

SHORT BIO: Joanna Drake



Joanna DRAKE has been the Deputy Director-General of the European Commission's Directorate-General (DG) for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) since 2021. In this role, she provides overall assistance to the Director-General in the management of the DG, contributing to the definition, coordination and implementation of strategy and policy orientation. She is also Mission Manager for the EU Mission Cancer.

She was previously Deputy Director-General of DG Environment (2016-2021) where she chaired a cross-cutting Task Force spear-heading strategic positions for the DG on (inter-alia) the post-2020 Commission financial framework negotiations, Brexit co-ordination, the urban agenda and the future-proofing of the EU's environmental acquis. Between 2010 and 2015 she was director for SME's and Entrepreneurship in the DG for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW). During her tenure in DG GROW she also led the Commission's Task Force on The Collaborative Economy, New Business Models And SME's.

By training, Joanna is a doctor of laws from the University of Malta, where she also lectured full time in the Department of European and Comparative Law. She acquired a post-graduate degree in Advanced European Legal Studies from the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium. She held various legal and management posts in the private and public sector before joining the European Commission as head of the European Commission Representation in Malta in 2005. She also had a key role in the Malta-EU accession negotiations as member of the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee.