

Guidelines on Working Group Organisation

1. Objectives and Tasks of a Working Group

- to establish communications channels with the key officials and other players in the area of work;
- to provide clear, concise, accurate, balanced and timely information for the Parliamentary and Corporate members of EURIM on relevant policy proposals, the sources and causes of support and/or opposition to them and the state of debate;
- to recommend appropriate political and other action;
- when approved by the EURIM Council, to organise campaigns to secure implementation of recommendations made.

2. Structure and Administration

A working group is established when a nucleus of members exists who can study a relevant area or issue and Council approves its formation. See [Getting Approval for New Groups](#). EURIM members are invited to a launch meeting where the group's initial scope and programme are defined. If the programme is likely to exceed the resource approved by Council for the group, then additional funds must be raised through sponsorship. The initial group membership is drawn up and a Chairman and Rapporteur appointed. The Chairman is usually a EURIM member but the Rapporteur may be a member of EURIM staff. The Chairman is responsible for the overall direction of the working group and for keeping Council and the EURIM membership informed of progress. See [Terms of Reference for Chairmen](#) The Rapporteur supports the Chairman, takes the minutes, prepares and collates documentation and administers the group. See [Terms of Reference for Rapporteurs](#).

Working groups should be result-orientated and be geared to produce their first findings within three months of launch. These findings will normally be presented in the form of a briefing paper, status report or other document (see Outputs - Section 4, below). Each working group has a section of the EURIM website (www.eurim.org.uk) and material can be posted publicly or password protected. Rapporteurs control the uploading of material to the website.

Working groups should be mindful of the need for balance (across interest group or political boundaries) in their findings. Where there is a division of opinion the differences should be clearly identified.

Working groups are encouraged to seek the active involvement of MPs and MEPs in their work and should aim to have at least two MPs from different political parties and two MEPs from different groups. Working parties should develop dialogue with the Commission DGs and the UK Departments of State applicable to their area of work. UK Civil Servants frequently attend working group meetings as observers and off-the-record briefings and workshops are often arranged to exchange information.

With one or two exceptions, working groups are expected to be relatively short-lived and to disband or be re-constituted once their initially defined tasks have been completed. The same topic may need different approaches with different people involved as it progresses from advance lobbying to debate of a Bill or Draft Directive and then into implementation via secondary legislation.

3. Meetings

Much of a working group's work is carried out in discussion meetings (normally hosted by a member) for which detailed minutes are prepared by the rapporteur. Some EURIM meetings are conducted off-the-record or under [Chatham House Rules](#). At the beginning of each meeting it must be made clear what will be attributable and how widely the proceedings will be distributed. See [Conduct of Meetings](#) and [Arranging a EURIM Meeting](#)

4. Outputs

Working groups may produce outputs on behalf of EURIM or just as working group statements. See [EURIM Publications](#) for the different kinds of EURIM output

4.1 EURIM outputs produced by working parties

If a working group is producing an output on behalf of the whole EURIM membership, it needs to be approved as a EURIM document and usually takes the form of a **EURIM Briefing**, a formal statement presented in a standard format and adopted by the EURIM membership. When the working group's output is ready for dissemination it is presented to the EURIM membership at a Presentation Meeting. These meetings are convened by the EURIM Executive and around six weeks' notice of the meeting is required. The paper(s) for presentation must be available in time to be sent out at least a week in advance of the meeting so that all members have an opportunity to submit comments in advance for tabling.

After discussion at the Presentation Meeting, and if appropriate, after revision, the final version is read for political balance and approved by two EURIM Directors prior to distribution. The content of a briefing normally relates to a single topical issue or is EURIM's response to a consultation document. It must be clearly written to enable busy people to assimilate the issues involved. See **Preparing a EURIM Briefing** for details of format and layout.

4.2 Working Party Outputs

At times it will be appropriate for the working group to respond directly to an official consultation exercise or statement, or to promote its findings informally beyond EURIM.

Such responses and statements may be structured as Status Reports, Overviews, Position Statements or be in the form of a letter. They must show clearly that they represent the opinions of the working group only, not EURIM as a whole. They do not need the approval of the EURIM membership so there is no need for a presentation meeting, but they still need approval by two EURIM Directors or by the Secretary General and one Director.

A working group will also produce a variety of papers for its own internal use - minutes, discussion notes, glossaries, reference material - and many of these will be mounted in the group's section of the website.

5. Promotion and PR

Once approved and printed, all EURIM publications, and some working group documents, are mailed to all EURIM members as well as being placed on the Website. Prior to this stage the working group should draw up a promotion schedule identifying the target audience for the paper. Appropriate covering letters should be written - usually by the group Chairman - and, in some cases, meetings and visits arranged to promote the ideas in the paper.

Where the content of the paper is likely to attract media interest, group chairmen should discuss with the Secretary-General the desirability of issuing a press release and/or briefing individual journalists.

6. Liaison with the EURIM Executive

The staff member assigned to each working group will normally act as a "one-stop-shop", consulting with colleagues and involving them in action as required. Other relevant staff responsibilities are:

Philip Virgo: Secretary General (virgo.philip@eurim.org)

Overall working party policy and strategy; Routes to key Parliamentarians and Officials
Enabling urgent actions; PR and External relations matters; Authorisation and quality assurance
Budgetary matters.

Kate Norman: Company Secretary (kate.norman@eurim.org)

Editorial: Preparation of all EURIM publications; Assistance with working party publications; Monitoring of website content.

Administrative: Maintenance of the EURIM database; Members' mailings

Dave Wright: Deputy Secretary General and Rapporteur (wrightdt@parliament.uk)

Emma Fryer: Rapporteur (Emma.fryer@eurim.org)