

Annual Activity Report

2017

DG INTE

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0. BUDGETARY IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

to be filled in by the DG		calculation	
			INTE
Code	Appropriation type	Type de crédits	EUR ou %
	Appropriations of 2017	Crédits 2017	
A	Initial appropriations	Crédits initiaux	55.333.500,00
B	Final appropriations	Crédits finaux	60.251.595,00
C	Commitments	Engagements	60.125.047,36
D	Commitments in % of final appropriations	Engagements en % des crédits finaux	100%
E	Payments	Paiements	50.779.203,59
F	Payments in % of commitments	Paiements en % des engagements	84%
G	Cancellations of 2017 final appropriations	Annulations de crédits finaux 2017	126.547,64
H	Cancellations appropriations in % of final appropriations	Annulations en % des crédits finaux	0%
	Appropriations carried over from 2017 to 2018	Crédits reportés de 2017 à 2018	
I	Automatic carryovers from 2017 to 2018	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2017 à 2018	9.345.843,77
J	Automatic carryovers from 2017 to 2018 in % of commitments	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2017 à 2018 en % des engagements	16%
K	Non-automatic carryovers from 2017 to 2018	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2017 à 2018	0,00
L	Non-automatic carryovers from 2017 to 2018 in % of final appropriations	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2017 à 2018 en % des crédits finaux	0%
	Appropriations carried over from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés de 2016 à 2017	
M	Automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	8.886.188,77
N	Payments against automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Paiements sur crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	8.507.011,61
O	Payments against automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017 in % of automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Paiements sur crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017 en % des crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	96%
P	Cancellations of automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Annulations de crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	379.177,16
Q	Cancellations of automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017 in % of automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Annulations de crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017 en % des crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	4%
R	Non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	0,00
S	Payments of non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Paiements sur crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	
T	Payments against non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017 in % of non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Paiements sur crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017 en % des crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	
U	Cancellations of non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Annulations de crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	
V	Cancellations of non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017 in % of non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Annulations de crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017 en % des crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	
	Assigned revenue in 2017	Recettes affectées 2017	
W	Appropriations from assigned revenue in 2017 (current)	Crédits de recettes affectées courants 2017	4.255.694,62
X	Assigned revenue carried over to 2017	Crédits de recettes affectées reportés à 2017	183.877,50
Y	Balance of commitments on assigned revenue carried over to 2017	Solde des engagements reportés à 2017 sur crédits de dépenses spécifiques sur recettes affectées	1.837.337,41
Z	Payments in 2017 against appropriations from assigned revenue (current and carried-over)	Paiements sur crédits de recettes affectées 2017 (courants et reportés)	5.622.860,17
AA	Payments in 2017 against assigned revenue in % of assigned revenue in 2017 (current and carried-over)	Paiements sur crédits de recettes affectées 2017 en % des crédits de recettes affectées 2017 (courants et reportés)	90%

1. OBJECTIVES

1.1. Objectives of the Directorate-General

i. The general objectives of DG INTE for 2017 are

DG INTE's mission is to provide the linguistic, technical and logistical support for the organisation of the parliamentary and political meetings of EP Members and bodies.

DG INTE supports European Parliamentary democracy by facilitating the legislative process and contacts with citizens. In accordance with the European Parliament policy on multilingualism, DG INTE enables the Members of Parliament to communicate across linguistic barriers, thus helping to underpin the democratic legitimacy of the Institution.

DG INTE's general objectives are to supply state-of-the-art meeting facilities, high quality interpretation services and conference organization in a professional, flexible as well as sustainable and resource-efficient manner.

ii. The specific objectives of DG INTE for 2017 are:

a) To ensure the full implementation of Resource Efficient Full Multilingualism based on the following principles: optimising workflows, increased individual and unit output, guaranteed social protection, high quality standards and more fairness in the workload distribution of interpreters.

b) To work in close cooperation with the client services of DG INTE and other stakeholders, in order to improve efficiency in the implementation of the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism and competitiveness as a service provider.

c) To ensure the modernisation of DG INTE, in order to adapt to the changing environment, with special emphasis on identifying and acquiring new skills in the DG, streamlining resources and administrative work processes, and providing state of the art IT tools to support them.

d) To further improve services to Members, bodies, political groups and other clients through organizational measures to enhance resource-efficiency and capacity usage in the area of meeting and conference management and by upgrading the technical facilities in the meeting rooms.

e) To take measures to promote the use of best practices in multilingual meetings in order to encourage users of interpretation to contribute to facilitating the provision of high quality interpretation.

f) To develop the competencies of all DG INTE's professional categories in order to improve outcomes and client satisfaction continuously. To enhance the quality of interpretation by providing specific skill-enhancement activities for interpreters, establishing training benchmarks, introducing rules for language learning by staff interpreters that are aligned to the needs of the service, and by providing the appropriate support tools, notably in the context of documentation and a paperless EP.

g) To engage in efficient, targeted and needs-based succession planning in order to match the long-term supply of interpreters to the future needs of the Institution, with a particular focus on implementing DG INTE's strategy for cooperation with universities.

- h) To promote an efficient use of the working time of all staff categories.
- i) To actively accompany technological developments in all areas of DG INTE's activity. To strengthen resource-efficiency in the field of meeting management and interpretation by upgrading IT tools as well as by taking measures to ensure that the supply of interpretation matches the evolving demand.
- j) To foster collaborative working methods inside the DG and inter-DG cooperation.
- k) To use inter-institutional cooperation where savings and efficiency gains are possible as well as to exchange best practices and mutual operational assistance.

1.2. Feasibility and risk assessment

In 2017, the synergy between Risk Management and Business Continuity Management was enhanced. In the framework of the Business Impact Analysis (BIA) carried out at DG level, further consideration was given to external risks with a rather low likelihood but with a potential major impact on DG INTE's activities. Particular attention was also paid to the identification of main dependencies and of possible supply chain issues. The results of this analysis fed into the European Parliament's corporate Business Impact Analysis coordinated by the central Business Continuity Management unit.

The major dependency of DG INTE on IT applications and infrastructure has regularly been flagged in the recent years, particularly via DG INTE risk register and throughout the BIA process. This contributed to enhancing DG INTE's response to a serious IT outage which occurred in October 2017.

While focus on the obsolescence aspects is maintained in the current risk register (in particular in relation to the Pericles application), it appears more clearly that the risk of a general or lasting outage of the IT infrastructure of the European Parliament should be more integrated in DG INTE's IT-related risk assessment and mitigating measures. Similarly, the further digitalisation of DG INTE activities could increase the exposure to IT-related risks. In this respect, complementary initiatives in relation to the regular extraction, dissemination, back-up and storage of key data (particularly at DG level) are being considered in the framework of a lessons-learned exercise and should be implemented in the course of 2018.

The key objective for DG INTE is to meet the expectations of its clients in a resource-efficient way. As a result, the other main risks included in DG INTE's risk register relate to:

- Adverse conditions for delivering high quality interpretation;
- Succession planning and unavailability of suitable interpretation resources on the market.

The latter risk was partly revamped in order to better reflect the growing tension in the interpretation market as the end of the current legislative term is approaching. The likelihood and impact of the risk were re-assessed accordingly.

Both issues are closely followed up via a number of DG INTE's projects included in the Parliamentary Project Portfolio as well as other targeted communication and outreach initiatives to various stakeholders and clients.

It is worth noting that the year 2017 also allowed to lay the foundations for one of the Parliament's most ambitious projects in the field of conference management, the One-Stop Conference Organisation (OSCO). The main aim of this project is to bring about more efficiency to the provision of conference services via enhanced administrative and logistical support provided to organisers in the European Parliament. In the framework of the European

Parliaments' focus on project risk management, OSCO has been selected as DG INTE's lead project to be further assessed in the first semester of 2018.

In 2017, risks related to budgetary cuts were considered high, both in the interpretation (payments to ACIs) and mission domains. The reinforcements needed were allocated to DG INTE. Therefore, no risk was eventually recorded in the risk register as far as the ACIs' budget is concerned, although some uncertainty persisted until quite late in the budgetary exercise. The risk related to cuts on the missions budget is currently closed.

Lastly, the initial analysis of the activities performed by the Conference Ushers unit, which joined DG INTE on 1 September 2017 did not evidence additional major risks.

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

2.1. Environment of the directorate-general

The demand for rooms, meetings and interpretation services from parliamentary bodies remained stable overall in 2017. However, a slight shift of activity was observed, with a 6.5% increase of meeting sessions with interpretation in Brussels and a 2.6% decrease in Strasbourg. The number of EP missions provided with interpretation also increased by 5.8%.

The interpretation services remained an important centre of attention in 2017. On the one hand, the discussions on revised interpreter working conditions continued.

In 2017, the discussion on a new set of interpreter working conditions was re-launched. It will continue in 2018, notably with the consultation of the Staff Committee.

On the other hand, the modernisation process of interpretation services in DG INTE also proceeded. In this context, the average weekly number of interpretation hours per interpreter became DG INTE's lead indicator.

Finally, work continued on DG INTE's projects, notably those which form a part of the Parliamentary Project Portfolio:

- Meeting and Interpretation Management System for the future: the development or acquisition of a core application for the management of all operational aspects related to conferences, meetings and events.
- Electronic Room Reservation System (ERRS): the creation of a single point of entry for all meeting requests.
- One-Stop Conference Organisation: a project aiming at increasing the efficiency of the provision of conference services in the EP.
- Provision of Services – Reaching Out to Clients: this project aims to develop an overall approach to the measurement of client satisfaction with the services of DG INTE
- Best Practices for Working in Multilingual Meetings: an Awareness-Raising Campaign on how the interpretation service adds value to the multilingual democratic debate.
- Knowledge Profiles: a project which aims to give interpreters deepened specialised knowledge in Parliaments broad policy streams.
- Interpreter Support Tools for Meeting Preparation: a project to develop a multilingual terminology identification and translation tool.
- An Increased Automation of Conference Room Installations: concerns a substantial modernisation of the technical installation in the EP's meeting room.
- e-Poster: a project to phase out the display of official notices on paper and to replace it with an electronic system.

2.2. Human resources of the DG

2.2.1. Establishment plan

	at 1.1.2016				at 1.1.2017			
	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Permanent posts	382	117	4	503	372	111	8	491
Temporary posts				0				0
Total	382	117	4	503	372	111	8	491

2.2.2. Staff numbers as at 31.12.2017

	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total		FTE
Officials	328	131	11	470		445,8
Temporary staff	18	14	1	33		
- in temporary posts				0		
- in permanent posts	11	5	1	17		16
- to offset part-time working	7	9	0	16		15,5
Contractual agents				52		44
Seconded National Expert (SNE)				0		
Agency staff				0		
Total				555		521,3

2.3. Budget implementation 2017

2.3.1. Initial and final appropriations

Overall, initial appropriations, amounted to €5.333.500. Following the two mopping up procedures, a series of 'S' transfers and one 'C' transfer, the final total appropriations amounted to €60.251.595,00. The details of the transfers are as follows:

Result of Mopping up 1 & 2 and 'C' and 'S' transfers:

Budget Line	Movement
01405-01	+1.345.860
01404-04	-140.000
02103-19	-81.365
02105-19	+193.600
02140-04	+3.600.000
03042-03	+50.000
03245-04	-50.000
Total	€ +4.918.095

The increase of €4.918.095 is mainly attributable to transfers on the line 01405-01 of €1.345.860 for conference interpreting agents and €3.600.000 on line 02140-04 for the maintenance and renewal of equipment and modernisation of the meeting rooms in Strasbourg and Brussels.

Budget item 01405-01 + €1.345.860

The original budget requested for 2017 was €48.900.000. The composition of the estimated shortfall in appropriations of €1.345.860 was as follows:

- Reduction of the initial budget appropriations during the budgetary procedure by 6.2%: **-€3.038.160.**
- The effective management of a sustained demand +3% compared to the PDB, **+€104.636.**
- After deduction of the projected surplus **€1.587.664**, revenues cashed for the interpretation services provided to third bodies

Budget item 02105-19 + €193.600

There was no initial budget foreseen for that line. The appropriations on this line were made available by S-transfer on 06/03/2017 to cover a specific contract with the main contractor of framework contract ref.: PE/ITEC-ITS14 - Lot 3, the Consortium CGI Luxembourg S.A. - Intrasoft International S.A. to develop the Multipurpose Speech Bank (MSB). The contract entered into force on 11/09/2017 and it will end on 30/06/2018.

Budget item 02140-04 + €3.600.000

The initial budget of €7.000.000 was increased by €3.600.000 in order to:

- to allow for the execution of the 2018 project plan as per the budget submitted at the end of 2016 in order to allow for the conference facilities renovation process to proceed in line with the original planning presented in the PPP (DG INTE - Increased automation of conference room installations) + **€1.000.000.**
- to enable DG INTE to include the replacement of the conference installations in 11 large meeting rooms in Strasbourg. This will allow us to further improve the overall performance of the system and reduce the total renovation costs over time (renovation of the meeting rooms as a whole in 1 step rather than in 2 steps) + **€2.600.000**

Bulk ordering enabled a better price to be negotiated / higher discount obtained with our supplier of the conference equipment. The overall saving is estimated to be €480.000 (10% reduction on the cost of the equipment & 11 rooms @ €20.000 per room).

2.3.2. Final appropriations and appropriations committed

Committed appropriations against final appropriations represent an overall utilisation rate of 99.79%. This includes large provisional commitments on the budget line 1405-01 "*Expenditure on interpretation: Freelance Interpreters*".

2.3.3. Appropriations committed and payments made

84.4% of committed appropriations was paid during the exercise.

Remainders on commitments on current appropriations amount to €9.345.844 and mainly concern €2.431.164 on the budget line 1405-01; €6.131.517 on the line 2140-04; €162.332 on line 02105-19; €240.907 on line 3042-03 and €191.509 on line 3245-04.

These remainders will be carried forward to 2018 for the relevant lines:

1405-01 - To honour payments of Conference Interpreter Agents remuneration and travel costs, related to services provided in 2017.

2140-04 - For payments for the last quarter of the maintenance contracts for Brussels and Strasbourg, and more significantly for payments of large orders of materials, equipment, and contracts for installation, relating to the plan for modernisation and increased automation of the conference rooms.

2105-19 - To honour payment of the legal commitment entered into in September 2017, due to end in June 2018.

3042-03 - To honour payment of legal commitments entered into in 2017 with the contractors who have provided services related to organising meetings of political groups outside of the three working places.

3245-04 - To cover final payments on the grant programme 2017/2018.

2.3.4. Use of automatic and non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017

The overall rate of payments against automatic carry-overs 2016 to 2017 is 95.73%. The total amount of unused carried forward appropriations amounts to €379.177. Here are the reasons why:

- €157.020 not utilised on line 2140-04 (3.4% of the amount carried over) This unused balance at the end of 2017 is mainly the result of the commitments for the maintenance contracts of Brussels (€3.436) and Strasbourg (€49.192). The amounts committed initially were based on the offer of the contractor in his reply to the call for tender. Given that the specific terms and conditions of the contract mentions that only the hours really executed can be paid, the amount remaining at the end of 2017 corresponds to the hours that were included in the estimation by the contractor but that were not required for the execution of the contract. For 2017, the commitments were revised based on the experience from 2016.
The remainder of the unused credits corresponds to a value of €44.391 spread over a total of 22 different commitments.
- €157.770 on line 3042-03. There is an on-going issue with one of the contractors providing services to the Meetings and Conference unit. The contractor contends that the Parliament should bear the VAT applicable to the sub-contracts, and because of this issue, the contractor has withheld a number of final invoices. There are some outstanding legal commitments, specific orders where the services were ordered and delivered in 2016 but the final invoices have not yet been presented. The outstanding amount is estimated to be in the region of €40.000.
- €58.432 on line 3245-04 represents the remaining carried forward appropriations deemed necessary at the start of 2017 to pay the remaining amounts due on the grant agreements from the 2016/2017 grant programme. Final amounts paid were less than foreseen as beneficiaries had overestimated the cost of their projects.

2.3.5. Use of appropriations corresponding to assigned revenue

2.3.5.1 Situation with regard to specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue

The amount of assigned revenue for 2017 is €4.255.695 of which 96.15% has been committed in 2017. Of the committed amount 90% was already paid in 2017. This largely concerns the budget line 1405-01. The remaining assigned revenue on the budget lines is carried forward to 2018 (€11.320) and will be utilised in priority.

2.3.5.2 Situation with regard to specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue carried over

- Carried forward revenue amounts to €183.877,5 (type 5)
- Carried forward committed revenue amounts to €1.837.337,41 (type 3)
- Carried forward assigned revenue (type 5) was utilised at 83,85%.
- Committed carried forward revenue (type 3) was utilised at 97,51%.

2.4. Results achieved

OBJECTIVE N°	INDICATORS	RESULTS FOR THE 2017 EXERCISE
	MEETINGS	
1.1.i	<i>Number of requests managed by the Meetings Office in the New Meeting Request System (MRS)</i>	656
1.1.ii (a)	<i>Average weekly number of interpretation hours per interpreter (Lead indicator)</i>	13.34
1.1.ii (b)	<i>Total EP meeting sessions with interpretation provided</i> Brussels: 3147 Strasbourg: 2059 Luxembourg: 11 Total 5217	
	<i>EP Missions outside 3 work places with interpretation provided</i>	181
1.1.ii (c)	<i>Number of meetings outside of places of work organised by the Conference Service (Political groups, Conf. Presidents and Bureau)</i>	33

1.1.ii(d)	Meetings with interpretation organised for other institutions total: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission (Lux) 47 Commission (EP buildings) 2 Court of Auditors (Bxl, Lux, outside) 0/38/9 Comm. of Regions (Bxl, outside) 99/0 Eur. Economic and Social Comm. Ombudsman 43/0 Translation Centre 7 DG SCIC meeting in Strasbourg 2 4 	
	Total for other institutions	251
	Requests for meetings in the EP premises by outside bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brussels 60 Luxembourg 0 Strasbourg 31 	
	Total	91
	Meeting attended by a conference technician	4965
	Meetings requiring set-up in the meeting room	3094
	Meetings managed remotely from Central Control Room	5468
	Total number of meetings attended by ushers	Brussels: 10.526 meetings and 5 mini-sessions Luxembourg: 4 meetings Strasbourg : 3.168 meetings and 12 plenary sessions
	INTERPRETATION	
1.1.i	Total of staff interpretation days in 2017 for the needs of the EP/all institutions	42165/42810
	Total of Conference interpreting agents (ACI) days in 2017 for the needs of the EP/all institutions	48790/50530
	TRAINING	
1.1.ii (f)	Thematic training organised in cooperation with EPs services, permanent representations and other Institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total events 74 Total participants 937 	

	Knowledge profiles for Interpreters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total participants (PPP) 	19
	Language enhancement training in cooperation with EP services and other institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total events (one or more sessions) Total participants 	5 27
	Total number of participants in language courses 2017-2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-house specific e-learning private tuition 	70 18 9
	External language courses for staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term Long term Exchange scheme with EP Liaison Offices 	49 3 4
	Success rate of staff interpreter language adding projects following external language courses	81%
	TESTING	
1.1.ii (f)	Total number of added languages by staff interpreters in 2017/total applicants tested Interpreter days spent assisting testing process/number of successful candidates at language adding and inter-institutional accreditation tests	58/100 = 58% 28/58 = 48%
	Total number of new ACI's/total candidates tested	11/45 = 24%
	SUCCESSION PLANNING	
1.1.ii (g)	Number of memorandum of Understanding signed with universities	24
	Number of grants awarded to universities in 2017	7
	Number of universities who received pedagogical assistance at final exams	13
	Remote teaching assistance (virtual classes)	47 virtual classes with 26 partner universities
	Total n° of visits by universities	27
	Total number of students & trainers visiting DG INTE	227
	Bursaries granted to ACIs for language learning/enhancement	35

	INTER-INSTITUTIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	
1.1.ii (k)	<i>Participants to structured exchange programme with SCIC (EP & SCIC)/total n° of exchange days of interpretation</i>	27/509

One-Stop Conference Organisation

Following on from the conclusions of the senior management Away Days in Aachen, on 12th and 13th January 2017, the Secretary-General called for a high level working group to be set up to revise the current planning and organisation of conferences. The first meeting of the High-Level Working Group on the One-Stop Conference Organisation took place on 8th March. Subsequently, the One-Stop Conference Organisation was turned into a project in the PPP, with DG INTE in the lead. As part of the project, the Conference Ushers Unit was transferred to DG INTE as of the 1st of September 2017. Further efforts were also launched internally to structure and streamline the logistical support to conferences.

In September 2017, discussions started with DG ITEC and other stakeholders on a spin-off project of OSCO (OSCO-REGIS), i.e. a centralised database and single platform for managing the workflows related to participants' registration, accreditation and management. This will address the inefficiencies stemming from the numerous, largely manual processes currently being used by conference and event organisers for that purpose.

Building up on the cooperation already achieved in the area of conference management at the level of the High Level Working Group, an 'OSCO stakeholder network' was created to allow for a more intense, operational involvement of the DGs involved in the provision of conference services.

On 11 December 2017, a new strategy for the modernisation of conference management was adopted by the Bureau and DG INTE was entrusted with its administrative and logistical implementation. In order to follow up on these decisions, a new Directorate for Conference Organisation was created.

The modernisation of interpretation

In 2017 the modernisation process of the interpretation services proceeded. Attention continued to be paid to individual and unit output in interpretation and to ensuring fairness in interpreting assignments. The output calculation – the average weekly number of interpretation hours per interpreter – was further refined and became DG INTE's lead indicator. In addition to the above, the workflows between the Interpretation Directorate and the Directorate for Organisation and Planning were reviewed and the cooperation between the Programming Unit and the Heads of Language Units was intensified, with the latter playing an increasing role in assuring that the interpreter assignments of their units are optimised, while an appropriate balance between the workloads of the individual interpreters is achieved. As a result, average unit output increased from 11:54 hours/week in 2014, when work on this indicator first started, to 13:34 hours/week in 2017. In addition, the number of interpreters with a weekly average of less than 11 hours/week decreased from 86 in 2014 to 9 in 2017 with only one interpreter exceeding an average of over 17 hours/week.

Improving efficiency in the implementation of the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism

Continuous efforts were undertaken in order to match the recruitment of external interpreters (ACIs) very closely with the interpretation needs of the institution. This was combined with efforts to increase individual and unit output. The net result was a decrease of 1.7% in the volume of ACI recruitment from the previous year, while the demand of interpretation did not drop.

The volume of ACIs recruited for the other institutions decreased by 30%. The largest contributing factor to this was the discontinuation of provision for the meetings of the European Commission in Luxembourg in July 2017. Demand for other institutional clients decreased as well, but it remained within the usual margin of fluctuation.

Interpreter working conditions

In spring 2017, the Secretary General launched a third attempt to reach an agreement with the interpreters' representatives on a new set of working conditions. The conferral procedure lasted until the summer recess, without yielding an agreement on a final text for interpreters' working conditions. On 14 July 2017 the Secretary General revoked the interpreter working conditions of 2006 and introduced a new set of rules, which entered into force on 1 July 2017. In the second half of October, discussions with the staff committee started on these new rules.

Closer cooperation with the client services

Following the recommendations of the IAS report on the implementation of the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism to 'foster cooperation and dialogue on other issues in the demand and supply of interpretation facilities', an Operational Coordination Group (OCG) was set up between DG INTE (chairing), DG IPOL and DG EXPO. Besides questions relating to the implementation and follow-up of the IAS report, operational issues of common interest are also discussed, both in the formal meetings of the OCG and in additional working parties and in ad hoc meetings.

Adapting to a changing environment

In 2017, work towards this objective included reviewing a number of work processes internal to DG INTE, with a view to streamlining resources, as well as a number of training activities in order to acquire new skills and enhance the DG's ability to effectively manage change.

A screening was conducted of both the financial initiation function, on the one hand, and secretarial support functions, on the other. The results of these exercises will feed into the broader reflections about the DG's transformation plan.

A review was also conducted of the circuits for the creation and approval of mission orders, as well as the handling of expenses declarations, with view to simplifying and consolidating of the procedures. Following this analysis, the Management Team of DG INTE adopted new circuits, which entered into force on 01 January 2018.

As regards acquiring management skills, DG INTE focused in particular on change management and on key performance indicator.

Language learning and thematic training by interpreters

To ensure that language learning by staff interpreters remains aligned with the needs of the service and to facilitate long-term workload balancing, the obligation for every staff interpreter to achieve a target of 5 passive or retour languages over the course of his/her career was strictly implemented and language learning paths were agreed with all staff interpreters who do not yet have 5 languages in their language combination.

Specific language classes were organised both for staff interpreters and ACIs. Bursaries were granted to ACIs for language learning. One summer university for 25 interpreters with DE as a passive language was organised in Austria (Vienna and Salzburg).

Thematic and professional skills training for interpreters was organised both with in-house expertise and with external trainers.

The Knowledge Profiles project (INTE PPP number 4) started in September with two groups: 12 staff interpreters' participate in the LAW group and 7 staff interpreters participate in the ECON group. To increase horizontal cooperation across DGs, the training project has been opened to other DGs. 3 DGs have positively replied to the invitation (COMM, PRES, LS).

Upgrading the technical facilities

The continuation of the PPP for Increased Automation of Conference Room Installations was underway in 2017. 14 additional rooms were renovated in Strasbourg and the Central Control Room in Brussels received a significant upgrade to facilitate the remote supervision of the automated meeting rooms. To avoid the need for two successive renovations (with associated duplicate costs), it was decided to continue replacing both audio-visual and conference equipment when renovating the meeting rooms in Strasbourg, in order to prepare for the full implementation of the OSCO project. This initiative started in 2017 and additional appropriations were secured in the 2017 mopping up procedure to enable DG INTE to continue this work in 2018.

The project to deploy an electronic system of communication (e-Poster - PPP) also continued, reaching the first milestones in 2017.

Awareness-raising

In the context of the Parliamentary Project Portfolio, the project on Best Practices for Working in Multilingual Meetings, 7 animations were produced to promote the use of best practices in multilingual meetings. In the course of 2018, these animations will be used during the awareness raising campaign on various media (e.g. screens inside and outside of the meeting rooms) and distributed via online media. Numerous interviews were granted to the media to increase awareness of the added value of interpretation. In view of the acute shortage of Danish interpreters, DG INTE, together with the European Commission and the Court of Justice interpretation services, promoted the setting up of an interpreter training course in Denmark. As a result, in 2018 a new interpretation course will be launched in Aarhus. An intensive aware-raising campaign was prepared in 2017 to support this initiative.

Interpreter support tool

A feasibility study on the use of speech recognition technology was conducted and provided an overview of the market for state-of-the-art solutions. The capabilities of the existing solutions were tested on parliamentary speeches and the potential use of such technology as

a support for interpreters discussed in a series of workshops with technology providers. The conclusion was that while the technology is not ripe yet to specifically support interpreters, it may be very well applied in other use cases in the parliamentary environment (e.g. accessibility of parliamentary debates). The results of the study are used as a basis for a future Proof-of-Concept that should be implemented in the framework of the larger project on Speech- to- Text and Translation" managed by the Office of the Secretary General.

Concerning the "Interpreter Support Tool", the Business Case was adapted based on tests with a pilot group of users. The revised business case and adjusted budget for the Phase II of the project were introduced on the IT plan 2018.

Documentation

The documentation service, now within the Interpreter Support and Training Unit, aims to ensure the provision of meeting-related documentation to support interpreters. A total of 23.584 documents for 4263 meetings were uploaded to the Meeting Information and Notes Application (MINA) tool in 2017. Between March and September 2017 the Documentation Service at the Interpreter Support and Training Unit met all the committee secretariats to discuss DG INTE's to-date and future co-operation with them as regards the provision of meeting documentation for interpreters.

Succession planning and cooperation with universities

As part of the implementation of the new strategy for cooperation with universities, a total of 227 students and trainers from 27 universities visited DG INTE. Furthermore 13 universities received virtual or on site pedagogical assistance at their final exams.

The Pre-Selection Tool (PST) managed by DG INTE is intended to contribute to the improvement of the success rate and to lower the costs of inter-institutional freelance interpreter accreditation tests. The PST was used continuously for all inter-institutional accreditation tests in 2017. Based on the experience gathered in the 2016 test cycle, the test procedures were streamlined and the tool was further developed to ensure increased consistency in the application of the assessment criteria to be applied by all evaluators trained in them.

In 2017, 47 Virtual Classes were organised and a total of 26 EU and non-EU partner universities received remote teaching assistance by professional conference interpreters. In addition, a pilot coaching programme was launched with the Virtual Coaching Tool (VCT), a web-based e-learning application for providing one-to-one remote interpretation coaching assistance.

Inter-Institutional Cooperation

The staff interpreter structured exchange programme with DG SCIC of the European Commission during the Strasbourg sessions weeks continued in 2017. The structured exchange is a useful instrument that gives the opportunity to colleagues of both institutions to become acquainted with the work and the proceedings in the other institution. It also contributes to finding a solution for EP staff members who cannot travel to Strasbourg for medical or other reasons.

DG INTE held the presidency of the Awareness Raising and Outreach WG and of the Coordination of the Committee for Interpretation (CCI) in the framework of the Executive Committee on Interpretation (ECI)/Inter-Institutional Committee on Translation and

Interpretation (ICTI). DG INTE also continued to chair the Working Group on Training in IAMLADP (International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications, a UN-lead organisation).

Upgrading IT tools

In 2017, work progressed to upgrade a number of IT tools. There were projects on-going concerning:

- The Multipurpose Speech Bank (MSB): start of the development of a central video and audio repository for managing recorded speeches used for testing and training.
- The Meeting Request System (MRS).
- The Meeting Information and Notes Application (MINA)
- The System for Assignments Management (SAM)
- The Mobile Interpreter Virtual Office (MIVO)

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

The overview of the application of the minimum control standards set out in Annex 6.8.

The Budget Unit provides ex ante verification of all financial transactions of the DG. This work is done by a team of 2 ex-ante verifiers. The total number of files checked by the ex-ante verification team in 2017 was 1.637 transactions (this includes both FINORD and WEBCONTRACT). The 'procurement help desk function' (assured by 1 AD procurement expert) checks the DGs procurement procedures above the threshold of €15.000 before launching. For those procedures above €60.000 there is a two stage check, the first before publication and the second before the award of the contract. The procurement help desk and the ex-ante verifiers give advice to the operational units on an ongoing basis. This part of the work is not easily quantifiable but it is appreciated by the operational units.

All invoices were paid within an average period of 13.88 days, which is three days earlier than the average for Parliament as a whole (16.91 days). and no late interest was paid in respect of any invoices.

These controls are complemented and supported by the ex post control activities performed by the Total Quality Management Unit. The two units meet and discuss on a regular basis, issues to be addressed and for input to the control findings and recommendations.

The Budget unit organised meetings for financial and operational initiators in the DG during the course of the year. A workshop was arranged by the Budget unit to explain the principles and meaning of placing '*conforme aux faits*' on invoices as part of the standard training for newly empowered staff.

An internal working group of DG INTE (BUDGET, TQM and ACI Payment Unit) finalised a workflow and a draft guidance document to establish a harmonised procedure for the recording and reporting of exceptions and non-compliance events. This work contributed to the elaboration of a guidance document established at central level by providing DG FINs with the detailed results of its internal reflections.

In 2017, an in-depth review of existing mission order circuits and declaration of expenses circuits was performed in DG INTE. Key conclusions regarding the overall coherence of the system in place, potential bottlenecks and possible options for rationalisation were assessed in detail with senior management. At year-end, the Management Team adopted a revised set of workflows. Changes adopted will simplify and bring uniformity to the procedures across the DG, taking into account the specific needs of different services.

Ways to further increase awareness on internal control standards were considered. Following a brainstorming session organised by DG FINS, a self-assessment questionnaire was drawn up within DG INTE concerning Minimum Internal Control Standard nr 8 on processes and procedures. This questionnaire will eventually support a presentation of the MICS concerned to the DG INTE financial actors' network. This will also provide for a possible sharing of experience. Moreover, in 2018, further tools and guidelines are expected at central level and will be duly taken into account.

A Risk Management Team is in place in DG INTE (composed of the Director for Resources, the Adviser to the Director-General, the Total Quality Management Head of Unit and one AD staff member). In order to enhance the synergies with Business Continuity Management in a cost-efficient and consistent way, the Risk Management Team has been entrusted with the coordination and monitoring of Business Continuity related initiatives within DG INTE and in cooperation with the central Business Continuity Management Unit.

Regarding the cost / effectiveness of controls, in the absence of a methodology specifically adapted to the needs of the Parliament, it is difficult to provide a reliable analysis. In 2017, the number of staff involved in controls remained unchanged. There are currently 2 ex-ante verifiers of financial transactions and 1 procurement expert checking tender files, they all work in the Budget Unit. There is also 1 ex-post controller working in the Total Quality Management Unit (following a combined approach of transaction testing and system review). If, however, the definition of controls is considered in a broader sense then one could include part of the work done by both operational and financial initiators whose role also includes verification work and their respective Heads of the Units and eventually Directors, all of whom have a verification role.

4. CONCLUSIONS

2017 was a year dedicated to the on-going modernisation of DG INTE. In the area of interpretation, discussions continued on the interpreter working conditions and the lead indicator system was developed. The One-Stop Conference Organisation project was launched and this culminated in the decision on the creation of a new Directorate for Conference Organisation.

5. DECLARATION BY THE AUTHORISING OFFICER BY DELEGATION

I, the undersigned, Agnieszka WALTER-DROP

Director-General for Interpretation and Conferences

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.

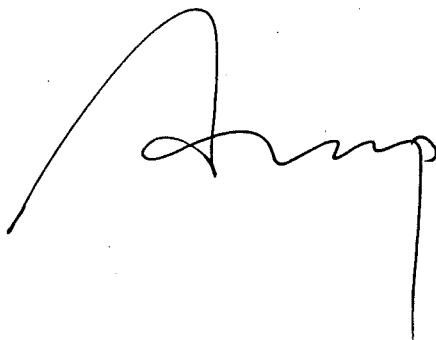
This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgment and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of self-assessment, ex post controls and remarks by the Internal Audit Service, as well as the lessons learned from the reports of the Court of Auditors for financial years prior to that for 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 JAN 2018**

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Drop', written over a horizontal line.

6. ANNEXES

6.1 *2017 budget implementation statement*

- 6.1.1. **Current appropriations** (nature 0)
- 6.1.2. **Automatic carryovers** (nature 2)
- 6.1.3. **Non-automatic carryovers** (nature 6)
- 6.1.4. **Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue** (nature 7)
- 6.1.5. **Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue carried over**
(nature 5)
- 6.1.6. **Specific expenditure commitments/assigned revenue carried over**
(nature 3)
- 6.1.7. **Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue** (nature 9)

ANNEX 6.1.1

DG. INTE

Situation des Crédits courants Exercice: 2017 (en EUR)

Edité le 15/01/2018 à 16:50

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits Initiaux	Virements+ Budg. Suppl.	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	% Util.	Paiements Effectués	Solde des Engag. E.C.	Crédits Disponibles
01404-04	STAGES, SUBVENTIONS ET ECHANGE DE FONCTIONNAIRES: SUBVENTIONS POUR FORMATION ET BOURSES ACCORDEES POUR LE PERFECTIONNEMENT D'INTERPRETES DE CONFERENCE ET FRAIS ANNEXES	229.500,00	-140.000,00	89.500,00	79.682,75	89,03	78.197,17	1.485,58	9.817,25
1405	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	46.244.000,00	1.345.860,00	47.589.860,00	47.589.860,00	100,00	45.052.351,27	2.537.508,73	0,00
02103-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - ACTIVITE RECURENTE DE GESTION DES APPLICATIONS TIC	210.000,00	-81.365,00	128.635,00	128.634,32	100,00	48.049,38	80.584,94	0,68
02105-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - INVESTISSEMENTS EN PROJETS-INTE- PROJETS IT DECENTRAISES	0,00	193.600,00	193.600,00	192.992,00	99,69	30.660,30	162.331,70	608,00
02140-04	ACHAT, RENOUELEMENT, LOCATION, ENTRETIEN ET RAPARATION DE MATERIEL ET D'INSTALLATIONS TECHNIQUES - CONFERENCES	7.000.000,00	3.600.000,00	10.600.000,00	10.599.895,13	100,00	4.468.377,94	6.131.517,19	104,87
3042	REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS	1.165.000,00	50.000,00	1.215.000,00	1.104.243,32	90,88	863.336,43	240.906,89	110.756,68
03245-04	ORGANISATION DE COLLOQUES, SEMINAIRES ET ACTIONS CULTURELLES: SOUTIEN AU MULTILINGUISME Y COMPRIS LE PROGRAMME DE SUBVENTION DESTINE AUX UNIVERSITES , ECOLES ET AUTRES QUI FOURNISSENT UNE FORMATION EN INTERPRETATION	485.000,00	-50.000,00	435.000,00	429.739,84	98,79	238.231,10	191.508,74	5.260,16
Total Général		55.333.500,00	4.918.095,00	60.251.595,00	60.125.047,36	99,79	50.779.203,59	9.345.843,77	126.547,64

ANNEX 6.1.2

DG. INTE

Situation des Crédits reportés automatiques

Exercice: 2017 (en EUR)

Edité le 15/01/2018 à 16:50

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits Reportés	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	Palements Effectués	% Util.	Crédits Disponibles	Reliquat de Conversion
1402	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	3.600.177,71	3.600.177,71	3.600.177,71	3.594.283,14	99,84	5.894,57	0,00
01404-04	ACTIONS DE FORMATIONS (Y COMPRIS LES SUBVENTIONS ET BOURSES ACCORDEES	504,37	504,37	504,37	444,67	88,16	59,70	0,00
02103-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - ACTIVITES RECURENTES DE GESTION DES APPLICATIONS TIC	53.669,27	53.669,27	53.669,27	53.669,18	100,00	0,09	0,00
02105-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - INVESTISSEMENTS EN PROJETS-INTE- PROJETS IT DECENTRAISES	69.747,00	69.747,00	69.747,00	69.747,00	100,00	0,00	0,00
02140-04	ACHAT, RENOUVELLEMENT, LOCATION, ENTRETIEN ET RAPARATION DE MATERIEL ET D'INSTALLATIONS TECHNIQUES - CONFERENCES	4.605.741,13	4.605.741,13	4.605.741,13	4.448.721,03	96,59	157.020,10	0,00
3042	REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS	345.578,92	345.578,92	345.578,92	187.808,83	54,35	157.770,09	0,00
03245-04	ORGANISATION DE COLLOQUES, SEMINAIRES ET ACTIONS CULTURELLES: SOUTIEN AU MULTILINGUISME Y COMPRIS LE PROGRAMME DE SUBVENTION DESTINE AUX UNIVERSITES , ECOLES ET AUTRES QUI FOURNISSENT UNE FORMATION EN INTERPRETATION	210.770,37	210.770,37	210.770,37	152.337,76	72,28	58.432,61	0,00
Total Général		8.886.188,77	8.886.188,77	8.886.188,77	8.507.011,61	95,73	379.177,16	0,00

ANNEX 6.1.3

DG. INTE

Situation des crédits reportés non automatiques Exercice: 2017 (en EUR)

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits Initiaux	Virements+ Budg. Suppl.	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	Palements Effectués	Solde des Engag. E.C.	Crédits Disponibles
Total Général		0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00

ANNEX 6.1.4

DG. INTE

Situation des Crédits de dépenses spécifiques/RA

Exercice: 2017 (en EUR)

Edité le 15/01/2018 à 16:50

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits an. cumulés.	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	% Util.	Paielements Effectués	Solde des Engag. E.C.	Crédits Disponibles
01404-04	ACTIONS DE FORMATIONS (Y COMPRIS LES SUBVENTIONS ET BOURSES ACCORDEES	506,72	506,72	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	506,72
01405-01	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	4.242.884,19	4.242.884,19	4.088.725,07	96,37	3.679.268,07	409.457,00	154.159,12
02103-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - INVESTISSEMENTS EN PROJETS-INTE- PROJETS IT DECENTRAISES	1.418,36	1.418,36	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	1.418,36
03042-03	REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES	9.427,66	9.427,66	1.863,00	19,76	0,00	1.863,00	7.564,66
03245-04	ORGANISATION DE COLLOQUES, SEMINAIRES ET ACTIONS CULTURELLES: SOUTIEN AU MULTILINGUISME Y COMPRIS LE PROGRAMME DE SUBVENTION DESTINE AUX UNIVERSITES , ECOLES ET AUTRES QUI FOURNISSENT UNE FORMATION EN INTERPRETATION	1.457,69	1.457,69	1.457,69	100,00	1.457,69	0,00	0,00
Total Général		4.255.694,62	4.255.694,62	4.092.045,76	96,15	3.680.725,76	411.320,00	163.142,14

ANNEX 6.1.5

DG. INTE

Situation des Crédits reportes dep. spec RA

Exercice: 2017 (en EUR)

Edité le 15/01/2018 à 16:50

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits Initiaux	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	Palements Effectués	% Util.	Solde des Engagements	Crédits Disponibles
01402-01	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	147.620,00	147.620,00	147.620,00	147.620,00	100,00	0,00	0,00
01404-04	ACTIONS DE FORMATIONS (Y COMPRIS LES SUBVENTIONS ET BOURSES ACCORDEES	36,00	36,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	36,00
02103-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - ACTIVITES RECURENTES DE GESTION DES APPLICATIONS TIC	30.112,50	30.112,50	28.483,50	0,00	0,00	28.483,50	1.629,00
03042-03	REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS	3.359,00	3.359,00	651,00	151,00	23,20	500,00	2.708,00
03245-04	ORGANISATION DE COLLOQUES, SEMINAIRES ET ACTIONS CULTURELLES: SOUTIEN AU MULTILINGUISME Y COMPRIS LE PROGRAMME DE SUBVENTION DESTINE AUX UNIVERSITES , ECOLES ET AUTRES QUI FOURNISSENT UNE FORMATION EN INTERPRETATION	2.750,00	2.750,00	2.750,00	2.750,00	100,00	0,00	0,00
Total Général		183.877,50	183.877,50	179.504,50	150.521,00	83,85	28.983,50	4.373,00

ANNEX 6.1.6

DG. INTE

Situation des engagements reportés de dépenses spécifiques /RA Exercice: 2017 (en EUR)

Edité le 15/01/2018 à 16:50

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits reportés	Crédits actuels	Engagements Contractés	Palements Effectués	% Util.	Reste à payer
01402-01	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	1.835.903,04	1.835.903,04	1.835.903,04	1.790.609,91	97,53	45.293,13
03042-03	REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS	1.003,50	1.003,50	1.003,50	1.003,50	100,00	0,00
03245-04	ORGANISATION DE COLLOQUES, SEMINAIRES ET ACTIONS CULTURELLES: SOUTIEN AU MULTILINGUISME Y COMPRIS LE PROGRAMME DE SUBVENTION DESTINE AUX UNIVERSITES , ECOLES ET AUTRES QUI FOURNISSENT UNE FORMATION EN INTERPRETATION	430,87	430,87	430,87	0,00	0,00	430,87
Total Général		1.837.337,41	1.837.337,41	1.837.337,41	1.791.613,41	97,51	45.724,00

ANNEX 6.1.7

DG. INTE

Situation des crédits de dépenses spécifiques /RA externes Exercice: 2017 (en EUR)

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits Initiaux	Virements+ Budg. Suppl.	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	Palements Effectués	Solde des Engag. E.C.	Crédits Disponibles
Total Général		0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00

Annexes 6.2 - 6.8

6.2 *Report on compliance with payment deadlines*

Rapport sur le respect des délais de paiement

<u>Invoices paid in 2017</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			645	645
	Total invoiced (€)			60.095.938,74	60.095.938,74
Paid outside time limit	Number of invoices	0	26		26
	Total invoiced (€)		223.419,85		223.419,85
	Amount of default interest (€)		293,77		293,77
Total number of invoices		0	26	645	671
Total invoiced (€)		0	223.419,85	60.095.938,74	60.319.358,59

The total number of invoices received in 2017 was 671 for a total amount of €60.319.358,59. Of these, 26 invoices were paid outside of the deadline, generating a total of €293,77 of interest. No invoice generated more than €200 of interest so no automatic payment was necessary. Furthermore, no contractor claimed interest under the €200 limit.

Of the 26 invoices paid outside of the delay, 19 had a delay of 5 days or less. For the remaining 7, several were delayed either due to arrival in December but could only be paid in January after the carried forward appropriations were made available in FINORD or were delayed in the summer holiday period when the responsible file manager was not available to provide the necessary further clarifications when queries were raised. The remaining invoices that were paid outside of the delay mainly relate to payment orders being incorrect and needing to be returned to the financial initiator for correction.

The average delay for payment of invoices in DG INTE in 2016 was 13,88 days.

6.3 List of exceptions - derogations from the rules

Liste des exceptions - dérogations à la réglementation

List of waivers/cancellations of receivables (Articles 91 and 92 RAP) - Not applicable for DG INTE in 2017

Derogations from the rules							
Réf. document	Ordonnateur compétent	Objet	Montant	Avis vérificateurs		Décision	
				conforme avec observation / non conforme	Justification	Ordonnateur compétent	Justification
ED 70203	Nick GHEYSEN as suppléant for Anna GRZYBOWSKA	Technical equipment for the meeting of the ECR Political Group in Berlin 26-30/06/2017	39.000€	non conformity / Over ruling	<p>The use of article 134.1.B was not accepted. The file did not include clear-cut evidence from the hotel that the proposed service provider had an exclusive contract with the venue. When asked to provide this on 15/06/2017, the hotel was not prepared to deliver this proof and left the AOSD without the proper legal basis to award the contract.</p> <p>There was not enough time to organise a proper procedure. A low value negotiated procedure inviting a minimum of 3 economic operators to submit offers with the required ex-ante publicity would need at least 3-4 working weeks to finalise a contract.</p>	Over ruling / validation	<p>Validation of the budgetary commitment and signature of the order form.</p> <p>The risk of not signing this contract would have resulted in considerable damage to the image of the EP not to mention the costs incurred if cancelled at the last minute.</p> <p>The meeting could not go ahead without the IT equipment in place. There is also the political fallout to consider, as this was the biggest ECR meeting of the year.</p>

6.4 Long-term contractual obligations - Not applicable for DG INTE in 2017

Obligations contractuelles de longue durée

Contractor	Subject	Duration ⁽¹⁾		Overall value of procurement operation	Contract expenditure in 2017	Renewal method ⁽²⁾	Description of monitoring measures
		Contract	Procurement operation				

(1) Months, years or open-ended

(2) Manual or automatic

6.5 ***Exceptional negotiated procedures (Articles 53 and 134) and competitive procedure with negotiation (135 RAP)***
Procédures négociées exceptionnelles (articles 53 et 134 RAP) et procédures concurrentielles avec négociation (135 RAP)

Name(s) of successful tenderer(s)	Subject	Amount	Legal basis	Grounds	Applicants		Eligibility criteria	Contract reference	PPF opinion date
					Invited:	For negotiations			
Biorganic Factory	Catering services for GREENS EFA GROUP Study DAYS 03-05/02/2017	€19.795	ART 134.1.b	Contractor has exclusive rights to provide catering services in the Bruxelles Environment BGE venue - copy of exclusive rights contract was verified	1	NP with 1 candidate	Offer conformed and price acceptable	INTE/2017/DOF/MCU/GR VERTS FEV17 BRUXELLES CATERING	n/a (€135.000)

6.6 *Results of ex-post evaluation*

Résultat des évaluations ex-post

The ex post controls were carried out in line with the updated strategy adopted in the beginning of 2015 and with the 2017 annual work programme. As in previous years and in the spirit of the strategy, the ex post activities were not limited to purely transaction-based checks but also included a process review.

The ex post controls were set up as follows:

- Transactions testing were carried out on budget lines which were either managed (at least partially) by newly appointed AOSDs or for which the nature of the expenditures had not been subject to ex post controls (or process review) in recent years.

As a result, ex post controls were performed on budget lines 2140-04¹, 3042-03²/04³ and 1404-04⁴. Altogether, for these budget lines, the amounts verified amounted to 6% of the payments made on current credits as of the end of the year 2017. Overall, no significant issue was detected with regard to the control objectives followed (i.e. checking whether the expenditures have been incurred, comply with all rules and administrative requirements and whether allocated funds have been used for their intended purpose as well as pay attention to topics highlighted in the past).). With regard to budget line 3042-03, the on-going issue regarding the late submission of invoices with one of the contractors providing services to the Meetings and Conferences Unit is closely followed by the relevant services.

Based on the transactions reviewed, a number of good practices were noted such as the inclusion of routing slips in payment files archived, the use of tailor-made checklists in some cases, the good understanding that the “certified correct” needs to be endorsed by a colleague close to the service provided or receipt of goods and the good level of information recorded in WebContracts.

Some comments, mainly of an administrative nature, were also made to support AOSDs in their efforts to continuously strengthen the controls in place. It was mainly related to the documentation of payment file, the update of templates used to communicate outside the service (as names change), the benefit of including in the payment file all internal checklists used, the filling in of checklists (indicate when a control point is “not applicable” rather than leaving the corresponding field blank), the filling in of the field “time limit for delivery” in order forms (where applicable), the continuous use of DG INTE internal guidelines concerning training of financial actors.

- An assessment of the degree of implementation of outstanding recommendations from previous ex post control work was performed (open actions were related to 2016 exercise). Out of 8 recommendations concerned, 7 were closed following satisfactory follow-up measures provided by the AOSDs concerned. The last one (concerning the added value of providing access to the Pericles application for Budget Unit’s actors involved in the ex-ante verification for payments to the EP travel agency concerning prepaid tickets issued to Conference Interpreting Agents) was closed following further assessment made by the

¹ *“Technical equipment and installations: Maintenance, use and repair of technical equipment and installations - conferences”*

² *“Meetings, congresses and conferences: Political group meetings”*

³ *“Meetings, congresses and conferences: other meetings”*

⁴ *“Graduate traineeships, grants and exchanges of officials: grants for training and further training of conference interpreters and related expenses”*

Budget Unit concluding that this was not needed given the circuit in place (no extra control layer needed).

- An in-depth review of existing mission order circuits and related declaration of expenses circuits was also performed. This review was requested by the Director-General in her capacity as Competent Authority (DG PERS being the AOD for the budget line concerned). It was carried out based on a desk review of mission order files and available documentation (e.g. empowerments of actors playing a role in the circuits). This desk review was complemented by extensive interviews with main actors concerned across the Directorate General.

Key conclusions regarding the overall coherence of the system in place, potential bottlenecks and possible options for rationalisation were assessed in detail with senior management. At year-end, a revised set of workflows was decided by senior management. Changes adopted will simplify and bring more uniformity to the procedures across the DG, taking into account the specific needs of different services.

6.7 *Sensitive posts*
Fonctions sensibles

A full analysis of sensitive posts was carried out in 2016. It was decided for 2017 that the analysis done in 2016 was considered far-reaching enough for its conclusions to be carried over to 2017.

6.8 Assessment of the implementation of the Minimum Internal Control Standards
Evaluation de la mise en oeuvre des normes minimales de contrôle interne

Self-assessment summary table

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

6.8 Assessment of the implementation of the Minimum Internal Control Standards

Section	Standard N°	Comments on achievement
1. Mission statement and values	1.Duties	The mission, role, objectives and tasks of the Directorate-General and each of its services are set out on the DG's intranet site EPIWEB. The job description and individual objectives of all staff are set out in the annual staff reports.
	2.Ethical & organisational values	All rules and regulations relating to staff conduct and responsibilities, and the official statute which includes matters relating to conflict of interest, are available to all staff on the intranet of the Institution. Furthermore, most links are also provided on the intranet site EPIWEB.
2. Human Resources	3. Allocation of staff and mobility	Mobility affects only part of the staff of DG INTE insofar as interpreting staff are not mobile. Other posts follow the normal rules and instructions issued. Post allocation is strictly according to the needs of the service and, of course, can in any case only be within the "envelopes" granted by DG PERS to each DG.
	4. Staff assessment & development	Staff assessment is made each year in the annual staff reporting procedure. The Human Resource Unit's Training Officer is available to assist and advise on all matters related to training and is responsible for coordinating the annual training programme for the DG, and a dedicated unit ensures appropriate career-long training for staff interpreters. The Budget Unit follows up and advises operational units on financial training matters in coordination with the training officer.
3. Planning and risk management	5. Objectives & performance indicators	<p>The objectives of the DG are established overall for the Directorate-General, and detailed between each Directorate and each Unit. These are sent to all staff and are also published on the intranet site of the DG. In the meantime the modernisation process of DG INTE also proceeded. In this context, the average interpretation unit output became DG INTE's lead indicator.</p> <p>A training course for all middle and senior managers on <i>Metrics and Key Performance Indicators</i> was held in December 2017</p>
	6.Risk management process	The role of DG INTE Risk Management Team remains instrumental in supporting risk detection and mitigation as well as in providing the Director General with an updated overview of DG INTE's risk register. In order to enhance the synergies with Business Continuity Management in a cost-efficient and consistent way, the Risk Management Team has been entrusted with the coordination and monitoring of BC-related initiatives within DG INTE and in cooperation with the central Business Continuity Management Unit. In the framework of the European Parliaments' focus on project risk management, the One Stop Conference Organisation project has been selected as DG INTE's lead project to be further assessed in the first semester of 2018.

4. Operations and Control activities	7. Operational set-up	<p>All sub-delegations (permanent and temporary) are the subject of a written and registered document. All financial delegations and empowerment decisions are recorded in writing and up-dated on the central register maintained by the Budget Unit.</p> <p>There is a central list of all financial actors published on EPIWEB (DG INTE Intranet), this is regularly updated.</p> <p>In 2017, an in-depth review of existing mission order circuits and declaration of expenses circuits was performed in DG INTE. Key conclusions regarding the overall coherence of the system in place, potential bottlenecks and possible options for rationalisation were assessed in detail with senior management. At year-end, the Management Team adopted a revised set of workflows. Changes adopted will simplify and bring uniformity to the procedures across the DG, taking into account the specific needs of different services.</p>
	8. Processes and procedures	<p>DG INTE financial circuit operates according to a semi-decentralised model. Financial and operational initiators and operational verifiers are working in the operational units. The ex-ante verification of files is dealt with in the Budget Unit. All procurement procedures above €15.000 are checked before launch by the Procurement Help Desk function, also within the Budget Unit.</p> <p>In the framework of the discussions on reporting of “exceptions” and “non-compliance events”, DG INTE proactively contributed to the elaboration of a corporate guidance by providing DG FINS with the detailed results of its internal reflexion on this particular topic.</p>
	9. Supervision by management.	<p>Most of the financial transactions in DG INTE are the result of a procurement procedure. All awarded contracts where the value is greater than €15.000 are subject to a prior approval by the procurement help desk before launch. Both the ex-ante verification team and the pre-checking of the procurement procedures are documented in a monitoring and workflow table enabling regular follow up and analysis.</p> <p>An ex post function has been in place in DG INTE since May 2013. Ex post controls was carried out in line with the updated strategy adopted in the beginning of 2015 and on the basis of an annual work programme. The satisfactory implementation by AOSDs of ex post control recommendations over the years is an indicator of the constructive approach towards continuous improvement.</p> <p>More details on the outcome of ex post controls performed in 2017 are provided in annex 6.6 of the report.</p>
	10. Business continuity	<p>On the basis of the initial Business Impact Analysis (BIA) carried out in the first semester of 2017, DG INTE was in a position to proactively contribute to the corporate BIA coordinated by the central Business Continuity Management unit. The BIA exercises and the IT outage which occurred in October 2017 at corporate level further evidenced DG INTE’s strong dependency on key IT</p>

		applications and, overall, on the EP IT infrastructure. The BIA process has been instrumental in disseminating BC principles, reasoning and techniques particularly at managers' level. A Business Continuity (BC) action plan, in line with central guidance, is being implemented within DG INTE in order to pave the way towards a fully-fledged BC plan. The EP central BC Manager is regularly kept informed of new developments or initiatives in the BC domain.
	11. Document management	Systematic and formal registration of incoming documents is recorded in GEDA. Centralised administrative archives have been set up and are maintained according to internal instructions to the institution. The financial archives are organised in the TRI building and all electronic archiving is up to date. The DG was involved in the drawing up of an EP-wide filing plan in the context of the GIDOC, and is working on its implementation.
5. Information & Financial reporting	12. Information and communication	Information concerning the financial irregularities panel is available via the intranet site of the EP, no separate internal procedures are deemed necessary. A full service meeting (DG, Directors and all HoU) is held once per month by the Director- General. Each Unit holds regular team meetings. Regular meetings are held between the Budget Unit and the Financial Initiators (from the operational services). The intranet site of the DG, EPIweb, is a well-used platform for communicating issues and information and for providing a first reference for administrative matters and work-related documents.
	13. Accounting and financial information	The accounting data, annual accounts and financial reporting are prepared in accordance with the Financial Regulation and its rules of application, with the general accounting principles and with the internal rules of the Parliament. DG INTE's budget implementation is monitored and reported on periodically in accordance with the relevant EP decision and resolutions, mainly addressed by the SG and DG FINS. It includes activity reports, preparation of budget estimates, discharge procedures, mopping up exercises etc. Work is still underway to review the Manual of Procedures for financial actors into a helpful and user-friendly guide. Due to staff shortages it has not been possible to finalise in 2017 and work will continue into the new exercise. Observation notes, file notes and comments on budget transactions are systematically registered in a workflow table used by the Budget Unit. All details of budgetary transactions and contracting are registered in Finord and /or Webcontracts
6. Evaluation and auditing	14. Evaluation of activities	In 2017, a number of work processes internal to DG INTE were reviewed, with a view to streamlining resources. A screening was conducted of both the financial initiation function, on the one hand, and secretarial support functions, on the other. The results of these exercises will feed into the broader reflections about the DG's transformation plan.

		2017 was a year dedicated to the on-going modernisation of DG INTE. In the area of interpretation, discussions continued on the interpreter working conditions and the lead indicator system was developed. The One-Stop Conference Organisation project was launched and culminated in the creation of a new Directorate for Conference Organisation
	15. Evaluation of internal control systems	Monitoring and evaluation are on-going exercises. Section 3 of the report provides a more detailed account.
	16. Audit reports	<p>As far as the audit report carried out by the Internal Audit Service on the implementation of the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism (released in July 2016) is concerned, 6 of the 10 actions falling under DG INTE's responsibility were subject to a first follow-up exercise in the last quarter of 2017. The Internal Auditor took note of the progress made on all actions. Among other achievements, the creation of an operational coordination group (OCG) which comprises representatives from DGs INTE, IPOL and EXPO as well as the regular meetings organised in 2017 allowed the Internal Auditor to reassess the residual exposure to risk of his first recommended action from "significant" to "moderate". This resulted in all open actions being now rated "moderate".</p> <p>It should be noted that DG INTE also contributed to the cross-DG Internal Audit engagement related to the Activity Reporting process, as it did for the engagement on Business Continuity Management in 2016.</p>