

**INFORMATION ON THE BUDGETARY AND
THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN 2015**

AND

**REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN
PREPARATION FOR THE
EP DISCHARGE FOR 2015**

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Introduction

The present document presents the answers by the Secretary General to the questions tabled by Members of the Budget Control Committee in the preparation to the decision on the European Parliaments' discharge for budgetary and financial management of the year 2015.

In this context this introduction will give an overview of the main characteristics of the year 2015, Parliaments use made of financial resources and important events as well as the fulfilment of the objectives for this year as they were formulated in Parliaments' budget as adopted by the budgetary institutions and by its Bureaus' decisions.

BUDGET OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN 2015

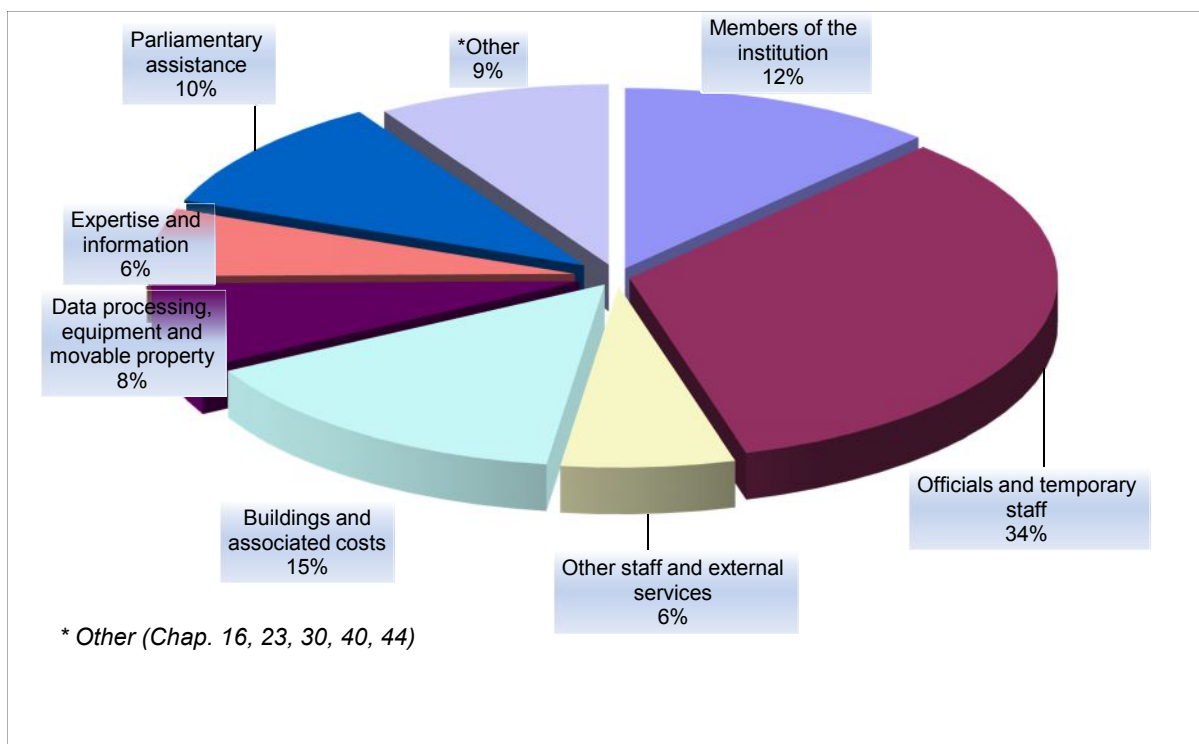
Parliament's final appropriations for **2015 totalled EUR 1 794 929 112**, or 19.78 % of heading V of the Multiannual Financial Framework¹.

In 2015, 99.1% of the initial budget was committed and only 0.9% (EUR 16 107 073) had to be cancelled.

This excellent result could be achieved thanks to a combination of a very high degree of implementation of the budget as requested by the financial authorities on the one hand and an end of the year transfer of EUR 71.0 Mio of unspent funds on the request of the Joint Working Group of the Bureau and Committee on Budgets and following a positive opinion by the Committee on Budgets, so as to help fund the extension and modernisation of the Konrad Adenauer Building (KAD), which is the main construction project in Luxembourg. As a result of this an estimated EUR 24.3 Mio in financing charges will be saved over the construction period and loan amortisation period. Without this end of the year transfer, 95.1% of the initial budget had been committed.

In 2015 four chapters accounted for 71% of total commitments. Those chapters were Chapter 10 (Members of the institution), Chapter 12 (Officials and temporary staff), Chapter 20 (Buildings and associated costs) and Chapter 42 (Expenditure relating to parliamentary assistance).

¹ Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020.



COMPLIANCE OF BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT WITH POLITICAL DECISIONS

The objectives pursued and outcomes achieved in 2015, which are set out below, stem from the priorities and decisions adopted by the Bureau in 2015, the guidelines adopted by Parliament in its budget resolutions, and the goals and achievements of the Parliamentary Project Portfolio.

A. Enhancing the security of Parliament

During 2015, following the terrorist acts committed in France and the anti-terrorist operations in Belgium, the President decided several times to change the state of alert at Parliament in Brussels so as to align the level of security at the Institution with the sensitive security climate.

In addition, on 14 November 2015, following the bloody terrorist attacks in Paris, the President decided to raise the Institution's state of alert at all three places of work and at the Information Offices to amber with immediate effect.

In this context, in order to maintain Parliament's openness and transparency and the continuity of its activities, DG SAFE introduced measures enabling certain activities, such as meetings, events and exhibitions organised by Members on an individual basis, to resume (these normally being prohibited when the state of alert is amber), provided that they are compatible with the necessary vigilance required by the context.

The President also instructed DG SAFE to enforce this principle and to monitor compliance with it daily. Accordingly, any request for a meeting, event or exhibition is now automatically referred to DG SAFE for an opinion.

A.1. iPACS Project

On 9 March 2015, the Bureau approved the iPACS (integrated Physical Access Control System) project for the acquisition of new security techniques to step up security at the Institution by giving it modern, integrated, non-invasive technological tools capable of assimilating future technological developments.

The iPACS project will make it possible to maintain security and protection at Parliament's premises in the three places of work in a coordinated, coherent and integrated manner, with the aid of a single genuinely integrated system which is capable of supporting and guaranteeing all the functionalities required.

This new system will be based on three main modules representing a major improvement: (a) a new common central IT system (CIS) consisting of all the modules and applications needed to manage and monitor the material security installations, in order to centralise and integrate all security devices; (b) integration of a new multifunctional, contactless, highly secure electronic chip into Parliament's access badges. This innovation could make it possible, inter alia, to introduce automated interinstitutional mutual recognition procedures for badges; and (c) a set of new items of equipment and new installations which will facilitate local monitoring of security and allow more effective monitoring of security in all fields (badge readers, surveillance cameras, barriers, anti-intruder systems, occupancy detectors, secured doors, etc.).

A.2. ICT security governance

At its meeting of 7 September 2015, the Bureau adopted the European Parliament ICT security governance system. 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 introduces a security governance steering board 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 carried out by PricewaterhouseCooper, as requested by plenary in the 2012 discharge resolution.

A.3. Security of EP external missions

A Task Force on Security of EP External Missions was established in March 2015, chaired by the Director for Members' Financial and Social Entitlements (DG FINS). The Task Force was composed of representatives from the Cabinet of the Secretary-General, the Directorate for relations with the Political Groups (DG FINS) and from various Directorates-General. The mandate entailed, among other issues, to verify the legal obligations of the EP as regards the MEPs and staff members on official mission and to review the composition, the mandate, the procedures and the resources of the Crisis Cell.

The Task Force produced, after eight months of intensive work, a comprehensive report containing concrete proposals to improve the prevention, the management of risks and emergencies related to EP external missions, along with proposals for modification of the current regulatory framework.

B. Enhancing the work of Parliament and its Members in order to complete the legislative cycle

B.1. Knowledge Management

The development and build-up of the Members' Research Service (EPRS) has moved to a further stage. Further specialisation of staff has been achieved, by appropriate training, so that specialist Policy Analysts are now in place in all major policy fields in the respective specialised units.

The Members' Research Service has provided analysis and research to individual Members in response to their specific requests. Provisional figures show that in 2015, the Members' Research Service responded to a total of (at least) 3 137 research enquiries. Of these, 219 resulted in the production of a Tailored Analysis. It has also started to deliver in-person briefings to individual Members in the various policy fields. The management of enquiries by Members follows the principle of strict confidentiality.

The Members' Research Service has also proactively provided a wide range of briefing material, along the categories of products defined at EP level. In the same year, it published 334 At-a-Glance notes, of which 141 were Plenary At-a-Glance notes, 228 Briefings², 42 In-depth Analyses and 83 Key Sources.

In terms of content, these publications aimed at covering all EU policy areas, if possible. In this first full calendar year of a new parliamentary cycle, a particular focus was placed on the political priorities of the European Commission. Particular attention was dedicated to timely responsiveness to events, crises and sudden changes on the political scene.

Some 352 internal studies and briefing papers were also produced, not drawing on any budget funds managed by DG IPOL (2014: 218). Approximately half of these were entirely new papers whereas the other half corresponded to revised versions and updates. These figures again demonstrate that a significant share of expertise is produced in-house.

In 2015, as an addition to the existing types of publications, the Members' Research Service launched several new series of publications. The 'EU Legislation in Progress' briefings aim to give readers an overview of the process regarding a legislative file; these briefings are updated at each new step of the law-making process, allowing the reader to follow it, to be aware of the state of play and to anticipate the next stage. In 2015, the MRS published 22 such briefings. It has also developed a coordinated series of publications on 'How the EU Budget is Spent', covering the various spending programmes under the MFF; 13 such briefings were published in 2015.

In the area of European Added Value, two 'European Added Value Assessments' were completed and four reports on the cost of non-Europe were published in 2015. Furthermore, a Strategy for completing the Single Market was presented to the IMCO Committee³ in September. This document was requested as a follow-up of the various 'Cost of Non-Europe Reports' on the Single Market published in 2014 ('Cecchini Revisited') and was mainly based on the work done by a high-level panel of experts specifically established for this purpose. In addition, the third edition of the 'Mapping of the Cost of Non-Europe 2014-2019' was published in April 2015.

² From which one was co-produced by DG IPOL and 12 by DG EXPO.

³ IMCO : Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Three scientific foresight projects were launched by the Scientific Foresight Unit (STOA) in the course of 2015, with one already delivering a series of briefings by the end of the year. Six studies, four briefings and four in-depth analyses were published, and a dozen events, including a successful Annual Lecture were held.

All STOA events open to the public are covered by live tweeting from the EPRS Twitter account (@EP_ThinkTank). Members, speakers, stakeholders, experts and citizens interested in the topic often engage in relevant tweeting before and during an event, thus hugely multiplying its impact. On average there are around 250 tweets per event using the specific hashtag (#) created for that event, potentially reaching several hundreds of thousands unique Twitter users. The fourth round of the MEP-Scientist Pairing Scheme was launched with a significant increase in the number of participating Members and scientists (33 pairs). The membership of the STOA Panel was increased from 15 to 24 Members by the Parliament's Bureau, widening the number of committees represented and linking STOA closer to policy work in those committees.

B.2. Supporting political priorities

2015 was the first full year of the 2014-19 legislative period. This led to an increase in output of the Directorate for Impact Assessment and European Added Value in most of its fields of activity. At the same time the year was characterised by complex political debates on, amongst many other things, the Economic and Monetary Union and – increasingly in the second half of the year - migration.

In the area of ex-ante impact assessment, however, it could be noticed that 2015 was also the first year for the newly-installed Commission, which resulted in only a relatively small number of legislative procedures submitted to Parliament and consequently in the number of impact assessments requiring appraisal by the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit. The rather slow start-up of legislative activity by the Commission provided the opportunity to carry out more general research and analysis activities, to present Parliament's activities to outside bodies, including national parliaments, and to produce related briefings, notably with regard to the Commission's new Better Regulation Guidelines and Impact Assessment in general.

2015 was the first full year in the production of 'European Implementation Assessments', to parallel the implementation reports prepared by the parliamentary committees, and other ex-post evaluations, as well as for their presentation before these committees. Five 'European Implementation Assessments' were prepared, together with 17 'Implementation Appraisals', addressing proposals to update existing EU law.

Scrutiny and oversight of the executive was significantly enhanced throughout the whole legislative and policy cycle by an extended range of products provided by the Policy Cycle Unit (formerly Policy Performance Appraisal Unit) and the European Council Oversight Units which, in addition to the production of Initial Implementation Appraisals, provided inter alia a total number of eight 'Rolling Check lists', Briefings ahead and post of each of the meetings of the European Council, produced a great number of further studies and organised events. By these initiatives, a basis was laid to follow-up in particular the evaluation process at the European Commission and of commitments undertaken by the European Council, and to gather the necessary information and expertise to have a sound basis to follow-up on the inter-institutional aspects related to better law making as such.

A number of projects which form part of the PPP (parliamentary projects portfolio) deal specifically with parliamentary scrutiny, including three developed by DG IPOL: strengthening the culture of scrutiny in the committees, scrutiny of delegated acts and draft measures under the RPS⁴, and scrutiny of financial programmes under the MFF⁵. The three projects made good progress in 2015. As for the project of Scrutiny of MFF financial programmes, a discussion with the Court of Auditors on priorities for their work programme was held at the level of the Conference of Committee Chairmen (CCC).

Tailor-made services to committee Chairs and Coordinators, committee Members and Rapporteurs was provided. In this task, flexibility and rapidity are of the essence and this dynamic environment implies that not all elements of the activity can be fully planned at the beginning of a year. An example of such quick implementation of political decisions was the setting-up of the Special Committee on tax rulings and other measures similar in nature or effect (TAXE) in February 2015, as well as the new mandate for six months, starting on 2 December 2015, or the setting-up of the Committee of Inquiry on emission measurements in the automotive sector, as decided in December 2015.

In the area of internal policies, 397 parliamentary committee meetings were organised (2014: 312). These, and all related work prior to them, led to the adoption of some 418 reports (2014: 404), including budget transfers, which were voted and later dealt with by the Plenary. 226 trilogues were organised in 2015 (2014: 197), an increase but down from the levels at the end of the previous legislature (695 in 2013 and 335 in 2012). The policy departments organised 31 workshops in which external experts participated and discussed with committee members (2014: 15). The parliamentary committees organised 100 hearings (2014: 50 and 2013: 85). This is the highest number of hearings recorded in any one year.

B.3. External policy codecision and consent

Further progress was made in ensuring proper accountability of Commission and Council via adequate scrutiny mechanisms. Taking up the Commissioners' and VP/HR⁶'s commitments during their Hearings, committees ensured the oversight of the VP/HR's activities on a regular basis, notably by holding 6 Pre-Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) meetings, 7 Post-FAC meetings, 3 meetings of the Special committee, 2 hearings of EU Special Representatives and 9 exchanges of views with newly appointed EU Heads of Delegation.

Parliament's access to the negotiating mandates of international agreements was improved by securing access to initialled agreements and committing the VP/HR to a debriefing by the Chief negotiator on each negotiating meeting. Significant progress with regard to transparency in the TTIP negotiations was achieved through a comprehensive agreement reached with the Commission to grant access to all relevant MEPs on practically all relevant TTIP negotiating documents.

⁴ RPS: Regulatory procedure with scrutiny

⁵ MFF: Multiannual Financial Framework

⁶ VP/HR: Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Parliament's oversight role on CSDP⁷ was increased through a constant assessment of security developments as well as through an active promotion of inter-parliamentary activities with national parliaments, most notably in the framework of specific joint parliamentary meetings every semester in the presence of the VP/HR and relevant Commissioners on a specific topical issue, as well as through the bi-annual Inter-parliamentary Conference on CFSP⁸/CSDP. Active scrutiny of financing of CFSP/CSDP was ensured via the established regular AFET⁹/BUDG¹⁰ Joint consultation Meetings with the Chair of the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and relevant services of the Council/EEAS.

The necessary synergies between the work of committees and the activities of inter-parliamentary delegations were elaborated and further implemented. A number of principles aimed at reinforcing the efficiency of institutional external relations initiatives, such as the systematic invitation of delegation chairs to committee shadow meetings, and reciprocally of committee standing rapporteurs to relevant inter-parliamentary meetings were established, and an active contribution was made to the revision of the human rights guidelines for delegations to third countries with a mechanism of sending recommendations ahead of a delegation visit and ensuring reporting back to the subcommittee upon return.

In the area of mediation and dialogue, assistance and expertise has been provided to the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) in the implementation of CDSA¹¹ activities in order to increase the efficiency and overall impact of the EP. Implemented activities include High Level Visit led by the Speaker of the House of Representatives in Zanzibar focusing on peaceful political dialogue and consensus building, development of a Parliamentary Mediation Training Programme for MEPs with support of external experts, and development of new Young Political Leaders concept. Support and expertise was also provided for developing a mediation mechanism with the EEAS to strengthen parliamentary pillar of overall EU action in the area of mediation. Silent diplomacy of DEG Co-Chair (AFET Chair) organised 7 humanitarian medical missions to Azerbaijan and achieved the release from prison of Sakharov Prize nominee Leyla Yunus and her husband Arif Yunus.

Concerning pre-accession actions, 4 public conferences were organised (3 of them in an Enlargement country), 4 seminars, 4 study visits and received 8 fellows. MEP involvement and attendance were high, as was the level of participation of MPs from the parliaments of Enlargement countries. In particular the Seminar on Political Culture provided a first opportunity for MEPs to step in with mediation efforts in the political crisis in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

B.4. Improving plenary sitting services and relations with national parliaments

Modernisation of plenary-related IT applications is intensifying. Access to the Legislative Observatory from mobile devices (smart phones, tablets, etc.) and a voice recognition system for the Minutes and the CRE¹² are already a reality.

⁷ CSDP: Common Security and Defence Policy

⁸ CFSP: Common Foreign and Security Policy

⁹ AFET: Foreign Affairs Committee

¹⁰ BUDG: Budgets Committee

¹¹ CDSA: European Parliament Comprehensive Democracy Support Approach

¹² CRE: Verbatim Report of Proceedings.

The Members' Administration Unit (DG PRES) was instrumental in the introduction of the new laissez-passer for Members and continued to modernise its database systems. The Official Mail Unit also continued to modernise its procedures for registering and managing mail and made a key contribution to the GIDOC¹³ project.

Significant progress was made with the 'on demand' editing service, for example through the introduction of e-Parliament tools and the Drafting Support Tool.

The Connect database proved to be an excellent tool for monitoring interparliamentary legislative exchanges. In 2015, the number of interparliamentary meetings returned to normal after a quiet year in 2014, a European election year. Development continued of the two IT databases under the responsibility of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments (ECPRD¹⁴ and IPEX¹⁵), thus improving further the information available to Members and third parties. The new publication 'Spotlight on National Parliaments' also proved to be an excellent way of disseminating targeted information on specific topics.

C. Communication and visitor reception

C.1 New visual identity for the European Parliament

At its meeting of 12 January 2015, the Bureau gave its final approval to the new logo and its introduction. Approval followed on from an initial exchange of views on the subject at the meeting of 15 December 2014.

The aim of the new logo, designed by members of Parliament's staff and therefore no cost in terms of concept, production and intellectual property rights, is to ensure renewal and consistency. It is better suited for use on social media and other on-line platforms and guarantees better coherence with respect to the logos of the other Institutions.

The general approach towards introducing the new logo involves bringing it into use as and when new materials are produced, stocks of consumables bearing the old logo were exhausted and the normal cycle of replacement of more durable materials allows it to be introduced. Exceptions to the general rule were made in the specific area of public communication, where existing materials were immediately replaced by new materials bearing the new logo (in particular the backcloths used in plenary and in meeting rooms, etc.). The overall cost of introducing the logo was put at EUR 120 000, whereas the design had been done inhouse.

C.2 Visitor strategy

The overall European Parliament visitor strategy was approved by the Bureau at its meeting of 27 April 2015, subject to elements for which a funding decision had not yet been taken and for which a full costing would have to be submitted to the Bureau prior to any decision.

The strategy includes:

- a visitor pathway on the Parliament site in view of the increasing number of visitors;
- the introduction of a loyalty programme allowing Parliament to maintain contact with visitors and fully complying with data protection rules;

¹³ GIDOC: Interdepartmental group of staff responsible for document management.

¹⁴ ECPRD: European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation.

¹⁵ IPEX: EU document and information exchange platform for national parliaments.

- more efficiently promoting what Parliament offers visitors, both on-line, in particular via the social media, and through printed material such as leaflets and maps; and
- integrating the Brussels region public-transport network.

The concept for the Visitor Welcome Centre 'Station Europe' was approved by the Bureau at its meeting of 18 May 2015. The aim of the project is to convert the old Brussels-Luxembourg station into an orientation point for the European Parliament visitor pathway, with interactive and user-friendly applications, and to use the first floor as a space for events and receptions, having regard to the relocation of Parliament's Information Office for Belgium to new premises closer to Brussels city centre.

The proposed cooperation arrangement with the Belgian authorities on the Musée Wiertz area was presented to the Bureau at its meeting of 8 June 2015. Wiertz park directly borders the Paul-Henri Spaak Building and is easily accessible from Parliament's main entrances. It would be possible to incorporate a pleasant green space into the visitor pathway, which would also be accessible to Members and staff. The Bureau tasked the Secretary-General to undertake exploratory talks with the 'Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique', responsible for the 'Musée Wiertz', and the Belgian 'Régie des bâtiments', responsible for the museum's buildings.

C.3 House of European History

Work in the Eastman Building - the site for the House of European History (HEH) - has advanced in 2015. With the finalisation of unexpected measures not incorporated in the initial planning - additional works on the outer glass envelope and supplementary security installations - fitting out and technical installations of the building have been completed in 2016. The construction costs are in line with the budget approved by the Bureau. The Commission will pay 800.000 Euro of the running costs per year, making it possible for the HEH to be open to visitors seven days a week on a similar basis to the Parliamentarium.

The opening of the permanent exhibition and of the temporary exhibition will take place in May 2017. Visitors will be provided with a tablet and information in all official languages to guide them around the museum. A complete virtual tour of the museum will be possible via the HEH interactive website, thus reaching out beyond the physical museum itself.

C.4 European Youth Event (EYE)

At its meeting of 16 June 2014, the Bureau decided that the EYE should be held regularly as part of an open and continuous strategy for communication with young people. The concept for the EYE to be organised in Strasbourg in May 2016 was approved on 12 January 2015.

The event was to be centred on the following five thematic areas, which are core issues for the future of young Europeans: (a) War and Peace: Perspectives for a Peaceful Planet; (b) Apathy or Participation: Agenda for a Vibrant Democracy; (c) Exclusion or Access: Crackdown on Youth Unemployment; (d) Stagnation or Innovation: Tomorrow's World of Work; (e) Collapse or Success: New Ways for a Sustainable Europe.

The European Youth Event 2016 which was held on 20-21 May in Strasbourg was a unique experience in which for the second time, the European Parliament opened its doors to thousands of young people from across the continent and asked them to present their ideas on Europe and its future. 7500 young Europeans exchanged ideas and perspectives on youth-related issues under the motto "Together we can make a change".

Young participants had the opportunity to participate in activities and connect with each other outside Parliament premises. In a 'youth village' set up in the vicinity of Parliament, partners and other approved organisations were able to introduce themselves and other youth-related organisations at stands, exhibitions and information points.

A broad variety of activities was offered, including: informal education activities by young people for young people, including political debates, intercultural training, and networking; stages for young artist groups; leisure activities to balance the overall programme with fun, creativity and entertainment, including special events for the Friday and Saturday evening. Overall, more than 180 activities were held involving 350 speakers, 570 groups coming from more than 37 countries, and more than 100 media reports.

C.5 Other activities

2015 was marked by major events such as the UN Climate change conference (COP21) or the opening of EXPO Milan 2015, requiring live coverage that ensured a big impact in the media. Furthermore special and in-depth coverage was organised for major visits and events in the Parliament such as the visit of Alexis Tsipras, Angela Merkel and François Hollande, the King Felipe VI of Spain or the King of Jordan. On 9 September 2015 the first State of the Union (SOTEU) debate with President Juncker took place in Strasbourg. The event had extensive media coverage, both written and audio-visual ensuring high visibility to the EP. In this context, a significant effort was made in identifying in advance media priorities and analysing their impact.

In 2015 the EPIOs¹⁶ finalised the "Stakeholder Dialogue" pilot project which was carried out in cooperation with DG IPOL. Between September 2014 and May 2015 EP Information Offices in the Member States organised 23 stakeholder dialogue events for rapporteurs of 20 selected legislative files from 4 committees that involved 847 participants, including 510 representatives of stakeholders' organisations. With this project the EPIOs contributed to reinforcing support to rapporteurs' legislative work by offering the possibility to discuss with stakeholders in a number of member states with a specific interest or relevance regarding the selected legislative files. Following the positive feedback from rapporteurs and stakeholders in June 2015 the Bureau Working Party agreed to continue the pilot project. EPIOs stakeholders' consultations are included in the Legislative Cycle of EP in the Strategic Execution Framework.

2015 was also a year of the launch of "The European Parliament Ambassador School Programme" as a pilot project in 6 Information Offices. It aims to provide young people with a deeper understanding of the European Parliament and the European Union in general and gives students the opportunity to understand their rights as European citizens. Visits to schools, educational material and seminars constitute the basis of the programme.

In addition, at its meeting of 7 September 2015 the Bureau decided to amend the rules on the use of the Strasbourg Chamber by youth groups, by making Parliament's premises available for free to youth organisations, and to make the Strasbourg premises the central point for European youth events.

¹⁶ European Parliament Information Offices in the Member States.

D. Continuing to implement the multiannual programmes to rationalise and modernise key parts of Parliament's Administration

D.1 Buildings policy

The goal of Parliament's buildings policy is to provide Members, assistants, staff and visitors with optimum working conditions, in all circumstances, in modern buildings which offer a high degree of energy performance and guarantee their safety, comfort and well-being.

Buildings policy is a long-term policy that does not follow the annual rhythm of the EU budget. For the best possible results in the long term, it is necessary to plan five to 10 years ahead while bearing in mind prospective needs emerging over 20 to 25 years. Building projects often require financing over several years; proper planning is therefore fundamental for sound financial management.

On 24 March 2010 the Bureau adopted Parliament's first-ever medium-term buildings policy, which was essential to allow Parliament to develop a comprehensive, logical approach to its buildings policy that makes it possible to determine to what extent needs are being met and what policy options should be chosen.

At its meetings of 22 October, 12 November and 3 December 2014, and 28 January and 15 April 2015 the members of the Bureau Working Group on Buildings, Transport and a Green Parliament analysed all the various aspects of the new medium-term buildings strategy. On 15 April 2015 the Working Group endorsed the 2015-2019 buildings strategy which was presented to the Bureau at its meeting of 7 September 2015. After initial deliberation by the Bureau, the Working Group discussed the proposal in detail at its meeting of 23 September 2015. A decision on the medium-term buildings strategy ought to be taken by the Bureau at the beginning of the second half of the parliamentary term.

Two decisions with a direct impact on the buildings strategy were taken by the Bureau in 2015: the decision on the Brussels visitor reception strategy, endorsed in principle on 27 April 2015, and the decision on the second phase for construction of the KAD Building, adopted on 6 July 2015 (see section on Luxembourg below).

Implementation continued of the projects decided on as part of the medium-term buildings strategy adopted by the Bureau on 24 March 2010, as set out below:

Brussels

Occupancy of the building at Square de Meeûs 8 began in June 2014 when DG IPOL, DG EXPO and DG EPRS departments moved in (some 1000 staff involved). That removal was the first key stage in the process of making additional space available in Parliament's main buildings to political groups for Members.

However, the improvements could not be completed by the bare owner prior to occupancy, or even by the end of 2015, despite the major progress made. At the bare owner's request, an overall technical and financial agreement was established in early 2016, following which provisional acceptance took place and the deed of sale was signed.

At its meeting of 14 December 2015 the Bureau approved the draft agreement with the bare owner on the fee for temporary occupancy of the Square de Meeûs 8 building between June 2014 and January 2016. The 12-year usufruct contract, already approved by the Bureau and the Committee on Budgets on 14 January 2013 and 5 March 2013 respectively, has entered into force in the Spring 2016 after the committee on Budgets has approved the temporary occupancy fee.

Construction works on the Martens Building (Trebel project) progressed well in 2015 and the handover of the building to Parliament took already place in June 2016 instead of April 2017, the foreseen date. The construction phase is currently being followed by fitting out and adaptation works.

With regard to the new training centre, the property market survey was carried out and, after the Bureau and the Committee on Budgets had given their agreement, negotiations were finalised with a view to signing an agreement.

The contract with the bare owner, signed in April 2016, provides for the existing building, Montoyer 63, to be demolished in order to build a new training centre. It also provides for the leasing of a temporary building (located nearby) for the approximately two years it will take to build the new training centre.

The opportunity arose during the year to develop different concepts for the renovation of the Spaak Building and begin looking into carrying out certain ancillary projects prior to the renovation. A decision on the extent of the renovation works of the PHS building is expected in the first semester 2017.

Luxembourg

At its meeting of 6 July 2015 the Bureau decided to re-evaluate the original KAD building project and adopt the option recommended by the Working Group on Buildings, Transport and a Green Parliament, i.e. to construct the new west part of the KAD Building, albeit without renovating the old building, which will allow Parliament to take a decision on the old building at the start of the next term with a better insight into actual future needs. Completion of the east site works is now scheduled for September 2018; completion of the west site works (not including possible renovation of the old building) is scheduled for May 2021.

Following the Bureau decision of 6 July 2015, the project management carried out a feasibility study to assess the impact of that decision on the project as a whole and, in particular, on the technical modifications which are essential to ensure that the building complex, not including the old building, can operate properly.

Throughout 2015, the fiduciary account was used to safeguard Parliament funds which were not used immediately to settle invoices. The assets held in the fiduciary account stem from Parliament pre-financing payments and the first loan draw-down effected on 31 December 2013. The assets were released gradually as required. In 2015, Parliament effected 13 releases totalling EUR 44.5 Mio. Following renegotiation of the terms of the contract with the bank, and despite interest rates hovering at levels close to zero, the assets held in the fiduciary account have yielded a sizeable level of interest that will reduce the cost of financing the project.

Until the new KAD Building becomes available, it is necessary to keep renting the Geos Building. In addition, space in the Goldbell Building has been gradually freed up by reorganising the use of space, moving professional training rooms and relocating some directorates-general. The building was cleared completely in 2016.

Information Offices

In Berlin, renovation work on the premises currently used by the information office was carried out at the owner's own expense and accepted in October 2015.

The contracts for that work and for the work on building a small Parliamentarium on the ground floor of the Europe House were signed on 19 December 2014. The Parliamentarium was officially opened in May 2016.

Rental agreements and additional agreements providing for specific alterations required by Parliament were signed for the Europe Houses in Wrocław, Dublin, Ljubljana and Tallinn in 2015.

Work on extending the conference room in the Jean Monnet House in Bazoches was scheduled for and completed in 2016.

Maintenance policy

The requisite contractual basis is now in place to run and maintain Parliament's buildings in line with the enhanced objectives set under the new maintenance policy (works maintenance contracts and maintenance support and inspection contracts in the areas of maintenance of technical systems and structural elements/fixtures and fittings) and mount the best possible response to maintenance needs.

In Brussels, the renewed maintenance contract lays down more stringent quality requirements. Until such time as a political decision is taken on renovating the Spaak Building, a minimum number of essential maintenance operations need to be carried out so that adequate safety and operational standards can be maintained.

In Luxembourg, Parliament obtained 'SuperDrecksKëscht' eco-certification for its waste sorting operations. An additional agreement was concluded in order to optimise the current cleaning contract, and the end result has been an annual saving of some EUR 400 000. A number of additional agreements were concluded with a view to optimising the principal maintenance contracts and meeting new operational requirements.

As regards the faults affecting the fireproofing (flocking) on the ceiling frame in the Weiss Building, the inspections being conducted by the group of experts appointed by Strasbourg District Court are continuing. The experts' final report, initially expected in October 2015, was finally received on 25 March 2016. Court proceedings will ensue.

As regards the ceilings and miscellaneous defects issues, the reports by the experts appointed by the Strasbourg District Court were submitted on 31 March 2014 and 30 November 2013 respectively, Parliament's conclusions have also been submitted, and, accordingly, court proceedings are ongoing.

D.2 Environmental policy

Parliament has sought to set an example in the fight against climate change by adopting a comprehensive strategy for reducing and offsetting its carbon emissions, with the ambitious target of reducing its emissions by 30% by 2020. To date, Parliament has already considerably reduced its emissions by 27.2%, over 2006 and is stepping up its efforts to achieve the target on time.

On 12 September 2011, the Bureau decided to implement an offsetting scheme including emissions from official staff travel, energy use, technical installations in buildings, and official cars. Given the limited scope, not all of Parliament's CO₂ emissions could be offset. Furthermore, the Bureau decision did not specify conditions for the location of potential projects, quality standards for offsetting projects or frequency of offsetting.

Offsetting is financed on the basis of Parliament's budget Article 239 (EMAS¹⁷ activities, including promotion, and the European Parliament's carbon offsetting scheme) (EUR 250 000 in the 2015 budget). Because of the current limited offsetting scope and the low prices of emission certificates, this budget heading has never been fully used for offsetting since 2012.

At its meeting of 7 October 2015, the Bureau decided to revise this approach and offset the total volume of Parliament's carbon emissions, including emissions from flights by MEPs between their country of origin and Brussels and Strasbourg, on an annual basis, but limited to the funding available under Article 239.

To that end, it 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. It also endorsed the 'Gold Standard' as a quality standard for offsetting projects in developing countries.

The EMAS Communication Plan 2015 was adopted by the Inter DG Steering Group on Environmental Management in January 2015 and the EMAS Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2020 was prepared with the input of all the directorate generals and adopted.

A number of communication and awareness-raising activities were successfully organised, including: Earth Day event, Mobility Week (September 2015) and Waste Week (November 2015), the setting-up of a new EMAS website and Facebook account, and publication of eMagazines and a Best Practice Guide.

Cooperation with similar Environmental Management Systems in national Parliaments and EU-institutions was established.

A green public procurement (GPP) helpdesk was set up to accompany the GPP approach adopted by the Public Procurement Forum in 2014. The GPP approach was reviewed after implementation of a one-year-test-phase in 2015.

D.3 Catering policy

Efforts continued in 2015 to modernise catering within Parliament until 2019 as laid down in the Bureau decision of 10 June 2013 on 'Parliament's future catering policy 2014-2019 - Guidelines for modernisation'.

A new provider took over at the end of September 2015. For the first time the Parliament is not subsidising the contractor. Although the switchover proved complex, there was no interruption in catering services.

In order to broaden the range of outlets still further, an invitation to tender was issued for a Mediterranean-style restaurant and an organic/fair-trade cafeteria catering for people with food intolerances. The new outlets opened in autumn 2016.

Further to the Bureau decision of 8 June 2015, alteration and renovation works has been carried out, or is ongoing, in buildings in Brussels and Strasbourg (Spaak, Spinelli, Trèves I and Weiss).

¹⁷ Eco-Management and Audit Scheme.

D.4 Modernisation of information technologies

The implementation of programmes such as e-Parliament (amendments and electronic signature, MEP Portal, etc.), Paperless (eCommittee¹⁸, eMeeting¹⁹, etc.) and Knowledge Management is making it possible to move towards a totally on-line EP with full mobility.

A new version for the translation of committee amendments has been made available in production in autumn 2015. Given the success of CAT4TRAD (system for the management of documents to be translated), and because of the reduced number of documents arriving through the e-Parliament chain, a new project to convert legislative documents from Word to XML has been started in November 2015.

During 2015, the delivery of IT support service to EP Members and staff has continued, with a focus on improving the quality and the maturity of the services. A service catalogue has been published, and service performance indicators are regularly measured. User perception is assessed through monthly phone surveys and a yearly email survey as well. In 2015 the deployment of tablets for Members was concluded. Also, as an action in the framework of increasing the security for remote access, tokens have been distributed to Members, assistants and staff in order to enforce a 2-factor authentication when connecting to EP IT infrastructure and services.

The roll-out of WIFI access in the three main sites of the European Parliament was continued by phase 3 of the WIFI project. Phase 3 concentrated on the satellite buildings in Brussels, and on the buildings in Luxembourg. In Brussels, 298 new WIFI access points were installed. In Luxembourg, 858 WIFI access points were installed. Phase 4 of the WIFI (coverage of the surroundings of the main buildings in Brussels and Strasbourg, in order to provide internet access to visitors) rollout was prepared.

The Electronic Voting Information System (ELVIS) of the plenary rooms in both Brussels and Strasbourg was renewed, as well as the VOD-CRE system (which allows the recording of the interventions in the plenary sessions, with multi-language support). The VOD-COM system, allowing the recording of the interventions in the meetings of the committees, was ordered for installation in 2016.

On top of its traditional mission of delivering working documents related to the legislative process, the Diffusion Unit has developed different services to the members and the staff, including physical or electronic delivery of documents on demand. It also plays a major role in the reduction of printed paper by monitoring the effective use of documents and by taking part to the paperless projects. The long term tendencies were confirmed in 2015: increase of electronic delivery of documents on request, reduction of physical distribution and of paper waste. Even if the printed volume depends strongly on the legislative activity, the present reduction of printing is mainly due to voluntary reduction of quantities in the Committees (10 Mio pages in 2015, compared to 65 Mio pages in 2011). At the end of 2015, five Committees were working paperless and all were using eCommittee and eMeeting.

¹⁸ The eCommittee application is a dedicated work space for members, committee secretariats, political group staff and others who need to follow the work of committees. Each committee has its own site, which helps to increase transparency and work efficiency. It has been used by all committees since February 2012.

¹⁹ The eMeeting application makes committee meeting documents available in a user-friendly format, which allows consultation, annotation and sharing of documents at any time, anywhere and on any device.

The restructuring of the more than 2000 pages on EP Intranet (in three languages EN, FR, DE) has been prepared. On the basis of user test results a new site map was created with the help of professional information architects using a thematic and task-oriented classification. Editorial guidelines have been drafted in order to install and preserve this new information architecture in the future.

E. Other modernisation measures

E.1. Improving services to Members: Members' Portal and One-Stop Shop

At its meeting of 26 October 2015, the Bureau endorsed the new approach for dealing with Members' financial and social entitlements, the new principles put forward for the strategy proposed, and the practical aspects of putting that strategy into practice. The goal is to enhance client orientation and to reduce the administrative burden for Members. In this respect, two new instruments will play a major role: the Portal and the e-Portal.

The Portal will be a single front desk integrating all services related to financial and social entitlement formalities. It will provide Members with concise information regarding the rules in force and the status of their rights. At the Portal, application forms will be submitted and preliminary verifications will be performed on the spot. Nevertheless, the files will be dealt with in the Portal's back office by the specialists in each unit with a personalised approach.

The Portal will be operated from within Directorate B of DG Finance as a separate service. It will be staffed with an experienced and multiskilled team from the three units responsible for the administrative procedures regarding the Statute for Members and the Implementing Measures for the Statute. The impact of departmental reorganisation will be budget-neutral: staff will be assigned to the Portal on the basis of redeployment of posts within the Directorate for Members' Financial and Social Entitlements.

The electronic counterpart to the Portal for Members, the e-Portal, has been accessible since 12 January 2015 and provides Members with a unique secure entry point via which they can perform actions related to their financial and social rights on-line.

It allows, inter alia, the electronic submission of reimbursement requests by Members, consultation of their personal file (remuneration, transitional allowance, pensions, insurance), access to all incoming and outgoing correspondence related to social entitlements, consultation of MEPs' budgets (e.g. parliamentary assistance allowance), at any point, access to documents exchanged with paying agents managing local assistants' employment contracts, the follow-up of files concerning travel expenses, and the introduction of an IT system for the management of meetings between Members and DG FINS services.

The target users are Members and - subject to their prior written authorisation - accredited parliamentary assistants. Training sessions are organised for Members and authorised assistants, upon request, by the e-Portal Support Unit. In the long term, access to the e-Portal will be extended to external stakeholders, such as paying agents, in order to integrate other administrative procedures which have not yet been digitised.

Further to the Bureau decision of 9 December 2013, the One-Stop Shop has been operating since February 2014 as a central contact point for Members seeking assistance. It serves a link between Members and the various Administration departments, which will continue to provide the services for which they are directly responsible.

The One-Stop Shop covers all administrative and support services, but does not provide assistance with core political work or advice on the rights and obligations of accredited parliamentary assistants under their Statute.

In accordance with the Bureau decision of 9 December 2013, the One-Stop Shop carries out user satisfaction surveys. The first survey, conducted in November 2014, produced an overall score of 88.6% for quality of service. A more recent survey, conducted over a six-week period starting on 21 September 2015, produced a score of 94.7% for quality. The unit's aim is now to maintain the same level of satisfaction in the future.

In 2015 - the first full year in which the unit has been operating - close to 4 500 requests were received from 707 Members. For Members requiring assistance with the formalities they need to deal with when taking up their seats, the One-Stop Shop arranged meetings for them with the relevant Administration departments on their first day in Parliament. This service was greatly appreciated.

E.2. Financial and budgetary management

The aim of the Financial Management System (FMS) project is to improve the visibility and availability of decision-critical information on available resources (human, IT and financial) and their use, achieve efficiencies by standardising and automating key central financial processes, and provide a solution to the approaching technical obsolescence of existing IT applications, in particular the general and budgetary accounting systems and the payments system.

The work on the Blueprint document continued in 2015. The change of the consulting company in charge of its revision and an update, initiated in autumn 2015, of the initial business case, delayed the delivery of the final report, which is now expected in the first half of 2017.

Based on the decision to step up digitalisation dissociated from the future FMS, progress was made towards e-procurement and e-invoicing. In cooperation with the Commission, the roll out of the publication modules provided by the OPOCE ("TED e-tendering) was prepared, as well as the necessary training with a view to its implementation by all Parliament services in 2016. Steps have also been taken to digitalize the payment chain, inter alia by the introduction of electronic signature of payment orders.

E.3. Human resources management

The revision of the General Implementing Provisions (GIP) and the Internal Rules necessitated by the entry into force of the new Staff Regulations continued in 2015. The rules regarding the staff reports procedure for senior management and professional incompetence were adopted, and new rules are being prepared as regards administrative inquiries, the code of good conduct and arrangements for granting the education allowance

Following consultation of the directorates-general, a 'Charter on contract staff administration' came into force on 1 July 2015, and the 'declaration of no conflict of interest' form was revised.

Further to the European Court of Justice's Marcopoulos judgment of 12 December 2013 and the new implementing measures for accredited parliamentary assistants, adopted by the Bureau on 14 April 2014, the main documents relating to the parliamentary assistant dismissal procedure were reviewed in 2015, in cooperation with the Legal Service, in the light of initial experience of conciliation and a number of recommendations made by the European Ombudsman.

At its meeting of 26 October 2015, the Bureau adopted amendments to the Implementing Measures for the Statute for Members, focusing on parliamentary assistance: 25% of the parliamentary assistance allowance must be set aside for the recruitment of accredited parliamentary assistants, the number of whom may not exceed three per Member. In addition, in order to encourage greater transparency in the use of resources²⁰, it is now mandatory to publish the names of natural and legal persons remunerated from the parliamentary assistance allowance.

The issue of equal opportunities remains a key component of Parliament's human resource management policy. Accordingly, the 2014-2019 action plan for the promotion of gender equality and diversity was finalised in 2015 and submitted to the Bureau on 27 April 2015. The revised mandate of the High-Level Group on Equality and Diversity was adopted by the Bureau on 18 May 2015.

Many awareness-raising measures were carried out and much progress has been achieved, in particular on the integration of people with a disability, as a result of implementing the new procedure for recruiting persons with a disability as contract staff, EPSO having issued the first call for applications in January 2015, continued implementation of the recently introduced procedure for recruiting persons with a disability as trainees, focusing on 'reasonable accommodation', organisation, selection and welcoming trainees with disabilities, taking steps with a view to integrating the traineeship programmes for persons with disabilities with the general programme, and organising meetings for staff members caring for a parent with a disability or a chronic illness.

In addition, a brochure entitled 'Women in the European Parliament' was published, information stands were set up to mark International Women's Day on 8 March, and awareness-raising initiatives were organised to mark International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

The 'Social Report', now called the 'Human Resources Annual Report', was substantially modernised; the 2014 version (issued in October 2015) was extended to cover accredited parliamentary assistants.

Finally, forty-seven posts were deleted from the establishment plan (at Secretariat level) in connection with the implementation of the Interinstitutional Agreement on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management²¹.

²⁰ Cf. Article 15 TFEU and letter of 30 September 2002 from the European Ombudsman to the President of the European Commission.

²¹ Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management (2013/C 373/01).

DISCHARGE QUESTIONNAIRE

PARLIAMENT'S GENERAL CONTEXT

- 1. Le Secrétaire General se doit d'informer le Bureau du PE sur toutes les décisions adoptées par le PE en plénière lors de l'approbation des comptes annuelles du Parlement notamment celles qui impliquent pour leur implémentation une décision du Bureau ou bien les requêtes dirigées directement au Bureau (« Le Parlement demande au Bureau... »). Quelle est la suite donné par le Bureau à chacune de ces demandes adoptées en plénière pour la décharge 2014?***

The Secretary General transmits all his answers to the Discharge Authority and at the same time to the Bureau of Parliament. As all Vice Presidents and Queastors are voting in Plenary the discharge resolution, Members of the Bureau are fully aware of all decisions adopted by Parliament. The follow-up given by the Bureau and the Secretariat General to the requests formulated in the resolution of 28 April 2016 related to the 2014 Parliament's discharge is the following:

Follow-up to §30 (whistleblowing rules)

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. Therefore, the revision of these rules is not foreseen. As regards local assistants, their contracts are concluded directly with the Member and in accordance with the national law applicable in the relevant Member State. 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.

Follow-up to §37 (GEA allowance)

The new Bureau will have to discuss a revision of the non-exhaustive list of expenses defrayable under the general expenditure allowance. This list will inter alia allow the reimbursement of audit activities to review the expenses in relation with the general expenditure allowance. It should be mentioned that Members are free to return back to the Parliament 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.

Follow-up to §42 (Visitors' group subsidies)

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. After intensive work, the final proposal to the Bureau, together with the necessary updates to the relevant rules on visitor groups, was adopted by the Bureau on 24 October 2016 and entered into force on 1 January 2017. The new rules were communicated to Members via a Bureau communication.

Follow-up to §43 (Transparency Register)

The European Commission's 'Public Consultation on a proposal for a Mandatory Transparency Register' was launched on 1 March 2016 and concluded on 1 June 2016. A total of 1,766 contributions were received during the consultation (980 from individual citizens and 786 from organisations). The responses were analysed by the Commission in June and then made public. They then fed into the Commission's draft proposal for an inter-institutional agreement for a mandatory register, covering the three institutions. The College of Commissioners examined a draft text on 28 September 2016, which was subsequently forwarded to Parliament. A contact group has been set up through the Conference of Presidents, in accordance with Rule 27 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, involving Ms Hubner, the Chairperson of the AFCO committee, Ms Guillaume, Vice-President responsible for transparency matters, and a representative from all political groups.

Follow-up to §44 (MEPs' Declarations)

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).

Follow-up to §48 (MEPs' legislative footprint)

At its meetings on 4 July and 12 September 2016 the Bureau adopted a number of measures with a view to completing implementation of the Inter-Institutional Agreement on the Transparency Register, including the establishment of a voluntary footprint of organisations consulted by Members when drawing up reports or opinions. The voluntary footprint exists since 1 November 2016 in the form of an annex to be attached to reports and opinions listing organisations and individuals from whom the rapporteur has received input in drawing up the report or opinion. The new transparency measures were communicated to Members via a Bureau communication.

Follow-up to §81 (Composition of Advisory Committee on Harassment involving Members and their APAs)

The Secretary General will submit in due course a note to the Bureau, 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.

2. *Le Bureau du PE continue à être peu transparent et accessible malgré les multiples demandes pour améliorer sa transparence et la communication de ses décisions. À ce jour, le 4/11/2016, sur la page web du Bureau les derniers documents qui ont été publiés sont le compte rendu de sa réunion du 12 septembre et l'ordre du jour de sa réunion du 3 octobre. Jamais dans les ordres du jour ou ailleurs peut-on trouver les notes du SG qui vont être soumises au Bureau. Est-ce que des mesures sont prévues pour améliorer définitivement cette situation? According to the Secretary-General's briefing on the 2014 discharge resolution, all documents for the Bureau were available more than ten days before the Bureau meetings. How does the SG explain the fact that Bureau members themselves received these documents often only on the eve of the meeting? Why are these documents, insofar as they do not contain information that would come under data protection rules, not published on the EP's website?*

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, whose presence is essential for the running of the meetings.

The necessary consultation and information process with other Members of Parliament 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, as well as the Secretary-Generals of every political group, receive all documents both in electronic and in paper form, prior to the meetings. The Secretary General delivers the preparatory file containing all his notes for the upcoming Bureau meeting 10 days before the meeting takes place to the President. The President transmits the notes for the attention of the Bureau about 5 days before the meeting to the Members of the Bureau, the Quaestors, the political group staff in charge and to Parliament's top management.

In addition, agendas of the meetings are published beforehand and are made available on Parliament's intranet and internet 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 at the following meeting, these minutes are published on Parliament's intranet and internet site.

The minutes include specific references to the documents used in the information and decision making process by the Bureau members and can be obtained via the Register, under the conditions of Regulation No 1049/2001, 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.

3. *Quels sont les motifs pour que le SG n'ait pas soumis au Bureau des propositions sur les décisions adoptés par le Parlement dans sa Résolution du 28/04/2016 sur la décharge du PE 2014, dans ses paragraphes 80 et 81?*

With regard to the request to bring the subsistence allowances for APAs on mission to the three places of work into line with those of other staff (paragraph 80 of the EP resolution of 28 April 2016 on the discharge 2014), the process of adaptation of the flat rates will be initiated soon.

With regard to the request to include at least two representatives of the APAs in the advisory committee on harassment and its prevention at the workplace responsible for APAs (paragraph 80 of the resolution of 28 April 2016 on the discharge 2014), a proposal to the Bureau to change the rules regarding the advisory committee is currently being prepared.

4. *The New World of Work (NWOW) programme was terminated in June 2015. Can the Secretary General provide a detailed report with concrete figures of the expenses incurred for NWOW in 2015? Can the SG also provide a global picture of all expenses incurred for the NWOW programme in its entirety? Finally, can the SG provide details on any costs incurred as a result of the cancellation of the programme?*

Parliament is currently constructing two major buildings, the ADENAUER building in Luxembourg and the MARTENS building in Brussels for more than 4000 staff members corresponding to about 50% of its civil servants staff. The layout of these buildings will impact on the way the administration works for the next 30 years.

The overall investment budget is about 550 Mio. Euro. Traditionally at least 15% of a construction budget are used for studies which concern not only the construction of the building, but, also the design and interior layout of the space.

In order to determine the final set-up and design of the space intensive consultations of the staff concerned have been conducted under the heading “New World of Work” with the intention to better adapt office space to the institutional and the final user’s needs.

These consultations have been encouraged and closely accompanied by the Bureau Working Group on Buildings, which also visited spaces created under this concept.

The experiences gained thanks to an intensive consultation process with the end users have been fully integrated in the final interior office space design of the ADENAUER and MARTENS building, which reflects the needs of the individual Directorates and Directorates Generals.

In 2015 the following payments have been made linked to the New Worlds of Work study:

- Programme manager: 0,2 Mio EUR;
- Martens building - Concept introduction and support: 0,28 Mio Euro;
- Adenauer building - Concept introduction, support and audit: 0,5 Mio. Euro.

The decision of the President of July 2015 to discontinue the “New Worlds of Work” programme resulted in cancellation fees of 0,28 Mio. Euro.

The screening and consultation concerning real office space needs undertaken in the framework of the “New World of Work” study allowed for a downwards review of the necessary space in the ADENAUER building. On this basis the Bureau decided to not pursue the renovation of the old ADENAUER building resulting in net savings of 28Mio. Euro.

5. What are the criteria for the number of staff from the secretariat present during committee meetings and during missions?

For staff presence (excluding interpretation services) at committee missions and committee ad hoc delegations, the following rules apply:

Committee missions outside EP's three places of work and within the EU, EEA and candidate countries may be assisted by up to two persons from the committee's secretariat. If the mission comprises 10 or more MEPs, three persons from the committee's secretariat can assist the mission. This excludes staff from the political groups' secretariats and interpretation services. Where justified by the programme of a mission, committee missions may have recourse to the services of a staff member from the EP information office in the country visited (Bureau decision of 2 October 2000²² on committee missions outside the three places of work of the EP (within the EU, EEA and candidate countries), Art. 15 (1), (3)).

As regards Committee ad hoc delegations outside the EU, Art. 13 of the implementing provisions governing the work of delegations and missions outside the EU stipulates that delegations shall be composed exclusively of MEPs and may be accompanied by officials of the EP secretariat and political group staff.

There is no guidance as regards the number of accompanying staff members. However, committees' secretariats mostly applies the same guidance of the Bureau rules indicated above.

Moreover, there are internal rules for staff assisting inter-parliamentary delegations, which are applied by analogy to the committee missions outside the EU (ad hoc delegations), as follows:

| Number of MEPs | Number of assisting staff |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Up to 3 MEPs | 1 AD |
| Up to 7/8 MEPs | 1 AD and 1 AST |
| Up to 15/20 MEPs | 2 AD and 1 AST |
| Up to 35/40 MEPs | 2 AD and 2/3 AST |

²² Consolidated on 3 May 2004 and amended by Bureau decisions of 21 February 2005, 11 October 2006, 10 December 2007 and 14 January 2008, consolidated by Bureau decision of 16 June 2009 and amended by Bureau decisions of 14 November 2011, 12 March 2012 and 15 December 2014. Article 15 states: “Committee missions travelling outside Parliament's three places of work may be assisted only by political group secretariats, a secretariat from Parliament's services consisting of not more than two persons – or, if the mission comprises 10 or more members, not more than three persons.”

Concerning committee meetings in Parliament's premises, there are no specific rules and it depends on the relevance of the agenda, presence of experts and the overall workload in the committee secretariats. Presence of staff working for the committee secretariats, when possible, is encouraged, as staff should keep an overview of the on-going files. The attendance by EP staff at normal committee meetings is linked to the needs with regards the agenda and does not generate costs.

6. *How many awaydays did DG Presidency/ DG INLO/ DG EXPO and the Bureau have in 2015, where did they take place and how many people participated respectively? What were the costs?*

DG EXPO and the Bureau had no away-days in 2015. DG INLO had an away-days session (18-19 June, in Brussels Airport, Martin's Patershof Mechelen and Breckpot) and a follow-up session (7 October, on the EP premises in Strasburg), with 30 and 31 participants respectively. The total cost, including travel, stay and experts was EUR 30 491. DG Presidency had a two-day away-days session (4-5 May, in the Chateau Jemeppe), with 19 participants and a cost of EUR 11 200 and a teambuilding session for the staff members of the Directorate for Legislative Acts (28 May, Management Centre Europe, Brussels) with 121 participants and a cost of EUR 22 100.

7. *Combien des cas d'intervention de l'OLAF auprès du PE se sont produits en 2015? Sur quelles questions?*

The administration has taken note of 18 interventions by OLAF in 2015, presuming irregularities in payments to parliamentary assistants, pension payments, presumption of use of funds for foundations and European political parties. However, an intervention by OLAF does not obligatorily conclude that there is actual fraud.

8. *Could you please provide a breakdown of the external consultants working in the Parliament per each DG showing the number of staff (per DG) and the number external consultants (in the same DG)?*

There is no such category 'external consultants' in Parliament.

The following table provides a breakdown per DG showing the number of officials at 31 December 2015 and the number of external staff contracted by external companies and working 'intra muros' at the Parliament in the framework of service contracts, expressed as Full-Time-Equivalents (FTE). Seconded national experts and contractual agents are not included.

External staff intra-muros is highly needed for the good functioning of Parliament and where outsourcing has been judged more efficient. This concerns for instance the staff running the canteens, implementing maintenance and cleaning tasks, reception staff in the Parliamentarium and visitors facilities, free-lance interpreters etc.

| DG | Number of officials (AD, AST, SC) at 31.12.2015 | External staff <i>intra-muros</i> at 31.12. 2015 |
|---------------|--|---|
| PRES | 308 | 2 |
| IPOLE | 508 | 0 |
| EXPO | 220 | 0 |
| EPRS | 262 | 28 |
| COMM | 618 | 121 |
| PERS | 370 | 27 |
| INLO | 395 | 823 |
| TRAD | 1148 | 30 |
| INTE | 506 | 234 |
| FINS | 191 | 35 |
| ITEC | 443 | 527 |
| SAFE | 147 | 5 |
| Legal Service | 106 | 0 |
| Emas | 9 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 5 231 | 1 832 |

9. *Transfer of responsibilities from the administration to the offices of Members: what steps do you envisage to ensure that these can be returned to the administration?*

The administration has developed a new platform, called e-Portal 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 and assistants can always submit their paper requests to the staff desks as before. Although the newly created processes involve a greater implication of Members or assistants, notably the scanning of documentary evidences, it helps to significantly reduce the global administrative burden for MEPs and contributes to enhance the treatment of their requests by different means.

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.

10. When do you expect to have developed the common format and design for all analytical publications produced within the Parliament's administration, making a clear distinction' between official EP positions and both to EPRS and policy department output?

The new common format and design for all EP analytical publications is now in its final stage of completion and is expected to be in use as of the first half of 2017.

The administration continues working in fine-tuning the harmonised templates for analytical publications and still needs to resolve some pending technical problems related to the dynamic pdf files. The templates are expected to be available as from beginning of 2017.

In parallel, continued efforts are being made to reinforce the distinction between official EP positions and Parliament's research publications of various kinds. This includes, for example, the insertion, where appropriate, of standard formulations in the introductory sections of studies conducted by Directorates-General for parliamentary committees, to more clearly explain the nature of the document and its function in providing analytical support to the work of the requesting committee. The administration is also aiming for a strengthened and unambiguous common disclaimer for use in the various types of publication.

11. What were the overall costs (development, production, marketing, distribution, staff costs) of the brochures produced by the European Parliament per DG? How many brochures were published by each DG and in total by the Parliament in 2015?

| Cost of brochures printed in 2015 | | | | |
|--|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Client | Number | Circulation | Pages in A4 equivalent | Cost (in EUR) |
| COMM | 223 | 118 406 | 3 749 512 | 374 951 |
| EPRS | 871 | 107 463 | 4 271 432 | 427 143 |
| EXPO | 219 | 18 662 | 1 001 028 | 100 103 |
| FINS | 1 | 30 | 1 200 | 120 |
| INLO | 15 | 2 270 | 80 520 | 8 052 |
| INTE | 2 | 45 | 17 028 | 1 703 |
| IPOL | 562 | 44 882 | 3 443 588 | 344 359 |
| ITEC | 23 | 4 076 | 1 122 930 | 112 293 |
| JURI | 3 | 82 | 18 720 | 1 872 |
| PERS | 48 | 23 308 | 721 480 | 72 148 |
| PRES | 22 | 2 397 | 336 810 | 33 681 |
| PROFFICE | 1 | 1 | 826 | 83 |
| SAFE | 30 | 10 953 | 268 155 | 26 816 |
| SGOFFICE | 28 | 3 463 | 129 042 | 12 904 |
| TRAD | 51 | 2 134 | 90 368 | 9 037 |
| Total | 2 099 | 338 172 | 15 252 639 | 1 525 264 |

Please note the following information regarding the table:

- Figures include brochures, leaflets, handouts, posters and the like, but exclude documents relating to the legislative circuit, and other Committee working documents;
- the documents were printed by DG ITEC, acting as an internal service provider;
- the unit price was calculated at EUR 0.1 per page as a standard price including indirect costs too, such as paper, equipment running and depreciation costs and staff costs;
- the cost of internal staff working on developing the brochures' content and organising their publication cannot be measured, as this would require the introduction of a very detailed time measurement system in which each staff member would have to indicate the time spent on each task²³; in addition, a horizontal 'brochure development' task would have to be defined before the start of the year in question. It also appears that the benefits delivered by such a measurement system would be outweighed by its cost;
- DG COMM, whose tasks include publicising Parliament's activities, spent a further EUR 798,954 on having 87 brochures with a volume around 1,363,058 copies printed by external contractors. This solution is chosen if the demand cannot be met by DG ITEC's internal printing and publication services.

²³ The development of the documents is made by the client DG and not by DG ITEC, so all the DGs will be involved in such measurement which adds an additional layer of complexity.

12. How will the EP implement the new procurement rules, which have made it possible to no longer go for the lowest price but also for the economically most advantageous offers? How the environmental and social concerns have been taken into account in 2015 and what are the expectations in this respect for the coming years?

According to Article 110 (4) of the Financial Regulation, the award of contracts shall be based on the most economically advantageous tender, which shall consist in one of three award methods: lowest price, lowest cost or best price-quality ratio. There have been no recent changes in this respect.

Environmental concerns play an important role in public procurement and the term “Green Public Procurement (GPP)” is commonly used. It is defined in the European Commission’s Communication *Public Procurement for a better environment* as “a process whereby public authorities seek to procure goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle when compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function that would otherwise be procured”.²⁴ Over the last decade, GPP has become an increasingly important aspect of the activities of public bodies in Europe.

The “European Parliament’s Environmental Policy” 2007 and 2010 as signed by the President and the Secretary-General and adopted by the Bureau, both contain a commitment for Parliament's administration to include “environmental guidelines into procurement procedures”. To this end, the Steering Committee for Environmental Management in the European Parliament asked for setting up a working group in order to develop a global approach for green procurement in the EP. The Steering Committee is the highest administrative authority of the Environmental Management System of the European Parliament. Chaired by the Secretary-General, it brings together the Deputy Secretary General, the Directors-General and the Jurisconsult.

The Working Group on Green Public Procurement (WGGPP) was set up in February 2014 and submitted the results of its work to the Inter DG Steering Group on Environmental Management and the Public Procurement Forum. The Forum adopted the adaptation of the Vade Mecum on public procurement, the procurement planning document and an EP Implementation Guide on Green Public Procurement in its meeting of 21 June 2016. This guide is designed to help authorising officers at the European Parliament successfully launch a green purchasing policy and procedures. It explains the possibilities offered by legal tools in force in a practical way, and looks at simple and effective solutions that can be used in public procurement procedures.

Standard classification categories for public procurement contracts have been developed. These are “no environmental dimension”, “not green”, “light green”, “green”, “very green” and “green by nature.” Eleven product/service categories are listed in the procurement planning document, which have greatest relevance for green public procurement at the European Parliament. These are: cleaning, food and catering, furniture, IT and imaging equipment, lighting, office supplies, paper, sanitary and water equipment, textiles, vehicles and transport and waste management.

²⁴ COM (2008) 400, page 4

GPP is currently still in the testing phase at the Parliament. The expectations for the coming years are hence a further increase of the importance of environmental concerns in public procurement.

Social concerns were not taken into account in public procurement in 2015 as the reference to those is only made in the new version of the Financial Regulation that came into force on 1 January 2016.

DELEGATIONS

13. In 2015 what were the ten most expensive delegation trips, in absolute terms, and what were the ten most expensive delegation trips on average per MEP?

A) The 10 most expensive delegation trips in 2015, in absolute terms

| Description | Start day | City | Country | Nbr of MEPS | Total in EUR |
|---|------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| ACP-EU JPA 29th Session | 15/06/2015 | Port-Vila | Vanuatu | 45 | 977 584 |
| EuroLat Executive Bureau - 4 Standing Committees - WG Migration | 16/03/2015 | Panama | Panama | 46 | 407 184 |
| DEPA Yerevan Armenia | 17/03/2015 | Yerevan | Armenia | 25 | 202 475 |
| D-MX Mexico | 18/02/2015 | Mexico | Mexico | 11 | 142 941 |
| 77th EP-US IPM/TLD | 03/11/2015 | Washington | USA | 17 | 111 095 |
| 13th EP-Kazakhstan PCC | 24/09/2015 | Astana | Kazakhstan | 10 | 104 983 |
| D-CN Beijing Shenyang China | 20/07/2015 | Beijing & Shenyang | China | 9 | 102 287 |
| INTA Tokyo Japan | 04/11/2015 | Tokyo | Japan | 8 | 96 855 |
| D-CL Santiago Chile | 12/11/2015 | Santiago & Valparaíso | Chile | 8 | 96 481 |
| LIBE New York USA | 03/11/2015 | New-York | USA | 17 | 93 572 |

B) The 10 most expensive delegation trips in 2015, on average per MEP

| Description | Start day | City | Country | Nbr of MEPS | Average per MEP |
|--|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| ACP-EU JPA 29th Session | 04/12/2015 | Port-Vila | Vanuatu | 45 | 10 399.18 |
| DANZ New Zealand | 15/06/2015 | Wellington and Auckland | New Zealand | 4 | 8 416.37 |
| DPAP Midrand South Africa | 16/03/2015 | Midrand | South Africa | 4 | 8284.32 |
| ECON Lima Peru | 20/07/2015 | Lima | Peru | 3 | 7694.74 |
| INTA Tokyo Japan | 06/04/2015 | Tokyo | Japan | 8 | 7 456.52 |
| D-CN Honk Kong | 28/05/2015 | Hong Kong | Hong Kong | 3 | 7 286.81 |
| ADHOC Delegation to Caracas Venezuela | 09/10/2015 | Caracas | Venezuela | 3 | 7 215.73 |
| STOA Kyoto Japan | 04/11/2015 | Kyoto | Japan | 1 | 7 135.60 |
| PECH Saint Denis Réunion | 01/11/2015 | Saint-Denis | Ile de la Réunion | 3 | 7 125.08 |
| D-CN Beijing Shenyang China | 04/10/2015 | Beijing & Shenyang | China | 9 | 7 049.53 |

14. Could you please provide us with the costs of all interparliamentary delegations in the EU? What were the highest and lowest amounts paid for delegations in 2015? What was the average amount?

| | |
|---|---------|
| Cost (EUR) of all interparliamentary delegations in the EU in 2015: | 151 270 |
| Average amount (EUR) for the interparliamentary delegations in the EU in 2015 | 16 808 |

| Description | Start date | City | Country | Nbr of MEPS | Total in EUR |
|---|------------|----------|---------|-------------|------------------|
| Interparliamentary delegation in the EU with the highest cost in 2015: | | | | | |
| 3rd EU-Serbia SAPC | 3 | Belgrade | Serbia | 13 | 31 086.92 |
| Interparliamentary delegation in the EU with the lowest cost in 2015: | | | | | |
| DEEA Riga Latvia | 11 | Riga | Latvia | 1 | 1 567.57 |

15. What were the costs for the EP-Washington delegations in 2015? Could you please provide us with a list of:

- The number of officials, the total cost and the reasons for the delegation visit;**
- The number and the names of MEPs, the total costs and the reasons for the delegation visit;**
- The costs for all preparatory meetings that decided which delegations were allowed to go to Washington and which were rejected in the end.**

There were 10 EP delegations to Washington in 2015 and their costs were EUR 602 801. Replies to points a and b can be found in the following tables:

| Mission Code | Mission Type | First Day | Last Day | Number of MEPs | MEPs' costs | Number of staff | Staff costs | TOTAL COSTS |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| AFCO | Committee delegation | 03/11/2015 | 06/11/2015 | 6 | 32 198 | 2 | 12 764 | 70 102 |
| CONT | Committee delegation | 15/06/2015 | 19/06/2015 | 7 | 35 458 | 2 | 9 094 | 47 645 |
| DEEA | Inter-parliamentary delegation | 10/03/2015 | 11/03/2015 | 1 | 5 453 | 0 | 0 | 5 564 |
| D-US | Inter-parliamentary delegation | 03/11/2015 | 05/11/2015 | 17 | 93 572 | 4 | 15 719 | 111 095 |
| D-US | Inter-parliamentary delegation | 16/03/2015 | 18/03/2015 | 3 | 14 331 | 2 | 9 094 | 25 558 |
| ECON | Committee delegation | 20/07/2015 | 22/07/2015 | 7 | 33 209 | 2 | 9 488 | 46 104 |
| ENVI | Committee delegation | 16/03/2015 | 20/03/2015 | 11 | 64 063 | 2 | 2 643 | 69 652 |
| ITRE | Committee delegation | 16/03/2015 | 20/03/2015 | 9 | 46 738 | 2 | 9 762 | 59 570 |
| JURI | Committee delegation | 03/11/2015 | 06/11/2015 | 7 | 42 047 | 3 | 15 772 | 82 219 |
| LIBE | Committee delegation | 16/03/2015 | 20/03/2015 | 10 | 51 423 | 3 | 18 030 | 85 293 |
| TOTAL | | | | 78 | 418 492 | 22 | 102 366 | 602 801 |

The number of participating staff does not include interpreters as they can be both freelance or officials.

The lists with the names of the participating Members will be sent to the secretariat of the committee on budget control and can be consulted by the Members who wish to do so.

As regards point c, the Conference of Presidents as well as meetings of the external mission coordination group (EMCG) were involved. No additional costs occurred.

| Mission code | Reasons for the visit |
|--------------|---|
| ENVI | Meeting interlocutors (stakeholders, administration & regulators) on climate change, energy as well as health and food safety |
| ITRE | meetings with members of Congress (responsible for industry, energy, research and ICT), meetings with representatives of civil society, non-governmental organisations and the relevant associations (industry, energy and ICT-community) |
| TRAN | Exchanges with US interlocutors (administration, stakeholders, regulators) on aviation matters, in particular related to Single European Sky |
| LIBE | Data protection, Safe Harbour, Mass surveillance, EU-US agreement (umbrella agreement), US privacy initiatives (big data/internet of things), US counterterrorism and law enforcement (DHS, TFTP) |
| AFCO | Insight of the US constitutional and political processes, notably in what concerns the distribution of powers between Congress and the White House, the risk of political gridlock and the constitutional mechanisms ensuring democratic accountability at all levels of decision, which can provide for a valuable comparison on complex and strategic matters that AFCO is dealing with |
| ECON | Dialogue with US counterparts in the area of financial services and financial stability |
| JURI | Discussing, in particular, the regulatory and arbitration aspect of TTIP, as well as questions relating to intellectual property rights with representatives of the US Congress. The parts of the programme which were related to TTIP have been coordinated with the INTA committee. |
| D-US | Discussing TTIP, security cooperation and the preparation of the forthcoming IPM. |
| D-US | Discussions related to energy security, trade, security and defence cooperation, foreign policy cooperation (Ukraine, Syria, Russia), Transatlantic Digital Market. |
| DEEA | Interparliamentary Delegation for relations with Switzerland, Iceland, Norway and European Economic Area - participation in the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (SCPAR) |

16. Could you please provide us with an overview for 2015 on the flight tickets for EP staff under Article 1a of the Staff Regulations and Article 1 of the conditions of employment of other servants of the European Union: a) total amount of money spent on business class flight tickets b) number of business class flight tickets paid/reimbursed by the European Parliament?

According to the Bureau decision of 17 June 2009 on the General implementing provisions concerning reimbursement of mission and duty travel expenses, officials and other agents can only take business flight tickets for destinations outside Europe, according to IATA definition. In 2015, the European Parliament spent EUR 1 365 314 for business flight tickets for 429 missions of staff members.

COMMUNICATION

17. We would appreciate an overview of the following costs which occurred in 2015 of running each information office in the Member States: a) building costs b) staff costs and number of staff d) communication activities.

| Expenditure relating to information offices in 2015 (EUR thousands) | | | | | | |
|--|------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Country | City | Property | Staff and missions | Communication and operating exp. | Total | Average staff (FTE) |
| Belgium | Brussels | | 925 | 455 | 1.380 | 12,1 |
| Bulgaria | Sofia | 100 | 153 | 138 | 392 | 3,9 |
| Czech Republic | Prague | 171 | 393 | 182 | 747 | 5,9 |
| Denmark | Copenhagen | 917 | 756 | 150 | 1.822 | 6,2 |
| Germany | Berlin | 1.719 | 1.268 | 607 | 3.594 | 12,6 |
| | Munich* | 82 | 291 | 65 | 439 | 3,0 |
| Estonia | Tallinn | 180 | 307 | 122 | 609 | 3,9 |
| Ireland | Dublin | 920 | 775 | 169 | 1.865 | 5,0 |
| Greece | Athens | 263 | 793 | 151 | 1.207 | 8,1 |
| Spain | Madrid | 722 | 1.395 | 236 | 2.353 | 11,6 |
| | Barcelona* | 210 | 339 | 93 | 642 | 3,0 |
| France | Paris | 1.291 | 1.110 | 262 | 2.664 | 10,9 |
| | Marseille* | 53 | 351 | 61 | 464 | 3,2 |
| | Strasbourg | | 1.803 | 246 | 2.049 | 19,8 |
| Croatia | Zagreb | 267 | 251 | 117 | 635 | 3,7 |
| Italy | Rome | 808 | 921 | 245 | 1.974 | 8,7 |
| | Milan* | 197 | 297 | 103 | 597 | 3,8 |
| Cyprus | Nicosia | 211 | 245 | 91 | 548 | 4,3 |
| Latvia | Riga | 207 | 297 | 66 | 570 | 4,6 |
| Lithuania | Vilnius | 211 | 303 | 119 | 633 | 4,6 |
| Luxembourg | Luxembourg | 254 | 362 | 94 | 710 | 4,0 |
| Hungary | Budapest | 155 | 349 | 151 | 654 | 5,8 |
| Malta | Valletta | 92 | 298 | 184 | 575 | 4,0 |
| Netherlands | The Hague | 163 | 703 | 261 | 1.127 | 6,5 |
| Austria | Vienna | 180 | 654 | 193 | 1.027 | 6,2 |
| Poland | Warsaw | 209 | 430 | 305 | 944 | 6,7 |
| | Wroclaw* | 279 | 206 | 72 | 558 | 2,9 |
| Portugal | Lisbon | 143 | 632 | 177 | 952 | 6,0 |
| Romania | Bucharest | 288 | 246 | 104 | 638 | 4,5 |
| Slovenia | Ljubljana | 140 | 317 | 118 | 575 | 4,8 |
| Slovakia | Bratislava | 147 | 452 | 129 | 728 | 5,0 |
| Finland | Helsinki | 417 | 700 | 148 | 1.264 | 5,6 |
| Sweden | Stockholm | 478 | 724 | 182 | 1.385 | 5,3 |
| United Kingdom | London | 230 | 1.606 | 565 | 2.402 | 10,6 |
| | Edinburgh* | 200 | 402 | 76 | 677 | 2,9 |
| Total | | 11.904 | 21.055 | 6.437 | 39.396 | 219,5 |

Property costs: rent, works, maintenance, cleaning, security and service charges. Staff: missions included. Operating expenditure: the operating appropriations for the regional offices are included in those for the main offices.

* Regional office.

18. Could you please provide us with further information on the EPLO Washington Office: a) mission costs within the United States b) mission costs between the United States and the European Union c) costs related to the office's programme of activities?

| | |
|--|---------------|
| 2015 mission expenditure for the Washington Liaison Office | |
| within the USA | 13 917 |
| between the USA and the EU | 67.947 |
| Total | 67.947 |
| 2015 communication expenditure for the Washington Liaison Office* | |
| Total | 38.516 |

19. How much the EP spent on the EP information offices in order to increase awareness of the EU Citizens of the European Parliament? How much the EP spent through the Information Offices to travelling of journalists to Strasbourg and Brussels? What were the figures spent on such activities in 2014 and 2015?

The European Parliament spent EUR 1 208 685 in 2014 (elections year) and EUR 1 179 518 in 2015 to invite journalists to plenary sessions. A further EUR 548 567 in 2014 and EUR 496 523 in 2015 were spent to invite journalists to press seminars taking place in Strasbourg and Brussels.

In light of the increasing financial and economic constraints, many media outlets are operating under, a context of increased financial difficulties such actions contribute greatly to the visibility of the EP legislative and political activities. They improve the understanding of key legislative and political issues and strengthen Parliament's relations with senior editors and columnists. In the longer run, they also help cultivate ties with young journalists and journalism students.

The quantitative and qualitative assessments carried out on a regular basis (feedback surveys and media monitoring) show that journalists value those actions.

Information Offices organise platforms of communication and debate for Members in order to increase awareness of the EU citizens in the Member States about the decisions taken by the Parliament. The budget for communication activities of Information Offices was EUR 8 945 622 in 2014 (including activities related to the European Elections) and EUR 6 437 301 in 2015.

20. What was the total number of visitors and the total cost of the visitor program supported by the Parliament in 2014 and 2015 per year?

| Organisation and reception of groups of visitors | | |
|---|----------|----------------------------------|
| Year | Visitors | Expenditure (in EUR millions) |
| 2014 | 247.092 | 22,3 |
| 2015 | 267.785 | 22,4 |

21. In the case there were funds not used for the visitor groups due to the cancellation of visits following the security threats how were this funds used?

112 visitors groups were cancelled following the attacks in Paris and Brussels in November 2015 and March 2016 respectively. Quaestor's communication 40/2015 authorized MEPs to reschedule their groups to 2016 or allow groups to claim the reimbursement of costs that could not be avoided. At the time of writing, Members have requested to reschedule 54 groups and to reimburse 12 groups.

22. Could you please inform us on the state of play on the proposal to abolish cash payments to visitors groups as endorsed by the Bureau on 14 December 2015? It will possible for group leaders to receive the costs related to visitor groups on a corporate credit card?

The revised rules governing the reception of visitors' groups were adopted by the Bureau on 24 October 2016 and will enter in force as of 1 January 2017. These foresee four possible categories of group leaders: a participant to the visit, a collaborator of the MEP, a paying agent or a travel agency. The financial contribution can be paid only by bank transfer, either to the group leader's personal bank account, to the bank account of the group (association, company, school, etc.), to the bank account of the paying agent or to the bank account of the travel agency. For all bank transfers made to a group leader's personal bank account, the EP will deliver a certificate establishing the source, amount and purpose of the financial contribution granted.

The possibility of offering a corporate credit card to group leaders was mentioned in the early stages of the discussions on the revision of the rules, but was ultimately discarded following the introduction of the various elements of flexibility described above (i.e. different types of group leaders, different possibilities for banks accounts).

23. What was the original and the expected date of opening of the House of European History? Could we have an updated timeline of all key stages to be completed between now and that date? What was the initial budget and what is the anticipated final total cost of this investment? Could we have a full breakdown of costs of all contracts relating to the House of European History?

In its meeting on 12 December 2017, the Bureau decided on 6 May 2017 as official public opening date coinciding with the 'Open Day' of the EU Institutions in Brussels.

The initial plan of an opening in 2016 had to be delayed because:

- the need for upgraded security installations in line with new requirements for all of Parliament's buildings following the Bureau decision of December 2015 on security matters;
- works (performed at the cost of the contractor, see below) to correct a construction defect identified by Parliament's services;
- other technical issues - inter alia - related to the development of the multilingual media-guide tablet system in 24 languages (see answer to question no. 25 below).

These delays are budgetary neutral (except the upgraded security installations) and within the envelope of the HEH Business Plan which has been agreed in the Committee on Budgets and transmitted to the Committee on Budget's Control in several occasions (discharge questionnaire 2011, 2012, ...).

The initial budget for the development costs of the HEH, as presented to the Committee on Budgets in 2011, amounted to EUR 55.4 Mio. In addition, the costs of the architectural competition in 2010 amounted to EUR 0.4 Mio.

The share in the budget (business plan) of the construction works for renovation/extension of the Eastman building and a part of the fitting-out, amounted to EUR to 35.0 Mio. As compared to this amount, the anticipated final total cost of this investment is EUR 33.6 Mio, i.e. EUR 1.4 Mio below the share of the approved budget. The breakdown of costs of all contracts relating to the construction works of the HEH is as follows (amounts in EUR Mio):

| | | |
|------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Works | | |
| | Main works | 26.96 |
| | Preparatory works | 0.19 |
| | | |
| Studies | | |
| | Contest | 0.44 |
| | Designers | 5.44 |
| | Various studies | 0.21 |
| | | |
| Associated costs | | |
| | Insurance | 0.15 |
| | Controls/expertise | 0.15 |
| | Miscellaneous expenses | 0.06 |
| | | |
| | Total | <u>33.60</u> |

Furthermore, it should be noted that the delay and construction costs relating to the defective windows and glass façade was entirely borne by the contractor and not by the Institution. The constructor has also been subject to penalties of EUR 900 000 due to the delays in the construction of the building.

The total budget as approved for the exhibitions (the permanent exhibition, the first temporary design and the building up of the collection) is EUR 20.8 Mio:

- EUR 8.8 Mio for the permanent exhibition;
- EUR 1.8 Mio for the first temporary exhibition;
- EUR 6.0 Mio for multilingualism in the exhibition;
- EUR 1.2 Mio for the fitting-out of the other spaces (net amount after EUR 3.6 Mio out of EUR 4.8 m Mio allocated to this type of expenditure in the Business Plan have been assigned to renovation works);
- EUR 3.0 Mio for the building up of the collection in the first three years of the project (EUR 1 Mio/year), as the HEH did not have a museum collection of its own.

The actual exhibition investment costs until the opening of the HEH are (amounts in EUR Mio):

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Contract exhibition design & project management | 2.2 |
| Contract exhibition production and installation, including reimbursement of expenses for copyrights of images, films and digital copies used in the exhibition | 13.1 |
| Cost for designing and building of the temporary exhibition | 1.2 |
| Objects in the exhibition, acquired via loans (some 300 loan contracts both for the permanent and the temporary exhibition) as well as purchased (over 560 objects so far), to build up the HEH's own collection (cost of the objects including transport costs) | 1.5 |
| | |
| Total | <u>18.0</u> |

Therefore, the anticipated total investment costs for the exhibitions, at this date, of EUR 18.0 Mio are **EUR 2.8 Mio below the initial budget**.

24. How many visitors is the House of European History expected to have per year and what will be the annual costs once it is fully operating?

Considering the Parliamentarium as a benchmark and taking into account the new security environment in Belgium, the expected number of visitors to the House of European History (HEH) counts around 225 000 and 250 000 visitors per year.

| Annual operating budget of the House of European History (in EUR millions) | | | |
|---|---|--------------------|----------------|
| DG | Activity | Expenditure | Revenue |
| COMM | - Publications, organisation of events and workshops, website and educational programmes for visiting groups and guided tour - Maintenance of the installations of the permanent exhibition - One temporary exhibition per year and travelling exhibitions - The collection (conservation, transportation of loan objects, insurance, storage etc.) - Floor staff | 7,7 | |
| SAFE | Security staff and firemen | 1,1 | |
| INLO | - Structural and technical maintenance - Cleaning - Utilities | 1,0 | |
| PERS | HEH staff (33.2 FTE in 2015) | 3,5 | |
| | Commission's contribution to running costs (SLA signed end of 2016) | | 800.000 |
| | Total | 13,3 | 800.000 |

25. *Could the delays relating to the opening of the House of European History have been foreseen? Have any actions taken, if the delays were caused by foreseeable factors? What communication strategy has been developed, considering the increasing hostility in a number of Member States against European as opposed to national history and culture? Will the motto 'unity in diversity' also be the overriding theme for the exhibitions in the House? Now that the European Commission will co-finance the exploitation of the House, how much influence will the Commission have with respect to the nature and contents of exhibitions?*

While delays to major projects of such complexity are frequent, many of the delays could not have been foreseen. There were some knock-on effects on the assembling of the permanent and first temporary exhibitions that arose because of the necessary replacement (at the cost of the contractor) of the glass panels. These necessary works (completed on time) nonetheless delayed the start of the process of establishing the stable environmental norms required for the correct conservation standards required for all museums. A further knock-on effect of this delay was the delay to the installation of the museum furniture and showcases. This was also affected adversely by the works on the Léopold Park during August 2016, during which period deliveries could not be carried out to the HEH building.

For the main delays please refer to the question above.

A comprehensive communication strategy is being developed to face all of the questions - including critical questions - that could be asked in the run-up to the opening of the HEH and immediately afterwards, in order to demonstrate to the public and the press that the project is a truly professional new addition to Parliament's visitor facilities.

While the motto 'unity in diversity' was not explicitly chosen to embody the guiding principles of the HEH, the issue of diversity was referred to expressly in the founding document of the House, the Conceptual Basis paper that was drafted by expert historians and adopted by the Bureau in 2008, as follows: "The broad thrust of European history must be presented (in the HEH's permanent exhibition) so that more recent history, and the present, can be understood. The exhibition should equally illustrate both the diversity of the history of Europe and the commonality of its roots".

For the development of the permanent exhibition, the idea of diversity has been expanded so that the multiplicity of perspectives of history and the diversity of its interpretations are important guiding principles of the exhibition. In practice therefore, while the exhibitions will present one clear narrative for visitors with limited knowledge of history, many different parts of the exhibitions display a diversity of viewpoints on important subjects. Diverse developments in different countries are explained when they are of relevance for the whole of Europe.

The European Commission has been represented on the House of European History's Board of Trustees since 2009. With the beginning of the co-financing, the European Commission will nominate an expert for the Academic Committee. The Academic Committee is an independent team of Historians and Museum specialists from a large number of Member States. It oversees the academic quality and independence of the House of European History's content and exhibitions, which will be developed by the in-house team of curators.

26. What is the total cost of the Visitors' Centre per year and the number of visitors per year since it became operational? In 2015, what has been the percentage increase of the budget line for the Visitors' Centre and the visitor's percentage increase?

The whole year statistics for the Parliamentarium are available from 2012 and are as follows:

| Year | Operational budget (in EUR Mio) | Visitors |
|------|------------------------------------|----------|
| 2012 | 3.5 | 268 174 |
| 2013 | 3.7 | 337 153 |
| 2014 | 4.4 | 340 500 |
| 2015 | 4.3 | 326 080 |

The percentage decrease of the spending within the budget line for the Visitors' Centre (Parliamentarium) in 2015 was -2.3% and the visitor's percentage decrease -4.2%.

The decrease in visitor numbers is due to the Paris terrorist attacks in November 2015 which also had an impact on Brussels.

The global annual maintenance costs for the Visitors' Services (estimated based on an average global price of the maintenance per square meter) were:

- Visitors' Centre in the Paul-Henry Spaak building (5 814 m²): EUR 174 420;
- Parlamentarium (4 893 m²): EUR 146 790;
- Visitors' Centre located in the Atrium building (842 m²) which became operational in late 2016: EUR 25 260.

27. What was the detailed cost incurred for the House of Europe in Berlin 2015?

Operating expenditure is detailed at the reply to question 17 (the EUR 1.7 Mio expenditure on property includes EUR 1.1 Mio recurring expenditure and 0.6 Mio for specific building works, see below).

As for the creation of a Parlamentarium in Berlin, successively called "Experience Europe", the Bureau approved on 13 January 2014 the signing of a new lease for an additional area in the House of Europe in Berlin. The public space was subsequently enlarged and equipped with a 360° film of the Parlamentarium, presenting the European Parliament with the view to improve visitors' experience. The total expenditure on this specific project was EUR 2.4 Mio, of which EUR 1.8 Mio for fitting-out, media hardware and exhibition content, and EUR 0.6 Mio for building works. All funds were provided via budget transfers without requesting any additional funds.

The project was implemented without additional permanent posts, thanks to existing staff assuming the extra workload and the engagement of one contract agent during the year in question. Promotion for the new mini-Parlamentarium was assured within the regular communication budget of the House of Europe in Berlin.

28. How much was spent on the LUX Prize in 2015? Please include any expenditure related the LUX Prize which may have been covered by other budgets lines such as:
a)-mission expenses (hotels, travel, daily allowances) related to any events for staff and members;
b)-all costs relating to publicity and other activities
c)-the local information offices

| Expenditure for the LUX Film Prize 2015 | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Activity | Expenditure (in EUR) |
| Core activities : '- official selection, competition and award ceremony; - cost of subtitling into 24 languages; - film copies for screenings in 28 Member States; - authors' rights. | 385.933 |
| Mission expenditure for DG COMM staff | 5.708 |
| Members' official travel expenditure | 8.700 |
| Publicity measures, aiming at: - enlarging the audience of the screenings (35 227 spectators in 2014 vs. 45 662 in 2015, i.e. an increase of 30% and a cost/audience ratio decreasing from EUR 9 in 2014 to EUR 6.8 per spectator); - raising awareness by reaching more than 16.5 million persons across Europe (social media 0.006 EUR/person, print media 0.038 EUR/reader). | 256.621 |
| 10th anniversary's preparatory phase and setting up a partnership designed to further increase the audience , especially in the European public sphere. | 57.890 |
| Screenings and related events organised by the EPIOs in the Member States: these attracted nearly 43 000 spectators, up from 35 000 in 2015 and 29 000 in 2013. Expenditure includes the costs of screenings, advertising and organisation of the debates with MEPs. | 309.606 |
| Extraordinary expenditure on a survey on awareness and impact of the Prize, requested by the plenary in paragraph 59 of the 2013 discharge resolution. | 60.875 |

29. Whereas having a transparent and accessible website is key to the involvement of citizens, which steps has the European Parliament taken in 2015 in order to make its website more informative and accessible for people with disabilities, especially blind and deaf persons?

Accessibility of Parliament's website is a key concern for DG COMM and DG ITEC, working in close cooperation to improve their performance in that regard.

Several recent and current projects make the EP website more accessible, notably:

- The introduction of Responsive Web Design (the ability for a website to be adapted to the screen it is consulted on) on the EP website, to be rolled out progressively over the course of 2017, will significantly enhance accessibility and readability of the website for mobile devices and generic assistive technologies (voice-over, etc.).

- The Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), started in 2014, ensures that all content published is easily readable by search engines. Generic assistive technologies crawl, index and read contents in the same way search engines do, so the SEO improvements will contribute at the same time to a better accessibility of the website as well.
- Public procurement procedures will now require compliance with accessibility guidelines based on the new directive on the accessibility of the websites of public sector bodies, just adopted by the European Parliament in October 2016. For example, a call for tender published in 2016 for the overhaul of Parliament's web streaming system includes web accessibility compliance at level AA. The evaluation of the offers included specific verification of the level of compliance with accessibility guidelines.
- The accessibility of infographics was also improved, such as those of web edited videos for which captions were transcribed in different languages.
- DG COMM also provides support to all EP services publishing online content and gives advice on accessibility issues (near-real-time captioning of the plenary proceedings, sign-language interpretation, accessible PDF files, accessible Power Points, providing the transcripts of video and audio contents, etc.).

It should be pointed out that Europarl News webpages are compliant with web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, on compliance level AA, already since 2009.

To illustrate the progress made, it is also to be noted that independent audits conducted in 2014 on the accessibility of websites of EU institutions (e.g. by the European Blind Union) ranked the European Parliament as "good" in terms of compliance with web accessibility guidelines compared to other institutions.

PERSONNEL

30. En quoi consiste le projet *The Jean Monnet Academy* ? Quelles sont ses origines et objectifs ? Quand est-ce que le projet a été adopté ? Quelles ont été les coûts de sa création et quelle a été son budget depuis sa création ? Quelles actions ont été réalisées jusqu'à présent ?

The objective of the project is to set up an in-house academy to preserve specific knowledge and expertise, and to provide a platform for learning and professional development. The in-house academy will strengthen the knowledge of the EP administration and therefore reinforce the support provided to Members.

For 2015, there were no budgetary implications for the project.

31. Quelles sont les conclusions du groupe de travail « *Screening* » sur les améliorations qui devraient être appliquées pour rendre l'organisation du travail plus efficiente au sein du PE ?

DG PERS is undergoing currently an internal screening process.

32. Est-ce que le transfert des postes en provenance des Comités (CESE & CoR) vers l'EPRS est déjà terminé à ce jour ? Peut le secrétariat informer du nombre des transferts total, ainsi que par année et quand est-ce que ce transfert va prendre fin ? Peut aussi indiquer les mêmes informations mais en ce qui concerne des transferts internes d'autres services du PE vers le EPRS ?

Yes, the transfer of posts from the two Committees has been finalised. Parliament has welcomed 60 colleagues. In the budget procedure 2017 this transfer has been acted by confirmation of the increase of 60 posts in the organisation chart of Parliament and decrease of the same number in the two Committees.

In addition, 28 internal transfers took place to DG EPRS: 9 from DG IPOL, 5 from DG PRES, 3 from DG COMM, 2 each from DG EXPO, DG ITEC, the Legal Service and the SG's Cabinet, 1 each from DG SAFE, DG TRAD and the President's Cabinet.

33. Combien d'experts nationaux auprès du PE et des fonctionnaires ou agents du PE mis à disposition auprès des administrations nationales il y a eu en 2015 ? Quel a été l'incidence budgétaire ?

36 experts seconded from national administrations worked for the European Parliament in 2015, representing 30 full-time equivalents and a cost of EUR 1 575 000. In 2015, one official was seconded to a national public authority pursuant to the Bureau decision of 7 March 2005. This official being seconded to a body located at his place of employment (Secretariat of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union from 1 October 2014 to 30 June 2015 in Luxembourg), there was no financial impact.

34. Concernant la migration de Streamline vers Sysper: Quels sont les derniers développements à ce sujet et l'état de lieux des négociations avec la Commission Européenne? Est-ce que finalement un accord a-a été conclu? Est-ce que le Bureau a été mené à prendre une décision dans le premier semestre 2016 tel que c'était prévu? Si oui, qu'est ce qui a été décidé?

Parliament has been faced with a sharp increase in user fees requested by the Commission in comparison with the cost initially indicated. Furthermore, the procedures foreseen by the Commission are in contradiction to the need of administrative independence of Parliament. Therefore, the project is currently on hold.

35. Pour quelles raisons le SG n'a pas donné suite aux demandes de la DG PERS de mai 2013 de créer une unité financière centralisant les fonctions d'initiation et de vérification financière ex ante, d'une part, et les procédures de passation de marchés, d'autre part ce qui permettrait sans doute de détecter d'éventuels dysfonctionnements ou faiblesses et de renforcer l'efficacité des contrôles dans le domaine financier ?

The Secretary General gave his agreement on the principle of a creation of a financial and public procurement unit in DG PERS.

36. Un régime de teleworking a été approuvé et est entré en vigueur le 31 octobre 2016 au sein du Secrétariat général. Quels sont les motifs pour que le Parlement Européen soit la seule institution à ne pas avoir mis en marche jusqu'à présent un programme de flexitime surtout tenant compte que dans d'autres institutions ceci fonctionne correctement depuis des années et a prouvé largement son succès? Pourquoi les APA n'ont pas été inclus dans le régime de teleworking (il est évident que leur inclusion n'impliquerait en aucun cas une imposition des aménagements spécifiques de travail aux députés de la part de l'administration étant donné que toute demande devrait être accompagnée de l'autorisation du MEP)?

The EP has assessed the prospect of introducing flexitime. A comprehensive comparison and analysis of all existing systems within the different European institutions was carried out. The necessary backing of the Staff Committee and the political leadership was not available for the introduction of flexitime.

Occasional telework was introduced as of 31 October 2016 by decision of the Bureau. The decision on the introduction of occasional telework within the EP stipulates in Article 2 (2) that the rules apply to any member of staff of the Secretariat-General to whom the Staff Regulations or CEOS are applicable, including APAs.

37. Combien de réclamations article 90 ont été introduites par les fonctionnaires, autres agents et APA en vertu de ces articles en 2015 (spécifier)? Combien de ces réclamations ont été répondues favorablement? Dans les cas où les réclamations ont été rejetées par l'AIPN, combien ont été introduites comme recours devant le Tribunal de la Fonction Publique Européenne? Combien d'entre elles ont eu gagné de cause? Quel a été le coût pour le Parlement des recours perdus devant le Tribunal ?

199 complaints were introduced in 2015, the breakdown being as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| AD | 59 |
| AST | 98 |
| Temporary agents | 5 |
| Contractual agents | 16 |
| APA | 7 |
| Officials on invalidity | 1 |
| Retired officials | 13 |
| TOTAL | 199 |

- Of these 199 complaints, 76 have been upheld or partially upheld and 123 rejected.
- Of the complaints received in 2015, 6 have been followed by appeals to the Civil Service Court. These 6 cases are still pending. No external costs were incurred so far.

38. What was the total cost for Strasbourg missions in 2015? What steps have been taken in order to decrease the cost related to having three working places?

EUR 17.6 Mio were spent on staff missions to Strasbourg in 2015 (including missions for the plenary sessions as well as all other purposes). A number of measures taken by different DGs allowed to decrease mission expenditure, these included:

- general reduction of the number of missions to Strasbourg;
- reduction of the number of missions by using visio-conference facilities;
- increasing car sharing (namely for Strasbourg and by colleagues having the same working time on mission and living not far away from each other);
- promoting the use of public transport.

39. Quelles sont les raisons pour que le poste 3000- Frais de mission du personnel, se trouve presque sans fonds durant les derniers mois de l'année budgétaire jusqu'au point de recommander vivement aux DG de diminuer les missions du personnel à Strasbourg? Comment expliquer que ce poste puisse malgré tout contribuer substantiellement au virement C7 de ramassage (-2200 000 en 2015)? Peut-on nous informer du nombre des missions du personnel du secrétariat général par séance plénière à Strasbourg en 2015 ?

In 2015, no DG or service spent 100% of its missions' budget. The percentage of the 2015 budget execution ranges from 97.2% to 82.5%, with an average execution rate of 88. 8%. The mission budget line was not without funds during the last months of the budgetary year 2015.

In general, DGs and services are invited to reduce the missions' requests in order to reduce European Parliament's environmental footprint in accordance with the EMAS action plan adopted by the Secretary General on May 5, 2015 (GEDA D(2015)21006) which requests each DG and service to reduce its session missions to Strasbourg by 10%. In addition, following the decision of the committee on budgets, after the conciliation meetings with the Bureau, the appropriations for staff missions on item 3000 were reduced from EUR 28.75 Mio in 2015 to EUR 27.70 Mio in 2016 and to EUR 25.37 Mio in 2017. Taking into account the fact that the Council has adapted in 2016 the ceilings for hotels and the per diem lump sums for missions within Europe and that there are additional needs for missions due to the increase of contractual staff (internalisation of security and drivers), the reduction of the total appropriations will not allow to cover in 2017 the same number of missions per DG as compared to previous years.

In 2015, European Parliament's staff made the following number of missions linked to Strasbourg sessions:

| Session | Number of Staff |
|----------------|------------------------|
| January | 1 555 |
| February | 1 568 |
| March | 1 639 |
| April | 1 650 |
| May | 1 605 |
| June | 1 595 |
| July | 1 652 |
| October I | 1 606 |
| October II | 1 566 |
| September | 1 607 |
| November | 1 587 |
| December | 1 691 |

40. Deux nouveaux trajets directs par jour ont été inaugurés par les compagnies ferroviaires belges et françaises pour le trajet Bruxelles-Strasbourg facilitant une alternative rapide et efficace au train charter et tenant compte aussi que d'autres trajets sont aussi possibles avec changement à Paris ou à la Gare CDG, pourquoi le PE s'obstine à prendre comme base de remboursement des frais en train les prix du vieux train Bruxelles-Luxembourg-Strasbourg que presque plus personne n'utilise car il est inconfortable, mets plus de 5 heures pour faire le trajet, est souvent en retard et dont les horaires ne correspondent plus aux horaires de travail du PE ? Pourquoi ne pas prendre comme base de remboursement le prix du train charter ou le prix moyen des trains faisant le même type de trajet que le train charter? (surtout tenant compte que les frais de transports en chemin de fer doivent être remboursés sur la base d'un voyage effectué selon l'itinéraire répondant au meilleur rapport coût total/efficacité (notamment, la durée du voyage) jusqu'à concurrence des tarifs pratiqués en première classe (décision du Bureau du 17 juin 2009))

The first class train tariffs (applicable at the time of the validation of the mission order) communicated by the Parliament's travel agency are used as reference for the settlement of the mission's train travel expenses for all destinations reachable by train, including Strasbourg.

41. Could you please inform us about the status quo and the further plans regarding the fitness centre and the estimated costs which will occur? What were the reasons for the transfer of responsibilities from DG INLO to DG PERS for the management of the center?

The fitness center in Brussels is currently run with a basic, reduced service. Only the fitness room is open and access is restricted to MEPs and EP staff members.

Following the Bureau decision of 6 June 2016 to internalize the management of the Sports Centre, DG PERS is recruiting new staff (fitness instructors), and two persons have been transferred from DG INLO as receptionists. Extensive repair work was carried out. It is planned to start with the full range of services (fitness, group classes) early 2017.

A public call for tender for replacing the equipment should be launched in 2017.

The aim is that the Sports Centre is self-sustainable from fees paid by users. Current projections indicate that this is feasible. Estimated costs for 2017 are as follows;

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Maintenance, upkeep, cleaning: | EUR 60 000 |
| Energy consumption: | EUR 14 000 |
| Staff: | EUR 121 000 |

The decision to transfer responsibility for the Centre from DG INLO to DG PERS reflects the integration of the Centre's programme within a more global policy for employee health, prevention and well-being, and the Administration's commitment to ensure that the Centre responds to the needs of its users and has better possibility of adapting to them. The management of the Sports Centre (and the Strasbourg Sports Centre) is part of responsibilities of the Prevention and Wellbeing at work Unit.

42. What is the reason for the 54% increase in 2015 compared to 2014 concerning the expenditures for the early childhood centre and approved day nurseries? Is it possible to guarantee the same quality at lower costs?

The increase in the expenditures for the early childhood centres from 2014 to 2015 relates to the facilities for childcare run by the European Commission (OIB). For these structures, the European Parliament does not have any management competence. The increase was mainly due to the change of methodology set by the Commission for the distribution of running costs between the European Institutions in Brussels.

The question concerning whether it is possible to guarantee the same quality at lower costs should be addressed to the Commission.

TRAINING

43. How many persons attended the language trainings of the Parliament in year 2015? What is the success rate of online language courses in 2015? How many EP staff members took part in the trainings held by the Commission in 2015?

In 2015, 5 105 EP participants successfully attended language training. Of them, 474 attended a language training organized by the Commission.

Online language courses do not have a pass/fail exam at the end. Therefore, there is no success rate for online language courses.

44. How many individuals attended the trainings in total in year 2015? How many days did the staff of the EP spend on training (internal/external) in average in 2015?

In 2015, the total number of EP participants was 20 871²⁵, of which 20 136 participants to internal courses and 735 to external courses.

The average amount of training per employee in 2015 stood at 37.22 hours or 4.65 days.

45. What was the cost for training measures in total/per employee (contract agent/official) in year 2015?

In 2015, the cost of training amounted to EUR 236 per participant in average.

The training service is available for officials and contract agents, and for temporary staff (mostly in the political groups) and accredited parliamentary assistants, i.e. for a total target audience of about 9 407.

Total number of participants in 2015 was 20 871, of which 14 455 were officials, 2 370 were contract agents and 4 046 belong to the other categories in the target audience.

The training budget spent in 2015 amounted to EUR 4 925 461.

46. Are there any examples of EP staff working out of Brussels traveling to Brussels to attend trainings? If yes how many such travels occurred in 2015?

In 2015, 812 participants based in other workplaces attended training courses held in Brussels.

47. Are there any trainings held by external training bodies? What were the costs of external trainings in year 2015?

Cost of external training was EUR 205 876 in 2015, of which EUR 165 571 for language courses. A detailed breakdown is provided in annex.

1. External general training courses
2. External language courses

²⁵ NB: This includes officials, contract agents, temporary staff (mostly in the political groups) and accredited parliamentary assistants

48. Combien des fonctionnaires, autres agents, APAs participent aux cours organisés autour des activités de bien être? Est-ce que le nombre d'activités organisées permet de donner suite à toutes les demandes? Est-il vraiment nécessaire que certaines de ces activités soient gratuites? Comment garantir l'égalité des chances dans le cas des cours gratuits?

Well-being affects the metabolism and the ability to handle stress and deal with all the challenges that each day brings. An investment of the institution in well-being of its employees is a long term investment in the health of the staff with all positive effects for their contribution to Parliament's work.

Activities of the Unit in the well-being field are focused on:

Psycho-social aspects of work

Physical activity at work

Nutrition at work

The program of well-being activities was launched in March 2015. Exact numbers of those attending are not available, however it is estimated that on average 50 - 60 colleagues take part in activities each week.

The administration negotiates tariffs with the instructors, but the participants pay the instructors directly. Some courses are free because the instructors are staff members who volunteer to give the courses.

49. How many AST staff, after having been certified, have been recruited to AD posts during 2015? Please provide a breakdown per gender and nationality. Since 2005, how many of the certified AST officials (including those who in the meantime retired) have still not been recruited to an AD post?

During the course of 2015, 3 officials who had passed the certification procedure were appointed to AD posts (2 male, 1 female; 1 Finnish and 2 Belgian).

As of 01.12.2016, 21 officials, having passed the certification procedure, were not yet appointed to an AD post.

The Secretary General has taken into account the experience of the last years and changed the underlying rules in 2016 (see question 50).

50. Last year, DG PERS engaged to "exploring ways of how to increase the uptake of certified officials to AD positions taking into account the example of the European Commission". Could you please outline the conclusions of the exploration you undertook and the planning of their implementation?

The procedure to select candidates to follow the certification training program was modified in 2016. Candidates are required to demonstrate their motivation and communication skills in the language of the certification training at an interview with the Joint Certification Procedure Committee. Changes also aim to give a role to the DGs in the selection process, in order to increase chances that candidates selected to follow the training program correspond to their actual and future AD recruitment needs.

The issue was discussed with Directorates-General to raise their awareness. The fact that the two officials who passed the certification procedure in 2015 were already appointed to AD posts in 2016 can be considered a positive sign.

ACCREDITED PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANTS (APA)

51. Considering the problems detected during the implementation of the APA statute, has the EP services informed the Commission, which has the right of initiative to reform the staff regulations, on the existing problems and shortcomings with regard the APAs statute as to give awareness of the eventual need to reform?

The EP's administration is aware of the challenges inherent in the implementation of Title VII of the CEOS. The representatives of the EU institutions meet on a regular basis in a number of inter-institutional fora (for example, the Staff Regulations Committee, the College of Heads of Administration) in order to consider issues arising linked to the Staff Regulations and their implementation. No revision of the Staff Regulations and CEOS is envisaged at present by the European Commission.

52. There are notable disparities between the APAs salaries – it varies between delegations and offices. What guidance is available for MEPs to help determine APA level/salaries? How many downwards changes of grades for APAs were requested in 2014 and 2015, including during the changeover of the legislative period? How did the EP administration ensure that Article 19.4 of the Implementing Measures relating to APAs was respected in each case? Had the application of this Article by the administration any influence in the final decision of the downwards change of grade?

MEPs are free to decide on the grade of their APA(s), as set out in Article 19 of the Implementing Measures (grades 1 to 13 if the APA concerned is to perform administrative support and secretarial duties; grades 7 to 19 if the APA is to perform drafting and advisory duties). No guidance is given by the administration on this matter.

20 downgrades were requested by MEPs in 2015. For 2014, the corresponding number was 29. Each downgrade is subject to the acceptance of a new offer by the APA. If the APA refuses the downgrade, the current contract (with a higher grade) keeps running.

A dedicated field exists in the current form for any request to change the grade of an APA. The administrative unit in charge of the preparation of contracts' for APAs strictly ensures that a justification is provided. If this is not the case, the Administration reserves the right not to grant the request.

53. Comment on évalue et contrôle les conditions de travail dans les bureaux des assistants à Bruxelles et à Strasbourg ou souvent plus de 5 ou 6 personnes -APA et stagiaires confondus- s'entassent en 12 m2? Est-ce que ces conditions de travail sont adaptées aux normes de santé et sécurité dans le lieu de travail? Il y a un plan de travail pour remédier à cette situation?

In 2014, Members received 450 additional offices in Brussels, in order to be able to accommodate a 4th assistant. The maximum occupancy of a parliamentary office is 3 persons only if the average of 2 persons per office is respected (e.g. the occupation of 3 offices could be the following: 1 MEP + 3 assistants/trainees + 2 assistants/trainees = average of 2 people per office). If a Member wishes to employ a 4th assistant, the authorisation to do so would only be granted if the Member has 3 offices at his/her disposal.

Due to the lack of office space in Strasbourg, Members and their assistants share the office. The office surface just allows the possibility to place a maximum of 3 people working at the same time. This situation will change by 2019 when more office space will be made available for Members.

Each Political group receives a set of offices taking into account its size, and allocates them to its Members and staff according to its needs. The administration does not interfere in the office allocation of the political groups, which manage their own office envelope both for their Members and their staff. However, the SPPT (European Parliament's Service for Protection and Prevention in the Workplace) would intervene in response to requests from MEPs or their assistants concerning the layout of offices and the adjustment of furniture.

54. According to Article 139 (1)c of the APA Statute (COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 160/2009), the employment of an accredited parliamentary assistant (APA) shall cease "in the case of an assistant engaged to assist only one Member of the European Parliament pursuant to Article 128(2), at the end of the month in which that Member's term of office ends, whether by death or resignation or for any other reason". As a consequence it would be possible for an APA to lose the job overnight, in the event of the death or resignation of his/her MEP on the final day of a given month. The APA would not have a single day of notice period, nor any leeway in response to this sudden loss of position. The right to a notice period for termination of an employment contract is a fundamental acquired right of European workers. In order to respect the working rights of APAs implementing rules should be adopted by the Parliament's Bureau concerning the scope of implementation of Article 139(1), whilst waiting for a general revision of the APA Statute itself. Is the Secretary General aware of this problem and its severity? What is his position on this? And would the Secretary General be prepared to present proposals to the Bureau to find an urgent solution to this situation?

The accredited parliamentary assistant is chosen by his/her MEP. This choice is fundamentally based on mutual trust.

In case of the end of a MEP's term of office, Article 139 (2) of the CEOS sets out that the accredited parliamentary assistant is entitled to compensation in lieu of notice, which compensates the sudden loss of position. Moreover, a notice period of 1 to 3 months as foreseen in Article 139 (1)d would make little sense, as the MEP would have already left the EP, and therefore there would be no office or work for his/her accredited parliamentary assistant.

55. Quelles ont été les aboutissements de la poursuite en 2015 de la mise en œuvre de la procédure de licenciement des APA suite à l'arrêt Marcoupoulos, aux décisions du Bureau en avril 2014, aux recommandations de l'Ombudswoman et aux avis du Service Juridique?

In 2015, the main documents regarding dismissals were reviewed and further improved.

For example, the dismissal request form lists several grounds for dismissal. The procedure includes the invitation to a pre-dismissal interview where the accredited parliamentary assistant is informed of - and hear on - the grounds for dismissal. All the APAs' rights are explained during the interview. Finally, the APA has the possibility to request a conciliation procedure provided in Article 139(3a), if s/he sees a possibility to continue working for his/her MEP.

All documents related to dismissal (such as invitation to a pre-dismissal interview, decision, implementation of the decision) have received the agreement of Parliament's Legal Service.

56. What specific role will the APA Committee play in the evaluation procedure of the APA Statute and the implementing rules before the end of 2016?

The APA Committee has been contacted by the chair of the ad hoc working group to comment on the evaluation report of the APA Statute and the implementing rules. Indeed, it was intended to add their comments in a separate chapter of the report.

A first very fruitful and constructive meeting between the APA representatives was held on 8 December 2016 to discuss the APA recruitment, departure and administrative procedures as well as the related facts, problematic issues and solutions presented in the draft Report. The APA representatives presented their comments, which will be included in a separate Chapter of the Report.

On 14 December 2016, the APA representatives sent additional questions and comments, which had not been raised during the meeting on 8 December. Considering their impact, a new meeting with the APA representatives was scheduled for January 2017 in order to discuss the new points raised by them. Therefore, the finalization of the report is still pending.

57. How many accredited parliamentary assistants have declared side activities? How many of these are paid activities?

In 2015, 55 APAs sought authorisation to perform outside activities. 52 authorisations were granted and 3 were rejected. Out of the 52 authorised activities, 9 were paid activities, which were granted based on the fact that the APA concerned are employed under a part time work contract.

58. How many cases of as whistle-blowers were registered in 2015 what was the nature of these cases? How this cases does distributed among staff and APAs? What is the current personnel situation of each (e.g. were there dismissals, horizontal moves, etc.)? How many cases were referred to OLAF?

Since the internal rules implementing Art. 22c of the Staff Regulations on whistle-blowing entered into force in December 2015, no case of whistle-blowing was officially registered in 2015.

However, one case occurred that would have qualified as whistle-blowing under the current rules. The case was referred to OLAF. An APA, whose contract expired at the foreseen date, acted as whistle-blower. The APA's identity was protected by both the EP and OLAF.

59. The Secretary General acknowledged that whistleblowing rules shall be applicable for APAs as well, but the EP is not in a position to provide employment protection as they are dependent on their individual MEPs office. What measures have been taken during 2015 to fulfil the obligations under the Staff Regulation to provide protection to APA acting as whistle-blowers? Would you consider the creation of an alternative solution (such as financial compensation) for compensating APAs for the loss of their employment in order to balance this inequality?

In case an APA seeks protection as whistle-blower, he may be granted distancing measures, that is to say the right to work from another office than his MEP's. No other mechanism is currently envisaged by the applicable rules.

Should the APA be dismissed, such request would be thoroughly verified by the competent authority in order to ascertain whether the request for dismissal is objectively justified. In case of dismissal the APA is entitled to challenge it, first by a complaint according to Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations and, if rejected, before the court. In case the APA had been working for more than 6 months, s/he would be entitled to claim unemployment benefits.

60. The allowances and accommodation ceilings for permanent officials for missions have recently been revised upwards, whereas the flat rate allowances for APAs remain the same, and are significantly lower (less 21%) than those for permanent officials. Member's may decide between EUR 120, EUR 140 or EUR 160 per day to cover hotel expenses and per diem. Could the Secretary General therefore commit to undertaking an administrative level review of the APA allowance system for Strasbourg and on the basis of that review, submitting to the Bureau as soon as possible, a proposal for reform in order to bring the APA allowances in line with other officials?

The Secretary General gave an answer to the question of APA's travel allowance system for Strasbourg in the follow up to the 2014 Parliament's discharge resolution. Please refer back to his answer to paragraph 80 of that document.

The hotel ceilings and the allowance rates applicable for the EU agents' missions in Europe have been modified by the Council and entered into force on September 10, 2016.

The process of adaptation of the flat rates for the APAs will be launched soon.

STAFF

61. How many former staff members of Presidents' cabinet work in the Parliament Administration without having successfully participated in an official EPSO competition and how many of that staff worked in the private office of the President in 2015?

In 2016, 18 former members of Presidents' cabinet were working in the Parliament Administration without having successfully participated in an official EPSO competition. Out of these, 11 were recruited on the basis of internal competitions and 7 persons were recruited as temporary agent or contract staff or APA by the administration. None of them worked in the President's cabinet in 2015.

62. Which safeguards have been built into the recruitment procedure for directors and directors-general in the EP secretariat in order to avoid political interferences?

Vacancies are published via the usual channels (internally, inter-institutionally and/or externally).

The EP advisory committee on the appointment of senior officials defines selection criteria related to the nature of the duties and based on these criteria, proposes to the Bureau the candidates to invite to an interview. After the interview, the advisory committee makes a recommendation to the Bureau regarding which candidate(s) is (are) best suited to fill the vacancy.

The Bureau takes the decision to appoint the successful candidate to the post in question.

63. How many former MEPs were paid from the EU-Budget in 2015 for providing services as advisors, contract agents or others? What were their tasks?

No former MEPs provided services as advisors in 2015. Two former MEPs are contract agents, exercising tasks of "press assistant" at the ECR group and of "assistant in parliamentary business" at the ALDE group respectively.

Moreover, 14 former MEPs were employed by the European Parliament in 2015. Three of them are officials, seven of them accredited parliamentary assistants and four of them temporary agents of political groups.

64. Requests that the Secretary-General provides an overview (in table form, per DG) of all posts in Parliament for middle and high management posts (heads of unit, directors and director generals) for the year 2015 (the table should also include nationality and type of contract). Requests information about the number of Heads of Unit, Directors and Director-Generals by nationality and gender.

Posts adopted in the establishment plan are not assigned to a specific gender or nationality. Only a breakdown of staff occupying posts can be established.

The following table provides an overview of middle and higher management by gender per DG (as of December 31, 2015):

| Position Gender | Director-General | | Director | | Head of Unit | |
|--------------------|------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE |
| DG | | | | | | |
| PRES | | | 1 | 2 | 8 | 5 |
| IPOLE | 1 | | 1 | 4 | 21 | 4 |
| EXPO | 1 | | 3 | | 9 | 6 |
| COMM | | 1 | 2 | 2 | 33 | 14 |
| PERS | 1 | | 2 | 2 | 13 | 5 |
| INLO | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 16 | 3 |
| TRAD | | | 1 | 1 | 21 | 13 |
| INTE | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 17 | 16 |
| FINS | 1 | | 3 | | 8 | 2 |
| ITEC | 1 | | 4 | | 11 | 1 |
| EPRS | 1 | | 1 | | 9 | 6 |
| SAFE | | | 3 | | 9 | 2 |
| JURI | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 |
| RELATIONS/GROUPS | | | 1 | | 1 | |
| SG | | | 1 | | 4 | 1 |
| SGAD | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 2 |
| CABPRES | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| TOTAL | 8 | 4 | 31 | 14 | 187 | 85 |

The following table provides an overview of middle and higher management by gender and nationality (as of December 31, 2015):

| JOB | Director-General | | Director | | Head of Unit | |
|--------------|------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE |
| NAT | | | | | | |
| AT | 1 | | | | 5 | 2 |
| BE | | | 4 | 1 | 20 | 4 |
| BG | | | | | | 3 |
| CY | | | | | 2 | |
| CZ | | | | | 3 | 1 |
| DE | 1 | | 4 | 5 | 22 | 6 |
| DK | | | 2 | | 4 | 4 |
| EE | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| ES | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 26 | 12 |
| FI | | 1 | | | 7 | 3 |
| FR | 2 | | 4 | 2 | 24 | 9 |
| GB | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 9 | 8 |
| GR | | | | | 10 | 2 |
| HR | | | | | | 1 |
| HU | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| IE | | | | | 3 | 1 |
| IT | 2 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 18 | 9 |
| LT | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| LU | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| LV | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| MT | | | | | 2 | |
| NL | | | 2 | | 7 | 2 |
| PL | | 1 | | 1 | 4 | |
| PT | | | 3 | | 8 | 3 |
| RO | | | | | 1 | 3 |
| SE | | | | | 4 | 2 |
| SI | | | 2 | | 1 | 1 |
| SK | | | | | 2 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 8 | 4 | 31 | 14 | 187 | 85 |

NB: Directors include 1 AT/PT (Temporary agent on temporary post) and Heads of Unit include 3 AT/PT.

65. How many recruitments of senior officials (Heads of Unit, Directors and Directors General) were organised in 2015 and what is the breakdown of successful candidates in these recruitments by gender? For all new recruitments in 2015 please state from which Member State the candidate was from.

The following recruitments of senior officials took place in 2015:

- 1 Director General (AD15): 1 woman (Finland);
- 5 Directors (AD14): 4 men (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy) and 1 woman (United Kingdom);
- 7 Heads of Unit: 4 men (Germany, France, Cyprus, Greece) and 3 women (France, Slovakia, Italy).

66. How many AST and AD permanent and temporary posts were in the EP in 2015 by nationality and by location (Brussels, Strasbourg, Luxembourg and external offices of the EP)? How many of the EP staff is in grade AD 12 and upwards and what nationalities?

Posts adopted in the establishment plan are not assigned to a specific gender or nationality. Only a breakdown of staff occupying posts can be established.

The following table provides a breakdown of staff by nationality, function group and place of employment as of December 31, 2015:

| Location | BE - Brussels | BE - Brussels | FR - Strasbourg | FR - Strasbourg | LU - Luxembourg | LU - Luxembourg | Other | Other | TOTAL |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| FG | AD | AST | AD | AST | AD | AST | AD | AST | |
| NAT | | | | | | | | | |
| AT | 20 | 18 | | | 7 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 58 |
| BE | 129 | 381 | 3 | 5 | 51 | 113 | 2 | 1 | 685 |
| BG | 38 | 34 | | | 32 | 24 | 3 | 3 | 134 |
| CY | 4 | 3 | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 13 |
| CZ | 30 | 22 | | | 34 | 28 | 4 | 4 | 122 |
| DE | 140 | 74 | 1 | 4 | 71 | 68 | 5 | 10 | 373 |
| DK | 26 | 20 | | | 38 | 24 | 2 | 3 | 113 |
| EE | 22 | 18 | | | 33 | 17 | 2 | 4 | 96 |
| ES | 118 | 117 | 1 | 9 | 57 | 66 | 5 | 10 | 383 |
| FI | 44 | 43 | | | 45 | 40 | 2 | 5 | 179 |
| FR | 131 | 105 | 3 | 31 | 79 | 196 | 4 | 7 | 556 |
| GB | 82 | 41 | | | 33 | 30 | 7 | 4 | 197 |
| GR | 60 | 56 | 1 | 2 | 41 | 39 | 3 | 7 | 209 |
| HR | 31 | 16 | | | 35 | 18 | 2 | 1 | 103 |
| HU | 43 | 31 | | | 43 | 27 | 4 | 6 | 154 |
| IE | 16 | 31 | | | 5 | 18 | 2 | 5 | 77 |
| IT | 138 | 129 | 2 | 2 | 59 | 110 | 6 | 11 | 457 |
| LT | 23 | 18 | | | 33 | 21 | 2 | 4 | 101 |
| LU | 2 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 54 | | | 73 |
| LV | 27 | 16 | | | 29 | 18 | 2 | 3 | 95 |
| MT | 14 | 10 | | | 29 | 12 | 2 | 3 | 70 |
| NL | 38 | 22 | | 1 | 23 | 22 | 4 | 5 | 115 |
| PL | 71 | 49 | 1 | 1 | 37 | 43 | 6 | 7 | 215 |
| PT | 48 | 59 | | 1 | 36 | 69 | 4 | 5 | 222 |
| RO | 52 | 40 | | 3 | 39 | 39 | 2 | 3 | 178 |
| SE | 39 | 33 | | 1 | 28 | 20 | 4 | 5 | 130 |
| SI | 24 | 15 | | | 33 | 26 | 2 | 3 | 103 |
| SK | 27 | 26 | | | 34 | 27 | 3 | 3 | 120 |
| Other | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | 2 |
| TOTAL | 1438 | 1434 | 13 | 61 | 992 | 1177 | 89 | 129 | 5333 |

The following table provides a breakdown of staff in grade 12 and higher by nationality as of December 31, 2015:

| GRADE | AD12 | AD13 | AD14 | AD15 | AD16 | TOTAL |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| NAT | | | | | | |
| AT | 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 | | 15 |
| BE | 25 | 30 | 14 | 2 | | 71 |
| CY | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| CZ | 1 | | 1 | | | 2 |
| DE | 26 | 22 | 18 | 5 | 2 | 73 |
| DK | 4 | 18 | 2 | 2 | | 26 |
| EE | | 1 | 1 | | | 2 |
| ES | 15 | 44 | 28 | 4 | 2 | 93 |
| FI | 28 | 16 | 1 | 1 | | 46 |
| FR | 27 | 29 | 18 | 7 | | 81 |
| GB | 18 | 31 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 65 |
| GR | 11 | 39 | 10 | | 1 | 61 |
| HR | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| HU | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| IE | 2 | 1 | 4 | | 1 | 8 |
| IT | 20 | 39 | 16 | 4 | 3 | 82 |
| LU | 3 | 4 | 3 | | | 10 |
| LV | | 1 | 1 | | | 2 |
| MT | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| NL | 4 | 15 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 31 |
| PL | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | | 6 |
| PT | 10 | 25 | 11 | 2 | | 48 |
| RO | | 2 | | | | 2 |
| SE | 15 | 13 | 1 | | | 29 |
| SI | 1 | | | 2 | | 3 |
| SK | 1 | | 1 | | | 2 |
| TOTAL | 220 | 335 | 161 | 35 | 11 | 762 |

67. How many vacant posts did the EP fill in 2015 and how long did on average did a post remain vacant in the EP in year 2015? How many staff members left the EP in 2015? How many of these retired? How many went to other EU institutions?

In 2015, 173 officials (83 AD, 56 AST, 34 AST/SC) and 12 temporary agents 2a) (9 AD et 3 AST) were recruited to the EP's General Secretariat

It took on average 140 calendar days to fill a vacant post, i.e. from the launch of a recruitment procedure until the entry into service of the chosen candidate.

This includes the period between the formal decision to recruit and the arrival of the chosen candidate on his/her new post, which can vary from several weeks (for staff already working in the EP) to a couple of months (for laureates from EPSO reserve lists).

In 2015, 189 officials left the EP. The service of 154 officials (54 AD, 100 AST) was terminated, of which 126 retired (44 AD, 82 AST). Furthermore, 35 officials left the Parliament's General Secretariat for other Institutions (23 AD, 12 AST). 2 temporary agents 2a) have also terminated their service in 2015.

68. Is there a procedure in force for newly appointed EP staff to give a declaration of honour that they have not worked for intelligence services of any country in the past?

Every staff member joining the EP has to complete a declaration on their honour in which they have to enumerate all activities (whether paid or not) within the 5 years prior to their recruitment. This includes the obligation to inform Parliament's administration about any work for intelligence services in this period. There is no obligation to give information on activities prior to the 5-year-cut-off point of the declaration.

The declaration on the honour also contains a statement of the recruit to be free of all obligations towards other employers. Newly recruited staff members also have to forward documents relating to their prior professional experience for inclusion in their personal files.

69. We would appreciate a comprehensive overview of staff on sick leave in 2015 broken down by the number of staff members that were on sick leaves and by how many days they were on sick leave? Could you indicate the two Directorate Generals where the most days of sick leave occurred? How many days of sick leave concerned Mondays and Fridays in 2015?

a) For the sick leave in 2015, please see Annex.

b) The two DGs with the highest rate of absences in 2015 were DG PERS (5.78%) and DG EPRS (4.89%).

c) The total number of days of certified sick leave on a Friday was 815, on Monday 567 and from Friday to Monday 109.

70. How many staff retired in 2015? What was the average age and average length of service of staff members leaving the service? What was the amount of the highest pensions for officials of the European Parliament actually paid in 2015? What was the average pension paid in 2015 for officials of the European Parliament? What is the average pension paid for officials of the European Parliament who retired in 2015?

159 members of staff retired in 2015, of which 126 officials and 33 other agents.

For staff members leaving the service (in 2015), the average age was 62 years 2 months and the average length of service was 27 years and 8 months.

The pension payments are managed by the PMO of the Commission, the EU pension scheme being a single system covering the entire population, irrespective of status or employer institution. EU pension rights are acquired by staff in proportion to the service rendered throughout their whole career across all EU institutions and bodies.

As the EU Pension scheme is unique and there are no specific pensions associated with individual EU institutions or bodies, the Commission would provide consolidated figures for all Institutions.

71. How many officials in which functions and grades were retired in 2015 in the interest of service according to Article 50 of the staff regulations?

There was no decision in 2015 pursuant to the provisions of Article 50 of the Staff Regulations.

72. How many working days were granted in 2015 as vacation days for years of service? How many people were concerned?

As in most European national administrations and in the private sector, European civil servants are entitled to extra leave according to the length of their service in the European institutions.

In 2015, of 6520 agents in service²⁶ 234 (3,6%) have received extra vacation days for years of service within the Secretariat-General, based on Article 57 of the Staff Regulation. The total amount of days given were 1 170 days (or 9 360 hours).

73. What was the average number of hours of overtime worked in 2015? How much compensatory time-off has been granted on average to Parliament's staff members?

DG PERS only have information concerning staff working for the Secretariat-General and only for those staff members who are entitled to overtime. The information for Political Groups is not provided to the Administration.

Following the provisions of Article 1 of Annex VI and article 3 of the internal rules on overtime, only the following categories are potential beneficiaries of a compensation in time or a reimbursement of overtime:

- Assistants of grades AST 1n to AST 4 (1030 as at 31/12/2015);
- By way of derogation administrative assistants in transition of grades AST 1 to AST 7 who were before 1 May 2004 in former categories D and C shall continue to benefit as well). Less than 10 officials were in this situation as at 31/12/2015;
- Secretarial assistants of grades SC 1 to SC 2 (58 as at 31/12/2015);
- Contract Agents of Function Groups I and II (165 as at 31/12/2015).

This represents a total number of 1263 agents out of 6520 agents in service in 2015 (19%).

²⁶ Average number of officials, temporary and contract staff in service in the Secretariat General in 2015.

Thus, most staffers are not entitled to overtime compensation or payments according to the Staff Regulations, so the actual overtime is considerably higher than the figures shown in the table below. Due to the increased workload and the decrease in staff, a tendency for an increasing undeclared overtime is to be witnessed. This concerns in particular the administrative DGs.

The overtime hours worked are recalculated in increased hours (hours worked x 1.5 or x 2 depending on the moment of work). This transformation allows calculating properly the number of hours of compensation given and paid. The available information for 2015 is shown in the following tables:

OVERTIME 2015

| Overtime worked | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Month | rate 1,5 | rate 2 | Total hours worked | Hours to be paid or compensated |
| 2014- 09 | 1.358,69 | 127,42 | 1.486,11 | 2.292,88 |
| 2014- 10 | 1.908,65 | 106,75 | 2.015,40 | 3.076,48 |
| 2014- 11 | 2.172,74 | 169,16 | 2.341,90 | 3.597,43 |
| 2014- 12 | 1.842,07 | 160,09 | 2.002,16 | 3.083,29 |
| 2015- 01 | 1.630,93 | 103,42 | 1.734,35 | 2.653,24 |
| 2015- 02 | 1.593,11 | 91,67 | 1.684,78 | 2.573,01 |
| 2015- 03 | 1.389,86 | 124,75 | 1.514,61 | 2.334,29 |
| 2015- 04 | 1.749,84 | 154,09 | 1.903,93 | 2.932,94 |
| 2015- 05 | 2.474,34 | 503,3 | 2.977,64 | 4.718,11 |
| 2015- 06 | 2.101,46 | 141 | 2.242,46 | 3.434,19 |
| 2015- 07 | 1.478,89 | 111,75 | 1.590,64 | 2.441,84 |
| 2015- 08 | 43,75 | - | 43,75 | 65,63 |
| Total | 19.744,33 | 1.793,40 | 21.537,73 | 33.203,30 |

| Compensated | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Hours compensated | % |
| 1.730,44 | 75,47% |
| 2.536,47 | 82,45% |
| 2.911,88 | 80,94% |
| 2.006,74 | 65,08% |
| 2.159,16 | 81,38% |
| 2.055,53 | 79,89% |
| 1.847,83 | 79,16% |
| 2.410,56 | 82,19% |
| 3.537,73 | 74,98% |
| 2.889,54 | 84,14% |
| 1.983,82 | 81,24% |
| 57,53 | 87,66% |
| 26.127,19 | 78,69% |

| Overtime paid | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Month | rate 1,5 | rate 2 | Hours paid | % |
| 2015- 01 | 312,96 | 46,5 | 562,44 | 24,53% |
| 2015- 02 | 341,34 | 14 | 540,01 | 17,55% |
| 2015- 03 | 432,7 | 18,25 | 685,55 | 19,06% |
| 2015- 04 | 701,03 | 12,5 | 1.076,55 | 34,92% |
| 2015- 05 | 312,72 | 12,5 | 494,08 | 18,62% |
| 2015- 06 | 321,32 | 17,75 | 517,48 | 20,11% |
| 2015- 07 | 312,31 | 9 | 486,47 | 20,84% |
| 2015- 08 | 337,8 | 7,84 | 522,38 | 17,81% |
| 2015- 09 | 646,75 | 105,13 | 1.180,39 | 25,02% |
| 2015- 10 | 360,1 | 2,25 | 544,65 | 15,86% |
| 2015- 11 | 288,68 | 12,5 | 458,02 | 18,76% |
| 2015- 12 | 5,4 | - | 8,1 | 12,34% |
| | 4.373,11 | 258,22 | 7.076,11 | 21,31% |

INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS

74. Could you please provide us with the following information on the Konrad Adenauer Building (KAD) in Luxembourg: a) breakdown of the cost related to the extension works b) breakdown of the costs related to the renovation c) breakdown of the total construction costs d) state of play e) until what date will the construction works be fully completed?

a) Breakdown of the cost related to the extension works:

The table below shows the annual breakdown of construction cost for the KAD project between 2013 and 2016 (amounts in EUR Mio, value date October 2012)²⁷:

| Year | Annual amount | Cumulated amount |
|------|---------------|------------------|
| 2013 | 4.05 | 4.05 |
| 2014 | 30.13 | 34.18 |
| 2015 | 43.90 | 78.08 |
| 2016 | 59.61 | 137.68 |

Pursuant to the decision of the Bureau of 2 February 2009 and the subsequently approval by the committee on Budget, the budgetary envelope of the project amounts to **EUR 432.8 million** (updated amount with value date of October 2012).

In its meeting of 10 October 2016, the Board (body established in the context of the Partnership Agreement concluded between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Parliament) revised the target cost of the project (without renovation of KAD1) as follows (amounts in EUR Mio, value date of October 2012):

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Cost estimation of June 2015 (initial project + evolution construction site) | 424.2 |
| Savings "zero renovation" KAD1 | -57.0 |
| Technical modifications necessary | 16.6 |
| Contingency reserve (3.3%) | 12.7 |
| Total | 396.5 |

b) Breakdown of the costs related to the renovation

The Bureau, at its meeting of 6 July 2015, decided not to proceed with the renovation of the KAD1 for the time being. Therefore, there are no costs linked to the renovation of the KAD1 within the scope of the project.

²⁷ Total of all construction lots, including cost for lot 2 "travaux de gardiennage et travaux divers" which are directly financed by budget item 2005. The totals do not take into account preparatory works and VAT to be pre-financed and subsequently recovered; estimation for 2016 as communicated to Parliament by the project management on 26 September 2016.

c) Breakdown of the total construction costs

See point a).

d) State of play

The construction works of the KAD Project done by 31 December 2016 are estimated at EUR 137.68 Mio (value October 2012, see point a)).

e) Until what date will the construction works be fully completed?

According to the current overall timeframe, the project will have been completed by the following dates:

- Construction site East: second semester 2018;
- Construction site West: second semester 2021.

75. Did the Parliament took out loans to purchase offices or buildings in year 2015? In which countries, and for which acquisitions? Please list also the rental agreements the Parliament entered in 2015 for offices and buildings. In which countries, and for which offices or buildings?

The Parliament did not take out any loans for building acquisitions in 2015.

In 2015, no lease contracts were signed for the sites Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg.

For Information offices, new lease contracts entered into force in 2015 for the following premises:

- Berlin, Germany (contract), entered into force on 1/1/2015, following the decision of the Bureau of 13 January 2014 and the consultation of the committee on budgets on 19 March 2014;
- Wroclaw, Poland (contract), entered into force on 5/5/2015, following the decision of the Bureau of 9 March 2015 (the opinion of the committee on budgets was not required in application of article 203(7) of the Financial Regulation);
- Dublin, Ireland (administrative agreement), entered into force on 16/9/2015, following the decision of the Bureau of 9 March 2015 (the opinion of the committee on budgets was not required in application of article 203(7) of the Financial Regulation).

76. How can the Parliament guarantee that the outcome of the procedure regarding building contracts for purchase and rent is the most cost efficient? Who is in charge for managing rental/purchase procedures? What is the average office monthly rental price per square meter that Parliament is paying for its premises globally?

The procedures regarding building contracts for purchase or rent managed by DG INLO are the result of close cooperation between the operational units and the Contracts and Procurement Unit.

In this context, the operational units write the technical specifications of the buildings and estimate the cost of purchase and / or rent, based on the state of the property market and their experience, where appropriate in collaboration with external experts. The Contracts and Procurement Unit ensures compliance with the relevant legal provisions.

Please find below, illustrated by an example coming from Brussels, a short description of the procedure typically followed by Parliament's services.

The procedure adopted in order to purchase and rent buildings is a negotiated procedure following Article 104b of the Financial Regulation. During the first phase, known as the Market Prospection, a call for interest is published in the Official Journal of the EU for the lease, rental or purchase of a specific type of property (offices, conference centre, etc.) of a specific size within a specified urban locality.

During the evaluation of the submissions (without any price information), those ones complying with the minimal requirements (function, size and location) are “selected” or deemed acceptable. In the next step, the bidders submit a full financial and technical offer for the selected buildings during the Building Tender phase.

The method of evaluating the financial and technical offers during the Building Tender phase is decided by the evaluation committee, which is appointed by INLO Director General for each tender procedure. The evaluation is done considering both the price and the quality of the offers (50% each), considering the following distribution of points:

- up to 50 points for the price per square metre of useable space of building, as defined by the DIN277 standard. As no two building are of identical size, a unit price per square metre is employed for the comparison. The minimal and maximal size of selected buildings is predetermined during the Market Prospection;
- up to 30 points for the technical attributes of the building offered. The points could be awarded for the following criteria:
 - environmental performance & low energy consumption;
 - absence of asbestos;
 - compliance with design for all requirements;
 - availability of underground parking;
 - etc;
- up to 20 points for the location of the building, taking as reference a fixed point (in Brussels, for example, this reference is the Information Office building - BQL). While the selected buildings are all located within a minimal radius from the fixed reference point (as determined by the Market Prospection), closer buildings gain more points.

For the Information Offices, two years before the lease expiry, the services responsible (from Parliament or the European Commission) analyse the local market to determine the market conditions, notably the availability of suitable properties and the price range. If the current building continues to fulfil the requirements, and if there are no suitable alternatives available, negotiations proceed with the current owner.

If this market analysis concludes that there are indeed alternative options that respond at least as well as or better than the current building, the Bureau is asked to approve the launch of a market prospection.

In the process of the procedure, the evaluation criteria for buildings under consideration are location, footfall, visibility, functionality, quality of infrastructure, cost, accessibility for people with reduced mobility, links with public transport and energy performance. Once a shortlist of viable buildings has been drawn up, a visit by vice-Presidents and Quaestors of the building that fulfils the best these criteria is organized. Depending on the conclusions of this visit, the negotiations with the owner could start. The outcome of these negotiations is presented to the Bureau for its approval prior to the signature of the lease contract. In addition, provided that the project has significant financial implications for the budget as defined by the Financial Regulation, the approval of the Committee on Budgets is requested.

Who is in charge for managing rental/purchase procedures?

DG INLO is in charge of managing these procedures. In Brussels, the last building rental / procurement tender (for the new training centre to replace the building Montoyer 63) took place in 2015 and 2016.

For the Information Offices, the decision on which institution will manage the procedure is mutually agreed between Parliament and the Commission, on a case-by-case basis.

What is the average office monthly rental price per square meter that Parliament is paying for its premises globally?

In Brussels, the only rented building is Belmont (rental agreement for a period of 21 months). The monthly rent, excluding charges, is EUR 10.6/m² gross surface area, whilst the average on the market for offices in the European Quarter for 3/6/9 years contracts is in the range EUR 18.75 to 20.83/m² gross surface above ground floor per month. The Square de Meeûs Building is occupied by a usufruct contract and its monthly fee is EUR 20.13/m² above ground floor (office net surface area, excl. parking, stocks, etc.). In Luxembourg the monthly rent is EUR 16/m² (office net surface area, excl. parking, stocks etc.), whereas the average market price range is EUR 30 to 34/m² in Kirchberg district.

For the Information Offices, by dividing the total rental price by the total surface area rented across all sites, one arrives at a theoretical figure of EUR 18.30 per square metre per month.

77. *How much did the smoking booths in the parliament cost to install? How much is spent on ongoing maintenance? How regularly is the effectiveness of the booths assessed/tested? What research has been done into the health impacts of smoking booths for other staff in the building (particularly staff and customers at the ground floor cafe)?*

The number and location of smoking booths are decided by the Quaestors.

In Brussels, two booths (with a capacity of 12 persons each) have been installed in the Spinelli building, for a total cost of EUR 55 000 (following the decision taken by the Quaestors). The maintenance cost, per booth, is EUR 12 800/year.

In Strasbourg, two booths (16 and 12 people capacity) have been installed following the decision taken by the Quaestors, for a total cost of EUR 50 000. The maintenance cost, per booth, is EUR 12 000/year.

In both Brussels and Strasbourg, the maintenance (technical inspection, replacement of filters if needed, check of ventilation system, etc.) takes place every 3 months. On that occasion, the effectiveness of the booths is checked. Analysis of the quality of the air in the buildings are regularly carried out.

78. *Les négociations sur la conclusion d'un accord de coopération entre le Parlement européen et la Commission européenne en matière de gestion commune des Maisons de l'Europe ont-elles avancées?*

During the past legislative term, the Bureau Working Group on Buildings, Transport and a Green Parliament initiated a dialogue with the Commission with the aim of agreeing a medium term timetable concerning the acquisition of Houses of Europe. The competent services from both institutions analysed different ways in which this might be put in place. This analysis has revealed the existence of a fundamental divergence between the policy followed by Commission, which plans according to the annual availability of funds for a specific period, and that of Parliament, which advocates that the budget should follow a three-year joint action plan.

For Parliament, the main reason for establishing rules of governance was to have certainty regarding the Commission's financial participation in the case of purchase of buildings, the idea being that the decision-making bodies of each institution would jointly agree a triennial plan of joint actions according to the expiry date of current leases. This plan would target purchase as the preferred option with long-term lease in cases where this was not possible. Once established, neither the timetable, nor the budget commitments should change. In reality however, as mentioned above, the Commission planning depends upon the annual availability of funds.

Because of these divergent policies, negotiations on the political level fell apart in 2009 and the institutions have continued with the management system in place. On an operational basis, this system works well and the reciprocal payments are annually balanced. However, since March 2016 there have been ongoing informal contacts on the highest administrative level with a view to improving the situation as regards inter-institutional co-operation on this matter and in particular as regards acquisition, sharing of costs and other co-operation in the field of building management.

79. Could you please indicate what is the total cost of the subsidy for the Parliament's canteen in Luxembourg? Is there any subsidy applied in Strasbourg? What would be the estimated cost of applying the same subsidy not only for Luxembourg but for Brussels and Strasbourg as well? Does the Member's restaurant receive any subsidies and from which budget?

In 2015, the subsidy amounted to EUR 497 352 for Luxembourg and EUR 230 248 for Strasbourg. For Brussels, the accumulated subsidy for the first eight months of 2015 (the concession-based contract came into force in September, abolishing subsidies) amounted to EUR 2 531 890.

For the first ten months of 2016, the accumulated subsidy (concerning Luxembourg and Strasbourg together) amounted to EUR 483 441. Potential rebates on products etc., received by the supplier and passed on by the supplier to Parliament the year after could not yet be taken into account. The overall subsidy, including the rebate from the supplier, is estimated at staying below EUR 500 000 for the whole year 2016.

There are no longer subsidies being paid in Strasbourg as of November 2016. Referring to the period prior to the change in contract from "open book" to "concession", the subsidy paid for Strasbourg in 2016 is estimated at EUR 140 000.

Most of the subsidies are being reduced, in line with the budgetary resolutions adopted in Plenary as well as the Bureau decision on Parliament's catering policy 2014-2019 (decision of 10 June 2013). Going back to the system of subsidy would mean an estimated increase of EUR 3 500 000 for Brussels and EUR 200 000 for Strasbourg.

The Members restaurant does not receive any separate subsidies.

80. Could you please provide a breakdown of revenue and expenditure per catering outlet provided for under the Compass contract?

These are commercially sensitive data, falling under company secret, given that the current *modus operandi* is a concession contract and not the former "open book". However, the catering company regularly keeps the responsible Parliament services updated with the corresponding activity results. The "Profit Before Headcosts" of the food outlets in Brussels shows that the Self-Service restaurants in the Spinelli, Square de Meeûs and Trèves buildings are making losses. Except the Members Bar, all bars are profitable; the Members Restaurant and Cocktails-Conférences are profitable. Cocktails-Conférences is the activity that has achieved the best results in 2015.

81. Can it be confirmed that the Parliament's catering contractor applies zero hour's contracts to their staff and therefore employees can't know how many hours they will work in a given week?

"Zero hours" contracts are illegal in Belgium. Working hours are announced in week n-1 and cannot be modified without the worker's consent. Employment contracts are done by the contractor and not by the Parliament, however, requirements of labour and environmental legislation are monitored by DG INLO in close co-operation with the national labour authorities.

82. Peut le SG nous informer sur combien de travailleurs ont été licenciés chez Compass ainsi que l'ancienneté de ces travailleurs dans l'ancienne société prestataire de services Sodexo? Est-ce que les travailleurs licenciés ont été remplacés notamment par des travailleurs plus jeunes (ou qui impliquent beaucoup moins de charges patronales)? Comment le parlement s'y prend pour garantir les droits de ces travailleurs chaque fois qu'il examine et attribue un marché vis à vis des droits des travailleurs des entreprises qui ont gagné le marché et qui exercent leur emploi à l'intérieur du parlement? Quelles mesures ont été prises par le parlement pour se garantir que ces travailleurs soient protégés?

The internal conditions of execution of the concession contract by the current contractor Compass are linked to the performance of the contract.

As regards the question of workers' rights, Parliament systematically inserts into all tender documents and contracts the obligation on future contractors to comply with the relevant legal provisions. More precisely, in the procedures related to catering, Parliament has taken additional precautions, requiring in the tender specifications its intention to actively ensure compliance by the concessionaire with the provisions of labour and social law, while specifying that the institution cannot substitute for the rights and obligations of the employer which are assumed solely by the concessionaire.

The process of gradually shifting the financial responsibility from Parliament's budget to the providers of catering operations has taken place in all respect of social rights.

The current catering contractor COMPASS BELGILUX, operating in Brussels since September 2015, took over the staff of the former service provider SODEXO in full accordance with relevant Belgian labour legislation and also entered into a Collective Labour Agreement thus committing to maintain the benefits of the transferred employees. Almost a year after the signature of the contract COMPASS BELGILUX decided to terminate the employment contract of five catering workers out of 208, one worker was transferred in mutual agreement to another location and yet another put to early retirement with his consent.

The reasons underlying the lay-offs were substantially discussed with the union representatives of COMPASS as well as with the affected workers, in line with the relevant Belgian labour legislation and in full respect of the applicable Belgian legal provisions (notice of redundancy, full indemnity payment according to years of service, etc.).

COMPASS has assured Parliament's responsible services that all termination of contract interviews ran smoothly and in the presence of a union representative, thus making sure no irregular or non-complying actions of the employer could possibly take place. The workers had the opportunity to express their view. Employees had been laid off due to staff restructuring and were therefore not supposed to encounter any difficulties to register for unemployment allowances. Moreover, the company has informed Parliament's administration that they were also providing counseling to the remaining members of the teams in which the dismissed workers were working, so that they could be assured about their future. COMPASS has further informed Parliament that these laying-offs were exceptional and would not be repeated as a measure.

The seniority of the employees dismissed was 1987, 2001 and 2009. They were not replaced by new recruits, because the organization of the work process has changed.

Any of Parliament's contractors is expected to fully comply with all employment, safety and social security laws, which are also part of all service provision contracts. In cases of proven and systematic malpractice, abuses or infringement of rules, Parliament has the right to review its contractual situation with the service provider in question.

Calls for tenders regarding sustainable collective catering have a threefold contribution. The well-being of Members and staff, the care for the environment and the fulfillment of social responsibility are all taken into account, while respecting the sound financial management of Parliament's budget.

83. Could you indicate which outlet locations offer discounts in catering for interns? How was the level of discount for interns decided upon?

There are discounts for interns of EUR 0.50 on the main dishes in all self-service restaurants in Brussels and Luxembourg and of EUR 0.80 in Strasbourg. There has not been any recent change in discounts because the price of the main dish has also remained unchanged due to social reasons.

84. Does the EP have a policy in place to avoid wasting food? What percentage of food from the canteen is discarded? Are there local welfare organisations who receive that food?

Since the second semester 2013 the Parliament is implementing a comprehensive policy with the objective to drastically reduce food waste. As a consequence, basically none of the food, which can be safely recovered and reused in accordance with HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) concepts and the applicable rules for food safety and hygiene, is wasted. The responsible services in Parliament's administration take action to reduce the amount of food wasted, to save money and natural resources, and help make sure that those in need are fed.

An ambitious plan for significant reduction of food-wastage at the three sites through benchmarking, best-practises and awareness raising measures is in place aiming at 10-15% target of food waste (unsold food and leftovers).

This target will be achieved by an annual reduction of 5% in kg per meal by 2019 (reference year: 2016).

Results achieved so far are pointing at this direction:

- in Nov 2016 food waste was 15% .
- in 2015 - 15,92%.
- in 2014 - 18,21 % .

In order to continue diminishing food wastage the following measures are in place:

- introduction of so-called "my portion", which helps reduce food waste in the canteens by giving the choice of big and small servings sold at a different price. The catering staff is being currently trained to actively offer it to clients with the aim of gradually expanding it to all sale points and dishes.

- introduction of scales at the self-service restaurants for the weighing of certain products (such as salads).
- introduction of “end of service”- less choice from 1.30 pm onwards.
- removal of presentation tables in all catering facilities and gradual replacement by pictures on screens both on the spot and on the EP intranet.

Giving away unsold food to charity is also making its way as good practice in the EP canteens and sales points. This marks a first within the Brussels institutional landscape, since Parliaments’ kitchens are at the forefront of a program to distribute ready meals in a systematic and monitored way. Unsold food from the Spinelli canteen is collected and given away on a weekly basis. All in all, by end November 2016, Parliament kitchens have already given around 1500 meals out to charitable organisations, such as Banque Alimentaire Brabant and Resto de coeur de Laeken.

85. How many bottles of water are used on an annual basis for the meetings? Why did the Parliament stick to the policy of providing bottles instead of making tap water more easily available to the participants?

About 350 000 litres of bottled mineral water per year were distributed at official and administrative meetings so far. Several measures are under way and should further help to reduce those figures, such as enhanced control on the supply of bottles of mineral water as well as awareness raising on the need to save scarce resources.

Budget item 3040 (miscellaneous expenditure on internal meetings) has therefore been cut by 46% over the last three years, from EUR 2 600 000 in 2013 to EUR 1 400 000 in 2016.

In addition, the Bureau Working Group on Buildings, Transport and a Green Parliament has taken the decision to encourage further reduction of the use of bottled mineral water in meetings by installing water fountains connected to the public system in main passageway areas. It gave therefore its endorsement to a proposal to install water fountains in front of frequently used meeting rooms in Brussels and Strasbourg at its meeting of 22 June 2016.

Contracts were signed in October 2016 and currently 36 fountains near meeting rooms in Spinelli, Spaak, Antall and the Library as well as 11 fountains in Weiss, and De Madariaga are being installed. Further locations will follow. At the request of the political groups, Parliament’s administration already studies possible locations in buildings in Brussels where their offices are located.

After consultation with the SPPT (Service Prévention et Protection au Travail) and the CPPT (Comité Paritaire de Prévention et Protection au Travail), the water fountains are bottleless and floor standing models, directly connected to the water supply. In-line activated carbon filters for chemical reduction and mechanical filtration for particles are used. Antimicrobial protection inhibits potential bacterial growth.

Once the current 1-year Parliament pilot project lapses and should the Bureau Working Group agree, a new call for tenders for Strasbourg and Luxembourg can be launched for a duration of 4 years. Brussels will adhere to the inter-institutional tender organised by the Commission in the first half of 2017.

EMAS has been involved in the reflection concerning eco-friendly, 100% recyclable bottles, tumblers or other containers, such as refillable bottles.

86. How many official cars with drivers did the EP provide in 2015 for personal use only? What were the costs in 2015 for each of these official cars including the driver? How many of these personal official cars were allocated in 2015 respectively to Members of the European Parliament and officials of the European Parliament?

In accordance with Article 2(1) of the Rules Governing Transport Arrangements for Members (Bureau Decision of 30 November 2011), official cars shall be assigned on a permanent basis to the following persons:

- President (2 cars + 2 drivers);
- Political group chair of EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, GUE/NGL (1 car + 1 driver) and one car without driver for the EFD and since second half of 2015 one car plus driver for the ENF.
- Secretary-General (1 car + 1 driver);
- Deputy Secretary-General (1 car + 1 driver);

Therefore, in total 11 cars and 10 drivers are provided. No separate breakdown of costs is available for the cars and drivers assigned for personal use.

The total staff costs of all of Parliament's 31 drivers amounted to EUR 2 175 860 in 2015 (average cost per driver: EUR 70 189). No other personal official cars are allocated to Members or officials.

87. What costs occurred in 2015 for persons related to the European Parliament who used airport VIP services?

The cost for the rent of the reception desk and waiting room for VIP services at the Zaventem airport amounted to EUR 14 400 in 2015. These services are exclusively used by Members.

88. *The European Parliament have started the internalisation of the car service while the opportunity to travel by train to the airport has been made possible, which could reduce not only costs but travelling time and CO2 emission. Have the EP services considered incentivise the use of the airport trains for MEPs? Have this opportunity been taken into consideration in the internalisation of the car service and to what extent?*

A Quaestors' notice regarding the free travel pass issued by SNCB valid for new fast and efficient direct train connection to Brussels Airport was sent on 23 November 2016. The services continuously encourage Members and staff alike to use environmentally friendly transport, in particular public transport, but in the end it is the decision of each individual. It is indeed hoped that the new train service will be well received by the Members and will have a positive impact, reducing the number of airport car journeys delivered by INLO's driver service.

89. *Quels ont été les conclusions de l'étude comparative sur l'internalisation du service chauffeurs réalisée par la DG INLO en 2015? Combien des nouveaux postes ont été créés? Est-ce que des nouvelles vagues de recrutement sont encore prévues? Après le concours organisé, pouvez-vous indiquer la nationalité, l'âge et le genre des chauffeurs qui ont été lauréats du concours? Combien des chauffeurs qui travaillaient dans l'ancienne entreprise ont passé le concours et combien d'entre eux ont été recrutés? Combien des chauffeurs de nationalité belge il y avait avant le concours et combien après?*

The comparative calculation between internalisation, including operative leasing, and the current system showed an increase of the budget by EUR 3.7 Mio per year.

The call for expressions of interest EP/CAST/S/16/2016 Contract Staff - function group I (GF I)- Drivers (F/M) was published on 14 April 2016; this notice is available in the Official Journal C 131 A of 14 April 2016.

110 new drivers (contract agent, FG I) and 6 specialist dispatchers will be recruited in 2017. The recruitment procedure is still ongoing. For this reason, it is premature at this stage to give a full overview on gender/nationalities. It should be noted that no additional administrative staff will be recruited.

90. *Quelle est la raison de la mise en marche d'une procédure d'aménagement des bureaux des Membres à Bruxelles? L'appel d'offre a été lancé? Qui a décidé que le renouvellement de ce mobilier est nécessaire et pourquoi? Quelles sont les prévisions budgétaires et le calendrier d'application? Ceci concerne aussi les bureaux des APA?*

In summer 2014 the challenges relating to furniture and associated services were proven to be significant: the feedback received from Members after the electoral break and the consequent constitutive office move revealed that a large number of Members found the office furniture outdated to meet their needs and increasingly presenting the signs of long use.

Furthermore, as the furniture in Members' and assistants' offices in Brussels had in any case over-reached its age (approaching 20 years when the standard usage and writing-off age is 10 years) and would have been needed to be replaced, a working group was established within DG INLO to assess the future furniture needs for the Members of the European Parliament and their assistants. The working group, comprising the Directors for Logistics and for Resources respectively, issued its final report in early 2015 which, after acceptance by the Secretary-General, was presented to the Bureau Working Party on "Buildings, Transport and a Green Parliament" in May 2015 and again in November 2016. The first budgetary appropriations had been already allocated to this project in the budgetary procedure 2016, i.e. voted by the plenary.

Following the endorsement by the latter of the project, DG INLO, with active involvement of other Directorates-General and of the Legal Service, has started a procurement procedure in form of a competitive dialogue. The procedure is now at the dialogue stage, after selection of the five most suitable consortia of furniture manufacturers and logistics companies. The dialogue is expected to come to an end by March 2017, followed by the evaluation and finally the award of the contract which should take place by May 2017 at the latest.

The refurbishing project itself will start as from July 2017 with a pilot group of 50 Members and their assistants. By the end of 2018 all Members' and assistants' offices in Brussels should be newly furnished. The works are to be carried out over 30 non-consecutive weeks, exclusively during holiday times, Strasbourg plenary weeks and constituency weeks so as to avoid the disruption of parliamentary activities.

It is useful to recall that, at this stage, the procurement procedure (competitive dialogue) is still ongoing and the contract still has to be awarded. No appropriations were used from the 2016 budget. On account of the start in the second semester 2017 with a pilot group only, the needs for the budgetary year 2017 can be expected to be moderate. The cost will depend on the outcome of the ongoing procurement procedure.

91. Could the Secretary General describe in detail the steps taken to reduce the number of trunks transported between the Parliament's working places?

A continuous decrease of the number of trunks transported to Strasbourg has been observed over the last years (from on average 2 200 in 2013 to 1 600 in 2016), which shows that Members and staff have increasingly made use of modern digital methods for the storage of documents. When voting on discharge for the financial year 2013 on 29 April 2015, Parliament called on the Secretary-General "to design a plan to reduce the number of trunks available for parliamentary travels" and suggested "that smaller trunks be used or a shared system be implemented, thus reducing its cost in financial and carbon footprint terms".

Following a decision from the Bureau Working Group on Buildings, Transport and a Green Parliament, a survey was held between 26 May and 9 June 2015 amongst Members to obtain their opinion on the use of trunks by themselves and by their assistants in order to assess the ongoing need for the transport of paper documents. A considerable number of replies indicated the wish of many Members to return or share trunks.

Further on, the administration made a proposal to move towards a depersonalised trunk sharing system whereby each administration unit receives only half the number of trunks as the number of its staff going on mission to Strasbourg. This proposal was agreed upon by the members of the Working Group on Buildings, Transport and a Green Parliament on 23 September 2015.

The implementation of depersonalised trunk sharing for the administration started in 2016 after a required adaptation of the IT tool used for ordering the priority return transport of trunks (TRT Transport Request Tracker). The sharing of depersonalised trunks for the administration has been phased in since May 2016 with the exception of senior management and the transport of confidential (mostly HR-related) documents. The gradual phasing-in was necessary in order to keep up the high quality of the service with a very low error rate.

Due to the trunk sharing and streamlining of transport of other material (for example audio-visual), the number of single truck trips between Brussels and Strasbourg was reduced by 10 per session. The target of a 50% reduction of trunks for staff will be reached in the first semester 2017.

INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION

92. Wishes to be informed of the current status of the new working conditions discussed with the staff interpreter's representatives and the results of the modernisations process. What is the total number of staff working in interpretation in the Parliament per Member State?

Although a first proposal to revise the working conditions for interpreters at the EP currently in force since 2006 had been, discussed since December 2013 and finally agreed upon by the EP staff interpreter negotiation delegation, a majority of staff interpreters rejected the final proposal in April 2015.

In order to move forward on bringing the EP staff interpreters' specific working conditions in line with the new Staff Regulations as well as to align DG INTE's working methods with the changed needs of Parliament brought about by the Treaty of Lisbon, the Secretary General, had requested DG INTE to conduct, an in-depth analysis of productivity data of the interpretation services. The data produced were also used to provide replies in 2015 to a number of questions raised in the context of the Discharge of the 2014 Annual Budget.

The analysis showed a number of inefficiencies in the way interpretation resources were managed and which had an impact on interpreters' productivity. These inefficiencies were mainly linked to three elements: system bottlenecks, availability of staff interpreters and employability.

On the basis of this analysis, a comprehensive modernisation process was launched. This still on-going modernisation process fully takes into account the interpretation duties, which constitute the staff interpreters' core task, as well as the different other duties and activities of staff interpreters forming part of their responsibilities as civil servants. It aims at establishing a framework, based on four elements: ensuring increased productivity, ensuring social protection of the staff, bringing about more fairness in the distribution of the workload of the staff interpreters and ensuring a high quality of service provision. Removing the system bottlenecks, reducing unavailability and improving staff employability are the key drivers for this process.

The process covers two broad chapters. The first chapter concerns a number of management decisions to address the issue of the availability of staff interpreters during the core activity periods of Parliament and to improve employability as well as to balance the workloads of interpreters. It also concerns measures to increase individual productivity and unit output as well as to enhance further interpretation quality.

With regard to the modernisation chapter, the following measures have already been introduced:

- The availability of staff interpreters has been improved. New guidelines on staff interpreter annual leave have been introduced; a 'clean week's' policy is in place, avoiding all other assignments than interpretation assignments on core business days.

- New benchmarks have been introduced to assess unit output and are being implemented. The average unit output has increased from 11:54 hours/week in 2014 to 13:20 hours/week in 2016.
- More fairness in interpreter workloads had been achieved. The number of interpreters with an average output below 11 hours/week has been reduced from 86 interpreters in 2014 to 20 interpreters in 2016.
- Tools have been developed to record and report on the workload of staff interpreters. A manager output counter has been introduced; all EP staff interpreters have been given access to their own personal workload, as well as the average output of their units, the other units and the EP average; a staff interpreter personal productivity counter has been introduced; reports on the output of the different language units and on the EP average are made available on request.
- The necessary measures have been taken to increase the employability of staff interpreters and to align language learning of staff interpreters to the interests of the service. A language score system has been developed and introduced; the language scores of all staff interpreters have been determined; the language learning paths of all the interpreters who have not reached a language score corresponding to 'excellent' are being determined.
- New IT solutions have been developed and deployed. The scheduling and documentation tool MINA has been fully deployed; tokens have been distributed and problems with premature log-off of the Parliament network have been addressed.
- The Interpreter Support and Training Unit has been created.
- Awareness-raising to improve speakers' input is being prepared. An awareness-raising project has been prepared for the new EP project cycle 2017-2019. The first awareness-raising actions are under preparation.

Based on the clear and shared understanding that the interpreter working conditions in force, dating from 2006, are no longer fit for purpose in view of the changed needs of Parliaments since the Treaty of Lisbon, the second chapter concerns the establishment of new interpreter working conditions which ensure a more resource-efficient assignment of interpreters and thus an enhancement of productivity and output. At the same time such new working conditions should include all necessary safeguards for health and a good work-life balance of interpreters.

A consultation process was launched on the 15th July 2016 between representatives on behalf of interpreters and on behalf of DG INTE's Management. A new set of working conditions for interpreters was presented that would strike the appropriate balance between increased productivity, high quality of the service, more fairness and social protection. Based on a mandate by the Secretary General, the two consultation parties should hold regular meetings until the end of 2016 with a view to finding agreement on the text proposed

The planned last meeting of this consultation process, the 14th since the launch of the process in July, took place on 16 December 2016, but no final agreement could be reached yet.

In 2015 there were 296 occupied staff interpreter posts in DG INTE, corresponding to 267 Full Time Equivalents (FTE). Interpreters are not recruited on the basis of nationality considerations but rather on the basis of language qualifications, with interpreters from different nationalities working together in the same unit to serve Members from different Member States. For instance, the German Unit provides interpretation services for Members from Germany, Austria and Belgium. The distribution of the staffing is therefore not provided per Member State but per language unit.

The staffing is described in FTE (Full Time Equivalent), as this measure better corresponds to the real capacity of DG INTE to provide service, taking into account staff movements in the course of a year as well as the use of statutory entitlements (part-time, family and parental leave). In 2015, the distribution of the FTEs over the language units was as follows:

| 2015 - FTE in Interpretation | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| UNIT | FTE | Staff numbers |
| BG | 11.8 | 12 |
| CS | 5.6 | 7 |
| DA | 5.8 | 7 |
| DE | 21.6 | 24 |
| EL | 14.7 | 15 |
| EN | 20.7 | 24 |
| ES | 17.8 | 19 |
| ET | 5.5 | 6 |
| FI | 12.6 | 14 |
| FR | 22.1 | 23 |
| HR | 8.5 | 9 |
| HU | 11.1 | 13 |
| IT | 19.1 | 21 |
| LT | 8.4 | 9 |
| LV | 7.1 | 8 |
| NL | 11.3 | 14 |
| PL | 16.6 | 19 |
| PT | 14.2 | 15 |
| RO | 9.8 | 11 |
| SK | 7.3 | 8 |
| SL | 5.6 | 6 |
| SV | 9.7 | 12 |

93. How many hours per week did interpreters spend in their booth in 2015 delivering interpretation services per language?

The data provided below concern staff interpreters only. The data have been calculated using the hours of booked interpretation time in PERICLES (the database used by the administration for managing meetings and interpretation) divided by the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing numbers.

This methodology corrects for part-times, parental and family leaves. Maternity leaves have also been excluded. Additionally and in line with paragraph 99 of the Resolution on the Discharge 2014, all sickness leave and all annual leaves, including the annual leave taken on core business days, have been excluded from the calculation. Last but not least late cancellations of meetings or languages have not been taken into account, as their impact is difficult to quantify.

The reference period that has been used is 2015, excluding white weeks (i.e. weeks without parliamentary activity).

For the sake of comparison, the data supplied in response to the Questionnaire for the Discharge 2014 is also supplied, but has been recalculated in line with the adapted methodology as described above.

| 2014 | Average for M, S, C, MS & T weeks | M weeks | S weeks | C weeks | MS weeks | T weeks |
|---|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| BG | 11:57 | 12:09 | 10:02 | 15:27 | 13:22 | 0:00 |
| CS | 13:07 | 13:26 | 10:16 | 17:22 | 14:18 | 9:45 |
| DA | 11:41 | 13:18 | 9:24 | 15:29 | 11:19 | 0:00 |
| DE | 12:25 | 14:12 | 9:28 | 15:13 | 13:36 | 6:13 |
| EL | 11:35 | 13:11 | 8:08 | 15:44 | 12:30 | 0:00 |
| EN | 12:29 | 13:26 | 9:31 | 15:50 | 14:51 | 4:20 |
| ES | 11:36 | 13:14 | 9:12 | 13:29 | 13:53 | 2:09 |
| ET | 11:51 | 12:47 | 10:09 | 14:17 | 12:17 | 0:00 |
| FI | 11:29 | 12:09 | 9:14 | 13:33 | 12:11 | 0:00 |
| FR | 11:54 | 12:54 | 9:31 | 14:04 | 14:11 | 6:03 |
| HR | 11:31 | 11:44 | 9:40 | 14:58 | 11:27 | 0:00 |
| HU | 12:21 | 13:09 | 9:40 | 15:59 | 13:13 | 0:00 |
| IT | 12:13 | 13:11 | 9:29 | 15:19 | 13:05 | 4:40 |
| LT | 12:01 | 12:33 | 9:07 | 15:59 | 14:41 | 1:12 |
| LV | 11:32 | 11:41 | 9:14 | 15:47 | 12:44 | 0:00 |
| MT | 9:56 | 10:19 | 9:21 | 11:28 | 10:32 | 0:00 |
| NL | 11:50 | 12:40 | 8:57 | 15:15 | 13:52 | 0:00 |
| PL | 11:43 | 11:32 | 9:33 | 15:12 | 12:39 | 4:50 |
| PT | 12:26 | 13:51 | 9:32 | 15:08 | 13:36 | 0:00 |
| RO | 13:14 | 13:28 | 10:20 | 16:55 | 15:23 | 0:00 |
| SK | 11:40 | 11:40 | 9:25 | 15:27 | 14:03 | 1:37 |
| SL | 12:46 | 12:43 | 11:10 | 15:45 | 13:29 | 0:00 |
| SV | 12:44 | 13:02 | 10:10 | 15:48 | 14:09 | 5:21 |
| Abbreviations: M = Mixed weeks (i.e. Group/committee week) S = Strasbourg session week C = Committee week MS = Minisession week in Brussels T = Turquoise week | | | | | | |

The overall average number of hours per week staff interpreters spent in their booth in 2014 delivering interpretation services, according to the revised calculation method, was 11:54 hours/week (taking into account only standard parliamentary working weeks, i.e. Group, Committee, Brussels Mini-session, Strasbourg Part-Session and turquoise weeks and excluding all white periods).

| 2015 | Average for M, S, C, MS & T weeks | M weeks | S weeks | C weeks | MS weeks | T weeks |
|-------------|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| BG | 12:39 | 12:00 | 11:28 | 17:52 | 17:18 | 3:47 |
| CS | 14:31 | 15:43 | 11:38 | 19:49 | 19:54 | 0:00 |
| DA | 12:21 | 12:44 | 10:27 | 15:59 | 19:34 | 0:00 |
| DE | 13:45 | 15:00 | 10:46 | 17:14 | 18:38 | 8:30 |
| EL | 12:42 | 13:36 | 8:42 | 17:42 | 19:27 | 3:25 |
| EN | 14:05 | 15:04 | 11:28 | 16:48 | 18:49 | 9:18 |
| ES | 13:36 | 14:24 | 11:08 | 17:11 | 18:52 | 5:52 |
| ET | 12:58 | 13:21 | 11:26 | 17:10 | 17:51 | 0:00 |
| FI | 12:17 | 12:41 | 9:34 | 16:20 | 17:20 | 1:35 |
| FR | 13:40 | 15:12 | 10:54 | 16:37 | 18:26 | 6:50 |
| HR | 12:35 | 11:19 | 11:30 | 16:39 | 18:12 | 2:46 |
| HU | 13:16 | 12:28 | 12:45 | 17:43 | 18:42 | 0:00 |
| IT | 13:46 | 14:47 | 11:23 | 17:33 | 18:49 | 5:03 |
| LT | 13:04 | 13:13 | 10:44 | 18:41 | 18:53 | 2:18 |
| LV | 12:20 | 12:35 | 10:54 | 17:37 | 16:44 | 1:48 |
| NL | 12:56 | 13:46 | 11:16 | 18:28 | 18:45 | 0:00 |
| PL | 13:09 | 13:35 | 11:12 | 17:28 | 17:35 | 4:53 |
| PT | 13:40 | 15:12 | 11:14 | 17:29 | 18:22 | 3:56 |
| RO | 13:48 | 14:06 | 11:50 | 18:56 | 20:15 | 0:00 |
| SK | 12:41 | 12:49 | 10:10 | 18:07 | 18:29 | 0:00 |
| SL | 13:34 | 13:11 | 12:25 | 16:47 | 20:08 | 0:00 |
| SV | 13:37 | 14:11 | 10:42 | 18:32 | 18:13 | 0:00 |

While 2014 was an electoral year, 2015 on the other hand was a year of normal parliamentary activity. In 2015 the overall average number of hours per week staff interpreters spent in their booth delivering interpretation services, according to the new calculation method, was 12:50 hours/week (taking into account only standard parliamentary working weeks, i.e. Group, Committee, Brussels Mini-session, Strasbourg Part-Session and turquoise weeks and excluding all white periods).

The management decisions taken in the context of the modernization process notably the implementation of the new guidelines on interpreter annual leaves, the clean weeks policy as well as targeted assignments using the new benchmarks, described in the reply to question 92, have resulted in 2016 in an increase of the average number of hours per week that staff interpreters spent in their booth to 13:20.

It should be underlined that, apart from interpretation duties, interpreters have a number of other tasks and carry out a number of other activities. These comprise notably meeting preparation, language learning and language maintenance, subject-based and specialized training, virtual classes with universities teaching interpretation, speech preparation and recording for training, tests and competitions, participation in tests and competitions as speakers, assessors or board members. Most of these activities take place outside the core business days of Parliament, in line with the clean week policy. Certain activities, however, such as external language courses and exchanges of staff interpreters with other Institutions, do inevitably coincide with core business periods. These are therefore taken into account for the interpreters and units concerned in the assessment of the different benchmarks for productivity and output.

94. What were the average costs for interpreters per language for a) staff interpreters b) freelance interpreters?

The average cost/hour for staff interpreters was calculated as follows²⁸:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Average cost per hour = | $\frac{((\text{Salary costs} + \text{Pension provision} - \text{Community Tax}) + \text{Mission costs} + \text{Overhead costs} + \text{Annual leaves costs}) - \text{Assigned revenue}}{\text{Total number of EP working hours}}$ |
| | Total number of EP working hours |

The average cost/hour for freelance interpreters was calculated as follows²⁹:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Average cost per hour = | $\frac{((\text{Remunerations} - \text{Community Tax}) + \text{Overhead costs} + \text{Cost of freelance-specific DG INTE Units}) - \text{Assigned revenue}}{\text{Total number of EP working hours}}$ |
| | Total number of EP working hours |

To facilitate comparison, the table below provides an overview of the average costs per hour per language of the staff interpreters and of the ACI for 2014 and 2015:

²⁸ The salary costs for staff interpreters were calculated on the basis of FTE corrected for part-time, parental leave, family leave, maternity leave and long term sick leave (> 30 calendar days). In accordance with the methodology adopted for the Special Report No 5/2005 of the Court of Auditors, a pension provision of 22 % was added to the salaries and the community taxes. Mission costs, interpreter-specific overhead costs, the cost of replacement for annual leaves taken during core parliamentary working days, the assigned revenue for interpretation services for other clients and the total number of working hours were taken into account.

²⁹ The remunerations for freelance interpreters include all fees and allowances, including travel costs. Free-lance specific overheads were taken into account.

| Costs/hour in EUR for 2014 and 2015 | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Language | Staff | | Freelance | |
| | 2014 | 2015 | 2014 | 2015 |
| BG | 337 | 273 | 239 | 208 |
| CS | 315 | 297 | 268 | 262 |
| eDA | 515 | 478 | 290 | 260 |
| DE | 394 | 309 | 194 | 216 |
| EL | 474 | 371 | 315 | 269 |
| EN | 410 | 357 | 228 | 244 |
| ES | 474 | 393 | 195 | 205 |
| ET | 411 | 316 | 315 | 313 |
| FI | 503 | 428 | 293 | 241 |
| FR | 440 | 344 | 189 | 206 |
| HR | 311 | 259 | 341 | 311 |
| HU | 375 | 328 | 268 | 241 |
| IT | 467 | 356 | 228 | 219 |
| LT | 319 | 286 | 285 | 226 |
| LV | 364 | 304 | 250 | 242 |
| MT | 255 | 321 | 322 | 266 |
| NL | 436 | 364 | 224 | 194 |
| PL | 383 | 302 | 228 | 221 |
| PT | 492 | 380 | 212 | 189 |
| RO | 320 | 287 | 248 | 228 |
| SK | 323 | 280 | 299 | 262 |
| SL | 282 | 274 | 291 | 252 |
| SV | 466 | 388 | 253 | 239 |
| Average | 411 | 340 | 260 | 240 |

As indicated above, 2014 was an electoral year. It had a number of atypical weeks leading to a reduced demand for interpretation. In 2014 the average cost/hour for staff interpreters was EUR 411 and for freelance interpreters EUR 260, whereas in 2015, a year with regular levels of parliamentary activity, the average cost/hour for staff interpreters was EUR 340 and for freelance interpreters EUR 240.

It should be noted that the total number of hours worked for each category of interpreters is contingent on assignment choices that are not based on the status of the interpreters but on other factors such as interpreters' effective availability, assignment rules set in the interpreters working conditions, the language combinations of the available interpreters matching the language needs in meetings, etc. As a result the number of hours delivered by either category of interpreters in any given period of time is variable, which also induces variations in the hourly cost, even in the case of staff interpreters.

95. What was the lowest and the highest service delivery per hour/ week per language in 2015? The question is focused on parliamentary working weeks (group week, committee weeks and plenary weeks).

The lowest service and highest service delivery, expressed in hour/week per language is given for the different types of parliamentary weeks with the data having been calculated using the same methodology as for the reply to Question 93.

For the sake of comparison, the table below gives an overview, per type of week, of the highest and lowest service delivery in 2014. It is to be noted that the data for 2014, which were originally provided in reply to the questionnaire for the Discharge 2014, have been updated in accordance with the revised calculation method described in the reply to Question 93.

| 2014 | M weeks | | S weeks | | C weeks | | MS weeks | |
|------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | MIN | MAX | MIN | MAX | MIN | MAX | MIN | MAX |
| BG | 10:48 | 16:48 | 8:53 | 11:10 | 11:52 | 18:45 | 8:50 | 18:25 |
| CS | 11:47 | 15:24 | 8:46 | 11:11 | 14:18 | 19:32 | 12:09 | 21:45 |
| DA | 11:15 | 17:03 | 6:45 | 10:38 | 8:14 | 20:25 | 9:45 | 15:22 |
| DE | 9:42 | 17:21 | 6:22 | 14:26 | 10:34 | 19:37 | 10:07 | 18:15 |
| EL | 10:04 | 15:22 | 7:03 | 11:50 | 11:47 | 19:10 | 7:30 | 17:30 |
| EN | 9:16 | 16:58 | 6:49 | 14:30 | 11:20 | 19:34 | 7:45 | 20:39 |
| ES | 9:11 | 16:48 | 7:19 | 11:55 | 7:37 | 17:27 | 7:42 | 17:45 |
| ET | 9:30 | 13:30 | 8:37 | 11:06 | 12:45 | 19:50 | 8:34 | 14:50 |
| FI | 9:31 | 14:30 | 6:13 | 10:40 | 11:25 | 15:19 | 8:10 | 17:00 |
| FR | 7:40 | 16:25 | 6:31 | 12:42 | 7:23 | 19:22 | 7:15 | 17:49 |
| HR | 8:54 | 14:20 | 7:20 | 11:18 | 12:19 | 17:11 | 8:59 | 13:48 |
| HU | 10:21 | 17:09 | 7:55 | 12:30 | 9:56 | 19:07 | 8:45 | 18:08 |
| IT | 10:01 | 15:58 | 6:23 | 12:43 | 10:03 | 18:27 | 8:09 | 17:10 |
| LT | 10:08 | 14:45 | 8:16 | 10:04 | 13:28 | 17:30 | 11:00 | 18:25 |
| LV | 9:27 | 13:11 | 7:46 | 9:53 | 14:15 | 17:32 | 10:59 | 15:06 |
| MT | 10:09 | 10:28 | 9:12 | 9:30 | 9:47 | 13:10 | 8:40 | 12:25 |
| NL | 11:36 | 14:08 | 5:00 | 10:29 | 11:18 | 18:05 | 10:11 | 19:54 |
| PL | 8:47 | 14:45 | 5:36 | 12:13 | 11:42 | 17:39 | 8:55 | 19:15 |
| PT | 11:02 | 18:34 | 6:49 | 11:49 | 12:50 | 18:30 | 9:08 | 16:59 |
| RO | 10:18 | 15:45 | 3:09 | 13:07 | 12:11 | 18:59 | 9:30 | 18:46 |
| SK | 8:01 | 14:16 | 4:21 | 10:42 | 11:45 | 18:21 | 9:24 | 17:20 |
| SL | 10:21 | 15:09 | 10:33 | 11:38 | 14:17 | 18:02 | 11:50 | 18:58 |
| SV | 8:00 | 15:22 | 6:47 | 12:00 | 12:42 | 18:34 | 8:45 | 17:54 |

The table below provides the data requested for the lowest and highest service delivery in 2015.

| 2015 | M weeks | | S weeks | | C weeks | | MS weeks | |
|------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | MIN | MAX | MIN | MAX | MIN | MAX | MIN | MAX |
| BG | 9:15 | 16:00 | 6:20 | 13:06 | 13:40 | 19:58 | 13:08 | 20:38 |
| CS | 14:35 | 18:22 | 9:54 | 12:34 | 16:45 | 21:59 | 17:16 | 22:16 |
| DA | 9:45 | 16:21 | 7:09 | 11:30 | 12:59 | 21:00 | 17:12 | 24:30 |
| DE | 10:36 | 17:30 | 8:19 | 13:59 | 7:32 | 21:53 | 15:43 | 21:31 |
| EL | 9:03 | 17:31 | 7:13 | 11:32 | 15:04 | 21:07 | 15:18 | 22:48 |
| EN | 3:53 | 18:03 | 7:30 | 13:56 | 8:27 | 22:06 | 12:51 | 26:00 |
| ES | 6:54 | 16:01 | 7:23 | 13:44 | 14:00 | 22:03 | 16:18 | 21:26 |
| ET | 11:26 | 14:37 | 10:59 | 13:13 | 12:23 | 21:30 | 15:31 | 20:05 |
| FI | 9:35 | 15:25 | 5:23 | 11:58 | 10:57 | 20:00 | 12:50 | 20:03 |
| FR | 11:01 | 18:34 | 7:39 | 13:57 | 12:36 | 21:53 | 12:50 | 24:30 |
| HR | 9:05 | 12:37 | 10:00 | 12:49 | 12:31 | 19:05 | 15:35 | 19:42 |
| HU | 10:16 | 14:10 | 10:03 | 14:22 | 8:24 | 21:37 | 12:51 | 22:08 |
| IT | 10:34 | 17:49 | 4:31 | 14:08 | 12:28 | 23:01 | 16:21 | 22:45 |
| LT | 10:57 | 15:20 | 10:04 | 12:09 | 16:25 | 21:33 | 16:45 | 23:10 |
| LV | 10:58 | 14:30 | 8:52 | 12:07 | 12:47 | 19:43 | 11:39 | 24:35 |
| NL | 10:14 | 16:23 | 8:23 | 12:06 | 12:39 | 22:57 | 15:34 | 22:24 |
| PL | 10:36 | 17:30 | 8:40 | 12:50 | 13:41 | 20:25 | 12:37 | 23:44 |
| PT | 13:23 | 16:35 | 9:00 | 12:55 | 13:25 | 19:56 | 16:20 | 20:35 |
| RO | 12:37 | 15:36 | 11:27 | 13:54 | 18:03 | 21:00 | 17:51 | 22:35 |
| SK | 12:00 | 14:36 | 4:55 | 11:57 | 14:45 | 21:12 | 15:34 | 24:25 |
| SL | 10:11 | 15:54 | 10:22 | 14:57 | 13:15 | 20:00 | 17:04 | 23:44 |
| SV | 10:41 | 15:45 | 6:29 | 13:11 | 14:23 | 21:18 | 13:38 | 21:08 |

96. What is the total number of days the Parliament had to use freelance interpreters in year 2015? What was the total cost of freelance interpreters in year 2015?

In 2015 the Parliament recruited freelance interpreters for a total of 47 061 contract days. The total cost of freelance interpreters was EUR 47 371 272.

97. Could you please provide a detailed cost breakdown of the translation costs? What was the estimated translating cost of the institution per page in year 2015?

The translation services of the European Institutions work closely together and have at their disposal a set of harmonised key activity and performance indicators presenting basic information on core aspects of their translation business. An important indicator is the translation cost of the institution per translated page. The definition of cost of translation is based on a simplified full-cost model. For the purpose of maximum comparability between the different Institutions, not the real cost but estimated cost is calculated with the help of common flat rates for *certain* cost elements on which the language services of the different Institutions only have limited influence (if at all). Examples concern the cost for administration including building, training and IT (for some Institutions only) or staff cost.

The justification for the use of such flat rates lies in the observation that an increase of the cost for translation due, for example, to the move of the translation service of one Institution to a more expensive building – with no (or only negligible) impact on the translation process - would influence negatively the comparability between the different Institutions. The same holds true for other cost elements.

In 2015, the Parliament has translated more than 1.1 Mio pages. This reflects a strong increase in production after the election year 2014, though the level of production in 2015 still remained 18% below the levels for the years 2012 and 2013. This can partly be explained by the typical cyclic pattern over a legislature, where production is taking up in the first year after the elections and steadily increasing towards the end of the term, and partly because of a general reduction in legislative proposals and the introduction of linguistic profiles for amendments tabled in the parliamentary committees.

To translate these 1.1 Mio pages in 2015, the Parliament spent EUR 165.2 Mio, which was 4.3% more than the year before (EUR 158.4 Mio) and 1.2% more than in 2013 (EUR 163.2 Mio). The corresponding (average) cost per page was EUR 145 in 2015 compared to EUR 193 in 2014 (a significant decrease due to 2014 being an election year with lower production and similar overhead costs). The following table provides a detailed breakdown of the translation costs for the year 2015.

| Translation costs 2015 | |
|---|--------------------|
| Costs | EUR |
| Expenditure for outsourced translation | 8 349 450 |
| Other non-staff costs | 36 595 142 |
| Other staff costs | 3 522 945 |
| Staff costs - AD | 88 887 346 |
| Staff costs - AST | 27 892 505 |
| All Costs | 165 247 388 |
| | |
| Pages | Number |
| Number of pages translated (outsourced) | 308 075 |
| Number of pages translated (in-house) | 835 242 |
| Total number of pages | 1 143 317 |
| | |
| Costs per page in EUR | 145 |

98. Given increased interest by citizens, civil society organisations and investigative journalists in how the Parliament implements its budget, has the Secretary General undertaken any work to increase the transparency and usability of existing information by providing parliamentary expenditure data in open source format?

Following a request stemming from the 2017 budget estimates' resolution (§10), the Europarl webpage presenting the EP budget will be enriched with a graphically attractive, easy-to-read infographics showing the breakdown of the EP budget.

Several sets of data have already been made available by the EP services on the European Open Data Portal, under the lead and following instructions of the Secretary-General. The budget of the European Union including the section on the European Parliament and Parliament's report on budgetary and financial management are published in the Official Journal and on the Website of the Parliament under the section "About Parliament" at the following location:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/20150201PVL00012/The-EP's-budget>.

Additional information on parliamentary expenditure is included on the Website of the Parliament under the discharge section of the Budgetary Control Committee (CONT): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/cont/practical-information.html>.

Information includes the Annual Accounts of the European Parliament, consisting of Balance Sheet, Economic Outturn Account, Cashflow Statement and Notes; Annual Activity Reports of the Directorates-General; the Annual report on the contracts awarded and the Report on compliance with payment time limits.

99. The Bureau decision of 26 October 2015 increased transparency measures for service providers by, in part, publishing the names of MEP service providers on the Parliament's website. As MEPs can use other resources from budget item 400 for service providers, why are these names not also published?

The Bureau decision of 26 October 2015 concerned the Implementing Measures for the Members Statute which provides under Article 34, paragraph 8 that the names of assistants and trainees as well as the names or corporate names of service providers and paying agents shall, for the duration of their contract, be published on the website of the European Parliament, together with the name of the Member or Members they assist.

The appropriations provided under budget article 400 cover the administrative and operational expenditure of the political groups and the non-attached Members' secretariat as well as the political and information activities conducted by the political groups and by the non-attached Members in connection with the European Union's political activities (Article 1.1.1 of the Rules on the use of appropriations from budget article 400 (hereafter "400 Rules")).

The Implementing Measures for the Members' Statute do not apply to the contracts concluded with service providers using appropriations under budget article 400. These contracts can refer to a wide range of activities, including for instance the purchase of promotional objects, online or printed material, or the rental of premises for conferences or meetings.

The 400 Rules provide that the political groups shall be responsible to the institution for the use of the appropriations (Article 1.4). The appropriations allocated to the non-attached Members are managed by the administration of the Parliament (Article 2.9.3). Publication requirements are foreseen for the political groups in so far as each political group is obliged to submit annually to the President of the European Parliament an audited report on the use of appropriations for the past financial year, comprising of an auditor's report and the financial report of the group, which shall be published on Parliament's Internet site (Article 2.7.1 and 2.7.2 of the 400 Rules). For the non-attached Members, the administration prepares a consolidated version of the statements of revenue and expenditure and the balance sheet for each Member, which is also published on the website of the European Parliament (Article 2.9.7).

No further publication requirements are foreseen under the 400 Rules. For the possibility to provide more detailed information such as the names of service providers, Parliament is bound to the generally applicable rules, in particular to the Financial Regulation and the derived rules. However, the contracts paid from the appropriations of budget article 400 are concluded between political groups or non-attached Members and service providers directly without involvement of the institution. Therefore, the application of the general EU legislation as regards the protection of personal data has to be considered, in particular Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data and Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

In order to enable the publication of the names of service providers paid through the appropriations of budget article 400, the applicable 400 Rules would need to be modified by a decision of the Bureau.

100. *The European Parliament called in its 2014 discharge resolution for full transparency of the General Expenditure Allowance. Has the Bureau given any appropriate mandate to the relevant services in order to provide clearer monitoring and oversight of the general expenditure allowance? Did the Secretary-General consider reminding the Bureau of this matter through an informative note with follow up suggestions? How many members have returned unused GEA funds to the EP and how many members have made public their office's use of the allowance? Can this data be publish in the parliament's page of every individual Member?*

In line with the 2014 discharge resolution, the Bureau Members will have to look into the revision of the list of expenses which may be defrayed from the General Expenditure Allowance (GEA).

Since the publication of the use of the GEA is not compulsory but made under the sole responsibility of the Member, the rules do not provide for Parliament's administration to verify neither the eligibility nor the accuracy of the expenses. In 2015, 14 Members have returned unused GEA funds.

101. *Member's subsistence and distance allowances have been subject to misperception. Can you explain in detail whether, for example, local travel costs have to be met from the subsistence or the distance allowance? Which measures have been taken to avoid overlap between the two allowances? Which costs could not be reimbursed, if the distance allowance was to be abolished?*

The subsistence allowance is a flat-rate sum (EUR 306/day in 2015) which is intended to cover all costs incurred by the Member at the place of work or the venue of the meeting, mainly accommodation expenses and meals. It is paid when the Member's presence is attested by his signature for each day of official activities published in the Parliament's calendar.

The distance allowance and the duration allowance are intended to cover travel-related ancillary expenses for ordinary journeys, such as parking charges, motorway tolls, reservation fees, excess luggage charges, taxi fares and all other similar and reasonable expenses. Members are entitled to a distance allowance and a duration allowance in respect of journeys within the EU. This entitlement applies to one ordinary return journey per Parliament's working week, referred to as the main journey.

In the more specific case of local travel costs, these are to be covered by different means:

- 1) At the place of residence: if the member is using his pre-defined standard route, the local travel costs to and from the airport/station are reimbursed at the rate of EUR 0.50/km (on the basis of the distance between the place of residence and the airport/station of departure). This entitlement applies to one ordinary return journey per Parliament working week, referred to as the main journey.
- 2) At the place of work: taxi fares are covered by the duration and distance allowances. However, for journeys where the Member has a right to an official vehicle but does not use it, the taxi fares may be reimbursed on the basis of actual costs under the following conditions laid down by the Bureau:
 - Taxi fares between the train stations in Kehl or Offenburg and Strasbourg;
 - Journeys between the airport of arrival or the station and the official meeting venue (including official meetings of political groups) outside the three places of work (the amount must be reasonable).
 - The ceiling for reimbursement is determined by the Bureau as follows:
 - EUR 50 per journey for journeys between the airport of arrival/departure, or EUR 15 between the train station of arrival/departure and the place of work, provided that they are part of the journey to the final destination/from Parliament's place of work;

- EUR 50 per week for other journeys at the place of work ('city taxis'). Nevertheless, sums to be reimbursed will be calculated on a bi-weekly basis, provided that the weeks concerned are consecutive weeks during which official activities are scheduled on Parliament's calendar (non-white weeks) and fall within the same calendar year and parliamentary term.

Since the distance and duration allowances are meant to cover several types of expenses which are not standard and recurrent for a lot of different travel patterns, it is barely possible, shall they be abolished, to predict precisely and exhaustively which costs would not be covered.

102. How many Members of the European Parliament used their total budget of all allowances (including language and computer courses)? Have any irregularities had been detected?

For the General expenditure allowance, the payment is made at the beginning of each month and the applicable rules (article 25 of the Implementing Measures for the Statute for Members) do not require Members to justify or report on its use. In 2015, six Members have requested the Parliament not to transfer of the entire allowance, and 14 Members have returned unused GEA funds. All the others have used the entirety of the allowance.

Concerning the parliamentary assistance allowance, there were no occurrence where a Member used all his or her envelope. This does not take into consideration the carry-over of unused balance at the end of the year. The average amount of the appropriations unused and carried forward from 2015 to 2016 amounted to EUR 18 500 per Member.

Concerning the travel expenses allowances, no Member was reported in 2015 to have applied for his total entitlement.

For language and computer courses five MEPs in total used up the full language course allowance (EUR 5 000) in 2015. Three MEPs in total used up the full computer course allowance (EUR 1 500) in 2015.

NB: The full allowances linked to MEPs professional training are not only the language and computer course reimbursements, but also two return trips, up to 20 daily allowances, ferries and taxis that MEPs can spend when travelling for their language courses abroad. No MEP used all of these allowances altogether.

Regarding irregularities, it must be noted that an irregularity is an act which does not comply with EU rules and which has a potentially negative impact on EU financial interests, but which may be the result of genuine errors committed both by beneficiaries claiming funds and by the authorities responsible for making payments. If an irregularity is committed deliberately, however, it constitutes a fraud.

The irregularities are detected at an early stage through the administrative verifications of supporting documents (tickets, invoices, contracts, deliverables, etc.).

These verifications may result into a requirement of additional information and corrections of errors before the payment. If the payment has already occurred, they result into recoveries or adjustments on the next payment. If the nature and scale of the irregularities may signal some deliberate intention, an investigation is launched (see also Question 104).

103. What was the cost for APA, local assistants, Members service providers and for trainees in 2015? Could you provide the breakdown per member state? Dans votre rapport sur les actions prises après la décharge 2014, vous indiquez que les questeurs transmettront une note sur les règles à suivre dans le cadre du recrutement des assistants locaux et des prestataires de services. Pouvez-vous nous préciser la date à laquelle cette note devrait être transmise et nous indiquer si de nouvelles règles ont été adoptées par le bureau sur cette question?

Please find below the budgetary consumption by type of assistant and by nationality of the Members concerned. Figures are in EUR Mio.

| Member state (MEP) | Accredited assistants | Local employees | Local service providers | Trainees | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------|--------|
| AT | 2,54 | 1,59 | 0,12 | 0,22 | 4,47 |
| BE | 3,87 | 0,60 | 0,21 | 0,10 | 4,79 |
| BG | 2,55 | 0,91 | 0,30 | 0,18 | 3,94 |
| CY | 1,00 | 0,40 | 0,10 | 0,04 | 1,54 |
| CZ | 3,20 | 1,04 | 0,68 | 0,12 | 5,04 |
| DE | 13,97 | 8,42 | 1,04 | 0,56 | 23,98 |
| DK | 1,80 | 0,83 | 0,11 | 0,08 | 2,82 |
| EE | 1,16 | 0,24 | 0,09 | 0,05 | 1,54 |
| ES | 8,45 | 4,01 | 0,63 | 0,19 | 13,29 |
| FI | 2,08 | 0,71 | 0,19 | 0,13 | 3,10 |
| FR | 10,47 | 5,95 | 0,35 | 0,38 | 17,15 |
| GB | 6,51 | 8,69 | 1,21 | 0,21 | 16,63 |
| GR | 3,42 | 1,08 | 0,61 | 0,25 | 5,36 |
| HR | 1,43 | 0,80 | 0,19 | 0,29 | 2,71 |
| HU | 4,13 | 0,51 | 0,41 | 0,07 | 5,12 |
| IE | 0,99 | 1,26 | 0,15 | 0,09 | 2,49 |
| IT | 8,92 | 5,65 | 1,91 | 0,92 | 17,40 |
| LT | 1,23 | 1,40 | 0,08 | 0,07 | 2,78 |
| LU | 1,29 | 0,13 | 0,00 | 0,02 | 1,44 |
| LV | 1,02 | 0,66 | 0,27 | 0,01 | 1,97 |
| MT | 0,68 | 0,64 | 0,09 | 0,02 | 1,43 |
| NL | 4,01 | 1,18 | 0,17 | 0,14 | 5,50 |
| PL | 5,02 | 5,64 | 1,68 | 0,41 | 12,75 |
| PT | 3,83 | 0,83 | 0,46 | 0,13 | 5,25 |
| RO | 5,14 | 1,52 | 0,82 | 0,34 | 7,83 |
| SE | 3,95 | 0,66 | 0,11 | 0,17 | 4,89 |
| SI | 1,41 | 0,55 | 0,13 | 0,05 | 2,13 |
| SK | 2,09 | 0,78 | 0,43 | 0,08 | 3,38 |
| TOTAL | 106,17 | 56,69 | 12,52 | 5,33 | 180,72 |

The rules regarding the Parliamentary assistance have been modified by the Bureau in October 2015, following informal consultations with EP bodies including the Quaestors. A communication was issued by the Bureau in 2015 informing of the change of the rules: Bureau Notice No 2/2015 - New decisions concerning the implementation of the Statute for Members regarding parliamentary assistance, available at: http://www.sib.ep.parl.union.eu/SIB/download.do?file=/Documents/01_Bureau/18_Communications/2015/02/02-2015_en.pdf

104. *How many investigations were carried out in 2015 for possible misuse of Member's allowances? Which precise budget lines/allowances were involved? What were the results of these internal investigations and how many cases were referred to OLAF?*

The total number of investigations concerning possible misuse of Members' allowance during the year 2015 was 376.

In this figure, 258 cases concerned the reimbursement of travel expenses (budget lines 1004, and 1005), of which 93 resulted in a refusal (partial or in whole), and in one information to OLAF.

Another 109 cases concerned parliamentary assistance allowances (budget line 4220), of which 96 resulted in partial or full recovery, 2 in refusals and 1 was communicated to OLAF.

There were also 8 cases which concerned the Member's general expenditure allowance (budget line 1006), of which 4 resulted in partial or full recovery.

Finally, 1 case concerned the Members 'survivors' pension (budget line 1032), which resulted in recovery and communication to OLAF.

The data provided hereafter refer to ex-ante or ex-post controls when it follows external information triggering suspicion of irregularities. Investigations started in 2015 but still ongoing are not included in these figures.

105. *Quel est le bilan d'utilisation de l'e- Portal en 2015 ?*

In 2015, 219 MEP were trained users of the e-Portal application and 162 Accredited Parliamentary Assistants had access to their MEP's files with the power of attorney. The administration made 214 individual presentations to Members and 31 presentations to assistants. A weekly tailor-made class-room training was given to interested Members and assistants.

In 2015, in total 2 807 requests have been made through the e-Portal, whereof:

- 2 237 requests were made for reimbursement of Members' travel and subsistence expenses;
- 221 requests were made on parliamentary assistance allowance;
- 27 requests were made on social entitlements of Members;
- 322 requests were made on the Financial Declaration and the CV of the MEPs.

Furthermore, the e-Portal gives the Members the possibility to consult the data and balances of their allowances, print certificates and monitor the treatment of their introduced requests. In total, 13 832 data consultations have been made in 2015, whereof:

- 4 857 concerned the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses;
- 7 197 concerned the Parliamentary assistance;
- 955 concerned the social rights;
- 543 concerned the MEPs Professional training and
- 280 concerned the activities related to CV and Financial declarations.

In 2017, a new version with a new graphical user interface will be launched to extend the use of e-Portal and make it even easier for Members to introduce their requests. It shall also grant access for mobile devices. Additionally, new features are also scheduled for the near future such as a module for Assistant's missions as well as remote access for paying agents and local assistants.

106. *Wishes to be informed whether basic data protection principles have been respected when more than a dozen administrative employees have unrestricted access to data concerning medical history including family background, travel accounts, service provider and co-payments. What measures have been taken to ensure overall transparency whilst allowing only partial access to data concerning individual employees? How can the administration ensure that assistants and deputies are aware who had access and when to personal and private data?*

The administration applies fully the rules in force concerning the protection of Members' data relating to their financial and social entitlements as well as for the protection of the data of their assistants. All EP staff dealing with Members' financial matters are statutory staff and therefore bound by the provision protecting the confidentiality of information received in the line of duty, namely Article 17 of the Staff Regulations.

The administration took care to restrict access to Members' Portal to the minimum number of people necessary to allow the proper running of the application. Furthermore, data access within the application is segmented by functional domain, so that officials only have access to data which is strictly necessary to carry out their tasks. Access to Members' Portal is properly logged: information on who accessed the application, at what time, and for what purpose, is securely registered and can be used for reporting purposes upon request.

The EP data protection officer confirmed that all IT applications in place at DG Finance and the treatment of data thereof fully complies in particular with Regulation (EC) 45/2001.

In addition, in the framework of compliance with Parliament's Internal control standards on ethics and integrity, staff was reminded of the obligations governing personal conduct, stemming inter alia from the Staff Regulation, the Financial Regulation, Regulation (EC) 45/2001, and the Code of conduct of Parliament's staff. They are of particular relevance indeed when dealing with Members and assistants' files, and cover key requirements such as access rights, personal data protection, confidentiality, and professional secrecy.

In 2016 Parliaments administration has considerably limited access of IT staff to the Members' Portal ensuring that only a minimum number of staff which is absolutely necessary to guarantee the running of the programme has access to it.

107. *What is the average length of time between MEPs notifying DG Fins about new local assistant contracts and their first salary payment being made? When local assistants are not paid after their first (and sometimes second) month(s) of work, what are the main reasons for this? What can be done to simplify this process in order to prevent such delays?*

According to Article 65(2) of the Implementing Measures for the Statute for Members (IMMS), all payment instructions linked to expenses incurred with local assistant contracts and received up to the 25th of the preceding month shall be processed by the EP administration for a payment on the 15th day of the following month to the bank account of the paying agent. Therefore, provided that such instructions and contracts are in line with all relevant rules, the maximum possible payment time is approximately 51 days (from the 26th of the previous month to the 15th of the following month). After receiving the payment, it is underlined that it is the paying agent's responsibility to pay the net salary into the employee's bank account.

In 2015, for 98.1% of the 1 437 new local employee contracts, the first payment (by the Parliament into paying agent's bank account) was made within the allowed timeframe, i.e. between 0 and 51 days. The situation for service provider contracts differs as the first payment is not made on the basis of the submission of a copy of the contract but following the submission of the first invoice.

According to the rules in force in 2015, and confirmed after the revision of IMMS rules in 2016, applications for new employment contracts should have been submitted not later than 30 days after the start date of the contract. This flexibility is often used by Members. In 2015, 62.6% of all new local employee contracts were submitted after the contract has started. In order to reduce the risk of delayed payment due to late delivery of contracts by Members, it is recommended to submit the applications and contracts before the actual starting date of the contract. This will allow both, the administration and the Members, to make in due time any necessary adjustments and corrections to the file, in order to allow for the swiftest possible payment.

In addition, when Members recruit assistants already involved in one or several side activities, the EP administration must analyse the risk of potential conflicts of interests or incompatibilities. To facilitate this analysis, the EP administration has developed guidance documents and is about to revamp the intranet website. For example, Members and their assistants are invited to always consult the Quick Tips section, which can be found on the first page of each important form (PDF) on the Intranet. The creation of a new common front desk for all financial and social entitlements, the MEPs' Portal, also helps Members to get more familiar with the new requirements.

108. *Is there a further review planned on the use of the BCD travel agency? Can the Secretary General provide an update on the traveller engagement project which has been under discussion between the EP administration and BCD?*

The current framework contract runs until the end of 2017 with the possibility of renewing it until the end of 2018. The contractor has been selected through an open call for tender (inter-institutional procedure). The preparation for the new call for tender will be launched during 2017.

The traveller engagement project has led to improvements in the internal cooperation between the Travel Organisation Service within the administration and the Travel Agency to ensure a more personalised service to passengers and to enhance the perception of BCD Travel:

- Internal procedures have been reviewed, simplified and harmonised (e.g. drafting manuals and guidelines), in compliance with standing rules and regulations, with the view to finding efficiency gains;
- Oral and written communication with passengers is being improved, with the drafting of standard messages and forms.

In addition to this, practical arrangements have also been applied:

- Increasing the number of agents at BCD implants following increased number of transactions.
- Restructuring the establishment plan of BCD implant office by creating specialised teams for reservations for Members, reservations for transport and reservations for hotels, each team headed by a team leader.
- Change of manager and deputy manager of the implant at EP premises.
- In-depth refurbishment/ modernising of BCD offices including general signage for the Travel Agency in Brussels and Strasbourg.

109. *How are the Thalys fares for part-sessions negotiated? What is the annual cost of Thalys and what is the rate of use? What is the explanation for the high fares, in the light of those currently being charged by the Belgian and French national rail companies for the two direct daily services they recently introduced? Is the chartered train really cost-effective, given the average market fare for other high-speed trains offering the same type of service?*

At the EP's request, the travel agency concluded with the Thalys railway company a contract for the charter of two high-speed trains covering the Brussels-Strasbourg-Brussels route, one consisting of two trainsets and the other consisting of one trainset. Thalys has a de facto monopoly, as it was the only company which was in a position to offer the EP a charter contract. Thalys' competitors Deutsche Bahn and SNCF were contacted several times but showed no interest in this service contract.

The fare charged by Thalys is EUR 135 per journey in 2015. TGV fares may be up to EUR 183. The contract also covers an additional service in the form of ticket and ID checks at the door of the train, a further security measure for our passengers. The total cost in 2015 was EUR 3 358 264.

The Thalys trains are always almost completely (more than 90% full). Unlike normal trains, the Thalys trains are full only in one direction: on Mondays the trains return empty from Strasbourg to Brussels and on Thursdays they travel empty from Brussels to Strasbourg.

Alternatives to the chartered train have been explored (normal train via Luxembourg and TGV via Paris) and do not seem to meet the EP's needs, in view of the timetables and the difficulty of accommodating some 1100 passengers all travelling at the same time for professional reasons. The new direct public service, for example, which was introduced in 2016, consists of a single trainset (374 places) and leaves Brussels for Strasbourg at 7.17, i.e. almost two hours before Parliament's chartered train.

110. *What was the cost in 2015 for covering all flight travel for Members? What was the percentage of flights done in economy class and on business class? What is the percentage of MEPs using business class/economy class during their flight travels? What were the equivalent figures for the flight travel of staff?*

The total costs of flight travel reimbursed in 2015 by the European Parliament to Members amounted to EUR 22 694 600. A proportion of 48% of the plane tickets reimbursed are economy class and 52% business class.

The total costs of flight travel reimbursed in 2015 by the European Parliament to staff amounted to EUR 2 869 239. A proportion of 88% of the plane tickets reimbursed are economy class and 12% business class.

111. *How many kilometres by Members' car have been repaid? What kind of certification has been provided to support these reimbursements?*

For ordinary travels, a total distance of 4 546 000 km have been declared and reimbursed. Concerning travels in the Member state, a distance of 6 819 000 km have been reimbursed. The global average by Member is 15 133 km.

For journeys by car, Members have to submit a declaration stating the registration number of the car used for the journey, the distance covered and the mileage at the places of departure and arrival. In the case of journeys between two of Parliament's places of work (e.g. Brussels and Strasbourg) or journeys of over 800 km, the declaration should be accompanied by supporting documents obtained during the journey which make it possible to determine the route and the fact that the journey was made on the declared date (for example, a fuel purchase receipt or motorway toll slip). Documents issued at the places of departure or arrival or within 50 km of those places cannot be taken into account. Reimbursement is, however, restricted to a maximum of 1 000 km per journey.

112. Compared with 2014, revenue from investments or loans granted, bank and other interest dropped by 51%. This can of course partly be explained by the current low interest rates context. Which measures can be taken to avoid further decreases? What was the average rate of return in respect of the investments and loans granted?

The EP has three major current bank accounts for executing the payments. These current accounts are replenished monthly by the European Commission to cover the payments of the coming month. The average monthly replenishment in 2015 was EUR 132 Mio.

The overnight market rate had negative rates first in August 2014 and has been negative since April 2015. However, the current contracts with the three major banks have guaranteed a modest interest income to the EP. The EP has been able to negotiate not to pay negative interest on any major bank account.

The new open tender procedure was carried out in 2016 and the subsequent new contracts (with two banks) will enter into force on 1 January 2017.

The EP has no investments or loans granted.

113. How does the EP select its banks for accounts and payments? Are there plans to set up a policy giving priority to those financial institutions who have demonstrated their excellence in respect of corporate social responsibility? If not, why not?

According to the Rules of Application of the Financial Regulation (article 58), the accounting officer shall launch a competitive tendering for financial institutions at least every five years. This requirement was complied with by the EP through an open tender procedure which was carried out during 2016, and which resulted in the conclusion of new contracts with two banks. These contracts will enter into force the 1 January 2017.

According to the Financial Regulation (Article 68), the accounting officer is responsible for the treasury management and for the safeguarding of the cash and cash equivalent. In this respect, the most important criteria for the selection of the financial institution is the financial stability and the rating of the bank. The corporate social responsibility is taken into account in the exclusion criteria and any financial institution not fulfilling the minimum criteria will be eliminated from the tender procedure.

In the recently concluded open tender procedure, the EP was seeking three major banks for execution of the payments but only two offers were received due to the condition that the EP does not accept to pay negative interest.

114. Which sums were paid in 2015 from the EP budget to a) Italian b) French former Members for pensions related to their European mandate pre 2009? How many a) Italian b) French former Members get such a pension from the EP budget?

In 2015, the European Parliament paid old-age pensions for European mandates exercised before July 2009 totalling EUR 3 474 787 to former Members elected in France and EUR 7 157 952 to former Members elected in Italy.

As of 31 December 2015, the beneficiaries of these pensions included 192 French beneficiaries and 198 Italian beneficiaries (figures include 32 survivors -widows and orphans- for France, and 46 survivors for Italy, and their pensions).

It should be noted that the average old-age pension is higher for former Italian Members than for the French beneficiaries, due to the existence in France of a mandatory national pension which is deducted from the pension paid by the European Parliament.

115. *What was the amount of pensions paid in 2015 to Members who made only one term? What is the amount paid to Members who made two or more legislatures?*

Until 13 July 2014, the pensions of retired Members were the responsibility of their respective Member States (most receive pensions similar to those of Members of National Parliament). In addition, the rules related to the Payment of Expenses and Allowances to Members foresaw a voluntary pension scheme (entitlements were calculated according to the contributions made by the Member to the scheme and could differ from the duration of Members' mandate) and a complementary pension scheme for Italian and French Members (due to the fact that they had less rights compared to Members of National Parliament).

In 2009, the Statute for Members entered into force and presently the only full term for which a former Member can claim an old-age pension from Parliament is the 7th legislative term. The duration of this term was from 14 July 2009 to 1 July 2014 (4 full years and 11 full months). Article 14(2) of the Statute for Members stipulates that the pension "shall be, for each full year's exercise of a mandate, 3.5% of the salary [...] and one twelfth thereof for each further full month". Accordingly, Members who had held a European mandate throughout the 7th legislature receive a monthly pension of 17.21% of the salary equalling EUR 1 380 in 2015 (EUR 1 413 as of 1 July 2015 due to the indexation of 2.4% with effect from this date).

It is not possible to give a pension amount for Members who have served two or more terms because presently no Member has served two full terms under the Statute for Members. As mentioned above, for Members who have served terms before July 2009 the main responsibility for the payment of pensions lays with Members States and Parliament administration has no information about the amounts of those pensions.

116. According to the latest figures the actuarial deficit of the voluntary pension fund amounted to 64% of the actuarial commitment. This seems to be a major deviation from the general rules for pension funds, contained in the IORP-directive. How do you explain this difference? Are any attempts made to increase the coverage ratio, for example, by adjusting either the contributions or the payments? Is it possible to provide for special measures for future beneficiaries? Even if insolvency of the funds is not likely to occur before 2024, is it not recommendable to provide for contingencies? Is it justified that the Parliament's budget is fully responsible in this regard?

The voluntary pension fund was set up by a decision of Parliament's Bureau as a separate legal entity. The fund is a non-profit organisation legally resident in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg ("Fonds de pension des députés au Parlement européen asbl", hereafter "the ASBL") which collects contributions and invests these through a special investment vehicle of which the ASBL is the sole shareholder. The management of investments as well as all legal compliance obligations of the fund are the responsibility of the ASBL.

Contribution payments to the fund ended in July 2014. Since July 2009, Article 27(3) of the Statute for Members has prohibited the acquisition of new rights or future entitlements for Members who receive the salary pursuant to Article 10 of the Statute. After July 2009, only a few re-elected Members who were already members of the fund and who opted for the national system in respect of the salary, transitional allowance and pensions under Article 25 of the Statute, continued to contribute to the fund. The last of these Members left Parliament in July 2014.

Article 27(2) of the Statute for Members stipulates that "Acquired rights and future entitlements [of the voluntary pension fund] shall be maintained in full." However, Parliament's Bureau is competent to change the rules applicable to the additional voluntary pension scheme as long as certain general principles are respected, such as the protection of rights acquired, the principle of proportionality, legal certainty and protection of legitimate expectations.

Parliament's Bureau decided on 1 April 2009 that "Parliament would assume its legal responsibility to guarantee the right of members of the scheme to the additional pension which could be retained after exhaustion of the Pension Fund". The exact means by which the pension rights will be guaranteed have not been explicitly decided yet.

The same decision by the Bureau has introduced three elements which are reducing the charge of the pension scheme. It is to be noted that all court cases against the 2009 Bureau decision have been won by Parliament.

117. *Were any irregularities reported in respect of the use of grants attribute to European political parties and foundations? What type of irregularities were found and which corrective measures have been taken? Have there been additional checks by the EP to the audits already performed by the European parties and foundations external auditor? If so, what was the nature of these checks?*

Article 9(3) of the Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003³⁰ states that the control of funding for the European political parties and foundations shall be exercised in accordance with the Financial Regulation and its implementing provisions. “Control shall also be exercised on the basis of annual certification by an external and independent audit.”

The Bureau Decision of 29 March 2004³¹ details in Article 6(3) the elements of the final report to be send by the beneficiaries by 15 May and at the latest by 30 June following the end of the financial year. Part of the final report is the “report of an external audit of the beneficiaries’ accounts carried out by an independent body or expert authorised under national law to audit accounts and appointed by Parliament for all parties and foundations.” Paragraph 4 of Article 6 details the elements, which need to be certified by the external auditor, and stipulates that the “auditor shall be mandated by Parliament, subject to the tender procedures in force under the Financial Regulation. The auditor’s fees shall be paid by Parliament.”

For each grant procedure, subsequently to the audit conducted by the external auditor a verification of the final reports is done by the competent services of the European Parliament (‘EP services’). This verification is based, on the one hand, on the audit reports (report on the annual accounts) and on additional indications given by the external auditor. The auditor decides if the audit report includes an unqualified or a qualified opinion. In addition to the opinion, if deemed necessary, the auditor includes emphasis of certain matters.

The EP services double-check and evaluate all findings, which are communicated by the external auditors. Furthermore to this audit work, the EP services evaluate the final reports of the beneficiaries, including a substantial analysis of the general ledgers of all beneficiaries which are requested in addition to the final reports by the services. The verification process is based on sample checks by the EP services, following a risk analysis, taking into account the performance of the beneficiaries over the past years. The samples are selected, based on indicators such as: the value of single transactions, the number of transactions involving the same service provider or consultant, knowledge about specific issues with individual service provider or consultants, incoherencies in the general ledger, divergences between the final budget and the provisional budget, information received from the beneficiaries, or from third parties, or from public sources etc. All supporting documents related to the selected samples are requested and analysed. The verification is usually restricted to a desk review.

³⁰ Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 on the regulations governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding (amended on 18 December 2007)

³¹ Decision of the Bureau of the European Parliament of 29 March 2004 laying down the procedures for implementing Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 on the regulations governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding (last amended on 7 October 2015).

In cases of serious issues detected during the desk review, the authorising officer by delegation may require the services to conduct ad-hoc on the spot audit visits, in order to analyse additional elements and to confront the beneficiaries with preliminary findings.

For the 2015 financial year, grants were awarded to 15 European political parties and to 15 European political foundations amounting to a total budget of EUR 43 974 579. During the control of the 2015 financial exercise, it was discovered that one European political party did not fulfil any more the condition to be represented in at least seven EU Member States. According to the rules, this implied that the European Parliament had to terminate the grant award decision as regards this party and its affiliated foundation. Parliament's Bureau started a termination procedure on 23 November 2015 in accordance with Article II.9.3 of the Grant Award Decision (Annex 2a to the abovementioned Bureau Decision of 29 March 2004). The termination procedure was finalised, as confirmed by the Bureau on 18 January 2016. Therefore, an anticipated closure of 2015 accounts was conducted for those two organisations which, apart from the usual report of the external auditor and the desk review through EP services, included an exceptional on-the-spot audit by the services. The final reports of the two organisations were approved by the Bureau on 9 May 2016 which decided that a considerable part of the expenditure of the two organisations had to be re-classified from eligible to non-eligible expenditure. The irregularities leading to this re-classification concerned:

- direct or indirect financing for a national political party, prohibited by Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003
- financing of a referendum campaign, prohibited by Article 8(4) of Regulation 2004/2003 for parties and by Article 4(6) of Regulation 2004/2003 for foundations
- reckless and excessive expenditure considered as non-eligible according to Article II.11.3 of the Grant Award Decision

The corrective measures consisted in the re-classification of the prohibited costs from eligible to non-eligible expenditure, which in the case of the party caused the reduction of the grant from EUR 425 460 to EUR 43 689 and an amount to be re-covered of EUR 296 679. In the case of the foundation, the grant was reduced from EUR 249 331 to EUR 93 663 and a balance of EUR 105 802 had to be recovered. Subsequent to a partial reimbursement of the amounts due, both organisations requested the competent national authorities to liquidate their associations. The European Parliament was informed on 10 October 2016 and has undertaken the necessary steps to safeguard its rights during the liquidation proceedings.

For the other beneficiaries, the accounts and the final reports were examined by the external auditor and by EP services following the procedure outlined above. For 26 beneficiaries, the final reports were approved by the Bureau on 12 September 2016.

For these 13 parties and 13 foundations, the auditor delivered 25 audit reports with unqualified opinion (of which 8 with emphasis of matter) and one with a qualified opinion.

The qualified opinion of the external auditor concerned the financing of an activity by another European political party. Due to an alleged risk of qualification of this activity as “indirect financing of a national party”, the auditors stated that they could not obtain sufficient and objective evidence that the activity was eligible for EU funding. Such indirect financing is forbidden, pursuant to Article 7(1) of Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003. This irregularity was further examined by the EP services and the Bureau decided to re-classify the involved costs of EUR 63 853 from eligible to non-eligible expenditure. Moreover, due to the additionally reduced possibility to carry over part of the grant to 2016, this re-classification diminished the final grant of the party by EUR 120 810.

During their control activities with regard to the 2015 closing, EP services discovered that one foundation had contracted companies of its own President as service providers for an amount of EUR 43 944 representing more than 22% of the foundation’s total expenditure. This practice involves a conflict of interest based on an economic interest. As corrective measure, the amount was re-classified from eligible to non-eligible expenditure by the Bureau, which resulted in a recovery order of EUR 37 788. The foundation has decided to file for bankruptcy with the competent national authorities and informed the European Parliament on 12 October 2016. Since then, the European Parliament has undertaken first steps in the termination procedure in respect of the 2016 grant to the foundation.

For two beneficiaries, one European party and its affiliated foundation, several irregularities were discovered which led to the auditor’s qualified opinion for the party in question and to an audit report with unqualified opinion for the foundation in question. Both reports include an emphasis of matter concerning the problem of the dependency on the EU funding in continuing the activities. As a result, the assumption of “going concern” may be put in question.

The auditor delivered a qualified opinion for the party as he could not obtain sufficient and objective evidence on the eligibility for an amount of EUR 157 935 due to possible infringement of the prohibition of direct and indirect financing of a national party and of the prohibition to finance referenda campaigns. For an additional amount of EUR 36 300, the auditor identified a conflict of interest with one supplier, which could be considered as non-compliant.

Due to the considerable amount of doubtful expenditure, the examination of the final reports of the party in question and of its affiliated foundation could not be finalised in time for the decision of the Bureau on the other 26 beneficiaries and had to be postponed until the meeting of the Bureau of 21 November 2016.

Based on the report of the external auditor and the extensive examinations by the EP services during several months, including on-the-spot audit visits of the services to the party and the foundation, the Bureau confirmed that both organisations made expenditure in 2015 which violates the prohibition of direct or indirect financing of national political parties and/or the prohibition to financing referenda campaigns. In the case of the party, the Bureau found the statement of the auditor justified that the contractual relation with one supplier has to be classified as a prohibited conflict of interest for family and economic reasons.

For these reasons, the Bureau re-classified an amount of EUR 500 615 of the expenditure of the party and of EUR 33 863 of the foundation from eligible to non-eligible as corrective measures. Resulting from this decision, the party in question closes the financial exercise 2015 with an account loss of EUR 402 766.

Subsequent to the decision of the Bureau of 21 November 2016 on the 2015 closure of both the concerned party and the foundation allegations were raised in public as regards several practices regarding the collection of donations in order to increase the foundation's own resources. Serious concerns as to the qualification of these donations as own resources (a criterion that needs to be established in order to qualify for funding by the European Parliament) were established as additional checks were carried out and further information was gathered from public sources. It is also doubtful whether the related expenses paid to the donors or to companies with close links to the donors can be considered as eligible expenditure.

118. *Why was no framework contract in place in 2015 for the overhaul of the in-house cable television system as part of the management and maintenance of Parliament's IT infrastructure? Could this not have been foreseen and what were the consequences of this temporary gap, apart from a drop in expenditure by 27%?*

The equipment used in the current system has become obsolete since several years. It is not possible to purchase extensions or spare parts, and the equipment does no longer evolve. In general, this obsolescence makes it rather difficult to find contractors for proper maintenance of the system.

The renewal of Parliament's television distribution system was the subject of an open call of tender procedure launched already in April 2011 (TELSIS, Lot 3). Only one offer was received, which did not satisfy requirements and the procedure was thus declared unfruitful in July 2012. Other lots of the same procedure were the subject of an appeal to the European Court of Justice in 2012. Following this appeal, the tender documents of all lots have been thoroughly revised. Due to the complexity of the procedure, the revised documents were not available before August 2015, when the tender procedure was re-launched. This time, four tenderers made an offer. All four offers were rejected in April 2016 due to non-conformity with the technical requirements. Since November 2016, a competitive procedure with negotiation is going on with those four entities, with a view to acquire the necessary equipment and services.

The delay has consequences for the deployment of new services, and for the reliability of the current service. Given the above-mentioned obsolescence of the current TV infrastructure, quality improvements such as High Definition TV or extensions of the current TV distribution service to new buildings are not possible. As spare parts for the current TV system can no longer be purchased, the breakdown of certain equipment may lead to a degradation of the level of service.

It is expected that the on-going call for tender procedure would allow the signature of a contract in the first months of 2017 and thus the implementation of a leading edge solution, with first results before the end of 2017.

119. *According to the Secretary-General's briefing on the 2014 discharge resolution it would be possible for Members who wish to do so, to publish their diaries, and in particular their meetings with lobbyists on the EP's website. However when a Member filed such a request, DG ITEC stated that this was not possible, as this was a political matter that needed to be decided by the Bureau. Did the Bureau in the meantime took a decision on this?*

The President has set up a working group composed of five Vice-Presidents, which has analysed the display of information relating to the activities of Members on Parliament's website.

Parliament's administration also contributed to the working group and stands ready to provide the necessary technical facilities to implement the decision that might be taken by the political organs.

During the Bureau meeting of 24 October 2016, the Members of the Bureau had an exchange of views on the letter sent by Vice-President Ms McGUINNESS to the President on the display of information relating to the activities of Members on Parliament's website. The following recommendations were made in the letter to the President:

1. The European Parliament is atypical in calculating and publishing in a prominent way the numerical totals for the different types of activities undertaken by Members when compared with national parliaments. In the context of the planned update of MEP profile pages (referred to below), the focus on qualitative analysis can be enhanced, while quantitative analysis made less prominent.

2. Members' profile pages should include a short explanation on the nature and context of each of the activities listed, such as a link to the relevant Rule of Procedure. Where appropriate, further explanation could be included, such as the roles of rapporteurs, shadow rapporteurs and Members of the Bureau.

3. A distinction should be made between: on the one hand, the different activities of Members in drafting reports and opinions, including as a shadow, Motions for Resolutions (e.g. rules 123, 128, 170), Oral Questions (rule 128) and speeches in plenary debates; and, on the other hand, other political activities such as Written Declarations, Written Questions (rule 130) and individual Motions for Resolution (rule 133).

4. In respect of Written Declarations (rule 136) and individual Motions for Resolution (rule 133), a distinction should be made between those tabled and those which reach the necessary majority.

The above modifications could all be implemented in the context of the ongoing re-design and facelift of the MEP profile pages, and should be accompanied by a communication strategy so that they can be clearly explained (internally and externally), making clear that the Parliament attributes more importance to the qualitative work of MEPs rather than the quantitative.

The Bureau approved the modifications proposed and instructed the responsible services to implement them without any undue delay.

120. *Could the declarations of interests of on their personal webpages be made available in all working languages of the EU, or at least in English? Would it be possible to put all declarations in one single sheet, using open software?*

The creation of a multilingual database for Members' declarations of financial interests had already been suggested in the past. The assessment concluded that the project proposal would not be implemented, due to other projects having a higher priority or requiring less financial resources.

As for consolidating the declarations of all Members into a single sheet, one has to consider that each Member bears the sole responsibility for his/her own declaration, and subsequent amendments thereof and this is why the documents appear directly on the Member's individual page on Parliament's website. This setup enables any citizen to verify quickly the declaration of the Member of his/her interest, together with any previous declarations. Conversely, putting all the declarations, submitted by all the Members, in one single sheet, which would have to be updated when any single Member submits an update, might be rather confusing and time consuming.

121. *It will be possible for MEPs to publish their reports legislative footprint on a voluntary basis. Can you guarantee that this possibility will be clearly visible on the individual Members site on www.europarl.europa.eu? When will the report of the working group entrusted with the task of developing a tool which will give a more reliable insight into Members' parliamentary activities become available?*

Following the Bureau decision of 12 September 2016, there is now a model for a voluntary legislative footprint to be attached to legislative and non-legislative reports and opinions. This has been fully available from 1 November 2016 and committee secretariats have been asked to provide full support to Rapporteurs wishing to use the form. The footprint form is an annex to the report, which is published as usual on the committee webpages. Once the report is adopted it is also available on the Members' pages, under parliamentary activities. See the related Bureau notice for more information:

http://www.sib.ep.parl.union.eu/SIB/download.do?file=/Documents/01_Bureau/18_Communications/2016/01/01-2016_en.pdf

The proposals of the working group entrusted with the task of giving a more reliable insight into Members' parliamentary activities on the EP website were adopted by the Bureau in its meeting of 21 November 2016. The proposals will be progressively implemented as from 2017.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

122. How many security staff members were employed within the three places of work in 2015? What are the total costs? How many security staff became officials, in which grade, in 2015?

The security staff is composed of contractual agents in function group I (Article 3a of the Staff Regulation) and performs security, safety, planning and dispatching tasks. On 31 December 2015, 439 agents were in employment. Expenditure in 2015 related to those security staff amounted to EUR 16.1 Mio. In addition, 12 staff members became officials in 2015 in grade AST3.

123. Could you provide an evaluation of the budgetary impact of the internationalisation of the security service since its entry into force with respect to the three previous years?

The internalisation of the security services in Strasbourg and Brussels has been progressively implemented since 2013.

Two types of expenditure have to be distinguished: the amounts paid to external service provider companies and the expenditure on the salaries and allowances of security and safety agents.

| Year | Security services (item 2026) | Security and safety agents (item 1400) | Total |
|------|----------------------------------|---|-------|
| 2013 | 15,4 | 0,3 | 15,7 |
| 2014 | 10,4 | 9,0 | 19,4 |
| 2015 | 3,8 | 16,1 | 19,8 |

NB: the number of buildings to be secured increased substantially in this period.
Budget items quoted include other services and other staff too, the figures relate specifically to security related expenditure.

124. DG SAFE published a vacancy note "... seeking eleven temporary agents to ensure the management and implementation of all appropriate actions related to the close protection of the President of the European Parliament..." Could you please provide us with further information on a) the estimated total costs for those temporary agents b) the period of these contracts c) who is currently in charge of these tasks?

For this operation, already existing permanent posts were just transformed into temporary posts of the same grade, without any additional budget needs. As a reference, the average annual salary, including allowances, for staff in grade AST3 was approximately EUR 52 600 in 2015.

The posts fall under the Article 2a of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union and the contracts may be terminated according to article 47 or 48 of those rules. The length of the contracts would vary according to the needs. Close protection is a new activity.

125. *Requests a detailed explanation from the Parliament with regard to the objectives and costs (including the costs for securing the two entrances of the ASP building) for improving security measures in the buildings and how this has influenced protection levels in the EP after the increased higher alert levels?*

The reinforcement of the various entrances of Parliament's buildings in the three places of work was requested by the Bureau at its meeting of 20 October 2014. A concept of alterations to entrances and reorganisation of control zones was subsequently established and then approved by the President and the three responsible Vice-Presidents on 10 March 2015.

In Brussels, the cost of works for securing the two entrances of the Spinelli building (sliding doors and railing shutters) is EUR 8.16 Mio. To improve the security installations of the House of Europe in Berlin, in particular for the reception area, Parliament invested EUR 0.15 Mio.

In close cooperation with DG SAFE and on the advice of its experts, DG INLO has drawn up a security design plan including the concept of security applied in Parliament's central buildings in Brussels and laying down the necessary additional security measures. These measures include a variety of work to improve perimeters of buildings and their façades, and a new structure and more stringent specifications for future entrance zones. The Bureau took a decision on these last measures at its meeting of 12 December 2016.

For security reasons not all measures can be disclosed in detail in a public document and for that reason, the Secretary General has proposed to disclose detailed information only to a restricted group of Members of the Committee on Budgets and Vice-Presidents following security issues with in a way that guarantees confidentiality. It has to be noticed that Parliament voted to invest in 2017 47,6 Mio. Euro in its security in order to make the institution fit for the new security requirements adapted to the current level of threat.

126. *Wishes to know which measures (including risk assessments and re-evaluations of the contingency plans for emergency situations) were taken during 2015 in order to render the EP more secure in particular for missions between the different sites of the institutions?*

Following the terrorist attacks, the President decided at several occasions to adjust the state of alert applicable to Parliament's premises, according to the prevailing circumstances.

In this context, a number of actions have been implemented:

- a) Meetings, events or exhibitions – taking into consideration the importance that Parliament gives to being an open and transparent institution, DG SAFE had to introduce additional measures to enable keeping up certain activities, such as meetings, events and exhibitions organised by Members on an individual basis, which now require extra checks to ascertain their compatibility with the increased security measures. Any request for a meeting, event or exhibition is now automatically referred to DG SAFE for an opinion.
- b) Entrances - all the entrances of the Parliament have been analysed and have gradually been renovated. From 2015, the works started with the reinforcement of the entrances to the Spinelli Building following in 2016 by the entrances of the directly connected buildings (Antall, Brandt, Atrium).
- c) Negotiations with Belgian State - very intensive exchanges took place with the Belgian authorities to secure the external perimeter of the EP. Together with the other institutions, a high-level group has been established. The result is the definition of a European perimeter secured by the Belgian force, the appointment of a Belgian representative common to all EU institutions and the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding for the security verification of all external staff working in the EP premises.
- d) Thalys - actions have been taken to reinforce the security on the Thalys charter to Strasbourg. In close co-operation with the Belgian and French police, risk analysis and checks are carried out before each session, in order to secure each journey.
- e) Communication to MEPs and staff - An ad hoc way of communicating has been implemented in cooperation with DG PERS and INLO, in order to inform the users of Parliament's buildings of the security measures taken according to the events. Urgent communications concerning security are sent by text message to the Secretaries-General of the Political Groups and to the senior and middle management in the administration. These persons are in turn responsible for informing their respective departments.

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| LEGAL SERVICE |
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127. Could you please list the three highest expenses for external lawyer's fees in 2015? What were the purposes of these costs?

| Law firm | Purpose | Expenditure |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|
| THIEFFRY | EP's representation in the three proceedings pending before the Tribunal de Grande Instance de Strasbourg, following the collapse of the hemicycle's ceiling in 2008. The representation by a lawyer is compulsory before national courts. | 137.277 |
| ALLEN & OVERY | Assisted and advised the EP in its difficult negotiations with the owner of the SQM building regarding delays and defects in the buildings works providing expertise in the field of Belgian real estate and fiscal law. | 122.334 |
| CASADO GARCIA | Legal costs to be paid in Civil Service Court cases in 2015. | 38.855 |

128. *The Parliament called in its 2014 discharge resolution for the alternative ways to foster CO2 offsetting. Have you been able to identify such alternative ways to foster CO2 Offsetting of the EP? Do you see for example the possibility of offsetting the travel of APAs as an option? Is the EP able to use all the resources available per year for CO2 offsetting effectively?*

On 7 October 2015, the Bureau revised its former decision of 12 September 2011 on CO₂ offsetting 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 limited to the financial means available under budget item 2390 (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.

The Bureau decision fostered Parliament's previous offsetting approach considerably since it allows Parliament to offset all carbon emissions which cannot be reduced any further and to become the first EU institution being 100 % carbon neutral.

Parliament's full carbon footprint includes the following seven emission categories: energy consumption in buildings, leakages of refrigerant fluids from air conditioning equipment and fridges, transport of goods, transport of persons, purchase of supplies and services, waste and fixed assets. The emissions from transport of persons include also emissions from the travel of APAs.

In 2016, Parliament's administration applied for the first time the new offsetting approach in its call for tenders. The procurement procedure will be finalised soon and a contract is due to be signed before the end of the year to offset 124 255 tonnes of CO₂ emissions from 2015.

Due to strong market volatility of prices for emission certificates in the field of offsetting of CO₂ emissions, expenditure under budget item 2390 was lower than the available budget in 2016. The situation can change in the future, however, depending of the evolution of prices for emission certificates and the availability of suitable projects.

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| 129. <i>Could it be explained how the EP Internal Auditor's programme of work is established and the criteria to decide which audit or consulting work will be carried out?</i> |
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In accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors, the Internal Auditor must establish a risk-based plan to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity, consistent with the organisation's goals. For this purpose, he draws up each annual work programme on the basis of a systematic, global risk assessment of the entire organisation of the European Parliament.

The process of building each work programme comprises the following sequential steps:

- Identifying the institution's 'auditable entities' and defining the 'audit universe'
- Carrying out a macro risk assessment of the organisation, in three distinct phases: risk identification, risk measurement and risk prioritisation
- Applying the results of the macro risk assessment to the audit universe, in order to select audits for the annual work programme and allocate the available internal audit resources. Six risk factors are used to measure risk in each auditable entity and thereby to prioritise audits:
 - Quality of the control environment and control activities of each auditable entity
 - Impact of changes in, and the complexity of, the applicable regulatory framework
 - Impact of changes in the auditable entity's organisation and in its operational environment
 - Complexity and/or volume of the auditable entity's operations
 - Time since the auditable entities were last audited by the IAS or by the Court of Auditors, taking into account the scope of those audits and the Court's plans
 - Size of the annual budget of the auditable entities.

Internal Audit incorporates into the risk analysis the extensive information on control activities and other risk responses in all auditable entities, which is gathered, for example, in the audits carried out, in the review of departmental activity reports and other relevant documentation, and in systematic interviews held with each of the Directors-General, in order to discuss their objectives for the coming year, their perception of risks to those objectives, and any new areas of concern that could affect the development of the risk-based audit plan and/or on the rating of risks within their respective Directorates-General. At these meetings, the Internal Auditor also asks for the DGs' possible needs for consulting services. He may then allocate a limited proportion of available resources to consulting assignments in the annual work programme.

In accordance with the provisions of the Financial Regulation, the Internal Auditor exercises his audit functions in full independence and may not be given any instructions nor be restricted in any way as regards the performance of those functions.