

12/07/2023



Corporate content on communication for outreach networks

Issue n. 55

To keep you in the big picture

Upholding the rule of law

Fresh off the shelf this week - **the 2023 Rule of Law Report report**, a momentous piece that builds on the important step taken in last year's report where specific recommendations for all Member States had been included for the first time. The report examines developments across all Member States, both positive and negative, in four key areas for the rule of law: the justice system, the anti-corruption framework, media pluralism and freedom, and other institutional issues related to checks and balances. The country chapters analyse new developments since the previous Report and the follow-up to the challenges and developments identified in the 2022 edition. The analysis also contains a qualitative assessment of the progress made by the Member States towards implementing the 2022 recommendations. The 2023 recommendations either build on last year's recommendations, where they were not fully implemented, or address new challenges. The recommendations aim to further assist the Member States in their efforts to take forward ongoing reforms and help them identify where improvements are needed. Get the [full story!](#)

We handpicked for you

Staying strong!

The latest **Standard Eurobarometer survey** conducted in June 2023 will help you get a host of useful insights into citizens' reactions to some of the most topical issues shaping our lives. To start with, the survey shows that EU citizens continue to back overwhelmingly the energy transition and to expect massive investment in renewables. Then, they continue to widely approve measures taken by the EU to support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. In addition, they also support stronger EU defence cooperation and increased defence spending. And while inflation remains a major concern, perceptions of the economic situation and economic expectations are improving. A majority of Europeans believe that NextGenerationEU, the EU's €800 billion recovery plan, can be effective to respond to the current economic challenges. Support for the euro stays high. Full details [here](#).

Might wish to share among your networks

The reality is ... virtual

Here is a piece for those who want to make a sense of the Commission's efforts to consult citizens on key policy areas. The growing importance of virtual reality led the Commission to convene a **Citizens' Panel to consult and engage with citizens who deliberated and made recommendations on actions** to shape the virtual worlds they want. The Panel gathered 140 citizens from the 27 EU Member States, randomly selected and representative of the EU diversity, with young people aged 16-25 making up one third of participants. The work carried out by citizens has fed into the [Communication: An EU initiative on Web 4.0 and virtual worlds](#) proposed by the European Commission. The [Citizens' report from the European citizens' panel on virtual worlds](#) with the full set of recommendations is published together with the Commission's proposal. The outcome of will continue to support the overarching work of the Commission related to emerging virtual worlds and will serve as a guide to help Member States in [shaping Europe's digital future](#).

Let's talk about health

The European Health and Digital Executive Agency has published a series of [2023 EU4Health open calls for proposals](#), bound to be of interest to universities, researchers, and organisations active in the fields of non-communicable diseases, mental health, cancer, substances of human origins, medical devices, health crisis preparedness and prevention. Applicants are invited to watch the recording of the [info session](#) and apply by **17 October 2023**. More information on the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#).

In addition, the agency has published [a call for tenders](#) on capacity-building on mental health for health professionals, with a budget of €9 000 000. The call aims to support health professionals in the EU through training on mental health, contributing to the European Commission's new [comprehensive approach to mental health](#). Applicants are requested to submit any questions about this call for tenders [via the dedicated tab on Ted eTendering](#). Deadline for submission: **4 September 2023 16:00 (CET)**.

Participating is shaping

DG EAC is delighted to share their new [report on Culture and Democracy](#) - a powerful piece of work, full of evidence. Among many other findings, the report shows that citizens who participate regularly in cultural activities are more likely to vote, to volunteer, and to participate in community activities, projects, and organisations. It illustrates the various ways in which **participation in cultural activities** helps individuals and communities engage in civic and democratic life.

Looking for holiday destinations?

Look no further. Just check out the 2023 edition of [Travelling in Europe](#), by the DG COMM unit in charge of Editorial Service and Targeted Outreach! The big **news for travellers** this year is that Croatia became the newest member of the border-free Schengen area and also adopted the euro. If you are visiting Greece, Hungary or Romania, don't forget to look up this year's European Capitals of Culture. And if you are in Cyprus or Spain, then you might want to seek out the 2023 European Capitals of Smart Tourism.