



Annual Activity Report 2022

PUBLICATIONS OFFICE
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICE IN BRIEF

The Publications Office of the European Union (the Office) is the **official provider** of publishing and open data management services to all EU institutions, bodies and agencies. It is the **central point of access** to EU law and case-law, publications, open data, research results, procurement notices and other official information. Its mission is to support EU policy making and ensure that this wide range of information and data is available to, accessible and reusable by public administrations, citizens and businesses to facilitate transparency, economic activity, the diffusion of knowledge, and Europe's digital transformation. The Office thereby contributes to making known what the EU does and means in concrete terms, and to unlocking the power of data. The Office is a recognised **centre of excellence for data, information and knowledge management**.

The Office provides a range of services for the **production, access to, reuse and long-term preservation** of public information and data produced by the EU institutions. Its work is centred around **seven strategic objectives**: developing 1) a 'digital European legal space', 2) a 'public procurement data space', and 3) a 'European open data space'; providing 4) legal publications support, 5) optimised publishing services, and 6) standardisation services for interoperability; as well as 7) connecting and preserving content and knowledge.

Through its services, the Office provides **access** among others to the *Official Journal of the European Union*, which it produces and authenticates, case-law and other legal information (EUR-Lex); public procurement notices (TED – Tenders Electronic Daily – *Official Journal supplement*); comprehensive collections of EU official documents and publications (OP Portal); structured open datasets from EU institutions, EU Member State public authorities, other European countries, and international organisations (data.europa.eu); EU-funded research projects and their results (CORDIS – Community Research and Development Information Service); and high-quality data and information resources for Members of the College and Commission staff in support of **evidence-based policy making**, along with other library and documentation services. The Office takes the lead in the Commission's work on **corporate reference data management** and is the business owner of the Commission's data catalogue. It provides training and animates communities-of-practice related to its different fields of competence.

An **interinstitutional Management Committee** governs the Office, adopts its strategic objectives and sets the guidelines for its activities and operations. The Office submits quarterly reports to the Management Committee, which adopts Annual Management Reports.

Based in Luxembourg, the Office is structured around four directorates and has 585 staff.

The Office manages budget items that concern administrative expenses and/or contract management and are in direct management mode. Risk management is conducted on a continuous basis. The reporting of authorising officers by subdelegation contains financial data and the main aspects of controls and risks.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Activity Report is a management report of the Director-General of the Publications Office to the College of Commissioners. Annual Activity Reports are the main instrument of management accountability within the Commission and constitute 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 achieving the Commission's general objectives and the Office's specific objectives

Management of the Office

2022 was another challenging year, marked by the end of the COVID-19 related measures and Russia's aggression against Ukraine, bringing a high workload with tight deadlines in publishing the EU's response through restrictive and other measures. Its activities as a centre of excellence for data, information and knowledge management developed considerably.

The need to ensure seamless, secure delivery of top-quality service, against a background of tightening budgetary and human resources, exacerbated through inflation and the energy and supply-chain crises, led the Office to reassess its delivery models. Defining how best to use resources to optimise the added value and impact of the Office's work for its institutional clients and for citizens and businesses was a key concern. Ensuring that the Office is an attractive and fulfilling workplace for its staff, was given top priority.

Strategic objectives

The steady implementation of the seven strategic objectives, that combine the mission of the Office as provider of publishing and data management services with a clearly defined role in support of EU policy making, continued throughout 2022, as highlighted below.

Digital European legal space

The Office made significant progress in bringing national law closer to EU citizens, eliminating barriers to smooth navigation in the digital European legal space. **National transposition measures for 16 Member States** can by now be consulted via [EUR-Lex](#). Search for millions of national judgments was also made possible through the reuse of the European case-law identifier (ECLI) search engine on EUR-Lex ⁽²⁾. Finally, the N-Lex portal was revamped for better usability, and work was carried out to improve search possibilities in the national legal databases through the use of the European legislation identifier (ELI) and its metadata.

The work on the **Joint Legislative Portal** (JLP), the future interinstitutional gateway to information on the state of play of legislative files, progressed substantially: functional specifications are ready and data impact analysis is finalised.

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

⁽²⁾ See more on [ECLI search engine](#) on e-Justice Portal.

To allow easier access to EU law, the Office further improved the '[EU Law in Force](#)' site and opened it to the public in 2022. The experience with the site and the feedback received from its users will help to define the future EUR-Lex display intended for the general public.

Public procurement data space

The Office **implemented eForms** on 14 November 2022, in compliance with the eForms regulation and its amendment ⁽³⁾. eForms are standard forms used by public buyers to publish notices on the [TED website](#); their use will facilitate interoperability and reuse of data.

The **development of the new TED website** started and the site is planned to be in place by end 2023. It will be able to publish both current standard procurement forms and future eForms. There will be an easier and more user-friendly access to public procurement data and to bulk data, and to the extraction of statistical data. Enhanced search and display of results will improve transparency and facilitate access to public procurement data.

European open data space

The European open data space provides services that connect data providers and data reusers. The **official portal for European data**, [data.europa.eu](#), is the central point of access to open data, connecting data from various public administrations. To engage with this community, the Office published 30 data stories explaining concepts such as linked open data. The portal was redesigned with new functionalities (preview, data storage and citation) and a more powerful search. The new version is more accessible and fully responsive. In the new data providers' area, data providers can upload and store the data behind their datasets.

The [data.europa academy](#) continued to offer learning material to help make society more data literate. In addition, a **training package for data providers** and a **DataViz training programme** were offered. The **EU Datathon 2022** competition received a record number of applications. The live-streamed competition's finals brought together 12 winning teams.

Following the adoption of the Data Governance Act ⁽⁴⁾, the **European single access point**, which the act foresees, will be established on [data.europa.eu](#), accompanied by technical guidelines to explain to the Member States how to harvest the data concerned by the act.

Interinstitutional legal publications support

The adaptation of all information systems involved in the production of the *Official Journal of the European Union* (OJ) has progressed, so that the Office can start with the **act-by-act publication of the OJ** as soon as conditions allow in 2023. With the act-by-act publication of the OJ, acts will no longer be combined and published together as a gazette. Instead, each act will be published as soon as it is ready for publication, independently of other acts. This will allow for a more flexible, faster and simplified way of publishing. A communication campaign towards all stakeholders to heighten their awareness of this important change is underway.

⁽³⁾ [OJ L 272, 25.10.2019](#), p 7 and [OJ L 305, 25.11.2022](#).

⁽⁴⁾ [OJ L 152, 3.6.2022](#), p. 1–44.

The Office made progress on the implementation of the **Interinstitutional Budget Information System** (IBIS), a secure, state-of-the-art digital solution, which will support the EU's annual budgetary procedure, enabling the sharing of data and collaborative working practices, and optimising the user experience in terms of both functionality and user interface.

Optimised publishing services

The Office offers production services for a wide range of output formats, from the identification of a publication to the distribution of the end products. To complement these services, the Office enlarged its service offer with **pre- and post-production services**, completing the full cycle of publishing services. Editorial advice and performance measurement are now available to all institutions. A **collaborative planning tool** for publications is available to the Commission. The new offer helps author services to increase the efficiency of their planning, to identify redundant or underperforming publications, and to improve cost-efficient production. Support for accessible publishing in the form of a website, training and a drafting tool have been deployed and further enhanced.

As domain leader in the field of publications, the Office has created a **professionalisation and engagement programme for the publishing community of practice**: the offer of e-learning modules and tutorials has been enriched, a shared space for the community of practice has been the basis to organise a forum to share knowledge and best practices, and the Office released four issues of the *Publish smart* newsletter.

Standardisation services for interoperability

Under the auspices of the Interinstitutional Metadata and Formats Committee (IMFC) coordinated by the Office, institutions adopted a **new version (4.1) of Akoma Ntoso for EU (AKN4EU)**. The Office further marked important progress in developing conversion and validation services related to AKN4EU. On the metadata side of standardisation, institutions agreed on the scenario of the Interinstitutional metadata exchange protocol (IMMC) evolution as proposed by the Office.

The Office established itself as a **reference data management competence centre**. In February 2022, the Commission's Information Management Steering Board (IMSB) confirmed the Office's comprehensive service package as corporate offering within the Commission. The Office published a new version of the **Interinstitutional Style Guide** (ISG) in a redesigned user-friendly PDF format.

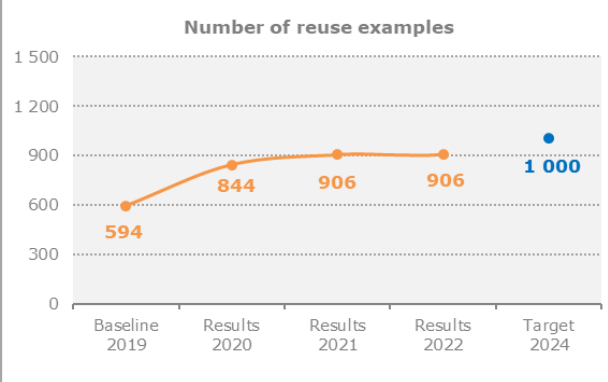
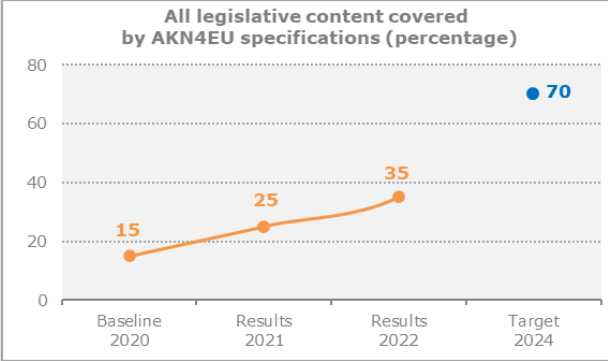
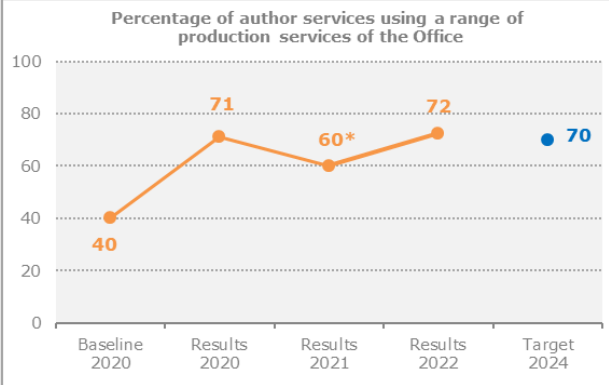
Connecting and preserving knowledge and content

The start of the year saw the formal launch of the first phase of the **EU legal deposit scheme** covering publications and websites. Actions were taken to raise awareness of the scheme and its benefits, e.g. through a seminar on the topic and open to all institutions.

The **EC Library** further strengthened its central role in providing data, research and information management services in support of evidence-based policymaking. Among the achievements in 2022 are the conclusion of a major interinstitutional framework contract for databases, datasets and periodical publications, further rationalisation of acquisitions, and the launch of new library research products in support of the policymaking process.

B. Key performance indicators (KPIs)

The most relevant KPIs, as per the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 are the following (**results** in orange and **targets** in blue):

Result indicators (description)	Target 2022	Target 2024	Results 2022												
KPI 1 – Number of reuse examples <i>(Sources: list of reuse examples published on data.europa.eu, Unit C.4)</i>	800	1 000	906												
 <table border="1"> <caption>Number of reuse examples</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Baseline 2019</td> <td>594</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Results 2020</td> <td>844</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Results 2021</td> <td>906</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Results 2022</td> <td>906</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target 2024</td> <td>1 000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Year	Value	Baseline 2019	594	Results 2020	844	Results 2021	906	Results 2022	906	Target 2024	1 000
Year	Value														
Baseline 2019	594														
Results 2020	844														
Results 2021	906														
Results 2022	906														
Target 2024	1 000														
KPI 2 – Number of Member States whose national legislation is available through EUR-Lex/N-Lex <i>(Sources: EUR-Lex, N-Lex, Unit C.2)</i>	i) NTM: > 12 ii) N-Lex: > 20	i) Further increase ii) Further increase	i) NTM: 16 ii) N-Lex: 20												
KPI 3 – Percentage of records exported to metadata reusers within 4 weeks of publication <i>(Source: Unit A.4)</i>	100 %	100 %	100 %												
KPI 4 – All legislative content covered by AKN4EU specifications <i>(Source: Unit A.1)</i>	35 %	70 %	35 %												
 <table border="1"> <caption>All legislative content covered by AKN4EU specifications (percentage)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Baseline 2020</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Results 2021</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Results 2022</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target 2024</td> <td>70</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Year	Value	Baseline 2020	15	Results 2021	25	Results 2022	35	Target 2024	70		
Year	Value														
Baseline 2020	15														
Results 2021	25														
Results 2022	35														
Target 2024	70														
KPI 5 – Increasing percentage of author services using a range of production services of the Office instead of submitting identifiers-only requests <i>(Sources: PlanPubli, Unit B.3)</i>	50 %	70 %	72 %												
 <table border="1"> <caption>Percentage of author services using a range of production services of the Office</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Baseline 2020</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Results 2020</td> <td>71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Results 2021</td> <td>60*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Results 2022</td> <td>72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target 2024</td> <td>70</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* The decrease in 2021 refers to the percentage, but not to the absolute number (more publications were identified as compared with 2020, including several existing so-called 'grey' – previously unidentified – publications).</p>				Year	Value	Baseline 2020	40	Results 2020	71	Results 2021	60*	Results 2022	72	Target 2024	70
Year	Value														
Baseline 2020	40														
Results 2020	71														
Results 2021	60*														
Results 2022	72														
Target 2024	70														

C. Key conclusions on Financial management and Internal control

In line with the Commission's Internal Control Framework the Office has assessed its internal control systems during the reporting year and has concluded that it is effective and the components and principles are present and functioning as intended. Please refer to AAR section 2.1.3 for further details.

In addition, the Office has systematically examined the available control results and indicators as well as the observations and recommendations issued by the internal auditor and the European Court of Auditors. These elements have been assessed to determine their impact on management's assurance about the achievement of the control objectives. Please refer to section 2.1 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. The Director-General, in her capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation, has signed the Declaration of Assurance.

Result indicators (description)	Target 2024	Results 2022
Estimated risk at closure (Source: Unit OP.01)	< 2 % of relevant expenditure	0.0053 %

D. Provision of information to the Commissioner

In the context of the regular meetings during the year between the Director-General of the Office and the Commissioner on management matters, the main elements of this report and assurance declaration have been brought to the attention of Commissioner Johannes Hahn, responsible for Budget and Administration and for the relations with the Office.

1. KEY RESULTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE COMMISSION'S GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND THE OFFICE'S SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

General objective 2: A Europe fit for the digital age



Specific objective 1: A European public procurement space provides an authoritative point of access to information on EU institutions' and Member States' public procurement activities and enhances the exploitation of public procurement data for its beneficiaries (economic operators, public decision-makers and EU citizens)

Implementation of eForms

The Office implemented eForms on 14 November 2022 as planned, in compliance with the eForms regulation and its 2022 amendment. The Office launched an entirely new chain of applications needed for the creation, reception and submission (eNotices2), validation (Common Validation Service), processing (TED Monitor 2022), and visualisation (TED Viewer 22) of eForms notices. The [TED website](#) was also adapted to be able to import, search and display the new eForms notices alongside the current notices.

As part of the **ongoing development of eForms**, the Office maintains a comprehensive set of documentation ([TED developer docs](#)), a software development kit and sample applications to provide national implementers, in particular the network of over 100 eSenders, with the technical resources they need to develop compliant and flexible eForms applications.

The Office held three online events focusing on eForms implementation – two eForms technical workshops and the **annual TED eSenders seminar** – with an average of 190 participants for each of the sessions. The interactive post-event surveys as part of the events and the separate survey the Office organised subsequently showed that the main concerns shared by eSenders are the complexity of the endeavour and the time limitations imposed by the eForms regulation.

As part of the continuous effort to facilitate communication, the Office announced its annual TED eSenders/eForms events calendar for the year 2023, which includes four follow-up eForms technical workshops and the annual TED eSenders seminar.

Easy and user-friendly access to public procurement data

The Office started the development of the new TED website that is planned to be in place by end 2023. It will be able to publish both current standard procurement forms and future eForms. It will allow users to access public procurement data, retrieve bulk data and extract statistical data more easily. Enhanced search and display of results will further improve transparency.

Improvement of the data quality

The Office continued the **development of the eNotification part** of the eProcurement ontology, and adopted and/or enhanced the corresponding reference lists (code lists). An

enhanced mapping to the contract award notices compatible with the latest version of the ontology was produced and used in a proof-of-concept for the public procurement data space.

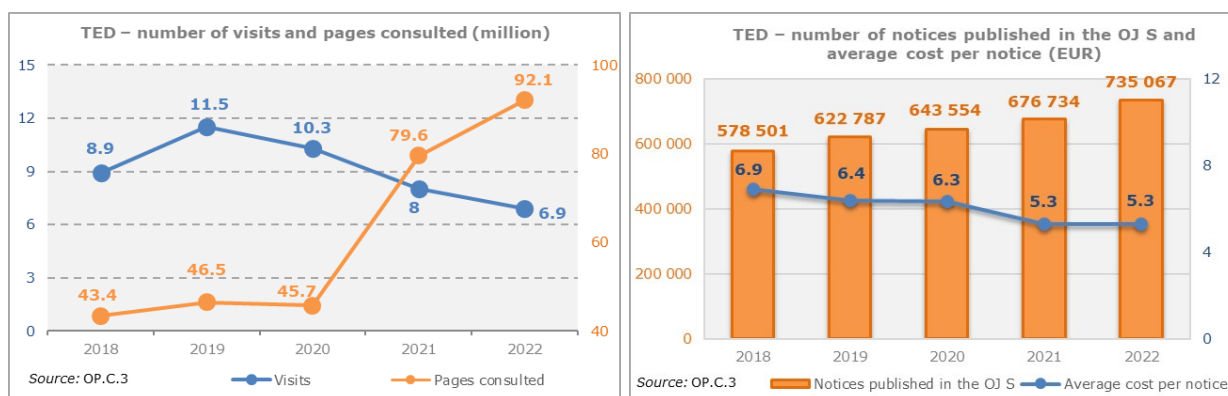
Better services and workflows

The **publishing workflow for eForms** is almost entirely automatic, though the users will not feel the full benefits until after October 2023 when the current forms will be no longer submitted through the legacy systems.

The Office continued to provide monthly indicators to eSenders so they could take specific action on rejections or quality issues of the data they send to TED. The reports use Qlik ⁽⁵⁾ and are sent out automatically.

To contribute to the development of a **procurement analytics service** (which will use data from the public procurement data space), that is, a framework to analyse public procurement data at regional, national and EU levels to support strategic objectives and policies, the Office has produced and enhanced a mapping of the fields contained in contract award notices over the last two years (2021-2022) with the elements of the eProcurement ontology.

The Office made available an **e-learning module** to facilitate the use of eTendering by contracting authorities.



Specific objective 2: A European open data space provides access to an authoritative collection of open data of EU institutions, Member States and European countries

Towards the European open data space – data.europa.eu

The European open data space provides open data services that connect data providers and data reusers. The **official portal for European data**, data.europa.eu, is the central point of access to open data coming from public administrations.

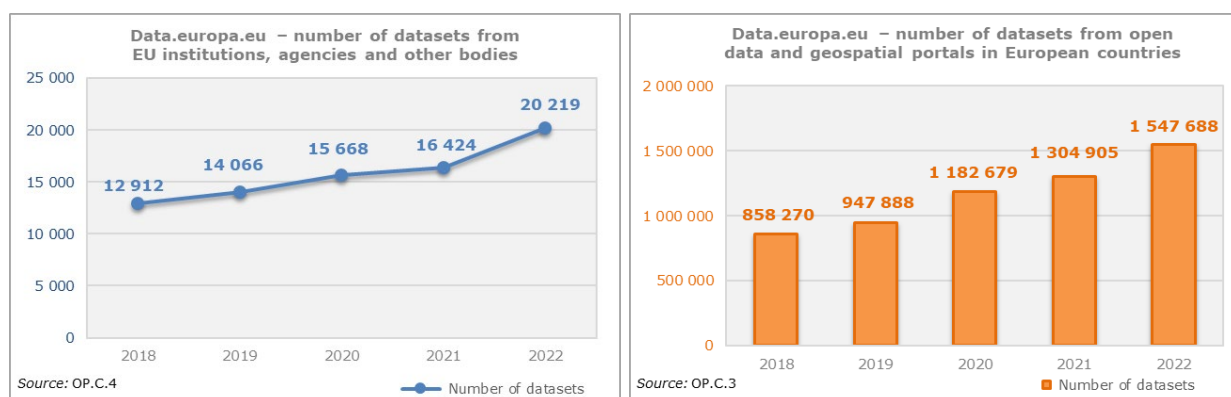
⁽⁵⁾ Qlik products are tools for data visualisation and business intelligence.

Providing access to information

The Office fully redesigned the portal for easier use, understanding and navigation, and many new functionalities were added. It has also a higher degree of **accessibility**, among others, due to high contrast and an easy-to-differentiate colour palette. The portal is now **fully responsive**. This leads to a neat and complete user experience on both desktop and mobile devices. The new design includes a restructured homepage showing a carousel featuring most relevant items, an overview of the main content types, a clearer menu structure, easier to understand labels, a calendar of upcoming events, and dedicated **events pages** showing all details about the events: a description, the type of event and how to access it.

Data.europa.eu offers more **powerful search filters**, allowing to easily find e.g. datasets, publications or events, and newly added extensive documentation both for data reusers and data publishers. The Office set up a new data providers' area where data providers can **upload** and **store data** behind their datasets.

The **metadata quality dashboards** allow to get visual feedback regarding the quality of the metadata of catalogues, datasets and their distributions in compliance with the FAIR principles for making data Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. A new feature to analyse the quality of data allows to check if CSV files are correctly formed and provides validation results and warnings.



Improving data literacy and engaging with users

The [data.europa academy](#) continued to offer learning material to make society more data literate. In total, 16 webinars took place in 2022 with an average of 130 participants per webinar, reaching over 2 000 persons. In addition, a **training package for data providers** was launched in September to meet the needs of this community and improve data publishing. In the course of the year, the **EU DataViz training programme** offered seven hands-on training courses. More than 350 participants attended one or more of them.

The answers of more than one thousand respondents to a survey on better understanding users and their needs will help to set up more efficient citizen-centric services. To engage with this community, the Office published **30 data stories** that explain concepts such as linked open data or high-value datasets.

Fostering reuse of open data

The EU Datathon finals took place on 20 October 2022. Twelve finalist teams, selected from 156 submissions coming from 38 countries, competed in four categories, aligned with the

Commission's political priorities, and presented their apps built on EU open data to the jury and the audience.

Supporting the implementation of EU open data policies

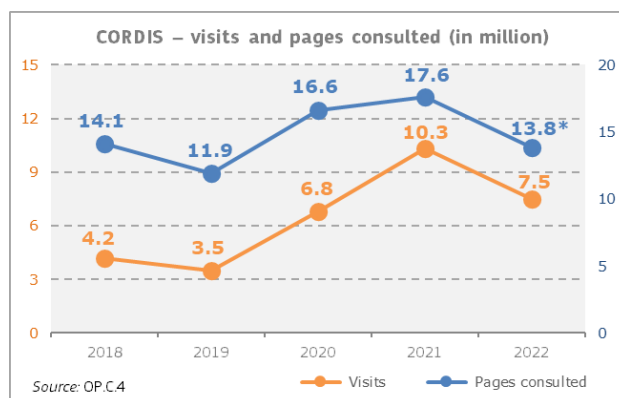
For the eighth consecutive year, the Office released the **Open Data Maturity Report**. As a result of a new methodology, the assessment of the impact dimension was strengthened and the adoption of high-value datasets across European countries was assessed. Following the adoption of the Data Governance Act ⁽⁶⁾, the **European single access point**, which the act foresees, will be established on data.europa.eu, accompanied by technical guidelines setting out to Member States how to harvest the data concerned by the act.

CORDIS services and developments

[CORDIS](#) editorial services disseminating the results of EU-funded research projects produced over 6 000 *Results in Brief*, news articles and project descriptions, 14 new thematic Results Packs and 11 episodes of the monthly podcast CORDIScovery. The Results Pack on citizen science was delivered in all 24 EU official languages. The production of thematic packs was further enriched with two pilot projects of the Project Info Pack on EU supercomputing and the Synergy Info Pack 'Restore our Ocean and Waters' that quickly gained popularity among key user groups. CORDIS also continued to diversify its dissemination channels completing the Results in Brief articles with nine pilot 3D explanatory videos.

The first project dataset in semantic format based on the [European research information ontology \(EURIO\)](#) was published on data.europa.eu. The specifications for the future SPARQL endpoint to query the EURIO knowledge graph were based on the **linked open data proof of concept** that was carried out in 2021. Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) are assigned to grants and more than 35 000 DOIs from Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe have been shared with CrossRef, facilitating the link between grants and subsequent projects and publications resulting from these grants.

The total number of visits to the CORDIS website doubled in the last three years. In 2022 it amounted to approximately 7.5 million. While a record number of visits took place in the previous year, largely in connection with COVID-19 and vaccine search queries, the long-term traffic trend remains positive.



* The previous years for the indicator 'pages consulted' the number of notices consulted was reported.

⁽⁶⁾ [OJ L 152, 3.6.2022](#), p. 1–44.

General objective 6: A new push for European democracy



Specific objective 3: A digital European legal space provides easy and comprehensive access to all law applicable within the EU

Joint Legislative Portal

Together with the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, the Office continued preparatory work on the **Joint Legislative Portal (JLP)** project. The JLP operational team defined **functional specifications** of the future portal and made significant progress with **data requirements analysis** and mock-up preparation. The adaptations of the systems involved will start in spring 2023.

Thematic and tailor-made presentation of legal information

To provide quick and easy access to **currently applicable EU legal rules for a non-specialised audience**, the Office opened the '**EU Law in Force**' site ⁽⁷⁾ to the public. In comparison with [EUR-Lex](#), which gives access to comprehensive information, the site provides easy and quick access to the EU legislation currently in force as well as to the case-law produced by the Court of Justice of the European Union. The key advantage of [EU Law in Force](#) is its radical simplicity for the benefit of non-experts. This is achieved by presenting only currently applicable EU law, combined with very intuitive navigation. Feedback collected from users of the site will be used for the business concept of a future EUR-Lex layer targeting non-experts.

To further increase findability of EU Law related to key current events, the Office created two **dedicated spaces** on EUR-Lex: one on EU measures taken in solidarity with Ukraine and another on EU measures related to the Ireland/Northern Ireland protocol. The specific pages provide thematic lists of related documents and a targeted search on the respective topics.

The Office started to work on better integrating and presenting **EU budget-related acts on EUR-Lex**, including the definitions of the specifications of the metadata to be received from the future Interinstitutional Budget Information System (IBIS) and the creation of mock-ups and a draft version of the functional specifications of the system. The final implementation will mean increased search possibilities and better navigation through the collection of EU budget public documents.

Access to national law and case law

The joint efforts of the Office and the European Commission's Secretariat-General (SG) resulted in four more Member States starting to publish the text of their **national transposition measures** on EUR-Lex: this brings the total number of Member States that make their texts available to 16.

⁽⁷⁾ Accessible via the the ['Law' section of the OP Portal](#).

The Office has given [N-Lex](#) ⁽⁸⁾, the single-entry point to the national law databases of individual EU countries, a modernised look and feel and improved its **usability**. The Office further carried out a business analysis for a future ELI-based search on EUR-Lex.

The possibility to search based on the **European case-law identifier (ECLI)** made access possible to several million national judicial decisions on EUR-Lex ⁽⁹⁾.

Findability, accessibility and usability of legal information

The Office further enhanced the findability of Commission documents (COM, JOIN, SEC and SWD) through quick search and through 'Find results by document number' on EUR-Lex. To better bridge legal and practical information, **EUR-Lex summaries of legislation** have been enriched with links to interactive forms on the e-Justice Portal.

Various improvements to the **usability of the website** were implemented, such as a new structure of the help pages explaining the different functionalities of EUR-Lex, a new design of the personal account section for registered users, or a dynamic graphical timeline that shows the evolution of a legal act over time:



The Office enriched the 'experimental features' corner with two new features: i) an interactive visualisation of document relationships, and ii) the replacement of CELEX identifiers by short plain text descriptions to identify some types of documents (EU treaties and case-law). The replacement of Celex identifiers makes the references more easily understandable (example: a link to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is 'TFEU (2016)' instead of '12016E043').

The Office analysed the recommendations of the **accessibility study** of 2021 were analysed and prioritised their implementation in the upcoming releases of EUR-Lex. An **accessibility statement** published on EUR-Lex is showing the current status of EUR-Lex accessibility to all users. The statement reflects the conclusions of the study and will be adapted as improvements in accessibility progress further.

Standards, formats and tools

The Office has performed a large-scale testing of the new **AKN4EU format for consolidation**. This test comprised more than 11 000 textual amendments of legal acts. The results proved the viability and efficiency of the approach and the Office is ready to produce consolidated texts in this new format once the legislator will start to submit amending acts in AKN4EU. The new format will allow for a more detailed and user-friendly display of

⁽⁸⁾ N-Lex provides a single entry point to the national law databases of individual EU countries.

⁽⁹⁾ See more on [ECLI search engine](#) on the e-Justice Portal.

consolidated texts and provide the basis for more automated consolidation.

A total of **20 legislation publishers** had implemented **ELI in their national systems** by the end of 2022: 14 EU Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Finland); along with Albania, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom; and the Office itself as the authoritative publisher of EU legislation.



Specific objective 4: Persistent and integrated access to the content and knowledge of the EU institutions is provided for current and future generations to ensure that citizens are well informed

The Office aims to facilitate access to information in a fast-evolving landscape, to improve discoverability and linking across EU content, and to ensure that information is available for all and for the long-term. The Office works to achieve this objective through actions on access, metadata, identifiers and preservation, as detailed below, with emphasis on identifying and using actors and channels as multipliers to enhance the uptake and impact of its services.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In its Community of Practice AI@OP, the Office explored together with stakeholders inside and outside the institutions the potential of AI-driven applications for its publication processes.

As part of its exploration of AI, the Office implemented a prototype, SeTA@OP, demonstrating to what extent machine-learning technologies can help in classifying documents and in establishing new links between document collections.

OP Portal – access to the collections managed by the Office

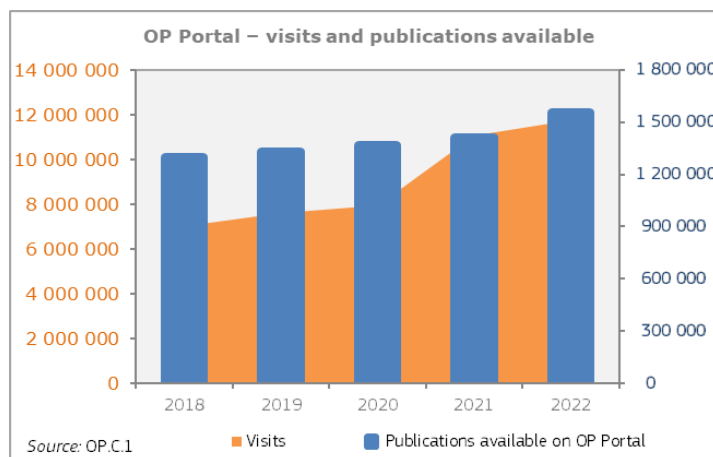
Publio, the Publications Office’s intelligent assistant released in December 2021, improved **user experience and accessibility** of the OP Portal’s content. In 2022, the Office continued to improve Publio conversational capabilities and **human-like behaviour**. It can now provide answers to simple predefined questions, it understands better and identifies the subject and the authors of publications based on questions from users. Users can also rate their experience with Publio and can provide feedback. In addition, the scope was extended to search for persons or organisations within the EU Official Directory, and Spanish was added as the third conversation language.

In 2022, the [OP Portal](#) became the home for **innovation and exploration** of new services based on **artificial intelligence**: a successful ‘questions and answers’ proof of concept proved how content published by the Office can be harvested to provide exact answers to concrete questions. A **‘Streaming Multimedia content’** proof of concept showed how the OP Portal can be used as a streaming platform to disseminate rich content to the public.

The Office released several features that enhance **content findability and accessibility** and promote reuse in 2022: existing widgets were enhanced with support for filters, new prebuilt templates for sites, event agendas, image galleries and maps were released. The efforts of improving search relevancy continued in 2022 and the OP Portal search capabilities

were extended with support for searching through the content of web sites which require authentication. To facilitate **reuse**, users of the OP Portal can now export search results in either pdf or excel formats.

To improve accessibility of web pages and to reach a broader audience, the OP Portal has added support for **machine translation** of editorial pages by integrating the machine translation widget developed by the DG Translation.



Identification and metadata provision

The Office continued to ensure the proper identification of a range of content types, thus contributing to their improved access and discoverability. There was a significant surge in the uptake of the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) during the year. This was partly explained by increased use of already established DOI registration services, especially those related to the identification of datasets. But the main surge was due to the implementation of a new service for grants awarded to projects funded by the EU's framework programmes for research and innovation. This service, developed in a close cooperation with CORDIS and DG Research and Innovation, facilitates the link between grants and subsequent projects and publications resulting from these grants.

The Office provides **rich metadata descriptions for its different collections**. For general publications, work was undertaken to enrich the existing metadata schema by including new information. This improved access and discoverability, facilitated links within collections and allowed for improved linking, notably between general and legal publications.

Long-term preservation

To improve the efficiency and reliability of its digital repository, the Office requested an external audit of its digital preservation service. The Office prepared an action plan based on the recommendation of the audit report, to be implemented in the coming year. In addition, a new collection has been added to the digital repository: all the procurement notices published on TED are now being added on a daily basis to the long-term archive.

EU legal deposit scheme

The EU legal deposit scheme is built on the following blocks: identification, description (metadata), acquisition, access and preservation. The scheme brings these building blocks together to enable the creation of a comprehensive, accessible collection of EU material preserved for the long term. In January 2022 the first phase of the scheme covering

publications and websites was launched. As part of the awareness-raising actions on the scheme and its benefits, the Office organised a seminar on the topic, open to colleagues from all the institutions. More than 90 people attended this virtual event and the feedback was very positive.

The EC Library

The EC Library completed its integration in the Office following the transfer from DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture in 2021 and enhanced its role as a **key service providing data, research and information management services** in support of the evidence-based policymaking process.

The EC Library continued its efforts to **rationalise the acquisition of data, research and information resources** across the Commission and at interinstitutional level. The library concluded a major **interinstitutional framework contract** for the provision of subscriptions to databases, datasets, specialist periodical publications and other e-resources, both for the Commission and for 47 participating EU institutions, bodies and agencies.

The EC Library made a tangible contribution to the **Better Regulation Evidence Transparency pilot project** developing a cross-DG service. It took part in early guidance sessions and provided training courses and research guides. The EC Library continued to support the Commission DGs with its reference services and literature searches. It launched a new online platform offering Library Guides on various subjects relevant to the policymaking process, which already attracted 24 593 views in 2022.

General objective 7: A modern, high-performing and sustainable European Commission



Specific objective 5: Standardisation services in the area of formats, metadata and multilingual reference data are provided at corporate level in order to rationalise resources, increase interoperability and strengthen information and knowledge

In 2022, the Office reached important milestones in advancing the standardisation of formats, data and reference data. The achievements were divided into the following areas: the introduction of AKN4EU in the interinstitutional legal data flow, the roll-out of services in the field of reference data management and the modernisation of the *Interinstitutional Style Guide*.

Adoption of the major version of AKN4EU

In 2022, the institutions made considerable progress with their work on the **Common Vocabulary** and adopted **AKN4EU version 4.1**. This new AKN4EU version complements the previous ones with the specifications of the AKN4EUZIP (.leg) files, namely their structure and naming conventions as well as the compulsory and optional metadata included in such files. Moreover, the Office made an important step towards the coverage of multilingual aspects by introducing new character encoding rules, which foresee the general use of the UTF-8 standard and the inclusion of foreign alphabets and of a wider range of mathematical

symbols. Finally, the Common Vocabulary was extended to a number of additional document types such as Council acts, proposals for Council acts, the Commission's Legislative Financial Statement and the European Parliament's Texts Adopted.

The Office also continued to explore the possibilities of **using EdiT** ⁽¹⁰⁾, with a proof of concept to examine if and how EdiT could be used by the Office's production workflows. The results of this study were communicated in April 2022 and the services involved are now following up on the findings with trilateral exchanges with the EdiT development team and the DG Translation, whose requirements are close to the ones identified by the Office.

The Office further marked important progress in developing **conversion and validation services** related to AKN4EU with a view to their implementation as from March 2023. The validation service will check the correct structure of .leg files (.zip files containing legislation in the AKN4EU format), while the conversion service will provide conversion between the currently used Formex and the new AKN4EU format. Several successful tests with the institutions were completed throughout autumn 2022. The services are expected to be delivered in the first quarter of 2023, after which a second stage of the project is planned, focusing on the conversion between different versions of AKN4EU.

Corporate reference data management services

In 2021 the Office carried out a proof of concept around **reference data management** services to support the policy of the Commission in this field. The results confirmed the adequacy of, and the interest in, such services provided by the Office to the other DGs.

Based on the findings of the proof of concept, the Office established itself as a reference data management competence centre offering a comprehensive service package. In February 2022, the Commission's Information Management Steering Board (IMSB) confirmed this service package as corporate offering within the Commission. The Office further took an active part in ensuring a prominent place for corporate reference data policy in the rolling action plan of the IMSB and co-chaired the related activities.

Improved EU Vocabularies website

The Office has **revamped the EU Vocabularies** website to ensure the visibility of reference data related services and to improve the accessibility of the reference data catalogue. The graphic presentation and the overall structure of the website were further improved with the aim of enhancing user interaction and user experience.

The content of the homepage was categorised into four blocks: reference data catalogue, online tools and applications, recent releases, and planning and support services. Further improvements were implemented to enhance usability and collaborative features, such as user contributions and requests and access to tools. A knowledge base which includes articles on reference data and semantic technologies was also created. The Office finalised this work in the second quarter of 2022; further improvements are planned for 2023.

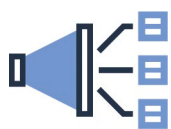
⁽¹⁰⁾ EdiT is an XML-based editor (using AKN4EU format) that will be used by the institutions for drafting all legislative acts. It is being developed by the Commission and the Council.

ENDORSE event

The Office, jointly with DG Informatics and with support from the [Interoperable Europe](#) programme, advanced preparations for the second edition of the **European data conference on reference data and semantics (ENDORSE)**. A call for proposals was launched in June and the Program Committee finalised its review by October 2022. The conference, planned for March 2023, will focus on practical use cases of reference data and semantic technologies. In addition, following up on the first edition of the Conference, several [post-ENDORSE events](#) took place in 2022.

Towards a modernised and multichannel *Interinstitutional Style Guide*

To modernise the [Interinstitutional Style Guide](#) (ISG), the Office assessed and entirely refurbished at IT level the whole production process. Consequently, institutional users received enthusiastically a new user-friendly PDF version. However, due to technical and resource issues, the planned availability of a new website interoperable with the back office, and the refurbishment of the ISG back office had to be shifted to 2023.



Specific objective 6: The EU institutions are provided with secure, fast and flexible digital solutions for publishing legal information

Act-by-act publication of the Official Journal

The transition to the act-by-act publication of the OJ, scheduled for 1 January 2023, had to be postponed due to circumstances beyond the Office's control. With the aim of starting the **act-by-act publication of the OJ** in 2023, the Office has made significant progress in implementing the necessary adaptations of all information systems involved in the production of the OJ. The Office has devoted significant efforts to testing the new production and publication chain, including the preparedness of the external contractors. A **communication campaign** to progressively inform all stakeholders about the important paradigm shift that the act-by-act publication of the OJ represents is underway.

Production of the Official Journal and other EU legal information

Throughout the year, the Office had to deal with matters of unprecedented urgency. This often implied the publication of specific OJ issues over the weekend and during holiday periods.

After the unprecedented increase in the number of pages published in the L series of the OJ in 2021, the number moderately decreased by 11.2 % in 2022 to reach a still very high level of production, totalling 968 689 pages.

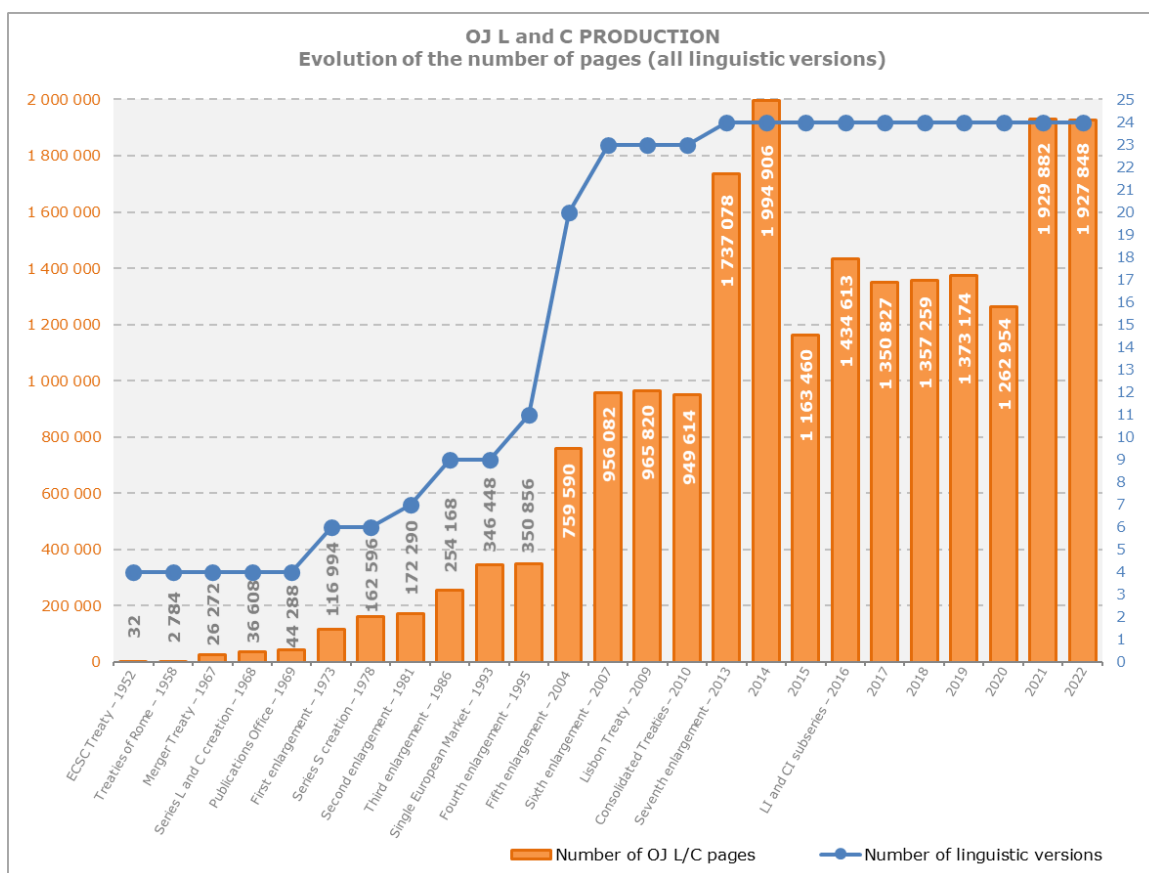
The number of pages published in the C series (resolutions, recommendations, opinions, information, preparatory acts, notices, etc.) further increased by 12.5 % – after an earlier significant increase by 50 % in 2021 – to reach 959 159 pages in 2022.

The overall number of pages published therefore registered an overall increase of 1.3 % and reached a very high level, totalling 1 927 848 pages, corresponding to 10 394 acts in 23 or 24 languages.

Official Journal: number of pages per series

Series	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
OJ L (legislation)	717 899	891 329	694 441	1 077 275	968 689
OJ C (information and notices)	639 360	481 845	568 513	852 607	959 159
Total	1 357 259	1 373 174	1 262 954	1 929 882	1 927 848

Despite the further increase of the number of pages, the number of OJ issues published decreased. The Office published 944 issues in 2022 (366 for the L series and 578 for the C series), which resulted in the publication of more voluminous and complex issues of the OJ. The number of issues published in the subseries has decreased (26 LI issues and 31 CI issues).



Production and publication of the EU budget

For the Common Integrated Budget Application (CIBA), the Office carried out preventive and corrective maintenance in order to guarantee the functioning of the application throughout the budget production process.

The Office made progress on the **implementation of the Interinstitutional Budget Information System (IBIS)**, which is expected to replace CIBA in 2024. The objective is to provide the EU institutions with a **secure, state-of-the-art digital solution**, which will support the EU's annual budgetary procedure, enabling the sharing of data and collaborative working practices.

A first version of IBIS has been developed with the AGILE approach that allowed the Office and EU institutions to efficiently and closely work together. The development will continue

throughout 2023, allowing the Office and the institutions to test IBIS in series of production simulation runs in parallel with the existing CIBA.

Case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union

Case-law was produced and published according to the judicial calendar of the Court of Justice. The Office published 36 787 documents (+ 25 % compared with 2021), corresponding to 390 178 pages (+ 7 % compared with 2021).



Specific objective 7: Governance and optimised publishing services are provided to all EU institutions to enable them to meet their communication objectives

Interinstitutional reference centre for publishing services

In the framework of the Office's role as **domain leader for publications**, it has made available new **pre- and post-production services** to all author services in 2022 to cover the full production cycle of a publication. The Office developed a **collaborative online planning tool** for the input of consistent data on planned publications, such as subject, publication date, budget and format. Bulk data import of existing planning tables has been added in 2022.

In 2022, the offer of e-learning courses and online trainings has been enriched: 481 users of e-learning modules and 403 participants to training sessions (satisfaction rate 9.08/10). A **Forum on Smart publishing** was organised for the community of practice (47 author services participated), and four issues of the **Publish Smart newsletter** were released (1 908 subscribers).

Digital and paper publications

In 2022, the Office received 6 072 requests for projects linked to the provision of identifiers or services for the production of general publications from all the EU institutions, by 125 different author services.

Publications: production, by institution (titles)

Institution/agency	2021	2022	Change 2022/2021 (%)
European Parliament	35	107	205.7 %
Council	402	323	- 19.7 %
Commission	5 701	3 947	- 30.8 %
Court of Justice	119	96	- 19.3 %
Court of Auditors	923	909	- 1.5 %
European Economic and Social Committee	3	24	700 %
European Committee of the Regions	0	1	100 %
European Central Bank	3	3	0 %
Decentralised agencies	1 202	2 799	132.9 %
Other	74	67	- 9.5 %
Total	8 462	8 276	- 2.2 %

In 2022, the Office provided 121 editorial advice reports for specific publications to 65 different author services.

Production of 8 276 titles was requested, showing a decrease of 2.2 % compared to 2021. In 2022, there was a particularly notable **increase – up 238 % – in production of videos and e-learning modules**. The Office’s clients also expressed increasing interest in new media formats. For the first time, the Office produced and contributed to the post-production of podcasts (in total 20 episodes for four clients) and continued to produce audiobooks. The Office created and published an HTML-based game for children for the Joint Research Centre and produced reports with data visualisations for several clients.

In 2022, the Office developed four new mobile apps and published three apps on behalf of a client on the corporate EU accounts in the app stores (Apple, Google Play, Oculus). The Office made 582 updates to existing apps, all language versions and platforms included, which presented an increase of 52 % compared to 2021. A total of 188 graphic design projects were started in 2022.

The Office organised an information seminar discussing how multimedia publications – videos, audiobooks, podcasts, mobile apps, immersive reality – can boost the impact of the message and broaden audiences. The seminar reached an audience of more than 200 and received very good feedback.

Nearly 50 factsheets were produced or updated for the Commission on the sanctions against Russia, the solidarity with Ukraine and Moldova, the energy and renewable energy rollout and the EU-Africa Global Gateway Investment Packages. Many factsheets, in addition to all the official languages, were produced also in Arabic, Russian, Swahili and Ukrainian.

In cooperation with DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and supported by the Erasmus+ programme, the Office launched printing of three schoolbooks which are to be distributed to children in Ukraine in spring 2023. With half a million books to be printed – the equivalent of 27 truckloads – this is a project of unprecedented scope and scale. The Office also took the initiative to prepare multilingual pictogram books aimed at helping Ukrainian refugees and those who work with them.

The Office launched a call for tenders for the provision of graphic design services including static infographics and other design-related services to replace the current graphic design framework contract that will expire in March 2023.

Accessibility

The percentage of accessible publications that the Office designed and produced increased to 22.1 % from 15.1 % in 2021.

The Office continued to deliver a series of **four webinars on accessibility** for novices, authors/self-publishers and designers that were delivered three times in 2022. Nearly 800 colleagues registered for the Office’s accessibility webinars and other offers such as lunchtime seminars and information sessions in various events, such as the Clear Writing Week. Author services and the Office were given feedback on the level of accessibility of their ongoing production and received advice or help to further improve it.

Performance measurement

The Office has made performance measurement available to all institutions in 2022 and 157 performance reports have been produced for 33 different author services, with the goal

of optimising the performance of general publications by consolidating, interpreting and visualising data from different sources: physical dissemination, electronic consumption on the OP Portal and/or on local websites, social media coverage, citations or surveys.

Language editing

In 2022, the language editing activity amounted to 2 275 527 pages. This reflects an increase of 1 % compared with 2021.

The number of **multilingual publications** that required detailed **language editing and proofreading** continued to increase, quite often with strict schedules. Particularly sensitive flagship publications included the general report on the activities of the European Union (The EU in 2021), the State of the Union documents, the EU budget and the Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget. In addition to the 24 official languages, the Office also ensured language-editing services in non-EU languages such as Norwegian, Macedonian, Serbian, Albanian and Ukrainian.

To face the steady demand, the outsourcing of general publications developed significantly with 115 379 pages outsourced (21 % of the total pages corrected). English represented 19 % of the total of outsourced pages, other EU languages 79 % and non-EU languages 2 %. The Office ensured high quality with an acceptance rate of 98.5 % on 767 externalised language-editing tasks.

The Office conducted satisfaction surveys among the author services using the Office's language editing and proofreading resources. Despite challenging circumstances, a **'very satisfied' level of 100 %** has been noted for the **Official Journal** whereas for general publications, a score of 94 % of 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' was achieved, as compared with 88 % in 2021 and 75 % in 2020.

Taking into account the outcome of a market study which the Office conducted, and in the overall context of increasing demand from EU institutions and agencies for language-editing services, the Office published in July 2022 an **interinstitutional call for tender** for the provision of language-editing services related to general publications in EU and non-EU languages. The interinstitutional framework contract is to be signed in spring 2023. It will complement the Office's in-house services and will sustain the language editing services for all author services, with the Office ensuring quality control.

Printing services

The Office diminished its in-house printing capacity (both technical and human resources) but maintained the ability to provide fast and high-quality printed products. In 2022, the production of the printshop mostly concentrated on meeting internal needs and answering urgent requests, producing a total of 4 million A4 equivalent pages.

2. MODERN AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION AND INTERNAL CONTROL

2.1 Financial management and internal control

Assurance is provided on the basis of an objective examination of evidence of the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. This examination is carried out by management, who monitors the functioning of the internal control systems on a continuous basis, and by internal and external auditors. The results are explicitly documented and reported to the Director-General. The following reports have been considered:

- the reports by the authorising officers by subdelegation (including reports on the financial data and the main points concerning controls and risks, follow-up of actions on audit recommendations, and significant problems);
- the quarterly reports to the Office’s Management Committee;
- the reports of the *ex post* and second level *ex ante* financial controls;
- specific analyses performed by the Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit and review of important processes and procedures and their documentation, including the reports on recorded exceptions and non-compliance events;
- the monitoring of the implementation of the Anti-Fraud Strategy;
- the contribution by the Head of Unit in charge of risk management and internal control, including the results of internal control monitoring at the Office level;
- the limited conclusion of the internal auditor on the state of control, and the observations and recommendations of the Internal Audit Service (IAS);
- observations and recommendations reported by the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

The systematic analysis of the available evidence provides sufficient guarantees as to the completeness and reliability of the information reported and results in the full coverage of the budget delegated to the Director-General of the Office.

This section covers the control results and other relevant elements that support management's assurance. It is structured into 2.1.1 Control results, 2.1.2 Audit observations and recommendations, 2.1.3 Effectiveness of internal control systems, and resulting in 2.1.4 Conclusions on the assurance.

2.1.1 Control results

This section reports and assesses the elements identified by management which support the assurance on the achievement of the internal control objectives ⁽¹¹⁾. The Office’s assurance building and materiality criteria are outlined in annual activity report annex 5. The annual activity report annex 6 outlines the main risks together with the control processes to mitigate them and the indicators used to measure the performance of the relevant control systems.

⁽¹¹⁾ 1) Effectiveness, efficiency and economy of operations; 2) reliability of reporting; 3) safeguarding of assets and information; 4) prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities and 5) adequate management of the risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, taking into account the multiannual character of programmes as well as the nature of the payments (FR Art 36.2).

The Office has established a system of control targeted at ensuring correct attribution of contracts in procurement procedures, the sound financial management and the legality and regularity of all financial transactions and the protection of assets and information. All transactions are subject to first level verification. In addition, sample-based second level *ex ante* and *ex post* controls are performed. The threshold of 2 % of authorised payments used by the Commission and the ECA (as explained in annex 5) as well as the quantification of the financial impact are applied. The estimated residual error rate for 2022 is significantly below the target of 2 %.

Financial resources managed by the Office fall into four categories.

- Administrative expenditure, which is managed through the Office's own budget (production of the Official Journal and other mandatory publications, production of general publications, access and reuse, long-term preservation, part of the costs related to the Office's information systems, financing of the EC Library), and through budget lines co-delegated to the Director-General of the Office by other DGs and services of the Commission (production, storage and dissemination of publications, subscriptions to periodicals and e-resources).
- Operational expenditure, which is financed through the budget lines delegated or co-delegated to the Director-General of the Office (eg. TED, CORDIS, DEP, Jure, etc.) for services related to EU programmes and activities.
- Internal assigned revenue under Article 21(3)(c) of the [Financial Regulation](#) (administrative or operational expenditure financing services related to the production, storage and dissemination of publications).
- Revenue received from the sale of publications. This revenue is transferred to the EU institutions and the Commission DGs concerned. Sales revenue has decreased during the last years and has become insignificant (EUR 34 852 in 2022).

A partly decentralised financial circuit is applied for most of the Office's transactions and a simplified payment workflow exists for low-risk items. The Office did not identify any reputational event which might have an impact on achieving the internal control objectives and, therefore, on assurance during 2022. One critical risk has been identified, for which mitigating measures are in place and constant monitoring of the risk is done at Office level.

Overview table (amounts in EUR million)

Risk-type / Activities	Procurement (e.g. minor or major values)	Total Expenditure	NEI e.g. Revenues, Assets, OBS (in) tangible or financial assets & liabilities)
Direct management Procurement (Publications)	53.14	53.14	Assets = 10.17
Direct management Revenues (Publications)			Internal assigned revenue = 2.41
Totals (coverage)	53.14	53.14	Internal assigned revenue = 2.41 Assets = 10.17
<i>Links to AAR Annex 3</i>	<i>Overall total (53.14 m EUR); see Table 2 – payments made</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>Table 4 – assets</i>
<i>Legend for the abbreviations: NEI = Non-Expenditure Item(s), OBS = Off-Balance Sheet.</i>			

In line with the 2018 Financial Regulation, the Office’s assessment for the new reporting requirement is as follows:

- Cases of ‘confirmation of instructions’ (new FR art 92.3): no such cases for the Office.
- Cases of financing not linked to costs (new FR art 125.3): no such cases for the Office.
- Financial framework partnerships > 4 years (new FR art 130.4): no such cases for the Office.
- Cases of flat-rates > 7 % for indirect costs (new FR art 181.6): no such cases for the Office.
- Cases of ‘Derogations from the principle of non-retroactivity [of grants] pursuant to Article 193 FR’ (new Financial Regulation Article 193.2): no such cases for the Office.

1. Effectiveness of controls

a) Legality and regularity of the transactions

The Office uses internal control processes to ensure sound management of risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions it is responsible for, taking into account the multiannual character of programmes and the nature of the payments concerned.

The control objective regarding legality and regularity of transactions relates to the calculated annual error rate, for which the threshold is set at 2 % of authorised payments.

The Office’s portfolio consists of segments with a relatively low error rate, i.e. less than 0.01 %. This is, respectively, thanks to the inherent risk profile of the funding modalities and the performance of the related control systems.

In addition, the Office has in place an effective mechanism for correcting errors, through *ex ante* and *ex post* controls, resulting in preventive and corrective measures, respectively.

No recovery or financial correction were necessary in 2022 as result of the second level *ex ante* and *ex post* controls performed by the financial control. Regarding corrections following first level *ex ante* and *ex post* controls at operational level, please see table below for details:

		Preventive measures (m EUR)	Corrective measures (m EUR)
Implemented by the Member States		n/a	n/a
	<i>of which from Member States controls</i>	n/a	n/a
	<i>of which from EU controls</i>	n/a	n/a
Implemented by the Commission			
	<i>of which from Member States controls</i>	n/a	n/a
	<i>of which from EU controls</i>	0.08	0.00 (*)
OP total		0.08	0.00 (*)

(*) The exact amount corresponding to *ex post* controls is EUR 828.89.

Based on all the above, the Office presents in the following Table X an estimation of the risk at payment and risk at closure for the expenditure managed during the reporting year.

Table X: Estimated risk at payment and at closure (amounts in EUR million)

The full detailed version of the table is provided in Annex 9.

OP	Payments made	Relevant expenditure	Estimated risk (error rate %) at payment*		Estimated future corrections and deductions		Estimated risk (error rate %) at closure*	
	m EUR	m EUR	m EUR	%	m EUR	%	m EUR	%
Publications		53.14	0.01	0.01	0	0	0.01	0.01
OP total		53.14 m EUR	0.01 m EUR	0.01 %	0 m EUR	0 %	0.01 m EUR	0.01 %
* The amounts of the estimated risk at payment and risk at closure are close to zero (m EUR 0.003), the figures in the table are rounded up to 2 digits.								

In order to ensure that **procurement procedures** do not lead to incorrect attribution of contracts, the Office maintains a *Comité des achats et marchés* (CAM) to give an opinion to the Authorising Officers by Subdelegation about the attribution decision and its basis. The committee delivered 12 **favourable opinions**. The responses to the CAM remarks were followed up by the Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit and were found to be satisfactory. All contracts over EUR 1 000 000 were preceded by an analysis before launching the procurement procedure.

With a view to mitigating the risk of improper implementation of contracts, liquidated damages amounting to a total of EUR 154 558.4 were applied by the operational services in 25 cases.

The Office carries out two types of controls on specific financial transactions in order to ensure that **commitments and payments** are legal and regular, and **recovery orders** are correctly established for all services rendered: controls that are made before signature of the transaction, only on commitments and recovery orders (*ex ante*), and controls on all types of completed transactions (*ex post*). Both verifications are organised on a sample basis.

All sampled transactions found to have errors were **examined in detail** and recommendations were formulated. From the control exercises carried out, 12 cases were identified and controlled in depth.

Controls carried out in the Office and related indicators cover the management of all types of financial resources, including revenue.

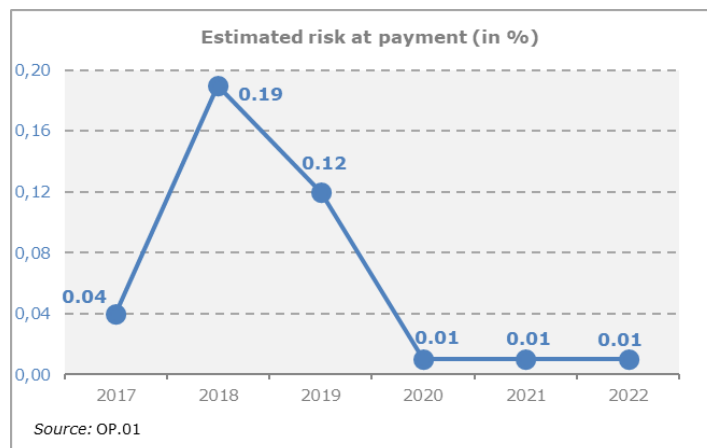
Financial control results are extrapolated to determine the amount at risk. This is carried out in accordance with the Commission guidance on sampling methods for audit authorities.

The results of controls on procurement activities (compliance with requirements regarding analysis of contracts and CAM opinions), the very low residual error rate calculated based on *ex post* controls performed on commitments and payments, and the overall regularity and legality of all other transactions (recovery orders, transfers and write-offs) **demonstrate the effectiveness and sufficiency** of the controls in place.

In the context of the protection of the EU budget, the Office's estimated overall risk at payment, estimated future corrections and risk at closure are consolidated at Commission level.

The Office's relevant expenditure, its estimated overall risk at payment, estimated future corrections and risk at closure are set out in Table X: Estimated risk at payment and at closure.

The **estimated overall risk at payment** for 2022 expenditure is close to zero. This is the Authorising Officer by Delegation's best, conservative estimation of the amount of relevant expenditure during the year (EUR 53.14 million) not in conformity with the contractual and regulatory provisions applicable **at the time the payment was made**.



Taking into account the nature of the Office's expenditure – in particular its low error rate – as well as the existing controls in place, the Office considers it unlikely that future corrections for the 2022 payments will be made. Therefore, the **estimated future corrections** for 2022 expenditure amount to EUR 0 million.

The difference between the estimated overall risk at payment and the estimated future corrections results in the **estimated overall risk at closure** for the 2022 expenditure that is close to zero. The detected error rate remains below the target of 2 %. This is an indication of the good functioning of the controls in place.

In comparison to 2021, the risk at payment (close to zero in 2021), the estimated future corrections (EUR 0 million in 2021) and the estimated overall risk at closure (close to zero in 2021) have remained stable.

For an overview at Commission level, the Office's estimated overall risk at payment, estimated future corrections and risk at closure are consolidated in the Annual Management and Performance Report.

b) Fraud prevention, detection and correction

The Office has developed and implemented its own anti-fraud strategy since 2014, on the basis of the methodology provided by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). The strategy is updated every three years, the last time in 2020. Its implementation is being monitored and reported to the management at least once a year according to the action plan. All necessary actions have been implemented.

The Office continued to raise staff **awareness on fraud prevention and detection** through a note for the attention of the Office staff from the Director-General and regular communications on the Office's intranet. Additionally, training courses on fraud prevention and ethics were advertised to staff. One training course dedicated to the Office staff was organised in collaboration with OLAF. Following the positive feedback from staff, this action

will be continued in 2023.

The Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit monitors the anti-fraud strategy through the follow-up of the action plan linked to it, including the performance indicators defined in the Management Plan.

The controls aimed at preventing and detecting fraud are essentially similar to those intended to ensure the legality and regularity of transactions.

To implement the anti-fraud strategy, several **analyses were performed**, such as the analysis of the register of exceptions, the follow-up of the CAM opinions, the analysis of contracts before renewal. No indication of fraud was detected.

In order to identify the risk of fraud, the Office screens the register of exceptions and the transactions where errors have a financial impact (as identified by Financial Control). These transactions were subject to a more in-depth analysis and **no indication of risk of fraud was found**.

During the reporting year, two entries in the register of exceptions concerning the taking over of costs by the Office and six concerning contractual overrides, categorised as fraud prevention indicators, were identified. This represented 0.17 % of the total number and 1.26 % of the total value of the Office's transactions during the period analysed. This is lower than both the materiality limit and the target. The analysis of these cases **did not lead to any suspicion of fraud**.

The Office had also contributed to the Commission anti-fraud strategy and the action for which the Office was lead service is now closed. There were no *financial* recommendations from OLAF for the Office in 2022.

The results achieved during the year thanks to the anti-fraud measures in place consist mainly in the increase of the staff awareness on fraud prevention and detection. No cases of fraud have been detected and there are no open OLAF recommendations.

On the basis of the available information, the Office has reasonable assurance that the anti-fraud measures in place are effective.

c) **Other control objectives: safeguarding of assets and information, reliability of reporting**

The main assets of the Office are as follows:

- **Information and data stored electronically**. Since 1 January 2018, all physical IT assets together with resources and operational responsibility have been transferred to DG Informatics. The system and data owners, however, remain at the Office. Access to applications is protected either by EU login or by legacy user IDs and password authentication (full adoption of EU login is in progress). DG Informatics ensures daily backups, a secondary site for high availability, data replication, safeguarding and business continuity.
- **The stocks of publications**. These are stored and managed in a secure location by an external contractor who maintains an inventory.

Archives are **stored in secure locations**. The non-current assets listed under table 4 of Annex 3 are internally generated intangible assets. All write-offs of these assets have to be

endorsed by a committee consisting of delegates of the DGs in Luxembourg which manage assets, and a president independent from asset management.

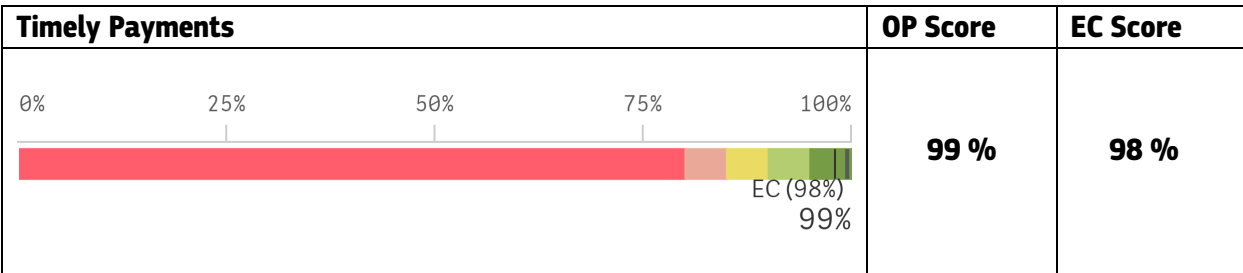
For legislative documents to be published in the Official Journal, the Office uses the **secure transfer** (eTrustEX/eDelivery) from the Commission, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions.

Together with the European Court of Auditors and the European Central Bank, the Office receives data via the IMMCbuilder ⁽¹²⁾, which is also secured by EU login and https protocol.

Based on the inventory procedure and the assessment of risks and of compliance with internal control principles, it can be concluded that **assets and information managed by the Office are properly protected.**

2. Efficiency of controls

In 2022 the Office made 3 565 payments for an amount of EUR 53.45 million. As from 2020, the former ‘payments-on-time (%)’ indicator changes from the number of payments on time (in percentage) to the payment accepted amount in time (in percentage).



Results show that the measures put in place by the Office to ensure the timely processing of payments are effective and efficient. The Office does not manage grants, thus, Article 194(2) of the Financial Regulation does not apply to the Office.

In 2021 the EC Library was transferred to the Office. In 2022 the Office has continued the coverage of the library activities by the existing control exercises (integration into the *ex ante* exercise conducted on commitments and recovery orders). This allowed for a more efficient use of the resources dedicated to control.

Based on the above it can be concluded that the controls are efficient.

3. Economy of controls

Every year, in cooperation with all units, the Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit estimates the costs of controls in place by reviewing the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members and their activity ratio dedicated to control tasks, and by monitoring the total number of transactions carried out by types. For 2022, the corporate methodology for the estimation, assessment and reporting on the cost-effectiveness of controls was applied and the costs of controls were separated by the applicable control system in *ex ante* and *ex post* controls. The detailed breakdown of costs of controls is presented in Annex 7.

⁽¹²⁾ The IMMCbuilder is a web-service-based tool that encapsulates the IMMC specifications and allows end-users or other IT systems to create valid IMMC packages based on pre-defined templates.

Overall controls (including control of procurement, control of financial circuits, financial control, control related to budget and accounting, coordination and internal control, and control related to IT security) cost EUR 3.77 million, EUR 2.74 million being dedicated to *ex ante* controls and EUR 1.03 million to *ex post* controls. The ratios of the estimated cost of controls per relevant control systems are between 0.44 % and 5.01 %. The ratio of the overall estimated cost of control calculated against the total amount in the scope of control is 1.46 %. The costs of controls were relatively stable over recent years, in 2021, they amounted to EUR 3.53 million and in 2020 to EUR 3.57 million.

Given that no changes were implemented in 2022 in the control strategy, and costs of controls are stable, the Office concludes that the **controls are cost-effective**.

4. Conclusion on the cost-effectiveness of controls

Based on the most relevant key indicators and control results, the Office has assessed the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of its control system and reached a positive conclusion on the cost-effectiveness of the controls for which it is responsible.

In non-financial terms, the benefits of control include better value for money, deterrent and preventive effects, efficiency gains, system improvements and compliance with regulatory provisions.

To reach a conclusion on the relative efficiency of controls, it is necessary to analyse the evolution of these efficiency indicators over time and/or compare them to relevant benchmarks. Comparison of financial control results and the proportion of exceptions to materiality criteria, and the comparison of the time to pay to legal requirements, indicates that **controls are effective**.

The procurement, commitment and payment procedures are, to a large extent, a regulatory requirement which cannot be curtailed. Therefore, the Office considers that the **necessity of these controls is undeniable** and, as shown by the risks outlined in Annex 6, a significant proportion of the appropriations would be at risk should they not be in place. Controls are carried out on a sample basis, applying a stratified methodology since the beginning of 2017. Furthermore, second-level *ex ante* controls are focused on the most relevant period. However, when the result of these controls is not satisfactory, *ex ante* controls are extended to cover other periods.

The Office reviews its control strategy on a regular basis depending on identified needs and risks. The Financial Control section continued to apply the sampling process and the extrapolation method to determine the estimated amount at risk as reviewed and aligned with the Commission guidance on sampling methods for audit authorities.

The Office is reviewing its processes to update the risk assessment and to identify further efficiencies including in terms of control.

2.1.2 Audit observations and recommendations

This section sets out the observations, opinions and conclusions reported by auditors – including the limited conclusion of the Internal Auditor on the state of internal control. Summaries of the management measures taken in response to the audit recommendations

are also included, together with an assessment of the likely material impact of the findings on the achievement of the internal control objectives, and therefore on management's assurance.

The Office is audited by both internal and external independent auditors: the Commission's Internal Audit Service (IAS) and the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

Recommendations following audits carried out by the Internal Audit Service

No audits have been carried out by the IAS in 2022 at the Office and there are no open recommendations from previous audits.

Limited conclusion of the internal auditor on the state of the internal control

Based on all the work undertaken by the IAS in the 2018-2022 period – namely, the audit on Intellectual Property Rights supporting activities (2018), the audit on IT governance and project management in the Office (2019) and the limited review on the internal control framework in the Office (2020) – and taking into account that: a) management has accepted all the recommendations issued in 2018-2022; b) management has adopted action plans to implement all the accepted recommendations. The IAS considers that these action plans are adequate to address the residual risks identified by the auditors; c) the implementation of these action plans is monitored through reports by management and follow-up audits by the IAS. The internal auditor concluded that the internal control systems in place for the audited processes are effective.

Recommendations following European Court of Auditors audits, European Parliament resolutions and other audits

The European Court of Auditors verified three transactions of the Office as part of the statement of assurance 2021 audit. No specific comment resulted from the verification of two of the transactions, while the results of the verification of the third one resulted in observations which have been implemented by the Office during 2022.

The Office is further dealing with one recommendation from the European Parliament's resolution on the 2018 discharge regarding the increase of transparency by allowing the search for winning bidders on TED. The Office accepted to be the lead service for this recommendation.

Conclusions

There were no audit recommendations open at the end of the year. Consequently, the current state of play **does not lead to assurance-related concerns**.

2.1.3 Assessment of the effectiveness of internal control systems

The Commission has adopted an Internal Control Framework, based on international good practice, to ensure the achievement of its policy and management objectives. Compliance with the internal control framework is a compulsory requirement.

The Office uses the organisational structure and the internal control systems suited to achieving its policy and internal control objectives in accordance with the internal control principles and has due regard to the risks associated with the environment in which it operates.

Assessment of the internal control systems

The internal control systems of the Office are assessed on a continuous basis.

Financial control results show that there are **no material risks** in financial operations and that first level operational and financial controls are satisfactory.

The analysis of the register of exceptions shows that the number of exceptions is insignificant in comparison to the total number of transactions in 2022 and there is **no specific risk**.

The Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit carries out evaluations, assists in the evaluations and analyses of contracts carried out by other units and monitors the completion of evaluations and analyses of contracts where the unit is not involved. The evaluations and analyses contribute to the quality of preparation of renewed contracts and show that the objectives of actions evaluated were attained. Discussions with all heads of unit in the Office take place to review the effectiveness of the internal control systems.

A **specific assessment** of the internal control system was carried out for 2022 in accordance with the methodology established in the 'implementation guide of the internal control framework of the Commission'. The presence and functioning of the components and principles of the internal control system were based on the strengths and weaknesses identified during the year and the measurement of the monitoring criteria. Following the recommendation of the IAS in 2020, the audit reinforced its internal control monitoring criteria and improved the use of soft controls in the specific assessment. In that respect, the results of the staff survey were taken into account in the overall assessment. The report on the specific assessment is presented to and **validated by the Director-General**.

The Office has assessed its internal control system during the reporting year and has concluded that **it is effective and the components and principles are present and functioning as intended**.

2.1.4 Conclusions on the assurance

This section reviews the assessment of the elements already reported above (in Sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3), and the subconclusions already reached. It draws an overall conclusion to support the declaration of assurance and whether it should be qualified with reservations.

The information reported in Section 2 stems from the results of monitoring carried out by management and auditors, and contained in the reports listed in Section 2.1. These reports result from a systematic analysis of the evidence available. This approach provides sufficient guarantees as to the completeness and reliability of the information reported and results in a comprehensive coverage of the budget delegated to the Director-General of the Office.

Results of controls of procurement, financial control and the analysis of exceptions support the conclusion that **resources are used for the intended purpose** and **operations of the Office are legal and regular**.

Analysis of the control results, *ex ante* analysis of contracts and evaluation activities ensure sound financial management; the measures taken to protect information and assets also give **assurance concerning safeguarding of assets and information**.

The follow-up of audit recommendations, the assessment of the internal control systems and the implementation of the anti-fraud strategy provide **reasonable assurance** that the **control systems work as intended and fraud is prevented and detected**.

In conclusion, based on the elements reported above, 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-General, in her capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation has signed the Declaration of Assurance.

2.1.5 Declaration of Assurance

Declaration of Assurance

I, the undersigned,

Director-General of the Publications Office,

In my capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation,

Declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view ⁽¹³⁾.

State that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of the self-assessment, *ex post* controls, the work of the Internal Audit Service and the lessons learnt from the reports of the Court of Auditors for years prior to the year of this declaration.

Confirm that I am not aware of anything not reported here which could harm the interests of the institution.

Luxembourg, 31 March 2023

Hilde HARDEMAN
Director-General

⁽¹³⁾ True and fair in this context means a reliable, complete and correct view on the state of affairs in the Office.

2.2 Modern and efficient administration – other aspects

2.2.1 Human resource management

Staff engagement and well-being

Drawing on the experience acquired from shifting to large-scale teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission adopted a new Decision on working time and hybrid working which entered into force on 1 April 2022. Hybrid working, combined with more flexible working time rules, led to a greater sense of responsibility and a better work/life balance among staff. Telework is allowed up to 60 % when the tasks performed are compatible with it.

Internal communication aimed to keep staff informed about the achievements, working mode changes, technical developments, and to give practical information. The move to the new building became one of the leading topics. Communications from the Director-General formed an important part of communication to staff. The new version of the intranet was deployed. Events like townhall meetings enabled two-way exchanges of information.

Gender-balanced management

Two senior management positions were vacant in 2022 and the related recruitment procedures are underway. One middle management position was vacant and was filled by a first male appointment resulting in a **gender-balanced middle management**, of nine women and eight men. Four deputy heads of unit were appointed resulting in a slight decrease of the gender-balanced occupation with seven women and ten men.

Optimum staff levels and specialisation

In a context of decreasing resource allocation, striving for optimum staff levels and use of skills to meet the Office's strategic objectives, some reallocation of posts was necessary. Vacant posts (retirement, external mobility) were systematically analysed and, where necessary, reallocated to better respond to operational needs. A small-scale reorganisation was prepared to become effective as from 1 January 2023, bringing together in the same directorate all colleagues working on cross-cutting services, tools and rules for data, information and knowledge management, to make the most of their combined skills, knowledge and expertise. Recruitment opportunities were used to acquire the specialised profiles for data, information and knowledge management tasks. Significant efforts were made to speed up the recruitment process, decreasing the vacancy rate from 5.9 % to 3.9 %.

2.2.2 Digital transformation and information management

Digital transformation

The Office implemented its **multiannual IT plan** and contributed to the **Digital Solutions Modernisation Plan** (DSMP), drawn up in accordance with the Commission's digital strategy. These plans form the basis to digitally transform the Office's business processes by developing new innovative digital solutions. The Office reached 61 % of the implementation of the digital strategy principles by the most important IT solutions (including legacy systems) and 85 % if we consider its most recent systems. It continued to be the frontrunner in the

implementation of the Commission's cloud strategy, with several cloud-native developments for major systems.

The **Unified Production Platform** (UPP) that is under preparation will provide the Office with a **digital solution supporting the production of legal and non-legal publications**, replacing nine existing systems. It is a multiannual transformation project involving a review of existing processes and aiming at the maximum automation of tasks. It is based on cloud-native agile development. In 2022 achievements included the development of the author portal and services supporting the outsourcing of proofreading.

Progress was made in developing the new IBIS system, in order to start its testing in the first quarter 2023. The objective is to provide the EU institutions with a state-of-the-art digital solution to support the production and publication of the EU budget.

Following the integration of the financial application DEFA, all related ColdFusion-based applications were phased out in 2022.

The Office also made **significant progress in the area of security**, with the finalisation of all security plans, attestation of security controls and further improvement of internal security processes.

In the domain of the Digital Workplace significant progress was made towards security as the Office played a pioneering role in the **upgrade to the Welcome domain**: 90 % of the Office staff migrated to the new domain within a three-month period.

Finally, the Office continued the programme aimed at increasing **digital literacy** by launching a specific digital literacy objective for all its staff, in line with the Commission's Next Generation Digital Strategy.

Information management

The Office, as a centre of excellence on data, information and knowledge management, played an active and prominent role in putting in place the Commission's data strategy, e.g. by managing data.europa.eu and by contributing to the [data advisory network](#) and taking on the business ownership of the [data catalogue](#). The Office plays an active role in the IMSB and the local data correspondent network.

In order to **stay at the forefront of data, information and knowledge-related actions**, the Office actively contributed to the implementation of the IMSB rolling action plan for 2022. It is the lead service for the action on corporate reference data management and continued to contribute to actions related to data literacy, data advisory service, business intelligence and artificial intelligence. In the framework of the Corporate Reference Data Management coordination group, the Office greatly contributed to the works on geospatial reference data (results are scheduled for the first half of 2023). In addition, together with the Joint Research Centre, it led the piloting of a cross-DG service for better regulation evidence transparency.

Data protection

The Office continuously monitors all its processing operations which involve personal data. In this context, the Office's data protection coordinator (DPC) keeps all data processing records regularly updated to ensure that they, and the connected privacy statements, accurately describe the relevant processing.

The DPC works closely with the Contracts Unit to ensure that data protection aspects are fully addressed in all calls for tenders and/or contract amendments, and that agreements with external processors thus reflect the responsibilities deriving from Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

The DPC specifically supported the staff of the EC Library to ensure that the rights of data subjects are adequately protected in the library's processing operations.

The DPC continued his **awareness-raising campaign** launched in 2021 across the Office. The unit-specific training sessions have reached approximately 70 % of the staff by the end of 2022. The campaign will continue in 2023.

2.2.3 Sound environmental management

In 2022, the Office commissioned a study by an external contractor with a view to reducing the Office's environmental impact, assessing the **carbon footprint** of its activities as well as preparing a specific greening action plan. Outcomes are expected mid-June 2023.

The Office continued its efforts with regard to the Commission's eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) and worked on actions to implement the **'Greening the Commission' action plan** at local level (e.g. reduction of paper and energy consumptions). Following the designation of a new EMAS correspondent in 2022, work started to develop a subsite on the intranet to further raise awareness on environment-related issues and organise local actions.

The percentage of **recycled paper and environmentally-friendly ink** used by the Office's printshop remained stable due to the difficulty of sourcing recycled paper and increasing prices all over the year. The paper used by the Office is still certified forest stewardship council (FSC) and elemental chlorine free (ECF) or process chlorine free (PCF).

The Office ensured that **energy saving measures** were implemented appropriately in its premises, through the constructive collaboration with the competent services in the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Luxembourg (OIL), the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels (OIB) and DG Informatics.

2.2.4 Initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities

Rationalisation of information purchasing

The EC Library provides a modern data and information resources service to Members of the College and Commission staff to support them in their policy work. In 2022, the library continued its efforts to rationalise the acquisition of data, research and information resources across the Commission but also at interinstitutional level. 27 DGs established co-delegation budget lines to delegate the management of their subscriptions to the library. As many as 151 orders were passed via co-delegation in addition to the orders already centralised with the library. This action has brought tangible benefits and will continue in 2023:

- Optimisation of budget spending by avoiding the duplication of resources purchased simultaneously by several DGs;
- Ease of access to these resources through the library catalogue;
- Reduction of administrative efforts and human resources involved at DG level.