



Annual Activity Report 2015

**PUBLICATIONS
OFFICE**

March 2016

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OFFICE**



Publications Office

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INTRODUCTION

The Publications Office in brief

Mission: access to law and to publications

The task of the Publications Office is to provide direct and free-of-charge access to European law and all publications of the European Union, as well as to publish, on all media and in all formats, the publications of the institutions and other bodies of the European Union, under optimum technical and financial conditions.

Activities

The Publications Office is an interinstitutional office, whose activities comprise the production, the access to and the reuse, as well as the long-term preservation of public information produced by the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies established by or under the EU Treaties (hereinafter EU institutions). The organisation and operation of the Office are governed by Decision 2009/496/EC, Euratom.

Under its mandate, the Office has competence, amongst others, for the following:

- publishing the *Official Journal of the European Union* and other mandatory publications;
- publishing non-mandatory publications in the context of the institutions' communication activities;
- referencing, preserving EU public data and making it available to the public.

In order to fulfil its mandate, the Office has implemented and manages the following online services:

- EUR-Lex – a single access point for legal information and authentic Official Journal;
- OP Portal – a single access point progressively bringing together the different collections of official documents and publications managed by the Office;
- TED (Tenders Electronic Daily) – a single access point for public procurement notices (Official Journal S);
- EU Open Data Portal – a single access point for structured EU institutions' data to facilitate reuse;
- EU Bookshop – online bookshop and library of EU publications;
- CORDIS (the Community Research and Development Information Service) – the primary public repository and service for the dissemination and the reuse of EU-funded research projects and their results;
- EU Whoiswho – the official directory of managers and services in the EU institutions;
- EuroVoc – the multilingual, multidisciplinary thesaurus covering the EU's activities;
- Metadata Registry (MDR) – the registry for metadata definitions, controlled value vocabularies (authority tables) and other reference data for consultation, validation and reuse purposes in human and machine-readable format.

The Office is a horizontal and support service for EU institutions, as well as for EU citizens. At the forefront of new technologies, it contributes to the information and communication activities of the institutions by referencing, publishing and disseminating the information they produce. At the same time, its activities are also society oriented: the free access to EU law and the legislative and decision-making processes, together with the long-term preservation activity, play a key role to the transparency and openness of EU institutions, as well as to their accountability and better policy-making process. The reuse of data activity touches a whole reuse community, formed of researchers, statisticians, IT developers, businesses, public administrations, interest groups, etc.

The Office operates in a changing environment and it must constantly adapt to technological improvements and innovations. Over the last few years, it has undergone a major change fuelled by a transition from the traditional model of paper-based publishing to a new paradigm of handling digital information. In the years to come it will need to further adapt to the needs of the digital and mobile environment in order to become an information hub for EU institutions.

Governance and organisation

The Office is governed by an interinstitutional Management Committee, which, in the common interest of EU institutions, adopts the strategic objectives of the Office, sets the guidelines for the general policies and ensures that the Office contributes within its areas of competence to the formulation and implementation of the institutions' information and communication policies.

Based in Luxembourg, the Office is structured around 4 Directorates and has approximately 630 staff members.

Budget matters

Budget items delegated by the Commission to the Director-General of the Office concern expenditure for administrative purposes and/or contract management and are in direct management. Therefore, compared to shared or indirect budget management, the inherent risk is low.

In 2015, the Office entrusted budget implementation tasks to DG Informatics, within the pilot project PublicAccess.eu, and to the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Luxembourg, for building management expenditure.

Accountability and reporting

The Office uses infrastructure (mainly IT), outsourcing and human resources, therefore its main risks and risk-management activities (including internal control) are concentrated on these areas. The reporting of authorising officers by subdelegation contains the financial data, as well as the main points concerning controls and risks, and formally documents any significant problems.

Quarterly information reports on the Office's production, dissemination and administrative tasks are communicated by the Office's Director-General to the Management Committee. Each year the Management Committee adopts an Annual Management Report.

The year in brief

Change of the Director-General

Ms Eva Beňová, Resource Director, was appointed by the College as Acting Director-General of the Publications Office as of 1 September 2015, following Ms Martine Reicherts' end of the term of office.

New strategic orientations

New strategic orientations were discussed by the Office's Management Committee in its meeting of 20 November 2015. These set the goal for the Office to become by 2020 an information hub for legislation, documents, publications and open data produced by EU institutions, in line with its interinstitutional mandate and on the basis of its competences in three areas of information management: production, long-term preservation, and access and reuse.

Within this context, in order to reflect the new paradigm of handling digital information and the terminology used in its day-to-day operations, the Office requested the Commission central services to introduce changes in the budget nomenclature ⁽¹⁾. They will apply as of 2017.

Reflection paper on data, information and knowledge management

The Publications Office actively participated in the High Level Group which elaborated the Reflection paper on data, information and knowledge management at European Commission. Several tools and solutions mentioned in the Reflection paper are managed by the Office, e.g. EU Open Data Portal, EU Metadata Registry, EuroVoc. The vision of the Office to become an EU information hub – a common competence and entry point enabling transparent integrated access, seamless navigation and search across EU information – is at the core of the information management. Within its area of expertise, the Office is highly committed to bringing its contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Reflection paper. The focus of the Office is on the public information produced by the EU institutions for which it provides services in the three areas of content management: production, long-term preservation, and access and reuse. In line with the objectives of the Reflection paper, the ultimate goal will be to produce quality information, make it accessible, linkable with other information, and findable. Within the framework of the Reflection paper, the Office will also promote collaboration and knowledge sharing as part of an effective corporate management of data.

Pilot projects

The Publications Office was entrusted the implementation of two pilot projects:

- Public Access.eu – online platform for the proactive publication of EU institutions' unclassified documents. The pilot project aims to devise ways to improve online access to unclassified documents held by EU institutions;
- Promoting linked open data, free software and civil society participation in law-making throughout the EU. The pilot project aims to demonstrate how open knowledge and free software solutions could contribute to enhance the understanding and the participation of citizens' in relevant phases of the legislative process of the EU.

⁽¹⁾ Budget line 'Cataloguing and Archiving' and the related ABB activity will be renamed 'Long-term preservation'. Budget lines 'Physical distribution and promotion' and 'Public websites' together with their related ABB activities will be merged and renamed 'Access and reuse'.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Activity Report is a management report of the Director-General of the Publications Office to the College of Commissioners. It is the main instrument of management accountability within the Commission and constitutes the basis on which the Commission takes its responsibility for the management of resources, by reference to the objectives set in the management plan and the efficiency and effectiveness of internal control systems, including an overall assessment of the costs and benefits of controls.

a) Policy highlights of the year (executive summary of section 1)

TOWARDS AN INFORMATION HUB

The Office has reinforced its position towards becoming an information hub of the EU institutions via the diversity and quality of the information and data provided by its services. In line with its interinstitutional role and responsibilities and bearing in mind the priorities and constraints of its stakeholders, the Office put its expertise and tools at the disposal of EU institutions, thus contributing to significant synergies and efficiencies.

EUR-Lex, the reference point for accessing EU law, has enhanced its role and is enlarging the coverage of its collections.

The first version of the OP Portal is now up and running. It gives access to EU law while a first set of general publications is already available. It aims at providing a central access point to the collections managed and disseminated by the Publications Office.

TED and its related systems have been updated to take into account the requirements imposed by the new public procurement directives.

The EU Open Data Portal (ODP) has consolidated its role in fostering reuse of data coming from EU institutions and other bodies.

CORDIS has been confirmed as the service in charge of the dissemination and reuse of EU-funded research results which encompasses the Horizon 2020 framework programme.

New services were launched: publishing and managing the portfolio of the institutions' apps on the major mobile app stores (European Union account on Apple Store, Google Play and Windows Store), as well as proposing HTML products in response to widespread emerging demand.

ACCESS AND TRANSPARENCY

The Publications Office has assumed the implementation of two pilot projects as proposed by the European Parliament, namely PublicAccess.eu and LOD – eParticipation. The pilot projects aim to improve online access to non-classified documents, as well as transparency and citizens' participation.

STANDARDISATION

The efforts deployed in metadata standardisation are reflected in the implementation of the first Interinstitutional Maintenance Metadata Committee (IMMC) based transmission workflow of documents from the Commission and Council to the Publications Office.

Substantial progress was achieved by the Interinstitutional Formats Committee (IFC) in defining common semantic structures.

b) Key Performance Indicators

The most relevant indicators to measure the policy achievements of the Publications Office in 2015 are the following:

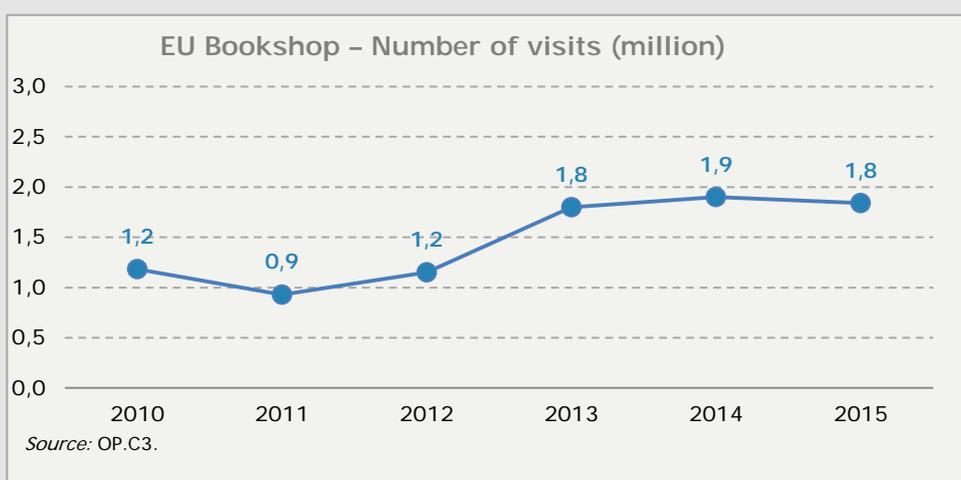
Result/Impact indicator (description)	Target 2015	Results 2015
Percentage of Official Journal issues produced without delay in 23 or 24 language versions	100 %	100 %
Access to official documents - Status of the single repository (CELLAR): a) availability of the repository: availability of the technical infrastructure (hardware, network, IT systems)	> 99 %	99,89 %
b) availability of the information in the repository: availability of OJ authentic (content and metadata) for online access and reuse	>99.9 %	99.99 %
Number of visits to EUR-Lex website	70 million	70.1 million



Number of visits to EU Bookshop website

1.8 million

1.84 million



Percentage of contracts above EUR 1 million evaluated

100 %

100 %

c) Key conclusions on Management and Internal control (executive summary of Section 2)

In accordance with the governance statement of the European Commission, the Publications Office conducts its operations in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations, working in an open and transparent manner and meeting the expected high level of professional and ethical standards.

The Commission has adopted a set of internal control principles, based on international good practice, aimed to ensure the achievement of policy and operational objectives. The financial regulation requires that the organisational structure and the internal control systems used for the implementation of the budget are set up in accordance with these standards. The Publications Office has assessed the internal control systems during the reporting year and has concluded that the internal control principles are implemented and function as intended. Please refer to Section 2.3 for further details.

In addition, the Publications Office has systematically examined the available control results and indicators, including those aimed to supervise entities to which it has entrusted budget implementation tasks, as well as the observations and recommendations issued by internal auditors and the European Court of Auditors. These elements have been assessed to determine their impact on the management's assurance as regards the achievement of control objectives. Please refer to Section 2 for further details.

In conclusion, management has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable controls are in place and working as intended; risks are being appropriately monitored and mitigated; and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented. The Director-General, in her capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation, has signed the declaration of assurance.

d) Information to the Commissioner

The main elements of this report and declaration of assurance have been brought to the attention of Commissioner Navracsics, responsible for relations with the Office, during a meeting dedicated to these matters on 21 March 2016.

1. KEY RESULTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICE

Achievement of specific objectives (2)

ABB activity: Production

Official Journal: production volume and cost per page

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based		
Official Journal published in all official languages on all media				
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015	
Percentage of Official Journal issues produced without delay in 23 or 24 language versions <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit B1	99 % (2005)	100 %	100 %	
Main output in 2015:				
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015	
Production of the Official Journal L&C	Average global price per page	<EUR 4	EUR 2.37	

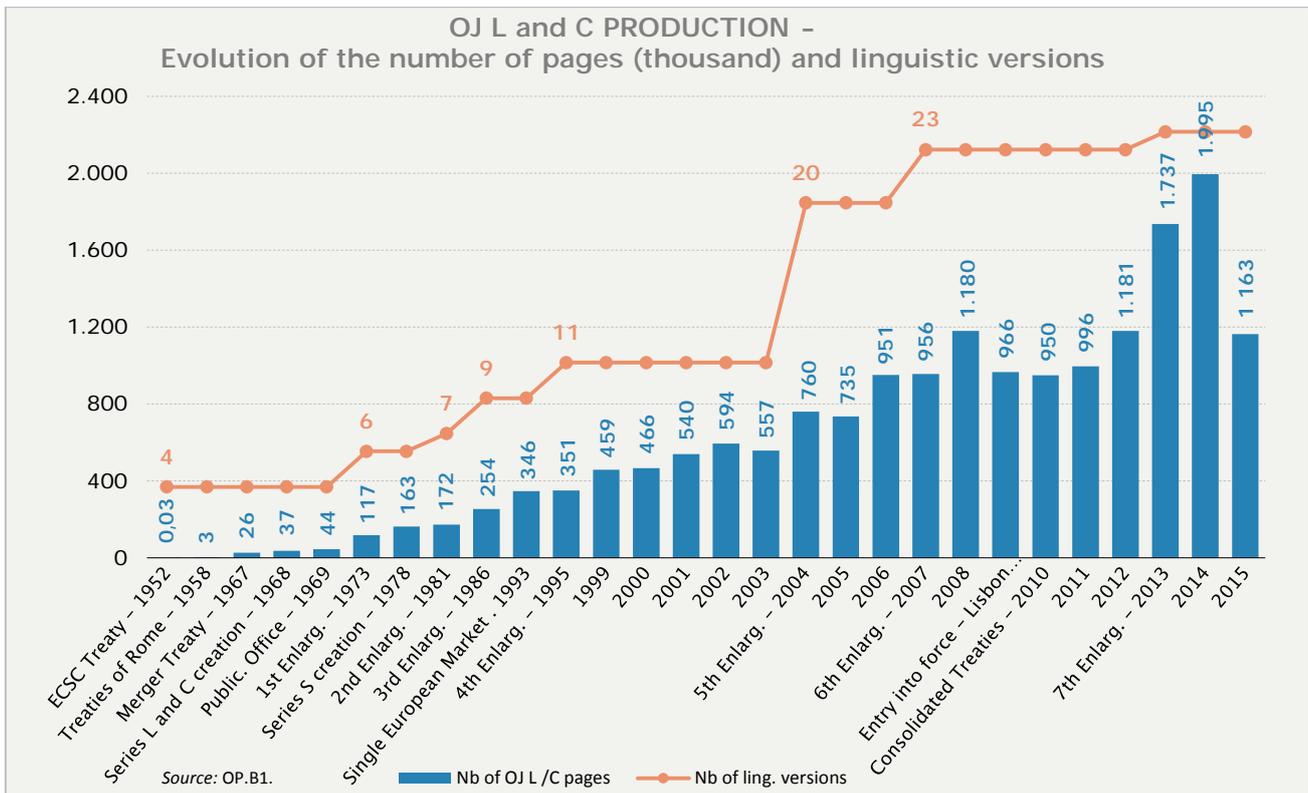
Production of the Official Journal saw a decrease in volume of 11.54 % for the OJ L series and a decrease of 61 % for the OJ C series. The decrease of OJ L reflects a return to historical legislative activity following parliamentary elections in 2014 and is comparable to the 13.88 % decrease noted in 2010, the year following the previous parliamentary elections. However, compared to 2013, OJ L volume shows in 2015 an increase of 24.85 %.

Official Journal: number of pages per series

Series	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
OJ L	574 016	471 769	654 009	530 561	456 929	496 515	583 354	568 114	801 813	709 289
OJ C	377 207	484 313 (*)	526 399	435 259	492 686	499 576	511 757	1 168 964	1 193 087	454 171
Other budgetary documents	93 512	83 986	86 014	87 978	102 521	69 334	103 782	76 018	108 165	82 715
Total	1 044 735	1 040 068	1 266 422	1 053 798	1 052 135	1 065 425	1 198 893	1 813 096	2 103 065	1 246 175

(*) Including issues of OJ C and OJ CE committed in 2006 and published in 2007 for a total of 161 421 pages.

(2) General objectives by policy area were not applicable to the Publications Office.



As of 1 January 2015, the legal acts published in the L series of the *Official Journal of the European Union* are assigned a unique sequential number. This change contributes to the REFIT programme ⁽³⁾ by harmonising and simplifying previous divergent practices, as it facilitates identification of and references to legal acts. It also paves the way for the implementation of the European Legislation Identifier (ELI) in EUR-Lex.

The full impact of the new contract prices effective mid-2014 caused the average global price per page to decline further reaching EUR 2.37 per page in 2015.



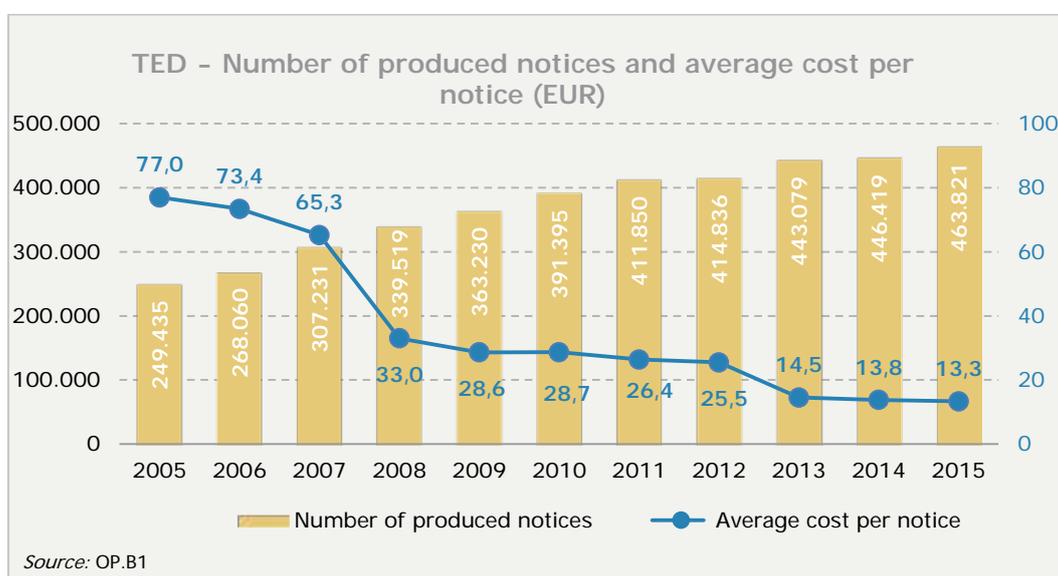
⁽³⁾ REFIT is the European Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme.

Supplement to the Official Journal

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
Publishing of all public procurement notices in the Supplement to the Official Journal, including assistance to the awarding authorities throughout the process			
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
Production of the Supplement to the Official Journal according to the directives in force	Average cost per notice	<EUR 14	EUR 13.33

During the year, 463 821 public procurement notices were published in the OJ S (i.e. on average 1 833 per OJ S edition), corresponding to 11 131 704 documents published in all 24 official languages. The volume of notices received in structured electronic format stood at 96.6 % of the total.

The average cost per notice reached EUR 13.33 during this year. The average price decreased by EUR 0.42 in comparison with 2014.



e-Recueil

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
European case-law collections have an IT structure/system for their production and dissemination			
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
Management of the case-law documents	e-Recueil project achieved	100 %	e-Recueil document-by-document will be launched in 2016

The implementation of the document-by-document production chain progressed according to the schedule agreed with the Court of Justice and the production system PlanJUR was finalised in July 2015. The launch of the e-Recueil document-by-document is foreseen for 2016 and will incorporate additional requirements, such as the management of corrigenda.

Consolidation and summaries of EU legislation

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
European Union acts are consolidated, i.e. integrate basic instruments of EU law, their subsequent amendments and corrigenda into single documents which are not legally binding			
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
Consolidation of legal acts	Total number of consolidated versions of legal acts produced	1 400	2 725
Smooth production of the summaries of EU legislation	Number of drafted/redrafted and updated summaries loaded in CELLAR and available for EUR-Lex	400	Drafted/redrafted: 482 Updated (including corrections): 75

Consolidation of EU legislation is a permanent task and is pursued in all official languages. It contributes to the implementation of the Commission's 'Smart regulation' initiative. At the end of 2015 the number of legal acts in force which were consolidated (in at least one linguistic version) reached 4 336 and the number of consolidated versions of legal acts produced during 2015 were 2 725.

Providing legal value to consolidated texts would be a major step in terms of simplification and access to legislation. Furthermore it would save both financial and human resources. Discussions within the Commission and at the level of the Management Committee are ongoing.

Summaries of EU legislation, a project of which the Office took over the management in 2012, is a non-mandatory collection providing readers with a concise, easy-to-read text facilitating the understanding of the legal documents. In 2015, 482 new summaries or completely redrafted existing summaries were produced and another 75 summaries were updated taking into account the most recent legislative changes. Additionally, a revision of the glossary complementing the summaries was finalised in the first half of 2015.

General publications

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
EU publications are produced on all media			
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
Management of the production	Growth in number of multimedia products ordered	50%	9%

Publication projects launched for general publications increased by 9 % compared to 2014 but saw a decrease of 24% in the number of requested language versions. The number of multimedia products saw an increase of 9 % due to a trend from e-books towards more interactive and complex as well as more time and resource consuming products (audiovisual, apps, html). The number of printed copies, as well as the overall budget spent on printing, continued to decrease.

The continued efforts to promote digital publishing achieved several important milestones in 2015: the Office set up the Interinstitutional Digital Publishing Committee (IDPC) and launched a new service publishing and managing the portfolio of interinstitutional apps on the major mobile app stores (European Union account on Apple Store, Google Play and Windows Store). The Office also launched HTML products in response to widespread emerging demand.

SPECIFIC EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY

GENERAL PUBLICATIONS CONTRACT

Overall production costs for general publications have significantly decreased over the past years, due to the entry into force of a new publishing framework contract in 2013. The total budget committed per year was as follows: EUR 6.47 million EUR for 7 860 titles orders in 2015 (average cost per title EUR 823); EUR 7.12 million for 10 312 titles ordered in 2014 (average cost per title EUR 690); to EUR 8.60 million EUR for 9 423 titles ordered in 2013 (average cost per title EUR 912) or EUR 11.65 million EUR for 6 119 titles ordered in 2012 (average cost per title EUR 1 903). However, the average cost per title shows an increase in 2015 due to more comprehensive services offered in the production of audiovisuals and apps, representing much more time and resource-intensive investments than the production of printed books and e-books.

REORGANISATION IN THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICE

Organisational changes took place in 2015, which allowed redeployment of staff in the following areas:

- finance: 3 distinct budget cells directly attached to Directorates were merged into the Finance Unit, with consequent rationalisation of workflows and expected synergies;
- proofreading: during 2015, 8 language sections had their size reduced from 6 to 5 staff, in order to allow internal redeployment to other units with an increased workload and to compensate the staff cuts.

ABB activity: Cataloguing and archiving (4)

Storage in the common repository

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
All digital content managed by the Publications Office is stored in a single repository			
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015
Access to official documents — Status of the single repository (CELLAR):			
(a) availability of the repository: availability of the technical infrastructure (hardware, network, IT systems);	>99.10 % (2014)	>99 %	99.89 %
(b) availability of the information in the repository: availability of OJ authentic (content and metadata) for online access and reuse.	100 % (2014)	>99.9 %	99.99 %
<i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit A2			
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
Identification, cataloguing and archiving of publications (including electronic publications)	General publications: number of notices produced	15 000	18 497

Cataloguing activities are necessary for the identification and discoverability of documents and other publications. During the year, 10 139 legal notices (EUR-Lex) and 18 497 bibliographical notices for general publications were prepared. As an official registration agency for the digital object identifier (DOI), the Office registered 15 966 DOIs for general publications.

The common repository, the CELLAR, contains all mandatory legal documents accessible through the EUR-Lex portal. Its content represents a total of more than 113 million files. Compared to the previous year, this represents a growth rate of nearly 10 %. The CELLAR continues to be one of the largest 'triple stores' (5) worldwide (more than 1 445 billion triples), which means it is one of the most important semantic data sources on the Web. It should be noted that its data are by design available as open data. There is a high load of access requests to the CELLAR, mainly for reuse. In 2015, there were in average more than 5.3 million queries per day, with more than 60 queries per second.

Long-term preservation of digital information

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
Digital information is preserved for the long-term.			
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015
Preservation of official documents — Volume of data stored in the long-term digital archive (EUDOR):			
(a) availability of the archive repository: availability of the technical infrastructure (hardware, network, IT systems);	99.99 % (2014)	>99 %	99.99 %
(b) availability of the information in the archive repository: availability of information (content and metadata) in the archiving.	100 % (2014)	>99 %	100 %
<i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit A2			

(4) To be renamed 'Long-term preservation' as of 2017.

(5) A triple store is a purpose-built database for the storage and retrieval of triples through semantic queries. A triple is a data entity composed of subject-predicate-object.

Within the scope of its mandate for the long-term preservation of official publications, the Publications Office has provided for their archiving throughout 2015. By year-end, the electronic archive EUDOR ⁽⁶⁾ contained 49 958 550 individual files, which represent a volume of 17 terabytes of data. The new EUDOR V3 long-term preservation contract was signed mid-2015. All metadata and content information stored in the common repository CELLAR will be archived as of mid-2016 in EUDOR V3.

EuroVoc – the EU's multilingual thesaurus

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
Online dissemination of the multilingual thesaurus EuroVoc			
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015
Number of visits to the EuroVoc website <i>Source of data:</i> European Commission, DG Communication, Europa analytics	Not available (new indicator 2015)	359 000	303 351

In the course of 2015, the Publications Office participated in the work of the Thesaurus working group, involving managers of various EU and international thesauri with the aim of collaborating in the maintenance and dissemination of their respective multilingual thesauri. In order to increase the discoverability of resources indexed with different controlled vocabularies, the Publications Office pursued the semantic alignment of EuroVoc with the concepts of a number of specific thesauri and taxonomies. The EuroVoc website has been enriched with new web services making it possible to get the Unique Resource Identifier (URI), terms or semantic alignment for a search term. EuroVoc is available through other channels, e.g. EU Open Data Portal, and is one of the most viewed dataset.

Metadata standardisation

Standardisation of metadata is essential to enable interoperability between systems and reuse of data. In 2015 the Publications Office continued the work under the guidance of the Interinstitutional Maintenance Metadata Committee (IMMC) leading to the development and implementation of an important number of interoperability assets. The first operational IMMC-based workflows have been put in place concerning the transmission of documents coming from the Commission and the Council. The data.europa.eu subdomain, managed by the Publications Office, was adopted for persistent URIs.

Harmonisation of document formats

In its on-going work on the harmonisation of document formats the Interinstitutional Formats Committee (IFC) focuses on the semantic structures of document content, a further important element of interinstitutional standardisation efforts. In 2015 the IFC made substantial progress in defining common semantic structures by using as a model the ordinary legislative procedure concerning a specific regulation.

⁽⁶⁾ EUDOR: European Document Repository.

ABB activity: Physical distribution and promotion (7)

Physical distribution

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
Distribution is fully externalised			
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015
EU institutions and agencies' satisfaction rate with the physical distribution services of the Publications Office (percentage of neutral and positive opinions expressed in an annual author services survey) <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C3	Not available (new indicator 2015)	85 %	61.4 %

The Distribution Centre in Gasperich closed on 21 March 2015. As from 23 March all storage and distribution logistics are managed through an outsourced integrated logistics management services (ILMS) contract.

The externalisation of storage and distribution operations under one single contract constituted a great challenge for all players concerned: the contractor, the Publications Office and the author services. Although during the first months of operations a number of weaknesses were identified, by end-2015 the quality of service was substantially improved following the timely and opportune measures taken by the Office. This year specific objective to fully externalize the distribution was completed. However, given the initial difficulties and problems associated with the performance of the new ILMS contract, the satisfaction rate related to the quality of the fully-outsourced distribution services was 61.4 %.

The number of copies held in stock (in the contractor's warehouse) as at end-December declined by 1.24 % compared to the previous year and by 17.26 % compared to 2013, and reached 15.53 million copies, mainly as a result of the destocking of older titles. With the aim of helping author services better manage their publications and thus improving cost-effectiveness, the Office has continued to encourage them to adopt more realistic initial print runs, maintain low stock volumes and use digital reprinting and/or print-on-demand services for subsequent needs.

Promotional activities

The social media accounts managed by the Office (Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn and YouTube) have continued to grow. These are not only drawing more traffic and interest in the Office's main websites but have also become a valued means through which users address queries and provide feedback.

The Office participated in several events, promoting both online services and publications. The Office's services were presented to EU visitors as well as to other groups, including a delegation from the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan and a delegation from public procurement authorities from Kenya.

The Publications Office pursued actions aimed to improve the author services' knowledge of copyright matters, especially regarding third-party copyright material and awareness of the reuse policy.

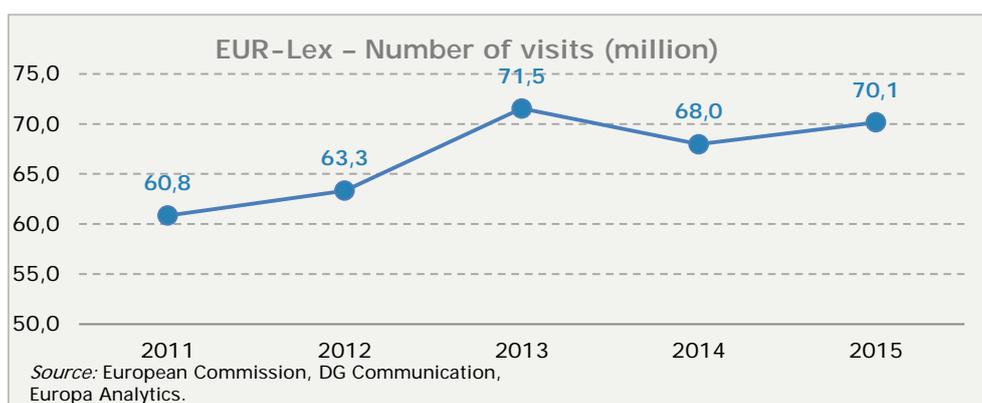
(7) To be renamed 'Access and reuse' as of 2017.

ABB activity: Public websites ⁽⁸⁾

EUR-Lex – the reference system for access to EU law

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based		
The European Union is provided with online access to law				
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015	
Number of visits to EUR-Lex website <i>Source of data:</i> European Commission, DG Communication, Europa analytics	67.3 million (2007)	70 million	70.1 million	
Percentage of Official Journals published as authentic on the EUR-Lex website <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C2	Not available (new indicator)	99.9 %	100 %	
Case-law documents published on EUR-Lex within the agreed deadline <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C2	Not available (new indicator)	100 %	e-Recueil document-by-document will be launched in 2016	
Main output in 2015:				
Description		Target 2015	Results 2015	
Access to EU law	Number of pages consulted on EUR-Lex website	190 million	191.3 million	
Reliable information service	Number of calls to EUR-Lex helpdesk	7 200 tickets	4 571 tickets	

Intensive work was done on EUR-Lex in order to improve the navigation and search experiences and to complete the collections available through the site. The collections have thus become exhaustive whilst making access to the information easier. The website is being further enriched by new document types related to legal procedures, which is one of the outcomes of one of the two pilot projects led by the Office, the PublicAccess.eu. Work has also continued on the addition of new-generation connectors providing access to national sites via N-Lex.



The previous EUR-Lex website, which was running in parallel since the opening of the new EUR-Lex website, was closed down on 31 December 2015 and the new EUR-Lex is now the reference site for EU law. The stabilisation of the new website is reflected in the number of helpdesk tickets which were significantly lower than they were initially.

Publication on EUR-Lex of the case-law documents will be agreed upon in a new Service Agreement with the Court of Justice once the document-by-document production of the e-Recueil is launched.

⁽⁸⁾ To be renamed 'Access and reuse' as of 2017.

OP Portal – the access to EU law and general publications

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
The access to EU law and general publications is facilitated			
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015
Number of visits to OP portal <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C1	Not available (new indicator 2015)	1 000 000	786 352
Number of visits coming from mobile devices <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C1	Not available (new indicator 2015)	150 000	110 089
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
Access by the general public to all the collections managed by the Publications Office	Number of pages consulted on OP portal	2 million	1.5 million

The Publications Office Portal (OP Portal), 'EU Law and Publications', was launched in March 2015. The portal replaces the internet site of the Publications Office and is available in the 24 official languages of the EU.

It aims at providing an easy-to-use single point of access to all the content managed by the Office (law, publications, procurement notices, contacts, vocabularies) as well as corporate information about the Publications Office. It gives access to EU law while a first set of general publications is already accessible. Adapted to modern web and mobility constraints, the portal supports users with tools for access to EU law and publications such as search, notifications, browse by subject or responsive design, and also interactivity of content like annotations, personalisation and rating.

Designed and built as a horizontal collection of dissemination services, this new internet platform marks a very important step in the digital transformation and rationalisation process.

Due to the launch in March of the OP Portal, the results are not comparable to the targets set for a full year.

TED – step up standardisation efforts in the area of public procurement

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based		
All tender notices are available in the Supplement to the Official Journal, from collection to dissemination on the TED website and other media, including assistance to the awarding authorities throughout the process				
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015	
Number of visits to TED website	9.2 million (2007)	12.5 million	13.6 million	
<i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C2				
Main output in 2015:				
Description		Target 2015	Results 2015	
Access to public procurement notices	Number of tender notices consulted on TED website	50 million	53.4 million	
	Percentage of tender notices published in the OJ S within the publication deadlines	99 %	99 %	
	Number of documentary units (notices) loaded on TED website during the year	440 000	463 821	

TED provides a unique access to business opportunities published by contracting authorities or entities which are subject to the EU public procurement directives. In 2015 work focused on creating the new public procurement standard forms as specified in the new public procurement directives and in adapting the associated technical systems in order to have them ready for use by Member States following the publication of the regulation on the new forms in November 2015.

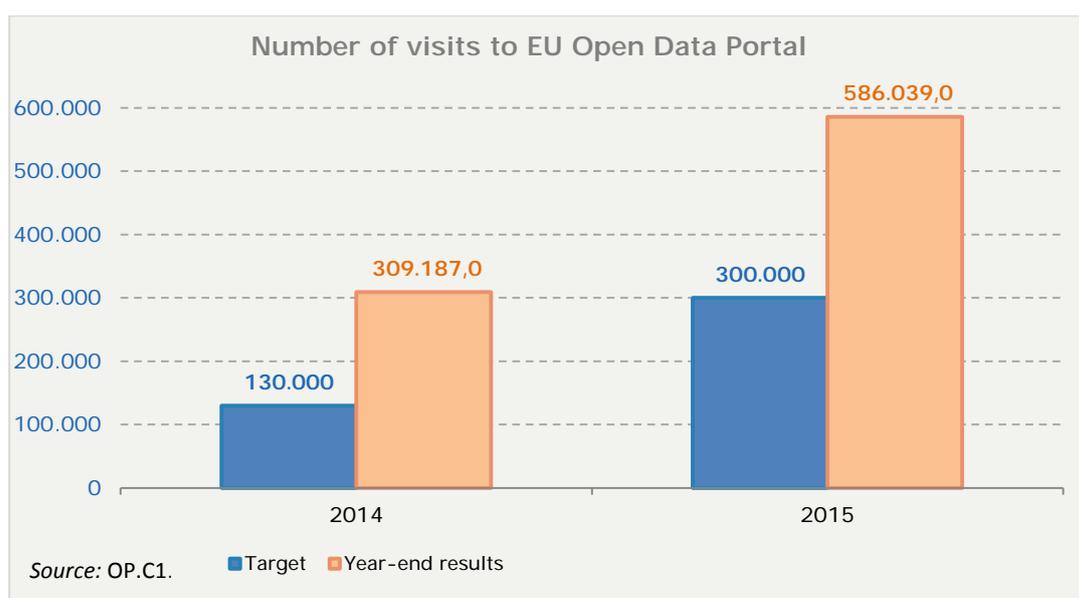
In the field of e-procurement, use of the eTendering platform (eAccess) continued to expand: 20 Directorate-Generals within the Commission, 3 within the European Parliament, the European Court of Auditors, the European Investment Bank and 14 agencies. Other Commission services, institutions (such as the Council and the Court of Justice) and agencies have also requested access. Regarding the downstream integration of eTendering with eSubmission in the eProcurement chain, improvements have been made in the interfaces between the two systems. The new support tool for eSenders was successfully put in production in November 2015.



EU Open Data Portal – reusable datasets from an increasing number of institutions and agencies

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
The dissemination and the reuse of public EU data is facilitated			
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015
Number of visits to EU Open Data Portal <i>Source of data:</i> European Commission, DG Communication, Europa analytics	309 187 (2014)	300 000	586 039
Percentage of users who find what they are looking for on the EU Open Data Portal <i>Source of data:</i> European Commission, DG Communication, Europa analytics	Not available (new indicator 2015)	60 % <i>(Depending on the availability of datasets from key players)</i>	46 %
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
Facilitate the dissemination and reuse of available EU data	Number of pages consulted on EU Open Data Portal	1 250 000	1 812 382
Increase the number of available EU datasets	Number of datasets on EU Open Data Portal (including availability of datasets from new major players such as EP and Council)	8 500	7 894

Since 2012, the Office is responsible for the development, hosting, maintenance and operational activities of the EU Open Data Portal, created by Commission Decision 2011/833/EU as the single point of access to open data held by the EU institutions, agencies and other bodies. The Office has been raising awareness about open data publishing, encouraging Commission services, EU institutions, agencies and other bodies to publish on the Open Data Portal and to increase the quantity and quality of datasets. The published data can be downloaded free of charge and reused by anyone. The Office gives data providers conceptual and operational support in the data publishing process. The Office pursues work to improve the features of the Portal, in particular enhancing its capabilities to discover and visualise datasets.



The number of visits has almost doubled compared to 2014. To be noted that the number of datasets exceeded 8 800 in September 2015, but was then affected by the discontinuation and reorganisation of datasets by the largest data provider (Eurostat).

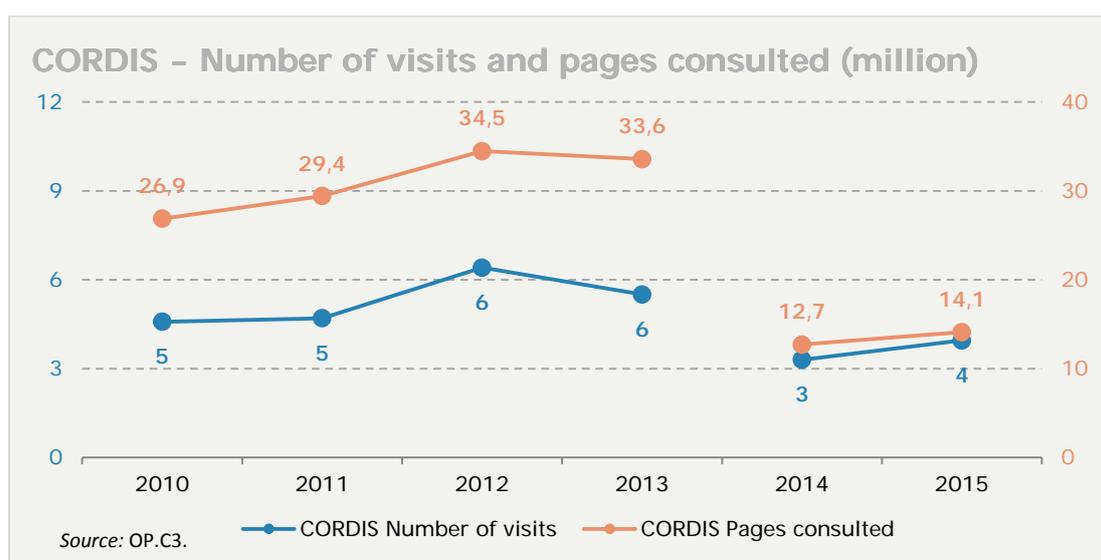
The relatively low percentage of users who found what they were looking for can mostly be explained by the fact that not all Commission services have yet identified and made available suitable data in their possession, as required by the Commission Decision on the reuse of its information. The Office promotes a reuse policy and works to increase the number of data providers from the Commission and other EU institutions.

CORDIS – the primary service for the dissemination and the reuse of EU-funded research results

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE		x Non programme-based	
EU-funded research projects and their results are disseminated in the broadest sense, and with improved access through the CORDIS website			
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015
Number of visits to CORDIS website <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C3	Not available (different calculating methodology as from 2014)	3.6 million	3.95 million
CORDIS user satisfaction rate (percentage of neutral and positive opinions expressed in the annual user survey) <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C3	Not available (new indicator 2015)	87 %	88.7 %
Main output in 2015:			
Description		Target 2015	Results 2015
Access to research results	Number of pages consulted on CORDIS website	14 million	14.1 million
Dissemination of research results	Number of research results available on CORDIS (cumulative FP6, FP7 and H2020).	25 500	33 059

Under the governance of the Horizon 2020 Common Support Centre at DG Research & Innovation, CORDIS consolidated its role as the European Commission primary public repository and service for the dissemination and the reuse of EU-funded research projects and their results. This role was confirmed by the College in the Horizon2020 Work Programme 2016-2017 and by the adopted strategy for effective dissemination and exploitation of research results.

With decades of very good internet search engine rankings, CORDIS remains a popular and trusted source of information (with the number of visits to the website increasing by 19.7 % compared to the previous year) and was a regular data provider to the EU Open Data Portal. The survey showed a high user satisfaction rate, i.e. 88.7 %.



The statistical tool changed in 2014. The results computed with the previous statistical tool are not comparable with the current ones.

EU Bookshop – free of charge online access to EU publications for all citizens

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based		
The full catalogue of EU publications is disseminated electronically				
Result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target 2015	Results 2015	
Number of visits to EU Bookshop website <i>Source of data:</i> Publications Office, Unit C3	0.5 million (2005)	1.8 million	1.84 million	
Main output in 2015:				
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015	
Dissemination of general publications	Number of pages consulted on EU Bookshop website	10 million	9.3 million	
Dissemination of e-books and publications on new types of media	Number of downloaded publications (pdf and epub)	1.3 million	1.21 million	

The direct and free of charge access to EU institutions general publications, studies and evaluations via the EU Bookshop website, allowing not only consultation but also download and print-on-demand, enhances the image of the Publications Office as a modern information provider. In 2015, the service continued to improve its user interface and introduced measures that both rationalise and increase cost-effectiveness of the distribution costs for online orders of free of charge publications.



The number of pages consulted remained more or less stable. Although in absolute terms the number of downloaded publications is higher than in 2014 (1 176 000), the 2015 target was missed due to the lower number of electronic publications (epub) downloads (less production in 2015), the website's switch to a new distribution platform and the measures put in place to rationalize and optimize distribution costs that caused a temporary decrease in the number of visits and downloads in the second and third quarters.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
An interinstitutional database following the lifecycle of all studies is put in place			
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
To ensure transparency in the field of EU-commissioned studies	Number of studies available for public consultation via EU Bookshop	5 600	6 276

The Office continued to support the dissemination of all public studies produced by the EU institutions by making them available on its EU Bookshop website. To further support the institutions in reducing duplication of studies and improving transparency, the Office also oversaw the development of an interinstitutional studies database. This is currently in a testing phase with the different institutions and it is expected to be launched into production in 2016. The studies database will enable users to manage the entire lifecycle of their studies, both public and confidential, from conception to publication, as well as to verify whether other similar studies are being undertaken, thus promoting synergies and cost-effectiveness.

PublicAccess.eu – online platform for the publication of EU institutions

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:		x Non programme-based	
Online platform for the publication of EU institutions unclassified documents			
Main output in 2015:			
Description	Indicator	Target 2015	Results 2015
Management of the pilot project	Launch of the pilot project 'PublicAccess.eu'	100 %	100 %

In 2015 the Publications Office started the implementation of the pilot project PublicAccess.eu, together with the Secretariat-General and the Directorate-General for Informatics of the European Commission. PublicAccess.eu has as main objective to devise ways to enable easier online access to a wider range of unclassified documents held by EU institutions, in order to increase transparency and limit the number of access to information requests.

In the initial phase, the main focus of the project is on documents related to legislative procedures, which are either unavailable to the public or dispersed over a number of different registers and websites.

While in 2015 actions have focused on the European Commission, in 2016 they will be broadened to include other institutions, in particular the European Parliament and the Council.

2. MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL

Assurance is an objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an assessment of the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

This examination is carried out by management, who monitors the functioning of the internal control systems on a continuous basis, and by internal and external auditors. Its results are explicitly documented and reported to the Director-General. The reports produced are:

- the reports by the authorising officers by subdelegation (including reports on the financial data and the main points concerning controls and risks, follow-up of actions on audit recommendations and significant problems);
- the reports from authorising officers of other Directorates-General who manage cross subdelegated budget appropriations;
- the quarterly reports to the Office's Management Committee;
- the reports of the ex post and second level ex ante financial controls;
- specific analyses performed by the Internal Control and Evaluation Unit;
- observations and recommendations of the Internal Audit Service (IAS);
- observations and recommendations reported by the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

This section reports the control results and other relevant elements that support management's assurance. It is structured into (a) Control results, (b) Audit observations and recommendations, (c) Effectiveness of the internal control system, and resulting in (d) Conclusions as regards assurance.

2.1 Control results

This section reports and assesses the elements identified by management that support the assurance on the achievement of the internal control objectives ⁽⁹⁾. The Publications Office's assurance building and materiality criteria are outlined in the Annex 4. Annex 5 outlines the main risks together with the control processes aimed to mitigate them and the indicators used to measure the performance of the control systems.

Financial resources managed by the Office fall into three types:

- administrative expenditure (salaries, buildings, etc.) managed through the Office's own budget, which is annexed to that of the Commission;
- operational expenditure including financing from within the Office's own budget and other budget lines delegated to the Director-General of the Office;
- under the supervision of its Management Committee, the Office is responsible for publications financed by other EU institutions, agencies or Commission services. These transactions comprise payments for the Official Journal L and C series; sales revenue received and then transferred to the institutions and services concerned; and expenditure related to production, storage and dissemination of publications incurred on behalf of other services.

⁽⁹⁾ Effectiveness, efficiency and economy of operations; reliability of reporting; safeguarding of assets and information; prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities; and adequate management of the risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, taking into account the multiannual character of programmes as well as the nature of the payments [Article 32 of Regulation (EU) No 966/2012].

In 2015, the Director-General of the Office also managed cross subdelegated budget appropriations for the following main activities:

- **CORDIS**: payments under the seventh framework programme were made on completion budget lines in cross subdelegation received from three Commission Directorates-General;
- the **JURE** collection ⁽¹⁰⁾, financed on a cross subdelegation received from DG Justice;
- **ISA Action** ⁽¹¹⁾, financed on a cross subdelegation received from DG Informatics.

Within the Office, a partly decentralised financial circuit is applied and a simplified payment workflow was introduced for low-risk items. Following a reorganisation in 2015, the budget cells formerly attached to Directorates were merged into the Finance Unit.

Cross subdelegations were given to DG Informatics within the pilot project PublicAccess.eu and to the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Luxembourg for the building management expenditure ⁽¹²⁾.

Coverage of the internal control objectives and their related main indicators

- ***Control effectiveness as regards legality and regularity***

The Publications Office has set up internal control processes aimed to ensure the adequate management of the risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, taking into account the multiannual character of programmes as well as the nature of the payments concerned.

In order to ensure that procurement procedures do not lead to incorrect attribution of contracts, the Office maintains a Comité des achats et marchés (CAM) to give an opinion to the Authorising Officers by Subdelegation about the attribution decision and its basis. The committee delivered 28 opinions. The responses to its remarks were followed up and were found satisfactory.

In order to mitigate the risk of improper implementation of contracts, in 6 cases, liquidated damages in the value of EUR 27 912.23, concerning 6 contracts, were applied by the operational services.

To ensure that commitments and payments are legal and regular, the Financial Control section of the Internal Control and Evaluation Unit carries out two types of control of specific financial transactions: controls that are made before signature of the transaction (ex ante) and controls on completed transactions (ex post).

Both verifications are organised on a sample basis. The sampling used is a mixture of random, monetary unit and risk-based methods. The target sampling rate is 25 % for ex ante controls and 15 % for ex post controls, but the actual sampling rate is determined by the sampling process based on risk levels of the controlled areas. The target sampling rates were complied with in 2015.

All transactions with errors were examined in detail and recommendations were formulated.

⁽¹⁰⁾ The JURE ('Jurisdiction, recognition and enforcement') collection contains the case-law delivered by the courts of the contracting States and of the Court of Justice of the European Union relating to the 2007 Lugano Convention and several other legal instruments pertaining to judicial cooperation in civil and commercial matters.

⁽¹¹⁾ ISA: Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations.

⁽¹²⁾ The cross subdelegation to OIL was used for the payment of the *reste-à-liquider* (RAL) of 2014.

The financial control results can be extrapolated to determine the amount at risk; given the partially risk based sampling method, this represents a conservative estimate.

Controls carried out in the Office and the indicators in Section 2 cover the management of all types of financial resources, including revenues, the great majority of which come from other EU institutions and bodies.

In the context of the protection of the EU budget, at the Commission's corporate level, the DGs' estimated overall amounts at risk and their estimated future corrections are consolidated.

For the Publications Office, the estimated overall amount at risk for the 2015 payments made is 0.001 M€. This is the Authorising Officer by Delegation's best, conservative estimation of the amount of expenditure authorised during the year (111 366 M€) not in conformity with the applicable contractual and regulatory provisions at the time the payment is made.

As the Office implements no programmes where ex post controls of external entities, which would give rise to recoveries in subsequent years, are conducted and the error rate is low, the corrective capacity is insignificant.

Publications Office	Scope (FY; € million)	Error rate (%)	Amount at risk (FY; € million)
Activity-level	as per AAR annex 3, table 2	Detected error rate	= (2) x (3)
Payments	111 366	0.001 %	0.001

- ***Efficiency and cost-effectiveness***

Based on an assessment of the most relevant key indicators and control results, the Publications Office has assessed the cost-effectiveness and the efficiency of the control system and reached a positive conclusion.

The Office produced cost estimations of the main control processes on the Office level and not on individual internal control template or stage level. The reason is twofold:

- on one hand, the Office's recoveries do not represent revenues for the EU as whole, as they are transferred by the Commission services, institutions and bodies of the EU (under Article 21(3)(e) FR); and
- on the other hand, the control is integrated both as a process and as far as human resources are concerned (recoveries are less than 10 % of the total value of the transactions controlled although, as both commitments and payments are controlled, this does not mean that they are less than 10 % of budget) and thus a separation of costs would not be feasible.

Public procurement control procedures

For procurements, an estimated EUR 0.64 million were invested in controlling 17 procurement procedures with a total value of EUR 42.7 million. Thus 1.5 % of the total contract value was dedicated to control. Last years' figures (when the 20 procedures controlled were valued at 60.2 million) excluded procurement controls by operational units estimated at EUR 0.4 million and therefore are not comparable to this year.

Financial circuits procedures

For financial circuits, an estimated EUR 1.56 million were invested in controlling 5 314 financial transactions worth EUR 180.1 million, out of which EUR 55.2 million represented payments. Thus 2.83 % of the total payment amount was dedicated to control. Each financial transaction controlled cost an estimated EUR 294. In 2014, the values were 2.33 % and 285 EUR respectively.

The time to pay was 12.2 days on average.

Financial control procedures

For ex post and second level ex ante financial control, an estimated EUR 0.52 million were invested in controlling 1 243 financial transactions worth an estimated EUR 157.9 million. Thus 0.32 % of the total value of transactions checked ex post was dedicated to control. Each transaction or procedure checked ex post cost an estimated EUR 415. In 2014, the values were 0.39 % and EUR 445 respectively.

Overall controls

Overall controls (including control of procurement and evaluation) cost EUR 3.4 million, estimated at 6.11 % of the payment volume. In 2014, the proportion was 4.27 %, but excluded procurement controls by operational units, estimated at 0.73 % of the payment amount.

Conclusion

In non-financial terms, the benefits of control include better value for money, deterrent and preventive effects, efficiency gains, system improvements and compliance with regulatory provisions.

To reach a conclusion on the relative efficiency of controls, it is necessary to analyse the evolution of these efficiency indicators over time and/or compare them to relevant benchmarks. Comparison of financial control results and the proportion of exceptions to materiality criteria, as well as of the time to pay to legal requirements, indicates that controls are effective.

Taking into account the historical error rate shortly after having started the second level ex ante and the ex post controls, which was between 5 and 7%, it can be assumed that the costs of controls are lower than the benefits which are the avoided errors. The changes between the years in percentages and costs per transaction originate from the difference in number and value of the transactions.

The procurement, commitment and payment procedures are, to a large extent, a regulatory requirement which cannot be curtailed. Therefore, the Office considers that the necessity of these controls is undeniable as shown by the risks outlined in Annex 5, as a significant proportion of the appropriations would be at risk, should they not be in place. Where possible, controls are already made on a sampling basis, applying risk-based sampling. Furthermore, second level ex-ante controls are only conducted during critical periods and when the result of these controls is not satisfactory.

The Office is reviewing its processes to update the risk assessment and to identify further efficiencies. This will lead to an improvement in the cost-effectiveness of controls.

• ***Fraud prevention and detection***

The Publications Office has developed and implemented its own anti-fraud strategy since 2013, elaborated on the basis of the methodology provided by OLAF. It has to be updated every three years.

The controls aimed at preventing and detecting fraud are not essentially unlike those intended to ensure the legality and regularity of transactions.

In order to identify risk of fraud, the Office screens the Register of exceptions and the transactions where errors have a financial consequence, as identified by financial controls, and subjects them to more in-depth analysis.

Eight cases identified by financial control, representing a total value of EUR 206 015, with a financial consequence of EUR 37 491, were controlled in depth. No indication of risk of fraud was found.

During the reporting year, 10 entries in the Register of exceptions, covering penalties and other contract condition overrides, considered as fraud prevention indicators, were analysed. This represented 0.29 % of the total number and 0.33 % of the total value of exceptions registered. This is lower than the materiality limit. The analysis of these cases did not lead to a suspicion of fraud.

Our conclusion is that the anti-fraud strategy of the Office is comprehensive and reliable. Its periodical review is foreseen for 2016.

One case was transmitted to the attention of OLAF.

- ***Other control objectives: safeguarding of assets and information***

The main assets of the Office are in the IT domain. Information is also mainly stored electronically. Thus, controls for safeguarding of assets and information complement each other. They comprise mainly control of access to IT equipment. Access to the computing centre is protected, access to the rooms of the telecommunications network is only permitted to staff duly authorised according to the needs. Access to applications is protected by user IDs and passwords. Access is centrally managed by Unit A4 (IT Infrastructure and Security) and needs the authorisation of the hierarchical supervisor and of the security responsible.

Daily backup and a secondary site ensure safeguarding of information and business continuity.

Unused material, equipment and archives are stored in secure locations. An inventory is carried out every year and a procedure for missing assets is in force to handle discrepancies. All write-offs of assets have to be endorsed by a committee consisting of delegates of the Directorates-General in Luxembourg which manage assets and a president independent from asset management.

There were no cases of security breach and all write-off requests to the write-off committee have been authorised.

The Office has implemented the secure transfer from the Commission of legislative documents to be published in the Official Journal; secure transfer from the Council of legislative documents to be published in the Official Journal is ready to be put into production.

2.2 Audit observations and recommendations

This section reports and assesses the observations, opinions and conclusions reported by auditors in their reports as well as the opinion of the Internal Auditor on the state of control, which could have a material impact on the achievement of the internal control objectives, and therefore on assurance, together with any management measures taken in response to the audit recommendations.

The Office is audited by both internal and external independent auditors: the Commission Internal Audit Service (IAS) and the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

During the period of reference, the IAS did not conduct a specific audit at the Office. The Office did implement three of the four recommendations of the horizontal audit on management and supervision of contracts for the outsourced IT services, carried out in 2014.

The IAS also took over the follow-up of selected recommendations made by the Internal Audit Capability of the Office in its audits prior to centralisation of internal audit. All recommendations reported as implemented by the Office were closed by the IAS.

Furthermore, the European Court of Auditors examined the reliability of the internal control systems of the Office. The ECA observations did not include issues related to transactions, control systems or the management representations in the Annual Activity Report.

As regards the implementation of recommendations issued in previous years, the relevant action plans are being implemented; no recommendations affecting assurance are overdue. One very important recommendation is open, concerning the streamlining and focus of evaluations preceding the renewal of contracts. A draft new procedure is under approval, and a new, more focussed questionnaire will be used in 2016. Another recommendation concerning Official Journal production was downgraded to important

following measures taken by the Office and the partial implementation and will be fully implemented in April 2016. Consequently, the current state-of-play does not lead to assurance-related concerns.

2.3 Assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control systems

The Commission has adopted a set of internal control standards, based on international good practice, aimed to ensure the achievement of policy and operational objectives. In addition, as regards financial management, compliance with these standards is a compulsory requirement.

The Publications Office has put in place the organisational structure and the internal control systems suited to the achievement of the policy and control objectives, in accordance with the standards and having due regard to the risks associated with the environment in which it operates.

Financial control results show that there are no material risks in financial operations and that first level operational and financial controls are satisfactory.

Analysis of the Register of exceptions shows that the number of exceptions is insignificant and there is no specific risk.

The Evaluation section of the Internal Control and Evaluation Unit carries out evaluations, assists in the evaluations carried out by other units and monitors the completion of evaluations by units for contracts where the section is not involved in the evaluation.

The result of this monitoring shows that the evaluations are conducted according to the procedure defined by the Director-General.

The evaluations contributed to the quality of preparation of renewed contracts and showed that objectives of the actions evaluated were attained.

The internal control coordinator has analysed the information available from the sources indicated above, including a desk review of the exceptions register and discussion with all heads of unit in the Publications Office.

In conclusion, the internal control standards are effectively implemented and functioning.

2.4 Conclusions as regards assurance

This section reviews the assessment of the elements reported above (in Sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) and draws conclusions supporting the declaration of assurance and whether it should be qualified with reservations.

The information reported in Section 2 stems from the results of management and auditor monitoring contained in the reports listed. These reports result from a systematic analysis of the evidence available. This approach provides sufficient guarantees as to the completeness and reliability of the information reported and results in a comprehensive coverage of the budget delegated to the Director-General of the Publications Office.

Results of controls of procurement, financial control and the analysis of exceptions support the conclusion that resources are used for the intended purpose and operations of the Publications Office are legal and regular.

Analysis of the control results and evaluation activities ensure sound financial management; the measures taken to protect information and assets also support the declaration of assurance.

The follow-up of audit recommendations, assessment of the internal control systems and implementation of the anti-fraud strategy ensure that the control systems work as intended and fraud is prevented and detected.

Overall conclusion

In conclusion, management has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable controls are in place and working as intended, risks are being appropriately monitored and mitigated, and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented. The Director-General, in her capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation, has signed the declaration of assurance.

3. Declaration of assurance

DECLARATION OF ASSURANCE

I, the undersigned,

Director-General of the Publications Office,

In my capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation,

Declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view ⁽¹³⁾.

State that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of the self-assessment, ex post controls, the opinion of the Internal Auditor on the state of control for years prior to the year of this declaration.

Confirm that I am not aware of anything not reported here which could harm the interests of the institution.

Luxembourg, 31 March 2016

(signed)

Eva BEŇOVÁ

(acting)

⁽¹³⁾ True and fair in this context means a reliable, complete and correct view on the state of affairs in the service.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Statement of the Resources Director

I declare that in accordance with the Commission's communication on clarification of the responsibilities of the key actors in the domain of internal audit and internal control in the Commission ⁽¹⁴⁾, I have reported my advice and recommendations to the Director-General on the overall state of internal control in the DG.

I hereby certify that the information provided in Section 2 of the present AAR and in its annexes is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and exhaustive.

Luxembourg, 31 March 2016

(signed)

Eva BEŇOVÁ

⁽¹⁴⁾ Communication to the Commission: Clarification of the responsibilities of the key actors in the domain of internal audit and internal control in the Commission [SEC(2003)59 of 21.01.2003].

ANNEX 2: Human and financial resources

Human resources (by ABB¹ activity and type of contract) at 31/12/2015

ABB Activity Code	ABB Activity	Human Resources		
		Establishment plan posts	Estimates of external personnel (in full-time equivalent units)	Total
26 AWBL-11	Administrative support	120	6	126
26 AWBL-12	Production	280	5	285
26 AWBL-14	Cataloguing and archiving	105	4	109
26 AWBL-15	Physical distribution and promotion	21	1	22
26 AWBL-13	Public websites	104	5	109
Total		630	21	651

(¹) Activity Based Budgeting.

Financial resources by ABB activity – Budget implementation 2015 (in EUR, commitment appropriations C1+C4+C5 credits)

ABB Activity Budget line	Budget line description	Available credits ¹	Committed credits	% committed / available
PRODUCTION				
26.010900.010201	External staff (administrative assistance)	1 032 500	1 032 500	100.00%
26.010900.0201	Production	6 579 027	4 469 734	67.94%
26.0110	Consolidation of Union law	1 415 000	1 414 983	100.00%
26.0111	Official Journal of the European Union (L and C)	10 055 951	9 308 407	92.57%
26.0112	Summaries of Union legislation	1 491 772	1 477 720	99.06%
26.0201	Procedures for awarding and advertising public supply, works and service contracts (OJ S)	8 497 888	8 418 926	99.07%
16.030204	Budget line subdelegated to the Publications Office by DG COMM (publication services)	1 100 000	1 100 000	100.00%
33.0302	Budget line subdelegated to the Publications Office by DG JUST (JURE Collection)	15 000	14 960	99.73%
	Budget lines co-delegated to the Publications Office for publication services	702 459	702 459	100.00%
TOTAL PRODUCTION		30 889 598	27 939 690	90.45%
CATALOGUING AND ARCHIVING				
26.010900.0202	Cataloguing and archiving	1 902 180	1 879 581	98.81%
26.0111	Official Journal of the European Union (L and C)	2 717 050	2 515 069	92.57%
26.037703	PublicAccess.eu	650 000	650 000	100.00%
26.037705	Promoting linked open data	500 000	500 000	100.00%
TOTAL CATALOGUING AND ARCHIVING		5 769 230	5 544 649	96.11%
PHYSICAL DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION				
26.010900.0203	Physical distribution and promotion	6 041 608	5 077 621	84.04%
26.0201	Procedures for awarding and advertising public supply, works and service contracts (OJ S)	111 425	111 425	100.00%
TOTAL PHYSICAL DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION		6 153 033	5 189 046	84.33%
PUBLIC WEBSITES				
26.010900.0204	Public websites	3 335 080	3 314 035	99.37%
26.0111	Official Journal of the European Union (L and C)	1 366 882	1 265 270	92.57%
26.0201	Procedures for awarding and advertising public supply, works and service contracts (OJ S)	394 175	394 175	100.00%
26.037703	PublicAccess.eu	350 000	350 000	100.00%
08.0205	Budget line co-delegated to the Publications Office for CORDIS	5 000 000	5 000 000	100.00%
26.030101	Budget line subdelegated to the Publications Office by DG DIGIT – ISA Actions	340 000	340 000	100.00%
TOTAL PUBLIC WEBSITES		10 786 137	10 663 480	98.86%

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT				
26.010900.010100	Expenditure related to staff in active employment	54 989 663	54 970 408	99.96%
26.010900.010201	External staff	1 202 506	1 202 506	100.00%
26.010900.010211	Other management expenditure	449 264	440 144	97.97%
26.010900.016000	Documentation and library expenditure	3 000	3 000	100.00%
Subtotal Human Resources		56 644 433	56 616 058	99.95%
26.010900.010300	Buildings and related expenditure ⁽²⁾	14 429 729	14 421 594	99.94%
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT		71 074 162	71 037 652	99.95%

TOTAL PUBLICATIONS OFFICE	124 672 160	120 374 518	96.55%
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Production

Value of author accounts invoices (invoicing by institution, agency or body)	6 467 169
Value of sales invoices issued	65 041

Total Publications Office + value of author accounts and sales invoices **126 906 728**

¹ Including transfers and reassignments made in 2015.

² Including budget co-delegated to OIL (EUR 9 487 996), DG DIGIT (EUR 199 650) and OIB (EUR 83 900)

Note

Total committed credits (delegated + subdelegated lines)	120 374 518
CORDIS co-delegated commitments	-5 000 000
Publication services co-delegated commitments	-702 459
DG JUST subdelegation commitments	-14 960
DG DIGIT subdelegation commitments	-340 000
DG COMM subdelegation commitments	-1 100 000

Total committed credits on delegated lines (see Annex 3, Table 1, Commitments) **113 217 099**

ANNEX 3: Draft annual accounts and financial reports

Annex 3 Financial reports – DG OP – Financial year 2015

Table 1: Commitments

Table 2: Payments

Table 3: Commitments to be settled

Table 4: Balance sheet

Table 5: Statement of financial performance

Table 6: Average payment times

Table 7: Income

Table 8: Recovery of undue payments

Table 9: Ageing balance of recovery orders

Table 10: Waivers of recovery orders

Table 11: Negotiated procedures (excluding building contracts)

Table 12: Summary of procedures (excluding building contracts)

Table 13: Building contracts

Table 14: Contracts declared secret

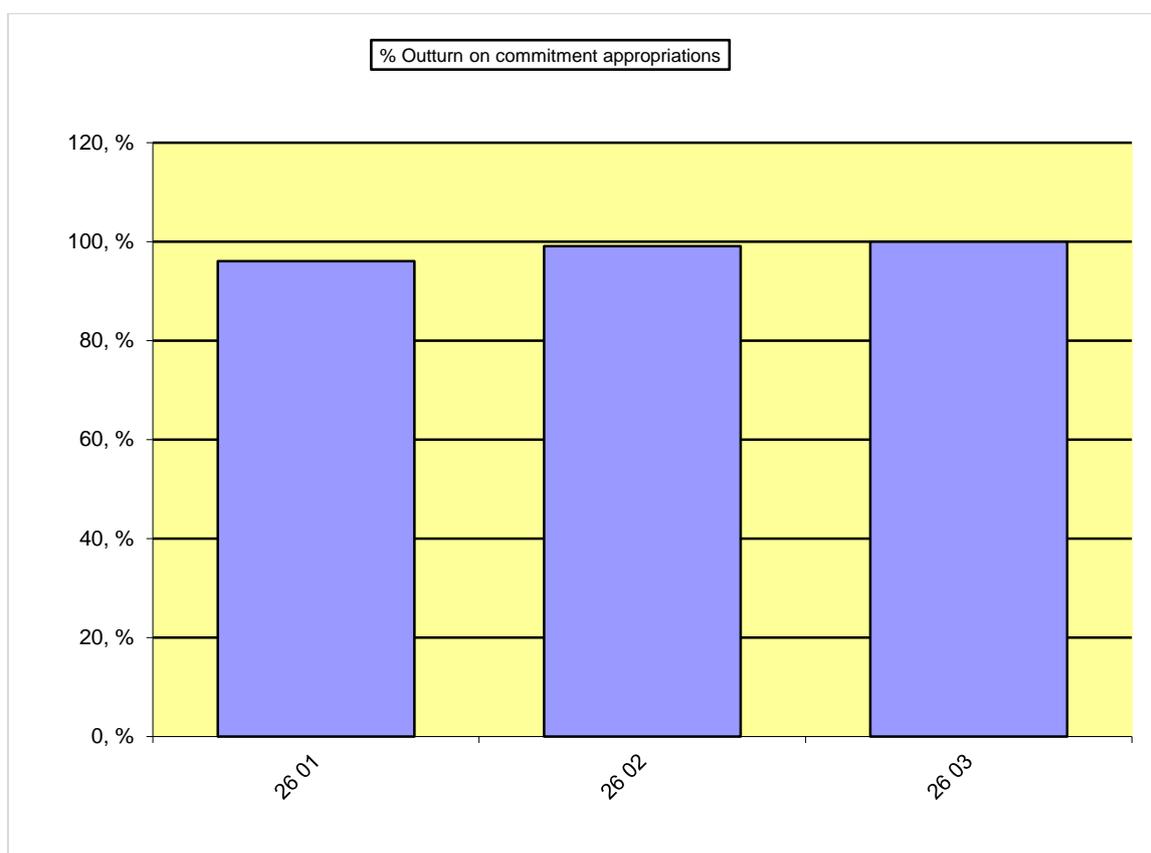
Additional comments

Annex 3 is reproduced 'as is' from accounting documents supplied by European Commission's Directorate-General for Budget. Not all information supplied can be fully checked by the Publications Office. However, the main comments identified are detailed below.

It should be noted that, in the recovery context report (Table 8), most of the recovery orders issued by the Office concern services provided in accordance with Article 21(3)(e) of the Financial Regulation, therefore they are not to be considered as errors.

TABLE 1: OUTTURN ON COMMITMENT APPROPRIATIONS IN 2015 (in Mio €)					
			Commitment appropriations authorised(*)	Commitments made	%
			1	2	3=2/1
Title 26 Commission's administration					
26	26 01	Administrative expenditure of the Commission's administration policy area	107.01	102.79	96.06%
	26 02	Multimedia production	9.00	8.92	99.11%
	26 03	Services to public administrations, businesses and citizens	1.50	1.50	100%
Total Title 26			117.52	113.22	96.34%
Total DG OP			117.52	113.22	96.34%

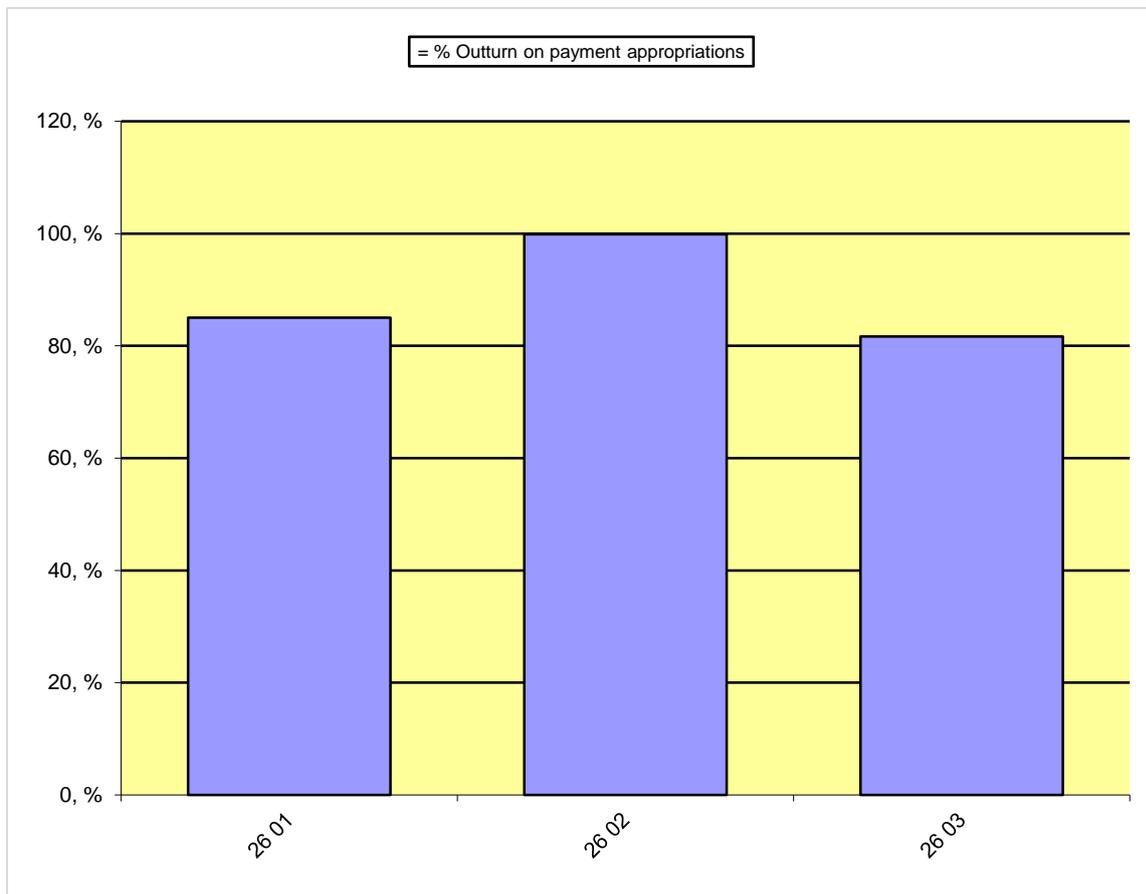
(*) Commitment appropriations authorised include, in addition to the budget voted by the legislative authority, appropriations carried over from the previous exercise, budget amendments as well as miscellaneous commitment appropriations for the period (e.g. internal and external assigned revenue).



Note: The figures are those related to the provisional accounts and not yet audited by the Court of Auditors.

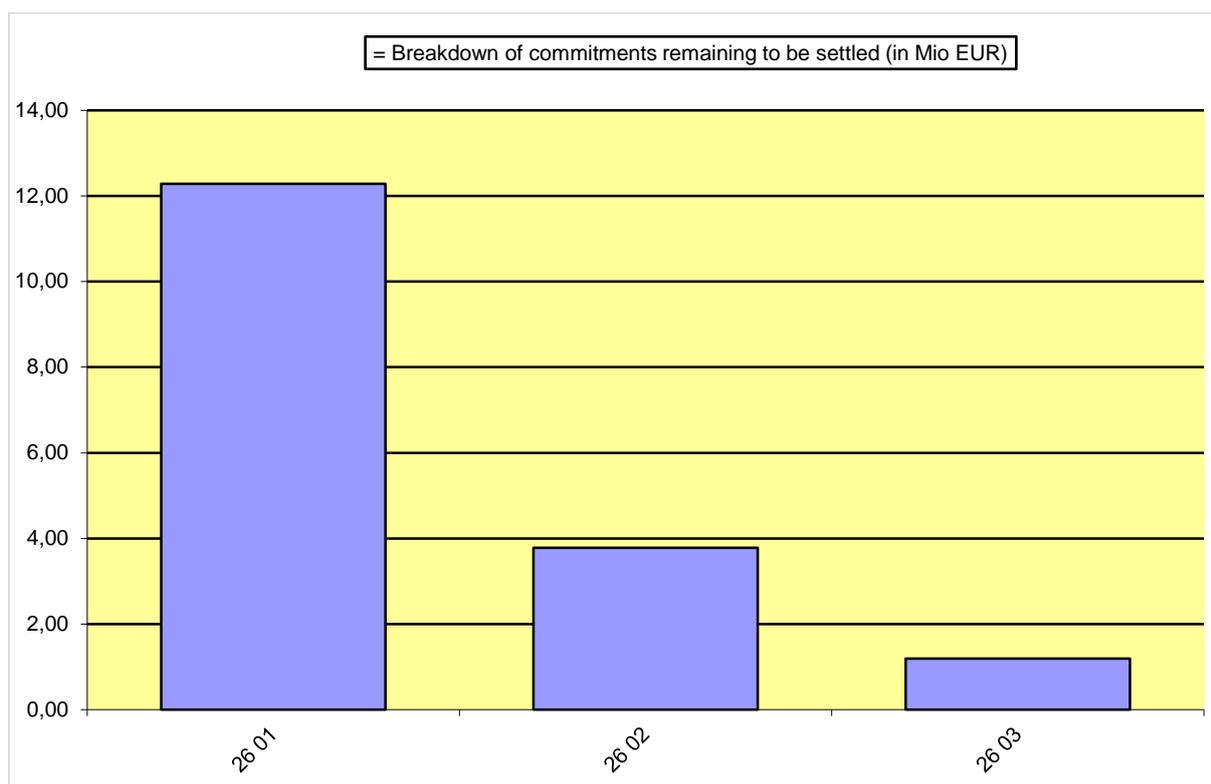
TABLE 2: OUTTURN ON PAYMENT APPROPRIATIONS IN 2015 (in Mio €)					
Chapter			Payment appropriations authorised (*)	Payments made	%
			1	2	3=2/1
Title 26: Commission's administration					
26	26 01	Administrative expenditure of the Commission's administration policy area	120.46	102.45	85.04%
	26 02	Multimedia production	8.62	8.61	99.86%
	26 03	Services to public administrations, businesses and citizens	0.38	0.31	81.67%
Total Title 26			129.46	111.37	86.02%
Total DG OP			129.46	111.37	86.02%

(*) Payment appropriations authorised include, in addition to the budget voted by the legislative authority, appropriations carried over from the previous exercise, budget amendments as well as miscellaneous payment appropriations for the period (e.g. internal and external assigned revenue).



Note: The figures are those related to the provisional accounts and not yet audited by the Court of Auditors.

TABLE 3: BREAKDOWN OF COMMITMENTS TO BE SETTLED AT 31/12/2015 (in Mio €)									
			2015 Commitments to be settled				Commitments to be settled from financial years previous to 2015	Total of commitments to be settled at end of financial year 2015 (including corrections)	Total of commitments to be settled at end of financial year 2014 (including corrections)
Chapter			Commitments 2015	Payments 2015	RAL 2015	% to be settled			
			1	2	3=1-2	4=1-2/1	5	6=3+5	7
Title 26: Commission's administration									
26	26 01	Administrative expenditure of the Commission's administration policy area	102.79	90.51	12.28	11.95%	0.00	12.28	13.45
	26 02	Multimedia production	8.92	5.28	3.65	40.88%	0.13	3.78	3.62
	26 03	Services to public administrations, businesses and citizens	1.50	0.31	1.19	79.37%	0.00	1.19	0.00
Total Title 26			113.22	96.09	17.12	15.12%	0.13	17.25	17.07
Total DG OP			113.22	96.09	17.12	15.12%	0.13	17.25	17.07



Note: The figures are those related to the provisional accounts and not yet audited by the Court of Auditors.

TABLE 4: BALANCE SHEET

BALANCE SHEET	2015	2014
A.I. NON CURRENT ASSETS	9 699 376.34	9 440 133.11
A.I.1. Intangible assets	4 392 099.91	5 036 772.47
A.I.2. Property, plant and equipment	5 307 276.43	4 403 360.64
A.II. CURRENT ASSETS	8 694 502.78	4 255 483.31
A.II.1. Inventories	7 705 387.12	3 527 681.63
A.II.4. Exchange receivables	860 028.65	115 200.27
A.II.5. Non-exchange receivables	90 803.33	517 685.30
A.II.7. Cash and cash equivalents	38 283.68	94 916.11
ASSETS	18 393 879.12	13 695 616.42
P.II. NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	-1 875 924.94	-637 857.02
P.II.2. Long-term provisions	-121 142.26	-112 690.36
P.II.3. Long-term financial liabilities	-1 754 782.68	-525 166.66
P.III. CURRENT LIABILITIES	-10 482 402.13	-9 487 687.73
P.III.3. Short-term financial liabilities	-603 926.42	-244 522.40
P.III.4. Accounts payable	-352 092.72	-155 376.53
P.III.5. Accrued charges and deferred income	-9 526 382.99	-9 087 788.80
LIABILITIES	-12 358 327.07	-10 125 544.75
NET ASSETS (ASSETS less LIABILITIES)	6 035 552.05	3 570 071.67

P.I.2. Accumulated surplus/deficit	64 160 292.37	20 480 983.31
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Non-allocated central (surplus)/deficit*	-70 195 844.42	-24 051 054.98
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TOTAL	0.00	0.00
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Note: It should be noted that the balance sheet and statement of financial performance presented in Annex 3 to this Annual Activity Report represent only the assets, liabilities, expenses and revenues that are under the control of this Directorate-General. Significant amounts such as own resource revenues and cash held in Commission bank accounts are not included in this Directorate-General's accounts since they are managed centrally by DG Budget, on whose balance sheet and statement of financial performance they appear. Furthermore, since the accumulated result of the Commission is not split amongst the various Directorates-General, it can be seen that the balance sheet presented here is not in equilibrium.

Additionally, the figures included in tables 4 and 5 are provisional since they are, at this date, still subject to audit by the Court of Auditors. It is thus possible that amounts included in these tables may have to be adjusted following this audit.

TABLE 5: STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE	2015	2014
II.1 REVENUES	-22 148 158.77	-20 810 496.84
II.1.1. NON-EXCHANGE REVENUES	-41 312.23	-68 325.32
II.1.1.6. OTHER NON-EXCHANGE REVENUES	-41 312.23	-68 325.32
II.1.2. EXCHANGE REVENUES	-22 106 846.54	-20 742 171.52
II.1.2.1. FINANCIAL INCOME	629.78	80.45
II.1.2.2. OTHER EXCHANGE REVENUE	-22 107 476.32	-20 742 251.97
II.2. EXPENSES	60 477 045.98	64 414 092.4
II.2. EXPENSES	60 477 045.98	64 414 092.4
II.2.10. OTHER EXPENSES	41 488 070.56	44 205 559.38
II.2.2. EXP IMPLM BY COMMISS&EX.AGENC. (DM)	19 754 762.55	21 320 298.01
II.2.6. STAFF AND PENSION COSTS	-840 893.55	-992 134.55
II.2.8. FINANCE COSTS	75 106.42	-119 630.44
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE	38 328 887.21	43 603 595.56

Note: It should be noted that the balance sheet and statement of financial performance presented in Annex 3 to this Annual Activity Report, represent only the assets, liabilities, expenses and revenues that are under the control of this Directorate-General. Significant amounts such as own resource revenues and cash held in Commission bank accounts are not included in this Directorate-General's accounts since they are managed centrally by DG Budget, on whose balance sheet and statement of financial performance they appear. Furthermore, since the accumulated result of the Commission is not split amongst the various Directorates-General, it can be seen that the balance sheet presented here is not in equilibrium.

Additionally, the figures included in tables 4 and 5 are provisional since they are, at this date, still subject to audit by the Court of Auditors. It is thus possible that amounts included in these tables may have to be adjusted following this audit.

TABLE 6: AVERAGE PAYMENT TIMES FOR 2015 – DG OP

Legal times							
Maximum payment time (days)	Total number of payments	Number of payments within time limit	Percentage	Average payment times (days)	Number of late payments	Percentage	Average payment times (days)
30	3 702	3 694	99.78 %	11.88	8	0.22 %	38.38
60	564	563	99.82 %	14.32	1	0.18 %	64.00

Total number of payments	4 266	4 257	99.79 %		9	0.21 %	
Average payment time	12.26			12.20			41.22

Target times							
Target payment time (days)	Total number of payments	Number of payments within target time	Percentage	Average payment times (days)	Number of late payments	Percentage	Average payment times (days)
30	830	829	99.88 %	12.01	1	0.12 %	38.00

Total number of payments	830	829	99.88 %		1	0.12 %	
Average payment time	12.04			12.01			38.00

Suspensions							
Average report approval suspension days	Average payment suspension days	Number of suspended payments	% of total number	Total number of payments	Amount of suspended payments	% of total amount	Total paid amount
0	25	45	1.05 %	4 266	705 349.97	1.28 %	55 159 959.12

Late interest paid in 2015			
DG	GL Account	Description	Amount (EUR)

Note: The figures are those related to the provisional accounts and not yet audited by the Court of Auditors.

TABLE 7: SITUATION ON REVENUE AND INCOME IN 2015									
Chapter	Revenue and income recognized			Revenue and income cashed from			Outstanding balance		
	Current year RO	Carried over RO	Total	Current Year RO	Carried over RO	Total			
	1	2	3=1+2	4	5	6=4+5			
50	24 868.76	0	24 868.76	24 868.76	0	24 868.76	0		
55	11 545 645.34	21 666.62	11 567 311.96	11 471 356	21 666.62	11 493 022.62	74 289.34		
57	2 763.18	1 349.95	4 113.13	2 763.18	1 349.95	4 113.13	0		
66	2 989 748.07	87 522.15	3 077 270.22	2 912 023.85	87 522.15	2 999 546	77 724.22		
90	14 300	0	14 300	0	0	0	14 300		
Total DG OP	14 577 325.35	110 538.72	14 687 864.07	14 411 011.79	110 538.72	14 521 550.51	166 313.56		

Note: The figures are those related to the provisional accounts and not yet audited by the Court of Auditors.

TABLE 8: RECOVERY OF PAYMENTS
(Number of recovery contexts and corresponding transaction amount)

INCOME BUDGET RECOVERY ORDERS ISSUED IN 2015	Total undue payments recovered		Total transactions in recovery context (incl. non-qualified)		% Qualified/Total RC	
	Nr	RO Amount	Nr	RO Amount	Nr	RO Amount
Year of Origin (commitment)						
2014			298	831 634.45		
2015			492	2 917 401.29		
No Link			29	7 823 211.41		
Sub-total			819	11 572 247.15		

EXPENSES BUDGET	Error		Irregularity		OLAF Notified		Total undue payments recovered		Total transactions in recovery context (incl. non-qualified)		% Qualified/Total RC	
	Nr	Amount	Nr	Amount	Nr	Amount	Nr	Amount	Nr	Amount	Nr	Amount
INCOME LINES IN INVOICES									6	4 249.05		
NON ELIGIBLE IN COST CLAIMS												
CREDIT NOTES	25	33 138.23					25	33 138.23	332	2 244 525.71	7.53%	1.48 %
Sub-total	25	33 138.23					25	33 138.23	338	2 248 774.76	7.40%	1.47 %
GRAND TOTAL	25	33 138.23					25	33 138.23	1157	13 821 021.91	2.16%	0.24 %

Note: The figures are those related to the provisional accounts and not yet audited by the Court of Auditors.

TABLE 9: AGEING BALANCE OF RECOVERY ORDERS AT 31/12/2015 FOR OP

	Number at 01/01/2015	Number at 31/12/2015	Evolution	Open amount (EUR) at 01/01/2015	Open amount (EUR) at 31/12/2015	Evolution
2014	16		- 100.00 %	110 538.72		- 100.00 %
2015		18			166 313.56	
	16	18	12.50 %	110 538.72	166 313.56	50.46 %

Note: The figures are those related to the provisional accounts and not yet audited by the Court of Auditors.

TABLE 10: RECOVERY ORDER WAIVERS IN 2015 >= EUR 100 000

	Waiver Central Key	Linked RO Central Key	RO accepted amount (EUR)	LE Account Group	Commission Decision	Comments

Total DG	
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Number of RO waivers	
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Note: The figures are those related to the provisional accounts and not yet audited by the Court of Auditors.

TABLE 11: CENSUS OF NEGOTIATED PROCEDURES – DG OP – 2015**Procurement > EUR 60 000**

Negotiated procedure legal base	Number of procedures	Amount (EUR)
Article 134(1)(b)	1	140 000.00
Article 134(1)(e)	1	330 125.00
Article 134(1)(f)	6	2 198 558.40
Total	8	2 668 683.40

In 2015 there were eight negotiated procedures which led to the budgetary increase of the previously signed contracts, amounting in total to EUR 2 668 683.40.

The contracts concerned were related to the provision of the critical services related to the core business of the Publications Office, namely:

- publishing of the Official Journal (CT 10490);
- functioning of the Common Portal (CT 10463), EUR-Lex (CT 10523), CELLAR (CT 10373), EU Bookshop (10024);
- running of the various IT projects (CT 10513).

In all the contracts mentioned above, except 10024, the budgetary increase was a temporary solution until the entry into force of a new contract, signed following a competitive tendering procedure. Consequently, those contracts were/will be terminated earlier, before the expiry of their maximum four years duration as foreseen in the Financial Regulation. It was not possible to apply this approach to contract 10024, due to the fact that this contract was signed following a negotiated procedure with one tenderer, as there had been no offer in response to the two preceding competitive procedures.

TABLE 12: SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES OF DG OP EXCLUDING BUILDING CONTRACTS

Internal procedures > EUR 60 000		
Procedure Type	Count	Amount (€)
Exceptional negotiated procedure without publication of a contract notice (Article 134 RAP)	8	2 668 683.40
Open procedure [Article 127(2) RAP]	12	42 686 961.58
TOTAL	20	45 355 644.98

TABLE 13: BUILDING CONTRACTS

Total number of contracts:	
Total amount:	

Legal base	Contract Number	Contractor Name	Description	Amount (EUR)

No data to be reported

TABLE 14: CONTRACTS DECLARED SECRET

Total number of contracts:	
Total amount:	

Legal base	Contract number	Contractor name	Type of contract	Description	Amount (EUR)

No data to be reported

ANNEX 4: Materiality criteria

The 2 % threshold used by the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors is applied.

Even if a potential financial loss is not material under this quantitative criterion or where the financial impact cannot be quantified with reasonable assurance, the error may still be significant in the light of qualitative criteria, in particular taking into account the reputational risk for the institutions.

However, no significant errors of this type, no significant control system weaknesses or significant reputational events were identified in 2015.

ANNEX 5: Internal control templates for budget implementation (ICTs)

Direct management

Stage 1: Procurement

Main control objectives: ensure procurement procedures do not lead to incorrect attribution of contracts

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	How to determine coverage, frequency and depth	How to estimate the costs and benefits of controls	Control indicators
Irregularities or errors in the procurement procedure may lead to incorrect attribution of contracts.	<p>Each contract above the open procedure threshold (at the moment EUR 130 000) is subject to an evaluation before launching the procurement procedure.</p> <p>The authorising officer by subdelegation decides on the attribution of contract based on the opinion of the CAM (P3F¹⁵).</p> <p>Composition of evaluation committees is subject to strict rules.</p> <p>Control of financial transactions, in particular operational verification.</p> <p>Application of liquidated damages.</p>	<p>Semi-annual checks of availability of evaluations.</p> <p>Monitoring CAM opinions.</p> <p>Monitoring by the Call for Tenders, Contracts and Copyright Unit.</p>	<p>Costs are estimated by determining the full-time staff equivalent dealing with monitoring and control of procurement procedures.</p> <p>Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature.</p>	<p>Percentage of evaluations available for launched procedures.</p> <p>Number of opinions given by the CAM.</p> <p>Percentage of contract amount used for control of procurement procedures.</p>
Irregularities or errors during implementation of contracts may lead to erroneous deliveries being accepted.	<p>Control of financial transactions, in particular operational verification.</p> <p>Application of liquidated damages.</p>	<p>See control of financial transactions.</p> <p>Number of liquidated damages applied.</p>	<p>These controls are part of transactional controls under the control objectives in stage 2: commitments and payments.</p>	<p>Number of cases where liquidated damages or other penalties were applied.</p>

⁽¹⁵⁾ Comité des achats et des marchés (CAM).

Stage 2: Commitments and payments

Main control objectives: ensure commitments and payments are regular and legal

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	How to determine coverage, frequency and depth	How to estimate the costs and benefits of controls	Control indicators
Improper application or non-application of contract conditions may lead to unjustified payments.	Overrides of contract conditions and deviations from procedures are registered in the Register of exceptions which is analysed semi-annually.	All exceptions registered are analysed.	Cost is time spent on analysing register of exceptions. Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature.	Number and value of exceptions in relation to the total number and value of financial transactions.
Deviation from contract conditions may lead to undue advantages.	Overrides of contract conditions and deviations from procedures are registered in the Register of exceptions which is analysed semi-annually.	All exceptions registered are analysed.	Cost is time spent on analysing register of exceptions. Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature.	Number of penalty and other contract condition overrides in the exception register.
Errors in preparing and processing budgetary commitments may lead to irregularities or illegal commitments.	Operational and financial verification. Every year until March the financial control performs: — sample based second level ex ante controls of commitments on advance appropriations and commitments, — sample based ex post controls of commitments not subject to second level ex ante controls. Exemption from second level ex ante controls is based on these results.	All transactions are subject to first level verification. The sample size of ex post and second level ex ante controls is expressed in percentage of the number and value of all transactions in the controlled period.	Cost is full-time staff equivalent spent on verification and financial control. Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature. The Office also considers the difference between: — amounts affected by errors as identified, and — amounts affected by errors without controls being in place (according to a hypothetical error rate).	Coverage of financial control. Error rate. Cost of controls in percentage of transaction value. Cost of control per transaction.
Errors during the preparation and processing of payments may lead to irregularities or illegal payments.	Operational and financial verification. Financial control performs ex post controls.	All transactions are subject to first level verification. The sample size of ex post and second level ex ante controls is expressed in percentage of the number and value of all transactions in the controlled period.	Cost is full-time staff equivalent spent on verification and financial control. Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature. The Office also considers the difference between: — amounts affected by errors as identified, and — amounts affected by errors without controls being in place (according to a hypothetical error rate).	Coverage of financial control. Error rate. Cost of controls in percentage of transaction value. Cost of control per transaction.

Stage 3: Other financial transactions

Main control objectives: ensure transfers and writes-off are regular and legal

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	How to determine coverage, frequency and depth	How to estimate the costs and benefits of controls	Control indicators
The requests for transfer of appropriations may be illegal or irregular due to improper preparation or mistakes during preparation.	Financial control checks all requests for transfer.	100 %	Cost is full time staff equivalent devoted to controls. Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature. Occasional corrections may be undertaken due to financial control observations.	Number of requests checked. Transfer requests in error. Cost of controls in percentage of transaction value. Cost of control per transaction.

Main control objectives: protection of assets and information

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	How to determine coverage, frequency and depth	How to estimate the costs and benefits of controls	Control indicators
A write-off request may be illegal or irregular due to improper preparation or mistakes during preparation.	Financial control checks all write-off requests. A write-off committee (or its president) in Luxembourg has to approve all requests.	100 %	Cost is full-time staff equivalent devoted to controls. Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature. Occasional corrections may be undertaken due to financial control observations.	Number of requests checked. Number of errors detected.

Revenues

Stage 1: Advance recovery orders

Main control objectives: ensure that recovery orders are correctly established for all services rendered

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	How to determine coverage, frequency and depth	How to estimate the costs and benefits of controls	Control indicators
Data in recovery orders established are not correct.	Operational and financial verification and monitoring by the head of the budget cell. Every year until March the financial control performs: — sample based second level ex ante controls of recovery orders, — sample based ex post controls of recovery orders not subject to second level ex ante controls.	All transactions are subject to first level verification. The sample size of ex post and second level ex ante controls is expressed in percentage of the number and value of all transactions in the controlled period.	Cost is full-time staff equivalent spent on verification and financial control. Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature.	Coverage of financial control. Error rate. Cost of controls in percentage of transaction value. Cost of control per transaction.
Final settlement contains errors.	IT systems are in place to provide data for the establishment of the settlement. Clients are continuously informed of the costs and can check the correctness. In case of additional recovery orders: operational and financial verification and monitoring by the head of the budget cell. Every year until March the financial control performs: — sample based second level ex ante controls of recovery orders, — sample based ex post controls of recovery orders not subject to second level ex ante controls.	All transactions are subject to first level verification. The sample size of ex post and second level ex ante controls is expressed in percentage of the number and value of all transactions in the controlled period.	Cost is full-time staff equivalent spent on verification and financial control. Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature.	Coverage of financial control. Error rate. Cost of controls in percentage of transaction value. Cost of control per transaction.

Stage 2: Periodic recovery orders (after services were rendered)

Main control objectives: ensure that recovery orders are correctly established for all services rendered

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	How to determine coverage, frequency and depth	How to estimate the costs and benefits of controls	Control indicators
<p>Recovery orders are not established for services rendered for other DGs, institutions or bodies.</p>	<p>IT systems are in place to enable follow-up of establishment of recovery orders for all services where needed.</p> <p>The heads of the budget cells follow the establishment of recovery orders for all services where needed.</p> <p>In case of advance recovery orders, there is a summary settlement at the end of the year.</p>	<p>All transactions are subject to first level verification.</p> <p>Monitoring and analysing exceptions.</p>	<p>Cost is full-time staff equivalent spent on verification and financial control.</p> <p>Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature.</p>	<p>Cases of recovery orders established late in the exception register.</p>
<p>Data in recovery orders established are not correct</p>	<p>A monthly statement is sent to the clients who have two weeks to check and react.</p> <p>Operational and financial verification.</p> <p>Every year until March the financial control performs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — sample based second level ex ante controls of commitments and on advance appropriations and commitments, — sample based ex post controls of commitments not subject to second level ex ante controls. 	<p>All transactions are subject to first level verification.</p> <p>The sample size of ex post and second level ex ante controls is expressed in percentage of the number and value of all transactions in the controlled period.</p>	<p>Cost is full-time staff equivalent spent on verification and financial control.</p> <p>Benefits are qualitative and their main effect is of a preventive nature.</p>	<p>Coverage of financial control.</p> <p>Error rate.</p> <p>Cost of controls in percentage of transaction value.</p> <p>Cost of control per transaction.</p>

ANNEX 9: Evaluations and other studies finalised or cancelled in 2015

Reference No of Annex 4 MP 2015	Title	Reason ¹	Scope ²	Type of evaluation or other study		Associated DGs	Comments	Reference	Cancelled	
				Focus ³	Author ⁴ Type ⁵					
I. Evaluations finalised or cancelled in 2015										
a. Evaluations finalised in 2015										
1	EU Bookshop	Renewal of contracts	Alternatives, risks, changes in the approach for the new contract	R	I	O	None	Public website	EIMS	
2	Computing services (Oracle, production chains)	Renewal of contracts	Alternatives, risks, changes in the approach for the new contract	P&R	I	I	None		EIMS	
b. Evaluations cancelled in 2015										
None										
II. Other studies finalised or cancelled in 2015										
a. Other studies finalised in 2015										
None										
b. Other studies cancelled in 2015										
None										

¹ L – legal act, LMFF – legal base of MFF instrument, FR – financial regulation, REFIT, CWP – 'evaluate first', O – other (please specify in Comments).

² Specify what programme/regulatory measure/initiative/policy area etc. has been covered.

³ P – prospective, R – retrospective, P/R – prospective and retrospective.

⁴ E – external, I – internal, M – mixed (internal with external support).

⁵ FC – fitness check, E – expenditure programme/measure, R – regulatory measure (not recognised as a FC), C – communication activity, I – internal Commission activity, O – other – please specify in the Comments.

