

ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2016
DG INTERPRETATION AND CONFERENCES

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0. OVERVIEW OF BUDGET EXECUTION

Code	Appropriation type	Type de crédits	EUR ou %
	Appropriations of 2016	Crédits 2016	
A	Initial appropriations	Crédits initiaux	53.295.500,00
B	Final appropriations	Crédits finaux	59.019.000,00
C	Commitments	Engagements	58.828.969,62
D	Commitments in % of final appropriations	Engagements en % des crédits finaux	100%
E	Payments	Paiements	49.942.780,85
F	Payments in % of commitments	Paiements en % des engagements	85%
G	Cancellations of 2016 final appropriations	Annulations de crédits finaux 2016	190.030,38
H	Cancellations appropriations in % of final appropriations	Annulations en % des crédits finaux	0%
	Appropriations carried over from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés de 2016 à 2017	
I	Automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	8.886.188,77
J	Automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017 in % of commitments	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2016 à 2017 en % des engagements	15%
K	Non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017	0,00
L	Non-automatic carryovers from 2016 to 2017 in % of final appropriations	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2016 à 2017 en % des crédits finaux	0%
	Appropriations carried over from 2015 to 2016	Crédits reportés de 2015 à 2016	
M	Automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	7.865.750,53
N	Payments against automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Paiements sur crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	7.567.283,29
O	Payments against automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016 in % of automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Paiements sur crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016 en % des crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	96%
P	Cancellations of automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Annulations de crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	298.467,24
Q	Cancellations of automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016 in % of automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Annulations de crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016 en % des crédits reportés automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	4%
R	Non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	0,00
S	Payments of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Paiements sur crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	
T	Payments against non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016 in % of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Paiements sur crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016 en % des crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	
U	Cancellations of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Annulations de crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	
V	Cancellations of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016 in % of non-automatic carryovers from 2015 to 2016	Annulations de crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016 en % des crédits reportés non-automatiquement de 2015 à 2016	
	Assigned revenue in 2016	Recettes affectées 2016	
W	Appropriations from assigned revenue in 2016 (current)	Crédits de recettes affectées courants 2016	3.219.369,54
X	Assigned revenue carried over to 2016	Crédits de recettes affectées reportés à 2016	1.711.157,16
Y	Balance of commitments on assigned revenue carried over to 2016	Solde des engagements reportés à 2016 sur crédits de dépenses spécifiques sur recettes affectées	505.438,38

Z	Payments in 2016 against appropriations from assigned revenue (current and carried-over)	Paiements sur crédits de recettes affectées 2016 (courants et reportés)	3.413.665,27
AA	Payments in 2016 against assigned revenue in % of assigned revenue in 2016 (current and carried-over)	Paiements sur crédits de recettes affectées 2016 en % des crédits de recettes affectées 2016 (courants et reportés)	63%

1. OBJECTIVES

1.1 Objectives of the Directorate-General

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.

The specific objectives of DG INTE for 2016 are:

- i. -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 through upgrading the technical facilities in the meeting rooms.
- ii. -To further professionalize the provision of interpretations services, by reviewing and streamlining the processes, establishing appropriate metrics and enhancing managerial responsibilities.
- iii. -To promote the efficient use of working time of all staff categories. In particular to increase the efficient use of interpreters' working time, in view of the changing pattern of Parliamentary meetings, the 2016 calendar and trends in demand.
- iv. -To increase the competitiveness and excellence of DG INTE's offer as a provider of interpretation services both inside the EP and to the other Institutions.
- v. -To develop the competencies of all DG INTE's professional categories in order to continuously improve outcomes and client satisfaction. To enhance the quality of interpretation by providing specific training activities for interpreters, as well as by establishing training benchmarks.
- vi. -To engage in efficient, targeted and needs-based succession planning notably in order to match the long-term supply of interpreters to the future needs of the Institution.
- vii. -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 the supply of interpretation matches the evolving demand.
- viii. -To promote internal coherence through communication and awareness raising actions and to foster collaborative working methods inside the DG and in inter-DG cooperation.
- ix. -To use inter-institutional cooperation where savings and efficiency gains are possible.

1.2 Feasibility and risk assessment

In 2016, DG INTE risk register has been significantly overhauled. Some long-range key risks, already followed for some years, were thoroughly updated and refocused in the light of DG INTE's modernisation process and adjusted objectives.

The key risks included in DG INTE register can be related - to a large extent - to cross-cutting risks identified at the level of the European Parliament (e.g. efficiency in providing IT applications / business continuity / staff development). Action plans designed for these risks are closely related to DG INTE projects included in the Parliamentary Project Portfolio (PPP). DG INTE may also benefit from projects developed by other DGs, in particular in the IT field.

In the IT domain, the measures aiming at mitigating the accelerated obsolescence of the Pericles application are closely monitored. DG INTE project "Meeting and interpretation management system for the future" is unfolding (Pericles upgrade BPM "to be" phase initiated and ongoing).

The risk related to the unavailability of documentation for interpreters has been extended and renamed to "Adverse conditions for delivering high quality interpretation". This wider risk is primarily treated through two new DG INTE projects in the PPP "Awareness raising campaign: best practices for working in multilingual meetings in the European Parliament" and "Reaching out to clients to better assess and respond to needs". Other targeted measures are also envisaged like the reorganisation of DG INTE's documentation service.

As to succession planning, the risk "Succession planning and sustainable development of linguistic resources" has been entirely reviewed under the lead of the unit for Multilingualism and Succession Planning. This unit is responsible for the entire area related to building up capacity for the future interpretation needs of the Institution and is also in charge of external communication and outreach to potential recruits/future interpreters working for the European Parliament (both ACI and potential staff).

With regard to the inter-institutional co-operation in the area of payments to ACIs, the impact of the related risk has been decreased due to notable progress in the provision of information by the European Commission DG Interpretation (SCIC). This being said, collaboration is still ongoing to further enhance DG INTE's supervision capability over operations.

A significant new risk related to the cuts in the mission budget (in particular related to the sessions in Strasbourg) was also identified and included in the risk register.

As risk management is a dynamic process, risks are continuously assessed. At the time the AAR for 2016 was prepared another risk related to increasing budgetary constraints and forecasting challenges (expenditure on interpretation: freelance interpreters) was being considered.

Lastly, it is worth noting that business continuity management and risk management are treated as fellow disciplines and closely coordinated within DG INTE. Therefore, the risk register and, from a more general point of view, the experience gained by DG INTE in risk management proved also to be extremely useful for the activities undertaken by the Directorate-General in the Business Continuity domain. An initial business impact analysis was launched at DG level in the last quarter of 2016. Work was ongoing at year-end but already allowed DG INTE to be

a constructive and credible interlocutor of the EP newly created “Business Continuity Management” unit.

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

2.1 Environment of the Directorate-General

Following the entry into force of both the Lisbon Treaty and the new Staff Regulations, interpretation duties are being performed in an environment with working conditions that are outdated and no longer fit for purpose as they are no longer aligned with the evolved meeting patterns of the EP. In April 2015, a set of new working conditions which had previously been agreed unanimously by the representatives of the management and of the staff interpreters, was rejected by the General Assembly of staff interpreters. After a period of reflection, during which an analysis was carried out of the productivity data of the interpretation service, the Secretary-General, together with the management of DG INTE, organised a series of meetings in January 2016 with all the staff interpreters, launching a process of modernisation of DG INTE. During these meetings, the challenges that lay ahead for the European Parliament as a whole, and DG INTE in particular, were discussed and the Secretary-General acquainted himself with the concerns of interpreting staff that led to the rejection by the General Assembly of staff interpreters in 2014 of the proposed working conditions. These discussions led to the establishment of a set of principles and objectives related to “Completing Resource Efficient Full Multilingualism”. Some of these principles and objectives were addressed to DG INTE management and became commitments for management to put in place a number of measurements in the course of 2016, whereas some other elements referred to principles to be included in a new set of working conditions for staff interpreters through a consultation process with their representatives.

The consultation process was launched on 15 July 2016, with a deadline for an agreement to be reached by the parties involved set by the Secretary-General, until the end of 2016. A total of 13 consultation meetings took place during the second half of 2016. The consultation process did not, however, yield a final result, since by the end of the deadline an agreement had not been reached by both parties on a final text for new working conditions for interpreters.

In parallel, the management commitments referred to above were implemented. In particular, the availability for assignments of staff interpreters was improved through the introduction of new guidelines on staff interpreter annual leave. In addition, a *clean day's* policy was introduced, with all non-interpretation assignment of staff interpreters being moved to periods of low parliamentary activity. New benchmarks were developed and implemented to assess the interpretation output of the different language units. New tools were developed to record and report on the workload of the staff interpreters. These tools were used to optimise interpreter assignments and to improve output as well as to achieve more fairness in workloads. As a result of the implementation of the new tools and benchmarks, the average unit output increased from 11:54 hours/week on average in 2014 to 13:25 hours/week on average in 2016, whilst the number of interpreters with an average output below 11 hours/week was reduced from 86 interpreters in 2014 to 20 interpreters in 2016. To ensure transparency, the staff interpreters were provided with an online counter displaying their own personal workload and with regular reports on their own average output as well as the average output of their unit, the other units, and the interpretation service as a whole. A number of measures were also taken to align language learning of staff interpreters with the interests of the service, in a more efficient manner. In particular, and also with a view to achieve more balanced workloads in the longer

term, the obligation was introduced for all staff interpreters to add languages until they have a minimum of 5 languages they can interpret from. New IT solutions, such as MINA - a new scheduling and documentation tool for interpreters - were developed and introduced.

Following analysis of DG INTE's activities related to Multilingualism (including ACI training, representation at language fairs, the grant programme, etc.), the approach used and the results achieved, a Strategy for Cooperation with Universities was established. The strategy defines different degrees of cooperation according to the evolution of demand and the needs of the service, and will enable DG INTE to focus efforts to maximum effect. Its full implementation was not completed in 2016, due to a major reorganisation of responsibilities within the Directorate for Organisation and Planning and the need to fill two vacancies for Heads of Unit. The re-structuring of the Directorate led to the extension of the remit of two units: The Interpreters' Training Unit was renamed Interpreters' Support and Training, and now includes the documentation service for interpreters which will improve the supply of documentation to the interpreters and to support them in an increasingly paperless environment. The Multilingualism Unit was renamed Multilingualism and Succession Planning, and is now also responsible for outreach aspects of external communication and key aspects of the organisation of competitions to recruit future staff interpreters. Both operations were neutral in terms of budget.

Finally, an awareness raising project has been prepared and will be gradually implemented in order to promote best practices for multilingual meetings among MEPs and meeting organisers

Another change to the working environment is the introduction of occasional teleworking in the EP, a scheme that was welcomed by many DG INTE staff.

2.2 Human resources of DG INTE

2.2.1 Establishment plan

	at 1.1.2015				at 1.1.2016			
	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Permanent posts	391	121	0	512	382	117	4	503
Temporary posts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	391	121	0	512	382	117	4	503

2.2.2 Staff numbers as at 31.12.2016

Officials	338	106	5	449		395,65
Temporary staff						
- in temporary posts	0	0	0	0		
- in permanent posts	18	4	1	23		22,6
- to offset part-time working	6	8	0	14		13,75
Contractual agents				22		20,95
END				0		
Agency staff				0		
Total				508		

2.3 Budgetary implementation 2016

2.3.1 Initial and final Appropriations

Overall, initial appropriations, amounted to €3.295.500. Following the two mopping up procedures, a series of 'S' transfers and one 'C' transfer, the final total appropriations amounted to €9.019.000. This is mainly attributable to transfers *in* on the line 01402-01 of €3.520.000 for conference interpreting agents and €2.650.000 on line 02140-04 for the maintenance and renewal of equipment and modernisation of the meeting rooms in Strasbourg and Brussels. A total amount of €376.500 was submitted to the first mopping up procedure and a number of smaller transfers took place between DG INTE and other DGs.

Budget item 01402-01 +€3.520.000

The original budget requested for 2016 was €46.3 million. However, this was reduced during the budgetary procedure to €44.9 million.

Additional factors leading to an increase in budgetary requirements were:

- Changes to the characteristics of demand - The pattern of activity levels for the type of week has changed which affects the costs.
- Change in the EP calendar - After the budget requests were made the calendar changed. For example, exterior activity weeks went from 6.5 to 9. Changes in patterns such as these have a high impact on budget requirements.
- Two new Inquiry Committees have been created increasing demand.
- The types of meeting considered according to the 21/22 language regime have increased resulting in a 5.5% increase in assignments.
- The average daily rate rose significantly with the effects of:
 - The 3.3% salary adjustment instead of the originally foreseen 2.1%
 - The Commission decision to adapt the daily allowances and hotel ceilings for missions.

Budget item 02140-04 +€2.650.000

€2.5 million additional appropriations were requested by 'S' transfer in order to allow for:

- The room renovation process to proceed in line with the original planning presented in the PPP (DG INTE 2 - Increased automation of conference room installations).

- To equip PHS HEMC with new high performance microphones in order to compensate for the acoustical limitations imposed by the design of, and the materials used in, the meeting room.
- To allow for the replacement of the conference installations in 6 large meeting rooms in Strasbourg. It is expected that renovating the meeting rooms in 1 step rather than 2 could give rise to savings of some €20.000 per meeting room.

The remaining €50.000 were transferred from DG SAFE in order to cover costs of purchase of equipment for professional training rooms of DG PERS.

Budget item 02103-19 -€82.500

Delays in the development phase of a de-centralised managed IT project meant that appropriations earmarked for support and maintenance (second phase) were not required in 2016.

Budget item 03245-04 -€254.000 - Due to a streamlining in policy on cooperation with universities, additional appropriations requested for university grants were not required. In the same context a planned major conference was not organised.

2.3.2 Final appropriations and appropriations committed

Committed appropriations against final appropriations represent an overall utilisation rate of 99.68%. This includes large provisional commitments on the budget line 1402-01 "Expenditure on interpretation: Freelance Interpreters".

2.3.3 Appropriations committed and payments made

84.89% of committed appropriations were paid during the exercise.

Remainders on commitments on current appropriations amount to €886.189 and mainly concern €3.5 million on the budget line 1402-01; €4.6 million on the line 2140-04; €345.578 on line 3042-03 and €210.770 on line 3245-04.

These remainders will be carried forward to 2017 for the relevant lines to:

1402-01 - To honour payments of Conference Interpreter Agents remuneration and travel costs, related to services provided in 2016.

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.

3042-03 - To honour payment of legal commitments entered into in 2016 with the contractor organising meetings of political groups outside of the three working places.

3245-04 - To cover final payments on the grant programme 2016/2017.

2.3.4 Use of automatic and non-automatic carryovers from 2014 to 2015

The overall rate of payments against automatic carry-overs 2015 to 2016 is 96,21%. The total amount of unused carried forward appropriations amounts to €298.467. This is mainly made up of:

€1.000 not utilised on the line 1402-01;

€9.000 on line 2140-04 and

€103.000 on line 3042-03.

2.3.5 Use of appropriations corresponding to assigned revenue

2.3.5.1 Situation of specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue

The amount of assigned revenue for 2016 is €3.219.369, 54 of which 94, 29% was committed in 2016. Of the committed amount 39,5% was paid in 2016. This largely concerns the budget line 1402-01. The remaining assigned revenue on the budget lines is carried forward to 2017 (€183.877) and will be utilised in priority. The remainder on commitments on the line 1402-01 (€1.8 million) will be utilised to cover external interpreting services provided in 2016, including cover for the backdated salary adjustment.

2.3.5.2 Situation of specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue carried over

Carried forward revenue amounts to €1.711.157,16 (type 5)

Carried forward committed revenue amounts to €505.438,38 (type 3)

Carried forward assigned revenue (type 5) was utilised at 99,94%.

Committed carried forward revenue (type 3) was utilised at 99.82%.

2.4 Results Achieved

Objective n°	Indicators	Results for the 2016 exercise	
i	MEETINGS		
	Total number of meeting sessions with interpretation attended by conference technicians	4962	
	Total number of meeting sessions requiring sound equipment set up and support	1130	
	Total number of meeting sessions requiring projection equipment set up and support	3969	
i	Total EP meeting sessions with interpretation provided		
	Brussels:	2955	
	Strasbourg:	2115	
	Luxembourg:	21	
	Outside 3 work places:	171	
	TOTAL	5262	
i	Number of meetings outside of places of work organised by the Conference Service (Political groups, Conf. Presidents and Bureau)	32	
iv	Meetings with interpretation organised for other institutions total:		
	Commission (Lux)	89	
	Commission (outside)	0	
	Commission (EP buildings)	0	
	Court of Auditors (Bxl, Lux, outside)	0/37/15	
	Comm. of Regions (Bxl, outside)	96/0	
	Eur. Economic and Social Comm.	35/1	
	Ombudsman	0	
	Translation Centre	0	
	DG SCIC meeting in Strasbourg	4	
	Total for other institutions	277	
		Files treated for requests for meetings in the EP premises by outside bodies:	
		Brussels	65
	Luxembourg	3	
	Strasbourg	47	
	TOTAL	115	
	Total of staff interpretation days in 2016 for the needs of the EP/all institutions	44.298/44.968 days	

i iii	Total of Conference interpreting agents (ACI) days in 2016 for the needs of the EP/all institutions	49.623/52.121 days
i iii vi vii	TRAINING & TESTING	
	Total number of added languages in 2016/total applicants tested	75/116
	Interpreter days spent assisting testing process/number of successful candidates at language adding tests	1.8
	Total number of successful pre-selection participants /total number of participants	73/144
	Total number of new ACI's/total candidates tested	35/118
	Bursaries granted to ACIs for language learning/enhancement	38
i iii v vi	Thematic training organised in cooperation with EPs services, permanent representations and other Institutions Total events Total participants	73 1083
	Knowledge profiles for Interpreters Total participants (PPP number 4)	13
	Language enhancement training in cooperation with EP services and other institutions Total events Total participants	19 165
	Total number of participants in language courses 2016-2017 In-house specific e-learning private tuition	63 14 7
	External language courses for staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term • Long term • Exchange scheme with EP Info Offices 	38 interpreters 7 interpreters 3 interpreters
	Success rate of language adding projects following external language courses	64%

v vi	GRANTS/ASSISTANCE TO UNIVERSITIES	
	Number of memorandum of Understanding signed with universities	27
	Number of grants awarded to universities in 2016	10
	Number of universities who received pedagogical assistance at final exams	18
	Remote teaching assistance (virtual classes)	46 virtual classes, involving 100 staff interpreters(88.5 interpreter days) & 204 students
	Total n° of visits by universities	30
	Total number of students & trainers visiting DG INTE	303
ix	INTER-INSTITUTIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	
	Participants to structured exchange programme with SCIC (EP & SCIC)/total n° of exchange days of interpretation	29/690
	N° EP interpreter days placed at disposal of SCIC during Strasbourg session	414
	N° EP interpreter days placed at the disposal of the SCIC outside Strasbourg sessions	349

2.4.1 Resource efficient demand management

Parliament's interpretation activity was at a level comparable to 2015. The provision of interpretation outside the EP places of work decreased as a higher number of missions, initially booked with interpretation, were affected by cancellations (up 13% . in comparison with 2015).

Discussions are ongoing with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) about terms for a service level agreement with DG INTE as a basis for cooperation in line with the political agreement of 2014. The European Committee of the Regions (CoR), which has a service level agreement with the DG, continued to request interpretation for their session weeks and, sporadically, for some of their statutory meetings. However, DG INTE currently remains bound by existing interpreters' working conditions, and cannot therefore offer competitive terms as a service provider.

2.4.2 Meetings and interpretation management

DG INTE is in charge of administrative management of all meetings of parliamentary bodies, with the exception of those managed by DGs IPOL and EXPO, and by authorised external organisations. The Meetings Office dealt with 5750 bookings with and without interpretation, and a further 1300 DG-internal bookings. 15% of bookings resulted in cancellation.

32 missions for Political Groups and Governing Bodies were organised in 2016. Requests from external bodies did not increase in 2016 and it is expected that this activity will continue to be hampered by the restrictions resulting from the application of the heightened alert level.

Work continued on the development of *Resource Efficient Full Multilingualism* functionalities in the new Meeting Request System which is being progressively put in place, in cooperation with the Meetings Office and the scheduling service of DG IPOL.

Programming

A key task in the programming sector is to deploy the requested interpretation services in meetings of Parliament bodies and other users, in line with the agreed language coverage and other parameters, and in compliance with the rules in force. A challenge faced in 2016 was a short programming preparation time, due to the late introduction and/or confirmation of meetings in Pericles and last minute cancellations and language. This uncertainty causes delays in ACI recruitments and increased costs.

Interpretation into a language previously confirmed was withdrawn on 76 occasions due to sudden shortages, this figure is lower than in 2015 (112 occasions) and was achieved by targeted deployment of stand-by teams.

A restructuring has been made to the programming service enabling focus on core activity and interpreter workload management. The technical helpdesk, which provides special assistance in meetings with interpretation using technologies, such as videoconferencing, was moved to the Conference Technicians Unit. The Documentation service, in charge of obtaining and making meeting documentation available to interpreters, was moved to the newly created Interpreter Support and Training Unit.

Recruitment

To meet interpretation demand DG INTE recruits Conference Interpreting Agents (ACI) on daily contracts. In 2016, the total number of ACI contract days was 52.121. More than 95% of the ACI contract days were to cover the interpretation needs of the European Parliament, and 5% for meetings of other institutions. For the European Parliament, there has been an increase of 1721 days of ACI recruitment since 2015. This is a result of several factors: more missions outside the working places, increased number of Committee meetings with full language regimes, creation of two new committees of inquiry, and the reduction of available staff interpreters (not replaced after retirement). The breakdown by institution is as follows:

	2016
European Parliament	49623
<i>Client institutions</i>	
Committee of the Regions	995
European Commission	630
Economic and Social Committee	456
Court of Auditors	354
European Translation Centre	55
European Ombudsman	8
<i>Sub-total for client institutions</i>	2498

Demand for ACI by client institutions fell by almost a third (1066 ACI days) in 2016. There was a significant drop in demand from the EESC (-127 ACI days) and the CoR (-781 ACI days). In 2016 all CoR plenaries were held during weeks when the EP was in Brussels and were manned by both staff interpreters and ACI, reducing the need to recruit ACI. Out of the total of 52.121 days recruited, 874 (1, 7%) were done for needs related to languages other than the official languages of the EU.

2.4.3 Enhancing skills and support for interpreters

2.4.3.1 Training and optimising human resources

Training for interpreters is organised according to DG objectives regarding linguistic, professional and thematic skill requirements.

57 staff and 6 ACIs participated in language classes, 7 staff and 7 ACIs followed e-learning courses and 7 followed private tuition. Of staff who sat language adding test after an external course in 2016, 64% were successful.

12 staff members are learning a language at an advanced level (FR, PT) with a view to adding the language within the next 18 months.

6 staff and 1 ACI followed two booster courses to prepare for an adding test in DE within the next 12months. 19 events with 165 participants were organised in Brussels for language enhancement in 10 different languages.

One summer university for 41 interpreters with EN C or B was organised in the UK.

Thematic training for interpreters was organised with in-house expertise, this totalled 52 events with 829 participants and was provided at zero cost.

Furthermore, 21 thematic, skills and personal development sessions were organised with external trainers with a total of 254 interpreters. Hence for non-language learning, 73 training sessions with 1083 participants were organised and sessions were offered in 15 languages.

13 staff participated in the Knowledge Profiles for Interpreters project (PPP number 4). Participants followed 6 classroom-training events, visited the European Investment Bank in Luxembourg and followed 2 Summer Universities in addition to completing between 3 and 6 *Massive Open Online Courses*.

2.4.3.2 Support for interpreters

The prototype of the Interpreter Support Tool application was tested by a pilot group and results are currently being evaluated. A feasibility study on the use of speech recognition technology is underway and will provide an overview of the market for state-of-the-art solutions, and feasibility assessment in the specific EP context.

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 21329 documents for 4818 meetings were uploaded in 2016.

2.4.4 Preparing for future interpretation needs - succession planning

2.4.4.1 Pre selection tool and speech recording

The Pre-Selection Tool (PST) was introduced in March for all inter-institutional accreditation tests and is managed by DG INTE. The intensive use of the tool has confirmed it is a robust efficient way of selecting candidates avoiding travel expenses and environmental costs.

In 2016 a total of 97 speech recordings were organised with 33 interpreters (19.5 interpreter days) for language adding and Pre-Selection Tool. 4 speech recordings and 10 grading sessions were coordinated with 11 interpreters (7 interpreter days) to contribute to the speech repository. For the purposes of EPSO testing, language adding tests and the PST, 185 speeches were validated by DG INTE.

2.4.4.2 Easing the transition from university into the interpreting profession

DG INTE and DG SCIC organised a second Professional Accreditation Support Scheme (PASS) with the participation of the Court of Justice. The programme was for interpretation graduates with HR, MT and NL and resulted in a 27% pass rate at accreditation tests.

2.4.4.3 Support to Universities

As part of the student visit programme a total of 303 students and trainers from 30 universities visited DG INTE.

46 Virtual Classes were organised with the involvement of 100 Staff Interpreters and 204 students, providing 26 EU and non-EU universities with high-quality remote teaching by EP interpreters. 4 new universities joined DG INTE's partner network and virtual classes have received positive feedback.

The Virtual Coaching Tool (e-learning platform for remote one-to-one interpretation coaching and included in the PPP for IT development) was developed to support universities within the context of succession planning and will ensure cost-efficiency and reduce environmental costs.

2.4.5 Inter institutional and international cooperation

DG INTE held the presidency of the Executive Committee on Interpretation (ECI) in the framework of the Inter-institutional Committee on Translation and Interpretation (ICTI), for the second consecutive year.

DG INTE also took the chair of the Working Group on Training in IAMLADP (International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications) and also of the Universities Contact Group of IAMLADP to foster international cooperation and synergies in the language professions.

2.4.6 Strengthening the structure of the Conference Technicians Unit.

Continuation of the PPP for increased automation of conference room installations was underway in 2016. 12 additional rooms were completed in Brussels finalising the automation project in the ASP and PHS buildings. 2 pilot rooms were also finalised in Strasbourg. To avoid the need for 2 successive renovations (with associated duplicate costs), it was decided to replace both audio-visual and conference equipment when renovating the meeting rooms. Additional appropriations were secured in the 2016 mopping up procedure enabled DG INTE to launch this work.

Maintenance contracts, established at the end of 2015, have allowed DG INTE to reduce the yearly maintenance costs of equipment by 25% or €350.000 in 2016.

2.4.7 IT supporting DG INTE

Decentralised projects.

- Assistance, support and backup facilities were provided for the Virtual Coaching Tool and the Pre-Selection Testing tool
- Interpreter Support Tool- bug fixes and documentation issues were resolved.

PERICLES developments (ITEC PERICLES team under the lead of INTE)

- MINA: (Meeting Information and Notes Application) phase 1 was finalised but phase 2 was delayed due to a change in priorities.
- MRS: Several releases adding dashboards and functionalities. A growing number of DGs are using the system. (INTE, SAFE, PRES, FINS, ITEC and EPRS).
- SAM (System for Assignment Management): Phase 1 implemented at 80% and will be placed at the disposal of users. Counters: In the framework of the modernisation of interpretation process, management indicators (counters) have been developed and delivered.

Inter-institutional projects

- Webcalendar: postponed due to changed development priorities.
- GRIF bridge: The system is in place and the activation of the automated transfer is scheduled for early 2017.

3. Evaluation and effectiveness of internal controls, including overall assessment of the controls' cost-effectiveness

The methodology, workflow and systems that constitute the internal control procedures imply continual and on-going assessment; this is embedded in the range of managerial responsibilities. Controls conducted throughout the year identify weaknesses and improvements are made quickly to address the shortfall. The Budget Unit verifies all financial transactions of the DG, and all tender procedures above €15.000 before launch. The total number of files verified by the ex-ante verification team in 2016 was 1500 transactions (this includes both FINORD and WEBCONTRACT files). These controls are complemented and supported by the ex post control activities performed by the Total Quality Management Unit. Regular contact is assured with the Budget Unit on any outstanding issues and for input to the controls findings and recommendations.

A Risk Management Team is in place in DG INTE (composed of Director for Resources, Adviser to the Director-General, Total Quality Management Head of Unit and AD staff member). It is instrumental in supporting risk owners in their risk assessment, helping them formulate risks and design mitigating measures in the most action-oriented manner possible, providing the Director-General with an overview of DG INTE current risk register.

A fully fledged exercise to identify sensitive posts was completed in 2016. An internal monitoring working group was set up under the lead of the Director for Resources. It comprised two representatives (Head of Unit and AD) from the HR, Budget and TQM units of DG INTE. The multidisciplinary character of the monitoring group was an asset for this step of the analysis and fostered in-depth exchanges of views.

DG INTE has opted for a *hands on* approach and aims at raising general awareness and understanding of Internal Control. In 2016 DG INTE focussed on Minimum Internal Control Standards n°8 (processes and procedures), n°10 (business continuity) and n°11 (document management) and organised a series of consultations and/or workshops on a number of relevant themes with different actors within the DG:

- two workshops were held to explain the principles and meaning of placing *bon à payer* and *conforme aux faits* on invoices. This was held with the operational unit most concerned with this issue in the DG. This also contributed to implementation of EPC recommendations.

- a subject selected for further development was to establish a harmonised procedure for the recording and reporting of exceptions and non-compliance events. A paper with proposed workflows and procedures was discussed within the DG (BUDGET, TQM and ACI Payment Unit). It was also presented to the Inter DG Steering Group for Finance and subsequently at the first workshop of 2017. This will now be finalised and the system put into place within the DG.

- a consultation took place on the hand-over templates for managers and staff concerned. The new procedure is now in place. In addition, an initial business impact analysis was launched.

- regular meetings are held for all financial and operational initiators in the DG. A colleague of DG FINS attended one of these sessions and gave a tailor-made presentation of the importance of the correct use of the application WEBCONTRACTS when preparing contracts, tenders,

order forms etc. This provided an excellent opportunity to ask DG-specific questions and increase understanding of the system aided by the expertise of the colleague.

Regarding the cost/effectiveness of controls; assessing the number of actors involved in control activities would depend on what is to be considered within this context. In DG INTE there are currently 2 ex ante verifiers of financial transactions and 1 procurement expert verifying tender files. 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 description is taken in broader terms then one could consider both operational and financial initiators whose role also includes verification work, Heads of the Units concerned, and eventually Directors, all of whom have a verification role. It should also be noted that the necessary tools are not available to enable calculation of costs with any degree of meaningfulness.

4. CONCLUSIONS

2016 began with the initiative taken by the Secretary-General to establish a series of principles and objectives aimed at “Completing Resource Efficient Full Multilingualism”. Subsequently, a number of managerial decisions were taken and management commitments implemented, while, at the same time, the consultation process on new working conditions for interpreters was launched on 15 July 2016. No agreement could be reached by the end of the deadline set by the Secretary-General for the consultation process, some improvements on resource-efficiency were achieved through the implementation of a number of managerial decisions not directly related to interpreters’ working conditions.

5. DECLARATION of the Delegated Authorising Officer

I, the undersigned, Agnieszka WALTER-DROP

Director-General of 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.

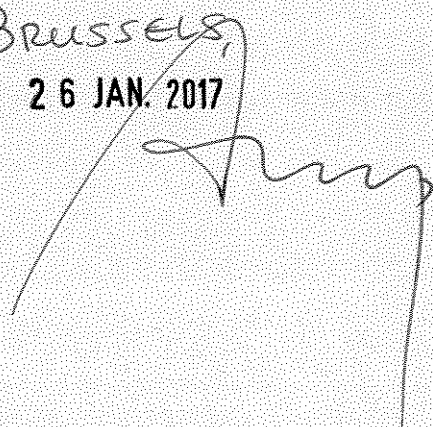
This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgment and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of self-assessment, ex post controls and remarks by the Internal Audit Service, as well as the lessons learned from the reports of the Court of Auditors for financial years prior to that for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

BRUSSELS

26 JAN. 2017



6. ANNEXES

6.1 Budget execution statements 2016

- 6.1.1. **Current appropriations** (nature 0)
- 6.1.2. **Automatic** (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. **Own revenue** (nature 8)
- 6.1.8. **Specific expenditure appropriations/assigned revenue** (nature 9)

6.2 Report on compliance with payment deadlines

6.3 List of exceptions derogations from the rules

6.4 Long-term contractual obligations - There are no long-term contractual obligations for DG INTE in 2016.

6.5 Exceptional negotiated procedures – There were no exceptional negotiated procedures in 2016.

6.6 Results of ex post evaluation

6.7 Sensitive posts

6.8 Evaluation of implementation of minimum internal control standards

ANNEX 6.1.1

DG. INTE

Situation des Crédits courants Exercice: 2016 (en EUR)

Edité le 17/01/2017 à 10:31

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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
1402	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	45.125.000,00	3.520.000,00	48.645.000,00	48.598.750,00	99,90	44.998.572,29	3.600.177,71	46.250,00
01404-04	STAGES, SUBVENTIONS ET ECHANGE DE FONCTIONNAIRES: SUBVENTIONS POUR FORMATION ET BOURSES ACCORDEES POUR LE PERFECTIONNEMENT D'INTERPRETES DE CONFERENCE ET FRAIS ANNEXES	170.000,00	-40.000,00	130.000,00	99.042,69	76,19	98.538,32	504,37	30.957,31
02103-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - ACTIVITE RECURENTE DE GESTION DES APPLICATIONS TIC	155.500,00	-82.500,00	73.000,00	71.124,40	97,43	17.455,13	53.669,27	1.875,60
02105-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - INVESTISSEMENTS EN PROJETS-INTE- PROJETS IT DECENTRAISES	50.000,00	20.000,00	70.000,00	69.747,00	99,64	0,00	69.747,00	253,00
02140-04	ACHAT, RENOUVELLEMENT, LOCATION, ENTRETIEN ET RAPARATION DE MATERIEL ET D'INSTALLATIONS TECHNIQUES - CONFERENCES	5.880.000,00	2.650.000,00	8.530.000,00	8.509.604,03	99,76	3.903.862,90	4.605.741,13	20.395,97
3042	REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS	1.145.000,00	-90.000,00	1.055.000,00	972.050,28	92,14	626.471,36	345.578,92	82.949,72
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	770.000,00	-254.000,00	516.000,00	508.651,22	98,58	297.880,85	210.770,37	7.348,78
Total Général		53.295.500,00	5.723.500,00	59.019.000,00	58.828.969,62	99,68	49.942.780,85	8.886.188,77	190.030,38

ANNEX 6.1.2

DG. INTE

Situation des Crédits reportés automatiques Exercice: 2016 (en EUR)

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits Reportés	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	Paiements Effectués	% Util.	Crédits Disponibles	Reliquat de Conversion
1402	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	4.205.876,47	4.205.876,47	4.205.876,47	4.118.747,57	97,93	87.128,90	0,00
01404-04	ACTIONS DE FORMATIONS (Y COMPRIS LES SUBVENTIONS ET BOURSES ACCORDEES	2.811,19	2.811,19	2.811,19	840,03	29,88	1.971,16	0,00
02105-19	INFORMATIQUE ET TELECOMMUNICATION - INVESTISSEMENTS EN PROJETS-INTE- PROJETS IT DECENTRAISES	221.191,15	221.191,15	221.191,15	219.865,94	99,40	1.325,21	0,00
02140-04	ACHAT, RENOUELEMENT, LOCATION, ENTRETIEN ET RAPARATION DE MATERIEL ET D'INSTALLATIONS TECHNIQUES - CONFERENCES	2.995.231,65	2.995.231,65	2.995.231,65	2.936.242,34	98,03	58.989,31	0,00
3042	REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES ET AUTRES REUNIONS	343.053,38	343.053,38	343.053,38	239.909,84	69,93	103.143,54	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	97.586,69	97.586,69	97.586,69	51.677,57	52,96	45.909,12	0,00
Total Général		7.865.750,53	7.865.750,53	7.865.750,53	7.567.283,29	96,21	298.467,24	0,00

ANNEX 6.1.4

DG. INTE

Situation des Crédits de dépenses spécifiques/RA Exercice: 2016 (en EUR)

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits an. cumulés.	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	% Util.	Paiements Effectués	Solde des Engag. E.C.	Crédits Disponibles
01402-01	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	3.165.181,17	3.165.181,17	3.017.561,17	95,34	1.181.658,13	1.835.903,04	147.620,00
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 - ACTIVITE RECURENTE DE GESTION DES APPLICATIONS TIC	30.112,50	30.112,50	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	30.112,50
03042-03	REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES	3.359,00	3.359,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	3.359,00
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	20.680,87	20.680,87	17.930,87	86,70	17.500,00	430,87	2.750,00
Total Général		3.219.369,54	3.219.369,54	3.035.492,04	94,29	1.199.158,13	1.836.333,91	183.877,50

ANNEX 6.1.5

DG. INTE

Situation des Crédits reportes dep. spec RA Exercice: 2016 (en EUR)

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits Initiaux	Crédits Actuels	Engagements Contractés	Paiements Effectués	% Util.	Solde des Engagements	Crédits Disponibles
01402-00	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	1.709.953,66	1.709.953,66	1.709.953,66	1.709.953,66	100,00	0,00	0,00
03042-03	REMBOURSEMENT FRAIS REUNIONS DES GROUPES POLITIQUES	1.203,50	1.203,50	1.003,50	0,00	0,00	1.003,50	200,00
	Total Général	1.711.157,16	1.711.157,16	1.710.957,16	1.709.953,66	99,94	1.003,50	200,00

ANNEX 6.1.6

DG. INTE

Situation des engagements reportés de dépenses spécifiques /RA Exercice: 2016 (en EUR)

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Poste	Intitulé	Crédits reportés	Crédits actuels	Engagements Contractés	Paiements Effectués	% Util.	Reste à payer
1402	DEPENSES D'INTERPRETATION	503.281,01	503.281,01	503.281,01	503.281,01	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	2.157,37	2.157,37	2.157,37	1.272,47	58,98	884,90
Total Général		505.438,38	505.438,38	505.438,38	504.553,48	99,82	884,90

Annex 6.2 Report on compliance with payment delays

<u>Invoices paid in 2016</u>		Default interest payable automatically (> €200)	Default interest payable on request (<=€200)	No default interest payable	Total
Paid by the time limit	Number of invoices			511	511
	Total invoiced (€)			55.886.706,23	55.886.706,23
Paid outside time limit	Number of invoices	0	32	0	32
	Total invoiced (€)	0	459.508,30	0	459.508,30
	Amount of default interest (€)	0	570,44	0	570,44
Total number of invoices		0	32	511	543
Total invoiced (€)		0	459.508,30	55.886.706,23	56.346.214,53

The total number of invoices received in 2016 was 543 for the total amount of €56.346.214,53. Of these, 32 invoices were paid outside of the deadline, generating a total of €570,44 of interest. No invoice generated more than €200 of interest so no automatic payment was necessary. Furthermore, no contractor reclaimed interest under the €200 limit.

Of the 32 invoices paid outside of the delay, 21 were delayed by 5 days or less. One invoice was paid with a delay of 67 days. This was due to the invoice being sent between services and arriving late to DG INTE (first invoice of a new contractor and incorrectly addressed to DG INTE). 1 invoice was the subject of a refused visa and *passer outre* which took longer to process after gathering all information, and led to payment being made with a 30 day delay.

A further 5 invoices were sent late in December 2015, and as payment could not be finalised before the closing of the year, they were only paid in January 2016 after the opening of the system.

9 invoices, included on one payment order, were delayed due to one being incorrect. This took longer to process as the payment order needed to be re-established for the 8 correct invoices.

4 invoices were received during the month of August and due to staff absences were treated with delays of between 1 and 24 days.

The remaining invoices which 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 12,71 days.

Annex 6.3 List of exceptions - derogations from the rules

Decisions to make an exception to the applicable procedures and rules							
Document ref.(FINOR D, ref, contract etc)	Relevant Authorising Officer	Subject	Amount	Verifiers opinion		Decision	
				Favourable with statement/unfavourable	Justification	Relevant Authorising Officer	Justification
ED 70029	M. JORISSEN	Order for analogue telephones and telecommunication costs for reunion of PPE Copenhagen	€6.187,26	Visa of non conformity/passé outre	No prior approved budgetary commitment in place before order was made. No request for an offer, no formal order issued and signed by Authorising Officer.	J C JIMENEZ MARIN	As necessary services were ordered by a member of staff, and as the responsible Authorising Officer would have given agreement, as payment is due, the instruction was given to place a passer outre.
ED 70125	M. JORISSEN	Order for provision of removal services during conference of ECR group in Copenhagen	€2.600,00	Visa of non conformity/passé outre	No prior approved budgetary commitment in place before order was made. No formal order was issued and signed by Authorising Officer.	A.GRZYBOWSKA	As the services were required and as they were ordered by a staff member and as they were delivered as requested the contractor is due payment for the services. Instruction given to place passer outre.
ED 70164	P. TULKENS	Request to DG PERS to order services of Conference technician	€115.000*	Visa of non conformity/passé 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 INTE.	P. TULKENS	Provisional commitment in place was exceeded by orders for services to the amount of €8.193 *. Only that part of the new commitment was established after the order had been placed (saisine a posteriori) passer outre placed.
ED 70308	M. JORISSEN	Order form for additional screens and projectors during the meeting of the ECR group in Rome	€2.400,00	Visa of non conformity/passé outre	Services supplied without prior approved budgetary commitment in place, and without a verified and authorised order form having been signed.	A.GRZYBOWSKA	Due to late notification on the part of the contractor and venue concerned that the services would not be supplied an urgent NP with 1 offer was set up. It was not finalised the services were required. Instruction given to place passer outre.

ED 70295	M. JORISSEN	Order of removal services during conference of GUE in Amsterdam and Rotterdam	€375,00	Visa of non conformity/passers outre	Original order of services exceeded without cover of budgetary commitment or amendment to order form.	A.GRZYBOWSKA	Services supplied exceeded order. Additional cost subject to an ED and order after services provided. Instruction for passer outre.
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Receivable waiver/cancellation procedures

Document ref. (Finord ref.)	Relevant Authorising Officer	Subject	Amount	Authorising officer's reasons for waiver/cancellation
OR 506/208	C. PALEOLOGOS	Interpretation services for november 2015 invoiced to the group Alliance et progres S&D	-1.760 €	This was not a waiver or cancellation of a debt as such. It relates to the partial cancellation of debit note 2015-1771 by means of credit note 2016-197 this was done because 4 interpretation sessions had been wrongly invoiced to the S&D group on the debit note 2015-1771.
OR 506-209	C. PALEOLOGOS	Interpretation services for december 2015 invoiced to the group ALDE	-1.760 €	This was not a waiver or cancellation of a debt as such. It relates to the partial cancellation of debit note 2016-113 by means of a credit note 2016-204. This was done because 4 interpretation sessions had been wrongly invoiced to the group ALDE on the debit note 2016-113.

Annex – 6.6 – Result of ex post evaluation

The ex post controls were carried out in line with the updated strategy adopted in the beginning of 2015 and with the 2016 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 process reviews.

The ex post controls mainly focussed on budget lines 1402-01 “Expenditure on interpretation: Freelance interpreters” and 1402-02 “Expenditure on interpretation: operators, technicians and conference managers”.

More precisely, the work related to:

- Pre-paid travel tickets issued to Conference Interpreting Agents (ACIs) via the EP travel agency: considering the high number of individual transactions handled, the Unit concerned has put in place a series of (mainly) manual controls in order to mitigate the risks inherent to non-automated process. The result of the transaction testing performed on a sample of pre-paid tickets for a given month as well as the payment of the related invoice was overall satisfactory. The process is documented by the Unit in charge, including the identification of inherent risks. In this light, suggestions made by EPC were limited. They mainly related to the interaction with operational actors concerning potential cases of non-use of tickets and to the added value of providing access to the Pericles application for actors involved in the ex-ante verification stage.
- Hiring of interim conference technicians through DG PERS framework contract: the transaction tested covered a full quarter of 2016. No issue was detected with regard to the amount paid. For the underlying controls, some recommendations were agreed with the AOSD concerned in order to further strengthen the relatively new process in place (mainly concerning some aspects of the selection stage, the reconciliation of hours invoiced and the timeliness of operations).
- Conversions of non-local ACIs’ contracts to professional domicile: in exceptional cases, ACIs can be required to remain in their professional domicile, thus allowing to limit costs (in particular travels, accommodation and some specific allowances). The analysis demonstrated that the share of non-local ACIs’ contract-days concerned by this practice was minimal. No atypical pattern was detected in relation to the decision-making process leading to conversions. Overall, conversions effectively contributed to cost limitation although the budgetary impact on budget line 1402-01 was limited. Some improvements were suggested in order to better identify conversions in the Pericles database and to increase DG INTE reporting capabilities over this practice.
- A follow-up exercise of open recommendations was performed. At the end of 2016, all the recommendations issued in the last four years were closed. Moreover, it was also confirmed that “issues for consideration” identified in the framework of the 2015 engagement “Reliability of Pericles information supporting payments to ACIs largely influenced the “to-be” phase of the “new Pericles” application.

Lastly, it should be noted that the Total Quality Management Unit (in charge of ex post controls) is part of the working group in charge of monitoring sensitive functions within DG INTE (an exercise was carried out in 2016). This allows to benefit from the detailed knowledge gained, over the years, about DG INTE internal control system, notably through the ex post work and process reviews.

Annex 6.7 Sensitive Posts

<i>Post identified as sensitive.</i>	<i>Measures taken</i>
<i>Director of Interpretation Director of Organisation & Planning Director of Resources</i>	<i>No action proposed. Sensitive due to powers of decision making inherent to the nature of the post.</i>
<i>Head of ACI Recruitment Unit</i>	<i>Regular reporting.</i>
<i>Administrative/Interpretation Manager ACI Recruitment Unit 4 x AD posts</i>	<i>Idem to above remark for the Head of ACI Recruitment Unit.</i>
<i>Head of Meetings and Conferences Unit</i>	<i>No action proposed. The mitigating measures implemented since the last exercise are enough to make the residual risk acceptable to management.</i>
<i>Administrative Manager Meetings and Conferences Unit</i>	<i>Idem to above remark for the Head of Meetings and Conferences Unit.</i>
<i>Meetings Organisers Meetings and Conferences Unit 4 x AST posts</i>	<i>Idem to above remark for the Head of Meetings and Conferences Unit.</i>
<i>Head of Conference Technicians Unit</i>	<i>No action proposed. The mitigating measures implemented since the last exercise are enough to make the residual risk acceptable to management.</i>
<i>Legal Advisor & Data Protection Co-ordinator</i>	<i>The mitigating measures implemented since the last exercise are enough to make the residual risk acceptable to management without any other corrective actions.</i>
<i>Advisor to the Director-General</i>	<i>The residual risk is acceptable to management without any corrective action.</i>
<i>Management administrator in Strategy Unit</i>	<i>The residual risk is acceptable to management without any corrective action.</i>
<i>Head of the Strategy Unit</i>	<i>The residual risk is acceptable to management without any corrective action.</i>

ANNEX 6.8 - Assessment of implementation of Minimum Internal Control Standards

Self-assessment summary table

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

ANNEX 6.8 - Assessment of implementation of Minimum Internal Control Standards

Section	Standard N°	Comments on achievement
1. Mission statement and values	1.Mission	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	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. Performance indicators are not yet developed and the point has been raised in the Inter DG Steering group for financial matters that this could be a case for developing these with the aid and some harmonisation from the central services.
	6.Risk management process	In the light of the modernisation process of DG INTE, a thorough overhaul of the risk register was performed. The role of DG INTE Risk Management Team was instrumental in supporting risk owners in their risk assessment, helping them formulate risks and design mitigating measures in the most action-oriented manner possible, providing the Director General with an overview of DG INTE current risk register. The risk register was also particularly useful in the framework of the initial Business Impact Analysis launched by DG INTE. The register served as a basis for many of the related interviews carried out with DG INTE senior and middle managers. It is DG INTE's intention to treat risk management and business continuity as fellow disciplines and coordinate them accordingly.

4. Operations and Control activities	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. A fully fledged exercise was completed in 2016 to identify sensitive posts and to set out recommendations for mitigating measures where applicable.
	8. Processes and procedures	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, attached to the Resources Directorate. All procurement procedures above €15.000 are checked before launch by the Procurement Help Desk function, also within the Budget Unit. A workflow and instruction for the reporting of exceptions and non-compliance events is in final stages of completion. This has already been discussed within the DG and also in the Inter DG Steering group for finance as a best practice exercise.
	9. Management oversight	An ex post function has been in place in DG INTE since May 2013. Ex post controls are carried out in line with the updated strategy adopted in the beginning of 2015 and on the basis of an annual work programme. In this light, ex post activities are not limited to purely transaction-based checks but particular attention is also paid to the related underlying processes. More details on the outcome of ex post controls performed in 2016 are provided in annex 6.6 of the report.
	10. Business continuity	In order to contribute in the most effective and efficient way to the developments in the BC field at central level, DG INTE launched an initial Business Impact Analysis. Contacts were taken with the DG INTE's counterpart in the European Commission (Directorate-General for Interpretation - SCIC) in order to benefit from their longer and wider experience in BC matters. A first meeting was held with the newly appointed Head of the central "Business Continuity Management" Unit where a number of principles and issues could be discussed in broad terms. The BIA process is still ongoing. The first results will be made available to the Senior Management in early 2017 and pave the way for new initiatives in the BC domain (in close cooperation with the BCM EP Unit). Work was completed in 2016 for the development of templates for handover of work from one staff member to another. The templates (one specifically for managers and one for all other staff) are now available and in use within the DG.
	11. Document management	Systematic and formal registration of incoming documents is made 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 is involved in the drawing up of an EP-wide filing plan in the context of the GIDOC.

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 (normally 4-6 times per year) 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 Manual of Procedures for financial and budgetary matters was available on the intranet site but was outdated, not user friendly, and did not contain essential information and links to assist financial actors with their work. This was therefore removed and work was underway at the beginning of the exercise to re-look the Manual into a helpful and user-friendly guide. Due to staff shortages it has not been possible to finalise in 2016 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 accounting and financial reporting required within the institution is organised with periodical and ad hoc reports. All details of budgetary transactions and contracting are registered in Finord and/or Webcontracts
6. Evaluation and auditing 5. Audit and evaluation	14. Evaluation of activities	Since the Bureau Decision on Resource Efficient Full Multilingualism in December 2011 DG INTE has instigated a number of major evaluations of its core activities. Optimising resource management, the modernisation of the services the DG provides and adaptation to changing patterns in demand and services required were again at the forefront of priorities in 2016. Analyses on productivity data of the interpretation service in 2015 resulted in a number of management commitments being implemented, based on in-depth evaluation of the existing processes and the productivity data of the service. A full analysis of the DG's activities relating to Multilingualism and the cooperation with Universities was finalised in 2015. Its implementation was delayed during this exercise but work is to be re-launched in 2017. In December 2015, the Strategy Unit was created to contribute to the on-going modernisation process by the development of metrics and KPI. Several metrics regarding the provision of interpretation were developed in the course of 2016 and are now implemented
	15. Evaluation of internal control systems	Monitoring and evaluation are on-going exercises. Detailed account is provided at point 3 of the report.
	16. Audit reports	The audit report carried out by the Internal Audit Service on the implementation of the Code of Conduct on multilingualism was released in July 2016. No critical recommendation was issued. Follow-up work is ongoing