

Guidelines for EPRA Content Producers

? *What is the purpose of the guidelines?*

The guidelines outline the practical aspects of producing plenary and working group sessions at EPRA meetings. It is intended to:

- clarify the role of the Content Producer, and the support they should expect from the Board Sponsor and EPRA Secretariat,
- give an idea of the time and effort normally required to produce an EPRA session and
- give an idea of why colleagues who work for EPRA member NRAs might want to take on the role.

Producing an EPRA session is a **team effort**. Together the Content Producer, Board sponsor and Secretariat make up a “Planning Team”. This paper explains the responsibilities of each member of the planning team, but these responsibilities are not set in stone: the key thing is to ensure that the team agrees and assigns the various roles as early as possible.

The following are **suggestions of how that can be done**. The Content Producer can propose new approaches or get more involved in the preparation of the session, in close cooperation with the EPRA Board Sponsor and the Secretariat.

? *What is a Content Producer?*

The Content Producer is the **coordinator and creative heart** behind plenary or working group sessions during EPRA meetings. In close coordination with the Board Sponsor and the EPRA Secretariat, the Content Producer is an essential element to ensure a high level of quality of EPRA sessions. The Content Producer takes part in the elaboration of the concept, structure and objectives of the session and provides the basis for the discussion by drafting a background document.

? *Why be a Content Producer?*

Being a Content Producer provides **a lot of opportunities** to learn new skills, gain confidence, develop knowledge of a particular area of media policy, and work closely with the EPRA Board and Secretariat, as well as eminent experts from academia and industry. Content producing a session also **brings benefits to the NRA** by showcasing the expertise of a member on a particular topic and providing the opportunity to consolidate the authority’s knowledge at European level. The Board especially wants to support newer EPRA participants or those who have less experience in working with the network to take on the role of Content Producer, and commits to:

- provide support through the process, including offering advice, regular calls and discussion of the topic,
- provide detailed feedback to the Content Producer on their contribution and work, which can then be passed on to their management for any annual appraisal process,
- provide a formal letter of appreciation to the Board/Chair of the Content Producer’s NRA.

1. Format of sessions

Most EPRA meeting sessions – no matter how inventive they may be! – are organised around several key elements:

- speakers (keynote speakers, presenters). These can be EPRA members or external experts,
- a Chair (usually the Board Sponsor, i.e. the member of the Board chairing the session),
- a survey of members and/or a background paper or a simple introductory paper,
- presentation materials (Powerpoint, Videos)

Working groups can follow the same format as a plenary session (i.e. with only 3-4 pre-arranged speakers) or can involve the exchange of case studies and experiences by numerous NRAs as a roundtable. Either of these options requires planning and organisation.

2. Initial planning

Once a topic for a plenary or working group session is agreed the Board members decide amongst themselves who will sponsor it. The Secretariat then contacts those who have offered to act as Content Producer (this usually happens during the consultation on the draft Work Programme in January each year) to confirm.

At that point, and ideally no later than three months before the meeting session takes place, a call should take place between the planning team to agree:

- on the overall format (i.e. interactive debate, learning session or mixed format) and focus of the session. Where it is not immediately obvious from the topic, there should be a discussion of what areas to focus on, what angle the session will take, the aims of the session etc. First orientations are provided by the Annual Work Programme
- whether there will be a keynote (and any early suggestions of who would give it)
- on the size and composition of the discussion panel
- depending on the theme and the objectives of the session, whether there should be:
 - o a [comparative document](#)¹ based on a survey (i.e. an online questionnaire uploaded on the EPRA Website) to support the session. Generally, this is the most ambitious and time-consuming option. The aim is to provide an overview of the state of play in each member's country, emphasizing the challenges faced by EPRA members.
 - o a [background paper](#)²: particularly relevant for innovative topics, it generally aims at setting the scene for the discussion, giving the keys to approach the topic, explaining the challenges and the issues at stake for regulators and presenting the objectives of the session.
 - o a simple [introductory paper](#)³: a 3-4 page document providing some brief context, listing the objectives, structure of the session and some questions for debate.
- whether or not audiovisual content is likely to be used.

¹ For an example of a comparative document, see: "Public service and public interest content in the digital age: the role of regulators" by Samuel Studer, OFCOM (CH), <https://www.epra.org/attachments/comparative-paper-public-service-and-public-interest-content-in-the-digital-age-the-role-of-regulators>

² For an example of a background paper, see: "Premium Sports Rights" by Roland Belfin, RTR (AT), <https://www.epra.org/attachments/sarajevo-plenary-2-premium-sports-rights-background-document>

³ For an example of an introductory paper, see: "The prevention of Hate Speech in the media in countries with multicultural communities" by Asja Rokša – Zubčević, CRA (BiH), <https://www.epra.org/attachments/sarajevo-working-group-3-hate-speech-introductory-paper>

As a priority, at this stage the following should also happen:

- based on the call, the Content Producer prepares a concept note (1-pager listing preliminary objectives, envisaged structure, format and deliverables).
- the Board Sponsor and Secretariat should identify potential keynote speakers and panel, including alternative options and inform/consult with the Content Producer. The consultation on the Work Programme usually provides helpful suggestions from EPRA members.
- the Secretariat should contact potential keynote speakers with an outline of the session and summary of expectations.
- the Secretariat should contact potential panel members with an outline of the session and summary of expectations.
- when developing a comparative, background or introductory paper, the Content Producer can decide if he/she needs substantial input and support from other colleagues. In any event, Secretariat should be regularly kept informed - and is always available for help.

3. Substantial development

Once the main participants have been identified (which can take more than a month), it is important to ensure their inputs are coordinated, do not overlap and that everyone understands the nature and context of their contribution. To this end, the following needs to happen:

- **12 weeks before the session:** The supporting survey, if relevant, should be developed, uploaded to the EPRA website and given an appropriate deadline. The survey is normally developed by the Content Producer and Secretariat and uploaded by the Secretariat.
- **3-4 weeks before the session:** The various individuals should be introduced to each other in the context of this session (even if some of them all know each other!), to confirm the context and format of the session and the key themes it will explore. This can be done by email, normally by the Board Sponsor and/or Secretariat.
- **3-4 weeks before the session:** A conference call between all participants should take place, so each can briefly summarise what they will talk about and the planning team can discuss any aspects of the coordination of the session. This can be organised by the Board Sponsor, with input from everyone on the call. If a conference call is not possible, each participant should at least be invited to share with the planning team and the other participants the key points that they plan to address during the meeting.
- **3 weeks before the session:** The draft of the comparative, background or introductory paper should be ready and circulated to the planning team for comments and input. In any event, the final paper should be ready one week before the meeting, to allow the Secretariat to edit it and upload it on the website.

4. Final preparations

- **1-2 weeks before the session:** If possible, there should be an exchange of presentations, or at least summaries of key points to be made. The Content Producer can prompt the session participants about this.
- **1-2 weeks before the session:** The Board Sponsor should develop a clear structure for the session, write any introductory notes, and email the participants with the main questions they intend to ask. The Board Sponsor should consult the Content Producer on this.
- **1-2 weeks before the session:** The planning team should seek out any interventions from EPRA members not involved in the session.
- **1 week before the session:** The Board Sponsor and Content Producer should have a brief call to go over the session.

Summary of key roles and responsibilities:

Role	Responsible (Support)
Identification & establishment of planning team	Sponsor/Secretariat
Initial planning incl. concept note	Content Producer (Secretariat/Sponsor)
Identification of keynote speaker/panellists	Sponsor/Secretariat (Content Producer)
Contacting speakers	Secretariat
Development of questionnaire	Content Producer (Secretariat/Sponsor)
Development & drafting of background paper	Content Producer (Secretariat)
Pre-session conference call/emailing	Sponsor
Planning session structure including intro notes & prepared questions	Sponsor (Content Producer)