

Annual Activity Report

2016

DG EXPO

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0. BUDGETARY IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

			DG EXPO	
Code	Appropriation type	Type de crédits	EUR ou %	Formule
	Appropriations of 2016	Crédits 2016		
A	Initial appropriations	Crédits initiaux	3.535.600,00	
B	Final appropriations	Crédits finaux	2.383.287,00	
C	Commitments	Engagements	1746.369,41	
D	Commitments in % of final appropriations	Engagements en % des crédits finaux	73%	D=C/B
E	Payments	Paiements	1065.381,82	
F	Payments in % of commitments	Paiements en % des engagements	61%	F=E/C
G	Cancellations of 2016 final appropriations	Annulations de crédits finaux 2016	636.917,59	G=B-C-K
H	Cancellations appropriations in % of final appropriations	Annulations en % des crédits finaux	27%	H=G/B
	Appropriations carried forward from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés de 2016 à 2017		
I	Automatic carryforwards from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	680.987,59	I=C-E
J	Automatic carryforwards from 2016 to 2017 in % of commitments	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017 en % des engagements	39%	J=I/C
K	Non-automatic carryforwards from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	0,00	
L	Non-automatic carryforwards from 2016 to 2017 in % of final appropriations	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017 en % des crédits finaux	0%	L=K/B
	Appropriations carried over from 2015 to 2016	Crédits reportés de 2015 à 2016		
M	Automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	876.447,59	
N	Payments against automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Paiements sur crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	692.520,56	
O	Payments against automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016 in % of automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Paiements sur crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016 en % des crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	79%	O=N/M
P	Cancellations of automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Annulations de crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	183.927,03	P=M-N
Q	Cancellations of automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016 in % of automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Annulations de crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016 en % des crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	21%	Q=P/M
R	Non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	0,00	
S	Payments of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Paiements sur crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016		
T	Payments against non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016 in % of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Paiements sur crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016 en % des crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016		T=S/R
U	Cancellations of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Annulations de crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016		U=R-S
V	Cancellations of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016 in % of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Annulations de crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016 en % des crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016		V=U/R
	Assigned revenue in 2016	Recettes affectées 2016		
W	Appropriations from assigned revenue in 2016 (current)	Crédits de dépenses spécifiques sur recettes affectées courants 2016	0,00	
X	Assigned revenue carried over to 2016	Crédits de dépenses spécifiques sur recettes affectées reportés à 2016	0,00	
Y	Balance of commitments on assigned revenue carried over to 2016	Solde des engagements reportés à 2016 sur crédits de dépenses spécifiques sur recettes affectées	0,00	
Z	Payments in 2016 against appropriations from assigned revenue (current and carried-over)	Paiements sur crédits de recettes affectées 2016 (courants et reportés)	0,00	

1. OBJECTIVES

1.1. Objectives of the directorate-general

Summary of the objectives of the Directorate-General for External Policies for 2016.

1. Cross-cutting objectives related to DG EXPO's Strategic Execution Framework - all units - to implement, if confirmed, the Parliamentary Project Portfolio (PPP) projects of which DG EXPO is a sponsor; to monitor and, when opportune, to contribute more effectively to all other projects that could impact in the work of DG EXPO;

- to actively promote horizontal cooperation between units, including through collaborative work on key documents or missions, through the sharing of documents and the invitation to meetings on a "need to know" basis; to also ensure that all cross-DG project teams and inter-service groups established in DG EXPO have a clear added-value and, when appropriate, limit their number, staff involvement and/or agenda items to maximise resources (staff time);
- to implement the administrative agreements reached with the EEAS on the assistance to EP missions and on the sharing of political reporting.

2. Objectives related to the Directorate-General's core business to provide assistance and expertise to the relevant political bodies.

2.1 Committee and sub-committee secretariats

- to further develop the assistance and expertise provided to committees, their Chair and Rapporteurs with a view to increasing the efficiency, oversight role and overall impact of the EP, notably in the legislative, budgetary and scrutiny fields;

- to alert, assist and provide follow-up to the political bodies so that they can hold the other institutions and the EEAS to account based on the commitments they made, including during the hearing process, especially regarding access to classified and non-classified information including those related to international agreements;

2.2 Delegation secretariats

- to further develop the assistance and expertise provided to interparliamentary delegations and their chair and to the multilateral assemblies, with a view to increasing the efficiency, oversight role and overall impact of the EP, notably in the field of scrutiny and of the delegations' input into the legislative cycle;

- to assess and, when appropriate improve the methodology ("reporting sheets") for delegations to systematically carry out scrutiny activities, including on the implementation of programmes and projects financed by the EU, the implementation of international agreements, the impact of EU legislation in 3rd countries and vice-versa, the follow-up given to recommendations by election observation missions and the human rights situation;

2.3 Policy Department

- to further increase the added value of the department's products by tailoring its output to Parliament's core business, adapting to the needs of the EP's political bodies and their political activities, especially those related to the legislative cycle, budgetary process and scrutiny activities, in close collaboration with the secretariats of the relevant bodies;

- to enhance cooperation with DG IPOL's policy departments and DG EPRS to seek complementarities and synergies in their work.

2.4 Democracy support units

- to further develop the assistance and expertise provided to the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) with a view to increasing the efficiency and overall impact of the European Parliament in the field of election observation, parliamentary capacity building, human rights action and mediation activities via the DEG's Comprehensive Democracy Support Approach (CDSA);

- to consolidate political ownership and enhance the visibility of the European Parliament's activities in terms of promoting democracy and human rights, in cooperation with other relevant services.

2.5 Resources directorate

- to allocate the DG's resources efficiently, optimise the management of these resources in the service of Parliament's bodies and promote, in cooperation with all EXPO units, an improved programming of the budget's implementation;

- to continue working with the other relevant services on the security of delegations on official journeys, particularly as regards the database IT project (see also under part 1), and the development of secure electronic communications.

1.2. Feasibility and risk assessment

Objective	Risk	Risk ranking	Actions
Security and safety of delegations on official journeys	Security of travelling delegations; health at stake; major incidents of violence, terrorism, political unrest, exposure to disease, natural catastrophes, war effect.	High	The Task Force "Security of EP External Missions" was created on 20 March 2015. During 2016 a software was developed (Mission Crisis Management software) to provide the Crisis Cell with all necessary data to manage crisis as speedily and effectively as possible.
Information and data security	Integrity and availability of EP information	Average	A secure reading room was organised in the SQM building to provide access to EU classified information to Members and staff. To develop a secure electronic communication system to receive EU classified information is one of the 2017-2019 projects of the relevant DGs.

Since part of DG EXPO's activities take place outside the three places of work, delegations and committees may be called upon to carry out their duties in high risk areas. Therefore, appropriations of EUR 250 000 were included in the 2016 budget for possible security needs.

A Country Security Assessment procedure is in force to ensure proper evaluation of the security situation in the countries planned to be visited in order to customise the security measures to the specific needs.

In addition, staff going on missions outside the three working places must attend security trainings before the mission and all staff involved in the administrative preparation of the delegations must take part in a specific training related to security file management.

2. ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS IN THE LIGHT OF THE OBJECTIVES - USE OF RESOURCES

2.1. Environment of the directorate-general

DG EXPO activities are closely linked to world developments and 2016 was a challenging year: the British referendum on EU membership, the Netherlands' referendum on the Ukraine Association Agreement, the attempted coup in Turkey, the results of the US elections, reactions throughout the EU to the refugee crisis, the situation in Syria, etc.

DG EXPO is in charge of providing support to 3 committees, 2 subcommittees, 4 multilateral assemblies, 44 standing delegations and the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG). The units in DG EXPO assist several political bodies dealing with external relations, covering relations with around 160 countries. DG EXPO staff is also organising election observation missions (maximum 12 per year, in 2016 there were 9).

DG EXPO is implementing during the budgetary years 2014-2019, a 5% establishment plan reduction across all grades as decided in the framework of the reform of the 2014 staff regulations for all Institutions and as a result of the compensation for the additional and unexpected creation of posts by the political groups in 2017 (while the 5% reduction is not applied by them). For a small DG as EXPO, such reduction has a strong impact and the working methods need to be consistently adapted.

For the DG as a whole, a number of positive changes have been introduced in 2016:

- Enhancement of flexible working methods by providing guidelines and encouraging the cooperation between units (one official working also for another unit on specific files);
- A secure reading room was created and is operational;
- The agreement with the EEAS on political reporting was implemented. As a result, more information is being received from the EU Delegations around the world;
- A pilot training session for the Crisis Cell was held, which will allow staff organising and participating in missions to have a more comprehensive information on the procedures to be followed when facing different type of crisis (natural disaster, political unrest, terrorist attack, etc.);
- A new tool for managing missions (Mission Crisis Management tool) was developed and tested.

2.2. Human resources of the DG

2.2.1. Establishment plan

	at 1.1.2015				at 1.1.2016			
	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Permanent posts	116	110	1	227	113	109	3	225
Temporary posts	3	2		5	3	1		4
Total	119	112	1	232	116	110	3	229

2.2.2. Staff numbers as at 31.12.2016

	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total	FTE
Officials	102	98	2	202	195
Temporary staff	6	4	0	10	10
- in temporary posts	2	1		3	3
- in permanent posts	4	3		7	7
- to offset part-time working				0	
Contractual agents				11	11
END				9	9
Agency staff					
Total				232	225

2.3. Budget implementation 2016

2.3.1. Initial and final appropriations

DG EXPO initial appropriations were EUR 3 535 600. There was a transfer, approved by the EP President, from DG EXPO budget line 3043 of EUR 100 000 to DG INLO, as well as EUR 1 052 313, transferred in the mopping-up exercises. Therefore, the final appropriations amount to EUR 2 383 287, representing 67% of the initial appropriations.

The main reasons for these surpluses are related with the nature of the activities developed by DG EXPO.

There were some events, committee missions, delegations and democracy support activities concerned, that were cancelled or postponed, for several reasons, ie, security reasons, political situation in the countries, political priorities changed, etc. Some missions were also less costly than initially foreseen, which allowed releasing some of the existing appropriations.

Concerning the external expertise budget, some requests, following the decision of the corresponding committee, were postponed due to political developments.

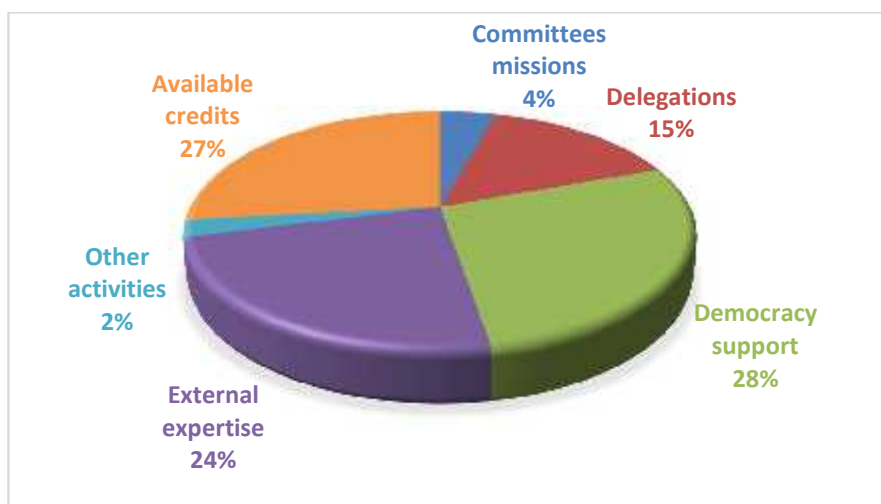
It is worth highlighting that DG EXPO has a very particular business with a significant degree of uncertainty, so there is always a significant difference between the initial and the final appropriations. There is a close follow up of the budget execution in order to be able to transfer the surpluses on time, and DG EXPO is continuously striving for improving its budget implementation.

2.3.2. Final appropriations and appropriations committed

In total 73% of the final budget was committed in 2016, corresponding to EUR 1 746 369; the level of execution is higher than in previous years (66% in 2015).

The interparliamentary delegations and assemblies used 57% of their annual budget and the committees used 64% of the appropriations allocated to committees' missions, mainly ad hoc delegations. In terms of external expertise, 85% of the appropriations have been committed. The level of implementation of the democracy support activities was around 77%.

The 2016 final appropriations were implemented as follows:



As usual, DG EXPO's budget execution is lower for the activities that involve delegations and committees' missions (budget lines 3042 and 3043), since there is a considerable degree of uncertainty on each mission and some issues are only known when the delegation is on the spot.

For each mission there are several DG involved and costs are shared between DG EXPO/IPOL, FINS (travel costs for MEPs), PERS (travel costs for staff), INTE (costs for interpreters). Only a small part of the costs of a mission is allocated to DG EXPO – miscellaneous expenditure (costs for local transport, security, booking of meeting rooms, business centre, etc).

DG EXPO's estimation of costs for each mission is always higher than the real costs, since it takes into consideration the maximum possible expenses to be incurred. The estimation of the costs depends on the draft programme for the mission (that can have last minute changes), on the risk assessment done, the political situation on the ground, the security measures that need to be put in place, margin for unexpected events, etc.

The real costs are always lower, but sometimes the liquidation of the surpluses take several months (supporting documents need to be collected and/or invoices have not been received, so payments are delayed). Such situations might affect the level of payments, implying the carryover of appropriations as well as a major impact in terms of budget execution.

Additionally, there are always unexpected events (ie. security issues, political situation) that lead to the cancelation/postponement of some activities, some of them at a very last moment, not making possible the release of the "unspent" budget.

Concerning external expertise, around 36% of the contracts were signed in the last two months of the year, which is an improvement compared to 2015. A couple of procedures were

launched late in the year, not allowing much time for submission of offers, and resulting in no award since no offers were received. Thus, the final appropriations available were not fully committed.

Some requests for external expertise were outside the framework contracts, due to its high level of specificity or for unavailability of the experts, for which procurement procedures were launched. In total 58% of the contracts signed for external expertise (studies, briefings and workshops) were under the existing framework contracts.

2.3.3. Appropriations committed and payments made

Payments made in the period from January to December 2016 correspond to 61% of the commitments made, being higher than in previous years.

Several aspects influence this situation, such as:

1. Considerable number of provisional commitments that are made due to the uncertainty linked to the nature of the activities performed by the different services (outgoing delegations, representation expenses, reimbursements, etc.) as well as the considerable number of imprest accounts (around one hundred in 2016).
2. Around one fourth of the appropriations are allocated to external expertise, where the time lag between commitments and payments is significant, since the execution of the contracts take several months and the payment is only done after formal acceptance of the services.
3. Some events took place at the end of the year, for which it was not possible to pay before the year-end.
4. There are also cases where several documents need to be collected for the reimbursement of expenses, being the time lag considerable between the date of the events and the final collection of the documents and thus delaying payments.

All these events have impact on the payment appropriations level, implying the carryover of the amounts to be paid.

2.3.4. Use of automatic and non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016

Out of the total commitments of EUR 876 448 which were carried over from 2015 to 2016, EUR 692 521 (79%) have been paid.

There were some extraordinary events having impact on the level of payments, like:

- Due to exceptional circumstances, it was not possible to pay the 2015 Sakharov prize;
- The Euromed Scola 2015 was cancelled a couple of days before the event for security reasons. There were contracts in place and expenses incurred due to the late cancellation. The amount of the carryover was not fully needed;
- Due to some quality issues in the performance of the contracts, in 3 studies, penalties were applied, therefore the total amounts initially contracted were not fully paid.

Additionally, there are also amounts of carryover for the reimbursement of travel expenses for presentations of the studies under the framework contracts. This situation is difficult to avoid since such costs are not known at the moment of the carryover and there are also cases where no presentation will take place or travel costs are not claimed.

2.3.5. Use of appropriations corresponding to assigned revenue

Not applicable.

2.4. Results achieved

Qualitative analysis of the activities carried out by DG EXPO in relation to the 2016 objectives:

2.4.1. Cross-cutting objectives related to DG EXPO's Strategic Execution Framework and the implementation of the Parliamentary Project Portfolio

The majority of the projects has been completed, like: the scrutiny of MFF financial programmes, the Parliamentary oversight on the implementation of the Union's trade agreements, enhancing the secretariat support in preparing and following up "urgency resolutions", facilitating access to confidential documents concerning trade negotiations through a secure IT tool.

Other projects are partly completed for instance increasing the dissemination of information related to the activities of Parliamentary bodies supported by DG EXPO services or developing secure electronic communication to enable EP to receive EU classified information. Both projects will be continued and adapted during the 2017-2019 period.

The project relating to implementation of the reforms of the EP external activities at secretariat level has led to improving the working methods in particular the cooperation between units. The structural changes of the project will be pursued as part of a new project.

2.4.2. Objectives related to the Directorate-General's core business to provide assistance and expertise to the relevant political bodies

2.4.2.1. Committees and sub-committee secretariats:

- Contributed to the development of an enhanced scrutiny and monitoring of the EU foreign policy by the relevant EP Committees through, inter alia, the scrutiny of the implementation of financing instruments and broader budgetary oversight, regular exchanges of views with the Vice-President/High Representative and the RELEX Commissioners as well as EEAS and Commission high officials on key geographical and sectoral issues, exchanges of views with newly appointed EU heads of Delegation, annual reports (ex: on human rights and democracy, CFSP etc.), "question time" slots, follow-up sessions to specific urgency resolutions; this happened not only through the Committee meetings but also through sectoral working groups; in the legislative field, the Committee Secretariat have furthermore played an essential role in facilitating the work of the EP negotiating team in numerous trilogue meetings including on divisive files (ex. conflict minerals regulation, updated Anti-torture Regulation);
- Coordinated the assistance and political advice to the EP negotiators in the preparation for and start of the interinstitutional negotiations on improved practical arrangements for cooperation and information-sharing related to international agreements; the operational arrangements for access to TTIP-related documents were moreover further implemented, allowing to handle a substantial amount of documents and providing unprecedented access to documents relating to ongoing trade negotiations;
- Implemented the administrative agreement reached with the EEAS on the sharing of political reporting with the reception, handling, notification, consultation process and storage of political reports transmitted by the EEAS since July 2016 (inter alia through the setting up of a secure reading room and its daily management, and through the use of the SECEM secure e-mail transmission, both with the assistance of Dir. C);

- Further developed and intensified the cooperation between Committees and with the delegations, formally or informally, especially for the visit of high-level third-countries representatives, which resulted in a higher proportion of exchanges of views and hearings taking place in association with relevant standing delegations or jointly with other Committees/Sub-Committees; also, joint missions were carried out, with an optimal use of synergies between two (sub)-Committees (ex: the joint INTA-DEVE delegation to UNCTAD allowed to cover the trade-investment-development nexus); and joint reports between EXPO Committees (ex. DEVE-AFET report on migration) and beyond (ex: DEVE-AFET-BUDG Rule 55 agreement on the legislative proposal for a European Fund for Sustainable Development, SEDE-ITRE on “Space capabilities for European security and defence”).

2.4.2.2. Delegation secretariats

During the period of reference, delegations' secretariats continued to consistently implement the scrutiny working methods and modalities introduced in 2015 and revised at the beginning of 2016.

This aimed to ensure the effective assessment and monitoring of international agreements, the level of implementation of EU financial instruments, the impact of programmes and projects financed by the EU, the follow-up given to recommendations issued by election observation missions, the human rights situation and the monitoring legislation in force or in the making. A total of 66 detailed mission reports also known as "reporting sheets" were produced during the period of reference, most of them focusing on Monitoring of international agreements (23) and financial instruments (16), human rights (14), follow-up to recommendations of Electoral Observation missions (7) and the impact of legislation in force or in the making (6). Ad hoc guidelines were also prepared with a view to streamlining the preparation and transmission of reporting sheets and to improve other aspects of the work of delegations (including the collection of data for statistical purposes).

The second annual report on scrutiny activities and contribution to the committees' work (2016) is in the process of publication. The report inter alia includes a detailed description of all actions undertaken to enhance cooperation with parliamentary committees and other bodies.

The good cooperation reached with committees boosted, during the period of reference, the role of delegations in supporting the EP's legislative cycle and increasing the scrutiny role of the EP in the field of foreign policy. The number of rapporteurs allowed to join an official delegation visit increased substantially. Joint meetings and presentations of missions' findings become the rule rather than the exception. The revamped spirit of cooperation also enabled the organisation of joint Delegation-Committee missions to third countries (e.g. DMAG-CULT to Tunisia).

There was also full involvement of delegations' secretariats in the preparation of a CDC working document on "friendship groups and other conducts by MEPs travelling abroad" that was supposed to address issues having a detrimental effect on the work of standing delegations and JPAs. Delegations also monitored the conduct of members abroad and informed the CoP, via the CDC secretariat, asking them to take action when deemed appropriate.

The quality of outgoing correspondence was also improved, as proven by internal statistics of the DG.

2.4.2.3. Policy department

In 2016, the Policy Department carried out a survey, the results of which showed a very high level of satisfaction with the Policy Department's products. Delegation chairs rated their

overall quality at 9.1 out of 10 and eight delegations awarded 10 out of 10 points across the board for each of the quality criteria. The highest average rating was 9.2 for relevance and coverage of issues of interest to the delegations, followed by 9.1 for quality of analysis, and 8.6 each for delivery in good time and quality of policy options/recommendations. The implementation of the results of the survey are a part of the unit's objectives for 2017.

The policy department continued its embedded approach in its communication activity by publicising its work on the EP Think Tank internet site, the policy departments' common intranet site and by contributing to monthly overviews of policy departments' activities. In addition, in June 2016 POLDEP EXPO launched its own monthly newsletter.

In the view of developing more links with the academic and think tank communities and relevant international organisations, the policy department unit organised 13 policy hubs, two diplomacy forums and two roundtables. It intensified cooperation and exchange of information with the Political Affairs and Public Diplomacy Departments of NATO and informal meetings at advisers' level have become regular (biannual).

Cooperation within DG EXPO and DG IPOL's policy departments and DG EPRS was enhanced with several research papers issued as a result of inter-service cooperation. Monthly meetings were held with policy departments of DG IPOL at the Head of Unit level. Information on completed, ongoing and planned work was exchanged between relevant services.

Compared to 2015, the number of speaking points/background notes grew by 30 % whereas the overall number of internal written products remained rather constant (295 in 2016 compared to 311 in 2015). To sum up, here is the information about the papers and other products made available by DG EXPO's Policy Department:

Speaking Points / Background	At a glance	Briefings	In-depth analysis	Studies	External studies (incl. Workshops)	Country Security Assessment (CSA)	Informal Meetings (incl. Policy Hubs, roundtables)
148	6	39	85	17	69	138	17
29%	1%	8%	16%	3%	13%	27%	3%

2.4.2.4. Democracy support activities

Most of the activities carried out have been organized in the six priority countries adopted by the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) - (Ukraine, Moldova, Tunisia, Morocco, Tanzania and Myanmar) and in the priority region (Western Balkans and Turkey). Nine election observation delegations (Uganda, Peru, Mongolia, Zambia, Gabon, Jordan, Georgia, Moldova and Ghana) have been organised in 2016. The election observation activities lead to the more recent work on capacity building with third countries parliaments. The important role the EP plays in supporting democracy and Human Rights, namely in the field of elections and political participation, it is enshrined in the Treaty on European Union, Art. 21: "The Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation [...] democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, [...]".

In particular in March 2016, the EP organised the Ukraine Week, a three-day event for the launch of capacity building activities with the Verkhovna Rada (VRU). 80 MPs (all office holders) and senior staff participated to the programme (workshops, high level discussions, topical debates, meetings between EP and VRU factions leaders etc.). As a result of the

Ukraine week the European Parliament signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Verkhovna Rada to build a close partnership in developing capacity building activities with a country which is at the top political priority for the European Parliament.

The 2016 support programme for the Western Balkan and Turkish parliaments provided capacity building sessions to 75 MPs and 42 parliamentary officials on a wide range of policy topics, ie. immigration and asylum policy, non-discrimination of persons with disabilities. It strengthened parliamentary dialogue and increased regional ownership. Members and staff of enlargement parliaments were exposed to the EU policies and decision making processes, through debates with participating MEPs, which helped them to understand and comply with the EU values and accession criteria. As a result an increased parliamentary participation and oversight of the EU accession process can be expected.

The actions organised with the Sakharov Prize Laureates and Human Rights Defenders helped to raise the EP reputation as also independent sources have highlighted effective EP work.

The pilot edition of the Sakharov Fellowship drew big interest of human rights defenders, increased the visibility of the EP action in numerous third countries and was highly appreciated by Members. The Regional parliamentary conference in Tunis (violence against women), was very welcomed by parliamentarians from Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Egypt, reaching its goal of facilitating dialogue among Maghreb countries. Political support to the Laureates, also via silent diplomacy, Mid-Term Conference of the Sakharov Prize Network, Sakharov Prize Week, One World Film Festival, Open Door Day and other actions consolidated positive picture of our engagement.

In 2016 Members of Parliament continued to be involved in an increasing number of mediation and dialogue activities, hence the advice and expertise provided by the mediation service has developed and increased as well.

Amongst the most notable activities: the successful launch of the first Jean Monnet Dialogue for Ukraine on 27-29 October. Conclusions were adopted and signed by all participants with detailed commitments to implement Recommendations No 2, 14 and 18 from the Need Assessment Mission Report. An implementation mechanism was also agreed in the form of a Working Group, Chaired by the Speaker and agreement on its composition and mandate. The Working Group has now been established within the Rada and the first meeting was Chaired by the Speaker.

2.4.2.5. Resources Directorate

In order to allocate the DG's human resources efficiently, all vacancies were published within the deadlines and in accordance to the rules. There was close contact and cooperation with other DGs and with operational units in all areas: recruitment, renewal of contracts, assessments, trainees, training, missions, logistics and EMAS.

One of the most important and effective staff exchange programmes is the one with the EEAS, with short term exchanges in delegations and/or in the headquarters. During 2016, eleven EP staff participated in this programme, being nine from DG EXPO, one from DG EPRS and one from IPOL. This programme proved to increase the mutual knowledge of both institutions and providing a better understanding how EEAS works in practice.

The financial resources were also efficiently allocated and the level of execution of 2016 was better than in previous years.

Cooperation with other DGs (IPOL and EPRS) for financial issues is performed on a frequent basis. The result is a better harmonisation of rules and practices. A common proposal (IPOL/EXPO) for the revision, update and simplification of the rules on public hearings was prepared. Cooperation with the EC was also enhanced with the participation in an inter-institutional framework contract for the provision of services and equipment to the election observation missions.

Concerning the continuous work on the security of delegations new trainings are taking place and a new system was developed for gathering information and having it available in case of crisis (mission crisis management tool).

In order to improve the visibility of the work performed by DG EXPO, a short video presenting the EXPO activities has been delivered in December 2016 - [“A Global Actor – The European Parliament’s impact abroad”](#). This video was done in collaboration with other services.

3. EVALUATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROLS, INCLUDING AN OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTROLS' COST-EFFECTIVENESS (ARTICLE 66(9) FR)

When evaluating the internal controls in DG EXPO, it is worth bearing in mind that in terms of budget implementation, the DG's activities include a high number of low value transactions, a high number of provisional commitments and the need for a significant number of imprest accounts.

Moreover, DG EXPO has a centralised system, for all financial transactions, including procurement. The financial initiation, verification and authorisation is centralised in the finance unit. The operational initiation is done by staff in the operational units. This system is more efficient and allows a better control as well as harmonisation of procedures.

The controls in place meet the objectives that lead to their implementation. DG EXPO has two ex-ante verifiers, but they also perform other tasks than the ex-ante verification. There are also other controls (not only financial) performed by other staff.

After political authorisation, the requests for expenditure are initiated by the operational units while the financial initiation, the procurement/ordering, the ex-ante verification and budgetary authorisation are dealt with by the finance unit. This segregation of duties (after political authorisation) guarantees that each transaction is implemented and monitored by, at least, four different actors. Therefore, the use of budget funds is under detailed scrutiny.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1. General evaluation of the reporting period

2016 was a challenging year and DG EXPO was able to cope with a heavy workload and to perform its activities at the highest level.

DG EXPO operated in line with the regulations in force, on the basis of the decisions of the political authorities and in compliance with the DG EXPO Strategic Execution Framework (SEF) set up in accordance with the Secretariat general's SEF.

DG EXPO yearly objectives guided the works of the services which percolated the general objectives within their own remits. In this process, the Authorising officer by delegation optimized the allocation of financial and human resources.

4.2. Evaluation of the available resources

In order to face the reduction of human resources and the heavy workload, DG EXPO has promoted the use of new methods of working, encouraging the use of the internal programme of cooperation between services. Guidelines were issued in order to promote and facilitate the use of this programme. It allows the temporary assignment of staff from a given unit to another, it can be in full time or part time modality, for a given period of time. This may involve participation in a delegation or a project or the follow-up of a specific dossier.

This cooperation allows a more efficient use of resources. It also enables the acquisition of new experiences and knowledge through the DG in a very flexible way.

The financial resources proved to be sufficient to provide the appropriate support to the political bodies and a better follow-up of the budget consumption was done, allowing an increase of the execution's level.

4.3. Conclusions on strengths and weaknesses and foreseeable measures with a view to better adaptation of the available personnel and budgetary resources

The optimisation of resources has an increasing importance and DG EXPO has been improving the synergies between the different services and also with other institutions in order to achieve better results.

Cooperation with EEAS has been enhanced in order to facilitate the organisation of the visits of the EP delegations outside the EU.

Communication inside the DG is improving and the work performed by the different services is communicated in a more efficient way and as such is becoming more visible.

Last but not least, it is worth noting the relevant experience and background of DG EXPO's staff as well as their dedication, availability and flexibility for dealing with unexpected events, for working sometimes in remote destinations and not always under the easiest conditions.

5. DECLARATION BY THE AUTHORISING OFFICER BY DELEGATION

I, the undersigned, Marco AGUIRIANO NALDA

Director-General of External Policies of the Union,

hereby declare, in my capacity as authorising officer by delegation, that I have reasonable assurance that:

- a) the information contained in the report presents a true and fair view;
- b) the resources assigned to the activities described in the report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principle of sound financial management;
- c) the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

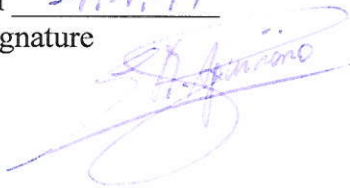
This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgment and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of self-assessment, ex post controls and remarks by the Internal Audit Service, as well as the lessons learned from the reports of the Court of Auditors for financial years prior to that for which this declaration is being made.

I also confirm that I am not aware of any fact not set down herein that could be prejudicial to the interests of the Institution.

Done at Brussels,

on 31/1/17

Signature



6. ANNEXES

6.1. 2016 budget implementation statement

6.1.1. Current appropriations as at the end of December - Financial year 2016 (nature 0)

Poste	Intitule	Credits Initiaux	Virements Budg. Suppl.	Credits Actuels	Engagements contractes	% Util.	Paiements effectues	Soldes des Engag	Credits disponibles
03020	FRAIS DE RECEPTION ET DE REPRESENTATION	101.600,00	-50.000,00	51.600,00	46.051,44	89,25	27.009,92	19.041,52	5.548,56
03042	REUNIONS, CONGRES ET CONFERENCES	80.000,00	-2.967,00	77.033,00	55.025,60	71,43	31.768,73	23.256,87	22.007,40
03043	FRAIS DIVERS D'ORGANISATION DES ASSEMBLEES PARLEMENTAIRES, DES DELEGATIONS INTERPARLEM. ET AUTRES DELEGAT.	1.100.000,00	-376.582,00	723.418,00	412.496,26	57,02	297.786,78	114.709,48	310.921,74
03200	ACQUISITION D'EXPERTISE: ÉTUDES, EXPERTS ET AUTRES PERSONNALITÉS	965.000,00	-300.349,00	664.651,00	564.092,63	84,87	181.050,63	383.042,00	100.558,37
03220	DEPENSES DE DOCUMENTATION ET DE BIBLIOTHEQUE	10.000,00	-8.935,00	1.065,00	1.065,00	100	1.065,00	0	0
03230	SOUTIEN A LA DEMOCRATIE ET RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITES PARLEMENTAIRES DES PARLEMENTS DES PAYS TIERS	1.100.000,00	-234.480,00	865.520,00	667.638,48	77,14	526.700,76	140.937,72	197.881,52
03244	EURONEST-SCOLA	179.000,00	-179.000,00	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL GENERAL		3.535.600,00	-1.152.313,00	2.383.287,00	1.746.369,41	73,28	1.065.381,82	680.987,59	636.917,59

6.1.2. **Automatic carryovers as at the end of December - Financial year 2016**
(nature 2)

Poste	Intitule	Credits Reportes	Credits Actuels	Engagements contractes	Paiements effectues	% Util.	Credits disponibles
03020	FRAIS DE RECEPTION ET DE REPRESENTATION	13.500,00	13.500,00	13.500,00	10.708,64	79,32	2.791,36
03042	REUNIONS, CONGRES ET CONFERENCES	12.048,50	12.048,50	12.048,50	10.748,50	89,21	1.300,00
03043	FRAIS DIVERS D'ORGANISATION DES ASSEMBLEES PARLEMENTAIRES, DES DELEGATIONS INTERPARLEM. ET AUTRES DELEGATIONS	132.280,07	132.280,07	132.280,07	91.964,94	69,52	40.315,13
03200	ACQUISITION D'EXPERTISE: ÉTUDES, EXPERTS ET AUTRES PERSONNALITÉS	461.037,55	461.037,55	461.037,55	421.818,76	91,49	39.218,79
03230	SOUTIEN A LA DEMOCRATIE ET RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITES PARLEMENTAIRES DES PARLEMENTS DES PAYS TIERS	217.581,47	217.581,47	217.581,47	144.844,02	66,57	72.737,45
03244	EUROMED-SCOLA	40.000,00	40.000,00	40.000,00	12435,7	31,09	27.564,30
TOTAL GENERAL		876.447,59	876.447,59	876.447,59	692.520,56	79,01	183.927,03

- 6.1.3. **Non-automatic carryovers as at the end of December - Financial year 2016**
(nature 6) - NOT APPLICABLE
- 6.1.4. **Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue as at the end of December - Financial year 2016** (nature 7) - NOT APPLICABLE
- 6.1.5. **Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue carried over as at the end of December - Financial year 2016** (nature 5) - NOT APPLICABLE
- 6.1.6. **Specific expenditure commitments/assigned revenue carried over as at the end of December - Financial year 2016** (nature 3) - NOT APPLICABLE
- 6.1.7. **Own revenue as at the end of December - Financial year 2016** (nature 8) - NOT APPLICABLE
- 6.1.8. **Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue as at the end of December - Financial year 2016** (nature 9) - NOT APPLICABLE

6.2. Report on compliance with payment deadlines

<u>Invoices paid in 2016</u>		Default interest payable automatically (> €200)	Default interest payable on request (<=€200)	No default interest payable	Total
Paid by the time limit	Number of invoices	-	-	487	487
	Total invoiced (€)	-	-	1.214.085,46	1.214.085,46
Paid outside time limit	Number of invoices	-	86	-	86
	Total invoiced (€)	-	146.187,16	-	146.187,16
	Amount of default interest (€)	-	116,91	-	116,91
Total number of invoices		-	86	487	573
Total invoiced (€)		-	146.187,13	1.214.085,46	1.360.272,59

More than 50 invoices were received at the end of 2015 (18/12/2015), out of which 15 had been registered at the beginning of November 2015 and the remaining at the beginning of December 2015, thus it was impossible to pay them in the 30 days' delay.

The issue was reported to the accounting service, but it was not possible to find the root of the problem.

Consequently, DG EXPO has increased the number of late payments in 2016 (86 compared to 26 in 2015). However, the late-payment interest is below the threshold of EUR 200 that triggers automatic payment of interest, so it is only payable if requested by the service provider. As none of the service providers requested such payment, no interest was paid. If they all would have requested the late interest to be paid would amount to EUR 116,91.

6.3. List of exceptions - derogations from the rules

Exceptions to procedures

Decisions to make an exception to the applicable procedures and rules							
Document ref. (Finord ref, contract, etc.)	Relevant Authorising Officer	Subject	Amount	Verifiers' opinion		Decision	
				favourable with statement/unfavourable	Justification	Relevant Authorising Officer	Justification
869/327	AZEVEDO	OD	EUR 78,32	NON CONFORME	PRINCIPLE OF ANNUALITY NOT RESPECTED - ART. 310 AND 316 TFEU + ART. 13 FR -Service provided in 2014 and invoice received in 2016.	PASSER OUTRE	SEE GEDA(2016) 12756. The service has been provided in good faith and the amount is due, so commitments need to be honoured. Thus, it was decided to proceed with the payment
924/122	AZEVEDO	OD	EUR 176,00	NON CONFORME	PRINCIPLE OF ANNUALITY ART. 13 FR NOT RESPECTED. FINANCIAL & LEGAL COMMITMENT AND RESPECTIVE EXPENDITURE HAVE BEEN INCURRED IN 2014. THE PROVIDER INVOICED THE SERVICE IN 2015 WHEN THE PAYMENT SHOULD HAVE BEEN MADE USING THE 2014 PAYMENT APPROPRIATIONS THAT SHOULD HAVE CARRIED OVER FOR THE 2015 YEAR.	PASSER OUTRE	GEDA(2016) 26645. The service has been provided in good faith and the amount is due, so commitments need to be honoured. Thus, it was decided to proceed with the payment

Waivers/cancellations of receivables

Not applicable

6.4. Long-term contractual obligations

Not applicable.

6.5. Exceptional negotiated procedures - Articles 53, 134 and 135 RAP

Name(s) of successful tenderer(s)	Subject	Amount	Legal basis	Grounds	Applicants		Eligibility criteria	Contract reference	PPF opinion date
					Invited:	For negotiations			
INDRA SISTEMAS	Election observation mission to Jordan, various logistical and security services 15-22/09/2016	€15.307,42	NP article 134.1 b) ii)	To implement the logistical, security and administrative aspects a direct contract has been awarded to the same economic operator which the European Commission contracted following a call for tender for framework contract under EuropAid/132614/C/ser/multi.	1	1	Quote of the service provider	2016/20217-01	Not Applicable
TRANSTEC	Election observation mission to Gabon various logistical services 23-29/08/2016	€19.059,91	NP article 134.1 b) ii)	To implement the logistical, security and administrative aspects, the contract has been awarded to the same economic operator which the European Commission contracted following a tender for framework contract EuropAid/132614/SER/Multi	1	1	Quote of the service provider	2016/20192-01	Not Applicable

6.6. Results of ex-post evaluation

Not applicable.

6.7. Sensitive posts

Following the note of the Secretary General of 19 May 2016 (GEDA (2016) 11955), several posts were selected in accordance with the methodology established and were scrutinised. A more comprehensive exercise was done in 2015.

The results were similar to the results of the previous exercises (2015 and 2012).

In general, the results of this assessment show that none of the posts scrutinised in DG EXPO is sensitive. A couple of AD jobholders included in this exercise have been in the same post for more than 7 years, however, due to their age, they are no longer subject to mobility. The existing "control environment" is considered sufficient to compensate for the resulting risks.

6.8. Assessment of the implementation of the Minimum Internal Control Standards

Self-assessment summary table

2014 standard No	2002 standard No	Achieved	Almost	Partly	Started	To be started / NA
Section 1: Mission statement and values						
1. Mission	2	✓				
2. Ethical and organisational values	1	✓				
Section 2: Human resources						
3. Allocation of staff and mobility	3	✓				
4. Staff assessment and development	3, 4	✓				
Section 3: Planning and risk management						
5. Objectives and performance indicators	7, 9, 10			✓		
6. Risk management process	11	✓				
Section 4: Operations and control activities						
7. Operational set-up	5, 6	✓				
8. Processes and procedures	15, 18	✓				
9. Supervision by management	17	✓				
10. Business continuity	19		✓			
11. Document management	13	✓				
Section 5: Information and financial reporting						
12. Information and communication	13, 14		✓			
13. Accounting and financial information	12	✓				
Section 6 Evaluation and auditing						
14. Evaluation of activities	N/A.	✓				
15. Evaluation of internal control systems	20, 22		✓			
16. Audit reports	21	✓				

Comments on the outcome of the annual self-assessment of MICS performance

Section 1: Mission statement and values - Achieved

DG EXPO's mission is clearly defined and available in DG EXPO's intranet. The objectives of the DG are set taking into consideration this mission. There is a link between the DG objectives and the objectives of its different services and of the staff objectives. The values are also clearly communicated to the staff, in the intranet as well as in the DG communications to staff (ie. annual meeting, newsletters, etc).

Section 2: Human resources

Allocation of staff and mobility - Achieved

Staff recruitment is done in accordance with the rules. All jobs interviews are carried out professionally and recruitment procedures are fully documented. Staff recruited have the expertise, experience, skills and competencies required to perform its tasks and meet its objectives. Recruitment is planned in the long run for the cases of mobility and retirement.

Temporary shift of human resources between units is done, in order to alleviate workload peaks.

Mentoring is in place and it is ensured that new staff members learn from their colleagues.

Temporary measures, like recruitment of contractual agents, are used to fill short-term gaps, however, due to budget reduction; some constraints are being faced for the replacement of staff on long-term sick leave.

Concerning staff mobility, staff is encouraged to express its preferences on allocation and reallocation.

Staff assessment and development - **Achieved**

The performance of all staff is assessed through the annual staff assessment procedure. Staff objectives are clearly indicated at the beginning of the year.

A career counselling service is available in order to provide assistance on career development.

Training objectives are determined annually within the annual training programme. In each unit the HoU and the training correspondent are in charge of evaluating specific training needs. Moreover, staff specific training needs are discussed, identified and included in their staff report. The annual training plan is discussed within the group of correspondents, validated by the HoU and then adopted by the Management Team.

Internal training is developed in order to cover specific training needs that are not covered by the training services.

Section 3: Planning and risk management

Objectives and performance indicators - **Partly Achieved**

Objectives are defined and revised annually for the Directorate-General, as well as for each directorate and unit. Personal objectives for staff members are defined at the beginning of the year, and are in line with the DG's objectives and mission.

Some indicators were defined in DG EXPO's "Strategic Execution Framework" (SEF), published on 18 December 2014.

Key Performance Indicators will be developed.

Risk Management - **Achieved**

Risk Management is done in line with the guidance provided by the Risk Manager of the European Parliament. DG EXPO's risk register is updated periodically. Risk assessment is an ongoing process.

Section 4: Operations and control activities

Operational set-up - **Achieved**

DG EXPO has a centralised system for financial matters. The files are initiated by the operational units, but the financial initiation, verification and authorisation is centralised in the Finance Unit, in the Directorate of Resources.

At the beginning of the year the authorising officer by delegation signs the sub-delegations. All authorising officers by sub-delegation are informed of their responsibilities and duties.

All DG EXPO staff is informed of all financial actors in place, there is a list published on the intranet that is periodically updated.

Processes and procedures - **Achieved**

Processes and procedures are in line with the relevant regulations, provisions and rules in place. There are processes and procedures clearly established, not only on the financial side, but also on the operational side. Information, including instructions, notes from the DG, templates, handbooks, etc., are available on DG EXPO's intranet.

Some of DG EXPO activities are similar to the ones performed by DG IPOL. So, whenever possible, harmonisation of procedures between both DGs is encouraged and put in place.

A record of the exceptions is kept and reported to the management. This information is also included in the intermediate reports as well as in the Annual Activity Report.

Info-sessions are organised, on a regular basis, to discuss best practices and raise some awareness on the procedures in place.

There is a clear segregation of duties, especially between the financial actors.

Progresses have been made in the course of 2016, with the electronic signature of all financial transactions. Such improvement was done at a central level and it was made available to all DGs.

Supervision by management - **Achieved**

Regular reporting on budget execution is addressed to the management.

Risk assessment is done and so far the need for performing ex-post controls was not identified. DG EXPO deals with a particular "business", since the number of financial transactions is high, but most of them of very low value. Ex-ante controls are performed for all transactions.

Business continuity - **Almost Achieved**

DG EXPO has a back-up system in place for staff. As well as in case of retirement, leave on personal grounds, transfer or long absence (annual or special leave), a handover of the files is done.

Each time a member of the management is off, a delegation is done and all units are informed.

In case of absence of staff, the business continuity is ensured; however, in case of major disruptions there is no updated plan in place. The business continuity planning dates back to 2006 and will be soon updated. This exercise is being coordinated centrally and further developments should be performed in the near future.

For the outgoing delegations, in case of a crisis the Crisis Cell of the EP is ready to intervene.

Document management - **Achieved**

Staff is familiar with procedures for registration and filling of the different types of documents. There is a team dealing with document management where all units are represented by a staff member and they meet periodically. During 2016 the new filing plan was under discussion.

There are also specific procedures in place for handling EU classified information.

Section 5: Information and financial reporting

Information and communication - Almost Achieved

This standard is considered almost achieved, since some measures are still need to be implemented, concerning electronic handling of EU classified information, however it does not depend only on DG EXPO. A new project will be implemented by DG ITEC. In the meantime and in order to make possible the access to EU classified information, a secure reading room was created and is operational.

Accounting and financial information - Achieved

The accounting data, annual accounts and financial reporting are prepared in accordance with the Financial Regulation and its rules of implementation, with the general accounting principles as well as in accordance with the internal rules.

DG EXPO has a centralised system, since the main financial actors are in the finance unit, so the financial initiation, verification and authorisation are done by the staff of the finance unit. The operational initiation is done by the staff in the operational units.

Information and financial reporting on budget implementation is provided by the finance unit to the responsible units in order to allow an accurate monitoring of the budget consumption.

DG EXPO's budget implementation is monitored and reported periodically, in accordance with, the relevant EP decisions and resolutions, mainly addressed by the Secretary General and DG FINS. It includes activity reports, preparation of budget estimates, discharge procedures, mopping-up exercises, information discussed in management meetings, etc.

DG EXPO also contributes to the preparation of the financial statements (finalised by DG FINS) to facilitate the decision making process of the EP's political bodies (Conference of Presidents and Bureau). The financial statements are estimates of expenses and are prepared when requests for delegations, missions and hearings are submitted to the authorisation of the political bodies (both for the 6-month programmes or for individual requests).

The quality of the reporting could be improved with an efficient IT financial system.

Section 6: Evaluation and auditing

Evaluation of Activities - Achieved

Activities are evaluated by the management in order to ensure an efficient use of resources and to check if the objectives were achieved. Special attention is dedicated to new activities, ie, during 2016 a new activity was implemented in the Sakharov network (fellowship for human right defenders) and at the end it was assessed in order to decide if such activity had achieved the objectives and if it should be continued in the future or not.

Evaluation of internal control systems - Almost Achieved

Some functions are centralised at the finance unit level. There is a straight cooperation between the finance unit and DG EXPO management.

For the self-assessment, several sources of information are gathered through contacts with the management, information from the management meetings, reports issued (financial and

operational), observations and recommendations from the ex-ante verifiers, notes from the AOSD, etc.

Improvements can be made and some internal guidelines need to be prepared.

Audit Reports - Achieved

The finance unit in DG EXPO ensures that action plans following the audits are implemented. Close follow-up and reporting is done. During 2016, DG EXPO was subject to two internal audits: one Business Continuity Management and another one on the implementation of the Code on Multilingualism. The implementation of both action plans is ongoing and in both cases, close cooperation with other services is needed in order to reach the desired outcome.