

### 1. Creation of groups of the Members of the Commission

Pursuant to Article 3(2) of the rules of procedure of the Commission, its President may set up working groups of the members of the Commission (referred to as “Commissioners’ groups”). The President of the Commission appoints the Chair of such groups. These groups may be established on a standing<sup>1</sup> or ad hoc basis.

The President of the Commission determines the composition and mandate of the groups and reserves the right to chair meetings of those groups of which he is not a member.

### 2. Objective and tasks

The objective of Commissioners’ groups is to contribute to a better preparation and co-ordination of the activities of the Commission and of its services, taking account of the priorities established by the Commission and the political guidance given by its President.

In achieving this objective, these groups will contribute to the shaping of Commission policy, and in particular, its coherence and consistency, without affecting the principle of collegial responsibility.

Notwithstanding the specific mandate conferred upon them by the President of the Commission, Commissioners’ groups shall, in particular, carry out the following tasks:

- (a) Provide policy orientations at an early stage (e.g. prior to the drafting of Green Papers, Communications, etc.) for the services on important issues and, where necessary, prepare policy debates within the Commission.
- (b) Ensure, on a continuous basis, coherence and consistency within broad policy areas (for example, external relations) and between different, but interrelated policies and activities (e.g. macro and micro-economic dimension of Community policy).
- (c) Contribute to the effective implementation of the Commission’s political priorities and of its work programme both at the time of their formulation and in following Commission initiatives throughout the inter-institutional decision-making process, and, where appropriate, in other fora.

---

<sup>1</sup> A list of standing groups [to be] created at the start of the mandate of the new Commission is annexed. These replace all Commissioners’ groups previously created.

Commissioners' groups will be assisted by the Secretary General. They shall ensure the follow up of their orientations and political guidance by their respective services.

Standing Commissioners' groups shall meet at regular intervals on the basis of an agenda established by the Chair of the group assisted by the Secretary General. The agenda shall take account of the priorities and planned work of the Commission.

### **3. Membership of Commissioners' groups**

The membership of Commissioners' groups shall be determined at the time of their creation<sup>2</sup>. As a general rule, the Directors General responsible to the members of the group participate *ad personam* in the proceedings. The groups are assisted by the Secretary General or his representative.

In the event of a duly justified absence of a Member of the Commission, he or she may be represented by his or her Chef de cabinet. Other Members of the Commission and Directors general may participate in the meeting at the invitation of the Chair of the Group.

### **4. Preparation of meetings of the groups**

The meetings of Commissioners' groups shall be prepared by a meeting of the cabinets and services concerned. Preparatory meetings shall be chaired by the Chef de cabinet of the Chair of the group assisted by the Secretary General or his representative.

Preparatory meetings shall examine both administrative and substantive issues related to the agenda for the meeting, and in particular shall determine what, if any, documentation will be presented to the meeting.

### **5. "Fast Track"**

The Commission may invite a standing or ad hoc Commissioners' group to prepare the discussion of any item likely to be discussed at a future meeting of the Commission.

The Commission may also determine that such preparation within a Commissioners' group satisfies the requirement for interservice consultation, providing the services most concerned are represented within that group. This possibility does not remove the need for the service(s) concerned to fulfil the obligation to obtain the agreement of certain services (e.g. the Legal Service) set out under existing procedural requirements.

---

<sup>2</sup> The annexed list of standing groups also lists their members at the time of their creation.

## **6. Changes to the composition, chairmanship or mandate of Commissioners' Groups**

The President of the Commission may pursuant to Article 3(2) of the rules of procedure of the Commission modify at any time the Chair of both standing and ad hoc Commissioners' Groups. He may also change their composition and mandate and may wind up such groups if the task for which they have been established has been completed or the circumstances justifying their creation no longer exist.

\*  
\* \*

Annex : 1

## Annex : Mandate and Membership of the Standing Commissioners' Group

The following Standing Commissioners' Groups are created with the mandates and membership as identified below :

- (a) ***Growth, competitiveness, employment and sustainable development.*** This group chaired by the President of the Commission will be open to all the Members of the Commission potentially concerned by the subjects covered, depending on the draft agenda for each meeting established by the President. Its mandate shall be to:
- Co-ordinate the activity of the Commission in all areas covered by the group, in particular through the identification of strategic priorities and the coherent planning of Commission activity.
  - Ensure the coherence of Commission activity in both the macro and micro-economic area, in particular, by taking account of the impact of market and technological developments, as well as the Commission's social, industrial and enterprise, research and training policies.
  - Pay particular attention to the compatibility, complementarity and coherence of activities related to the so-called Luxembourg, Cardiff and Cologne processes.
- (b) ***Equal opportunities.*** This group, whose chair will be the President of the Commission and whose vice chair will be the Member of the Commission responsible for employment and social affairs, will have an open membership. The group will include on a permanent basis the Vice-President responsible for reform and personnel and the Member of the Commission responsible for education and culture. Its mandate will be to :
- guarantee the coherence of Commission action with regard to equal opportunities both internally and externally.
  - ensure that account is taken of the gender dimension in all relevant Community policies and action, in accordance with Article 3§2 of the Treaty.
- (c) ***Reform.*** This group chaired by the Vice-President responsible for reform will be made up of a selected number of Commissioners invited *ad personam*, including the Member of the Commission responsible for budget. Its mandate shall be to:
- Help to design the internal reform of the Commission covering its overall activity, organisation and operation.

- Ensure and monitor the coherent and systematic implementation of the decisions of the Commission in this area.

(d) ***Interinstitutional relations.*** This group will be chaired by the Vice President of the Commission responsible for relations with the European Parliament. The mandate of this group will be to prepare and anticipate important policy discussions in the other institutions, including within the context of codecision procedures, and to follow the implementation of the Commission's work programme.

To this end, the group will meet on a regular basis to prepare the plenary meetings of the European Parliament and important Council meetings over the following trimester. The group will also meet on an ad hoc basis to discuss the planned work of the Commission and its services which implements the political priorities established by the Commission. It shall do this in the light of any priorities identified by the other institutions.

(e) ***External Relations.*** This group chaired by the Member of the Commission responsible for external relations will be made up of the Members of the Commission responsible for economic and monetary affairs, for development and humanitarian aid, for enlargement and for trade policy. Other Members of the Commission may be invited to participate in the work of the group on the basis of the subjects to be covered. Its mandate shall be to :

- Co-ordinate external policies of the Commission, in particular, to define strategic priorities and to plan activity in relation to its external relations, security, economic and development policy.
- Ensure the coherence of overall policy both in relation to horizontal issues and in relation to policies within geographical areas.
- Prepare and co-ordinate the positions of the Members of the Commission with specific portfolios in the area of external relations.