identity.

IMAGERY

- Imagery on the website, intranet, and portals should follow the style and principles defined in this brand book. **Photography should always be preferred over clip art or generic illustrations**, ensuring visuals remain authentic, human, and aligned with the EESC's overall visual identity.
- Images should support communication and reflect the EESC's character — credible, open, and connected to real people and situations. When illustrations are used, they must respect the EESC's established visual language — clean, modern, and consistent — and serve a clear communicative or functional purpose rather than decoration.
- **Icons and graphics** used on the website, intranet, and portals should follow the style and principles defined in this brand book. Consistent use of the approved icon style across all digital platforms reinforces the EESC's identity while maintaining a clean, intuitive, and accessible user experience.

INTRANET



dark modus

MEMBERS PAGE



dark modus

Design and layout principles

Digital content must communicate key information quickly and effectively. Prioritize **performance, usability, and accessibility**, while preserving brand consistency.

- Keep layouts **clean and focused**, avoiding visual clutter.
- Design pages for **responsive display**, adapting seamlessly across devices (desktop, tablet, mobile).
- Ensure content is **accessible**, with high contrast, legible fonts, alt text for images, and captions for media.

ACCESSIBLE PUBLISHING

Accessibility is an essential aspect of all EESC digital platforms. Content published on the website, intranet, and portals must comply with EU and international accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1 AA) to ensure that all users – including those with disabilities – can access and use information effectively.

This applies not only to web pages but also to **documents and forms** (PDFs, Word files, Excel sheets, and similar materials) made available online.

- **Structure and tagging:** documents must have a clear structure, using proper heading levels, lists, tables, and tagged elements to ensure screen reader compatibility.
- **Alternative text:** all images, charts, and graphics should include descriptive alt text.
- **Readable text:** ensure sufficient colour contrast. Avoid embedding text in images.
- **Forms:** interactive forms (PDF or web-based) must have properly labelled fields, logical reading order, and clear instructions.
- **Exporting:** when exporting from Word or other formats to PDF, ensure that tagging, alt text, and accessibility metadata are preserved.
- **Testing:** always check accessibility using built-in tools (e.g. MS Office Accessibility Checker, Adobe Acrobat Accessibility tools) before publishing.

Accessibility is not a technical option but a communication standard. It ensures that all EESC digital content is inclusive, transparent, and compliant with the institution's commitment to openness and equal access.

For further guidance, consult [Publications Office guidelines on accessible publishing](#)

3.4.

AUDIOVISUAL

The EESC produces a wide range of audiovisual content, including documentaries, interviews, debates, video messages, podcasts, and more. These products, designed to communicate the Committee's work in an accessible and engaging way, are aimed primarily at the EESC's main audiences — EU institutions, organised civil society, and other important stakeholders —while also reaching the wider public through social media.

Video design principles

All EESC videos should consistently reflect the EESC brand identity, ensuring legibility, clarity, accessibility and professional consistency across platforms.

- **Clarity and consistency:** keep videos clear, concise, and visually consistent with the EESC brand.
- **Visual simplicity:** avoid visual clutter; use clean layouts and simple, smooth transitions.
- **Visual style:** favour clean, human-centred, and authentic imagery (documentary-style footage rather than staged imagery). Ensure steady camera work, neutral or branded backgrounds, and minimal distractions.
- **Accessibility:** use readable text, captions, and clear audio, to ensure all viewers can engage with the content.
- **Screen-optimised content:** ensure all text and visual elements are legible and clear on mobile devices and social feeds.
- **Tone:** maintain a professional yet approachable style.

To make a video more accessible, captions in the same language as the audio and a transcript are important – but may not be enough. If the video contains visual content that isn't described in the audio, including an audio description can further enhance accessibility.

For more guidance, consult the following guidelines:

[How to plan your audio and video media of W3C](#)

[Success Criterion 1.2.5 Audio Description \(Prerecorded\) of WCAG 2.2](#)



Logo bug

Placement: the standard (vertical) version of the EESC logo, with its wordmark in the appropriate language, is used as a watermark in the top-right corner of the video frame.

During filming, ensure the logo bug is considered in the shot composition (framing).

Visibility adjustments: to improve its visibility against bright footage, the logo is embedded in a semi-transparent dark rounded shape (provided in the media kit).

Alternatively, a drop shadow effect can be applied to enhance legibility.



Video creation media kit

A dedicated media kit contains the common elements supporting consistent visual and stylistic presentation of all video products, including:

- Logo assets and bug (watermark) versions
- Intro and outro animations
- Templates for lower-thirds and subtitles

Always use media kit assets to ensure brand consistency.

Lower-thirds

Lower-thirds display the **name** and **role** of the person featured in the video (the “talent”) and should be set in Europea SemiBold, with the name in a larger font than the role.

Titles should avoid visual clashes with the content, such as overlapping a talent’s face, and remain legible against bright backgrounds by applying either a drop shadow effect or a solid background consistent with the corporate colour palette and the product’s identity.



75% of A

A

A

MARCARIDA ANDERSSON

EESC member

Font: Europea SemiBold Capitals

- **Font:** Europea Semibold UnderCaps
- **Size** of the role + container = 125% of the name
- **Container** can be put as a colour container or a line contour.
- **Colour:** All colours of the palette may be used

Subtitles

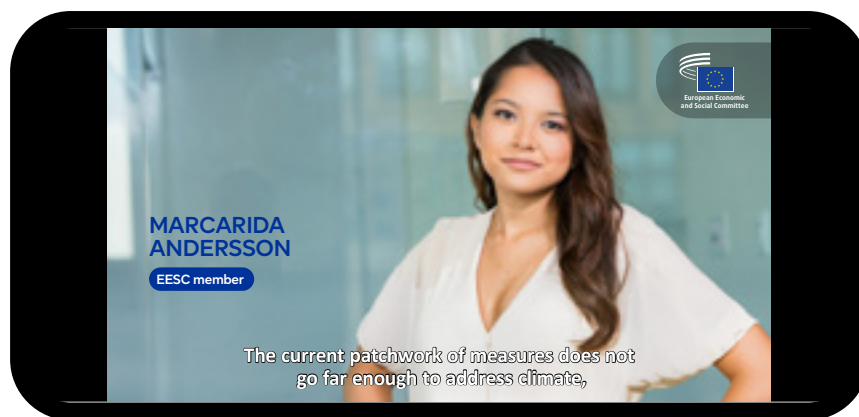
PERMANENT SUBTITLES

When they are required, they should be positioned in the middle of the vertical space between lower-thirds titles and the bottom edge of the image.

Subtitles should be limited to a maximum of two lines of text. They should not exceed 68% of the width of the frame.

Breaks between subtitles and lines should respect the grammatical standards of the language used. For example,

- Subtitles should match cuts in the editing timeline (e.g. they should not extend to a subsequent scene, when a different talent is speaking).
- Subtitles must not obscure the content.

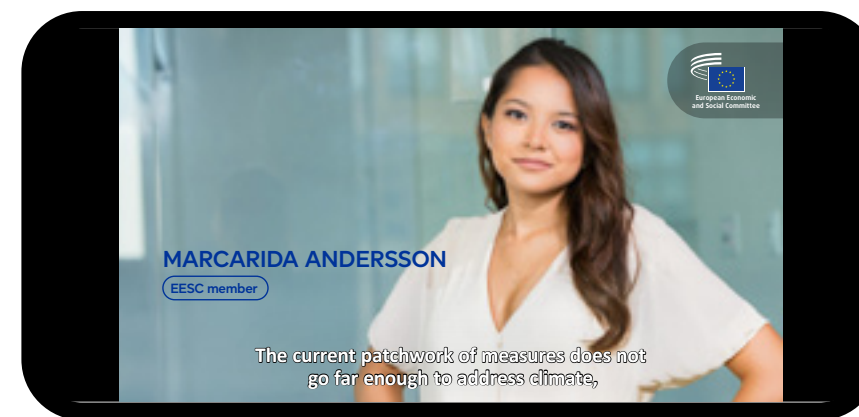


Subtitles

USER-SELECTABLE SUBTITLES

User-selectable subtitles (soft subtitles or closed captions, depending on the content) allow the user to select their preferred language or choose to hide the text entirely. The following rules apply:

- Breaks between subtitles and lines should respect the grammatical standards of the language used.
- User-selectable subtitles are usually stored in separate files, and feature support, such as typography and placement on the frame, can vary between publishing platforms. When creating those subtitles, it is therefore best practice to follow the authoring guidelines of the platform where the product is being published.



Subtitles

Intro and outro animations

Intro and outro may feature an animated EESC logo with the EESC wordmark in the language used throughout the video.

Logo versions

Both the standard vertical logo and the horizontal logo variant may be used in the intro and/or outro. To preserve consistency and recognizability of the Committee's visual identity, all logo versions must follow the proportions, typography, and colour specifications defined in these brand guidelines. The logo must always appear sharp, readable, and correctly scaled. Never stretch, rotate, distort, or apply unapproved colours or effects.

Tonal variations

Controlled tonal variations may be used to create a sense of motion, depth, or light transition. These variations must remain consistent with the logo colour palette and always conclude with the static logo displayed in its official colours.

Transitions

Use smooth and subtle transitions between the intro animation, main content, and outro to ensure a cohesive viewing experience.

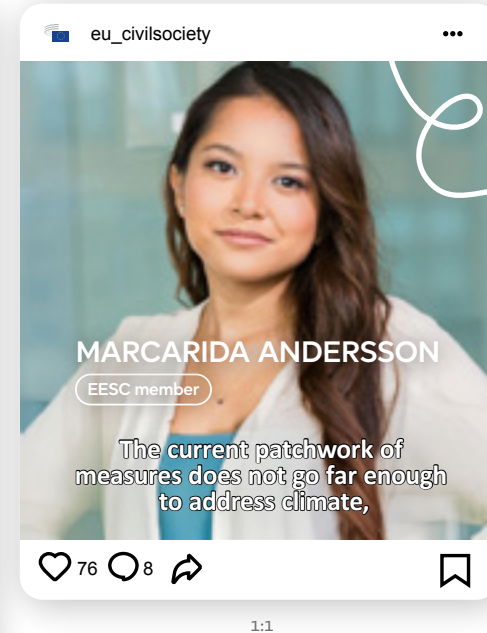
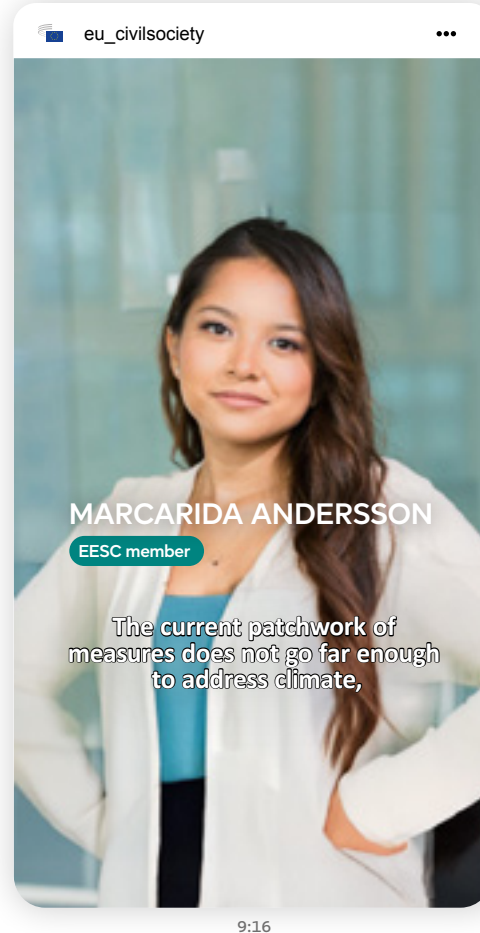


View the animation [here](#)

Producing square & vertical video formats

A substantial portion of video content today is consumed in **square (1:1)** and **vertical (9:16)** aspect ratios, primarily on social media and mobile platforms. Producing video for these formats requires special considerations to ensure maximum impact and readability:

- **Key visual content**, such as faces, action, or essential graphics, should not be obscured by the interface elements of the target social media platforms.
- Standard principles for permanent subtitles of horizontal video formats also apply to square and vertical videos. However, **subtitles** in square or vertical videos **can extend across up to three lines and span as much as 90%** of the frame width. The font size and weight should be chosen to assure legibility even on small mobile displays.



3.5.

PROMOTIONAL ITEMS: SUSTAINABLE VISIBILITY

Promotional items extend the EESC's visibility beyond its main communication channels and serve as tangible reminders of its identity. In line with the Committee's commitment to **responsible communication**, all items must meet strict standards of sustainability, ethics and eco-design.

Promotional items **complement** – not drive EESC communication. They should enhance visibility at key events, strengthen relationships, and convey a message of responsibility toward **people and the planet**. Selective use, sustainable sourcing and consistent branding show that visibility and responsibility go hand in hand.

Sustainability and ethical sourcing

All EESC-branded items must uphold environmental and social responsibility through strict **eco-design and sustainability standards**:

- **Materials: recycled, recyclable or renewable materials** (for example recycled plastics, organic cotton, FSC-certified paper, bamboo, cork...).
- **Origin: produced in Europe**, in line with EU environmental, labour and safety standards.
- **Production:** preference is given to suppliers with recognised environmental certifications (for example ISO 14001, EMAS, or equivalent).
- **Packaging:** minimal and eco-friendly; avoid excessive or non-recyclable wrapping.



Responsible use and distribution

In line with its sustainability commitments, the EESC aims to **reduce the production and distribution** of promotional goods, focusing on items that are **useful, durable and visible**. Each distributed item must serve a clear purpose and provide lasting value.

- **Less but better:** fewer, higher-quality and longer-lasting items.
- **Utility first:** items must be genuinely useful (e.g. pens, notebooks, lanyards, cotton bags, post-its).
- **High visibility:** focus on items that maximise brand impact at events and in professional contexts.
- **Avoid waste:** no single-use and disposable products wherever possible.



Brand design and marking

The branding of all promotional items must follow the **EESC's visual identity** guidelines to ensure consistency and professionalism.

- Items feature **only the EESC logo, English wordmark** and/or **the EESC's website** (eesc.europa.eu). The design element may also be used.
- **No additional slogans, graphics or sub-brand logos** (to avoid unnecessary leftovers).
- The EESC logo must remain legible and correctly proportioned and in approved colour.
- The logo should never be distorted, cropped or altered to fit irregular formats.



3.6.

BE OUR BRAND AMBASSADOR

Every member of staff represents the EESC in the way they behave and interact with the public. Your conduct, both in person and in communication, shapes how the EESC is perceived externally. This chapter is not about imposing rules – it is an invitation to reflect on how your everyday interactions with external persons can contribute to a positive, professional, and approachable image of the EESC.

Upholding ethical standards

The EESC has established clear ethical standards for its members, as outlined in the brochure [Respect and Dignity at the EESC](#). The guidelines on the [Obligations of officials of the EESC](#) set out a similar set of fundamental professional principles. These frameworks outline the principles of integrity, fairness, respect, and professionalism that apply not only to interactions with colleagues and the public but also to conduct in all aspects of professional life. They provide a reference for understanding your responsibilities and ensuring that your actions reflect the values of the EESC.

Practicing good manners

Being friendly, listening attentively, and following up on requests from visitors, citizens, or conference participants is essential to making a good impression. This applies not only to the behaviour of individual staff members but also to the administrative procedures they support. Complicated registration processes or delays caused by internal procedures can quickly create a negative perception of bureaucracy and undermine the image of the EESC.

Applying the brand in daily life

Every interaction is an opportunity to reflect the EESC brand. Clear, jargon-free communication – whether spoken or written – ensures accessibility and understanding. Approachability also extends to personal presentation: while a business suit conveys professionalism and integrity, consider context and audience to avoid creating unnecessary distance with visitors who may not be accustomed to formal clothing.



PART 4

BRAND ARCHITECTURE

Brand architecture defines how an organisation structures and connects its brands and sub-brands, ensuring clarity, coherence and consistency across the brand ecosystem. In doing so, it shapes how audiences understand and experience the brand as a whole. By adopting a single, cohesive architecture, the EESC reinforces trust, simplifies communication, and ensures that every brand extension benefits from – and contributes to – the same shared identity.

CONTENT	1. BRAND ARCHITECTURE OVERVIEW	140
	2. SUB-BRAND LOGOS STANDARD AND VARIANT VERSION	142
	3. GROUPS' LOGOS AND COLOURS	149

1. BRAND ARCHITECTURE OVERVIEW

MASTER BRAND LOGO

The EESC follows a branded house model, where **a single master brand unites all sub-brands** under one consistent identity. The EESC master logo fulfills this role, ensuring that all sub-brands align visually and conceptually with the core EESC identity.



As the unifying master brand, the EESC logo is prominently and consistently applied across all communications.

SUB-BRAND LOGOS



Standard

The standard sub-brand logo is to be used for **all EESC entities and working bodies** (including internal services), and is closely tied to the master brand to ensure visual and conceptual alignment.



Variant

A variant of the standard sub-brand logo is used for **initiatives** (flagship events, communication campaigns, or other special projects), while maintaining a clear connection to the master brand.



Groups

Group logos are closely aligned with the master brand to maintain consistency, while a **dedicated color** gives each group a distinct and recognizable presence.

USAGE RESTRICTIONS

- **Standalone logos** and combinations of sub-brand names with icons or graphic elements that omit the master brand are prohibited
- Individual **elements of the EESC logo** (flag, swoosh), whether altered or distorted, must not be used.
- EESC branding **does not apply to communications by the Joint Services**, which are common to the EESC and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR); in such cases, only the logos of both Committees should be used.

2. SUB-BRAND LOGOS STANDARD AND VARIANT VERSION

Standard sub-brand logo

HORIZONTAL VERSION



Typography: Daxline Bold (acronym) + Regular (sub-brand name)
No more than 4 lines of text, including the acronym
Colour: Black 82%

VERTICAL VERSION



AVATAR



Typography: Europa Bold

No more than 3 lines of text

Use short names

Colour: Corporate Blue as background with white text

Variant sub-brand logo

HORIZONTAL VERSION



Typography: Europea ExtraBold
No more than 3 lines of text
Colour: Black 82%

VERTICAL VERSION



AVATAR



Typography: Europea Bold

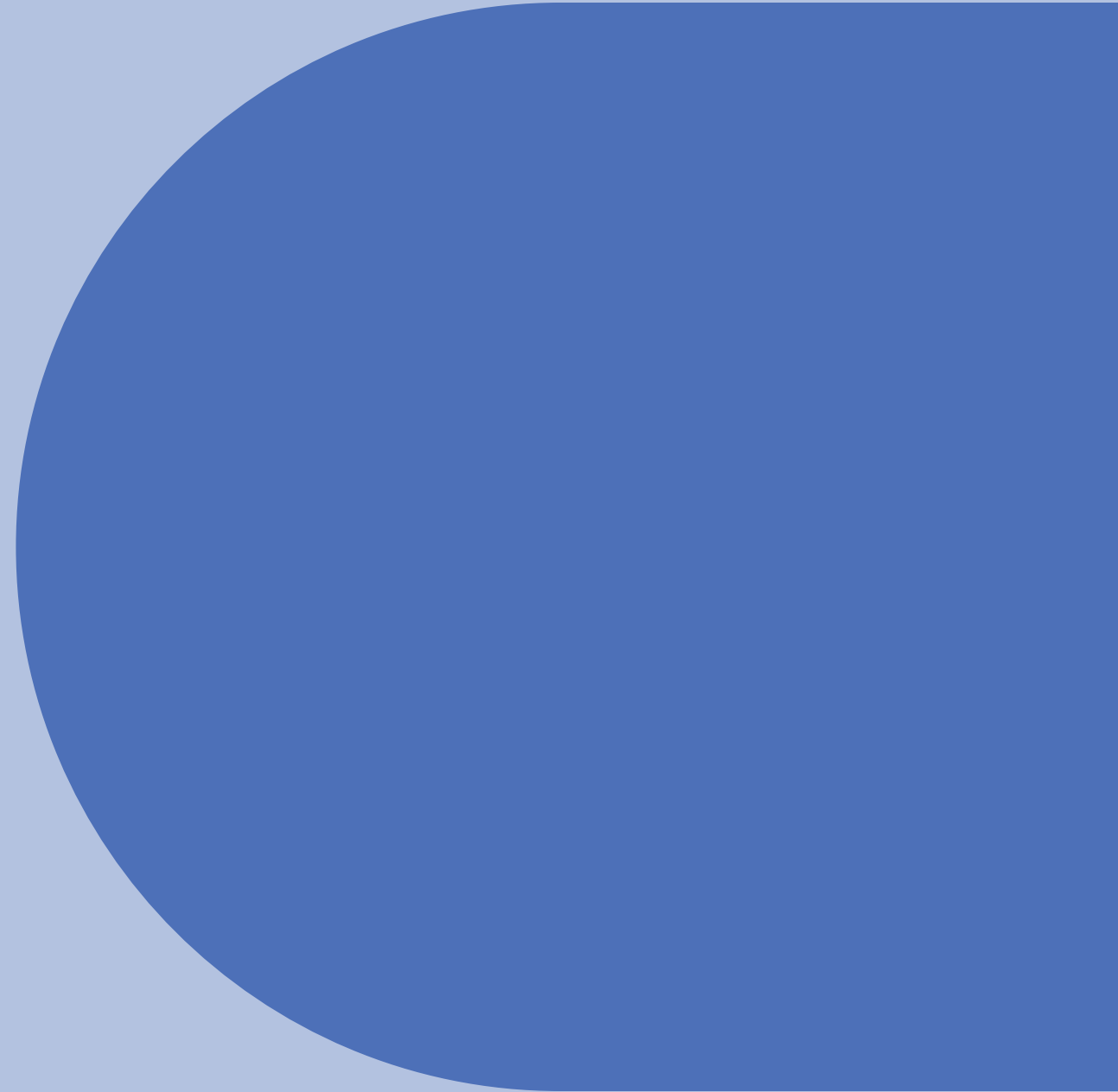
No more than 3 lines of text

Colour: Corporate Blue as background with white text

3. GROUPS' LOGOS AND COLOURS

The EESC is composed of three groups — the **Employers' Group**, the **Workers' Group**, and the **Civil Society Organisations' Group** — whose activities are central to the Committee's work.

While operating under the overarching EESC brand, flexibility is applied where necessary to accommodate specific priorities or communication needs, allowing each group to maintain its distinct character.



Group I logo

HORIZONTAL VERSION



VERTICAL VERSION



AVATAR



DRAFT VERSION

Group II logo

HORIZONTAL VERSION



VERTICAL VERSION



AVATAR



Group III logo
HORIZONTAL VERSION



VERTICAL VERSION



AVATAR



Group colours with secondary colour palette



European Economic
and Social Committee

Employers' Group



European Economic
and Social Committee

Workers' Group



European Economic
and Social Committee

Civil Society
Organisations'
Group

primary colour

Group I Blue
PMS 7690 C
PMS 7690 U
RGB 0 96 150
HEX # 006096
CMYK 100 30 0 34

Aa

secondary colours

Sky Blue

Deep Purple

Raspberry Pink

Warm Orange Red

Sunny Yellow

Teal Balance

Group II Red

PMS 185 C
PMS 185 U
RGB 235 0 42
HEX # EA0029
CMYK 0 98 82 0

Aa

Sky Blue

Deep Purple

Raspberry Pink

Warm Orange Red

Sunny Yellow

Teal Balance

Group III Green

PMS 7482 C
PMS 7482 U
RGB 20 136 72
HEX # 148848
CMYK 84 21 89 6

Aa

Sky Blue

Deep Purple

Raspberry Pink

Warm Orange Red

Sunny Yellow

Teal Balance

