



The ECA's communications policy and principles

The European Court of Auditors is the independent external audit institution of the European Union established by the EU Treaty. The ECA plays a crucial role in ensuring effective EU accountability to citizens for the public funds put at stake to meet EU objectives by:

- identifying risks to the financial interests of EU citizens;
- providing independent assurance on EU financial management; and
- advising policy makers on how to improve the use of EU public funds.

The ECA adds value by publishing its audit reports and opinions. They contribute to public oversight of the implementation of the EU budget and to informed decision-making on EU governance arrangements, policy and programme design and the allocation of EU funds.

Communications policy

In communicating its audit results and recommendations, the ECA helps raise public awareness of EU financial management and accountability issues and the importance of EU funds being used economically, efficiently and effectively and in compliance with the rules. The ECA's communications help protect the financial interests of EU citizens through the transparency they bring. The ultimate aim is to promote trust in the good functioning of the EU and its institutions.

The value of the ECA's contribution to EU accountability depends – to a large extent – on the use made of its work and products by its main partners in the accountability process, such as:

- **Political authorities** responsible for the public oversight of the use of EU funds: European Parliament; Council of the EU; and national parliaments.
- **Auditees** responsible for managing and receiving EU funds: European Commission; other EU institutions, agencies and decentralised bodies; and national authorities; and
- **Other auditors** of EU funds, including the Supreme Audit Institutions of the member states.



Communications principles

- The European Court of Auditors as external auditor of the EU, follows the principles of openness and transparency, and provides accessible and timely information about its role, work and the results it achieves.
- The ECA communications helps ensure that the results of its work are known and understood, and demonstrate how the ECA is meeting its objective of contributing to improved financial management.
- In order to protect the professional relationship between auditor and auditee, and in compliance with international auditing standards and legal requirements, only the information contained in its published reports is in the public domain. When necessary, the ECA provides context and background information to help readers gain a better understanding of its findings.
- The ECA holds press conferences for the annual report and, on a selective basis, for special reports, opinions and other matters. Press releases are issued for all the ECA's published reports and specific matters of interest, and are available on <http://eca.europa.eu>.
- The President represents the ECA and speaks for it on matters concerning its policies, purpose and values, as well as the annual reports. The President and the Members are supported in this role by the ECA's spokesperson. In the case of special reports or specific subjects, the reporting Member, or their nominee, speaks for the ECA.
- The ECA communicates online and through audit reports and other publications, events and the press and media. All its audit reports and opinions are available in all official EU languages at its website at <http://eca.europa.eu> and via the EU Bookshop. The ECA's website is its principal information platform.