2016

Annual Activity Report

EUSA
(European School of Administration)

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INTRODUCTION

The DG in brief

The mission of the European School of Administration is to provide high quality training and learning opportunities that meet the needs of all EU institutions and their staff in order to:

- *contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the institutions through the continuous development of the talents of their staff;*
- *help preserve and diffuse the values that underpin the development of the EU and the work of the European Civil Service;*
- *promote cooperation among staff of the various institutions by providing opportunities for networking and the exchange of ideas and good practice;*
- *share experience and provide opportunities for mutual learning by cooperating with the Schools of public administration in the Member States.*

In fulfilling its mission the School also contributes to the optimal use of available resources in the field of learning and development through the synergies it achieves with the training departments in the institutions and the resulting economies of scale.

The School is accountable to the same management board as EPSO and, like EPSO, forms part of the portfolio of responsibilities of the Commissioner responsible for Budget and Human Resources.

It works in close partnership with the learning and development services of all the institutions in order to ensure that its offer is responsive to their expectations and needs and that the best possible synergies can be achieved with their own activities in this field.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Activity Report is a management report of the Head of the European School of Administration to the College of Commissioners. Annual Activity Reports are the main instrument of management accountability within the Commission and constitutes the basis on which the College takes political responsibility for the decisions it takes as well as for the coordinating, executive and management functions it exercises, as laid down in the Treaties[1].

a) Key results and progress towards the achievement of general and specific objectives of the DG (executive summary of section 1)

*2016 was a year of **change** for the School, with impacts for the School as a whole. The change was spearheaded by the launch of our new management programmes.*

*The **new management programmes** had been on their way since the needs analysis in 2014. Following the conclusion of the new framework contracts in August 2015, the design process gathered speed and the new offer was gradually rolled out during 2016. It represents a radical break with the past – the courses are no longer structured by hierarchical level of management, but by topic, and thus the entire offer, with only a handful of exceptions, is open to managers at all levels, from team leaders to senior managers.*

*The second major change for the School was the transition from Syslog to the **new learning management system, EULearn**, which took place in the latter half of the year. This technical challenge coincided with the roll-out of the new management programmes, so that the inevitable teething problems with any new product or process were combined, and thereby exacerbated, leading to a noticeable drop in participation rates, in particular for the management courses.*

*The new management programmes also show greater **diversification of delivery** than ever before. The School has been increasing the proportion of blended learning in all its programmes, and took the opportunity to go even further with the new management offer. Another notable achievement of 2016 in this area is that all Key Skills courses now can boast their own e-book.*

*For the Key Skills, Seminars and Conferences, and programmes for newcomers, on the other hand, 2016 was a year of relative continuity. A very interesting development is the overwhelming success of the lunchtime workshops on different aspects of **well-being**. These were introduced in 2015 for the first time, and after only a year in existence the well-being workshops, together with the Key Skills course on Resilience, now represent nearly half of the School's total participation rates for the "Key Skills" courses. This sends a potentially worrying signal to the Institutions.*

Further achievements during the past year that are worth summarising here are:

- *delivering the compulsory training programme for the 11th annual certification exercise for assistant-grade staff with the potential to become administrators;*
- *organising three sessions of the Public Administration Erasmus traineeships for young national civil servants dealing with EU affairs;*
- *assisting the institutions and Agencies with the organisation of 35 customised learning and development programmes, notably a package of actions to accompany the Court of Auditors in its major organisational change.*

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[1] Article 17(1) of the Treaty on European Union.

Finally, the School generally met or surpassed its key performance indicators, more details of which are contained in the rest of this Report.

b) Key Performance Indicators (5 KPIs)

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Target 2016	Situation at the end of 2016
1. The inter-institutional character of our training activities which is part of the fundamental raison d'être of the School	**2012**: 29 % of non-Commission participants	30 % of non-Commission participants	34%
2. The level of satisfaction expressed by participants	**2012:** 96 % of satisfied participants	≥ 90 % of satisfied participants	97 %
3. The degree to which we introduce more blended learning elements in our training programmes	**2013**: 17 % of courses containing blended learning elements	≥ 30 % of courses containing blended learning elements	77%
4. The rate of attendance	**2012**: 90 %	≥ 90 %	88%
5. The evaluation of the impact of our training activities	**2013**: 2 pilot projects for the measurement of learning transfer and impact of training programmes	10 programmes to be analysed	11

These results indicate that with only one exception the School met, and even surpassed, its key performance indicators in 2016.

As can be seen from the performance indicators above, the School ensured a fair inter-institutional balance as regards participant numbers whilst at the same time making sure that whenever an individual institution needed a larger than usual number of places its demand was always satisfied. Indeed, the extremely high level of cooperation between the School and the institutions over the years has meant that it has never been necessary to trigger the formal and potentially cumbersome quota system envisaged when the School was founded. The School will continue its efforts in cooperation with the learning and development services of the institutions to eliminate any residual duplication that may exist in their specific offer.

There was a very slight overall decrease in the number of participants (-1,4%). This can be explained by the change in Learning Management System from Syslog to EU-Learn, which took place in the latter half of the year, and which had tangible consequences for the participation rates, in particular in the new management programmes which were still being rolled out. We are likely to still see some repercussions of the introduction of EU-Learn in the figures for 2017. Full details of the School's output in terms of its training programmes are contained in the annex to this Report.

Participants continued to be extremely satisfied with the School's programmes. More importantly, 98,2% of them found the programmes to be relevant to their work and this, coupled with the results of the School's extended impact evaluation activities, is very reassuring. Satisfaction statistics are important, but high ratings for relevance take evaluation one step further, and strongly suggest that the learning will be effectively transferred to the workplace. For this reason, the School has for several years been moving from general "satisfaction" questions asked in its online evaluation forms towards an evaluation linked to the participants' perception of how their actual learning has been helped by the training they have received, and how they have been able to implement their learning in the workplace.

The School is particularly pleased with the extent to which it has been able to diversify its delivery with an increasingly blended approach, reflecting the latest research on the way people learn. This has been a significant feature in the redesign of its leadership and management training programmes, as referred to elsewhere in this Report. In this area it should also be noted that the School has introduced e-books for all its "Key Skills" modules.

At the same time, there is clear evidence that a large part of the added value of the School's programmes stems from the opportunities they afford participants from different institutions and with different professional experience to meet in person. It is for this reason the "classroom-based" element of its programmes will not disappear, just be reduced in length and completed with a larger variety of learning methodologies.

The School is slightly disappointed that despite its best efforts it has not been able to reduce the percentage of late drop outs and "no-shows", which for 2016 was at 11%. The consolation is that without the dedication of its course managers in finding replacements on courses at short notice, this figure would have certainly been higher.

The School is continuously fine-tuning its internal arrangements in order to improve the efficiency and economy of its operations. One important example was the decision to open the inter-institutional call for tenders for "Key Skills" training courses to participation from all institutions, European Union offices, bodies and agencies, in the same way as for the contracts for management training and coaching in 2014-15. This meant that the contracting authorities did not have to organise their own tender, but could benefit from the School running the procedure on their behalf, resulting in significant savings of effort and time for each participating authority.

A total of 44 contracting authorities officially participated in this procurement procedure, and when the contract is signed in early 2017 they no longer need to pass through the School to use the contract – a procedure which adds no real value – but can deal directly with the contractor, although they can benefit from the School's expertise if they so wish.

c) Key conclusions on Financial management and Internal control (executive summary of section 2.1)

In accordance with the governance statement of the European Commission, the staff of the European School of Administration conducts its operations in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations, working in an open and transparent manner and meeting the expected high level of professional and ethical standards.

The Commission has adopted a set of internal control principles, based on international good practice, aimed to ensure the achievement of policy and operational objectives. The financial regulation requires that the organisational structure and the internal control systems used for the implementation of the budget are set up in accordance with these standards. The European School of Administration has assessed the internal control systems during the reporting year and has concluded that the internal control principles are implemented and function as intended. Please refer to AAR section 2.3 for further details.

In addition, the European School of Administration has systematically examined the available control results and indicators, including those aimed to supervise entities to which it has entrusted budget implementation tasks, as well as the observations and recommendations issued by internal auditors and the European Court of Auditors. These elements have been assessed to determine their impact on the management's assurance as regards the achievement of control objectives. Please refer to Section 2 for further details.

In conclusion, management has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable controls are in place and working as intended; risks are being appropriately monitored and mitigated; and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented. The Director of EPSO, in his capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation has signed the Declaration of Assurance.

d) Information to the Commissioner(s)

In the context of the regular meetings during the year between the DG and the Commissioner(s) on management matters, also the main elements of this report and assurance declaration have been brought to the attention of Commissioners Kristalina Georgieva and Günther Oettinger, responsible for Budget & Human Resources.

1. KEY RESULTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE DG

1.1 Leadership and Management development

Specific objective 1: To equip staff who exercise or who may exercise management responsibilities with the necessary skills and attitudes thereby helping them and their institution achieve greater effectiveness.		
Result indicator: Perceived usefulness. **Source of data:** Questionnaires completed by participants.		
Baseline 2012: 98 %.	**Target in 2020:** 90 %[2]. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.	**Latest known results:** (2016) 94%
Result indicator: Perceived impact and learning transfer. **Source of data:** Questionnaires completed by participants.		
Baseline 2016: 50 %	**Target in 2020:** At least 50 % of participants reporting a level 2 impact for each course (Generally, a course includes several competencies to be developed. The figure to take into account is the average for all the competencies included in a course). At least 2 months after a course participants are requested to give an estimate of: 1. their level of competency in the field on which they were trained before and after the course (on a scale from 0 to 10), 2. frequency of use of what they have learnt (on a scale from 0 ("never or almost never") to 2 "often or very often"), 3. importance of what they have learnt for their job (on a scale from 0 ("not really important") to 2 ("very important").	**Latest known results:** (2016) #n/a * * Due to the late roll-out of our new management programmes there was not sufficient data available to measure this indicator in 2016. It will be measured for the 1st time in 2017.

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[2] During the first year of a new training programme this rate is set at 85 % and at 90 % for the following years. However, given the importance of this objective both for the institutions and their managers, the School has decided to set the rate at 90 % from the outset despite these programmes being new.

	An indicator is calculated by multiplying the difference of level of competency before and after the course with the frequency and importance of the topic. An indicator between 2 and 4 is considered as showing a satisfactory level of impact; between 4 and 8, a fairly high level of impact; and above 8 a high level of impact.	
Main policy outputs in 2016:		
Description and indicator:	**Target date:**	**Latest known results:**
• About 45 courses and workshops to ensure continuity until the School's new offer is completely available	30/06/2016	(2016) 47 courses
• 6 editions of the Leadership Club for senior management,	31/12/2016	6 editions of the Leadership Club
• 2 two-day courses at the Jean Monnet House for Heads of Unit		2 courses at the Jean Monnet House
• 1 edition of the development programme for newly-appointed Directors	31/12/2016	2 editions of the Newly Appointed Directors Programme
New management and leadership offer:		
• 50 one to two-day workshops around the three "clusters" of Managing Myself, Managing My Team and Managing My Organisational Environment,		53 workshops
• 10 courses for newly-appointed Heads of Unit		4 Licence to Lead + 12 Essentials of Management

The Management and Leadership development was the area of the School's activities to be the most affected by change in 2016. As the new programmes were rolled out, from March onwards, the whole map changed.

The changes were fundamental. The School's training needs analysis, based on a large survey of managers in the institutions, input from HR specialists, trainers and coaches, showed clearly that managers across the institutions have such varying skills, and that units or teams vary so much in size, composition and level of complexity, that "one size" courses really do not fit all. Therefore, the School decided to break with the prevailing paradigm, and no longer offer courses for managers per level of management. Instead,

the new offer was grouped into three "clusters": Managing myself, Managing my team, and Managing the environment, covering the main areas of leadership and management development, and with very few exceptions, open to managers at all levels of the organisation, AST or AD, from team leader to senior manager.

Research shows that for learning to "stick", it needs to be short, close to the workplace, use many different learning methods, and engage the participant[3]. The new management offer takes this fully on board. In the new courses, managers spend less time in the classroom, and more time in peer coaching sessions, reading material online, working on their own projects, etc. Such a blended approach has been taken for as many as 80% of the courses (up from 47% in 2015).

The changes have had an impact on attendance. Overall, the School organised a total of 140 management development programmes and workshops (down by 7,8% on the previous year), which were attended by 1710 participants (down by 14% on the previous year). The surprisingly large drop in attendance rates is due to a combination of independent, but concurrent factors. Firstly, the old programmes were phased out, but due to staff shortages, the new programmes took longer than planned to be designed and rolled out. Concretely, this meant that for a few months only a reduced selection of courses was available. Secondly, the communication to managers of the new offer was made more complicated by the abovementioned change to the Learning Management System, from Syslog to EU-Learn, at a critical moment, combined with changes in the HR service delivery structure in the Commission, where our primary interlocutors had been the local training managers, the Cofos, who no longer were in place. The changed structure of the offer, with its greater freedom of choice, removed the "automaticity" for managers in the selection of which course to attend. The change of IT-tool to EU-Learn meant that potential participants struggled to find our programmes in the new environment, and the Cofos were no longer available to guide them through the new offer. For this target audience in particular, these factors matter greatly and the results on participation rates have been noticeable. The effects of the introduction of EU-Learn will undoubtedly be visible in the final turnout for 2017. It is nonetheless pleasing to note, that for those who did manage to find our courses, participant satisfaction rates and the perceived relevance of these new programmes is high. The School expects that a communication campaign in 2017 should bring participation rates at least back to their usual level.

Specific mention should be made of the Leadership Club. This series of conferences for senior managers celebrated its 8th birthday in 2016, and the School keeps innovating on the concept. A new format, lunchtime conferences with a more political slant – notably featuring President Van Rompuy as a speaker – was trialled, with great success. The well-being aspect was also addressed, through a session with Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard. All in all, the Leadership Club attracted a record number of 256 participants over 6 sessions.

It is also worth noting that demand for the programme for newly-appointed Directors has become such that 2 editions are now being run every year. This programme, which in 2016 started its 7th edition, continues to attract very positive reviews.

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[3] This is the basis for the "70-20-10" philosophy, which also underpins the Commission's new Learning and Development Strategy – only 10% of what you learn is learned through formal learning, i.e. in the classroom or through e-learning; 20% through exchanges with others; but 70% in the workplace itself.

1.2 Integration of new staff

Specific objective 2: To help new staff understand the working environment of the EU institutions, the raison d'être of the European project and to contribute to their successful integration.		
Result indicator: Perceived usefulness. **Source of data:** Questionnaire completed by participants.		
Baseline 2012: 93 %	**Target in 2020:** 90 %. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.	**Latest known results:** (2016) 93%
Main policy outputs in 2016:		
Description and indicator: • 70 seminars for newly-arrived staff covering the way in which European integration has developed; the institutions' key missions and procedures; their own transition into their new environment; information sessions on their social security and pension entitlements; and "Discover Brussels" lunchtime conferences.	**Target date:** 31/12/2016	**Latest known results:** (2016) 70

As mentioned in last year's Report, the School substantially reorganised its offer for new staff at the beginning of 2015, to take account of the various profiles of new arrivals as well as the Commission's new induction programme. The current "newcomers" programme caters for staff who are not only new in the institutions, but who have also had to change countries to take up their posts, with the attendant challenges that can bring. This is in the form of a short seminar with the possibility of individual coaching for those who feel the need. It is interesting to note that the number of participants taking up the offer of coaching is increasing significantly in Brussels, whereas it has always been high in Luxembourg.

The number of induction courses offered is adapted to demand, and the reduction in output (12 seminars in 2016, down from 16 the previous year) mirrors the reduction in recruitment in the Institutions overall.

It should be noted, however, that the delivery of courses on EU History and the courses on the institutions' key missions and procedures (called "EU4U") was kept at largely the same level as in 2015. These courses are delivered by the School's own staff, who also, in addition to our inter-institutional offer, deliver short versions of the "History" and "EU4U" seminars on the first day of the Commission's new induction programme.

1.3 Talent management for all and staff well-being

Specific objective 3: To help staff develop their talents across a range of skills they need to be effective in their current and future jobs.		
Result indicator: Perceived usefulness. **Source of data:** Questionnaire completed by participants.		
Baseline 2012: 99 %	**Target in 2020:** 90 %. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.	**Latest known results:** (2016) 93%
Result indicator: Perceived impact and learning transfer. **Source of data:** Questionnaires completed by participants.		
Baseline 2016: 50 %	**Target in 2020:** At least 50 % of participants reporting a level 2 impact for each course (Generally, a course includes several competencies to be developed. The figure to take into account is the average for all the competencies included in a course) At least 2 months after a course participants are requested to give an estimate of: 1. their level of competency in the field on which they were trained before and after the course (on a scale from 0 to 10), 2. frequency of use of what they have learnt (on a scale from 0 ("never or almost never") to 2 "often or very often"), 3. importance of what they have learnt for their job (on a scale from 0 ("not really important") to 2 ("very important"). An indicator is calculated by multiplying the difference of level of competency before and after the course with the frequency and importance of the topic. An indicator between 2 and 4 is considered as showing a satisfactory level of impact; between 4 and 8, a	**Latest known results:** (2016) 64 %

	fairly high level of impact; and above 8 a high level of impact.	

Main policy outputs in 2016:		
Description: Key Skills development • About 165 courses on a wide range of skills that allow every member of staff, whatever their grade or function, to perform more effectively.	**Target date:** 31/12/2016	**Latest known results:** (year) 157

Result indicator: Perceived usefulness of wellbeing initiatives.
Source of data: Questionnaire completed by participants.

Baseline 2015: 90 %	**Target in 2020:** 90 %. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training and learning opportunities	**Latest known results:** (2016) 90%
Main policy outputs in 2016:		
Well-being workshops and Resilience • About 110 courses and workshops on resilience, and physical, emotional and mental well-being.	**Target date:** 31/12/2016	**Latest known results:** (2016) 110

In purely quantitative terms, this group of training programmes continued to expand. The number of workshops delivered over the year rose from 227 to 267 whilst the number of participants increased to just over 3666, a rise of nearly 18%.

It is interesting to note where this increase has taken place. The Key Skills have always been a popular series of courses, but since the School launched its lunchtime "Wellbeing" workshops in 2015, these have seen exponential growth. The take-up for the other Key Skills seminars has remained fairly stable, but the "Wellbeing" workshops have increased in number from 10 in 2015 to 66 in 2016, which means that in 2016 nearly half, 46%, of the total number of participants in the courses listed above attended either one or more of the Resilience workshop and the "Wellbeing" workshops. The trend has been clear from the beginning, and there can be no doubt that this sends a troubling message to the institutions.

It should also be noted that the School in 2016 was able to introduce e-books for all its Key Skills courses. These are used in the classroom-based part of the courses, and are also accessible online.

1.4 Increase the number of women in managerial jobs at all levels

Specific objective 4: To contribute to the efforts of the institutions to increase the representation of women in management positions at all levels.		
Result indicator: Perceived usefulness. **Source of data:** Questionnaire completed by participants.		
Baseline 2016: 90 %	**Target in 2020:** 90 %. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.	**Latest known results:** (2016) 100%
Main policy outputs in 2016:		
Description: About eight 1.5 day seminars specifically for women.	**Target date:** 31/12/2016	**Latest known results:** (2016) 5

As mentioned above, 2016 saw a complete renewal of the School's management and leadership offer. The School's long-running and highly appreciated programme encouraging women to consider a management position, To Be Or Not To Be A Head of Unit, which has been offered since 2008, was also remodelled, and work started on two new programmes for the same target population with the same aim, to increase female participation in management: Next Step - Head of Unit and Non-Conscious Bias. However, due to serious staffing issues, it was not possible to finalise the design of the new programmes until very late in the year, and the full roll-out had to wait until 2017. This meant that the target could not be reached this year.

1.5 Certification procedure

Specific objective 5: To help the institutions develop the talents of assistant grade staff with the potential to become administrators by providing them with a high-quality certification training programme.		
Result indicator: Perceived usefulness of training programme. **Source of data:** Questionnaire completed by participants.		
Baseline 2012: 98 %	**Target in 2020:** 95 %. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.	**Latest known results:** (2016) 97%
Result indicator: Rate of appointment of successful candidates since the introduction of the Certification procedure[4]. **Source of data**: Regular statistics provided by Institutions.		
Baseline 2013:	**Target in 2020:**	**Latest known**

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[4] Only marginally influenced by the School.

74 % relating to the first 8 exercises[5].	80 %	**results:** 79,2% relating to the first 10 exercises
Main policy outputs in 2016:		
Description: 25 days classroom-based training for the 2015/2016 exercise plus individual study plus refresher training for re-sitting candidates.	**Target date:** 30/09/2016	**Latest known results:** (2016) Target reached

Certification represents a powerful demonstration on the part of the institutions of their willingness to invest significantly in their serving staff: it is in fact a highly effective talent management programme and as yet the only structural one in existence in the institutions.

2016 saw the 11th certification procedure and once again the School successfully delivered the compulsory training programme that selected candidates have to follow before being admitted to the examination stage. Satisfaction rates remained extremely high.

The pass rate in the examinations in 2016 was 55,04% (new and re-sitting candidates combined) Overall 71 candidates were certified (41 new ones and 30 re-sitters). By the end of 2016 a total of 890 AST staff had been appointed to the AD function group since the introduction of the certification procedure in 2006. This represents 79,32% of the total number of successful candidates in the first 10 exercises.

1.6 Erasmus for Public Administration and DISPA

Specific objective 6: To foster better understanding of the European institutions and their learning and development strategies among national administrations and their Schools and Institutes of Public Administration (DISPA).		
Result indicator: Participant satisfaction rates on Public Administration Erasmus programme. **Source of data:** Questionnaire completed by participants.		
Baseline 2012: 100 %	**Target in 2020:** 95 %. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training and learning opportunities.	**Latest known results:** (2016) 99 %
Result indicator: Satisfaction rates from Member States Permanent Representations. **Source of data**: Questionnaire completed by Permanent Representations.		
Baseline 2010: 90 %	**Target in 2020:** 90 %.	**Latest known results:** (2016) 96%

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5   The two most recent exercises are excluded because of the lead-time between the announcement of the results and the opportunities for actual appointment as an administrator. The 2020 target will be measured in the same way.

Result indicator: Number of participants attending the School's courses via the DISPA network.		
Source of data: Internal statistics.		
Baseline 2015: 14	Target in 2020: 20	Latest known results: 10

Main policy outputs in 2016:		
Description and indicator: • 3 8-day "Public Administration Erasmus" traineeships. • Acting as the informal coordinating body and secretariat of DISPA and preparing the record of their meetings.	Target date: 31/12/2016	Latest known results: (2016) • 3 "Public Administration Erasmus" traineeships • Target reached

The School organised the first 3 editions of the "Public Administration Erasmus" programme under the new administrative arrangements that were put in place towards the end of 2014. Although these meant that a greater financial burden fell on national administrations (and that there was a reduced number of places – hence the fall in participant numbers), their enthusiasm for this programme remained in general undimmed.

Extra places continued to be offered to Member States that would be assuming the rotating Presidency in the near future: these were gratefully taken up as they use this traineeship as a small but important part of their preparations.

The School plays an important role in the network of Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration (DISPA). As the de facto coordinating body for the network it is able to ensure a degree of continuity by participating in the "Trio" meetings that determine the agenda of the twice-yearly meetings. In 2016, the School not only participated actively in the meeting in the Hague on 25-26 April, but both planned, organised and ran the DISPA meeting on 19-21 October on its premises in Brussels. The School also wrote and reproduced the minutes for both these meetings.

The DISPA network has an operational branch named European Reciprocal Training (ERT) which makes sure that civil servants from Member States have opportunities to access training from the various schools in the network. On 6-8 July, the School organised a highly successful seminar in the framework of the ERT with 26 participants. The programme centered on EU institutions and procedures, as suggested by the network members.

It should also be mentioned that the School is an active member of Epsilon, a network for French-speaking L&D professionals in Belgium, and on 10 March 2016 hosted a session on its premises for the members of the network on Talent management.

1.7 Seminars and Conferences

Specific objective 7: To help staff acquire or extend their knowledge on their external environment, pension scheme and on the role of the EDPS, OLAF and the European Ombudsman.
Result indicator: Participant satisfaction rates on lunchtime conferences.
Source of data: Questionnaire completed by participants.

		Latest known results: (2016) 96%
Main policy outputs in 2016:		
• 2 "Brussels for Europe" Master Classes • 25 lunchtime conferences on key European bodies and pension scheme.	**Target date:** 31/12/2016	**Latest known results: 2016** • 1 "Brussels for Europe" Master Classes • 38 lunchtime conferences

This series of activities continued to attract significant numbers of participants and the lunchtime conference format continued to prove popular with staff in general.

Conferences on the work of OLAF were added to the offer during the second half of 2015. Lunchtime conferences on OLAF and the EDPS are now also being offered in Luxembourg; 4 of each offered in 2016, registering high attendance rates.

Due to delays in the procurement process for the new framework contract, it was unfortunately only possible to run 1 series of "Master Classes: Brussels for Europe" in 2016. This brought the total number since the inception of this initiative to 16. Since this programme was first introduced in 2008 it has been followed by 472 officials of the institutions, and thanks to periodic events for the "alumni" that are run by the organisers, at their own cost, a long-lasting network has emerged. Many participants have also been able to establish contacts in the Brussels administration which are very useful to them professionally.

2. ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL

2.1 Financial management and internal control

2.1.1 Control results

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

2.1.2 Audit observations and recommendations

This section reports and assesses the observations and conclusions reported by auditors which could have a material impact on the achievement of the internal control objectives, and therefore on assurance, together with any management measures taken in response to the audit recommendations.

The School is generally audited by both internal and external independent auditors: the Commission internal audit service (IAS) and the European Court of Auditors (ECA).
During the period of reference, an audit was carried out by the IAS on the School's procurement process, with the objective of assessing the adequacy of the School's internal control system with regard to compliance with the Financial Regulation and its Rules of Application. The auditors found that the internal control system in place for the procurement process provided reasonable assurance regarding this compliance. EUSA is revising and updating its procurement process for low-value contracts taking into account the related IAS recommendation. As far as the second recommendation, target date 30/06/2017, is concerned, it will be implemented, on behalf of the School, under the lead of EPSO.

2.1.3 Assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control systems

The Commission has adopted a set of internal control standards, based on international good practice, aimed to ensure the achievement of policy and operational objectives. In addition, as regards financial management, compliance with these standards is a compulsory requirement.

The European School of Administration has put in place the organisational structure and the internal control systems suited to the achievement of the policy and control objectives, in accordance with the standards and having due regard to the risks associated with the environment in which it operates.

The functioning of the internal control systems has been closely monitored throughout the year by the systematic registration of exceptions (under ICS 8).

The School considers that in general its internal control system functions satisfactorily.

This statement is based on the assessment that was carried out using a self-assessment questionnaire (iCAT questionnaire).

The School continues to take account of the risks involved in its activities and addresses them in its regular team meetings as and when appropriate.

The School buys mainly services/supplies in the area of training and training facilities. The contractors are mainly suppliers of training services in small to medium-sized companies within Europe. Procurement needs are clearly defined and justified from an economic or operational point of view and approved by the AOD. In this area no

significant risks have been identified.

In conclusion, the internal control standards are effectively implemented and functioning.

2.1.4 Conclusions as regards assurance

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

2.1.5 Declaration of Assurance

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

2.2 Other organisational management dimensions

2.2.1 Human resource management

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

2.2.2 Better regulation (only for DGs managing regulatory acquis)

N/A

2.2.3 Information management aspects

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

2.2.4 External communication activities

As the activities of the School are targeted to internal customers (officials and other servants of the EU civil service) this section does not apply.

If a DG chooses not to report in this section on at least one of those four components, the title of the relevant subsection should not appear and the DG should insert the following standard text:

This section covers also the [missing component(s) name(s)] component(s). For an extensive reporting on all components, please refer to Annex 2.