

REPLIES TO AND ACTIONS TAKEN

**ON THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION
OF 27 APRIL 2016 ON DISCHARGE IN RESPECT OF
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL
BUDGET OF THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2014**

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Parliament's management in 2014 and overall issues

§14: "Notes the reply from the Secretary-General regarding the accessibility of the ePetition application to Members and to the general public; calls on the Secretary-General to inform Parliament of the outcome of the Legal Service consultation and to assess the technical and budgetary cost of expanding the application's accessibility;"

Opinion of the Legal Service

The Committee on Petitions asked the Legal Service for an opinion regarding access to the ePetition database to all Members of the European Parliament. In its opinion of 14 September 2015 the Legal Service replied that, in principle, it could not identify any legal obstacle arising from the Data Protection Regulation, nor from the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament (RoP) as regards disclosure of petitions and personal data contained therein to other Members that those who are members of the PETI Committee.

The Legal Service pointed out, however, that the European Parliament by way of the Privacy Statement published on its website gives a certain kind of assurance to the petitioner on the treatment of personal data in the petition. The Legal Service noted that “in case Parliament makes the content of the petition also accessible to other Members/persons than the ones indicated in the Privacy Statement, it stands in conflict with its own assurance given to the petitioner. This could have implications for Parliament in the future, even resulting in liability of the institution with regard to the petitioner.”

Furthermore, the Legal Service wrote that “considering the lack of clarity, it is advised that the PETI Committee continues to temporarily restrict access to the e-Petition database to Members as indicated in the Privacy Statement and promptly proceeds to changing the Privacy Statement, in order to inform the petitioner that his or her petition might be accessed by all Members as provided for in Rule 216(2) RoP”.

Considerations relating to protection of privacy and the choice of the level of confidentiality

Petitioners have two ways to submit petitions: by ordinary post and through the Petitions Portal. When submitting a petition on paper, petitioners are not bound by any particular format or other formal requirements, nor can they be informed, at the moment of submission, of the public nature of the petition process and aspects relating to the protection of privacy, something easily achieved when submitting a petition through the portal.

While considering the granting of access to the ePetition to all Members, the PETI Committee has reviewed the global situation concerning the compliance of the PETI portal with its own Rules of Procedure and the currently applicable legislation on processing of personal data (Regulation 45/2001) and access to documents (Regulation 1049/2001). During this review it has become necessary to adapt the confidentiality options provided to petitioners and the privacy statement on the portal and ensure their coherence. The implementation of these changes requires technical development. To bring all petitioners on an equal footing, it is also necessary to establish a mechanism to inform petitioners who have submitted their petition on paper about the way their personal data is processed in the European Parliament.

The work on updating the portal and establishing a practice to inform those petitioners who have not submitted their petition through the portal is well under way in cooperation with all relevant services (Committee on Petitions, DG Presidency, DG ITEC, and Legal Service). It is due to be finalised in the autumn 2016. After completion of this revision, the ePetition database can be made accessible to all Members without major technical effort. More fine-grained access is a different matter and assessment of the technical feasibility and the budgetary cost would require a more detailed analysis of what access rights exactly would be needed.

In the meantime, the secretariat of the Committee on Petitions is available to provide all Members information concerning individual petitions on request.

Informing the general public: ePetition is a database containing all documentation and information relating to petitions, including personal data and original documents provided by petitioners. It is not a tool for disseminating information to the general public: it has not been conceived or designed for that purpose and its transformation into a web-based dissemination tool would require a considerable technical, editorial and legal effort.

The Petitions Portal was designed from the outset for use by the general public, firstly for submission of petitions and secondly for informing petitioners and the general public on existing petitions. Therefore, it is important to further develop the Petitions Portal as a tool for the reception of petitions and for dissemination of information about the right to petition and the processing of existing petitions. In the future, the Portal is due to become a real communication tool between the Parliament and petitioners, and provide more information about petitions also to the general public.

Catering

§20: "Calls on the administration to evaluate and propose a price scheme that combines the new rules whilst ensuring the possibility of discounts for interns, with affordable choices for menus;"

Parliament's administration is aware of the situation of interns, therefore there are discounts for interns of EUR 0.50 on the main dishes in Brussels and Luxembourg and of EUR 0.80 in Strasbourg.

§21: "Is disappointed that the administration is not able to provide data on the variable number of meals served during the different parliamentary days and weeks; wonders how any control can be exerted on contract providers if basic information like this is not available; calls on the administration to make available to the committee responsible the catering contract which came into force on 26 September 2015 and to provide details of the meals served;"

The catering contract signed in September 2015 foresees that the contractor should forward at request of the Institution any tables, statistics and other appropriated figures necessary for the Institution concerning for instance:

- the respect of the contract and its annexes;
- statistics to be submitted within the framework of the respect of the environment.

DG INLO, in charge of the follow-up of the contract (a copy of the contract has been sent to the CONT secretariat for consultation), receives by the 12th of each month the following monthly statistics:

- number of opening days;
- number of transactions;
- number of transactions per selling point;
- number of "My portion" sold.

Other statistics can be provided on request.

Number of passages (transactions) in restaurants/self-services in Brussels

Transactions in 2016 (between January 2016 and May 2016)		Breakdown per month				
		Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16
<u>Restaurants</u>						
Restaurant of members	25 075	3 783	6 272	4 994	5 571	4 455
Restaurant O' Liberty JAN	5 989	1 086	1 094	1 097	1 625	1 087
TOTAL Restaurants	31 064	4 869	7 366	6 091	7 196	5 542
<u>Self-Services</u>						
Self ASP	211 608	40 908	45 772	41 035	45 678	38 215
Self 12ième	12 203	2 466	2 646	2 443	2 712	1 936
Self SQM	38 455	7 596	8 085	7 819	8 595	6 360
Self TRI	10 305	1 826	1 932	2 098	2 489	1 960
Self Visitors BXL	8 719	658	1 622	1 758	2 585	2 096
TOTAL Self-Services	281 290	53 454	60 057	55 153	62 059	50 567
TOTAL	312 354	58 323	67 423	61 244	69 255	56 109

Cooperation agreement with Committees

§24: "Notes the signature of the cooperation agreement with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the Committee of the Regions on 5 February 2014; calls for specific detailed provisions to be laid down concerning the functioning of the services shared by the three institutions; stresses that the implementation of the agreement must be balanced and benefit the three institutions equally; asks that the mid-term review of the agreement should include an assessment by each institution of the impact that the agreement is having in terms of human resources, synergies, added value, and substance, and to provide a detailed breakdown of the savings and/or increased budgetary expenditure resulting from the agreement, paying particular attention to staff chapters; asks to continue to be informed of the agreement follow-up:"

On 5 February 2014, cooperation agreements with the EESC and the CoR were signed, accompanied by an “Annex on administrative cooperation” . The agreements also included a second annex on the “Budgetary scenario (concerning the) staff transfer from the Committees to the European Parliament” with an overview of the financial impact of the agreements. The cooperation agreements had an explicitly political focus and outlined a number of measures to be taken to achieve the overall political goals. The “Annex on administrative cooperation”, on the other hand, mainly concerned the implementation of extended practical cooperation in areas such as translation, access to buildings and canteens, security and IT. It should be stressed, that political and logistical cooperation was in place even before the cooperation agreements were signed. The agreements mainly served to create a more formalised framework for much wider cooperation.

Whilst the cooperation agreements themselves do not make reference to monitoring progress, it is stated in Annex I that the agreements’ “proper implementation (...) will be followed up on an annual basis by the Presidents or his/her representative supported by their respective Secretary Generals”. Furthermore, in its discharge resolution for 2013, the EP expressed its expectation that “the agreement will evolve in a balanced way, benefit all three institutions equally, and contribute positively to the further rationalisation of resources”. The EP also called “on each of the institutions, at the end of the first year of their collaboration, to make an individual assessment of the impact that the agreement is having in terms both of human resources and of expenditure, synergies, added value, and substantive quality.”

In December 2015, the EESC and the CoR issued individual Reports on the implementation of the respective cooperation agreements with the European Parliament. Both reports provide separate sections on the implementation of the cooperation agreement, i.e. the political cooperation, and the implementation of the Annex on administrative cooperation. The aspects of human resources, synergies, added value, substance and budgetary effects are covered in these reports.

A major element of the Annex on administrative agreement was the possibility for up to 80 members of staff (translators and assistants) from the two advisory committees to be transferred, on a voluntary basis, to the new Members' Research Service (MRS or Directorate A) of DG EPRS. In a process ending in April 2016, 60 persons (or posts) were transferred to the EP from the two advisory committees, in three successive waves, at six-month intervals. The total salary costs paid for detached and transferred staff amounted to EUR 583 thousand in 2014, EUR 3 742 thousand in 2015 and to EUR 2 182 thousand in the first half of 2016.

The staff joining the MRS followed a tailored mentoring and training programme, in order to facilitate the transition to their new, specialist research role. They are now fully operational and already making a strong contribution to the daily work of the MRS in responding to research requests from individual Members and in authoring research publications for the institution as a whole - as reflected in significantly expanded MRS output since 2014. For reference, over 5 500 research requests from Members (and over 1 000 requests from other parliamentary clients) were replied to in the first 24 months of the current European Parliament, alongside the issuing of some 1 500 publications for the use of all Members.

The Cooperation Agreements foresaw, in return for the staff transfer referred to above, the opening of MRS services to members of the two advisory committees once a threshold of 50 staff transfers had been reached. Following a phasing-in process in 2015, this has now been achieved in all policy fields. The services offered include:

- the provision of individually-tailored research and analysis to members of the two advisory committees, on the same confidential basis as such material is provided to Members;
- the provision of regular electronic newsletters, providing hyperlinks to all the latest EPRS publications (these newsletters are variants of those routinely sent to all Members);
- the provision of paper copies of selected EPRS publications, both for general purposes and as relevant to the business of the plenary sessions of the advisory committees, and/or their conferences, workshops and other events;

Regular contact has been developed at staff level on research issues, including on the planning of publications, with a view to maximising synergies and achieving a timely input into respective institutional workflows. In the case of the Committee of the Regions, this includes the development of a series of publications of special interest to local and regional authorities, contributing to development of an online learning course on regional policy for the Committee of the Regions, and providing briefing at the annual CoR-European Commission open days.

In addition, beyond the obligations of the Cooperation Agreements, the Library Directorate within EPRS (Directorate B) now provides access for members and staff of the two advisory committees to the Parliament's main library reading room in Brussels and access to the Library's e-book platform, as well as access to the paper collection of the Library through inter-library loan. All members and staff of the two advisory committees are invited to the regular EPRS policy roundtables and other events held in the Library reading room.

In the specific area of ex-post impact assessment and evaluation, where a regular input from the two advisory committees is foreseen in the Cooperation Agreements, regular meetings and exchanges of information are already taking place between the relevant administrative services, giving the Parliament greater access to the experience and expertise of the members of the advisory committees and their networks on the effectiveness of EU law in practice.

Based on the cooperation agreements of 5 February 2014, the translation services of the European Parliament and of the Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the Committee of the Regions (CoR) have made progress toward strengthening their cooperation. After careful consideration several provisions were planned in 2014 to strengthen this cooperation, namely the use of a common electronic platform for faster exchange of information when sharing translation requests (workload balancing), organisation of a one-day seminar of senior and middle management in order to increase knowledge of the translation workflows of the participating entities and in order to raise awareness about the sharing of translation work.

The one-day meeting was organised by the Parliament on 1 June 2015 leading to a consolidation of bilateral relations. One of the effects of the strengthened cooperation has been an increase in the use of the existing system of workload balancing.

Whilst not directly concerned by the cooperation agreements, it should be noted in this connection that the European Parliament in 2015 and 2016 once again successfully cooperated with the services of both committees as well as with those of the European Court of Auditors (ECA) in the organisation of joint procurement procedures for the signature of contracts for the provision of external translation services.

This example of inter-institutional cooperation under which the European Parliament is the Contracting Authority on its own behalf as well as on behalf of the other Institutions, enables the latter to avoid the duplication of administrative resources for the organisation of separate procurement procedures and the independent management of contracts which are already deployed. At the ECT meeting of 2 June 2016, the representative of the joint services of the two committees described this cooperation as essential to the functioning of its services.

Both committees and the ECA will furthermore join the European Parliament in the forthcoming launch of a joint call for tenders for external translation into Irish.

As regards the access to buildings and security, the European Parliament ensured the securisation of the passageway opened between Remard (RMD) and Remorqueur (RMO) buildings with the provision of security equipment and controlling its access by security and safety agents.

Following the raise of the security's level to yellow alert, the passageway has been closed since 16 November 2015 as announced in the general communication of the Deputy Secretary General. However it is opened during Committees' plenary sittings (from Wednesday 8am to Thursday 18pm).

Issues related to Members

§27: "Deplores the transfer of responsibilities from the administration to the offices of Members; calls for a review by and about the administration to check which obligations (e.g. responsibility for insuring trainees) can be returned to the administration;"

The administration has developed the new e-Portal platform aiming at assisting Members in dealing with their financial and social entitlement formalities. The functionalities offered in this new application cover a large scope, such as the management of personal data, submission of reimbursement requests electronically as well as access to certificates.

The use of the e-Portal is not mandatory: Members can still introduce their requests by paper as previously if they wish so. Although the newly created processes involve an implication of Members or assistants, it helps to reduce the global administrative burden for Members and contribute to enhance the treatment of their requests by different means:

- Use of templates in 24 languages which improve the accuracy of reimbursement requests, and ensure that forms are filled in correctly, which triggers a smoother and faster payment without a posteriori corrections or requests for clarification;

- Real-time information on payments and reimbursements, on balance information of individual budgets parliamentary assistance allowances and other allowances are assured at any time (24 hours a day, 7 days a week);
- Access to a wide range of administrative documents (certificates, access to payment sheets...) intending to facilitate the access for Members to the administrative data they need;
- Flexibility is also provided by external access to all the above mentioned functionalities, giving the Members or assistants the opportunity to deal with routine tasks whenever they decide so.

The e-Portal meets thus two major targets:

- Ensuring the flexibility offered to Members in terms of submission of administrative requests and consultation;
- Avoiding the circulation of document in paper format within the Parliament's offices, which also contributes to the achievement of the paper-less policy and digitalized administration.

Also in other areas, new tools are being developed in order to streamline processes. The project "Mission Crisis Management (MCM)" aims to gather information on on-going and future external missions in order to provide all the necessary data to treat crisis. It will provide the crisis cell information about who is where and when in case of crisis. It will include information like the travel plan, the mission programme and list of participants, etc. This tool is expected to be available for the testing phase at the end of 2016. MCM will facilitate the work of the administration and of the offices of the Members since it will put an end to the repetitive collection of information, i.e. passport number, GSM number, emergency contact details.

In relation to the responsibility for insuring trainees, it must be noted that this responsibility always laid with Members (Art 4 of the 'Rules concerning members' trainees - Bureau decision of 19 April 2010').

§28: *"Stresses the need to make the work of Parliament's internal decision-making bodies, in particular the Bureau, more transparent and accessible; calls for meeting agendas and minutes to be published on the internet and forwarded to members systematically and in good time."*

Parliament's governing bodies (the Bureau, the Conference of Presidents and the Quaestors) meet *in camera*, and thus are only open to their members and selected staff of the administration, essential for the running of the meetings.

The necessary consultation and information process with Members takes place via the Vice-Presidents and the Quaestors who are elected directly by the Plenary and thus represent all Members of Parliament, or via the political groups, who are represented by members of their staff in the Bureau meetings and by their Presidents in the Conference of Presidents.

All participants in the meetings of these governing bodies receive all documents both in electronic and in paper form, prior to the meetings. In addition, agendas of the meetings are published beforehand and are made available on Parliament's intranet site. In particular, in what the Bureau is concerned, all discussions and decisions, including the ones *in camera*, are minuted and, once approved by the Bureau, these minutes are also published on Parliament's intranet site. The minutes include specific references to the documents used in the information and decision making process by the Bureau members, and can, as a rule, be obtained via the Register or on the basis of Rule 31(2) of the Rules of Procedure.

As a follow-up to the Bureau meetings, any Member concerned by a Bureau decision, either in a personal or in an office-holding capacity, is informed by letter from the President, the Secretary-General or the Bureau secretariat.

§29: "Points out that the administrative burden for the offices of Members have also increased more generally and requests a rationalisation of the forms that have to be used for internal parliamentary procedures, such as recruitment of new assistants;"

Following the recent modifications of the Implementing Measures for the Statute for Members, most of the forms have been reviewed to reflect the new rules and the additional supporting declarations/documents required by the new rules. Forms were made more user friendly (filling-in on screen, use of drop-down lists...). The forms for contract modification and contract extension were merged into one document. Based on the lessons learned at the beginning of 2016, the relevant department will develop additional guidelines and take the opportunity of the revamping of the EP intranet to present the rules and forms in a more structured and user-friendly way.

The functionalities offered in the new e-Portal platform lead to a rationalisation of procedures. As regards the forms to be used by APAs, the administration is currently working on the integration of individual entitlements in the APA PEOPLE IT platform for the recruitment of APAs. This new solution will allow to start the Entitlements documents collection as soon as the offer is accepted by the applicant and thereby to create a synergy between the recruitment process and the entitlements process and to shorten the delay of establishment of entitlements.

§30: "Notes that after considerable delay, internal whistleblowing rules have been adopted and are in force since January 2016; expresses concern at the lack of protection granted to whistleblowers and calls on Parliament to ensure that their rights are fully respected; calls on the Bureau to extend internal whistleblowing rules to APAs and calls for equivalent national legislation to be applied to local assistants;"

According to Article 1 on the scope of the internal rules implementing Article 22c of the Staff Regulations, they apply to all Parliament staff and, *mutatis mutandis*, to trainees and national experts. APAs are hence already included in the rules on whistleblowing. The contracts of local assistants are concluded directly with the Member and in accordance with the national law applicable in the Member State where he or she was elected. Hence, these contracts do not fall under the scope of the internal whistleblowing rules and Parliament has no powers to modify the national law applicable to them.

§31: "Calls for clarification about what form official and unofficial cooperation with OLAF about Members' accounts takes; points to the information passed on to third parties in at least one case; sees this as a breach of independence of Members' mandates;"

The framework for cooperation between the EP and OLAF is provided for in the Practical Arrangements of 19 July 2013. They establish details of cooperation under Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999, the Interinstitutional agreement of 25 May 1999 and the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament. Parliament's administration duly complies with this framework in its cooperation with OLAF.

§32: "Notes that it was difficult to differentiate fully the President's political activities from his preparation as "Spitzenkandidat" to head his Party in the 2014 European elections, and it was also difficult to make a differentiation for other "Spitzenkandidaten"; considers that an unequivocal distinction has not been made between the two roles; calls for a clear segregation of office holders' functions and candidacies for European election campaigns; regrets the at least indirect use of Parliament staff to help prepare the campaign and calls for action to ensure that it does not happen again in future; regrets in this regard that the President transformed the Twitter profile of the European Parliament Presidency into his personal profile and used it during the campaign;"

A revision of Parliament's Rules of Procedure and of the Code for Conduct for Members is ongoing in the AFCO Committee. Possible thoughts to clarify rules could be addressed in this context.

§33: "Mandates EPRS to conduct a comparative analysis of the legal framework governing the compatibilities of candidates who run for election campaigns in other international organisations and in the Member States (election of Prime minister, Secretary General, Chancellor, etc.);"

The European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) is currently undertaking the comparative analysis requested. Taking into account the complexity of the subject and the need to look in detail at both legal provisions and best practice in a series of contexts - whether at EU level, within the 28 EU Member States, or in multiple international organisations, such as the United Nations (various bodies), OECD and IMF - it is envisaged that the study will be completed in the last trimester 2016.

§34: "Notes that in the period from 22 January to 18 April, the official international missions undertaken by the President were mostly with government and official representations attached to socialist parties and organisations; calls for further information in this regard;"

As requested during the 2014 discharge procedure, the President delivered the full list of the official travels undertaken by him during the first six months of 2014. Programmes of all those visits were also attached to the reply.

One of the goals of President Schulz's presidency between January 2012 and May 2014 was to visit each Member State. Those visits not only brought the European Parliament closer to citizens by making it much more visible, but also contributed greatly to establishing good and permanent relations between the European Parliament and national governments. Missions during the last four months of President Schulz's presidency were organised in order to complete the list of 28 States visited. The President's international visits were also devoted to preparing the visits of the Heads of State to the European Parliament. Most of them resulted in Presidents and Prime Ministers addressing the Plenary, including President Hollande and Chancellor Merkel who came to Strasbourg together in October 2014.

§35: "Requests further information on the campaigns of all "Spitzenkandidaten", in particular whether they were accompanied by officials and other statutory staff not on leave during the election campaign; welcomes the complementary information given by the President and requests the same level of transparency from the other candidates;"

DG PERS carried out a review of the missions of the "Spitzenkandidaten" to find out whether officials or other statutory staff accompanied them. This review did not reveal any such case.

§37: "Supports full transparency regarding the GEA in order to allow European citizens to have an insight into the general expenditure of the Members of the European Parliament; urges the Bureau to revise the list of expenses which may be defrayed from the GEA;"

At the request of the Bureau, the administration could submit to the Bureau a revised non-exhaustive list of expenses defrayable under the general expenditure allowance. This list can inter alia allow the reimbursement of audit activities to review the expenses in relation with the general expenditure allowance.

It should be noted that Members are free to reimburse any unused amounts. They can also have their accounts related to the use of the general expenditure allowance audited and can publish the details of their spending.

The main rules and best practices could be reminded via a Bureau communication to be sent to all Members.

§38: "Reiterates the appeal for greater transparency regarding the GEA for the Members; calls on the Bureau to work on a definition of more precise rules regarding the accountability of the expenditure authorised under this allowance, without generating additional costs and administrative burden for Members;"

Please see reply to paragraph 37.

§39: "Reminds the Bureau of the urgent need to audit the GEA;"

Please see reply to paragraph 37.

§42: "Notes the Court of Auditors' finding in its landscape review of the financial management of the Union budget that the practice of making cash payments for the reimbursement of costs to visitor groups was a "high risk concern"; demands therefore that cash payments be limited as far as possible when reimbursing costs to visitor groups; points out the high reputational risk for Parliament and the significant security risk entailed in making cash payments to visitor groups; acknowledges the practical concerns and calls for an evaluation of alternative and efficient methods to making payments before adopting new rules governing the reception of visitors' groups;"

At its meeting of 14 December 2015, the Bureau endorsed the proposal to abolish cash payments to visitors groups in favour of a fully secure, flexible and efficient solution for paying subsidies via bank transfers. The Bureau invited the Working Party on Information and

Communication together with the Vice-presidents in charge of budget to examine the necessary practical arrangements.

The final proposal to the Bureau, together with the necessary updates to the relevant rules on visitor groups, have been adopted by the working party and will be presented shortly for adoption by the Bureau.

§43: "Welcomes the fact that the Commission has started a public consultation procedure in respect of the revision of the current transparency register of the Commission and Parliament and its extension to the Council; requests that immediately after the public consultation an inter-institutional working group be set up for preparing proposals concerning the revision of the register, the accompanying code of conduct, and the functioning thereto;"

The Commission adopted on 28 September 2016 a proposal for an IIA on the transparency register allowing negotiations to start.

Under Rule 27 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, the Conference of Presidents is the body responsible for matters concerning relations with the other EU institutions. In addition, Vice-President Sylvie Guillaume has responsibility within the Bureau for the Transparency Register. The Secretary General stands ready to ensure that the negotiating team constituted in due course for the Parliament will be provided with all necessary administrative support.

§44: "Calls additionally for a report by Parliament's administration on which former managers, CEOs, directors and board members in relevant European NGOs are now Members of the Parliament;"

The current provisions of the Code of Conduct require Members to declare their occupations in the three-year prior to the beginning of their current mandate, including membership of any boards or committees or companies, NGOs, associations or other bodies established in law (Article 4(2)(a) CoC).

§45: "Calls for a report by Parliament's administration on the use of the Parliament's premises by interest groups and other external organisations; calls on the Bureau to examine the compatibility of these events with parliamentary work whilst ensuring that Parliament remains an institution open to exchange with civil society and to public debate;"

The following table shows the list of organisations that have been authorised to use the premises of Parliament in 2015, for both Strasbourg and Brussels. Due to the yellow alert restrictions, the number of requests granted was smaller than in previous years.

Use of EP premises by external bodies in 2015	
Brussels	
Parti Populaire Européen	22-23 January
Comité des Régions	11-13 February
Comité des Régions	16-17 April
Comité des Régions	3-4 June
Comité des Régions	8-9 July
Comité Économique et Social	4, 7 September
Comité Économique et Social	5-8 October
Covenant of Mayors	15 October
Comité des Régions	2-4 December
Prix du Livre Europeen	8 December
Strasbourg	
Association Unions	19 February
European Administration School (EAS)	10 March
Conseil des notariats de l'Union Européenne (CNUE)	11 May
Association Accès Culture	29 May
European Administration School (EAS)	9 June
Conférence de l'aviation civile (CEAC)	30 June - 1 July
Scouts et Guides de France	17 July
Chambre des experts agréés Communauté Européenne (CEACE)	24 August
European Administration School (EAS)	27 October

Parliament's premises are primarily used for parliamentary business, namely for meetings of parliamentary committees, political groups, interparliamentary delegations and for plenary sessions.

Individual Members may request authorisation from the Quaestors to organise cultural events and exhibitions. The criteria for holding such events are determined by the "Rules governing cultural events and exhibitions". The Quaestors and Parliament's responsible services ensure that these criteria are strictly respected.

Individual Members cannot request the use of and reserve any other of Parliament's premises, such as, for instance, meeting rooms. Such reservations can only be made via their respective political groups.

Authorising events in Parliament's Chamber (the Hemicycles in Strasbourg and Brussels) is the responsibility of the Bureau, also on the basis of the "Rules governing the use of Parliament's premises by outside bodies" mentioned above. On an entirely exceptional basis, the Chamber can be made available to other EU institutions and once a year to public bodies, for events in which Parliament is closely involved.

In addition, the use of parliament's premises by outside bodies is submitted to strict conditions (to the exception of the plenary's chamber that is submitted to stricter rules) which are, inter alia¹:

¹ Article 4 of the Rules governing the use of parliament's premises by outside bodies, adopted by the Bureau on 14 March 2000.

- Requests must be submitted by another European Union institution, a national or regional parliament of a Member State, a public body or a European political party;
- Requests by public bodies to use the Chamber must be endorsed and justified in writing by at least two relevant parliamentary committees;
- The initiative must have a European dimension, be related to the activities of the European Union and be of direct interest to Parliament;
- Events may under no circumstances have a commercial purpose and must not undermine the dignity of Parliament. Sponsorship shall be prohibited, along with any form of partnership between Parliament and a private body.

With regard to the compatibility of such events with parliamentary work, the Transparency Register was created in an attempt to address concerns regarding transparency and accountability of interest groups and external organisations wishing to influence European decision-making, whilst at the same time ensuring that EU institutions remain open to debate and exchanges with civil society. At present, the Transparency Register is a voluntary system of registration for all organisations or self-employed individuals, which aim to influence “*the formulation or implementation of policy and the decision-making processes of the EU Institutions, (...)*”. Parliament's Bureau also amended the Rules on Public Hearings in 2014 so that since then guest speakers at parliamentary hearings must comply with the requirements of the Transparency Register.

§47: "Urges the Parliament to adopt rules in order to disclose all input received from lobbyists/interest representatives on draft policies, laws and amendments as a 'legislative footprint':"

Prior to spring 2016, Parliament had adopted a number of resolutions which, inter alia, requested the Bureau to "devise a system for" recording legislative footprints (May 2011) and to "develop a standardised form for rapporteurs to publish on a voluntary basis a legislative footprint" (April 2014). Further, over the last few years, committee secretariats in DG IPOL as well as the Directorate for Legislative Acts in DG PRES have regularly advised rapporteurs who wish to include some form of legislative footprint in their explanatory statement as to appropriate formats in which to do this.

A number of reports have thus been published which contain legislative footprints, usually in the form of a list of interlocutors at the end of the explanatory statement.

The plenary has more recently adopted the European Parliament resolution of 28 April 2016 on public access to documents (Rule 116(7)) for the years 2014-2015 (2015/2287(INI)) which "*calls on Parliament, as a first step in this regard, to make available, to those MEPs who wish to report on their contacts with lobbyists, a template for Rapporteurs that can be annexed to their reports, as well as space for this type of information on the webpages of Parliament referring to individual MEPs.*"

In July 2016, the Bureau debated, on the basis of a proposal by the Vice-president responsible for Transparency, the possibility to ask the administration to develop and provide a form to rapporteurs and draftspersons for opinions, who, if they so wish and on a purely voluntary basis, could use this form to draw up a non-exhaustive list of interest representatives with whom they have had contact and received input in the framework of drafting their reports or opinions.

This list could be annexed to the report and/or opinion once adopted at committee level, listing the names of entities rapporteurs have received any input from,

This annex would be drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur or draftsman. A first version of the annex could be included with the publication of the draft report or opinion, and could, if necessary and so wished by the rapporteur or draftsman, be updated after adoption in committee.

It was communicated to the Bureau on 12 September 2016. Parliament's relevant services will take the necessary steps to implement it without delay and a Bureau Notice was sent to all MEPs on 6 October 2016. The inter-DG group responsible for maintaining Parliament's *Recueil des Modèles* (RdM) is currently finalising the different models so that the new provisions can be fully available as of 1 November 2016. The relevant services will continue to provide advice to rapporteurs and draftsmen on this voluntary legislative footprint.

§48: *"Calls on the Bureau to create the technical possibility for Members who wish to do so to publish their calendars on their official webpage and in particular their meetings with lobbyists;"*

This issue was raised in the Bureau. It is to be noted that the possibility for Members to publish their calendars does already exist.

Members' delegations

§49: "Notes that the costs of delegations, joint parliamentary assemblies, ad hoc delegations and election observation missions outside the Union in 2014 were curbed from EUR 5 794 360 (2013) to 1 351 212 (2014) following the remarks made by Parliament in its above-mentioned discharge resolution for the financial year 2013 and as a result of a reduction in duty travel during the changeover from one parliamentary term to the next, when there were no delegation visits for several months; criticises the fact, nonetheless, that some of Parliament's missions were excessively expensive, especially where distant destinations were concerned; expects those costs to be further explained and reduced in the near future and calls for details of the cost of each mission to be published in the annual activity report;"

In the past years, reporting on the delegations was included in the discharge questionnaires. The administration provided extensive information in its answers - for instance overviews on the ten most expensive delegation trips in absolute terms or with the highest average values per Member. Details, such as the purpose, the venue and the dates of the delegation were included. Reporting in this framework could be further developed if so requested.

Regular reporting in the framework of the annual activity reports is for several reasons not appropriate. Firstly, the annual activity reports are being prepared in January. By then the accurate costs of the missions for the previous year are not available, since some expenses are still to be paid and/or some imprest accounts are still to be regularised. In particular, Members have until the 31 October of the following year to present their claim for expenses related to missions, which prevents the administration from having any accurate financial information before November of the following year. Any request to have earlier information on this subject would imply a change in the rules related to Members' claims of expenses for missions. In addition, the costs of the missions are split between five different DGs - and would hence be included in five different annual activity reports which would not be very transparent: DG Internal Policies, DG External Policies, DG Finance, DG Personnel and DG Interpretation and Conferences.

§50: "Believes that thought should be given to how IT tools such as videoconferencing might be used to reduce the number of delegation visits;"

Indeed, the use of videoconferences is privileged and will contribute to reduce the number of missions and delegation visits. Different technologies are available in order to facilitate the use of videoconferencing, not only in the Parliament but also outside. It is worth to mention that EP Information Offices as well as EU Delegations are equipped with appropriate technology.

However, there are some inherent limitations to the usage of videoconferencing:

A significant part of the delegations' missions include on-site visits of projects financed by EU funds, meetings with different organisations on the ground or visits to different places that cannot easily be replaced by meetings through videoconference. Nevertheless, in such cases, if needed, videoconference could be used for preparatory meetings.

There are also some technical limitations, related with compatibility of systems inside and outside the Parliament. In addition, when interpretation is needed, the use of videoconference is very limited as it is not a standard procedure.

§51: "Calls for the websites of the interparliamentary delegations to be developed and supplied with content as a matter of urgency; also considers it vital that, budget permitting, public meetings of the delegations should be broadcast live via webstreaming, as parliamentary committee meetings are;"

Parliament's administration is actively working on overhauling the internet ('Europarl') websites of the interparliamentary delegations. A detailed proposal for the new sites, with a simpler navigation, improved structure and enriched content has been developed and should go live in 2017.

In response to the plenary's recommendation to webstream delegations' public meetings, the administration is implementing a system to webstream as many delegation meetings as is currently technically possible. This process should be implemented in September 2016. Given the more extensive facilities that exist in Brussels, more delegation meetings will initially be broadcast from Brussels than from Strasbourg.

EP's research service

§52: "Recalls that the new Members' research service began to provide a dedicated research capability for individual Members through briefing publications across all major policy fields; points out that in its first full year of activity the research service generated over 450 publications, responded to 1 675 requests for research from Members and dealt with 745 similar requests from Parliament's other clients; notes that this facility grants access to a large amount of pertinent information that should significantly reduce recourse to external expertise, representing a considerable saving; calls for all briefings on topics in key areas to be translated into the official languages of the Member States;"

The Members' Research Service (MRS) of the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) produced over 1 100 publications in the years 2014 and 2015, to help provide all Members with independent, objective and authoritative analysis of, and research on, EU-related policy, legislation and issues. In order to facilitate the wide accessibility of such analysis, the MRS already publishes all of its monthly Plenary at a Glance notes (of one to two pages) and major Briefings (three to 12 pages) in the six most spoken official languages of the Union, and its longer In-Depth Analyses (above 12 pages) in English, French and German.

Publications specially featured on DG Communication's webpages are usually translated into all 24 official languages as a matter of course. When publishing material on third countries, the MRS aims to translate such publications into the language of the country concerned, provided it is an official language of the European Union - for example, into Spanish or Portuguese for Latin American countries, or into French or English for many African countries.

It is important to note also that all EPRS publications can be translated into the official language of any individual Member, at his or her request, so long as the practical capacity of DG Translation permits. It should be also noted that individual briefings for Members are for their use only so they are not publicly available thus there is no need to have them translated.

The converse approach of systematically translating all EPRS publications into all 24 official languages of the Union would be potentially very costly. In 2015, DG EPRS published approximately 8 800 pages of briefing material in various forms. If all of this material had been translated into all official languages, the cost would have been approximately EUR 29 million. There could be considerable implications for the amount of working time consumed within the administration for the formatting and production of such material in all language variations, as well as for the systematic linguistic and other quality checks required. The time consumed would be unavailable for the conduct of research and other core EPRS functions.

§53: "Requests clearer definition of the tasks of the various service areas (research service, impact assessment) and that these areas of responsibility be made known to Members;"

The Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Services (DG EPRS) is already structured in a very clear way, determined by the Parliament's Bureau in July 2013, with three Directorates offering distinct products and services to differing clients:

Directorate for the Members' Research Service - Directorate A - responds to Members' requests for research, analysis and information, and publishes a broad range of publications on EU policy, legislation and issues for the use of Members as a whole.

Directorate for the Library - Directorate B - operates the Library Reading Rooms, housing the Parliament's physical and digital collections, which it acquires and manages. It provides online access to subscription-based publications for the institution, manages the Parliament's Historical Archives, answers citizens' enquiries, and deals with transparency issues.

Directorate for Impact Assessment and European Added Value - Directorate C - works primarily for parliamentary committees in the fields of ex-ante and ex-post evaluation, providing research requested by committees or pro-active analytical briefing of general use to them in their scrutiny and oversight work.

However, DG EPRS will reflect actively on how the tasks of the various directorates (and units within them) can be even more clearly delineated and presented, including by more active communication of these roles by email and by a better presentation of them on the Parliament's intranet and internet sites.

At the moment, detailed information on the role and organisation of DG EPRS is available on the EP intranet at the following locations, among others:

<http://www.eprs.sso.ep.parl.union.eu/eprs/auth/en/about.html>

<http://www.eprs.sso.ep.parl.union.eu/eprs/auth/en/organisation.html>

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EPRS_Organigram_15_Feb_2016.pdf

DG EPRS already pursues a pro-active approach to the provision of information on its products and services to Members and their offices: since the beginning of the current parliamentary term in July 2014, some 83 per cent of Members have been personally visited by EPRS staff in their offices or have attended meetings at which EPRS products and services have been presented. The directorate-general attaches high importance to continuously informing Members and their offices about the support available to them - with a small, dedicated 'Client Needs Team' for that purpose - and it will redouble efforts in that direction. This team coordinates visits by EPRS staff to Members, offers information sessions to Members' assistants, and monitors Members' evolving research needs - with a weekly reporting mechanism to senior management.

§54: "Requests that the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit improve its visibility, via email, with respect to the excellent services it provides to committee members and rapporteurs as well as to its working methods; encourages the pursuit of training sessions for advisors and assistants to Members; demands a substantial improvement in the staff resources available in this area, as this will contribute significantly to enabling Parliament to participate as an equal partner in the decision-making process;"

The Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit forms part of the Directorate for Impact Assessment and European Added Value (Directorate C) within the European Parliamentary Research Service (DG EPRS). In accordance with the rules set out in the European Parliament's *Impact Assessment Handbook* - the most recent version of which was approved by the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC) in November 2013 - the unit provides a wide range of targeted, timely and specialised support to parliamentary committees in their work on ex-ante impact assessment, covering all policy areas. . This support comprises essentially two types of products and services: (i) initial appraisals of the impact assessments accompanying legislative proposals tabled by the European Commission; and (ii) a range of other research work in respect of ex-ante impact assessment done at the specific request of individual parliamentary committees.

More specifically, initial appraisals of Commission impact assessments take the form of short briefing papers (up to twelve pages) summarising and analysing the quality of the Commission's impact assessments, with the purpose of identifying the latter's strengths and weaknesses in light of the Commission's guidelines and other quality criteria defined by the Parliament in various resolutions. These initial appraisals are provided pro-actively and systematically to the relevant parliamentary committees, so that the latter may question the Commission on the subject or follow up in any way they find useful. There have been 120 initial appraisals since July 2012, when the unit started work.

Other products and services, provided upon request of parliamentary committees are principally: (i) detailed appraisals of the quality and independence of the Commission impact assessments; (ii) complementary or substitute impact assessments on aspects of a legislative proposal not dealt with adequately (or at all) by the Commission impact assessment; and (iii) impact assessments of substantive amendments to the Commission proposal being considered by the Parliament. (Under the provisions of the Parliament's *Impact Assessment Handbook*, dating from before the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit was in fact created, impact assessments on amendments are always carried out for the Parliament by external experts, but the process is organised and managed by the unit).

To make these various products and services available in a targeted and timely manner, the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit has established procedures for the transmission of its work to committee members, including notably rapporteurs. They are delivered to the relevant committee secretariats, both through the official GEDA (Electronic management of European Parliament administrative documents) transmission system, and by email, and they are then distributed to the rapporteurs and other committee members, in accordance with individual committee secretariats' internal procedures. In general, the material is distributed to all committee members, as well as being uploaded on the e-committee website, especially when the Commission's impact assessment itself features there. Whenever appropriate and requested by the relevant committees, the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit is also available to present its work in person in committee meetings. (It has done so on nine occasions in Committee meetings and on five occasions in meetings of the shadow rapporteurs since July 2012. In addition, eight presentations were done by external contractors in full committee meetings and meetings of shadow rapporteurs).

Moreover, as for all EPRS publications, the output of the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit is distributed in due course in regular EPRS mailings to all Members, and they are also made publicly available on the Parliament's internet and intranet sites, notably on the EP Think Tank and EPRS intranet and blog. This material includes the most recent report of the parliamentary work in the fields of impact assessment and European added value.

In order to further enhance the visibility of its work, the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit will now explore, in collaboration with committee secretariats, additional ways to transmit speedily its material to committee members, without disrupting the established working methods of committee secretariats.. More generally, DG EPRS will also shortly begin sending to all Members, via email, more regular, tailored information packages on its work in the fields of impact assessment and European added value.

. Staff needs in this field, as in other areas, will be kept closely under review, to ensure that the necessary support is available to committees.

§56: "Urges DG EPRS to further differentiate its publications from the official positions of Parliament to avoid confusion in the public and media; welcomes the introduction of the disclaimer in all publications; calls on DG EPRS to make it more visible and not only on the back page, and to introduce additional features for an easy distinction with the official adopted positions of Parliament;"

As defined by the Bureau of the European Parliament, the mission of DG EPRS is to be 'independent, objective and authoritative in the work undertaken'. Its publications are thus analytical, non-partisan, briefing documents, based on the dispassionate analysis of any subject. To avoid any confusion between such analytical research material and the resolutions or other official positions of the Parliament, a standard disclaimer is systematically inserted into the text of EPRS publications - whether it is for pro-active briefing material produced by the Members' Research Service (Directorate A) or for studies commissioned by parliamentary committees or the STOA Panel (Directorate C) - which reads:

'The content of this document is the sole responsibility of the author and any opinions expressed therein do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Parliament. It is addressed to the Members and staff of the EP for their parliamentary work.'

This disclaimer is used jointly both by DG EPRS and by the five policy departments in DGs IPOL and EXPO, on the basis of a standardised approach to all analytical publications. DG EPRS has already increased the size of the disclaimer on its longer publications (in November 2014) and it is happy to make it more prominent still on all its output, in a way appropriate to the length and style of each publication. It has also proposed that the wording of the disclaimer be further clarified along the following lines, and this is now being considered:

'This document is prepared for, and addressed to, the Members and staff of the European Parliament as background material to assist them in their parliamentary work. The content of the document is the sole responsibility of its author(s) and any opinions expressed herein should not be taken to represent an official position of the Parliament.'

It is also worth noting that the distinction between analytical publications and official EP texts is already emphasised by the format of EPRS and policy department publications. In 2014, the Parliament's administration introduced a consistent set of categories for all such publications throughout the house - whether produced by EPRS or policy departments - so reducing any possibility of inadvertent misunderstanding of their status. These categories are, in increasing order of length: *At-a-glance* notes, *Briefings*, *In-depth Analyses* and *Studies*. The templates used for these publications, although they still vary, are all quite different to those of the parliamentary committees. Likewise, analytical publications are posted on the EP internet site ('Think Tank' pages) in clearly distinct places from where official texts adopted by the plenary can be found.

Further work continues in this area. The different directorates-general are working together to develop a common format and cover design for all analytical publications produced within the Parliament's administration. This will be launched in coming months and will take account of the request in the discharge resolution to strengthen the visibility of the disclaimer and to introduce additional features for an easy distinction' with official EP positions, applying both to EPRS and policy department output.

Separate to any disclaimer, one might reasonably expect the output of a parliamentary research service to include appropriate reference to the established position of the European Parliament on any subject, should such a position exist. This is something that the policy analysts authoring EPRS publications routinely seek to do as part of their work.

Communication

§57: "Notes that VoteWatch received two grants (EUR 149 172 in 2012 and EUR 350 000 in 2013) for the co-financing of specific projects related to the European elections; requests an added value assessment of those projects;"

In the framework of DG COMM's multiannual grants programme, project proposals were first assessed by evaluation committees established in accordance with the Financial Regulation and the award decision was based on pre-defined criteria announced in the calls for proposals published on the EP website.

In 2012, the VoteWatch project ranked 1st out of 86 project proposals and the 2013 project ranked 15th out of 84 project proposals. In both cases, the evaluation committees highlighted the relevance of the applications with respect to the objectives of the calls. They also acknowledged their capacity to reach out young people through innovative and creative tools fully exploiting the information and tools available on the EP website.

The objective of the 2012 project was to develop, in close partnership with the European Youth Forum League of Young voters, an innovative website (MyVote2014) allowing young voters to develop a basic understanding of the role and functioning of the European Parliament and to promote young voter participation in the 2014 European Parliament elections. The website was accompanied by a mobile app, a website widget and a Facebook application. In addition, an event at the EP's Parliamentarium, a panel debate as well as a seminar were also organised. The website received considerable attention in social media, including encouraging tweets from Parliament's and the Commission's Presidents. The site MyVote2014.eu attracted 30 000 unique visitors in its first months of existence, 310 000 page views and an average of 6.5 minutes spent on the site, which is considered extremely high by website standards.

The aim of the 2013 grant was to build a dedicated website to raise awareness of the European Parliament elections in 2014. It included a voting advice application based on the voting records of sitting Members, designed to help citizens decide which candidate or party to vote for. It was accompanied by a mobile app, a website widget and a Facebook application. In addition, various EP-related events were organised. From its launch until after the EP elections, nearly 400 000 users visited the site and 80 000 of them also completed the voting test. It also generated more than 14 000 Twitter followers, 4 500 Facebook fans and it had over 500 mentions in newspapers and online media as well as coverage on TV and radio, with an estimated reach of tens of millions of EU citizens.

Parliament's administration also carried out an ex-post verification on the 2013 project in the organisation's premises in January 2016 and concluded that the project, its costs, organisation and implementation were all in line with the grant agreement.

§59: "Criticises the presentation of statistical data on explanations of vote, speeches in plenary, parliamentary questions, amendments, motions for resolutions, written questions to the President of the European Council, the Council, the Commission or the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the Parliament website, which appear designed to prove which Members of the Parliament are supposedly "active" on platforms such as MEPRanking; calls on Parliament to stop providing the raw numbers in a statistical form and to take into account more suitable criteria to identify a Member as "active";"

The Bureau of the European Parliament has set up a working group dealing with the issue of the current depiction of Members' parliamentary activities on Parliament's website. A decision on the publication and/or transmission of statistical data on Members' parliamentary activities should be taken in that framework.

§60: "Notes that DG COMM is extremely vocal in calling for a reduction in expenditure and a greater stress on efficiency; calls for greater emphasis on the effective rather than costly deployment of information and communication technologies (ICT); notes that despite the large sums spent on the Parliament website, it remains complex, difficult to navigate and fails to generate the desired visibility; advises a review of the marketing strategy; stresses that a transparent and accessible website is key to the involvement of citizens;"

The EP offers different websites, containing millions of documents in 24 languages as well as a constant stream of updates and news.

The complexity of the EP websites is linked to the variety of actors it serves (Members, political groups, committees, delegations, governing bodies), the different audiences it addresses (both external: citizens, media, stakeholders, visitors, young people, national authorities etc.; and internal: Members, staff, assistants, etc.) and its different needs (transparency, information and communication, access to political documents, technical documentation and requests). The European Parliament's websites are in constant evolution to adapt to the political requests and needs and to keep pace with ever quicker evolving trends, technologies and web consumption patterns. They also have to adapt to the move towards a more powerful, visible and political Parliament which should be accessible to all internet users in an easy way. The management of the websites, performed by several competent services, is coordinated and guided by a Steering Committee composed of Members of DG COMM and DG ITEC.

In order to both enhance navigation and address the complexity issue, preparations for a major overhaul have started and will be implemented gradually as from December 2016. 'Responsive Web Design' will be introduced (i.e. the ability for a website to automatically reorganise its content and display according to the size of the device's screen it is consulted on) and the websites will become more easily accessible on all kind of devices (desktop computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones). The responsible services expect that user experience and the consistency of Parliament's online presence will improve. The new design will be based on the latest online trends as well as the experience, statistics and insights gathered over time.

Furthermore, the Secretary-General has set-up an inter-DG task force to deal with search engine optimisation (SEO). Visibility on the internet is highly linked to the ability to be found by search engines – these are actually the first source of traffic for the EP websites, delivering 40% of the visitors.

Parliament's websites should rank as high as possible to provide the necessary visibility, hence specific, large-scale SEO actions (of both a technical and editorial nature) are being implemented. The responsible services monitor the efforts and the results achieved regularly and this work will continue on a permanent basis as SEO is a domain in constant evolution.

§61: "Calls for a new and efficient Parliament website search engine, which provides both strong search engine optimisation and a fully comprehensive search engine results page alongside a dedicated effort to enhance access to the site by means of improved keyword recognition; recommends intense inter-institutional cooperation to connect all the website databases of Union institutions; notes that this will ensure greater transparency of Union activities for all citizen;"

In the context of the inter-DG task force on (external) search engine optimisation, mentioned above in the reply to paragraph 60, DG ITEC and COMM are also implementing a number of measures to enhance the internal search engine that runs on Parliament's websites. The ultimate goal is to improve the relevance of search results and the consistency among the different EP websites with both technical and editorial actions that include:

- Maintaining and enhancing semantic rules: proposing synonyms, creating a list of equivalent terms (matching technical terms to more general expressions), proposing related searches,
- Auto completion / keyword recognition,
- Spelling suggestions,
- Generalisation of sorting options,
- Suppression of duplicated content.

The platform of the current search engine will be phased out by the supplier by 2018. The above-mentioned actions are carried out bearing in mind to minimise investments that would be lost when the platform is replaced.

Close cooperation with other EU institutions, notably the Commission, the Council and the Publications Office is already in place in the context of the "Comité éditorial interinstitutionnel internet".

The new 2016 Interinstitutional Agreement of Better Law-Making² also foresees that "*the three Institutions undertake to identify, by 31 December 2016, ways of further developing platforms and tools to that end, with a view to establishing a dedicated joint database on the state of play of legislative files*". To make it easier to trace the various steps in the legislative process, an interinstitutional task force with Parliament, the Commission and Council was set up to implement this provision.

² <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2016-0081+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

§62: *"Is disappointed to learn that the works on the Eastman Building, which will provide the premises for the House of European History, has continued to accumulate delays; calls for a communications plan/ promotion and website projects/marketing plan that will detail how the House of European History is to achieve the desired level of impact;"*

The extensive works on the building, the upgrading of the security arrangements and, in general, the unprecedented task of building a major new collection from scratch amounted to a considerable challenge for all services involved.

Nevertheless and although the building, fitting out and technical installations of the House of European History, as well as the entire first temporary exhibition, are near ready, finalising the collection and the technical equipment for visitors still have to be achieved in order to allow the House of European History to open to the public in optimal conditions.

The elaboration of a single comprehensive communication and media plan for the House of European History is underway, aiming at promoting both the HEH opening events and its fully operational phase. A multi-disciplinary team of DG COMM staff will be working to devise a campaign that is wide-reaching and highly targeted at the same time, in order to reduce costs.

§66: *"Is concerned that the budget line for the European Parliament Visitors' Centre increased by 24 % over the previous year in comparison with the visitors increase which was only 1 %;"*

The increase was due to extraordinary events unrelated to the actual number of visitors. Firstly, the accession of Croatia in 2013 required the production of all media contents in a new language plus a number of adaptations in the exhibition. This major update was completed in 2014. Secondly, with a view to the European Elections, the highly successful 360° film was adapted to portray major achievements of the past legislature, the Parliamentarium produced a temporary exhibition on the significance of the European elections and it also hosted a major public event on election night. After the elections, substantive updates in the exhibition were required to adequately reflect the new composition of the Parliament.

§68: *"Notes that the expenditure on the LUX Film Prize itself in 2014 amounted to EUR 391 506, which is significantly reduced from previous years (2013: EUR 448 000; 2012: EUR 434 421) and which covered the official selection, the competition including subtitling into the Union's 24 official languages and prints for screenings in the 28 Member States, and the awards ceremony; Recalls that advertising and promoting the LUX Film Prize, together with the Sakharov prize and women's rights, aims to illustrate Parliament's commitment to consensual values such as human rights and solidarity, as well as its commitment to cultural and linguistic diversity; regrets the fact that the results of a survey on awareness and impact of the LUX-Prize, requested in the 2013 discharge report, is not yet available; calls for the results of this study to be available to the public by mid-May 2016 and an official presentation of the results to be made to its Committee on Budgetary Control and its Committee on Culture and Education;"*

The results of the survey requested in the 2013 discharge resolution are available for a presentation to the two Committees mentioned. The format and the date for the presentation have not yet been fixed at the time of writing.

Staff issues

§70: "Asks for clearer qualification requirements for staff particularly in sensitive functions such as, for instance, in the committee secretariats or the department for ex ante impact assessments; requests the review of specific requirements with respect to staff's ideological and political neutrality; requests that Parliament be presented with criteria for staff selection;"

Qualification requirements for filling a vacant post in Committees' secretariats, or in any other unit in the European Parliament's Secretariat, are clearly detailed in the vacancy notice (for internal/inter-institutional transfers) or the recruitment notice (for EPSO competitions/external procedures organised by the Parliament).

All vacancy notices comprise a standard job description and a free text section specific to each notice. The job description describes the specific characteristics of the job in question and has five parts: Activities, Training, Knowledge, Competencies and Environment. The free text is an integral part of the vacancy notice and describes in detail the requirements for the respective post. The person leading the entity, be it a Director-General, a Director or a Head of Unit, is responsible for the content of the free text; s/he decides on its degree of detail, depending on the profile sought for that post.

All institutions agree upon qualification requirements inserted in recruitment notices for EPSO competitions. As for selection procedures organised only by the Parliament and published in the Official Journal, the job description and selection criteria in the recruitment notice are agreed upon with the Secretary General.

Recruitment is based on merit only. Upon recruitment, all staff sign a declaration of absence of conflict of interest.

Officials or other servants' ideological and political neutrality is an absolute requirement, which implies that they must act with impartiality in order to further the interests of the European Union. The legal means of securing independent personnel is the Staff Regulations. Its provisions are complemented by the Financial Regulation and the Code of conduct adopted by the Bureau on 7 July 2008. Thus, the legislator wished to protect the European Union from the risk that its officials and other servants might become obligated to persons and sources of pressure outside its institutions. In this framework, Article 11, paragraph 1, of the Staff Regulations states the following:

"An official shall carry out his duties and conduct himself solely with the interests of the Union in mind. He shall neither seek nor take instructions from any government, authority, organisation or person outside his institution. He shall carry out the duties assigned to him objectively, impartially and in keeping with his duty of loyalty to the Union."

Infringements are punished by the Appointing Authority/Authority Empowered to Conclude Contracts of Employment. The neutrality of "ex ante impact assessments" is to be evaluated by the responsible Head of Unit, who must ensure that all documents produced by the Unit are politically neutral.

§73: "Points out that the increase in working hours from 37,5 to 40 hours a week under the revision of the staff regulations is the equivalent of over 350 extra posts and that this virtually offsets the staff cuts of 5 % over several years agreed as part of the reform of the staff regulations; calls on Parliament to present a transparent report with annual indications of planned reductions in posts and to take account of the increase in working time in so doing;"

Article 27 of the December 2013 IIA on budgetary discipline, cooperation in budgetary matters and sound financial management reads that "To neutralise additional capacity built up by the increase of working time to 40 hours per week, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission agree to progressively render 5% of staff as in the establishment plan on 1 January 2013. (...) This does not prejudice the budgetary rights of the European Parliament and the Council."

Parliament's understanding of the spirit of this article is that the annual reduction target should be set on the basis of a constant value ("charge de travail à volume constant").

The Parliament has been implementing the 5% staff reduction target since Budget 2014. As a political decision on excluding the political groups from this calculation has been taken by the Parliament, this reduction is being applied to the Secretariat General's part of the establishment plan.

Over the last three years 171 posts have been deleted: 67 in 2014, 47 in 2015, and 57 in 2016. In November 2015 in the framework of the adoption of the 2016 budget, the conciliation meetings between the Council and the Parliament set out the annual net reductions in the total number of posts in the establishment plan of the European Parliament.

According to the output of these discussions, for 2014, 2015 and 2016 net reductions amounted to respectively 37, 47 and 18 posts, considering that 69 posts were created during this timeframe: 30 posts in 2014 (ICT internalisation, compensated by a reduction in appropriations for external IT assistance) and 39 posts in 2019 (20 for security, 16 for scrutiny and 3 for the management of parliamentary assistance).

In order to reach the overall reduction target of the EP administration set to 281 posts (corresponding to 5% of the Secretariat General's part of the establishment plan on 1 January 2013), staff cuts period has been extended until 2019.

For 2017, 2018 and 2019 net reductions will amount to respectively 60, 60 and 59 posts.

§74: "Notes that the proportion of female officials remains very high and had risen to 59.2 % at the end of 2014, compared to 58.8 % at the end of 2013; is concerned at the lack of parity in the administration, where only 30 % of heads of unit, 34 % of directors and 18.2 % of directors-general are women; calls for an equal opportunities programme to be introduced, in particular for managerial posts, with a view to redressing this imbalance as quickly as possible; recalls that 1 out of 8 directors and 9 out of 31 heads of unit who were recruited in 2014 were women; is of the opinion that the recruitment procedure should be balanced; reiterates its call for the need of a more balanced representation of women in senior managerial positions;"

The proportion of female officials remains high but stable since 2014 (59.4% at the end of 2015 compared to 59.2% at the end of 2014). Efforts have been made to mitigate gender imbalance for director-general and head of unit posts. The imbalance was drastically reduced for directors-general (women represented 33% of directors-general on 20/6/2016) and became less pronounced for heads of unit (women represented 32% of heads of unit on 20/6/2016). As for director posts, the imbalance still remains stable (women represented 33% of directors at the end of 2015).

In order to increase the number of female heads of unit, which would have positive repercussions on female appointments also at senior-management level, actions have been taken in order to foster female applications, in line with the objectives and measures contained in the Action Plan for Gender Equality and Diversity within the secretariat of the European Parliament for 2014/2019.

The celebration of the International Women's Day on 8 March 2016 has represented an effective tool for heightening awareness and raising the profile of ideas and initiatives in the field of gender equality.

Beyond the necessary involvement of the political authorities, the roundtable '*Women with management potential*' has been an opportunity to develop proposals as to further actions to undertake in order to help redress the gender imbalance in the applications for Head of Unit posts. Six career-planning and training initiatives have been submitted, which had previously been presented to the High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity of the Bureau at its meeting of 17 February 2016. These initiatives have been favourably welcomed by the colleagues concerned and a new programme will therefore be put in place.

The initial part of this programme includes an individual learning and development needs analysis, as well as a three-day modular training course entitled "*Management for Women*". Once these two mandatory components have been completed, participants will have the opportunity to take part in some management training workshops and to participate in a mentoring scheme.

This training programme will be complemented with specific measures that aim to raise awareness of staff members, Human-Resources officers and line managers, regarding gender issues. A call for expression of interest for female officials in grades AD9 – AD 14 who are not managers, to enrol for the initial part of the programme, will be published end of June 2016.

In order to assure gender-neutral selection procedures, all selection panels have an appropriate gender balance and at least one member of each gender.

The composition of the Advisory Committee for the Appointment of Senior Officials includes an observer for gender equality matters.

The guidelines from an equality perspective for members of selection/recruitment panels are made available for the members of the selection panels, in order to avoid them asking improper interview questions or making inappropriate inquiries which can lead to restrictions or denial of employment opportunities, consequently creating discrimination.

The shortlist of candidates proposed by the selection panel to the Secretary-General for a middle-management post must include more than one name and be gender balanced as much as possible.

The Advisory Committee for the Appointment of Senior Officials sets up a list of candidates forwarded to the Secretary-General and then submitted to the Bureau, which decides on the final list of candidates eligible for an interview.

New measures for a better work/life balance have been introduced in the Staff Regulations in 2004 and 2014. The Bureau has adopted on 12 September 2016 rules for occasional teleworking with a pilot period to be assessed after 1 year. The non-existence of such a scheme until now was identified as a major obstacle for female colleagues not to apply for Head of Unit posts.

An inter-service working group on gender-neutral language has been set up and should soon take up duty in order to revise the present guidelines welcomed by the Bureau in May 2008.

A reinforcement of gender mainstreaming and of the internal structures dealing with the equal opportunities policy has been implemented through a gender mainstreaming network (both at MEP and at administrative level) and the role of the rapporteur in gender mainstreaming in the work of the Parliament (Ms Mlinar's report adopted on 8 March 2016).

§75: "Regrets the fact that Parliament has not yet published information on an annual basis about senior officials who have left Parliament's administration, as well as a list of the cases of potential conflicts of interest that have been addressed, as required by Article 16, paragraph 4 of the Staff Regulations;"

In 2014 and 2015, no senior official declared an activity after leaving the service. Therefore, no list was published.

§80: "Emphasises that subsistence allowances received by APAs travelling to Strasbourg are at least 21 % lower than those of other staff; deplores the fact that the Bureau has not responded to the request made by Parliament in paragraph 74 of its resolution of 29 April 2015; calls once again on the Bureau to take the necessary measures to remedy this inequality and bring APAs' allowances into line with those of other staff;"

Initially in 2009, a unique fixed price was set for the daily allowance for APAs.

The question was later analysed by the Working Group of the Bureau, chaired by Mme Roth-Berendt, which envisaged several possibilities including alignment with the modalities used for officials.

The final solution, which was retained by the Bureau, was to propose three different fixed prices to cover all mission expenses, except transport (which is reimbursed separately) and decided by the respective MEP.

§81: "Deplores the fact that the Bureau has failed to take any action at all in response to paragraph 71 of Parliament's resolution of 29 April 2015; calls on the Bureau to take the necessary measures as a matter of urgency to ensure that the composition of the advisory committee on harassment and its prevention at the workplace responsible for APAs is balanced and that it includes at least two representatives of the APAs;"

The Secretary General will submit a note to the Bureau by the end of 2016, after a full year of work of the Advisory Committee, analysing the work of the Committee, the application of the rules and the balance on the decisions. Based on this experience, recommendations of improvement will also be submitted to the Bureau.

§83: "Calls on the Secretary-General and the Bureau to look into and resolve problems in relation to APAs, for example delays in signing contracts at the beginning of the present parliamentary term, interruption of contracts, the implications of early European Parliament elections for minimum contribution periods, etc.; calls for APAs' representatives to be involved in the search for solutions;"

The contract of an accredited parliamentary assistant is directly linked to the mandate of an Member, so in case of a change of parliamentary term, extending a contract is not possible and a new recruitment has to take place.

Regarding the change of parliamentary term in 2014, whenever necessary, the APA concerned took up duties on the requested starting date (02/07/2014, the day after the change of parliamentary term) without actually signing the contract on that day. There were no gaps between contracts in cases in which the Members had submitted the recruitment request before the well-publicised deadline of 20th of June 2014 - approximately a month after the elections, giving the Member sufficient time to organise the recruitment of his/her assistant(s).

According to article 16.2 of the APA implementing rules, *'all the original documents requested shall be forwarded to the relevant Secretariat department no later than five working days before the contract starting date requested by the Member concerned. In the event of failure to comply with this time limit, the contract starting date shall be deferred.'* Therefore the time between the transmission of all documents by the APA candidate via the application PEOPLE and the start of the contract could not exceed 5 working days. The administration also did its utmost to ensure that the contracts were prepared as swiftly as possible following the registration of the recruitment requests. If recruitment took longer than those periods, it was only because documents were not provided in time by the APA candidate.

The administration was also committed to assuring that for the July 2014 session (i.e. the beginning of the new parliamentary term), all Members that had submitted an APA recruitment request should have at least one assistant with a signed contract.

§84: "Notes the progress made in adapting training courses to the specific needs of APAs; nevertheless considers it vital to make further progress in this direction, in particular as regards specific training, tailored timetables and intensive language courses, which are organised only during periods when most APAs have to take their annual leave; calls for account to be taken of the specific circumstances of APAs with regard to the timing of activities organised to increase well-being at work (mindfulness), lunchtime conferences, etc.;"

In recent years the following measures were implemented to accommodate the working conditions of different staff members in the EP, including APAs:

- 12 courses (8 in FR and 4 in EN) per language session on a Monday morning/Friday afternoon schedule. These courses were introduced specifically to fit the working conditions of the APAs. Due to the restrictions in number of rooms available, the administration can only offer limited amount of courses per session using this schedule;
- Language eLearning can be followed 24/7 for the duration of the license, and can be accessed from any device (laptop/PC/smartphone/tablet);
- DE classroom learning was made available as an in-house offer, meaning that no classes are held during Strasbourg weeks;
- Increased collaboration with the European Commission to ensure that the inter-institutional intensive summer language courses start after the July Strasbourg week if the latter is held in the first week of July.

Upcoming progress:

- Limited increase in the number of courses offered on a Monday morning/Friday afternoon schedule;
- Language eLearning can be expanded to allow participants to follow it throughout the whole year. As from 2017, the framework contract will allow the administration/management of eLearning courses to be done by the provider. This could be a way to continue offering eLearning throughout the year without affecting the workload internally;
- Where the number of learning requests permits, the possibility of offering blended learning will be analysed. This will be a mix of classroom and eLearning so that there is a personal follow up in class but the flexibility is enhanced.

Regarding training other than languages, APAs have access to the catalogue of courses available for all Parliament staff throughout the year.

§85: "Takes note of the report on the evaluation of the Statute for parliamentary assistants drawn up by Parliament and submitted in July 2015; deplores the fact that the report goes no further in practice than to assess the results from the APA-People application and highlight certain problems the administration has encountered in implementing the provisions of the Statute and with the internal implementing rules; expresses its unhappiness and total disagreement with certain value judgements made in the second part of the report; hence considers the evaluation to have failed to achieve its objectives, except in the case of the APA-People application; calls on Parliament, as a result, to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth evaluation of the Statute and the implementing rules before the end of this year, with that evaluation also all those aspects of a legal nature causing difficulties, so that the foundations can be laid for improving, adjusting and reforming individual rules in the near future; calls also for the official representatives of the APAs to be involved in this process, especially bearing in mind the very positive role they played in the first revision;"

In order to be in a position to provide the requested evaluation, DG PERS will establish a working group consisting of the heads of the different units which handle administrative issues linked to APAs. The APA Committee will be contacted in due course with a view to consulting it in this evaluation procedure.

§86: "Asks that, in the interests of transparency, Parliament's annual report cover activities organised and financed by the Staff Committee from the institution's budget, detailing the types of activity, the expenses incurred and compliance with sound financial management;"

Activities organised by the Staff Committee (SC) and financed by DG PERS are strictly followed by the authorising officer by delegation.

The SC provides to DG PERS a detailed annual report including the year-end Financial Statements, a summary statement of paid invoices for each social action taken and finally the overall reconciliation of expenses with bank extracts. The SC being an independent body from Parliament's administration it is not appropriate to cover activities organised and financed by the Staff Committee in a report prepared by the Parliament. The SC bears the responsibility on the activities that it organises and reports annually on them.

The financial statements of the SC are also validated by an external auditor. In conclusion, the related expenses are closely scrutinised by DG PERS.

§87: "Asks to be given the findings of the assessment of the APA People application for recruiting APAs that was introduced at the beginning of the present parliamentary term;"

APA-PEOPLE is fully operational although some improvements can be made. Current development work is focused on making it possible to upload documents necessary for the determination of APA's rights and allowances. This updated version of APA-PEOPLE should be used for the recruitment of APAs for the next parliamentary term.

The ex-post evaluation of the change of parliamentary terms in 2014, insofar as APAs were concerned, was made by DG Personnel and the conclusions of the assessment regarding APA-PEOPLE are as follows:

"Certainly in relation to the production of contracts and the taking up of duties, the development and introduction of the APA-PEOPLE IT application³ enabled DG Personnel to process a large amount of APA recruitment files at once and to organise the booking of appointments through a calendar managed by the EP administration.

- a) *For the management of the administrative recruitment process, APA-PEOPLE proved to be a success in terms of enabling large numbers of APA recruitment requests to be processed simultaneously, and in a short period of time. Providing the APAs with a platform through which they could upload (and thereby submit to the EP administration directly and swiftly) copies of all the documents necessary for the establishment of the contract was particularly beneficial. Had the system not been in place, and had all requests been processed according to the traditional, paper-based workflow, it is certain that DG Personnel would not have been able to process such a large volume of files in such a short period of time or indeed to manage the signing of their contracts / taking up of duties. However, this is not to say that the process ran smoothly across the board, especially as a number of bugs were encountered.*
- b) *For the management of APA medical appointments, the APA-PEOPLE application unfortunately proved not to be functional. A list of blocking bugs was identified but could not be solved despite the efforts of all actors involved. The Brussels medical service had to resort to a back-up Plan B installing a call centre and a manual procedure to send all necessary documents to the APA.*

DG Personnel is addressing the bugs in the system and the issues that did not work as foreseen, and intends to extend the system to include the full chain of recruitment as set out above."

³ Developed by DG PERS and DG ITEC via an external contractor in 2013-14, and maintained by DG PERS's IT unit since autumn 2014.

Buildings

§91: "Notes that since June 2014, some 1000 staff from DGs IPOL, EXPO and EPRS moved into the Square de Meeûs building; recalls that this move was the first key stage in the process of making additional space available to Members in Parliament's main buildings; wishes to be informed of Parliament's next steps, with a concrete timeline for when additional offices will be made available;"

In June 2014, around 1 000 members of staff moved into the Square de Meeûs building. Consequently, on the 7th July 2014, Political groups received 450 extra modules in the Altiero Spinelli and the Willy Brandt buildings for distribution to their Members, increasing the parliamentary office surface from 1 650 modules to 2 100 modules.

Moreover, the approval of Parliament's medium-term buildings strategy by the Bureau is expected before being able to define the following steps.

§92: "Calls on the administration to arrange facilities in the main Parliament buildings for the staff working in the Square de Meeûs, including a room to consult restricted access documents for Members;"

The Bureau decision of 15 April 2013 concerning the rules governing the treatment of confidential information by the European Parliament defines that "*information classified at the level RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED or its equivalent and 'other confidential information' shall be registered and stored by the competent services of the secretariat of the parliamentary body/office-holder or by the CIU, depending who received the information*".

Following this decision, committee secretariats in DG IPOL assumed the responsibility to treat such types of confidential information received by them. The committees followed their own arrangements in treating these documents.

On request of the ECON committee, a Secure Reading Room (SRR) - dedicated to the ECON committee - was created in 2015 in the Square de Meeûs building, to store documents received from the ECB Supervisory Board and to make them available for consultation by Members.

In reply to the need arising from special committee TAXE/TAXE 2 and the committee of inquiry EMIS to treat such confidential documents, DG IPOL provided for further secure reading facilities, including a central secure reading room in Square de Meeûs to be made available to other committees with the aim to facilitate their dealing with confidential information.

In general the provision of these rooms in Square de Meeûs appears to be well accepted by Members. In order to ensure that the storage and management of the documents concerned remain under the direct control and supervision of the respective committee secretariats, these secure facilities have been established in the same location as the committee secretariats, namely the Square de Meeûs building, which forms part of the European Parliament premises.

A potential provision of secure reading rooms by IPOL staff in the main building would risk to compromise IPOL staff's ability to take full responsibility for the documents, as colleagues are normally in the Square de Meeûs building and would thus not be in a position to immediately spot potential problems around the room. In addition, it would be difficult, at least for the typically very small secretariats of temporary committees, to send staff to the main building for longer consultations.

DG IPOL will collect the practices and experiences gathered from the use of the aforementioned secure facilities from committee secretariats, including the specific resource intensity as well as the demand from Members to consult these documents. Based on the conclusions, DG IPOL will proceed in the most resource-efficient way to further facilitate the access to such documents for Members.

As far as the aspect of infrastructure is concerned, a temporary local was created by DG INLO in the building Paul-Henri SPAAK (04C018) since August 2015. A definitive local was finalized in the building Paul-Henri SPAAK (-2B007) at end of June 2016 and given to DG SAFE for securing it before use.

§93: "Regrets that a cooperation agreement between Parliament and the Commission on joint management of Europe Houses was still not possible; urges the two institutions to find a mutually acceptable agreement setting out a framework for purchasing or leasing property and to simplify the administrative and financial procedures for the Europe Houses' day-to-day management; calls for the political hierarchy to intervene, if necessary;"

As far as Information Offices are concerned and with reference to the reply to question number 129 of the 2014 Discharge Questionnaire, there is no difficulty with regard to the financing of the daily management of Houses of Europe. The administrative burden and the sum of budgetary resources transferred are balanced.

The conclusion of a triennial programme to target the purchase, rental, or lease of Houses of Europe has not been possible given that the Commission is obliged to follow a budgetary programme which depends upon the funds available in any given year.

During site visits to Dublin and Paris at the beginning of 2016, the Vice-Presidents responsible for Buildings and Communication became aware of the diverging requirements of each institution when seeking a new House of Europe, and the subsequent financing thereof. Therefore dialogues have taken place at both political and high administrative level in order to improve inter-institutional collaboration in this area.

§95: "Demands concrete planning and cost projections for the renovation works; urges greater transparency and the participation of individual Members in decisions that have a decisive bearing on administrative and financial aspects of the institution; deems insufficient the information given and prior agreements concluded at the level of the Conference of Presidents and the Bureau; requests that all strategic documents on the organisation and future development of Parliament be distributed to all its Members;"

In Brussels, the heavy maintenance works on technical systems (Building Management system, Fire detection system, lifts) have been planned on a ten-year basis. This file has been presented to the Working Group on Buildings, Transport and a Green Parliament of the Bureau before being carried out.

For structural building renovation projects foreseen, analysis is ongoing following different scenarios. Costs and planning estimates make part of this analysis which is to be presented to the Bureau.

In Luxembourg, given the decision to leave the decision on the future of the existing Konrad ADENAUER building for a later stage and to move towards the Konrad ADENAUER II, no project of important renovation is planned.

In Strasbourg, the heavy maintenance works on technical systems (heat pump, fire security system, building management system) have been planned for a five-year period.

The administration will present any works to the Bureau before carrying them out and by rule these dossiers are also transmitted to the rapporteur on building issues in the Committee on Budgets.

With reference to Parliament's governing bodies (the Bureau, the Conference of Presidents and the Quaestors) it must be noted that they meet *in camera*, and thus are only open to their members and selected staff of the administration, essential for the running of the meetings.

The necessary consultation and information process with Members inevitably takes place via the Vice-Presidents and the Quaestors who are elected directly by the Plenary and thus represent all Members of Parliament, or via the political groups, who are represented by members of their staff in the Bureau meetings.

All participants in the meetings of these governing bodies receive all documents both in electronic and in paper form, prior to the meetings. However, it should be noted that it is not clear what is meant by "strategic documents", as Parliament does not use such terminology.

See also reply to paragraph 28 on the availability of documents (agenda, minutes, etc) of those governing bodies.

Interpretation

§97: "Notes that the calculation done by the Parliament shows that the average number of hours per week that staff interpreters spent in their booths in 2014 delivering interpretation services was 10,7 hours/week; notes however that the hours in the booth represent only a part of the interpreters' work, which also consists of meeting preparation, language learning and maintenance, on-call duty, subject-based and other specialised training; calls on the Secretary-General to provide indicators that measure all activities performed by the interpreters; deplores the spread in the delivery of interpretation assignments by individual interpreters between 6 and 16 hours per week on an annual average, leading to an unequal workload for interpreters; acknowledges that due to the elections, 2014 was not a typical year as concerns the volume of parliamentary activity;"

Combined reply to paragraphs 97, 98, 99, 101, 102, 103 and 104

In December 2015, an ambitious modernisation process was launched in DG INTE. This modernisation process aims to bring the framework for the provision of interpretation fully in line with the new Staff Regulations in force since 2014. In addition, it aims to align the existing framework with Parliament's meeting pattern which has changed considerably in the last few years and notably since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Finally, it aims to increase the efficiency and cost effectiveness of service provision, whilst fully safeguarding the statutory and social rights of staff.

The modernisation process, which is gradually being implemented in consultation with the staff, is based on five underlying principles: better services to Members, increasing individual productivity and unit output, guaranteeing social protection, achieving the highest quality standards and achieving more fairness in workload.

Addressing a number of system bottlenecks aims at increasing both the resource-efficiency of the interpretation service and the individual productivity of staff interpreters. These bottlenecks are caused by certain aspects of the current working conditions for interpreters, which were adopted in 2005 and are no longer aligned with the current meeting pattern of the Parliament. After a failure in April 2015 of the previous talks over new working conditions for interpreters, a revised framework is currently under consultation with the staff interpreter's representatives. The aim is to apply this framework as from the beginning of 2017.

The new working conditions currently discussed with the staff interpreter's representatives include a number of social protection measures which take into account the specificity of the work of the interpreters. These measures notably limit the total number of hours interpreters can spend on interpretation tasks, both on a daily and on a weekly basis.

In addition, at the launch of the modernisation process, a number of benchmarks and targets for individual productivity and unit output were determined and linked to productivity and output indicators.

The productivity indicator, which will be used to assess specifically the individual staff interpreter's compliance with the working time requirement of 40 hours laid down in the Staff Regulations, fully reflects all aspects of the work of the interpreters, which includes not only performing interpreting duties, but also other activities, such as meeting preparation, language learning and maintenance, professional development, speech preparation, participation as speaker or board member in test and competitions.

The output indicator, which will be used to assess more generally the language units' output, was based initially on the hours of interpretation provided by the unit's staff interpreters during parliamentary weeks. Part-time, maternity, parental and family leave, long-term sick leave as well as annual leave taken during turquoise weeks were excluded. This indicator will now be further developed to allow for also reflecting the impact of elements such as short-term sick leave, annual leave, external language courses and inter-institutional exchanges.

Extensive explanations about the above benchmarks have been provided in the context of a Reflection Day which was organised in DG INTE on 3 June 2016. This Reflection Day, to which all staff of DG INTE was invited, provided an opportunity for staff to ask questions and provide input on the different aspects of the new framework. Additionally, regular meetings are organised with the representatives of the staff interpreters where the new framework is discussed in detail.

Productivity and output will also be enhanced by ensuring that staff interpreters are available for interpretation duties on core business days, i.e. the days of parliamentary activity when the provision of interpretation services is needed. In this context, new rules will be introduced to ensure that all non-interpretation assignments will take place outside of those core business days. Furthermore, new guidelines on staff interpreter annual leave have been published in March 2016, also aiming at increasing availability of staff interpreters during Parliament's core business days.

Efforts will also be made, notably using the above mentioned indicators, to achieve a more equal treatment in interpreter workload distribution. There is currently a considerable spread in the delivery of interpretation assignments by individual interpreters. This spread is partly the result of differences in the number of languages staff interpreters have in their language combination. To contribute to reducing this spread, new rules will be introduced to ensure that interpreters learn new languages in a more systemic way in order to make them more versatile for assignments in the booth until the level of five languages is reached. These new rules will also contribute to further enhancing the quality of interpretation.

A first set of modernisation and reform steps taken by DG INTE's management have resulted in an increase of average output on an annual basis between 2014 and 2016 from 10:52 to 12:23 of 'booth hours', i.e. interpretation assignments per week. The number of interpreters with a weekly average of less than 10 hours/week of interpretation assignments has decreased from 55 in 2014 to 24 in 2016. Finally, the number of interpreters with an average of over 16 hours/weeks of interpretation assignments has increased from 1 in 2014 to 5 in 2016. 15 language units are currently exceeding 12:00 hours/week.

IT tools will be developed to ensure that all interpreters have full access to their own workload. Additionally, the application Pericles, the main interpretation management tool, is currently being re-engineered to improve the efficiency of the assignment process. DG INTE also has a project related to the development of IT tools to support the interpreters with the automated extraction of terminology from documents (Interpreter Support Tool project).

Inter-institutional cooperation will equally play a role. A close cooperation already exists with the Commission, in the context of both a structured exchange of interpreters between the two Institutions as well as ad hoc loans of interpreters in case of shortages in the resources for particular languages during peak periods. A pilot for an exchange with the interpretation service of the Court of Justice is currently underway.

In parallel, efficiency gains are sought in the administrative support units. On 1 June 2016, in the context of the modernisation process, there was a restructuring of two units (the Interpreters' Support and Training Unit and the Unit for Multilingualism and Succession Planning) with the tasks of the two units being revised and broadened in order to more efficiently and effectively support the interpreters in their daily work in order to further enhance the service to Members.

§98: "Notes with concern that the calculation method with regard to statistics has not been clarified and calls on the administration to better communicate its processes on the relevant representatives of the interpreters;"

Please see reply to paragraph 97.

§99: "Calls on the administration to exclude leave and sick leave when calculating the average number of hours spent by interpreters in the booth;"

Please see reply to paragraph 97.

§101: "Insists that efficiency gains are still possible in the supply of interpretation, notably by enhancing the efficiency of a service currently hampered by rules dating from 2005 that are no longer compatible with the current meeting patterns of the institution; requests an examination of whether efficiency gains can also be achieved in the administrative support units of DG INTE;"

Please see reply to paragraph 97.

§102: "Requests a review to evaluate whether an appropriate number of internal interpreters is also guaranteed during the core business days of Parliament;"

Please see reply to paragraph 97.

§103: "Calls on the Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences to take all the necessary management measures to improve the IT tools and technical support for interpreters to match those of the Commission, to increase productivity in terms of interpretation assignments, to realign interpretation workloads of individual interpreters, to ensure that staff interpreters are present and available during Parliament's core business days, whilst fully respecting their social rights; finally requests the Secretary-General to present a new concept with the aim of an efficient and cost effective use of staff, the concept should also be based on an agreement with the interpreters;"

Please see reply to paragraph 97.

§104: "Takes the view that improving the provision of interpreting services, in particular together with the Commission within the framework of institutional cooperation, would help ensure that these services are used more efficiently;"

Please see reply to paragraph 97.

§105: "Is concerned by the fact that responsibility for meeting organisation and conference management is scattered across different DGs;"

All official meetings driving Parliament's political and legislative activities are managed directly by its organisers, i.e. the political groups, the parliamentary committees and the inter-parliamentary delegations. That is the reason why political groups are the owners and manage meeting rooms during the weeks set aside for their activities (blue weeks) while the committees own and manage the meeting rooms during the so-called "committee" weeks (pink weeks). This structure matches Parliament's colour-coded calendar as decided by the Conference of Presidents.

Travel Agency

§106: *"Welcomes that DG FINS's instructions to the travel agency to look for best prices are being implemented effectively; further encourages the travel agency to intensify comparison and try to reach agreements with major airlines for more flexibility and more economical prices while ensuring the possibility to have modifications and cancellations to travel arrangements; calls on the travel agency to actively seek less expensive tickets and offers when booking and, in general, to offer more competitive prices taking all airlines into consideration; calls DG FINS to elaborate a survey among users on the level of service satisfaction with the travel agency in order to identify further areas of improvement;"*

The Travel Organisation Service is working intensively with the travel agency to ensure the proper implementation of the travel policies of the Parliament.

As regards Members' travels, the travel agency is instructed to send the proposal according to the applicable rules or, alternatively according to the specific request of the Member. In addition, the agency must also offer compliant proposals for the same itinerary, i.e. the maximum refundable amount, the lowest business class rate, the lowest flexible economy class rate and the cheapest fare available. Members choose the best option according to their professional commitments and needs. If available on the requested route, the agency also offers tickets from low cost airlines even if their conditions in case of exchange or cancellation are often very strict. The travel agency stores specific preferences of individual Members in their relevant profile (e.g. flight tickets within Europe in economy class, train tickets 1st class, etc.).

For other types of travellers, the travel agency offers reservations according to the instructions issued by the relevant Authorising Officer services and in conformity with applicable rules.

The Travel Organisation Service is performing ex-post controls and checks on reservations made by the travel agency to assess the conformity to instructions given.

Contingency plans

§108: "Calls DG FINS in close cooperation with DG SAFE and DG COMM to re-evaluate contingency plans for emergency situations to better address new security threats, in particular for missions between the different sites of the institution;"

Within Parliament's administration, it is DG SAFE that has the primary responsibility for crisis management and, in this context, develops and implement contingency plans for all security and safety-related incidents taking place inside Parliament's buildings. Security outside Parliament's premises, including train stations, is the responsibility of national authorities with whom DG SAFE maintains permanent contacts. It also proceeds, before each session, to an evaluation of the risk level in force and ensures the implementation of security measures accordingly, including access controls and other security checks for chartered transportation. The risk assessment is executed in light of a constantly changing environment and must therefore be executed shortly before departure.

Members' pension fund

§110: "Points out that the fund's projected future liabilities are spread over several decades; calls on the Bureau to consider options to improve the liquidity of the fund;"

According to the annual accounts provided to Parliament, there is no immediate concern with regard to the liquidity of the fund.

§111: "Calls for the results of the external assessment requested by Parliament in its above-mentioned discharge resolution for the financial year 2013 to be delivered without further delay; identifies the board of the voluntary pension fund as primarily responsible for the extent of the fund's deficit; calls for a sole concept for the private pension fund, to decrease the liabilities of this fund; calls on the Bureau to make a proposal for a comprehensive action plan to address Parliament's responsibilities immediately after the reception of the external assessment; estimates it necessary to decrease the retirement benefits for the participant members of the fund;"

Please see reply to paragraph 110.

§112: "Calls on the Bureau to make an assessment of the current situation of the pension fund as soon as possible;"

Please see reply to paragraph 110.

Parliamentary assistants

§113: "Welcomes the new, stricter rules applying to local assistants and service providers; notes that some of the points of the new rules remain vague and are a source of misinterpretation; calls on further clarification of these points, especially with regard to side activities of local assistants and service providers; stresses that both groups should be under very strict scrutiny;"

As foreseen in the Implementing Measures for the Statute for Members, all new contracts and all significant modifications of existing contracts for an assistant are subject to a declaration of side activities and absence of conflicts of interest.

It is primarily the responsibility and in the interest of the Members to ensure that the side activities are compatible with the tasks of his/her assistants. In addition, the Administration usually request additional clarification on the side activities before accepting the contracts. In some cases, a risk analysis is conducted together with the Member concerned and mitigating measures are discussed.

The Administrations intends to clarify the rules and give practical guidelines through a Quaestors Communication.

ICT systems

§117: "Calls for the creation of an emergency rapid alert system which allows DG ITEC in collaboration with DG SAFE to send swift communications by SMS or email to Members and staff that opt to be part of such a communication list to be used in specific security emergency situations;"

Following the raise of the security alert level to yellow, the Security Management Steering Committee - chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and composed of the Directors-General and Secretaries-General of political groups - has implemented new ways of communicating to Parliament users.

Firstly, an internal communication cell composed of the Director-General of DG SAFE, PERS, and FINS was created in order to harmonise the communications sent via e-mail to Parliament's users in case of a security-related emergency situation. This procedure was used after the terrorist attacks on 22 March 2016.

Secondly, an SMS alert system for urgent security-related communications to reach the top and middle management of Parliament (Directors and upwards, Cabinets, political groups) was also established. In case of an emergency, these persons would transfer the necessary information to their staff and to Members.

§118: "Takes note that an external ICT audit was carried out by an independent third party as requested during the 2013 discharge; further notes that the objective of this audit was to assess Parliament's ICT security capabilities and its systems' potential exposure to cyber threats, with a view to developing an ICT security improvement plan including a suggested roadmap to enhance Parliament's global security level; calls for a cybersecurity regulation to guarantee that Parliament be able to protect its information systems effectively and ensure the safety and security of Members in the face of cyberattacks;"

Parliament's ICT Systems Security Policy has been adopted by the Bureau at its meeting of 7 September 2015. That framework defines common principles, responsibilities, priorities and procedures to mitigate IT security threats and are to apply across all directorates-general.

The governance framework defined in this policy introduces an Information Security Steering Board (ISSB) and a Chief Information Systems Security Officer (CISO) to chair an EP-Computer Emergency Response Team (EP-CERT) that being one of the main recommendations of a security audit mentioned-above.

The policy is implemented via specific projects and activities. A security action plan has also been elaborated and is pending the approval of the ISSB and CISO before being communicated to the Vice-President responsible for ICT and to the Bureau.

§120: "Calls for regular stress-testing of the Parliament's security systems in the domain of ICT:"

DG ITEC is regularly performing security audits of the ICT systems and infrastructure for several years now, following established best practices. Tests consist of a regular scan of the different systems, white and black box tests as well as other types of security analyses, performed by internal and independent external resources. In 2015 the process has been completed by adding a new laboratory that tests the security of applications developed in-house.

§121: "Notes that the Bureau adopted an ICT systems security policy in its meeting on 7 September 2015; stresses the urgency of implementing a considerably more robust ICT security policy in line with Parliament's roadmap for a global information security strategy:"

Please see reply to paragraph 118.

Security

§122: "Takes note that the internalisation of security services was completed in Brussels on December 2014 and in Strasbourg on 1 July 2015 following the adoption of a global security concept; stresses that further security measures and an urgent revision of the global security concept as adopted by the Bureau in 2011 should take place in view of the recent security context;"

The Global Security Concept has been adopted by the Bureau in 2011, and since been regularly confirmed and complemented by a number of proposals on its implementation through specific actions, each of those also approved by the Bureau. Taking into account the current complex political and security context, the Bureau has considered security issues again at its meeting on 11 April 2016, and approved an updated planning of all security investments for the years 2016 and 2017. The Global Security Concept will remain under constant monitoring and will be adapted to changing circumstances, as appropriate, and under the supervision of the Bureau.

§124: "Calls for effective screening of all security staff with a view to ensuring their aptitude for the completion of their tasks in terms both of reliability and levels of professional competence;"

External safety and prevention staff who are still performing their tasks via a contractor have to be certified according to the relevant Belgian legislation ("Tobback law"). Possession of this authorization by the contractor and by each agent individually provides the institution a guarantee of integrity, reliability, ethics and professionalism.

As for Parliament's security staff, management and administrator grade staff all have academic training, at various levels, in the field of security and previously worked either for national police forces of a Member State or in the security services of the other institutions, which is of great benefit to Parliament. Security and safety agents (contract staff) and coordinators were all recruited by means of an EPSO selection procedure, have the necessary knowledge and professional experience and many of them previously worked for law enforcement agencies of various Member States. Security staff also participates in training courses tailor-made to cover issues specific to Parliament. A training plan was drawn up and 32 800 hours of training have already been given since the start of the internalisation process. Screening of security staff in terms of aptitude, reliability and levels of professional competence is conducted by DG SAFE at the point of selection and then at recruitment.

§126: "Calls for a revision of building security measures and for greater control at the entrance to the Parliament's car parks by means of automatic number plate recognition; demands the implementation of a central external control point to check all outside providers entering the Parliament's buildings;"

At its meeting on 20 October 2014, the Bureau asked for the various entrances to all of Parliament's buildings in the three places of work to be reinforced. An expert in security engineering was also commissioned to elaborate on reinforcing the security and protection level against intrusion risks and terrorists attacks.

In this context, between October 2015 and April 2016, the Simone Veil and rue Wiertz entrances to the Spinelli building have been completely refurbished. The second phase of the reinforcement works, on the entrances to the Antall, Brandt, Atrium and BQL buildings have started on 15 July 2016 and will be completed by the end of the year. The reinforcement work will then start in Strasbourg as well as in the remaining Brussels buildings. For Luxembourg, the new security measures will be integrated into the construction of the new Adenauer II building.

Taking into account the current complex political and security context, the Bureau has considered security issues again at its meeting on 11 April 2016, and approved an updated planning of all security investments for the years 2016 and 2017. The Global Security Concept will remain under constant monitoring and will be adapted to changing circumstances, as appropriate, and under the supervision of the Bureau.

The Bureau also agreed to reinforcing the protection of the entrances and facades in Brussels and Strasbourg and to creating a security perimeter around Parliament's main buildings in Brussels and Strasbourg to strengthen their resistance and reduce risks by expanding the minimum distance between the buildings and the spot of a potential attack.

As regards controls at the entrance to the car parks, security agents systematically proceed to a visual check of all drivers and passengers' access cards and European Parliament parking stickers. In addition, since the raising of the alert level to yellow, random checks have been performed on cars entering Parliament's car parks. With the implementation of the iPACS project (integrated Physical Access Control), an automated number plate recognition system will also be installed.

Concerning the checking of all outside providers entering Parliament's premises, a memorandum of understanding is being prepared with the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to provide a systematic screening for all external contractors working for the EU Institutions, to be signed in due course.

In the meantime, a series of precautionary measures were taken at the request of the Bureau in relation to persons working on Parliament's premises via contractors, such as:

- systematic identity and personal effects checks at all entrances;
- revision of the existing lists of external persons working on Parliament's premises - these will subsequently be sent to Belgian authorities for screening once the Memorandum of Understanding is signed;
- verification of the existence of a contract;
- request for a recent criminal record certificate;
- regular checks of all collective social areas made available to external service providers;
- inventory of dangerous goods;
- obligation for the contractors to provide, well in advance, the list of persons requested to work on the premises outside official opening hours.

In addition, the Secretary-General has set up a task force to implement an IT tool managing all staff of external service providers working in the Parliament, notably the issuance of nominative badges, IT accounts, office space etc.

§127: "Recalls the incidents regarding thefts occurring in MEP's offices; calls on DG INLO and DG SAFE to ensure greater security and transparency in regard to contractors and maintenance staff having access to offices;"

Parliament's administration is not aware of any information that could establish a relation between thefts in Members' offices and contractors or maintenance staff. For measures relating to external persons working on Parliament's premises, taken due to the current general security context, please refer to the reply provided to paragraph 126 above.

§129: " Recalls the incident on 7 of October 2014 involving Kurdish protesters; calls for a comprehensive and confidential assessment of the Parliament's security services to be performed; welcomes, as a first step, that a high-level group comprising representatives of the Parliament, the Commission, the Council and the Belgian state has been established to enhance cooperation in the security domain; calls for further cooperation with national and international security services;"

As mentioned above in the reply to paragraph 126, works relating to the protection of entrances and facades, the creation of a security perimeter around the main buildings in both Brussels and Strasbourg and the implementation of the iPACS project (integrated Physical Access Control System) are ongoing. All these investments result from an assessment of the security issues in the framework of the Global Security Concept.

The Global Security Concept has been adopted by the Bureau in 2011, and since been regularly confirmed and complemented by a number of proposals on its implementation through specific actions, each of those also approved by the Bureau. Taking into account the current complex political and security context, the Bureau has considered security issues again at its meeting on 11 April 2016, and approved an updated planning of all security investments for the years 2016 and 2017. The Global Security Concept will remain under constant monitoring and will be adapted to changing circumstances, as appropriate, and under the supervision of the Bureau.

A comparative assessment of the security policy in force in the European Parliaments and a number of national Parliaments was launched following the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015. Vice-President Tajani met representatives of the French, Italian and German national Parliaments on 16 March 2016 to exchange on the security policy of these institutions. It was identified that the EP' internal security is fully comparable to those of the national Parliaments. Security will further consolidated by the presence of armed security personnel at strategic points of Parliament's premises.

Concerning cooperation with national and international security services, communication and cooperation between all EU institutions' security services has been strongly reinforced and proved to be highly efficient. Owing to the work of the High Level Group, cooperation with the Belgian national authorities and police forces has also been strongly upgraded.

§133: "Urges the Secretary-General, as well as the respective administrative authorities of the Commission, the Council, the EEAS and the parliamentary committees to explore the possible grounds for a Common Interinstitutional Security Policy including an action plan to develop common elements such as risk assessment assets and methodologies, personnel and means for the protection of the respective political authorities and VIP guests, training syllabus and resources for security staff, access control equipment and technologies, cybersecurity and communications security, as well as specialised resource management, which should be in synergy with the competent authorities of the host countries of the Union's main sites, external offices and delegations;"

It should be stressed that a strong inter-institutional cooperation exists already. Several security related issues are developed in close cooperation between the EU Institutions, in particular in case of emergency situations when general risk assessment, threat evaluation and potential change of alert level as well as communications to Members and staff are commonly agreed. In addition, the Secretaries-General of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission have recently agreed that the three institutions should resume a joint position and formalise arrangements with the Belgian authorities on a number of security-related issues such as the security presence in the European quarter, CCTV installations and better operational information exchange.

Aside from these common elements, each institution develops its own security policy depending on the specificities of its own activity and its geographical location. Parliament's situation differs from the other institutions in that its security services are now internalised whereas others still rely on external service providers and that the right level of security has to be provided while Parliament wants to remain open and accessible to the citizens.

Environmental issues

§136: "Highlights the need to implement Green public procurement for all contracts and calls for tenders; calls for ambitious binding targets for green contracts, notably in the areas of food and catering, vehicles and transport, sanitary and water equipment, paper, waste management, IT and imaging equipment, lighting, cleaning, and furniture;"

The implementation of the comprehensive approach to Green Public Procurement (GPP) procedures at the European Parliament, which started in the beginning of 2015, will continue its test phase until the end of 2016. While during this phase the targets defined in the Green Public Procurement Guide ("Implementation Guide on Green Public Procurement", available on the Intranet) are not compulsory, Parliament's services should undertake all efforts to reach them. At least 35% of the procurement procedures launched by Parliament in 2016, 50% in 2017, and 60% in 2018 should be classified as "GREEN", "VERY GREEN" or "GREEN BY NATURE" in the following areas: cleaning, food and catering, furniture, IT and imaging equipment, lighting, paper, vehicles and transport, sanitary and water equipment, waste management, textiles and office supplies.

The main ongoing contracts in the IT field with an environmental impact already contain to a large extent contractual provisions on greenness. In this framework, it is verified that the authorising officers have classified the greenness of the intended contract in particular for contracts in which the environmental and sustainability criteria may have a significance. Besides, the possibility of providing for contractual penalties in order to set binding targets is stressed.

Moreover, staff is encouraged to take part in professional training on GPP and to use the competencies and advices provided by the GPP Helpdesk. In this respect, references are made to the Green Public Procurement Guide and to the GPP Helpdesk.

Regarding IT equipment and paper, environmental conditions are already included in the call for tenders for IT equipment and large production printers (performance criteria) and for specialised paper (recycled or FSC).

In addition GPP measures are implemented concerning imaging equipment and other equipment and furniture used in the audio-visual and communication fields, regardless the value or duration of the contracts.

Also in what buildings and logistics are concerned, a significant number of tender procedures have been prepared with the objective of greening Parliament's public procurement. Environmental recommendations have been integrated in the tender documents, in selection and award criteria as well as in contracts with environmental impacts. A few examples are:

- the purchase of electrical bicycles which have to be 100% renewable;
- the contract for the supply of energy which has to be 100% renewable;
- the contract for the buildings in Brussels which requires that aluminium window frames have to contain recycled materials;
- the contract for cleaning in Luxembourg: environmental selection criteria introduced (need for certification ISO 140001 or EMAS or equivalent);
- the new call for tenders for catering will include GPP aspects.

For the future, the administration will continue to actively contribute to improve GPP, deepening the green aspects of the tenders according to previous and current experiences in the areas concerned by the procedures.

§137: "Calls on the Secretary-General to design a plan to reduce the number of trunks available for parliamentary travels; suggests that a "canteen on demand system" or a "canteen sharing system" be introduced, thus reducing the costs in financial and carbon footprint terms;"

Trunk sharing system is currently being rolled out for the administration. Voluntary participation will be offered to Members and political groups. Trunk transport is always on demand, either by making a request through the TRT (Transport Request Tracker) tool or by putting the trunk outside the office on collection day for Strasbourg.

§138: *"Welcomes additional measures to offset unavoidable emissions; calls on Parliament to develop further CO2 offsetting policies:"*

On 7 October 2015, the Bureau revised its decision on CO² offsetting of 12 September 2011 and:

1. agreed on offsetting the total amount of Parliament's carbon emissions, including emissions from flights by Members between their country of origin and Brussels and Strasbourg, on an annual basis but limit it to the financial means available under budget-line 239 (currently EUR 249 000);
2. allowed for projects in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP-countries), or, if such projects are not available, either in countries encompassed by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) with established National Action Plan Projects or in countries encompassed by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EuroMed)/Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), in candidate countries for EU accession or in EU Member States;
3. agreed on the widely recognised Gold Standard as a quality standard for offsetting projects in developing countries.

In order to implement the Bureau decision in the course of 2016 for offsetting Parliament's 2015 carbon emissions, a tender procedure was launched in July in order to provide for timely signature of the contract and payment before the end of 2016.

The outcome of the tender will be evaluated after finalisation of the procedure.