



# **2019**

# **Annual Activity Report**

**European School of  
Administration**

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## THE DG IN BRIEF

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

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

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

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

The longstanding Director of the School retired at the end of 2016 and his replacement took up her functions in January 2020. In the meantime, duties have been carried out by the Deputy Head of Unit as acting Head of the School. The Deputy Head of Unit is both a highly active designer and facilitator so the School has therefore been operating with a reduced number of facilitators and designers for the last three years.

Ever since its inception, the School has been working continuously to improve skills for a high performing civil service in a fast changing and complex environment, for staff and for managers, and to integrate promptly and effectively new staff into the public sector.

In order to do this, it works in close partnership with the learning and development services of all the institutions in order to ensure that its offer is responsive to their expectations and needs and that the best possible synergies are achieved with their own activities in this field. To further promote these synergies, it also organises a number of very high value inter-institutional calls for tender, to which the institutions, Agencies and bodies have access.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Annual Activity Report is a management report of the Head of the European School of Administration to the College of Commissioners. Annual Activity Reports are the main *instrument of management accountability within the Commission and 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<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 17(1) of the Treaty on European Union.

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

2019 was the third year the School functioned without an appointed Head, as it had since the retirement of its long-serving Director on 31 December 2016. Despite the continued uncertainty around its leadership, and the difficulty therefore to take major policy decisions, it managed to turn around a number of negative trends and at the end of the year emerged in a stronger position than it had been in for several years.

Participant numbers grew for the second consecutive year, so the loss of participants which occurred in 2016-17 has now been recovered. There are continued issues with attendance rates, due to last-minute dropouts and no-shows, in particular for management courses, but the School is unfortunately far from the only training body facing these difficulties.

As already noted in the 2018 AAR, the School's induction offer is due for renewal, as the characteristics of the target audience are changing and the institutions increasingly run internal induction programmes for their new staff. Conversations with the institutions about what they wish from the School in this area have been both useful and encouraging, and the road forward to a new inter-institutional induction programme is clear.

The Key Skills and Wellbeing workshops are as popular as ever. The School's reflections on competencies are bringing out new workshops covering "the skills of the future", such as critical thinking and innovation.

The new inter-institutional management and coaching contract was signed in the autumn, and design is about to start on a new generation of management and leadership development programmes, based on a vision paper, which has received much positive feedback from the institutions.

The School's new website, makeover of communications tools, and first course catalogue have given its communication a much-needed boost. The organisation of the first Agency Day, to inform finance and L&D professionals from agencies about the School's offer and answer their questions, was a resounding success which drew many people.

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

- delivering the compulsory training programme for the 14th annual certification exercise for assistant-grade staff with the potential to become administrators. This despite the technical incident which led to the cancellation of the E2 exam; the School managed to deliver a new case study for a new exam so the exercise could be finished before the end of the year;
- Organising three sessions of the Public Administration Erasmus traineeships for young national civil servants dealing with EU affairs;
- Developing a new website and collaborative space for the DISPA network for Directors of Schools of Public Administration in the Member States.

## b) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)\*

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Target 2019	Situation at the end of 2019
1. The inter-institutional character of our training activities which is part of the fundamental raison d'être of the School	<b>2012:</b> 29% of non-Commission participants	30% of non-Commission participants	37%  (source: EULearn attendance report 2019)
2. The level of satisfaction expressed by participants	<b>2012:</b> 96% of satisfied participants	≥ 90% of satisfied participants	95 %  (source: EULearn evaluation report 2019)
3. The degree to which we introduce more blended learning elements in our training programmes	<b>2013:</b> 17% of courses containing blended learning elements	≥30% of courses containing blended learning elements	69%  (source: course description published by the School)
4. The rate of attendance	<b>2012:</b> 90%	≥90 %	82%  (source: EULearn attendance report 2019)
5. The evaluation of the impact of our training activities	<b>2013:</b> Two pilot projects for the measurement of learning transfer and impact of training programmes	10 programmes to be analysed	13 programmes  (source: Impact evaluation survey published via EUSurvey for 2019)

\* There are two additional KPI's in comparison with the SP2016-2020. These were added in 2016 in order to better reflect the Commission's priorities and because at the time it was considered to give a more meaningful picture. These are the KPI's which have been reported on in all Annual Activity reports since and including 2016.

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

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

To ensure the achievement of policy and management objectives, the Commission has adopted a set of internal control principles, based on international good practice. The financial regulation requires that the organisational structure and the internal control systems used to implement the budget be set up in accordance with these principles. The European School of Administration 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 for further details.

In addition, the European School of Administration has systematically examined the available control results and indicators, including those for supervising entities to which it has entrusted budget implementation tasks, 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; and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented. The Director General of EPSO, in his capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation has signed the Declaration of Assurance.

## **d) Provision of information to the Commissioner(s)**

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

# 1. KEY RESULTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE COMMISSION'S GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND DG'S SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES<sup>2</sup>

As can be seen from the performance indicators, the School ensured good inter-institutional balance as regards participant numbers, whilst at the same time making sure that whenever an individual institution needed a larger than usual number of places its demand was satisfied. This is particularly important when an institution has made a certain programme part of its mandatory training path. Most often, this concerns management programmes.

Participant numbers increased overall by over 10% from 2018 to 2019 on the School's programmes, from 6816 to 7615. The greatest increase in numbers comes from Commission staff, but although almost all institutions have sent more or similar numbers of participants, comparatively it is the agencies and others, which have increased the most, as they have more than doubled their number of participants in one year. The participation from the GSC has dropped, but mainly for conferences. The one institution, which stands out, is the European Parliament, whose participation has diminished by a quarter. The drop cuts across all programmes.

Participants continued to be extremely satisfied with the School's programmes. Evaluations of the transfer of learning to the workplace (impact assessment) also show that a high number of participants find that they are able to transfer their learning to the workplace.

The School is pleased with the extent to which it has been able to diversify its delivery with an increasingly blended approach. All its "Key Skills" modules now have a dedicated e-book, and many of its management programmes. In order to assist with the successful transfer of learning, the School has made a point of making many of its newer courses modular, interspersing moments of formal classroom learning with tasks to do back in the office, group coaching, buddying etc. Although this makes the courses more challenging to manage administratively, research shows that this approach is more effective in making the new skills and learning "stick".

The School is actively looking at ways in which it can enhance its blended approach, and has engaged a new member of staff to assist with the internal development of e-books. We have started experimenting with videos and filming of events and more will undoubtedly happen in this area in the future.

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

For the second year in a row, the School did not manage to meet its target for the rate of attendance. The numbers stood at 82% by the end of the year; below its target of 90%. Although the situation has improved somewhat with regard to the Key Skills, it is still difficult for management courses. The number of no-shows and last-minute cancellations have increased dramatically over the last few years. This trend can be observed not only in most of the other institutions, but also in national administrations. It seems like public

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<sup>2</sup> An Executive Agency uses as heading: "Implementation of the Agency's Annual Work programme - Highlights of the year".



servants feel they have less and less time to devote to training. In a context where new skills are needed for the new challenges Europe faces, this is not reassuring.

As already flagged in several years of Annual Activity Reports, the pressures of several years of staff cuts are now apparent. Staff may feel they have less time to participate in training, are under more pressure from their hierarchy to get back to the office, and are occasionally discouraged from attending any training at all. It is important that the immediate needs of the service are not allowed to hamper the long-term development of staff skills and competencies, or indeed their well-being.

In 2019, the School continued its communication drive. The logo and materials were updated. With the migration, the website was given a completely new look. The DISPA site was also refreshed and a collaborative space added. Finally, the School issued its first-ever catalogue, which was an instant success. As always, School staff participated in various events and fairs, such as the Court of Auditors’ T-day, the Newcomers’ Fair, and the Commission’s Career Day.

In 2019, the School also organised for the first time an Agencies day, to which staff from nearly 30 agencies participated. The Agencies day was held in conjunction with a Demo Day for the Key Skills courses, so that travelling agency staff could participate in both. Together with the improved communication with potential participants in Luxembourg, all these initiatives helped to boost visibility and consequently participant numbers.

### 1.1. Developing leadership and Management talents

Specific objective 1: To equip staff who exercise or who may exercise management responsibilities with the necessary skills and attitudes that will help them and their institution achieve greater effectiveness.		
<b>Result indicator:</b> Perceived usefulness. <b>Source of data:</b> Questionnaires completed by participants.		
<b>Baseline 2012:</b> 96%.	<b>Target in 2020:</b> 90%. Rate set as part of the School’s mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.	<b>Latest known results:</b> <i>(EULearn - 2019)</i> 93%
<b>Result indicator:</b> Perceived impact and learning transfer. <b>Source of data:</b> Questionnaires completed by participants.		

<p><b>Baseline 2016:</b> 50%</p>	<p><b>Target in 2020:</b> At least 50% of participants reporting a level 2 impact for each course (Generally, a course includes several competencies to be developed. The figure to take into account is the average for all the competencies included in a course).</p> <p>At least 2 months after a course participants are requested to give an estimate of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. their level of competency in the field on which they were trained before and after the course (on a scale from 0 to 10),</li> <li>2. frequency of use of what they have learnt (on a scale from 0 ("never or almost never") to 2 "often or very often"),</li> <li>3. importance of what they have learnt for their job (on a scale from 0 ("not really important") to 2 ("very important").</li> </ol> <p>An indicator is calculated by multiplying the difference of level of competency before and after the course with the frequency and importance of the topic.</p> <p>An indicator between 2 and 4 is considered as showing a satisfactory level of impact; between 4 and 8, a fairly high level of impact; and above 8 a high level of impact.</p>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> <i>(Impact evaluation survey - 2019)</i></p> <p>94%</p>
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## Main outputs in 2019:

Description and indicator:	Target date:	Latest known results: (EULearn - 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 110 courses around the three "clusters" of Managing Myself, Managing My Team and Managing My Organisational Environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 170 courses and workshops including Essentials for Managers not reserved for Heads of Unit</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 courses to prepare people before they apply for a Head of Unit position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 courses to prepare for a Head of Unit position</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 courses for newly-appointed Heads of Unit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 courses "Licence to Lead" for new Heads of Unit and Essentials of Management for Heads of Unit</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 editions of the development programme for newly-appointed Directors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 editions (12 and 13) of the Newly Appointed Directors Programme</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 editions of the Leadership Club and other events for senior management, of which at least 1 in Luxembourg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 editions of the Leadership Club.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 2-day courses for Heads of Unit at the J. Monnet &amp; R. Schuman houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 course at the Jean Monnet House and 1 at the Robert Schuman House.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 thematic conferences for managers featuring high-level internal speakers, of which at least 4 in Luxembourg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cycle of "EU in the Making", 10 in Brussels and 3 in Luxembourg, featuring high-level in-house practitioners, for Heads of Unit and above.</li> <li>• 1 cycle (3 sessions) of "Leadership Talks" lunchtime events on diversity with external speakers</li> </ul>

2019 saw the School continue to recover from the serious dip in attendance which hit in 2017, when, at its worst, its management courses only attracted 1710 participants. Numbers increased to 2434 in 2018 to reach 2882 in 2019. This can be ascribed to many different possible reasons. The School has pursued a concerted marketing campaign since 2017, which finally is bearing fruit. The aforementioned new website and catalogue have certainly helped enhance the School's image and spread the word about its courses. In Luxembourg, a new way of contacting potential participants gave immediate and tangible results, and the management offer finally "took off". Some courses clearly benefitted from being included in more extensive learning paths, which made them more widely known and thereby increased demand. One good example is "Next Step - Head of

Unit”, which since its inclusion in the Commission’s Female Talent Development Programme has become noticeably more popular, and so the final result was 10 courses delivered compared to 4 planned. Extra sessions also had to be added to several other programmes, and some new, more unusual offerings attracted a lot of attention.

The School has continued to innovate throughout, and in 2019 it was probably in the field of management that the most innovative courses were trialled.

The most unusual was probably the so-called “Walking seminar - purpose-driven leadership”. Based on the practice of walking, this programme takes participants outside for 2,5 days of intense self-reflection on their purpose, the European project, and their leadership, while walking 20 km per day. The programme was trialled with senior managers, middle managers, and women in management (see below under objective 4), and was greeted with enthusiasm by all target audiences. The School is currently training internal trainers from the other institutions to be able to scale up the seminar.

Another pilot was the “Innovation bootcamp”, a 2-day residential course, developed in collaboration with the Danish Design Centre. The bootcamp targeted senior managers, who had to come with a team of 3-4 from their service to work on their own innovation challenges in collaboration with other teams from different services. The format was judged to be highly successful.

Finally, the “Leadership Talks”, was a collaboration with an external consultant for a series of lunchtime conferences with speakers from the private sector in Belgium, with the purpose to share insights about how to foster diversity in the organisation. Despite the topicality of the theme, the conferences did not attract sufficient participant numbers to warrant the cost, and it was decided to stop the trial after 3 sessions. The School is certain that the topic of diversity and the idea of inviting leaders from the private sector are important and relevant, but that it is the format of the events which needs to be reviewed.

In 2018, "Essentials of Management" was chosen by the Commission as the basic management course all newly appointed Heads of Unit are required to attend within 3 months after appointment. The course had been completely redesigned, and was offered in two separate formats: 3 consecutive days, and, upon demand from the institutions, 3 non-consecutive days, to cater for the needs of newly-appointed Heads of Unit, who have difficulties finding time to take a three-day course just when taking up their duties. The School was also asked to offer some of these courses exclusively for Heads of Unit (closed to non-manager participants). The School was happy to do this, but it quickly became clear that the formula of three non-consecutive days did not work in practice, and it was equally clear that the courses exclusively for Heads of Unit did not fill up. Thus, the School decided to abandon the format after a few months.

The School’s long-established course for Heads of Unit at the Jean Monnet house in Houjarray, and its newer sibling at the Robert Schuman house in Scy-Chazelles, are as popular as before, and will continue also in 2020.

The programme for newly-appointed Directors continues to attract participants and very positive reviews. Its popularity means we run two editions per year, and so in 2019 the 12th and 13th editions were launched.

Due to staff shortages, only 2 "traditional" sessions of the Leadership Club for senior managers were organised, but the School’s series of lunchtime conferences on different EU policies for Heads of Unit, Directors and Directors-General, “EU in the making”, continued. These conferences attract large audiences and will continue in 2020.

The School also launched a pilot co-development group for senior managers, in collaboration with the internal coaches in HR.B.3 in the Commission. The pilot will be fully evaluated in 2020, but can already be observed to be of great benefit to participants.

It should be noted that the general trends observed for course attendance are particularly marked where managers are concerned. It is here that the proportion of no-shows and last minute cancellations are the greatest. It is not easy to see how managers' access to training can be facilitated enough for them to feel that they can participate. Even when present, they often have to take calls or attend meetings during the day, which leads to a sub-optimal experience both for them and for the other participants on the course.

<b>Specific objective 4:</b> To contribute to the efforts of the institutions to increase the representation of women in management positions at all levels.		
<b>Result indicator:</b> Perceived usefulness.		
<b>Source of data:</b> Questionnaire completed by participants.		
<b>Baseline 2016:</b> 90%	<b>Target in 2020:</b> 90%. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.	<b>Latest known results:</b> (EULearn - 2019) 99%
<b>Main policy outputs in 2019</b>		
<b>Description:</b>	<b>Target date:</b>	<b>Latest known results:</b> (EULearn - 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 seminars to prepare women to apply for a managerial position</li> <li>• 4 seminars to prepare women for a Head of Unit position</li> <li>• 7 seminars to prepare women for a Director position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<p>5 courses of To be or not to be a Manager - Women only</p> <p>2 courses of Next step: Head of Unit - Women only</p> <p>8 courses of To be or not to be a Director - Women only</p> <p>1 Purpose driven Leadership for women in management</p>

The School has supported women's career development through a range of courses since 2008, with the launch of To Be Or Not To Be A Head of Unit. This programme has been remodelled several times, as the overall offer for women has expanded. It is now named To Be or not To Be a Manager and is targeted at women (with some courses for men) at a much earlier stage in their career, with the intention to build up the managerial pipeline. The range of courses now also comprises Next Step: Head of Unit, Non-Conscious Bias, and the latest addition, To Be or not To Be a Director, for female Heads of Unit considering applying for a Director's post.

The Commission’s Female Talent Development Programme, which was delivered by the School in a bespoke version when it was first launched, has now been taken over by the Commission and is delivered in-house. Although there are positive effects on general awareness among staff of the School’s programmes, such as “Next Step - Head of Unit” as mentioned above, we can also see a reduction of similar proportions in the Commission’s participation on these programmes in their inter-institutional version.

The continued success of To Be or not To Be a Director, with 8 courses delivered, would indicate that there is a sizeable population of women who are interested in a Director position, which is positive news for the efforts to promote women into management.

## 1.2. Talent Management for all staff: general skills-based learning activities

<p><b>Specific objective 2:</b> To help new staff understand the working environment of the EU institutions, the raison d'être of the European project and to contribute to their successful integration</p>		
<p><b>Result indicator:</b> Perceived usefulness.  <b>Source of data:</b> Questionnaire completed by participants.</p>		
<p><b>Baseline 2012:</b> 95%</p>	<p><b>Target in 2020:</b> 90%. Rate set as part of the School’s mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.</p>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> (EULearn - 2019) 99%</p>
<p><b>Main outputs in 2019:</b></p>		
<p><b>Description and indicator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 seminars for newly-arrived staff covering the way in which European integration has developed; the institutions' key missions and procedures; their own transition into their new environment; information sessions on current EU topics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Target date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> (EULearn - 2019) 35 seminars</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 "Brussels for Europe" Master Classes</li> <li>• 20 lunchtime conferences on key European bodies and pension scheme and "Discover Brussels" lunchtime conferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<p>2 Master Classes</p> <p>16 lunch time conferences</p>
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Since 2015, to take account of the various profiles of new arrivals as well as the Commission's new induction programme, the School's "newcomers" programme, Transitions, caters for staff who are not only new in the institutions, but who have also had to change countries to take up their posts, with the attendant challenges that can bring. The satisfaction rates for this course, which includes individual coaching, are extremely high at 100%. The number of induction courses offered is adapted to demand.

In the last few years, we have noticed the once high numbers of participants on the School's induction programme dwindle to a trickle. The same reduction in demand can be seen for the inter-institutional courses on EU History and the courses on the institutions' key missions and procedures (called "EU4U"). This would appear to have a number of reasons, all of which are known. For "Transitions" in particular, the drop in participation reflects the reduction in "real" newcomers, as a large proportion of newly recruited officials have in fact been working in the institutions for years, though under different contracts.

Secondly, there is a strong trend for induction training to be increasingly internal to each individual institution. This has been discussed with the institutions, and there is evident interest and demand for the School to come up with a new, more content-focused programme for new staff which suits the actual target audience.

The interest to know more about what goes on inside the institutions is evident from the large numbers of staff attending the School's "EU News", lunchtime information sessions on current EU topics. In 2019, we ran 8 sessions totalling 432 participants.

**Specific objective 3:** To help staff develop their talents across a range of skills they need to be effective in their current and future jobs.

**Result indicator:** Perceived usefulness of skills development initiatives.

**Source of data:** Questionnaire completed by participants.

**Baseline 2012:**

97%

**Target in 2020:**

90%. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.

**Latest known results:**

(EULearn - 2019)  
94%

**Result indicator:** Perceived impact and learning transfer of skills development initiatives.

**Source of data:** Questionnaires completed by participants.

<p><b>Baseline 2016:</b> 50%</p>	<p><b>Target in 2020:</b></p> <p>At least 50% of participants reporting a level 2 impact for each course (Generally, a course includes several competencies to be developed. The figure to take into account is the average for all the competencies included in a course)</p> <p>At least 2 months after a course participants are requested to give an estimate of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. their level of competency in the field on which they were trained before and after the course (on a scale from 0 to 10),</li> <li>2. frequency of use of what they have learnt (on a scale from 0 ("never or almost never") to 2 "often or very often"),</li> <li>3. importance of what they have learnt for their job (on a scale from 0 ("not really important") to 2 ("very important").</li> </ol> <p>An indicator is calculated by multiplying the difference of level of competency before and after the course with the frequency and importance of the topic.</p> <p>An indicator between 2 and 4 is considered as showing a satisfactory level of impact; between 4 and 8, a fairly high level of impact; and above 8 a high level of impact.</p>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> <i>(Impact evaluation survey 2019)</i></p> <p>96.8%</p>
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**Main outputs in 2019:**

<p><b>Description and indicator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 150 courses on a wide range of skills that allow every member of staff, whatever their grade or function, to perform more effectively</li> </ul>	<p><b>Target date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> <i>(EULearn - 2019)</i></p> <p>166 courses</p>
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## Specific objective 7: To contribute to staff's wellbeing

**Result indicator:** Perceived usefulness of wellbeing initiatives.

**Source of data:** Questionnaire completed by participants.

<b>Baseline 2015:</b> 90%	<b>Target in 2020:</b> 90%. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training and learning opportunities	<b>Latest known results:</b> (EULearn - 2019) 93%
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### Main outputs in 2019:

Description and indicator:	Target date:	Latest known results: (EULearn - 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90 courses and workshops on resilience, mindfulness, burn-out and well-being</li> <li>• 6 lunchtime conferences on wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	103 courses  6 conferences

The Key Skills could be described as the bread and butter of the School. As has been the case for many years now, they count for roughly half of School's participants, and are probably the most well-known of the School's products. In 2019 the Key Skills courses totalled 3468 participants, up from 2018, when the total was 3226 participants. The number of workshops delivered over the year (for Key Skills and Wellbeing combined, including Conferences) was 275 in 2019, compared to 301 in 2018, which shows that the rate of participation has increased, and was close to maximum on many of the courses.

Demand for the "Wellbeing" part of the School's programmes is still high, with 1402 participants all in all, representing a sizeable slice of the Key Skills audience.

The "Key Skills Conferences", on topics related to those dealt with in the Key Skills courses, started in 2017 and have kept going. The lunchtime format is proving to be popular, and the now well-established conferences have become an appreciated opportunity to delve deeper into a particular topic dealt with more generally in one or other of the regular workshops.

The School's Key Skills suite of programmes is modelled on the EPSO competencies. It is, however, becoming clear that these competencies would benefit from additions to better keep up with a fast-changing world. Staff of the institutions need to be fully skilled to deal with the changes. The School has been active in this field in several ways: it has initiated an informal inter-institutional working group to explore the issue of competencies in a cross-cutting way, and it has already started adding to the long-standing Key Skills courses with new workshops training staff in "the skills of the future", such as "Think Again", on critical thinking, piloted in 2018, "Innovation" piloted in 2019, and more likely to follow.

## 1.3. Certification

<p><b>Specific objective 5:</b> To help the institutions develop the talents of assistant grade staff with the potential to become administrators by providing them with a high-quality certification training programme.</p>		
<p><b>Result indicator:</b> Perceived usefulness of training programme.  <b>Source of data:</b> Questionnaire completed by participants.</p>		
<p><b>Baseline 2012:</b> 98%</p>	<p><b>Target in 2020:</b> 95%. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training that participants can transfer to the workplace.</p>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> (Participant survey - 2019) 96.5%</p>
<p><b>Result indicator:</b> Rate of appointment of successful candidates since the introduction of the Certification procedure.  <b>Source of data:</b> Regular statistics provided by Institutions.</p>		
<p><b>Baseline 2013:</b> 74% relating to the first 8 exercises.</p>	<p><b>Target in 2020:</b> 80%</p>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> 82% relating to the first 10 exercises (source: data received from the Institutions)</p>
<p><b>Main policy outputs in 2019:</b></p>		
<p><b>Description:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 days classroom-based training for the 2018/2019 exercise plus individual study</li> <li>• Refresher training for re-sitting candidates.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Target date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30/09/2019</li> <li>• 30/09/2019</li> </ul>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> (2019) Target reached</p>

Certification represents a powerful demonstration of the institutions' willingness to invest significantly in their serving staff: it is a highly effective inter-institutional talent management programme.

2019 saw the 14<sup>th</sup> certification procedure and once again the School successfully delivered the compulsory training programme that selected candidates have to follow before being admitted to the examination stage. Satisfaction rates remained extremely high.

Due to technical circumstances outside the School's control, the written exam E2 had to be cancelled. It was only thanks to intense efforts of School staff that it was possible to reprogram this exam six weeks later with a new case study, thus keeping the deadline of marking and publication of the final results before the end of the year, so that none of the candidates ran the risk of being penalised in their future career development.

The pass rate in the examinations in 2019 was 60% (new and re-sitting candidates combined) Overall 75 candidates were certified (42 new ones and 33 re-sitters). All in all,

the number of successful certification candidates appointed to the AD function group represents 82% of the total number of successful candidates in the first 10 exercises.

## 1.4. Erasmus for Public Administration and DISPA

<p><b>Specific objective 6:</b> To foster better understanding of the European institutions and their learning and development strategies among national administrations and their Schools and Institutes of Public Administration (DISPA).</p>		
<p><b>Result indicator:</b> Participant satisfaction rates on Public Administration Erasmus programme.</p> <p><b>Source of data:</b> Questionnaire completed by participants.</p>		
<p><b>Baseline 2012:</b> 100 %</p>	<p><b>Target in 2020:</b> 95%. Rate set as part of the School's mission to provide high quality training and learning opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> <i>(Participant survey -2019)</i> 95 %</p>
<p><b>Result indicator:</b> Satisfaction rates from Member States Permanent Representations.</p> <p><b>Source of data:</b> Questionnaire completed by Permanent Representations.</p>		
<p>Baseline 2010: 90%</p>	<p><b>Target in 2020:</b> 90%.</p>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> <i>(Participant survey - 2017)</i> 95%</p>
<p><b>Result indicator:</b> Number of participants attending the School's courses via the DISPA network.</p> <p><b>Source of data:</b> Internal statistics.</p>		
<p><b>Baseline 2015:</b> 14</p>	<p><b>Target in 2020:</b> 20</p>	<p><b>Latest known results:</b> 12 to date <i>(source: specific enrolment data)</i></p>
<p><b>Main policy outputs in 2019:</b></p>		

Description and indicator:	Target date:	Latest known results:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three 8-day "Public Administration Erasmus" traineeships for an annual total of 134 participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	(2018) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 "Public Administration Erasmus" traineeships for 116 participants</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting as the informal coordinating body and secretariat of DISPA and preparing the record of their meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31/12/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target reached</li> </ul>

The School organised three editions of the "Public Administration Erasmus" programme. National administrations' enthusiasm for this programme is undimmed, and the satisfaction of participants remains very high. 134 places were offered to Member States, and 116 were finally taken up. The gap between places and participants can partly be explained by Brexit, as no British participants attended after the March session and partly by last-minute cancellations when it was no longer possible to find replacements.

Extra places continue to be offered to Member States that would be assuming the rotating Presidency in the near future.

The School plays an important role in the network of Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration (DISPA). In 2019, the School participated actively in the meeting in Timișoara on 16-17 May and in Helsinki on 07-08 November, providing the wrap-up and conclusion of both meetings, and produced the write-up of the meetings. In collaboration with the Finnish School, HAUS, it launched a collaborative space for DISPA members, called Howspace, and most notably completely revamped its DISPA website, modernising the look and updating the content.

## 2. ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL

This section explains *how* the European School of Administration delivered the achievements described in the previous section. It is divided into two subsections.

The first subsection reports the control results and other relevant information that supports management's assurance on the achievement of the financial management and internal control objectives<sup>3</sup>. It includes any additional information necessary to establish that the available evidence is reliable, complete and comprehensive. It covers all activities, programmes and management modes relevant to the European School of Administration.

The second subsection deals with the other components of organisational management: human resources, better regulation principles, information management and external communication.

These are covered in the EPSO activity report.

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<sup>3</sup> Art 36.2 FR: a) effectiveness, efficiency and economy of operations; b) reliability of reporting; c) safeguarding of assets and information; d) prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities; and e) adequate management of risks relating to the legality and regularity of underlying transactions

## 2.1. Financial management and internal control

Assurance is an objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an assessment 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 acting Director of EPSO. These are covered in the EPSO annual activity report.

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 complete coverage of the budget delegated to the acting Director of EPSO.

This section is for reporting the control results and other relevant elements that support management's assurance. It is structured into (a) Control results, (b) Audit observations and recommendations, (c) Effectiveness of internal control systems, and resulting in (d) Conclusions on the assurance.

### 2.1.1. Control results

This section is for reporting and assessing the elements identified by management which support the assurance on the achievement of the internal control objectives<sup>4</sup>. The DG's assurance building and materiality criteria are outlined in AAR Annex 4. Annex 5 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.

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

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<sup>4</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> Internal Control Objective(s) (ICO) only when applicable, given the DG's activities.*

## **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 School is generally audited by both internal and external independent auditors: the Commission internal audit service (IAS) and the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

### **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 European School of Administration 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.

The functioning of the internal control systems has been closely monitored throughout the year by the systematic registration of exceptions. Four exceptions were registered for 2019, the total amount (4749.71 EUR) was very small and the impact not material.

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

With regard to non-financial control systems, the School carries out regular reviews of participants' course evaluations to ensure that the quality and number of courses provided for the target audiences is optimised and that the School adjusts its offer accordingly. It also observes courses to ensure that the quality of the delivery and content of courses is of the appropriate level and to evaluate if the content needs to be adjusted. Trainers' feedback is also obtained to ensure that the courses meet the needs of the services.

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

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

The European School of Administration 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, 0 and 2.1.2), and the sub-conclusions already reached. It draws an overall conclusion to support the declaration of assurance and whether it should be qualified with reservations.

This is covered in the EPSO activity report

### **2.1.5. Declaration of Assurance**

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

## **2.2. Other organisational management dimensions**

### **2.2.1. Human resource management**

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

### **2.2.2. Better regulation (only for DGs managing regulatory acquis)**

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

### **2.2.3. Information management aspects**

This is covered in the EPSO activity report.

### **2.2.4. External communication activities**

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

### **Examples of initiatives to improve economy and efficient fo financial and non financial activities of the DG.**

All the parts related to this section are covered in the EPSO activity report.