



Annual Activity Report 2022

Directorate-General for
Human Resources and Security

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DG HR IN BRIEF

In 2022, the Commission adopted a new **Human Resources (HR) strategy** to support the mission of DG HR to build a high-performing, sustainable, modern and values-driven organisation that empowers staff to deliver outstanding results.

Our **values** consist of:

- Honest, fair, sustainable and ethical practice.
- Efficient, client-centric, high-quality HR services.
- A positive, inclusive and respectful work environment.
- A flexible work environment that encourages teamwork, collaboration and innovation and promotes personal and professional development.
- Strengthened management capability across the Commission and a culture of high individual and team performance.
- An enshrined security culture.

In pursuing our mission, we carry out the following **main types of activities**:

- ensure a safe, green and healthy work environment where staff's physical and mental wellbeing is supported;
- support new flexible ways of working with a focus on trust-based management;
- build a diverse, inclusive and accessible organisation;
- deliver efficient, staff-focused HR services supporting staff in all stages of their career;
- set the strategic HR framework within an effective and efficient use of resources;
- adopt a forward-looking approach to ensure the Commission has the right skills to deliver on its priorities now and in the future;
- ensure the safety, security and protection of staff, property, activities and information at all places of employment;
- ensure full respect of the Staff Regulations and open and efficient social dialogue with staff representatives to guarantee adequate working conditions.

The **legal framework** regarding EU staff matters, which constitute the body of law governing the European civil service comprise the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Staff regulations of Officials (SR) and Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (CEOS), delegated acts, EU directives, case law and report on the implementation of the Staff Regulations by all institutions.

SYSPER is the main HR management **information system** supporting most HR processes under the responsibility of DG HR. As part of the HR modernisation and transformation programme, work is ongoing to develop a new user-friendly HR IT platform which will replace existing systems.

In 2022, DG HR counted 1 320 statutory **staff members**¹. DG HR implemented its budget of EUR 360 million under centralised direct management.

In line with the new HR strategy, DG HR aims at modernising the Commission and creating the right conditions for staff to deliver on the Commission's priorities². To lay the foundations for the vision in this strategy, DG HR implemented a **large-scale reorganisation** in early 2022 to deliver faster, more efficient, user-friendly HR services. More specifically, the aim of the reorganisation was to enhance customer orientation; simplify HR processes; strengthen ownership and accountability and enhance collaboration among DG HR's staff and HR correspondents.

¹ HR Key Figures 2022 '[european-commission-hr_key_figures_2022_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)'

² As the new HR strategy was adopted after the publication of DG HR's strategic plan 2020-2024, the structure of this annual activity report has been adapted to align with the new HR strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual activity report is a management report of the Director-General of DG Human resources and security (DG HR) to the College of Commissioners. Annual activity reports are the main instrument of management accountability within the Commission. They 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 Treaties³.

In April 2022, a new Commission HR strategy was adopted to enable the Commission to perform at the highest level in the interest of all Europeans by offering a modern workplace and rewarding careers that attract top talent from all Member States. The new strategy was requested by President von der Leyen at a time where the world of work was changing, evidenced by global trends towards flexibility and digitalization of the workplace which were accelerated by the coronavirus pandemic.

Under the steer of Commissioner Hahn, the strategy sets out a common vision for the Commission in which all staff will work in a trust-based environment that embraces new technologies as well as modern and flexible work practices. It was developed following an extensive consultation exercise involving thousands of staff at all levels as well as senior and political leadership, trade unions and external benchmarking to align the Commission with best practice in other public and private organisations.

A. Key results and progress towards achieving the Commission's general objectives and department's specific objectives

Specific objective 1: An attractive workplace for all

- DG HR continued to build a more diverse and inclusive organisation by adopting an updated diversity and inclusion plan. This updated plan extends the existing commitments under the broader equality agenda and adds new commitments following an extensive stakeholder consultation.
- DG HR worked on preparing a new anti-harassment framework to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all staff.
- The new Decision on working time and hybrid working was adopted, providing staff with more flexibility to combine working at the office and teleworking and a right to disconnect.

Other key actions delivered in 2022 in support of objective 1:

Adoption and implementation of the action plan to increase attractiveness of careers in Luxembourg; ongoing support to staff from the inter-DG flexible working change team and Microsoft 365 team; proposal for new on-boarding programme; training for staff and managers (e.g. mental health first aid and psychosocial risks)

³ Article 17(1) of the Treaty on European Union.

- To build a greener organisation, the Commission adopted a new Communication on greening which sets out how the Commission will achieve corporate climate neutrality by 2030.
- The new corporate health and wellbeing programme 'Be Well' was launched in 2022. This programme builds on the successes of the fit@work initiative and broadens it to include a particular focus on mental wellbeing and wellbeing at the workplace.

Specific objective 2: Faster and agile selection and recruitment

- To reinforce the external talent pipeline, several more simplified open competitions were published or finalised in 2022. DG HR also worked with the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) to re-design the open competitions to make them faster and the blueprint for this new model was developed.
- DG HR pursued a timely implementation of the planning of internal competitions that was published early 2022. An extension was granted to the maximum duration for the recourse to non-permanent staff, to enhance their opportunities for participation in these competitions.
- Workshops with HR correspondents and Assistants (AST) and Secretaries and Clerk's (AST/SC) were carried out to define the future needs of the Commission in terms of these function groups.
- The set of measures in place to support the Commission achieve full gender equality at all levels of management have continued to demonstrate improvement at both senior and middle management level this year.
- To strengthen geographical balance, DG HR met all Member States to discuss their representation and finalised all draft joint action plans taking into account the specificities of each Member State to jointly address the possible causes of under-representation.

Other key actions delivered in 2022 in support of objective 2:

Introduction of automation features to speed up recruitment; adoption of new JPP Decision, which made it permanent and enlarged it to executive agencies; preparation of draft Temporary Agent decision; drafting the General Implementing Provisions to enable additional measures to strengthen geographical balance

Specific objective 3: A flexible and rewarding career

- To promote regular mobility at all levels, the headhunting service assisted managers identify candidates for a number of vacancies, the HR search tool was further developed, and work commenced on the development of an interactive dashboard.
- The learning and training offer was enhanced by identifying the Commission's strategic learning priorities, which will feed into the development of targeted learning packages.

Other key actions delivered in 2022 in support of objective 3:

Centralisation of all career guidance activities in one unit; launch of four-year career talks for staff; delivery of structured coaching process and specific coaching programmes; options explored to enhance the career perspectives of contract agents in EU Delegations; roll-out of first learning packages; analysis of talent management initiatives; greater assistance and outreach for underperformance cases and probationary periods

- A timely and comprehensive review of the annual appraisal reports was completed, resulting in more meaningful and simplified reports ready for the 2023 appraisal exercise.

Specific objective 4: Supporting the change

- A new HR service desk was set up to help staff access information on any HR matter.
- The review of all HR services and processes commenced to increase efficiency and client-orientation. Two processes were identified as priorities for this review: pre-selection, selection and recruitment and the case management in the Investigation and Disciplinary Office of the Commission (IDOC).
- Work continued on the HR digital transformation programme - a key enabler for the HR strategy. We also focused on running the preparatory activities and DG HR is now ready to move from the pilot to implementation phase for pre-selection, HR service desk and IDOC.

Specific objective 5: Foster a secure workplace

- A greater focus was placed on protecting the Commission’s sensitive and classified information and work continued on adapting internal structures to respond to evolving security threats through further work on the project for a new Integrated Security Operations Centre. To increase staff awareness, DG HR also engaged in multiple awareness-raising and training initiatives to mitigate security risks.

B. Key performance indicators

Result indicators	Baseline 2019	Interim milestone 2022	Target 2024	Latest known results 2022
Staff motivation index	60%	62%	65%	62%*
Staff satisfaction index	66%	68%	70%	68%*

*Data from the Commission’s staff survey 2021

Result indicators	Baseline 2019	Interim milestone 2022	Target 2024	Latest known results 2022
Level of satisfaction with HR services	68%	>70%	>75%	70%
- Overall satisfaction	59%	>65%	>75%	63%
- Overall level of quality	69%	>70%	>75%	69%
- Satisfaction of staff	60%	>70%	>75%	71%
- Satisfaction of managers				
Number of participants in security trainings and security briefings	8 149	8 500 (2023)	9 000	8 149
Average length of the recruitment process				
When a medical visit is not needed	80% finalised within 30 calendar days	85% finalised within 21 calendar days	90% finalised within 14 calendar days	100% finalised within 30 calendar days 95% finalised within 21 calendar days
When medical visit is needed	80% finalised within 60 calendar days	80% finalised within 30 calendar days	80% finalised within 25 calendar days	99% finalised within 60 calendar days 92% finalised within 30 calendar days

C. Key conclusions on financial management and internal control

In line with the Commission's Internal Control Framework DG HR 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 well overall, but some improvements are needed as minor deficiencies were identified. Please refer to annual activity report section 2.1.3 for further details.

In addition, DG HR 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. Improvements are necessary concerning the implementation of the ongoing action plans to improve the respective controls. The Director-General, in her capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation, has signed the Declaration of Assurance.

D. Provision of information to the Commissioner

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

1. KEY RESULTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE COMMISSION'S GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF DG HR

General objective 'A modern, high performing and sustainable European Commission'

Specific objective 1: An attractive workplace for all

An attractive workplace

In May 2022 DG HR's Diversity and Inclusion Office and the SG Task Force on Equality Secretariat published the results of the diversity, inclusion and respect at the workplace survey. These results were then presented widely as part of a participative process leading

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace

Action plan 2023 - 2024



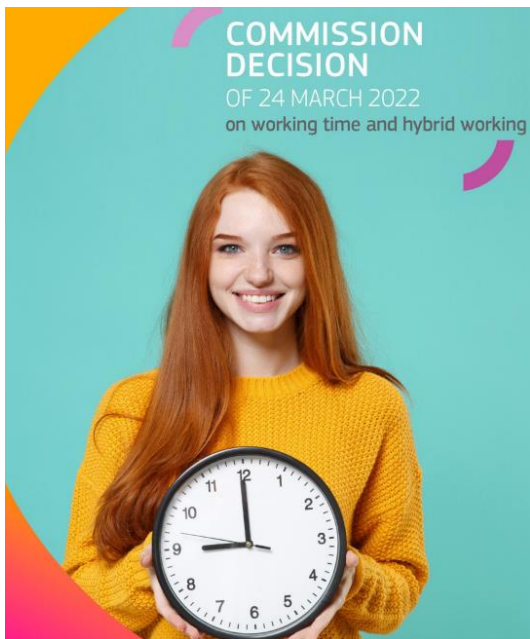
to the adoption of an updated **diversity and inclusion action plan** at the end of the year. The action plan, which will be implemented in 2023 and 2024, is an important deliverable of the HR strategy. It aims to contribute to making the Commission a more diverse and attractive workplace. Aspects of the action plan were already started in 2022, with the rollout of a series of training actions and presentations for managers, HR professionals and all staff.

At the end of 2022, DG HR launched a consultation for a comprehensive review of its framework to deal with sexual and psychological harassment, as an important building block for the psychosocial wellbeing of staff. This offered a new policy based on three pillars: prevention and early intervention, a victim-centred approach, and a focus on managers as part of the solution. The new policy results from staff input and a benchmarking with international organisations. A better support of staff and managers will be assured by the creation of a new coordinating function, the chief confidential counsellor. The new policy will be embedded in a new decision, in a guide for staff and an action plan offering accompanying training and publicity. The interservice consultation and social dialogue started in 2022, with a view to adopting the new **anti-harassment package** in 2023.

In **Luxembourg**, the European Commission represented by DG HR is, together with the other institutions present on the site, implementing the actions listed in the High-level report, which was adopted by the high-level group composed of Commissioner Hahn and the Secretaries-General, in April 2022. Concretely, the institutions are working together on

the promotion of job opportunities clustered around excellence hubs (in Luxembourg, hubs focusing on for example digital, financial and legal). This includes the reinforcement of our visibility, proposing complete welcome arrangements for newcomers, cooperation with the national authorities to address challenges, and the organisation of the site-specific competitions (in Luxembourg the first such competition is ongoing for auditors for the Court of Auditors). The implementation is being coordinated by the College of heads of administrations in Luxembourg. A first implementation report taking into consideration the contribution of all the working groups and was presented at the meeting of the College of heads of administrations in Luxembourg on 22 March 2023.

A new **Decision on the implementation of working time and hybrid working** was adopted on 24 March 2022. Reflecting on the way the world of work is changing – an



evolution accelerated by the pandemic – the Commission was ready to adapt, to become the modern, digital, flexible, and attractive working environment needed by the EU and its citizens. It is even more important to be a competitive employer to attract young and talented new colleagues, who often consider flexibility as an indispensable requirement of their working environment. This evolving working environment needs to deliver on the Commission's commitments but also ensure staff wellbeing, enhance efficiency, enable better work-life balance, and lessen our environmental impact.

To achieve this, the Commission has, amongst others, adopted this new Decision, which sets out a legal framework covering working time and hybrid working. It introduces an updated vision of hybrid working: all colleagues able to perform their tasks in situ and also remotely will have the opportunity to combine working at the office and teleworking and organise their working day or week in a flexible way. From the feedback received from staff through surveys and the overall output and work produced, the Commission sees the clear benefits of teleworking, but also understands the need to build relationships, integrate newcomers and maintain team cohesion, all of which are achieved more effectively face-to-face. In addition, this Decision for the first time introduces a right to disconnect and clearly indicates a disconnection period that will contribute to a better work-life balance and protect staff against digital work-overload.

DG HR's capacity to **support flexible ways of working** was strengthened further in 2022 and led to the creation of a unit focusing on corporate and DG-wide change projects. Both the flexible working change team and the Microsoft 365 team continued their work to transform the workplace.

The inter-DG flexible working change team supplied staff and managers with practical suggestions and ready access to updated information, organised both all-staff and management exclusive events on the new ways of working to support the transition to

flexible working for all DGs. In addition, DGs moving to flexible offices were offered support and guidance to make their moves as effective and efficient as possible, including via a peer-sharing mechanism. Midway through the year, an exercise was run with all those DGs who had completed their moves into flexible offices to take stock, learn from experience and adjust present practices to benefit DGs moving in the future.

The M365 team provided support, guidance and training to all DGs to speed up the digital transformation of the Commission. In December 2022, the Information Management Steering Board adopted a plan focused on supporting behavioural change to move the whole Commission to use MS Teams. In this, there will be a specific focus on managers. In all endeavours, DG HR worked with key partners including: the Secretariat-General, the Directorate-General for Informatics, the Joint Research Centre, the Offices for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels and Luxembourg, the Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements, the Directorate-General for Interpretation, the European Personnel Selection Office and the European School of Administration.

To become climate neutral by 2030, on 5 April 2022 the Commission adopted a **Communication on greening the Commission**, including an action plan to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 60%, compared to 2005. There has been a period of



intensive communication and outreach since its adoption to raise awareness inside and outside the Institution and to ensure even greater levels of staff participation. Two particularly successful corporate greening communication

campaigns were organised, including the co-organisation together with DG SCIC of the third corporate competition on sustainable conferences and events. A substantial number of actions were implemented including the Commission joining the Climate Pact, issuing voluntary guidance on greening staff and experts professional travel, offering a green learning challenge to staff, and working with the offices to green the Commission's buildings and save energy, and adopt a new biodiversity strategy for Brussels. Actions put forward in the Communication were integrated into the EMAS environmental management system to ensure robust implementation and reporting. They range from energy, biodiversity and paper savings to ways missions are carried out, digital behaviours and energy-efficient buildings.

Following promising results from a pilot **volunteering** matching platform, a bridging contract with 'Give A Day' ensures continuity of service until 2023. A procurement exercise is ongoing to identify a suitable service provider for a longer-term solution, ensuring local volunteering opportunities are readily available.

European Schools offer high standard quality education, crucial for attracting qualified staff to the European institutions, bodies and agencies. The Commission plays a key and active role representing the European Institutions in the governance of the European Schools, and in 2022 one of the main files was the proposals for the future structures of the Brussels European Schools in the context of the opening of a future 5th European School located in Neder-over-Heembeek.

Ensuring staff wellbeing and satisfaction

The proposal for the new **on-boarding programme** was developed in a concept paper by the end of 2022 building on feedback received from recent newcomers. The user-friendly programme consists of a comprehensive set of actions, initiatives and procedures aiming to ensure the better integration of newcomers by providing them with more experience and learning opportunities within a short timeframe. It also provides support to newcomers, staff and their families, to ease the integration into their environment.

The new on-boarding programme will also provide career development support to newcomers from an early stage by the introduction of a dedicated career talk in 2023. This will offer a chance for newcomers to consider how they can contribute to the organisation, assist them in managing their careers efficiently and promote a culture of mobility across the organisation from an early stage. The proposal includes elements of job shadowing and mentoring, for which guidelines started to be revised in 2022 and will be published in 2023.

Be Well, the Commission's new **corporate health and well-being programme** is a key component of the new HR strategy and was launched in October. It is a direct response to needs identified by staff in staff surveys, interviews with HR correspondents, people managers, counsellors, mental health experts and joint committees. Whereas the governance lies with DG HR, it also involves contributions from key stakeholders in DG DIGIT, the European Personnel Selection Office, OIB, OIL, PMO and the Commission Sports and Leisure Clubs. The programme comprises three pillars:

- Be Well Physically – promoting healthy lifestyle choices to prevent illness. This includes physical activities, providing ergonomic equipment and advice, corporate campaigns such as Velomai, the Walking Challenge, Running for Europe, Ekiden, and 'Test Your Physical Fitness' days.
- Be Well Mentally – a key focus of the action plan, will be the provision of advice and support for staff's emotional and professional wellbeing. Looking at staff from a holistic angle, this covers psychosocial risks, support for staff returning to work after a long illness, counselling, guidelines for managers and ways to prevent digital overload. A Mental Health First Aid training programme is a key component.
- Be Well at the Workplace – this pillar emphasises collaboration, social support, and inclusion. It recognises that staff have diverse needs, depending on their age, gender, career-stage, competencies, work profiles and culture, which require a diverse response. The working environment needs to be collaborative, conducive to

reflection and concentration, client-oriented, and social, while still offering flexible ways of working.

A communication campaign on the new HR strategy following its adoption was carried out in 2022 as well as intensive communications on several other Commission actions, in particular on staff volunteering activities in the context of the war against Ukraine, energy savings, the area of Greening, the Commission joining the EU Climate Pact, and the results of the staff survey. The work on updating the internal corporate communication strategy is therefore carried forward with the aim of completing it in 2023. A new template to allow the transition of local DG intranet sites has been finalised thus enabling the next stage of the project for a new intranet of the Commission.

In addition, in 2022, the performance and conformity audit in the field of occupational health and safety emergency preparedness and response, covering both Brussels and Luxembourg, was finalised. An action plan focusing on Brussels was developed together with OIB.

Specific objective 2: Fast and agile selection and recruitment

Faster and agile selection and recruitment

Several open competitions, including a simplified testing mix, were published or finalised in 2022 and allowed for the recruitment of specialist and generalist profiles, particularly from August 2022 onwards. Work was carried out to **re-design the open competition model**, together with the other institutions represented in the European Personnel Selection Office Management Board, with a blueprint for a new competition model ready for adoption at the end of 2022.

In addition, to provide further flexibility in selecting the most suitable candidates, several notices of competition accepted professional training as equivalent to academic qualifications, for profiles which are in high demand but hard to find and where a significant proportion of experts have developed their professional experience on the job.

An ambitious planning of **internal competitions** was adopted in 2022, in line with the new HR strategy. The plan covers the period 2022-2024 and includes 17 competitions, addressing all staff categories and is designed to provide for career progress or consolidation of the internal talent pool. DG HR pursued the timely implementation of that planning; eight were published, of which one was also finalised in 2022. In addition, DG HR published and finalised two specialised internal competitions. Advanced planning and the timely availability of selection board members, as a result of an internal call, facilitated the delivery of all the internal competitions throughout the year. To enhance the opportunities for non-permanent staff to participate in internal competitions, DG HR granted extensions to the maximum duration for the recourse to non-permanent staff in the Commission services.

Regarding the **recruitment process**, DG HR introduced automation features to reduce the time required for certain actions and to free up resources. In particular, the first version of

a SharePoint recruitment tool was rolled out, enabling the end-to-end monitoring of the selection and recruitment process. Furthermore, a selection and recruitment guide for officials and temporary agents has been made available to all DGs with simplified templates and grids, making it more accessible to all Heads of Units as well as HR Correspondents.

The positive assessment of the **junior professional programme** pilot, launched in 2018, led to its permanent establishment via a Commission decision adopted in 2022. DG HR extended the programme to the executive agencies. Based on the first results of the extended programme with the executive agencies, DG HR will assess the feasibility of establishing an inter-institutional programme for junior professionals with the European Personnel Selection Office.

In view of defining the **future needs of the Commission in terms of AST and AST/SC function groups**, workshops were held in 2022 with HR Correspondents as well as with AST and AST/SC staff. Taking into account the conclusions of these workshops, a report proposing specific measures will be adopted in 2023.

During 2022, particular attention was paid to the induction programme for the newly appointed Heads of Unit. All newly appointed were offered the possibility to participate in the corporate development programme and 87 newly appointed middle managers benefited from at least one session of the programme, consisting of two personal development plan sessions and three individual follow-up sessions. Two introductory sessions on HR management were also organised for them and development programme for established middle managers with performance issues was offered upon request.

In addition, all newly appointed Heads of Unit are contacted individually with three on-boarding calls to provide feedback on the selection procedure, information on middle management careers, including the probation period; to present the global offer around management development activities, the support tools at their disposal and who their contact points are; and to offer individual advice on particular situations and cases.

Balanced, diverse and flexible composition of staff

DG HR prepared a new draft **decision on the employment of temporary agents** across the Commission in consultation with the Legal Service. The aim is to streamline and harmonise the processes while providing transparency into the selection of temporary agents.

An overarching priority of the HR strategy is to honour the commitment of President von der Leyen to creating a representative organisation by the end of the current Commission mandate, including achieving **gender balance at all levels of Commission management**. By the end of 2022, 46% of management posts were held by women. At senior management level, 43% of Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General, Directors and Principal Legal Advisers were women, up 7 percentage points from the beginning of the mandate. At middle management level, 47% of Head of Unit or equivalent functions were occupied by women, up over 5 percentage points. Within the same timeframe, 238 Heads

of Unit were designated as Deputy to Director across the Commission and the share of women at this level exceeded 53%. Furthermore, 50% of the Deputy Heads of Unit appointments were women and the overall share of women at this level was 47% across the Commission. Following the adoption by the Commission of targets for first female appointments to middle management positions for the period 2020-2022, 56 out of 108 first appointments to middle management in 2022 were women, corresponding to 52% of the total number of first appointments made.

To support gender balance at middle management level, the fourth edition of the female talent development programme took place between March and December 2022. 121 female colleagues from all Commission services and executive agencies benefited from a mix of competency-building, mentoring by senior managers, networking and individual coaching. By December 2022, 56 participants from the 2018 programme, 42 from the 2019 programme and 34 from the 2020-2021 programme and already 9 from the 2022 programme had been appointed head of unit.

A screening of recruitment data was started and is well-advanced. The results will be available in early 2023. They will feed into the updating of recruitment guidelines which is one of the commitments of the updated diversity and inclusion action plan.

In line with the priorities of the HR strategy, DG HR invested substantial efforts to improve the **geographical balance** across different categories of Commission staff. Following bilateral meetings between the Director-General of DG HR with the 27 Permanent Representatives held in 2022, DG HR prepared - in cooperation with under-represented Member States - 15 draft joint action plans and 12 operational conclusions for appropriately represented Member States. These aimed at ensuring the appropriate follow-up to specific issues identified. DG EAC, DG COMM (including Representations), SG and the European Personnel Selection Office were consulted and contributed to the 15 draft action plans to the parts under their competence. The finalisation of the 15 joint action plans and 12 operational conclusions is foreseen in 2023, while implementation of measures contained therein has already started both in the Commission and in most under-represented Member States and will continue in the following years. At the end of 2023 – beginning of 2024, DG HR will assess the impact of the measures contained in the joint action plans, including on selection and recruitment trends. This will provide a basis for analysis and decision on further measures, including, potentially, the organisation of competitions bearing a geographical balance component.

In parallel, DG HR progressed on the drafting of General Implementing Provisions (GIPs) to Article 27 of the Staff Regulations and Article 12(1) of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (CEOS). These General Provisions will enable the implementation of additional and more targeted measures to address the observed imbalances between nationalities, including as regard non-permanent staff. In the meantime, DG HR requested recruiting services to invite at least one national from an under-represented Member State when they organise individual selections for non-permanent positions at non-linguistic AD level.

Specific objective 3: A flexible and rewarding career

Flexible careers

The career guidance and coaching activities were centralised in one unit in February 2022, ensuring the business continuity of both processes. This resulted in further professionalisation and improved the interconnectivity of the services. It also contributed to **strengthening and streamlining services such as coaching, mentoring, career guidance and head-hunting**, which provide staff with a holistic career development offer.

The career guidance service proactively reached out to staff via the launch of the **4-year career talk** exercise in June 2022, which was systematically offered to staff with four years in their current job, who receive invitations for a voluntary career guidance session.



The main objective of the talk is to provide staff with an opportunity to reflect on their career, discuss their professional profile, career aspirations and possible mobility plans. In addition, specific guidelines regarding career management were provided to managers having appraisal dialogues with staff, which will contribute to a further development of staff.

Approximately 3 500 individual career guidance sessions were also delivered in 2022. The offer for career-related learning and self-reflective workshops was further developed, with the introduction of specialised training sessions and new training formats. This resulted in an additional 4 000 participants attending various career guidance workshops, info sessions and webinars organised. In addition, the yearly event **Career Days** was organised with over 100 sessions that were open to all staff from the Commission and executive agencies. A selection of sessions was also made available to other institutions. The event attracted over 11 000 individual registrations, received very good evaluations and for the first time since 2019, staff could also attend sessions organised in-person.

A structured **coaching** process provided effective support to staff through individual, team and/or group coaching, delivered by a pool of qualified internal and external coaches. Specific coaching programmes addressing organisational needs were also introduced to support, in particular middle managers and key partners to positively impact the culture of the organisation. In addition, a coaching needs analysis was conducted and showed the positive impact of coaching, with 99% of clients saying that they would recommend the service. This analysis will also inform the development of the coaching strategy in 2023.

In 2022, the **headhunting** service contributed to workforce mobility by assisting line managers in detecting candidates relevant for specific posts, also for difficult to fill vacancies for those of strategic importance to the Commission. The headhunting process was further facilitated by continuous development of the HR Search tool, which was introduced to selected HR professionals to assist in identifying relevant profiles and supporting staff in the active career management. Further applications are being explored,

also around facilitating the mobility of middle management. In addition to headhunting, the HR Search data-driven process can be used to offer 'job hunting', which has proven successful when supporting staff's mobility aspirations.

To foster **staff internal mobility at all levels**, DG HR also started developing an interactive dashboard for staff and HR professionals, which will provide an additional overview of jobs across the Commission and is expected to be made available in 2023. This will allow staff to plan and optimise their career path and assist HR professionals in supporting staff in effective career management more effectively. In addition, some first options were also identified on the use of flexible structures that are currently under discussion.

To **support the mobility of middle managers**, DG HR is designing an inter-DG mobility framework to allow middle managers to broaden their horizons in other parts of the organisation, with DG HR playing a facilitating role between the two constituencies: DGs and middle managers. Middle managers were consulted at a meeting of the middle management network in March 2022 and statistical data around the mobility of managers was analysed to prepare the way forward. A working group on mobility was created among several services inside DG HR to broaden the discussion to mobility at all levels and develop a framework for monitoring mobility across DGs and professions based on indicators, trend analysis and benchmarking. The new appraisal report includes a new section on future development, which makes the discussion on mobility and career aspirations a standard feature of the annual dialogue between the jobholder and the reporting officer.

With regard to **career prospects for advisers and senior experts/senior assistants**, a consultation exercise is being prepared to be launched in the second semester 2023. The aim is to define the roles and responsibilities of advisers and senior experts/senior assistants ensuring that their skills and expertise are harnessed by the organisation and that they are supported in achieving their career aspirations.

On **external mobility**, the EU leadership exchange programme for middle managers to which DG HR participated, continued through 2022. Furthermore, in the context of the HR strategy a stock-taking exercise was carried out to map the existing external mobility programmes of the Commission and identify new needs.

In the spirit of close cooperation with executive agencies and to increase their attractiveness, DG HR in cooperation with executive agencies prepared a **pilot exchange programme between the executive agencies and some Commission services** to be launched in 2023.

DG HR also provided continued support to agencies and joint undertakings in harmonising their HR policies and implementing rules, particularly with regard to the implementation of the new rules on working time and hybrid working. DG HR contributed to the Commission Opinions on Single Programming Documents of agencies emphasising the objectives for more female representation in management positions or for environmental management.

A working group co-chaired by DG HR and DG INTPA was established mid-2022 to explore options to enhance the **career perspectives for Commission contract agents in EU Delegations**. The working group examined a series of proposals collected by the Commission external relations DGs or based on the experience of the HR services. Within the limits set out by the Staff Regulations and their compatibility with the interests of the service, the working group will analyse and explore different actions in 2023, notably in terms of budget impact. Some actions may require a revision of the current legal framework applicable to the mobility of contract staff in EU Delegations.

On learning and development, the key action is the development of learning packages to better target the up- and reskilling of staff to help the Commission deliver on its political priorities. Following a consultation of all DGs and services, the **Commission's learning priorities** were identified at the end of the year. With these priorities as the basis and orientation for targeted learning packages, their successive roll-out per job profile started in autumn 2022 with the publication of the policymaking package. Two more (human resources, budget & finance) followed shortly thereafter, alongside a [handbook for managers](#) to use these packages for their staff. In the wake of the digital strategy, the important dimension of digital skills and data literacy is going to be integrated into learning packages to ensure that colleagues can find everything they need for their given job profile in one place. With the goal to deliver learning packages covering 80% of the Commission workforce by the end of the first half of 2024, many more of them are going to be published in [EU Learn](#) over the coming 18 months, including job-specific specialisations. This work comes on top of around 3 000 training modules delivered by DG HR in 2022 (not to mention the LinkedIn Learning offer with over 16 000 e-learning modules that colleagues can take anytime, anywhere).

In 2022, DG HR migrated EU Learn to a new version to take advantage of its learning paths feature, and to support the deployment of learning packages, along with other improvements to support reskilling and upskilling of staff. DG HR also took steps to improve the protection of personal data and IT security in EU Learn, including by developing tailored access profiles to respond to specific needs regarding reporting and publishing courses.

DG HR has continuously contributed to building digital fluency in the Commission. The focus has been placed on collaborative tools (M365, including SharePoint online), as well as on expanding the learning offer on data with the creation of two learning packages (general learner and policy maker) and a package of courses for IT specialists (in collaboration with DIGIT). Usual activates continued on internal IT systems, such as ABAC, Ares, Legiswrite and PM².

During 2022, DG HR continued to cooperate with national administrations and international organisations. In the context of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN), a ministerial meeting was organised together with the French Presidency, the outcome of which was a ministerial declaration on the common values and challenges of European Public Administrations.

Performance management

An analysis of existing talent management programmes and initiatives was carried out in view of exploring options to **identify talent** early and offer support via career development services and dedicated talent management programmes. It highlighted gaps and needs and led to a proposal of actions to be decided on and implemented in 2023. This proposal covers elements such as a career talk for newcomers, a dedicated programme for staff leading teams, support for Deputy Heads of Unit and outlines the options for the future of the Female Talent Development Programme. This will constitute a comprehensive package for identifying and supporting talent at the Commission.

The project of revamping the **appraisal report** was successfully carried out in record time, meeting the ambitious objective of having the new features in place in time for the 2023 appraisal exercise. In January 2023, over 32 000 appraisal reports were successfully launched at the Commission and 15 Institutions and agencies having a service-level agreement with the



Commission. The project was launched in May 2022 with a consultation process involving written contributions received from 41 DGs and executive agencies, focus groups with reporting officers and HR correspondents, orientations from resource directors, social dialogue meetings and 15 Institutions and agencies having a service level agreement with DG HR.

As part of the appraisal report project, greater visibility has been given to the **assistance provided to managers** and HR correspondents from the Performance management team in DG HR **in case of individual performance issues**, including during the probationary period. Proactive outreach was ensured in 2022 through the new guide for reporting officers, trainings for reporting officers and reporting officers by delegation, induction sessions for new middle managers, and presentations on performance management in DGs. This outreach will continue in 2023. The performance management team works in close coordination with the career guidance and coaching services, the medical service, and other concerned services in DG HR.

The revamped appraisal report places greater emphasis, in the appraisal of managers, on their management of staff motivation and performance, including the follow-up of lower performance cases and **probationary periods**. Awareness-raising on the importance of timely remediation of any underperformance issue and the responsibility of managers in the effective follow-up of all probationers has also been included in induction sessions for new heads of units, as well as in the training on appraisal for reporting officers. In addition, the guide on the probationary period is currently under review. Its dissemination to DGs in the first semester of 2023 will serve as support for further awareness-raising towards

managers in DGs on their responsibility in ensuring quality recruitments and adequate follow-up of probationary periods.

Newly appointed managers are closely followed during the probation period and their reporting officers are also provided with guidance on their pivotal role in supporting the new managers. Each newly appointed manager is contacted to discuss the probation period and offered support from DG HR. Their progress is closely followed, including monitoring of their probation reports and management training, and followed-up with the HRCs where there is a need for remediation.

Specific Objective 4: Supporting the change: towards staff-focused and efficient HR services

The new **HR service desk** was set up in February 2022, in line with the action plan of the HR strategy. This is part of DG HR's effort to be more client centric and, at the same time, respond to the need consistently expressed by colleagues across Commission to be able to directly contact DG HR professionals.

Being reachable by phone/Skype and email, and offering the possibility of having face-to-face meetings, the HR service desk colleagues have been helping Commission staff access fast, direct support from DG HR (for example, with quick access to relevant information or by finding the right expert in DG HR or PMO). By December 2022, the service desk had dealt with over 2 000 requests.

Client feedback contributes to identify the areas subject to process improvement and to stimulate the HR units' own initiatives.

In its management plan for 2022, DG HR defined an action to perform a **review of all HR services and processes**, including the definition of process owners and priorities for process improvement. It consists of a full review of all HR services and processes to ensure they are agile, flexible and transparent, starting with the processes with dedicated actions in the HR strategy. The main goals of this review are to improve service quality, improve user centricity, prepare for digitalisation (HRT/automation) and ultimately enable efficiency gains and savings.

This translates into assigning end-to-end process-ownership with a clear mandate for service improvement with associated targets, enabling process owners to take full responsibility in their role and conducting regular reviews. A service catalogue has been developed to capture and share the accurate definition of what services are delivered to whom. This tool will be updated on an ongoing basis by the process owners in DG HR to ensure the catalogue is up to date, supporting collaboration and the process improvement projects.

Some processes have been identified as priorities for process review and aligned with the roadmap for the **HR modernisation and digital transformation programme** (HRT), in its first wave:

- Pre-selection/Selection/Recruitment
- IDOC (Investigation and Disciplinary Office of the Commission) Case Management

Other processes have been identified as allowing quick gains and being relevant when they impact on a substantial volume of staff (time management, appraisal and promotion), are still paper-based procedures (recruitments of officials and cabinet staff and departures), are delivered on several sites, or involve a significant number of FTEs⁴ (middle management/senior management selections and recruitments).

With the adoption of the strategy, the HRT is firmly anchored as a strategy enabler under the fourth priority on HR services, processes and solutions. Building on the 2021 deliverables, in 2022 DG HR has further intensified its activities on the programme and the year was devoted to running preparatory activities. Those activities consisted of test-driving the platform components, conducting further studies and strengthening cross-cutting streams around data protection and business and technical architecture.

A series of pilot projects and Proofs-of-Concept were run to test the suitability and flexibility of the envisaged platform in supporting the corporate HR function, and to assess the constraints and risks associated with its deployment. Considering the HRT platform components in combination with the legacy solutions and corporate services that results in a hybrid and highly complex landscape, the integration and transition strategy was also studied and will be further elaborated in 2023.

Regarding the HRT Data Layer, we developed the conceptual and logical data models further, in the domain of Preselection, Selection and Recruitment, using the redesigned business term template to review and document business terms. These actions, alongside more technical investigations on potential tools for metadata management, reference management and data aggregation and dissemination, carried out in partnership with corporate data services, have contributed to further shaping the foundational data layer of the future HRT platform.

The HRT preparatory phase has required significant engagement from many stakeholders in all HR family departments. The preparatory phase was also the opportunity to strengthen collaboration with the inter-institutional partners and several European institutions, bodies and agencies actively participated in the pilots and proofs of concept.

The work done in 2022 has allowed DG HR to confirm the readiness to move from the pilot to the implementation phase for pre-selection, HR service desk and IDOC.

Specific Objective 5: Foster a secure workplace

The Commission must adapt its infrastructure and processes to face ever evolving physical and digital security threats. In 2022, DG HR worked on all strands of its security operations to reinforce the protection of the Commission's interests and assets. The specific context of

⁴ FTE: Full Time Equivalent

the war against Ukraine made the protection of the Commission's sensitive and classified information more critical than ever.

In this respect, DG HR intervened on multiple fronts:

- It was active in the legislative procedure on the future **Regulation on information security**, to ensure progress of the negotiations;
- It deployed and boosted the use of secure communications tools to **protect classified information**;
- It rolled out a **mission security package** to staff travelling for service, to limit the risks of exposure to potential security threats originating from hostile intelligence gathering attempts.

Regarding physical assets, DG HR continued upgrading its **protection against unauthorised access** and hostile attempts to gain access to the Commission's most sensitive buildings. The delay in the implementation of certain projects is due both to the impact of the war against Ukraine on the supply chain of technical equipment and to the conditions imposed by the competent local authorities as part of the planning permission process.

Evolving security threats require constant adaptation, not only of our internal policies but also of our internal structures. The first milestone of the project to integrate, both physically and operationally, three security operations entities in a new **Integrated Security Operations Center** (ISOC), was completed through the finalisation of the feasibility study.

In 2022, DG HR also continued fostering a staff security culture through multiple awareness raising and training initiatives to mitigate security risks. DG HR also monitored the compliance of the applicable procedure for staff requiring a personal security clearance.

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. A list of the reports covered is included in the section 'building assurance' of annex 7.

The systematic analysis of the available evidence provides sufficient guarantees as to the completeness and reliability of the information reported, resulting in the full coverage of the budget delegated to the Director-General of Human Resources and Security (HR).

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.

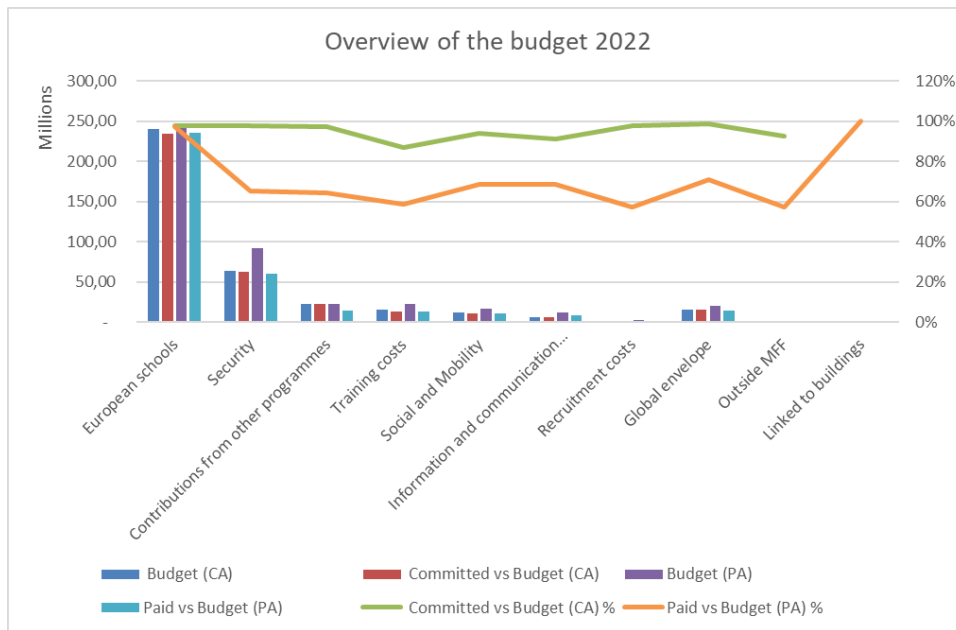
2.1.1. Control results

This section reports and assesses the elements identified by management which support the assurance on the achievement of the internal control objectives (ICO) ⁽⁵⁾. DG HR's assurance building and materiality criteria are outlined in the 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.

DG HR conducts its internal control operations following the lead of the central services (DG BUDG's Implementation Guide of the Internal Control Framework of the Commission), inspired on the COSO (Committee of Sponsoring Organizations) framework, and in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations, meeting the expected high level of professional and ethical standards. It builds assurance through the systematic review of the effective functioning of this internal control, the input of the internal (IAS) and external (ECA) auditors, and analysing the results of the ex-ante and ex-post controls carried out in the preparation of this report. For more details of the reports and documentation used to build up this assurance, please refer to annex 7.

⁽⁵⁾ 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 2nd and/or 3rd Internal Control Objective(s) (ICO) only when applicable, given the DG's activities.

Overview of the allocated budget 2022



PA: Payment Appropriations

CA: Commitment Appropriations

The overall budget allocations (all fund sources) for 2022 are: EUR 378.92 million for commitment appropriations and EUR 432.14 million for payment appropriations. These figures are not identical because for example DG HR carries out payments linked to commitments of previous years.

The budget execution rate in 2022 was 97% (EUR 368 million) and 83% (EUR 360 million) of commitment and payment appropriations respectively. Out of the EUR 360 million payments, 66% are contributions for the European Schools. The rest of the budget is mainly used to purchase goods and services for the Commission's security services, training, social and mobility (incl. medical services), ICT (incl. the Human Resources Transformation project HRT) and Commission's external personnel costs.

Income generated through the offer of services to other EU services represents respectively 6% and 4% of total committed and paid appropriations and mirror the part of support expenditures of the MFF 2021-2027 mostly in the field of security and ICT (HRT). More detail is provided in annex 7.

This year was characterized by the continuation of expenditure linked to the Coronavirus (vaccination EUR 0.5 million) and also the launch of several internal competitions (EUR 0.5 million) in line with the new HR strategy.

In line with the 2018 Financial Regulation, DG HR's assessment for the new reporting requirement is that none of the five reporting requirements are applicable to DG HR in 2022.

1. Effectiveness of controls

a) Legality and regularity of the transactions

DG HR uses internal control processes to ensure sound management of risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions it is responsible for, considering the nature of the payments concerned.

DG HR implements its budget in the direct management mode and has a financial portfolio consisting of two main segments associated with 1) periodic transfers to the European Schools and 2) the rest of HR Management (HRM) Support Services related expenditure. Both segments have low error rates thanks to the inherently low risk profile of the funding modalities of the European Schools and to the effective implementation of the financial control systems in DG HR.

In addition, DG HR has in place an effective mechanism for correcting errors, through ex-ante and ex-post controls, resulting in preventive and corrective measures, respectively. Please see table below for details.

		Preventive Measures (m EUR)	Corrective measures (m EUR)
Implemented by the Commission			
	of which from EU controls	0,5	0,4
DG HR total		0,5	0,4

The amount of preventive measures concern transactions where DG HR made corrections associated with inaccurate reporting by the supplier before the payment. The amount of corrective measures corresponds mostly to the results of applying relevant clauses within the contracts after the payment (cf. to table 8, annex 3).

DG HR strives to continuously improve the effectiveness of its controls based on the results of controls and on the anticipation of future risks. Thus in 2022, DG HR strengthened its controls to address weaknesses associated with some training activities and to help ensure the respect of the annuality budgetary principle, with a view to preparing for the migration to the Commission's new financial system in 2024.

The ex-post control campaign for 2022 covered 96 transactions worth EUR 116 million representing 31.7% of the value of all payments and 5.5% of the value of the recoveries made by DG HR.

Details on the key features of internal control are documented in annex 7.

Given the very low level of risk at payment and thus very low number of corrections, DG HR is using a conservative rate of 0% for its estimated future corrections. The estimated overall risk at payment for 2022 expenditure amounts to €0.004 million, representing

0.00% of the DG's total payments for 2022 obtained from the ex-post controls carried out. This assessment is based on the analysis of the ex-post controls.

The table below, gives the overview of the estimated risk at closure. Further details can be found in annex 7.

DG HR	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	%
Procured goods and services	123,92	123,92	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%
European Schools	235,87	235,87	0.00	0,00%	0.00	0,00%	0.00	0,00%
DG HR total	359,79 m EUR	359,79 m EUR	0,00 m EUR	0,00%	0,00 m EUR	0,00%	0,00 m EUR	0,00%

The estimated overall risk at payment for 2022 expenditure is the AOD's best conservative estimate of the amount of relevant expenditure during the year, not in conformity with the contractual and regulatory provisions applicable at the time the payment was made. This expenditure will subsequently be subject to ex-post controls and a proportion of the underlying errors will be detected and corrected in subsequent years. This amount corresponds to the conservatively estimated future corrections for 2022 expenditure.

DG HR's estimated risk at closure, in line with previous years, is very low and this has been consistently evidenced through the results of key internal control processes such as ex-post control. There is no need for an elaborate mechanism for correcting errors and the future corrections estimate is negligible. When such monies are due to correct errors, DG HR fulfils its duty to protect the Communities' budget.

The difference between the estimated risk at payment and the estimated future corrections results in the estimated overall risk at closure ⁽⁶⁾. There have been no changes in the risk of error when compared to 2021 and previous years (0,02%) mainly due to DG HR core activities remaining stable.

For an overview at Commission level, DG HR's estimated overall risk at payment, estimated future corrections and risk at closure are consolidated in the annual management and performance report (AMPR).

b) Fraud prevention, detection and correction

DG HR has developed and implemented its own anti-fraud strategy since 2013, on the basis of the methodology provided by OLAF. It is updated periodically. It was last updated

⁽⁶⁾ This is the AOD's best, conservative estimation of the expenditure authorised during the year that would remain not in conformity of applicable regulatory and contractual provisions by the end of implementation of the programme.

on 29 September 2021. Its implementation is being monitored and reported to the management annually together with the risk management exercise. The implementation of the continuous actions defined in the action plan is ongoing; their completion is expected by the end of 2023.

DG HR also contributed to the Commission anti-fraud strategy and followed up to OLAF's financial recommendations with the following results: 100% of recommendations were implemented.

The results achieved during the year thanks to the anti-fraud measures in place can be summarised as follows: DG HR raised awareness on fraud prevention and detection activity through the invitation of OLAF experts to its summer meeting of the Communauté des acteurs FINANCIERS et OPÉRATIONNELS de la DG HR (FINOP).

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

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

DG HR's assets, as booked in the accounts (annex 3), consist of internally developed Information Systems. They are thus intangible, non-current assets, and are fully amortised.

For this control objective (safeguarding of assets and information, reliability of reporting), DG HR's goal is to make sure that all relevant measures and procedures are applied to prevent and report any security breaches or leaks of personal and/or sensitive data. DG HR manages several IT systems that store personal data (SysPer, e-Sire, SerMed and HR Business Intelligence). Some DG HR decision making processes use, inter alia, reports based on data from these systems. The systems' security is monitored and improved when appropriate. The internal controls on the IT security are effective, except for the remaining issues being corrected in the ongoing implementation of the action plan to the IAS audit on IT security management (see section 2.1.2.). Further details are included in annex 7.

DG HR concludes that **there are no major issues in the other control objectives**, whilst acknowledging that improvement actions are necessary and ongoing to address recent audit recommendations.

2. Efficiency of controls

DG HR adopted generic efficiency indicators related to the time taken to pay suppliers and other beneficiaries (see annex 4). DG HR achieved its 2022 target of making 95% of payments on time. The average time taken to process a payment was 11 days, improving by 1 day compared to 2021.

The new indicator that places emphasis on the amount paid on time, as opposed to the number of payments, is a more relevant indicator. DG HR paying virtually all of the total amount paid on time, improved on last year's result and performed well compared to the Commission (EC) average. For further details, see annex 7.

DG HR concludes positively on the efficiency of the controls in place.

Timely Payments	HR Score	EC Score
	100%	98%

3. Economy of controls

DG HR has estimated the costs associated with its key financial controls (ex-ante and ex-post controls): EUR 10.2 million, representing 2.8% of the total amount paid EUR 359.8 million. For further details, see annex 7.

The cost of ex-ante financial controls on transaction processing in 2022 was EUR 9.5 million, which corresponds to 2.6% of the total amount paid.

Although most of DG HR's expenditure is dedicated to funding the European Schools, most of the investment in ex ante financial controls is dedicated to the remaining financial operations because they account for >99% of all transactions.

- for the European Schools, the average amount associated with a payment is EUR 2.6 million and the cost of control amounts to **0.2%** of the value of all payments made
- for the remaining transactions managed by DG HR, the average amount associated with a payment is EUR 6.6 thousand, and the cost of control amounts to **7.8%** of the sum total of payments made.

Segment of Financial Portfolio	Total Paid	% Total Amount Paid	Cost of Control (ex-ante + ex-post)	% Total Cost of Control	% Total Amount paid dedicated to Control
European Schools	EUR 236 Mio	66.6%	~EUR 0.5 Mio	4.9%	0.2%
Remaining DG HR operations Including additional income (SLAs and Co-delegated budgets)	EUR 124 Mio	33.4%	~EUR 9.7 Mio	95.1%	7.8%
Total Amount	EUR 360 Mio		~EUR 10.2 Mio		2.8%

For more details, refer to annex 7.

DG HR concludes that the cost of controls in 2022 is similar to previous years, in line with the stable control activities.

4. Conclusion on the cost-effectiveness of controls

DG HR continues to make efforts to improve the efficiency of financial processes. The resources dedicated to control are aligned with the risks in the financial and operational context (see also annex 7).

Based on the most relevant key indicators and control results, DG HR 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.

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.

Internal audit service (IAS)

DG HR is implementing, in collaboration with other services, the action plan to the IAS audit on IT security management in the HR family issued in December 2021, where the auditors presented three very important recommendations on IT security governance, logical system-related controls and IT service provider management (deadlines up to December 2023).

In 2022, the IAS carried out an audit on physical security of persons and assets in the Commission. The auditors issued three very important recommendations regarding the governance framework and organisational arrangements, the risk management framework and internal control measures for physical security. An action plan was agreed with the IAS in December and its implementation is ongoing with deadlines until 31 December 2023.

Details on the above recommendations and related remedial actions can be found in annex 7.

Conclusion of the internal auditor

Based on all work undertaken by the Internal Audit Service in the period 2018-2022, the internal auditor concludes that the internal control systems in place for the audited processes are effective, except for the observations giving rise to the 'very important' recommendations stated above. These recommendations are being addressed, in line with the agreed action plans.

European Court of Auditors (ECA)

There are no recommendations in the latest Annual Reports from the ECA, and the error rate confirmed by the auditors was low (<1%) in the field of administrative expenditure.

In 2022, The European Court of Auditors published 2 Special Reports involving DG HR. In its [Special Report 17](#) on the Commission's use of consultancy services, the ECA made 1 recommendation to the Commission where DG HR has a co-leading role to complete the existing framework governing the use of external consultants' services;

The Commission has accepted all ECA recommendations, and for the recommendation listed above, with deadline December 2023, which will be implemented jointly by DG HR, DG BUDG and the Secretariat-General, the implementation of the action plan has started.

The ECA issued in 2022 the [special report 18/2022](#): “EU institutions and COVID-19 Responded rapidly, challenges still ahead to make the best of the crisis-led innovation and flexibility,” with the following recommendation for DG HR:

- assessment of the suitability of fully remote and hybrid meetings and adopting guidelines on remote settings,
- assessment of the impact of telework and adaptation of the post-COVID-19 rules if needed, and
- monitoring and reporting on the environmental impact of the new ways of working.

DG HR has incorporated the planned actions to address this recommendation – with deadline end of June 2024 – in its HR Strategy action plan, that is closely followed-up by its management, and the EMAS environmental management system.

Conclusion

DG HR concludes that **the results of the review of the internal control systems audited by the IAS and the ECA are positive**, except for the observations giving rise to the ‘very important’ recommendations on IT security management, and physical security of persons and assets, which are being addressed in line with agreed ad-hoc action plans, and the observations regarding the improvement of the institution’s resilience, which are being considered in the framework of the action plan to the HR Strategy. Further details can be found in annex 7.

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.

DG HR 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 internal control self-assessment for 2022 was carried out following the methodology established in the *“Implementation Guide of the Internal Control Framework of the Commission”* and is based on the sources of information described in section 2.1 above. In addition, the annual results of the ten standard financial indicators (see annex 4 for more information) are very good. The assessment also considered the IAS limited conclusion on the state of internal control and audit recommendations in DG HR for the year 2022, where the IAS concluded that *the internal control systems in place for the audited processes are effective, except for the observations giving rise to the ‘very important’ recommendations*

(see section 2.1.2 above). The impact of the open recommendations does not adversely affect the assurance declaration.

DG HR 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 well overall**, but some improvements are needed regarding the recommendations of the IAS related to IT security management (internal control principle 11), and physical security of persons and assets (internal control principle 10). These needs are reported under point 2.1.2 on IAS audit observations and in annex 7.

The improvements are being implemented in agreed action plans or included in the action plan to the HR strategy.

2.1.4. Conclusions on the assurance

The information reported in section 2.1 stems from the results of management and auditor monitoring contained in the reports listed. 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 DG HR.

DG HR has put in place suitable control measures to limit risks of errors, guarantee that **assets and information are safeguarded, and to prevent, detect and correct fraud and irregularities**. The **inherent risk for expenditure** managed by DG HR, including procurement, is relatively **low** because of the limited budget as well as the centralised and direct mode of budget implementation. This is confirmed by results from ex-post control and exception reporting. The **risks are effectively mitigated by means of controls put in place**. The Authorising Officer by Delegation's best estimation of the risks relating to the legality and regularity for the expenditure authorised during the reporting year is 00%. Comprehensive ex-ante controls were put in place within the financial circuits. Their effectiveness has been positively assessed in an independent review.

Further assurance is obtained by the **risk management process** put in place, and the number and type of **exceptions and non-compliance events** reported in 2022. DG HR also relies on individual assurance statements prepared by the sub delegated authorising officers twice-a-year.

Results from **audits** during the reporting year give **overall positive feedback and did not include any critical findings**. The very important recommendations identified in 2.1.2. are currently being addressed through ongoing action plans.

All objectives associated with financial management were achieved, with assurance on the sound execution of the budget, at a 100% budget execution rate. Recoveries on erroneous payments are negligible, representing less than 0.1% of the amount paid.

Management has obtained satisfactory evidence that the **internal control system is implemented effectively** in DG HR.

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

I, the undersigned, Director-General of Human Resources and Security, in my capacity as authorising officer by delegation declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view ⁽⁷⁾.

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.

Brussels, 31 March 2023

(signed with electronic signature)

Gertrud Ingestad

⁽⁷⁾ True and fair in this context means a reliable, complete and correct view on the state of affairs in the DG.

2.2. Modern and efficient administration – other aspects

2.2.1 Human resource management

On 16 February 2022, the new organisation chart was implemented and in the following April the new corporate HR strategy was adopted. The reorganisation brought about new ways of working for staff with the reshuffling of files and the introduction of start-to-end processes in each unit. Many staff members also changed units and teams.

To adequately support colleagues during these changes, DG HR boosted its internal communications and staff engagement initiatives. For example, pulse surveys and internal staff network meetings with the Director-General were organised to receive feedback from staff on the proposed reorganisation and subsequently feedback on the new DG structure. Regular town hall meetings were also organised to keep staff up to date with the latest developments and to provide them with the opportunity to ask questions directly to management. In addition, DG HR organised a series of resilience workshops in 2022 to provide further support to colleagues in becoming more resilient.

DG HR also adapted to new ways of working, implementing the new Decision on working time and hybrid working and offered a round of workshops for colleagues working in a dynamic office setup.

The 2021 DG HR staff survey results showed that the staff engagement index was at an all-time high of 75% and even surpassed the 2024 target of 71%. A local strategic HR plan for the DG with internal actions focused on skills, culture and organisation needed to deliver the corporate strategy was also presented for validation.

In 2022, DG HR made three first appointments of women to Head of Unit position, bringing the total to five for the period 2020-2022; hence exceeding its target of three. Throughout the year, DG HR continued injecting additional effort into enlarging its pool of potential female candidates by improving its communication and awareness raising. End of 2022, 43% of the Deputies to the Directors and 46% of the Deputy Heads of Unit in place were women.

DG HR developed its local equality mainstreaming plan in 2022 which focuses on actions which aim to increase the overall understanding of diversity and inclusion, to celebrate the organisation's diversity, and integrate these principles in the culture of the organisation and the way we work, promoting a psychologically safe and inclusive workplace.

2.2.2 Digital transformation and information management

DG HR conducted several preparatory activities for the HR modernisation and digital transformation programme with a view to test-drive the capabilities offered by the platform's components and gradually prepare for implementation and transition as of 2023.

Further details are included in section 1 Specific Objective 4: Supporting the change: towards staff-focused and efficient HR services.

Regarding information management and the management of HR data, following DG HR's reorganisation, the roles and responsibilities have been revised with the business units across the DG, clarifying and appointing, where necessary, the data owners, data stewards, and data steward coordinators and their respective backups. Together with the new data management community, all data assets have been revised and remapped, such as HR reports, interactive dashboards, operational datasets, and business definitions. This provides a new basis for a better and more intentional management of HR data, in line with European Commission data governance and data policies.

Furthermore, to support the data stewards and data steward coordinators in performing their role, both in DG HR and across the European Commission, DG HR has designed a dedicated learning path for Data Stewards, a package of various types of courses, self-training, and documentation. The first set of training was organised at the end of 2022, and have proven to be very useful to the data community in HR.

In 2022, DG HR has achieved good progress in hitting the target of awareness raising activities set by the 2020-2024 strategic plan i.e. that 100% of the staff should have taken a data protection training by 2024. The total data protection trainings for DG HR staff in 2022 was 407 (which equals 32% of DG HR staff as long as each participant only follows one training). Furthermore, the total number of such trainings for DG HR staff for the period of 2019-2022 is 1 557.

To comply with its obligations under the Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, DG HR has appointed a data protection coordinator (DPC) and a large team of assistant DPCs, having a good legal and data protection expertise, and a direct reporting line to the senior management. DG HR ensures that its processing operations are appropriately documented in data protection records, which are continuously reviewed and kept up to date at least on annual basis. DG HR has established processing agreements with external processors that process personal data on behalf of DG HR. In 2022, it has replied to 265 requests from data subjects to exercise their data protection rights. Overall, in 2022 the DG HR DPC team has delivered 585 pieces of written data protection advice and has provided oral consultations in 417 instances.

2.2.3 Sound environmental management

The EMAS coordination team in DG HR coordinates the Commission's Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) and subsequently the implementation of the Greening the Commission Communication and action plan. In 2022, DG HR also appointed a dedicated EMAS Correspondent (outside of the EMAS coordination team). This will help with the achievement of the most demanding greening actions within the assigned DG and allow the actions demanding most resources to be achieved during 2023.

Most of the local EMAS/greening communication actions were coordinated by the EMAS Taskforce for the One, as a collaboration between the EMAS teams in of DG HR, DG SCIC, DIGIT and the European Personnel Selection Office. Specifically:

During the spring campaign in April-May 2022:

- i. collection of old clothes and textiles in collaboration with an non-governmental organisation, CYCLUP, and
- ii. a 'Plogging' action at Brussels' Parc Royal in collaboration with the Swedish Embassy in Brussels.

During the waste action campaign in November-December 2022:

- i. a second collection of old clothes/textiles in collaboration with CYCLUP and one for small electrical appliances in collaboration with another non-governmental organisation, Cyreo, and
- ii. Circular economy / upcycling info fair at LOI107.

Moreover, both VeloMai (May 2022) and the Walking Challenge (October 2022) have been extensively promoted among DG HR staff aiming to further enhance the uptake of sustainable commuting practices, resulting in more than double the number of participants in the VeloMai Challenge in 2022 over the previous year in which the initiative was run.

One specific local green innovation during 2022 was the design and organisation of a 100% green DG HR Christmas party (I'm dreaming of a Green Christmas/It's not easy being green). Special attention was paid to providing a sustainable catering offer, with purely vegetarian and vegan food options (and no single use items). There were green awareness-raising games during the evening and even decorative material was recycled from previous Christmas parties. This was a success both as morale-boosting event after the pandemic but also as a legitimate and successful green awareness event.

For the first time, DG HR in collaboration with DIGIT co-organised a Paperless Photo Competition to promote a wide range of good paperless practices, from the simple to the more advanced to further expand the database of the Paperless Cluster Knowledge Base and to identify use cases to inspire broader action for a paperless Commission, as part of the recently adopted Greening the Commission Communication and action plan.

2.2.4 Examples of economy and efficiency

The reorganisation of DG HR implemented in 2022 illustrates DG HR's efforts in improving its functioning with a view to investing its resources in the most economical and efficient manner. Another example relates to the ongoing review of HR services and process, which is further detailed in section 1 'Specific Objective 4: Supporting the change: towards staff-focused and efficient HR services'.