

ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT



Directorate-General for Logistics and
Interpretation for Conferences

20
19

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1. Executive summary

2019 was a European election year, with a lower volume of ordinary meeting activity for DG LINC and a correspondingly lower level of appropriations, but with periods of high intensity and unpredictable demand for interpreting and conference logistics, which peaked in the autumn during the intensive hearings of Commissioners-Designate and associated meetings.

It was also a year of adaptation and innovation. The DG took on an enhanced role in conference organisation, as mandated by the Bureau of the European Parliament in 2018. The focus was on paving the way to becoming the single interface for a range of high quality conference services for meeting, conference and event organisers at the European Parliament.

The first quarter of 2019 was particularly dynamic and fast moving. Considerable flexibility was required from its services in the run up to the European Elections in May, with meeting schedules changing sometimes at short notice. This had a direct impact on resource management and the ability to plan. The pre-election period culminated in the live debates of the *Spitzenkandidaten* and the European Election Night on 26 May. DG LINC played a pivotal role in these events, providing interpretation and conference technology support for live broadcasts from the EP Hemicycle.

A revised Code of Conduct for Multilingualism, regulating the provision of interpretation and

translation, was adopted by the EP Bureau in July 2019. This gave DG LINC an updated framework in which to operate and ensured that high-quality interpretation could be provided in a resource-efficient way, adapted to the needs of its users.

The DG also continued to adapt its working methods to the interpreter working conditions which were agreed and entered into effect the previous year, to make efficient use of the resources allocated to enabling multilingual parliamentary meetings.

Over the course of the year, the DG completed the transition to gain full responsibility for managing the logistics of events on the Esplanade Solidarność 1980.

In terms of social dialogue, the implementation of the interpreter working conditions was closely monitored by the Follow-Up Group on Working Conditions, in addition to regular quarterly meetings with interpreter representatives.

A series of unit-level metrics were determined at the end of 2019, in order to collect information on productivity and client satisfaction trends and to monitor progress with DG LINC objectives.

The budget execution rate remained consistently high across DG LINC (99.2%), with some minor exceptions where projects and activities inherently consisted of a high level of unpredictability. The budget for external

training was decentralised to DG LINC, allowing the DG to develop external activities in a more targeted way.

The first year of EP-wide AST mobility produced an increase in transfers in and out of the DG. Attempts to promote the attractiveness of the service and to welcome newcomers produced results, with a net positive balance of transfers in against transfers out of the DG.

DG LINC managed risk and business continuity with regular interactions taking place with the EP Risk and Business Continuity Manager. Good communication and awareness raising strengthened DG LINC's responsiveness to incidents. The DG's Incident Management Team can be activated within minutes to

respond to potential crises, and was convened several times in 2019. There were also continuous efforts to reinforce the internal control framework in the DG.

The DG concluded a project cycle under the 2017-2019 Strategic Execution Framework (SEF) and began a new cycle of projects under the 2019-2021 SEF at the beginning of the new parliamentary term. Activities were aligned with the new SEF, empowering Members of Parliament in multi-lingual meetings, with an innovative and client-facing approach.

ENVIRONMENT OF THE DIRECTORATE-GENERAL, OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS



2. Environment of the Directorate-General, objectives and results

2.1. The Directorate-General

DG LINC's mission is to provide linguistic, technical and logistical support for EP Members and bodies for the organisation of multilingual parliamentary and political meetings. DG LINC supports European parliamentary democracy by facilitating the legislative process and enabling citizens to follow and to take part in Parliament's work.

DG LINC aims to provide state-of-the-art meeting facilities and high quality interpretation services in a professional, flexible as well as sustainable and resource-efficient manner. User needs are at the centre of our activities, as shown by the creation of a single point of contact for conference organisers. The One-Stop Conference Organisation (OSCO) project, which was concluded in 2019, saw a widespread restructuring of back office processes, in order to create a more streamlined and comprehensive service for meeting organisers and Members of Parliament.

THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE DG

New Conference Infrastructure and Innovation Unit

In 2019, the Conference Technicians Unit was split into two units, to better serve the goal of remaining at the forefront of technological developments, while continuing to provide

high-quality technical support service to meetings. The newly formed Conference Infrastructure and Innovation Unit was charged with ensuring a first rate conference infrastructure, through renovation and innovating in the field. The Conference Technicians Unit remained responsible for the operation of fixed and mobile interpretation conference systems, projection systems and the recording of meetings.

Reorganisation and renaming of the Strategy Unit

In April, the Web Team moved to the DG LINC Strategy Unit from the IT Unit. This move reinforces the internal and external communication efforts of the DG's central services, by including the management of the DG Intranet EPIWeb and assistance with graphic design for events and publications. The name was correspondingly changed to the Strategy and Communication Unit.

The Strategy and Communication Unit continued to be responsible for communication and outreach activities in and outside of the DG and the development of key result indicators and other metrics. The Unit also coordinates inter-directorate activities in the DG and provides advice to senior management on strategy development.

Esplanade Solidarność 1980

A major milestone in the development of DG LINC's conference organisation capabilities was reached in 2019 when DG LINC took over the responsibility for the management of event logistics on the Esplanade Solidarność 1980.

Election recess activities

Over the election recess period in April-May 2019, an extensive and tailor made training catalogue was offered to all staff of the DG. DG LINC colleagues were given the opportunity to enlarge their skills base, and interpreters were given the opportunity to make intensive progress on language pathways, with a view to expanding their language combinations.

New Strategic Execution Framework and Innovation

Innovation was also at the centre of DG LINC activities, coinciding with the adoption of a new Strategic Execution Framework (SEF) for the EP. A new project cycle was launched in which DG LINC submitted 19 projects to be included in the DG's Project Portfolio, of which 7 are monitored at corporate level within the Parliament Project Portfolio (PPP). The DG LINC Innovation Days 20-21 June 2019 gave an opportunity for all DG staff to reflect on the future of their profession and to get better acquainted with the projects and project managers at the Project Fair.

The 19 projects that form part of the DG LINC Project Portfolio are all geared towards providing enhanced and holistic services to our clients, while taking into account and making best use of technological advances.

DG LINC projects which were included in the 2019-2021 PPP at corporate level are:

- Artificial Intelligence Chatbot Assistance for Conferences
- DG LINC metrics collection
- Moderation, webinars and event memory services for meetings and events
- One-Stop Booking for Catering and Exhibitions
- Participants' App for Conferences
- Remote services for events and virtual meetings
- Welcoming and Wayfinding for Participants

Progress with the 2017-2019 Strategic Execution Framework projects

DG LINC had 10 PPP projects in the 2017-2019 project cycle which concluded in 2019. The corporate projects were the One-Stop Conference Organisation (OSCO) and REGIS - EP Conference and Event Registration Tool.

Good progress was made with both of these corporate projects. Increased capacity for conference logistics was ensured in 2018 with the creation of a new Directorate for Conference Organisation, which put in place innovative working methods and workflows. The directorate helped take the OSCO project forward and major milestones were reached during the year. The REGIS project entered the final phase with the purchase of dedicated software at the end of 2019.

2.2. Key results and progress towards achieving objectives

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF DG LINC FOR 2019:

- To supply state-of-the-art meeting facilities and high quality interpretation services, in a professional, flexible as well as sustainable and resource-efficient manner;
 - To pave the way for the smooth and coordinated delivery of conference services for meeting, conference and event organisers at the European Parliament, through the creation of a single point of contact with the client.
-

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF DG LINC FOR 2019:

- a) To continue to implement the Strategy for the Modernisation of Conference Management, as adopted by the Bureau on 11th December 2017, building the capacity to drive and deploy innovative projects in the area of conference management;
- b) To assist the transition to the EP IX legislature both in concluding the activities of the current legislature as well as organising and starting the work of the next.
- c) To adapt to the changes required by the evolving Brexit situation and its administrative, organisational and linguistic consequences;
- d) To develop and consolidate the new identity and structure of the DG, through a targeted and inclusive communication campaign to external and internal stakeholders;

e) To continue the modernisation of the DG, in order to adapt to the changing environment, with special emphasis on identifying and acquiring new skills, streamlining resources and administrative work processes and providing state of the art IT tools to support them, and to promote an efficient use of the working time of all staff categories.

f) To ensure full implementation of Resource Efficient Full Multilingualism based on the following principles: efficient workflows, optimised individual and unit output, guaranteed social protection, high quality standards and fairness. To consolidate the implementation of the revised Interpreter Working Conditions, including monitoring within the framework of the Follow Up Group, with a special focus on resource-efficiency, workload distribution and work-life balance of staff.

g) To build further the system of metrics and indicators to measure the workload of interpreters with a view to ensuring compliance with the 40-hour working week, as laid down in the Staff Regulations, and to continue to apply the provisions of the Cornerstones.

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

i) To maintain the high quality and further improve services to Members, bodies, political groups and other clients by means of organisational measures to enhance resource-efficiency and capacity usage in the area of

meeting and conference management, upgrading the technical facilities in the meeting rooms, and more particularly, by further developing and implementing the project on One-Stop Conference Organisation.

j) To provide assistance to Members and other clients, external organisers and EP staff for the preparation and running of meetings and events, including safety in the meeting rooms, and to provide support to the EP Protocol Service during high level visits.

k) 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.

l) To develop further the competencies of all professional categories in the DG, in order to continuously improve outcomes and client satisfaction.

m) 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 the DG LINC outreach strategy.

n) To actively accompany technological developments and innovation in all areas of DG LINC activity. To strengthen resource-efficiency in the field of conference organisation, meeting management and interpretation by upgrading IT tools and technical facilities.

o) To foster innovative and collaborative working methods inside the DG and inter-DG

cooperation, in particular through the creation and implementation of a Community of Innovation.

p) To use inter-institutional cooperation where savings and efficiency gains are possible as well as to exchange best practices and mutual operational assistance.

q) To foster staff engagement and commitment through participatory initiatives and by making full use of all available forms of social dialogue;

r) To establish a comprehensive plan of activities for all DG LINC staff for the election period, including technical equipment renovation and maintenance in EP premises, specific and tailor-made training initiatives for all staff categories, preparation of awareness raising campaigns inter alia for new MEPs, etc.;

s) To promote the principle of equality, diversity and inclusiveness as well as wellbeing of all staff.

RESULTS ACHIEVED - GENERAL OBJECTIVES

During this European Election year, DG LINC continued to provide high-quality conference and interpreting services in the EP, enabling parliamentary work and thus contributing to democratic accountability. As 2019 was a European election year and saw hearings of Commissioners-Designate for a new College of Commissioners, DG LINC enabled the European Parliament to play its role in setting up a new composition of institutional bodies for the next five years.

2019 was the concluding year of the 2017-2019 project cycle, during which DG LINC reinforced its role in conference organisation in the European Parliament, in accordance with Strategy for the Modernisation of Conference Management, as adopted by the Bureau on 11th December 2017. 2019 also saw the beginning of a new project cycle where DG LINC's projects for 2019-2021 are included under the strategic programme entitled "Conference of the Future".

RESULTS ACHIEVED - SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

a) The one-stop approach to conference organisation is now fully mainstreamed in DG LINC, following the conclusion of the OSCO project in 2019.

b) High-quality interpretation services were guaranteed in 3 797 regular parliamentary meetings, with an average of 12:19 interpretation hours per week per interpreter (DG LINC's lead indicator). 2019 was an election year and parliamentary activity was interrupted during the electoral recess, and the appointment of a new Commission also impacting activity levels.

c) DG LINC prepared for Brexit by launching a campaign to attract English native speakers: the "EU still needs you campaign", supported by visits to UK and Irish universities (Bath and Galway), a DG LINC stand at the London Language Show and the #ThinkLanguages event in Dublin.

d) Following the best practice campaign "DG LINC interpreters get your message across", several initiatives progressed in 2019 including

the development of speed and overrun alerts to support chairs in the management of meetings.

e) The OSCO project considerably streamlined work processes related to conference organisation. The Meeting Request System (MRS), progressively rolled out in 2019, has become the central tool for the booking of meetings in the Parliament, with 15 167 requests managed through the system in 2019 (63% of all meetings booked).

f) The Interpreter Working Conditions Follow-Up Group met monthly in 2019 in order to guarantee Resource Efficient Full Multilingualism and correct implementation of the revised interpreter working conditions.

g) A working group was set up and met periodically in 2019 to discuss with staff interpreters the inclusion of non-interpreting activities in personal counters, and a system of metrics for productivity and client satisfaction at unit level was developed centrally.

h) The Operational Coordination Group met regularly in 2019, bringing together stakeholders from different services, in addition to the creation of efficiencies via the Meeting Request System (MRS).

i) To further modernise the services DG LINC offers, new services were built into the existing modernised conference structure. The "One-Stop Participation Management" system was finalised with the acquisition of the REGIS/Event Works event management software, and the "One-stop Overview and Reporting" system guaranteed structured planning, feedback collection and event debriefing routines.

j) 58 touchpads were installed in small meeting rooms for MEPs and DG PERS administrative rooms, allowing for on-the-spot reservation and versatile use. 9 meeting rooms in Strasbourg were equipped with fixed videoconferencing installations and steps were taken towards integrated videoconferencing and webstreaming with cameras managed by DG LINC. 6 additional conference rooms were fully renovated in Strasbourg as well as one in the ANTALL building in Brussels. In Brussels, all meeting rooms are equipped with new sound recording equipment and end-user facilities.

k) An extensive awareness raising campaign rolled out after the European Elections in May 2019 targeted both returning and new Members of Parliament and their assistants (APAs). Awareness raising took place via the MEP.learn catalogue, induction training for APAs, animations about multilingual meetings and an interactive brochure.

l) A tailor-made training programme was developed for the election recess period for all DG LINC staff, comprising classroom training and intensive language courses. Thematic and specialist training continued, with 10 staff interpreters acquiring Knowledge Profiles in 2019, and more than 100 staff starting on new language learning pathways.

m) DG LINC's cooperation with universities training interpreters continued in 2019. A system of grants, pedagogical assistance, remote teaching assistance and student visits supported future interpreters to ensure continuity. The DG's presence on social media and EP outreach events, such as the Open Day in Brussels and Strasbourg or Multilingualism Day further increase visibility to language

professionals. An emphasis was brought on Danish as a deficit language, with support to the interpreting course in Aarhus and an intensive course for candidates to accreditation.

n) The creation of a unit focused on Conference Infrastructure and Innovation in 2019 helped DG LINC focus its efforts on harnessing new technological advances. The DG remained at the forefront of conference technology standards by participating in technical working group meetings of the International Organization for Standardization in Ottawa (June 2019).

o) Innovative and collaborative methods within the DG were developed in 2019. The event knowledge database was built and the Community of Innovation enhanced further the use of interactive methods for events and conferences. Live polling apps were widely used.

p) DG LINC continued working closely with other institutions, both in providing conference services and interpreter exchanges with the European Commission, Committee of the Regions, Economic and Social Committee and the UN, for efficiency gains and best practice.

q) A number of participatory initiatives took place over the year. DG LINC Innovation Day in June gave an opportunity to introduce the new DG LINC SEF and the project portfolios. Meet and Greet sessions were held, to introduce different units in the DG and Newcomers' Day seminars continued to introduce new colleagues to the DG.

r) A comprehensive package of training was provided to interpreters for the electoral recess

period from week 17-22, during which interpreting activity was low.

Attendance was high, peaking at around 97% of available staff in week 20. Training covered intensive language learning, knowledge profiles in specialist subjects and general thematic training.

s) DG LINC worked to support its disabled staff and freelance interpreters, particularly with active participation in the DG INLO initiative “Improved Accessibility of EP Buildings”, and developed a checklist for accessible meetings and events, to be further consolidated in 2020.

| OBJECTIVE | INDICATORS | RESULTS FOR THE 2019 EXERCISE |
|-----------|--|-------------------------------|
| | MEETINGS | |
| | Number of requests managed using the meeting request system (MRS) | 15 167 |
| e, h | Percentage of meetings managed using the meeting request system (MRS) | 63% |
| f | Average weekly number of staff interpretation hours per interpreter (lead indicator) | 12:19 |
| | <i>Total EP meeting sessions with interpretation provided in 3 places of work</i> | 3 797 |
| f | Number of meeting days outside 3 places of work with interpretation provided | 153 |
| | Number of meetings outside of places of work organised by the conference service (Political groups, Conf. Presidents and Bureau) | 26 |
| | <i>Meetings with interpretation for other institutions in the three places of work</i> | 277 |
| | <i>Meetings with interpretation for other institutions outside the three places of work</i> | 9 |
| | <i>Total meetings with interpretation for other institutions</i> | 286 |
| h,i | <i>Requests for meetings in the EP premises by outside bodies</i> | |
| | Brussels | 44 |
| | <i>Members' exhibitions</i> | |
| | Number of requests processed | 469 |
| | Number of events supported | 206 |
| | Meeting attended by a conference technician | 3 667 |
| | Meetings requiring set-up in the meeting room | 3 208 |
| | Meetings managed remotely from central control room | 5 725 |
| | Number touchpads installations for small meeting rooms | 58 |
| | Number of new fixed videoconferencing equipment installations in Str meeting rooms | 5 |
| | <i>Total number of meetings attended by ushers</i> | 12 462 |
| | INTERPRETATION | |
| | <i>Total interpretation days in for the needs of all institutions</i> | 66 468 |
| b,f | Total of staff interpretation days | 28 272 |
| | Total of conference interpreting agents (ACI) days | 38 196 |

| | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| | TRAINING | |
| | <i>Thematic training organised for staff and freelance interpreters:</i> | |
| | Total events | 62 |
| | Total participants staff / freelancers | 698 / 276 |
| | <i>Professional skills training for staff interpreters:</i> | |
| | Total participants | 250 |
| | <i>Knowledge profiles for interpreters</i> | |
| | Total participants | 10 |
| | <i>Language enhancement training in cooperation with EP services and other institutions :</i> | |
| I,r | Total participants staff / freelancers | 126 / 31 |
| | <i>Total number of participants in language courses starting in 2019 :</i> | |
| | In-house specific staff / freelancers | 104 / 10 |
| | e-learning staff / freelancers | 5 / 11 |
| | Private tuition staff | 12 |
| | <i>External long/short term language courses for staff :</i> | 47 |
| | Exchange scheme with EP liaison offices | 5 |
| | <i>Safety training:</i> | |
| | Total events | 15 |
| | Total participants | 165 |
| | TESTING | |
| | Total number of added languages by staff interpreters | 30 |
| I | Total number of added languages by freelancer | 25 |
| | SUCCESSION PLANNING | |
| | Number of memorandum of understanding signed with universities | 30 |
| | Number of grants awarded to universities | 6 |
| | Number of universities who received pedagogical assistance at final exams | 23 |
| | Number of universities who received pedagogical assistance during EP electoral recess | 12 |
| m | <i>Remote teaching assistance (virtual classes)</i> | |
| | number of partner universities | 27 |
| | number of virtual classes | 47 |
| | Total n° of visits by universities | 29 |
| | Bursaries granted to ACIs for language learning/enhancement | 33 |
| | SCIC/LINC INTERPRETER STAFF EXCHANGE | |
| p | Number of interpreter days from SCIC to LINC | 181 |
| | Number of interpreter days from LINC to SCIC | 276 |

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management remains embedded in DG LINC operations. DG LINC's Business Continuity and Risk Management Team composed of the Resources Director, the Head of the Quality Management Unit and the Advisers to the DG met at regular intervals to monitor the state-of-play and discuss possible emerging issues. Key topics were also addressed in the DG LINC Management Team meetings as well as at monthly meetings of middle and senior management.

Key risks associated with DG LINC's objectives are set out below:

- The shortage of suitable interpretation resources on the market and succession planning remained of significant importance to DG LINC in 2019. Support to universities is in place through a variety of channels. Furthermore, a regular presence at EP corporate outreach events (OPEN days and European Youth Event) is ensured. The organisation of a Multilingualism Day (together with DG TRAD and DG COMM) attracted over 2,600 visitors in September 2019. Outreach campaigns to universities in the UK and Ireland focused on promoting a continuing need for English-speaking conference interpreters. Furthermore, an inter-institutional campaign was launched to promote the Danish Language at Aarhus University in Denmark.

- Measures to improve conditions for delivering high quality interpretation continued in 2019 with a combination of awareness raising

initiatives amongst MEPs and APAs particularly in the framework of induction training for the new Members, as well as measures taken within the framework of projects to promote best practice in multilingual meetings and to raise awareness about the interpreting service. Nonetheless, as 58% of MEPs elected to the 9th Legislature are new to the European Parliament, it is considered that this risk should remain subject to the close attention of senior management.

- Significant developments in risk mitigation have been made in the field of business continuity for IT concerning the PERICLES family of applications. The creation of datasets, routine extractions and transfer of information to relevant services are key achievements this year and further efforts are planned to reduce the impact of a possible PERICLES system failure. Concurrently, as central elements of PERICLES have progressively been migrated to new web technologies and only low risk back office functions are pending (but foreseen), both the likelihood and impact of an incident due to the obsolescence of the tool steadily diminished over 2019.

- The final quarter of 2019 saw a complete overhaul of personnel in the external PERICLES development team. A strong focus was provided to update the technical documentation and transfer knowledge to new team members. Effects of this transitional period could be experienced in a deteriorated ability to provide development and production support. Mitigating measures were put in place at the end of the year and monitoring of the effect will be ensured over time.

With regard to the flagship projects of the 2017-2019 project cycle, OSCO and REGIS, residual risks continued to be monitored during the year. The maturity of OSCO has resulted in the overall lowering of risks. A number of risks considered as key risks in the early stage of development of the project (e.g. resistance to change, absorption capacity) were reduced. The key remaining risk relates to the legal and regulatory consequences of the transfer of the responsibility for organising events on the Esplanade Solidarność 1980, which was still under analysis at the end of 2019.

In 2018, a fraud risk assessment was initiated. The residual risks were considered mostly low. Some complementary measures were nevertheless planned and the follow up performed in 2019 showed satisfactory

developments. In particular, efforts in awareness raising (presentation by DG PERS to DG LINC middle and senior managers complemented by internal communication efforts drawing attention to the new Ethics - I Care! guide) and positive advances linked to the development of new indicators should be underlined.

Finally, the business continuity plan for the DG was completed in its approved version in early 2019 and continuously updated since then. Efforts have been made in terms of awareness raising towards managers and a service notice on the DG LINC intranet was also made for all staff. The DG LINC incident management team is operational, immediately actionable through a dedicated instant message group.

RESOURCES MANAGEMENT



3. Resources management

3.1. Human resources

On 01 January 2019, the total number of posts attributed to DG LINC in the establishment plan was 514, 10 fewer than the previous year, following redeployment across the institution and additional reductions to the establishment plan.

A total of 43 vacant posts were published in 2019 (3 AD Heads of Unit, 15 AD, 17 AST and 8 SC posts). DG LINC continued its efforts to facilitate the mobility of AST officials subject to the mobility policy adopted in 2018. In 2019, there were 15 transfers into DG LINC of staff from other Directorates-General, of which 4 took place in the context of mobility, and 8

transfers from DG LINC to other Directorates-General of which 3 in the context of mobility.

DG LINC continued to provide trainees with interesting opportunities as part of its efforts to offer young professionals a useful experience and project a positive image of the European Parliament as a potential employer. In 2019, DG LINC welcomed 37 trainees, who also benefitted from the DG's specific newcomers' training course, which was provided to a total of 114 people. For the first time DG LINC welcomed 3 Danish trainees as part of a strategic action to mitigate the risk of a shortage of Danish language interpreters

ESTABLISHMENT PLAN

| | on 01/01/2019 | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | AD | AST | AST/SC | Total |
| Permanent posts | 351 | 144 | 19 | 514 |
| Temporary posts | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 351 | 144 | 19 | 514 |

| | on 01/01/2018 | | | |
|--|---------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | AD | AST | AST/SC | Total |
| | 366 | 140 | 18 | 524 |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 366 | 140 | 18 | 524 |

STAFF NUMBERS AT 31.12.2019

| | AD | AST | AST/SC | Total |
|---|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Officials | 307 | 128 | 15 | 450 |
| Temporary staff | 15 | 9 | 2 | 26 |
| - <i>in temporary posts</i> | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| - <i>in permanent posts</i> | 10 | 1 | 0 | 11 |
| - <i>offsetting staff working part time</i> | 4 | 8 | 2 | 14 |
| Contract staff | | | | 54 |
| Seconded national experts (SNE) | | | | 0 |
| Agency staff | | | | 0 |
| Total | 322 | 137 | 17 | 530 |

3.2. Financial and budgetary management

INITIAL AND FINAL APPROPRIATIONS

Final appropriations amounted to EUR 54 118 050 compared to the EUR 52 943 670 originally available

FINAL APPROPRIATIONS AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTED

Overall, initial appropriations amounted to EUR 52 943 670. Following the two mopping up procedures, a series of 'S' transfers and 'C' transfers, the final total appropriations amounted to EUR 54 118 050.

Result of Mopping up and Transfers

| Budget line | Movement € |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 01404-04 | -106 000 |
| 01405-01 | 1 800 000 |
| 01612-06 | 84 380 |
| 02103-19 | -135 000 |
| 02105-19 | -611 000 |
| 03042-03 | 450 000 |
| 03245-04 | -308 000 |
| Total | +1.174.380 |

The increase is mainly attributable to increases on the sub-items:

- 01405-01 *Interpretation expenses - External interpretation*. Demand for interpretation was expected to be considerably lower than usual given the election year. Initial appropriations needed to be reinforced, however, due to dynamic activity, and forecasts were eventually

affected by late cancellations. The final budget remained 13.5% lower than 2018, a non-election year.

- 01612-06 *External training* to cover expenditure related to decentralised training activity taken over from DG PERS. One important change in the way the DG manages its human resources was the handover of the management of the budget for individual external training from DG PERS to DG LINC in 2019. The DG paid for 54 individual external training courses, of which 47 were for interpreters. Two summer universities were organised in 2019, of which one in France (32 participants) and one in Finland (6 participants).
- 03042-03 *Meeting political groups* to cover the increase in the number of meetings requested by the Political groups and increase in the average cost for each meeting.

There was also a decrease on budget sub-item 02105-19 mainly due to the transfer of the project "speech to text and translation" to DG TRAD (EUR -200 000), the reassessment of the needs and the lower cost of the REGIS project (EUR -240 000).

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTED AND PAYMENTS MADE

Committed appropriations against final appropriations represent an overall utilisation rate of 99%. This includes large provisional commitments on the budget sub-item 01405-01 *Interpretation expenses - External interpretation*.

The level of execution on the sub-item 03042-04 is 78%, slightly lower than the average due to the uncertainty surrounding meetings of the

political groups outside the three places of work and which are subject to dynamic changes.

94% of committed appropriations was paid during the exercise.

USE OF AUTOMATIC AND NON-AUTOMATIC CARRYOVERS FROM 2018 TO 2019

The overall rate of payments against automatic carry-overs 2018 to 2019 is 96%. The total amount of unused carried forward appropriations amounts to EUR 232 002.30. Here are the main reasons why:

- EUR 101 517 unpaid on sub-item 03042-03. There is an on-going issue with one of the contractors who provided services to the Meetings and Conference unit in 2016/2017. There are some outstanding legal commitments, specific orders where the services were ordered and delivered in 2016 and 2017 but the final invoices have not yet been presented. The amount reserved for that is of EUR 30 000. The nature of the activity which involves a considerable number of provisional commitments also influence the carry over execution rate for this sub-item.
- EUR 83 949 unpaid on sub-item 03245-04 concerns the grant agreements from the 2018/2019 grant programme. Final amounts paid were less than foreseen as

beneficiaries had overestimated the cost of their projects.

Nevertheless, DG LINC continuously tries to minimise the rate of unpaid carryovers through active follow up.

APPROPRIATIONS CORRESPONDING TO ASSIGNED REVENUE

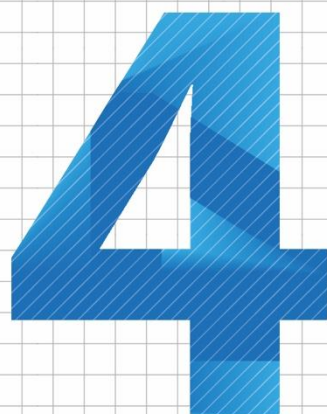
- Situation with regard to specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue:

The amount of assigned revenue for 2019 is EUR 2 854 910 of which 91% has been committed. Of the committed amount 96% was already paid in 2019. This largely related to budget sub-item 01405-01 *External Interpretation*.

- Situation with regard to specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue carried over:
 - Carried forward revenue amounts to EUR 457 020 (type 5).
 - Carried forward committed revenue amounts to EUR 423 857 (type 3).
 - Carried forward assigned revenue (type 5) was utilised at 100%.

Committed carried forward revenue (type 3) was utilised at 100%.

EVALUATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL, INCLUDING OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF COST- EFFECTIVENESS



4. Evaluation and effectiveness of internal control, including overall assessment of cost-effectiveness

4.1. Assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of internal control

The implementation of Internal Control Standards was monitored throughout the year by keeping track of key initiatives or new measures evidencing efforts to follow the principles set by the standards while taking into consideration the characteristics and circumstances of the DG environment. It was complemented at year-end by an 'expert' review whereby members from the Strategy and Communication Unit, DG Advisers, HR Unit, Budget Unit together with the Quality Management Unit gathered views to form a reasoned opinion. In this regard, the guidelines from DG FINS were taken as the point of reference. Annex 6.e sets out the summary results and presents the state-of-play, standard by standard.

The internal control framework at DG LINC is reliant on an internal structure with a continuous flow of information. A (senior and middle) Managers Meeting is held every month to share important information and allow managers to further disseminate throughout their teams during unit meetings. As a key oversight body, the Management Team (composed of the Director General and the Directors), usually meets every two weeks and

attends to important files concerning their state-of-play presented by the Heads of Unit in charge, who in turn, seek guidance and plan subsequent steps. Regular information is also published on the DG LINC intranet (EPIweb) to further circulate messages to all staff.

This approach was complemented by a number of initiatives aimed at sharing information and assisting colleagues to better understand the variety of work undertaken throughout the DG from the very start of their experience at DG LINC. New staff members were welcomed to Newcomers' Day, which took place three times throughout 2019. Moreover, a Meet & Greet project was launched and has been providing DG LINC staff with a regular opportunity to meet colleagues of a given Unit during lunchtime to better understand their daily life and core activity. In addition DG LINC Innovation Day events allowed inter alia to present the EP and DG LINC Strategic Execution Framework to all staff in June 2019, facilitating discussion and exchanges on topics such as purpose, identity, vision and other components of the framework.

Key components of the internal control strategy for 2019 also included a continuing focus on risk management and a culture of resilience evidenced in particular with the completion of the business continuity plan in early 2019. In this regard, an Incident Management Team is in place and was activated several times in

2019 (see also section 2.2). Moreover, a ‘lessons learned’ approach was further utilised to build on experiences.

In 2019, the election recess created an extra opportunity for staff to develop their skillsets. This was realised through a tailor-made training program offered and largely attended. Furthermore, increased awareness raising efforts took place throughout the year bringing topical issues to light including for example, data protection (following recent key developments in this field), ethical matters (presentation by DG PERS in a Managers Meeting) and document management (in view of the introduction of the new HERMES document management system).

Significant efforts were also made and are still ongoing at year-end regarding the development of new metrics and indicators.

In the budgetary and financial area, measures were taken by the Budget Unit to facilitate the transition to the new Financial Management System (FMS). Other key components of ex-ante controls included the systematic checks carried out by the “procurement helpdesk function” concerning the DG’s procurement procedures above the threshold of EUR 15 000 (before launch) and those procedures above EUR 60 000 (two-stage check, the first before publication and the second before the award of the contract) as well as advice being regularly provided to operational units.

DG LINC has set up an organisational structure and internal control systems tailored to the performance of its tasks, taking into account the risks associated with the management environment. The authorising officer by

delegation continuously assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of the internal control systems with a view to ensuring that they are functioning as expected and that any detected weaknesses in the controls are corrected.

4.2. Assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the controls

The Financial Regulation (art 76.9) requires the Authorising Officer to ensure not only the effectiveness, but also efficiency of the internal control and to make an assessment of the cost and benefits of control.

Following the methodology for the assessment of the cost-effectiveness of controls provided by the Project Management Office, DG LINC produced an estimation of costs of the main control processes.

- Ex-ante verification of all financial transactions (i.e. commitments, payments, recoveries and decommitments);
- Verification and advice on procurement procedures and calls for proposals.

DG LINC does not use external audit for verification.

Estimated Cost of Controls

| Total estimated costs of controls* | Budget managed | Ratio (%) |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| 228 835 | 63 551 768 | 0.36% |

*The cost of controls is calculated by estimating the number of FTEs dedicated to the various control stages or processes and the total average annual cost by FTE. The contribution to the Joint Payment Office is not included in the calculation of the estimated cost of controls, but is included in the total budget managed.

It is difficult to quantify in a budgetary and numerical way the material benefits of the checks carried out.

The benefits of controls may be of a non-financial nature and include:

- optimisation of financial resources;
- compliance with the principles of legality, regularity and sound financial management
- quality assurance to guarantee that the objectives are met, quality standards are respected and public funds are used effectively and for the intended purpose;
- a preventive effect, to limit the occurrence of procedural errors and promote sound financial management.

The results of these controls provide assurance that risks relating to the legality and regularity of transactions are properly managed.

4.3. Summary of internal and external audits

As far as the audit report carried out by the Internal Audit Service (IAS) on the implementation of the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism is concerned, the IAS is carrying out a follow-up exercise every six

months. As of the end of 2019, four further actions have been closed by the Internal Auditor while four are still ongoing (all with a residual risk assessed as “moderate”) for which DG LINC is in the lead. Remaining actions mainly relate to increased availability of and reporting on statistical information concerning the use of resources as well as to the completion of IT developments. Follow-up work has been carried out in close cooperation, where needed, with the Operational Coordination Group (OCG) which comprises representatives from DG LINC (chair), DG IPOL and DG EXPO. This group met at regular intervals in 2019 and has helped in identifying measures to address actions recommended by the IAS and more generally continued to prove value to foster cooperation and dialogue on issues relating to the demand and supply of interpretation facilities.

It should be noted that DG LINC was also included in the scope of an ongoing information systems audit on “identity and access management”. This audit is primarily carried out within DG ITEC. DG LINC was included in the scope in the framework of limited testing of the access rights concerning the PERICLES set of applications.

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

5. Statement of assurance

I, the undersigned, Agnieszka WALTER-DROP

Director-General of Directorate-General for Logistics and Interpretation for Conferences hereby declare, in my capacity as authorising officer by delegation, that I have reasonable assurance that:

- the information contained in the report presents a true and fair view;
- 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;
- the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of 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 **06/04/2020**



ANNEXES

6

6. Annexes

a. Budgetary implementation overview

| Code Appropriation type | | EUR ou % | Formule |
|---|--|------------|--------------|
| Appropriations of 2019 | | | |
| A | Initial appropriations | 52.943.670 | |
| B | Final appropriations | 54.118.050 | |
| C | Commitments | 53.698.327 | |
| D | commitments in % of final appropriations | 99% | D=C/B |
| E | Payments | 50.621.944 | |
| F | Payments in % of commitments | 94% | F=E/C |
| G | Cancellations of 2019 final appropriations | 419.723 | G=B-C-K |
| H | Cancellations appropriations in % of final appropriations | 1% | H=G/B |
| Appropriations carried forward from 2019 to 2020 | | | |
| I | Automatic carry forwards from 2019 to 2020 | 3.076.384 | I=C-E |
| J | Automatic carry forwards from 2019 to 2020 in % of commitments | 6% | J=I/C |
| K | Non-automatic carry forwards from 2019 to 2020 | 0 | |
| L | Non-automatic carry forwards from 2019 to 2020 in % of final appropriations | 0 | L=K/B |
| Appropriations carried over from 2018 to 2019 | | | |
| M | Automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 6.121.788 | |
| N | Payments against automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 5.889.786 | |
| O | Payments against automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 in % of automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 96% | O=N/M |
| P | Cancellations of automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 232.002 | P=M-N |
| Q | Cancellations of automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 in % of automatic carry over from 2018 to 2019 | 4% | Q=P/M |
| R | Non-automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 0 | |
| S | Payments of non-automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 0 | |
| T | Payments of non-automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 in % of non-automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 0 | T=S/R |
| U | Cancellations of non-automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 0 | U= R-S |
| V | Cancellations of non-automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 in % of non-automatic carry overs from 2018 to 2019 | 0 | V=U/R |
| Assigned revenue in 2019 | | | |
| W | Appropriations from assigned revenue in 2019 (current) | 2.854.910 | |
| X | Assigned revenue carried over to 2019 | 457.020 | |
| Y | Balance of commitments on assigned revenue carried over to 2019 | 423.857 | |
| Z | Payments in 2019 against appropriations from assigned revenue (current and carried-over) | 3.388.011 | |
| AA | Payments in 2019 against appropriations in % of assigned revenue (current and carried-over) | 91% | AA=Z/(W+X+Y) |

b. 2019 Budget implementation statement

1. Current Appropriations

| DG. LINC | Situation des Crédits courants Exercice: 2019 (en EUR) | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Poste | Intitulé | Crédits Initiaux | Virements+ Budg. Suppl. | Crédits Actuels | Engagements Contractés | % Util. | Paielements Effectués | Solde des Engag. E.C. | Crédits Disponibles |
| 01404-04 | STAGES, SUBVENTIONS ET ECHANGE DE FONCTIONNAIRES : SUBVENTIONS POUR FORMATIONS ET BOURSES ACCORDEES POUR LE PERFECTIONNEMENT D'INTERPRETES DE CONFERENCE ET FRAIS ANNEXES | 185.000,00 | -106.000,00 | 79.000,00 | 75.276,14 | 95,29 | 75.276,14 | 0 | 3.723,86 |
| 1405 | DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION | 42.120.170,00 | 1.800.000,00 | 43.920.170,00 | 43.870.170,00 | 99,89 | 43.536.897,07 | 333.272,93 | 50.000,00 |
| 01612-06 | APPRENTISSAGE ET PERFECTIONNEMENT FORMATIONS EXTERNES | 0,00 | 84.380,00 | 84.380,00 | 79.488,40 | 94,20 | 68.143,31 | 11.345,09 | 4.891,60 |
| 02103-19 | INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - ACTIVITE RECURRENTE DE GESTION DES APPLICATIONS TIC | 440.500,00 | -135.000,00 | 305.500,00 | 224.928,42 | 73,63 | 30.051,06 | 194.877,36 | 80.571,58 |
| 02105-19 | INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - INVESTISSEMENTS EN PROJETS-INTE-PROJETS IT DECENTRALISES | 1.261.000,00 | -611.000,00 | 650.000,00 | 630.079,13 | 96,94 | 95.247,60 | 534.831,53 | 19.920,87 |
| 02140-04 | ACHAT, RENOUELEMENT, LOCATION, ENTRETIEN ET REPARATION DE MATERIEL ET D'INSTALLATIONS TECHNIQUES - CONFERENCES | 7.497.000,00 | 0 | 7.497.000,00 | 7.496.833,66 | 100,00 | 5.883.351,17 | 1.613.482,49 | 166,34 |
| 3042 | REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS | 710.000,00 | 450.000,00 | 1.160.000,00 | 903.104,73 | 77,85 | 685.958,69 | 217.146,04 | 256.895,27 |
| 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 | 730.000,00 | -308.000,00 | 422.000,00 | 418.446,93 | 99,16 | 247.018,51 | 171.428,42 | 3.553,07 |
| Total Général | | 52.943.670,00 | 1.174.380,00 | 54.118.050,00 | 53.698.327,41 | 99,22 | 50.621.943,55 | 3.076.383,86 | 419.722,59 |

2. Automatic Carryovers

| DG. LINC | | Situation des Crédits reportés automatiques Exercice: 2019 (en EUR) | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Poste | Intitulé | Crédits Reportés | Crédits Actuels | Engagements Contractés | Paiements Effectués | % Util. | Crédits Disponibles | Reliquat de Conversion |
| 01404-04 | ACTIONS DE FORMATIONS (Y COMPRIS LES SUBVENTIONS ET BOURSES ACCORDEES | 15.093,28 | 15.093,28 | 15.093,28 | 15.093,28 | 100,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 |
| 1405 | DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION | 2.495.367,52 | 2.495.367,52 | 2.495.367,52 | 2.478.181,41 | 99,31 | 17.186,11 | 0,00 |
| 02103-19 | INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - ACTIVITES RECURRENTES DE GESTION DES APPLICATIONS TIC | 173.132,04 | 173.132,04 | 173.132,04 | 170.732,04 | 98,61 | 2.400,00 | 0,00 |
| 02105-19 | INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - INVESTISSEMENTS EN PROJETS-INTE- PROJETS IT DECENTRALISES | 163.222,16 | 163.222,16 | 163.222,16 | 163.222,16 | 100,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 |
| 02140-04 | ACHAT, RENOUELEMENT, LOCATION, ENTRETIEN ET REPARATION DE MATERIEL ET D'INSTALLATIONS TECHNIQUES - CONFERENCES | 2.870.886,84 | 2.870.886,84 | 2.870.886,84 | 2.843.937,03 | 99,06 | 26.949,81 | 0,00 |
| 3042 | REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS | 240.585,15 | 240.585,15 | 240.585,15 | 139.067,71 | 57,80 | 101.517,44 | 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 | 178.594,34 | 178.594,34 | 178.594,34 | 94.645,40 | 52,99 | 83.948,94 | 0,00 |
| Total Général | | 6.121.788,05 | 6.121.788,05 | 6.121.788,05 | 5.889.785,75 | 96,21 | 232.002,30 | 0,00 |

3. Non-Automatic Carryovers

| DG. LINC | | Situation des crédits reportés non automatiques Exercice: 2019 (en EUR) | | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Poste | Intitulé | Crédits Initiaux | Virements+ Budg. Suppl. | Crédits Actuels | Engagements Contractés | Paiements Effectués | Solde des Engag. E.C. | Crédits Disponibles |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | Total Général | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

4. Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue

| DG. LINC | | Situation des Crédits de dépenses spécifiques/RA Exercice: 2019 (en EUR) | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Poste | Intitulé | Crédits an. cumulés. | Crédits Actuels | Engagements Contractés | % Util. | Paiements Effectués | Solde des Engag. E.C. | Crédits Disponibles |
| 01405-01 | DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION | 2.838.820,77 | 2.838.820,77 | 2.599.780,77 | 91,58 | 2.500.000,00 | 99.780,77 | 239.040,00 |
| 03042-03 | REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES | 6.732,00 | 6.732,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 | 6.732,00 |
| 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 | 9.357,33 | 9.357,33 | 9.357,00 | 100,00 | 7.599,14 | 1.757,86 | 0,33 |
| Total Général | | 2.854.910,10 | 2.854.910,10 | 2.609.137,77 | 91,39 | 2.507.599,14 | 101.538,63 | 245.772,33 |

5. Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue carried over

| DG. LINC | | Situation des Crédits reportes dep. spec RA Exercice: 2019(en EUR) | | | | | | |
|----------|--|--|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Poste | Intitulé | Crédits Initiaux | Crédits Actuels | Engagements Contractés | Paiements Effectués | % Util. | Solde des Engagements | Crédits Disponibles |
| 01405-01 | DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION | 445.021,77 | 445.021,77 | 445.021,77 | 445.021,77 | 100,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 |
| 03042-03 | REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS | 11.998,63 | 11.998,63 | 11.998,63 | 11.998,63 | 100,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 |
| | Total Général | 457.020,40 | 457.020,40 | 457.020,40 | 457.020,40 | 100,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 |

6. Specific expenditure commitments/assigned revenue carried over

| DG. LINC | | Situation des engagements reportés de dépenses spécifiques /RA Exercice: 2019 (en EUR) | | | | | |
|----------|---|--|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Poste | Intitulé | Crédits reportés | Crédits actuels | Engagements Contractés | Paiements Effectués | % Util. | Reste à payer |
| 01404-04 | ACTIONS DE FORMATIONS (Y COMPRIS LES SUBVENTIONS ET BOURSES ACCORDEES | 506,72 | 506,72 | 506,72 | 41,29 | 8,15 | 465,43 |
| 01405-01 | DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION | 423.350,00 | 423.350,00 | 423.350,00 | 423.350,00 | 100,00 | 0,00 |
| | Total Général | 423.856,72 | 423.856,72 | 423.856,72 | 423.391,29 | 99,89 | 465,43 |

7. Specific expenditure appropriations/external assigned revenue

DG.
LINC

Situation des crédits de dépenses spécifiques /RA externes Exercice: 2019 (en EUR)

| Poste | Intitulé | Crédits Initiaux | Virements+ Budg. Suppl. | Crédits Actuels | Engagements Contractés | Paiements Effectués | Solde Engag. E.C. | des Crédits Disponibles |
|-------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | | | | | | | |
| | Total Général | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

c. List of exceptions - derogations from the rules

| DECISIONS TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION TO THE APPLICABLE PROCEDURES AND RULES | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|----------|--|--|------------------------------|--|
| DOCUMENT REF. | RELEVANT AUTHORIZING OFFICER | SUBJECT | AMOUNT | VERIFIER'S OPINION | VERIFIER'S OPINION | DECISION | DECISION |
| FINORD REF., CONTRACT, ETC. | | | | FAVOURABLE WITH STATEMENT/UNFAVOURABLE | JUSTIFICATION | RELEVANT AUTHORIZING OFFICER | JUSTIFICATION |
| ED 70030 | Marc JORISSEN | Technical installation costs for the EPP group meeting in Ericeira October 2018 | 1 594.31 | non conforme/ passer-outre | A valid budget commitment was in place, but due to a miscalculation on the part of the AOS the amount carried forward was insufficient to meet the legal obligation to pay the contractor for services rendered when invoice was passed for payment. The previously cancelled amount was committed on 2019 exercise to cover the legal obligation to pay | Marc JORISSEN | Services had been delivered by contractor and the expenditure is eligible. Insufficient balance available on carried forward credits. Instruction for passé outre. |
| ED 70031 | Marc JORISSEN | Order of set up services during EPP meeting in Rotterdam 23-24/01/2019 | 1 300 | non conforme/ passer-outre | Original order of services exceeded without cover of budgetary commitment or amendment to order form. | Marc JORISSEN | Services supplied, the expenditure is eligible Additional cost subject to an ED and order after services provided. Instruction for passé outre. |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|--|-----------|-------------------------------|---|----------------|--|
| ED 70225 | Nick GHEYSEN | Rental of a stand at the London Language Show 2019 | 8 770.48 | non conforme/ passer-outre | Legal commitment entered into without a valid budgetary commitment in place | Nick GHEYSEN | Late transfer of file with very short deadlines. File manager signed a booking form believing it to be an administrative document when in fact it was deemed to be a contract by the organisers of the event. Instruction for passé outre. |
| OD 982/88 | Philip TULKENS | regularisation of payment to DG PERS for interim staff | 35 627.65 | non conforme/ passer-outre | No prior approved budget commitment in place before DG PERS were requested to order services of Conference technicians from their framework contract on behalf of DG LINC | Philip TULKENS | Provisional commitment in place was exceeded by orders for services to the amount of €35.627,65 Only that part of the new commitment was established after the order had been placed (saisine a posteriori) . Instruction for passer outre |

WAIVERS/CANCELLATIONS OF RECEIVABLES

| RECEIVABLE WAIVER/CANCELLATION PROCEDURES | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------|--------|--|
| DOCUMENT REF. (FINORD REF.) | RELEVANT AUTHORISIN G OFFICER | SUBJECT | AMOUNT | AUTHORISING OFFICER'S REASONS FOR WAIVER/CANCELLATION |
| N/A | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

d. Results of assessments

Results of ex post controls showed satisfactory outcome in previous years. In 2019, due to staff shortage, no ex post controls were carried out. The situation will be re-assessed in 2020 with a view to plan ex post controls where needed.

e. Assessment of the implementation of the minimum internal control standards

ICS 1: Duties

The mission, role, objectives and tasks of the Directorate-General and each of its services are set out in the DG's intranet site (EPIWeb). DG LINC's mission is anchored within its Strategic Execution Framework (SEF), which was updated in May 2019 in a participatory seminar involving all middle and senior management. It was subsequently made available to all staff on EPIweb and also promoted at Innovation Day events held on 20 and 21 June 2019. Job descriptions were kept up to date and individual objectives of all staff were set out in the annual staff reports and discussed during interviews. Regarding new developments in the field of One Stop Conference Organisation (OSCO), a meeting officer job description was adopted in October 2019.

ICS 2: Ethical and organisational values

All rules and regulations relating to staff conduct and responsibilities, and the Staff Regulations including matters relating to conflict of interest, are available on the intranet of the European Parliament. Values of DG LINC are set out in the SEF primarily under "Identity" and "Culture" (see ICS 1 for further information about the presentation made to staff in 2019). Ethical matters were also briefly touched upon during the Newcomers' Day.

Following the fraud risk assessment exercise carried out in 2018. Satisfactory developments were noted in 2019 particularly in relation to awareness raising efforts and progress linked to the development of new indicators. Information was published on EPIweb highlighting the new ethics guide from DG PERS. Moreover, DG LINC also invited the Head of the Careers and Ethics Unit in DG PERS to a Managers Meeting on 14 November 2019 who addressed all managers about ethics in the workplace, conflict of interest and the code of conduct of officials of the EP.

Moreover, following the recruitment of 2 new AST officials in the Human Resources Unit (HR Unit), it was decided that these colleagues should sit in selection panels for AST and AST/SC officials as per the guidelines issued by the Director-General concerning the composition of selection panels for posts in DG LINC. A special training session was organised by the Head of the HR Unit to ensure that all the AST staff of the HR Unit participating in selection panels were aware of the rules and procedures in place. The session also touched on ethics in the context of selection interviews, including awareness of data protection and prevention of conflict of interest.

DG LINC also benefits from the presence of a certified mediator, who provides support for staff and management as well as a legal advisor offering impartial ethical advice where needed.

ICS 3: Allocation of staff and mobility

Mobility affects only part of the staff of DG LINC. Interpreting staff, conference technicians and conference ushers are not mobile. Other posts follow the normal rules and instructions issued. Every colleague mobile is supported by the local Career Guidance Officer, in line with the EP Policy.

A number of initiatives help colleagues to better understand the work carried out in other areas of the Directorate-General and therefore support the mobility effort within the DG. Temporary placements are a proven solution to both support mobility and remedy workload peaks. In 2019, 7 temporary placements were managed. Newcomers' Day is now fully established and 3 editions took place in 2019. The Meet & Greet campaign run by the HR Unit and the Strategy and Communication Unit, aims at regularly providing DG LINC staff with the possibility to meet a unit in a relaxed atmosphere and have informal exchange with its colleagues during lunchtime.

The Career Days took place on 7 May 2019 in Brussels and on 14 May 2019 in Luxembourg. DG LINC was present with a stand jointly operated by Strategy and Communications Unit and HR Unit staff, showcasing DG LINC core businesses during a dedicated workshop.

Recruitment priorities were identified in 2019 to support the development of the OSCO framework. On the interpretation side, succession planning was given careful attention and, to this end, DG LINC maintained a continuous presence at EP corporate outreach events including the organisation of its own Multilingualism Day (together with DG TRAD and DG COMM) in September 2019 in addition to embarking in outreach campaigns for English and Danish interpreters.

When colleagues move away from their job, operational continuity is maintained through hand-over reports that are requested by the HR Unit to colleagues leaving their post (channelled through their respective managers).

ICS 4: Staff assessment and development

As staff development is a topic of importance for DG LINC, during the 2019 election recess, a tailor-made training program was offered and largely attended following promotion made on EPIweb to staff members. Particular attention was also paid to welcoming new staff to DG LINC. As already stated above, Newcomers' Day took place three times in 2019. Moreover, all new Heads of Unit have received training on how to conduct assessment interviews. Staff assessments are conducted each year in the annual staff reporting procedure. The Human Resources Unit's Training Officer and Local Career Guidance Officer are available to assist and advise on all matters related to career and training. The Human Resources Unit 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. Furthermore, different actors in the financial circuits are guided with a training path planned as a basis in directing newcomers. Once a new financial actor is empowered, Budget Unit checks that the mandatory training has been followed.

ICS 5: Objectives and performance indicators

The objectives of the DG are established overall for the Directorate-General, and detailed between each directorate and unit. These are distributed to all staff and are published on EPIweb. Staff objectives are set in the Staff Report (Notation Report=RAPNOT).

As part of the overall objective for the EP administration to establish an efficient and consistent way of measuring activity across the administration, the Secretary General requested in 2019 that all Directorates-General develop indicators, with the objective being to measure client satisfaction and productivity at unit level. In this framework, DG LINC metrics collection was completed at year-end and ready to be tested in early 2020 under the lead of the Project Management Office. Status is set at "almost achieved" until full completion of this parliamentary project.

ICS 6: Risk management process

Risk management remains embedded in DG LINC operations to facilitate timely identification, control and monitoring of risks. The DG LINC risk register is regularly updated (at least once a year and whenever deemed necessary by risk owners) and particular attention is given to emerging risks. DG LINC's Business Continuity and Risk Management Team met at regular intervals throughout 2019 (7 meetings) to monitor the state-of-play and discuss

possible emerging issues. Key topics can also be addressed in DG LINC Management Team meetings as well as the monthly meetings of middle and senior management. The Quality Management Unit also continues to monitor progress concerning the implementation of DG LINC PPPs and possible related key risks. Finally, close cooperation took place between the EP Risk Manager and DG LINC with the aim of maintaining internal practices aligned with central guidance.

ICS 7: Operational set-up

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 updated on the central register maintained by the Budget Unit.

There is a central list of all financial actors published on EPlweb and updated regularly.

The situation with regard to sensitive posts in DG LINC was reviewed in November 2019 by an internal working group comprised of the Director for Resources (Chair) and representatives of the HR, Budget and Quality Management Units of DG LINC. Results were communicated to the Director General and subsequently endorsed by the Management team on 26 November 2019.

The PERICLES Advisory Board (PAB), consisting of key PERICLES stakeholders and chaired by DG LINC, meet on a regular basis (usually every three months) to discuss governance matters relating to the PERICLES set of applications. IT matters (including the IT plan once a year) are also discussed, where needed, within the DG LINC Management Team which meets at regular intervals (usually every two weeks).

ICS 8: Processes and procedures

The common understanding that key procedures should be kept well-documented continued to be demonstrated in 2019. This was evidenced in different fields of activity and examples include: the launch of the parliamentary project “OSCO Rules Handbook” which aims to contain all necessary contacts and procedures related to new OSCO developments; a specific request was made by the Directorate Interpreter Planning and Support regarding guidance in the framework of the review of their codification; a working group (comprising representatives from DG PRES) designed a procedure to work in the secure area; the business continuity plan was complemented with detailed procedures where deemed needed; updates to the mission order

circuits continued to be ensured by the HR Unit; a detailed description of procedure in the field of IT access rights was also promptly provided upon request to the internal auditor.

Moreover, with regard to financial and budgetary matters, the DG LINC financial circuits operate according to a model by which operational initiators and verifiers are working in the operational units for most budget lines while the financial initiation (for most budget lines) and the ex ante verification of files are dealt within the Budget Unit. All procurement procedures above EUR 15 000 are checked before launch by the Procurement Help Desk function, also within the Budget Unit. Finally, exception reporting is in place and exceptions documented throughout the year are reported in the Annual Activity Report.

ICS 9: Supervision by management

Each manager puts in place supervisory measures deemed appropriate to his/her activity and remit. Other management oversight actions were in place in 2019 to complement these measures. This is illustrated by the following examples: regular presentations made by Heads of Unit to the management team on the state-of-play regarding key files, regular meetings of the business continuity and risk management team, regular reporting on meeting activity by interpreter team leaders (both in and outside of the three places of work), progressive development of other reporting activities (see above), central monitoring of parliamentary and DG LINC projects.

Most of the financial transactions in DG LINC (outside BL 1405-01) are the result of a procurement procedure. All awarded contracts where the value is greater than EUR 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. There was no ex post control carried out in 2019.

ICS 10: Business continuity

The business continuity plan for the DG was completed in its approved version in early 2019 and has been continuously updated since then. Following the Strasbourg Attacks that took place in late December 2018, lessons learnt have been implemented to ensure a robust and functional BCP. Efforts have been made in terms of awareness raising towards managers and a service notice on EPIweb was also published to all staff.

The DG LINC incident management team is operational, immediately actionable through a dedicated instant message group and was activated several times in 2019 to address specific situations (each time with due information to and close collaboration with the central Business Continuity Management Unit). Finally, the “Run, Hide, Tell” conference was held by DG SAFE informing staff about how to best react during an incident at the EP and dedicated sessions were organised for DG LINC in order for staff interpreters to have the opportunity to attend this conference outside core activity periods.

ICS 11: Document management

In 2019, DG LINC focused on preparing its staff for the arrival of the new Electronic Record Management System (HERMES). An in-house training was organised for the Archive Working Group members as well as workshops with each unit’s DMCs (Document Management Coordinators). The filing plan was fine-tuned and intensive efforts made to develop folders lists within each entity. The rules and good practices in document management have continuously been the subject of awareness-raising actions for the attention of the DMCs who in turn, are responsible for informing their colleagues. Compliance with the relevant compulsory security measures was ensured through the setting up of a dedicated ‘markings’ group while DMCs actively checked access rights in GEDA. Furthermore, the retention schedule has been regularly updated.

ICS 12: Information and communication

A full Managers Meeting (Director General, Directors and all Head of Units) is held on a regular basis (monthly) by the Director-General. Each unit holds team meetings as deemed necessary. Regular meetings take place between the Budget Unit and the financial actors (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 for both staff and freelance interpreters. Specific conferences were held throughout the year including in 2019 information session on Data Protection to raise awareness on new applicable rules. Beyond measure in place at institution level regarding reporting of improprieties, DG LINC will assess the possibility to elaborate an ad hoc procedure further, trying to identify good practices from others (hence, the “almost achieved” status).

ICS 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 LINC budget implementation is monitored and reported periodically in accordance with 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.

The work concerning the update of the Manual of Procedures for financial actors to be transformed into a user-friendly guide is almost complete but could not be published before year-end and in turn, will be re-considered with the arrival of a new Head of Unit (hence the “almost achieved” status). Observation notes, file notes and comments on budget transactions were systematically registered in a workflow table used by the Budget Unit. All details of budgetary transactions and contracting were registered in Finord and /or Webcontracts.

As part of the preparation for the changeover to FMS, the Budget Unit analysed each unit's activities, met with them bilaterally and agreed changes to the financial circuits in order to effectively work within FMS.

ICS 14: Evaluation of activities

Evaluation of activities is being carried out based on resources available and priority needs. DG LINC further developed a ‘lessons learned’ culture in 2019 when significant events occurred. This was for example the case following the Strasbourg Attack in late 2018, when four surveys were circulated amongst DG LINC staff to immediately gather information from the way DG LINC reacted and further improve the business continuity plan in 2019. The end of the legislature also provided the opportunity to organise a mini reflection day in June 2019 with a group of conference ushers and technicians to reflect on their activities over the past years, learn from the past experience in meetings serving DG LINC clients while at the same time looking ahead to the next legislature.

Moreover, activities can be the subject of an evaluation upon request of senior management and results be further discussed within the DG LINC Management Team. This can even be carried out within sub-groups of the Executive Committee on Interpretation, as it was the case in 2019 during

which the Inter-institutional Test Group completed its comprehensive review concerning the accreditation test process. Lastly, the development of indicators (see also ICS 5) should further contribute to improving evaluation work.

ICS 15: Evaluation of internal control systems

The Quality Management Unit has taken the role of internal control coordination. Since the last quarter of 2019, a network of internal control coordinators has been put in place by the Project Management Office. This group aims at supporting a common approach towards internal control monitoring. DG LINC took an active part in this network. In 2019, DG LINC was assessing the internal control systems based on the supervisory arrangements in place (see also ICS 9) providing for continuous flow of valuable information throughout the year. This was complemented by an “expert” review at year-end whereby members from the Strategy and Communication Unit, Advisors, HR Unit, Budget Unit together with the Quality Management Unit gathered views to form a reasoned opinion.

ICS 16: Audit reports

DG LINC is following up on actions recommended by the Internal Auditor in his report on the implementation of the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism and reports twice a year to the Internal Audit Service on progress made. In order to ensure both relevance and effectiveness of measures taken, the follow-up effort is closely monitored within the Operational Coordination Group gathering DG LINC (chair), DG IPOL and DG EXPO representatives and which itself was created to follow a recommendation from the internal auditor.

Self-assessment summary table

| STANDARD | ACHIEVED | ALMOST | PARTLY | STARTED | TO BE STARTED/N.A. |
|--|----------|--------|--------|---------|-----------------------|
| 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 | | | | | |

| STANDARD | ACHIEVED | ALMOST | PARTLY | STARTED | TO BE STARTED/N.A. |
|--|----------|--------|--------|---------|-----------------------|
| 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 | | | | | |