



Management Plan 2016

DG NEAR

Contents

PART 1.	Overview of main outputs for the year	3
	General objective 1 – A Stronger Global Actor	3
	General objective 2 - Towards a New Policy on Migration.....	12
	General objective 3 – A Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy	14
	General objective 4 - A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment	16
PART 2.	Organisational management outputs for the year	19
	Examples of initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities of the DG.	19
	Presentation of main outputs for organisational management- Human resources	20
	Presentation of main outputs for financial management: Internal Control and Risk Management	22
	Presentation of main outputs for Better regulation	26
	Presentation of main outputs for Information Management aspects	28
	Presentation of main outputs – External communication.....	28

PART 1. Overview of main outputs for the year

General objective 1 – A Stronger Global Actor

Specific objective 1: Increased stability in the Neighbourhood in political, economic, and security related terms

The central objective of the revised European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is stabilisation. In 2016, the roll-out of the revised ENP will be co-led by DG NEAR and the EEAS. It will include a new security dimension and a focus on economic development as a key tool for stabilisation. There will be close cooperation with Member States throughout the process.

In this framework, DG NEAR will contribute to developing new partnerships with ENP countries, including new agreements with Armenia and Azerbaijan.

With ENI funding – both through ongoing and new programmes - DG NEAR will continue working with public institutions, the business community and civil society organisations in the partner countries to accompany the necessary reforms and deliver results that matter for people's daily lives.

Particular attention will be given to Neighbourhood countries affected by the refugee crisis. DG NEAR will continue implementing the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis and will launch activities under the Northern Africa window of the Africa Trust Fund to address the root causes of irregular migration.

Specific objective 1: Increased stability in the Neighbourhood in political, economic, and security related terms		Related to spending programmes: ENPI, ENI
Main outputs in 2016:		
Policy-related outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Roll-out of the revised ENP	Prioritise the implementation of the revised ENP and drive it forward with Commission Line DGs and EEAS so that Commission policies and spending programmes for Neighbourhood are in line with the new priorities.	Throughout 2016
	Contribute to launching work leading to the development of tailor-made partnerships	Throughout 2016
New agreements with Armenia and Azerbaijan	Contribute to negotiations on new agreement with Armenia	Armenia: to be concluded by the end of the year
	Contribute to exploratory talks, negotiation mandate and possible launch of negotiations on new	Azerbaijan: Throughout 2016

	agreement with Azerbaijan	
Association/Cooperation Councils and Association/Cooperation Committees with Neighbourhood countries	Support implementation of Association/Cooperation agreements/DCFTA. Contribute to Association/Cooperation Councils and Association/Cooperation Committees	Throughout 2016
Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council aiming at developing an EU-wide strategic framework for supporting Security Sector Reform	Co-leading (with DEVCO and EEAS) the drafting of an EC/HRVP joint Communication on Sector Security Reform, due to be released mid-2016 Agenda planning reference: 2016/EEAS+/001	Mid-2016
Main expenditure outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Multiannual programming process and joint programming (2017–2020)	Multiannual (2017–2020) programming process with four or five ¹ Neighbourhood south countries is launched and completed. Multiannual (2017–2020) programming process with 5 Neighbourhood East countries and 1 regional is launched.	Throughout 2016
ENI Multi-annual and Annual programmes	2016 ENI country action programmes adopted	Throughout 2016
Lebanon and Jordan 'Compacts'	Finalize the Lebanon and Jordan 'Compacts' following the London Conference of 4 February 2016, in close coordination with all Commission services to complement ENI support with other EU funding sources and initiatives.	Throughout 2016
ENI and ENPI implementation/	Benchmarks for KPIs on contract and payment are met.	December

¹ Depends on a pending decision on the revision or extension of Libya's programming document

budgetary execution		
Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument - TAIEX	TAIEX events contributing to the implementation of AA/DCFTA and to current or future agreements implying approximation with EU laws and norms (East and South)	Throughout 2016

Specific objective 2: Strengthened Eastern Partnership; support regional cooperation between southern neighbours, including through the Union for the Mediterranean; promote cross border cooperation between member states and partner countries

The Eastern Partnership will remain a key element of the revised European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In line with the ENP review and the sectoral priorities agreed at Riga in 2015, our focus will be on coordination of priority projects in key strategic areas such as transport connectivity, environment, youth and employment as well as the harmonization of digital markets.

Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) is an important element of the EU policy towards its neighbours in the East and South. A new package of ENI CBC programmes, totalling € 1 billion, was adopted in December 2015. This prioritises projects supporting sustainable economic development along the EU's external borders, thus reducing differences in living standards and addressing common challenges across these borders. An important challenge for 2016 will be to sign the Financing Agreements between the European Commission and Partner Countries for these ENI CBC Programmes.

In 2016, DG NEAR and the EEAS will work to further invigorate regional cooperation in the Southern Neighbourhood and give priority where appropriate to the **Union for the Mediterranean** in its regional cooperation efforts.

Specific objective 2: Strengthened Eastern Partnership; support regional cooperation between southern neighbours, including through the Union for the Mediterranean; promote cross border cooperation between member states and partner countries		Related to spending programmes: ENPI, ENI
Main outputs in 2016:		
Policy-related outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Eastern Partnership	Follow closely and provide support to Eastern Partnership in view of strengthening synergies with bilateral co-operation and national strategies	Throughout 2016
Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)	Support the UfM sector policy dialogue with partner countries. Provide institutional support to the UfM.	Throughout 2016

	Qualitative assessment of commitments made in declarations adopted at the Ministerial Meetings of the Union for the Mediterranean and qualitative assessment of progress reports presented at these meetings.	
Main expenditure outputs		
2016 ENI Multi-country Programmes	2016 Programmes adopted by the Commission	Throughout 2016
CBC	Sign Financing Agreements between the European Commission and Partner Countries participating in 13 ENI CBC Programmes adopted in 2015, covering the period 2014-2020, worth 1 billion EUR.	Throughout 2016

Specific objective 3: The enlargement countries are more ready to join the EU, in particular on the fundamental areas of rule of law, public administration reform and economic development, reaping the benefits of closer integration with the EU before accession.

The **2016 enlargement package** will assess where enlargement countries stand in terms of their preparation for EU membership and provide further guidance to them including by applying the strengthened methodology to a number of new areas.

DG NEAR will also contribute to moving forward on **enlargement negotiations** with the candidate countries concerned. DG NEAR will ensure this by fostering and monitoring progress by negotiating countries with regard to alignment to EU standards and legislation under the 35 Chapters of the acquis. DG NEAR will also ensure the monitoring of the implementation of the Stabilisation and association agreements (SAA) with Western Balkans countries.

As the **refugee crisis** is putting a major strain on Turkey and the Western Balkans, DG NEAR will continue to provide **substantial support** in 2016 to these countries. DG NEAR will in particular monitor the implementation of the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan on Migration and visa liberalisation roadmap and begin implementation of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey. DG NEAR will also contribute to improving cooperation between and **stepping up consultation with the countries along the Western Balkans route** and provide financial assistance where appropriate.

Once requested by the Council, DG NEAR will lead in the preparation of the opinion on the **application for EU-membership** submitted by **Bosnia and Herzegovina** in February 2016.

These policy-related objectives will be supported through projects financed by **IPA**. In 2016, the **Mid-term review of strategy papers** for IPA beneficiaries will also be launched to make sure our financial assistance programmes can best help **to deliver on reforms**.

Specific objective 3: The enlargement countries are more ready to join the EU, in particular on the fundamental areas of rule of law, public administration reform and economic development, reaping benefits of closer integration with the EU before accession.

Related to spending programmes: IPA I and IPA II

Main outputs in 2016:

Policy-related outputs

Description	Indicator	Target
2016 enlargement package (communication and country reports) and contribution to council conclusions.	<p>- Ensure its adoption including applying the 2015 pilot methodology to a number of additional areas, ensuring support and buy-in from all stakeholders.</p> <p>Agenda planning reference: 2015/NEAR/008</p> <p>- Work with Presidency, Member States and other DG units on subsequent General Affairs Council Conclusions.</p>	<p>November 2016 (TBC) for adoption</p> <p>End 2016 (TBC) for conclusions</p>
Accession negotiations	Ongoing work with negotiating countries (Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey) to progress on accession negotiations. This includes preparing screening reports, opening and closing Benchmark Reports (several/year, as necessary), and Draft Commission Positions (DCP) (several/year, as necessary)	<p>Turkey: Updated screening reports on Chapter 15, 23, 24 and updated DCP for Chapter 26</p> <p>Serbia: complete all screening reports</p> <p>Montenegro: Draft and present Opening Benchmark (OBM) Reports to COELA on chapters where MNE has fulfilled the OBMs² - several/year, as necessary</p> <p>For the other negotiating documents, several/year, as necessary</p>

² In cases where the fulfilment is ensured in time to allow this process to be completed within the timeframe

Turkey Customs Union	Complete preparations for negotiations of modernised Customs Union. Prepare in close association with DG TRADE the Impact assessment study and the Draft mandate Agenda planning reference: 2015/TRADE+/035	Indicator: Impact assessment study Q3 2016; Draft mandate, Q4.2016
Kosovo* ³ –Serbia	Support the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue process	Throughout 2016
Economic Reform Programmes (ERP) for the enlargement countries	Coordination of the 2016 ERP exercise for the enlargement countries and preparation of new guidance note for the 2017 ERP exercise.	2016 assessments and draft council conclusions adopted according to schedule fixed in 2015. Adoption and circulation of guidance note to partners before 1 July 2016
Monitoring the Stabilisation and association agreements (SAA) with Western Balkans countries	SAA Council, Committee, and sub-committee meetings taking place with western Balkans countries. DG NEAR prepares, participates in and reports on these meetings	All WB countries (for Kosovo as from entry into force of SAA in April or May 2016): SA Council (annual) [SA Committee (annual) Sub-committees (7 / year) For Kosovo: Until the SAA enters into force, continuation of Meetings of the Stabilisation and Association Process Dialogue (SAPD)

*³ The designation of Kosovo is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Turkey - Joint Action Plan on Migration and visa liberalisation roadmap	Monitor the Joint Action Plan on Migration and visa liberalisation roadmap	Throughout 2016 Visa reports in March and September
Thematic evaluation on support to Economic Governance in enlargement	The evaluation should serve to provide advice and evidence in future EU assistance on economic governance. (ongoing through 2016) Agenda planning reference: 2016/NEAR/001	The evaluation will be completed end 2016 and will assess the performance, good examples and lessons learned from the pre-existing assistance in areas related to economic governance in the enlargement countries.
Thematic evaluation on social protection (2007-2013)	The objective of the evaluation is to assess the EU support provided in external action for social protection during the period 2007-2013. Agenda planning reference: 2016/NEAR/002	4th quarter 2016

Main expenditure outputs

Description	Indicator	Target
IPA II Multi-annual and Annual programmes	2016 IPA II country action programmes adopted	Throughout 2016
Strategy papers for IPA beneficiary countries (i.e. these papers define the priorities for action to be financed by IPA II during 2014-2020).	Launch of the Mid-term review (for BiH: extension of country strategy paper until 2020)	Launch mid 2016
IPA I and II implementation/ budgetary execution	Benchmarks for KPIs on contract and payment are met	December

Facility for Refugees in Turkey up and running	Set up the Facility (governance, rules) Q1, , take strategic decisions in Steering Committee from Q1, actions programmed Q3 and contracting started Q4	Throughout 2016
Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument - TAIEX	Continued co-ordination of the TAIEX instrument across the Commission to assist enlargement countries with regard to the approximation, application and enforcement of EU legislation	Throughout 2016
Thematic evaluation on the support to SME competitiveness	The evaluation will assess the performance, good examples and lessons learned from the past assistance in the area of SME competitiveness in the enlargement and neighbourhood countries. It should serve to provide evidence and advice in designing future EU assistance. Agenda planning reference: 2016/NEAR/003	3rd quarter 2016
Mid-term evaluation of the Civil Society Facility (CSF) for the Western Balkans and Turkey	The evaluation should provide advice for future EU assistance on the support to civil society (Q3-Q4 2016)	The evaluation will be completed end of 2016 and will assess the performance, good examples and lessons learned from the on-going assistance to civil society and media through the CSF

Specific objective 4: Enlargement – Improved connectivity within the Western Balkans and with the EU. Improved good neighbourly relations among Enlargement countries with a view to overcoming the legacy of the past

Connectivity is at the very heart of the Commission's efforts to support integration among the individual countries and between these countries and the EU. The efforts in the framework of the '**Berlin process**' and the **Western Balkan 6 cooperation** also serve to drive forward the countries' European perspective. They also contribute to building bridges in the region, developing good neighbourly relations and promoting peace and reconciliation.

The connectivity agenda is therefore an essential element of DG NEAR contribution to the Commission's objective of the EU as a stronger global actor.

This is a long-term process, but in 2016 the Commission will adopt a **connectivity investment package** to be endorsed at the **Western Balkan summit in Paris in July**. In addition, the countries are expected to ensure the implementation of "soft" measures to

open markets, remove barriers to integration and create a transparent regulatory environment.

Significant funding and co-financing will be provided through the **Western Balkans Investment Framework** in order to support investments boosting jobs and growth and promoting connectivity in the region. This will be complemented by loan-financing from **International Financial Institutions**. The Western Balkan countries and their National Investment Committees must ensure that the single project pipelines become credible planning and prioritisation mechanisms ensuring that the countries have the budgetary resources and fiscal space to take up the necessary loan financing to get all the projects implemented on time.

Specific objective 4: Improved connectivity within the Western Balkans and with the EU. Improved good neighbourly relations among Enlargement countries with a view to overcoming the legacy of the past		Related to spending programme(s) Multi-country IPA I and II
Main outputs in 2016:		
Policy-related outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Successful Western Balkan Summit in Paris	Prime Ministers endorse 2016 connectivity package including confirmation of progress on the soft measures on transport and energy. Progress in completing the Core transport network and the Core transport corridors. Progress in implementing the Projects of Energy Community Interest.	July
Western Balkan 6 Ministerial meetings	Ministers confirm progress on the implementation of soft measures for transport and energy	Jan-June
Main expenditure outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
2016 IPA II Multi-country Programmes prepared in line with national and regional needs	Programmes adopted by the Commission	July & November
IPA I and II implementation/	Benchmarks for KPIs on contract and	December

budgetary execution	payment are met.	
Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument - TAIEX	Continued organisation of TAIEX regional events to assist enlargement countries in improving and consolidating good neighbourly relations through TAIEX events of common interest (energy, transport, connectivity, migration, judicial and police cooperation, etc.)	Throughout 2016

General objective 2 - Towards a New Policy on Migration

Specific objective 5: Stem the influx of irregular migrants to the EU, by addressing the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration in Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries. Promote mobility and mutually beneficial migration.

The **current refugee crisis is a challenge of global dimensions**. DG NEAR will work hand in hand in 2016 with partners and neighbouring countries which are most affected combining short term measures, for example helping governments cope with migration and refugee flows and boosting long term prospects including education for refugees and improving livelihoods.

DG NEAR will **focus especially on Turkey to stop the flow of irregular migration to the EU** coming from that country. DG NEAR will also work on the **Jordan/Lebanon compacts**.

DG NEAR will make sure that the **EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis**, the Facility for Refugees in Turkey and the Trust Fund Africa are implemented and added value ensured.

Specific objective 5: Stem the influx of irregular migrants to the EU, by addressing the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration in Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries. Promote mobility and mutually beneficial migration.		Related to spending programme(s) IPA and ENI
Main outputs in 2016:		
Policy-related outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target date
Turkey - Joint Action Plan on Migration and visa liberalisation roadmap	Monitor the Joint Action Plan on Migration and visa liberalisation roadmap	Throughout 2016 Visa reports in March and September
Alignment with "acquis" by candidates and potential candidates	Negotiations and alignment by candidates and potential candidates to EU standards and acquis related to chapter 24 monitoring	Throughout 2016

Visa liberalisation process for Kosovo	Kosovo: Implementation of 2012 visa liberalisation roadmap	In 2016
Commission Proposal on Georgia Visa Liberalisation prepared	Drafting of the proposal by the Commission (DG HOME in the lead) and adoption by the College	March 2016
Launch of the Mobility Partnership with Belarus	1. Finalising the Annex to the Mobility Partnership with Belarus 2. Signature of the Mobility Partnership Declaration by the EU, the Member States and Belarus	Second half of 2016 (DG HOME in the lead)
Commission Proposal on Ukraine Visa Liberalisation prepared	Drafting of the proposal by the Commission (DG HOME in the lead)	Early 2016
Joint ECHO, DEVCO and NEAR Communication on protracted displacement and development	Adoption of this Communication by the College Agenda planning reference: 2015/ECHO+/009	April 2016
Main expenditure outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Facility for Refugees in Turkey up and running	Set up the Facility (governance, rules) Q1, , take strategic decisions in Steering Committee from Q1, actions programmed Q3 and contracting started Q4	Throughout 2016
EU regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis	Implementing initiatives via the EU regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis	Throughout 2016
Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa – North Africa	Commitment of 35% of the funds approved by the 1 st operational committee for 2016	31.12.2016
Support to Georgia VLAP	Support to the continuous	Throughout 2016

implementation	implementation of the VLAP benchmarks, in particular in the fields of migration and organised crime	
Support to migration management in Belarus	Commission Financing Decision to be adopted.	End July 2016
TAIEX	Support to VLAP, border management and asylum related matters, including in collaboration with interested line DGs	Throughout 2016

General objective 3 – A Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy

Specific objective 6: Increased energy security and more effective climate policies in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries as well as increased energy connectivity between the EU and these countries.

DG NEAR will help work towards this objective by assisting **accession countries** with **alignment to EU standards** as well as through their participation in the **Energy Community**. A **strengthened energy dialogue** will also be achieved with **neighbourhood partners**, through the implementation of the revised ENP.

Specific objective 6: Increased energy security and more effective climate policies in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries as well as increased energy connectivity between the EU and these countries.		Related to spending programme(s) IPA and ENI
Main outputs in 2016:		
Policy-related outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Energy Community Treaty.	Level of Enforcement of existing Energy Community <i>Acquis</i> (through Berlin Process ‘soft measures’)	By the time of the Paris Summit, the level of enforcement of these ‘soft measures’ should allow investments in energy projects.
	Application of the EU’s Security of Supply Regulation to the Energy Community	Once the revised SoS Regulation is approved, this is transposed in the EnC countries, allowing the SoS

	Inclusion of climate elements in Energy Community <i>Acquis</i>	Regulation to apply to those countries. Transposition of EU's Monitoring Mechanism Regulation into the Energy Community by the end of the year.
Alignment with "acquis" by candidate countries	Outputs related to negotiations and alignment by candidate countries to EU standards, <i>acquis</i> on related chapters (Energy etc.) and Energy Community Treaty obligations.	(see also the 'level of enforcement' above) Serbia and Montenegro, in particular, should make further progress to full alignment. Approve the Screening Report for Turkey for the Energy Chapter
ENP review roll-out – Priority actions on Energy	Strengthen energy dialogue with Neighbourhood partners Also develop regional and sub-regional measures.	Throughout 2016, on the basis of the EnP Review roll-out
Main expenditure outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Number of Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF) projects in 2016 on renewables energy and efficiency sectors	Neighbourhood East: 2	Neighbourhood East: 2
ENP review roll-out – Priority actions on Energy	Contracting and implementation of new regional energy programme (€ 20 million) to support evidence-based energy policies and closer energy interconnections.	2016

General objective 4 - A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment

Specific objective 7: Increased prosperity in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries and in the EU through increased economic and trade opportunities between the EU and these countries.

DG NEAR will contribute to the specific objective through a variety of policy-related actions. These include completing preparations for the renegotiations of **modernised Customs Union with Turkey**, monitoring the **Stabilisation and Association Agreements** with the countries of the Western Balkans as well as ensuring **financial assistance to Morocco and Tunisia to accompany them in the DCFTA negotiations**.

Specific objective 7: Increased prosperity in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries and in the EU through increased economic and trade opportunities between the EU and these countries.		Related to spending programme(s) IPA and ENI
Main outputs in 2016:		
Policy-related outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Enlargement		
Turkey Customs Union	Complete preparations for negotiations of modernised Customs Union. Prepare in close association with DG TRADE the Impact assessment study and the Draft mandate Agenda planning reference: 2015/TRADE+/035	Indicator: Impact assessment study Q3 2016; Draft mandate, Q4.2016
Economic Reform Programmes for the enlargement countries	Coordination of the 2016 ERP exercise for the enlargement countries and preparation of new guidance note for the 2017 ERP exercise.	2016 assessments and draft council conclusions adopted according to schedule fixed in 2015. Adoption and circulation of guidance note to partners before 1 July 2016
Monitoring the Stabilisation and association agreements (SAA) with Western Balkans countries	SAA Council, Committee, and sub-committee meetings taking place with western Balkans countries. DG NEAR prepares, participates in and reports on these meetings	All WB countries (for Kosovo as from entry into force of SAA in April or May 2016): SA Council (annual) [SA Committee (annual) Sub-committees (7 / year)

		For Kosovo: Until the SAA enters into force, continuation of Meetings of the Stabilisation and Association Process Dialogue (SAPD)
Alignment with economic criteria and economic related "acquis" chapters by candidates and potential candidates	Outputs related to negotiations and alignment by candidates and potential candidates to EU standards and acquis on related chapters (free movement of goods, services, capital, public procurement, company law, intellectual property rights, competition, financial services, taxation, employment, enterprise and industrial policy, research, consumer protection, customs, etc.)	Throughout 2016
Thematic evaluation on support to Economic Governance in enlargement	The evaluation should serve to provide advice and evidence in future EU assistance on economic governance. (ongoing through 2016) Agenda planning reference: 2016/NEAR/001	The evaluation will be completed end 2016 and will assess the performance, good examples and lessons learned from the pre-existing assistance in areas related to economic governance in the enlargement countries.
Neighbourhood		
DCFTA with Morocco and Tunisia.	Continued participation in EU's awareness raising and negotiation efforts in relation to DCFTA with Morocco and Tunisia. Ensure implementation of financial assistance to accompany the DCFTA negotiations.	Throughout 2016
DCFTA Facility for Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine	The two DCFTA Facilitation programmes with the EIB and the EBRD will generate approximately 13750 sub-loans. Improve technical and SPS standards leading to enhance the competitiveness of SMEs in the DCFTA signatory countries.	From now up to 2020

Main expenditure outputs		
Description	Indicator	Target
Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument - TAIEX	TAIEX events contributing to the implementation of AA/DCFTA and to current or future agreements implying approximation with EU laws and norms (East and South)	Throughout 2016

PART 2. Organisational management outputs for the year

Examples of initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities of the DG.

In 2016, DG NEAR will be looking to undertake a number of initiatives to improve and enhance the work of the Directorate-General. Such initiatives include notably:

- **Manual of procedures**

In 2016, DG NEAR will develop a single procedural guidance manual "NEAR MAP" (manual of Procedures for financial implementation). This manual will provide a **single entry point to procedures applying to the whole DG** for activities implemented under IPA and ENI. The NEAR MAP will then be regularly updated. It is expected that this manual will become available in wiki format on DG NEAR's intranet in the course of 2017.

- **Internal Control Strategy**

DG NEAR will develop and start implementing a DG wide Internal Control Strategy. This strategy will define the concept of Internal Control and refer to the control environment of the DG before describing its implementation in the **5 areas of internal control**: effectiveness, efficiency, economy of operations; adequate management of the risk relating to the legality and regularity of underlying transactions; prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities; reliability of reporting; safeguarding of assets and information.

- **OLAF and anti-fraud issues**

In 2016, the first activity planned relates to the establishment of internal procedures and guidelines for reporting serious irregularities and/or suspected fraud, thereby increasing the efficiency of staff members' responses in such situations. This will be achieved through the production and dissemination of an **OLAF manual for DG NEAR**. The second planned activity relates to the design and dissemination of an **anti-fraud questionnaire** to both gauge, and raise, awareness of procedures and issues related to OLAF and anti-fraud, as well as provide the basis for an analysis of where to target further anti-fraud training and awareness raising activities. Finally, a third activity will deal with the provision of **training for OLAF Focal Points (OFPs)** in EUDs and HQ, covering the role and responsibilities of an OFP and the new DG NEAR OLAF manual. IT systems- CRIS ABAC transition

- **Financial IT Systems**

During 2016 a smooth transition for the processing of invoices and other financial transactions is planned from CRIS (the IT system used so far by DG DEVCO and NEAR) to **ABAC (the Commission's corporate financial IT system)** for all DG NEAR users, ensuring business continuity to the greatest possible extent. Activities to be organised include regular communication/information activities with operational/financial users at HQ and in Delegations, dedicated training sessions for Delegation and HQ staff on CRIS ABAC and setting up and testing and then implementing a mandatory e-signatory via ARES that needs to accompany the processing of all invoices and other financial transaction files.

The main benefits of CRIS ABAC migration will be as follows:

- The direct encoding of financial transactions in ABAC will contribute to **smoother processing of invoices** (and other financial transactions) within DG NEAR as the

workflow will no longer be delayed due to potential technical problems/bugs between CRIS and ABAC. In addition, at the beginning of the year, processing of payments will no longer be delayed due to CRIS closure. As from January 2017- the processing of invoices will be possible directly in ABAC without the need to wait for re-opening of CRIS.

- The internal approval process of any financial transaction (mainly invoices, but also recovery orders and forecast of revenue) will be documented in **a mandatory e-signatory generated in ARES**. This will contribute towards the achievement of document management objectives of our DG and ensure a clear audit trail of all financial transactions (invoices, recovery orders and forecast of revenue) processed within DG NEAR.

Court of Auditors

DG NEAR will also prepare **guidelines and instructions on how to deal with the discharge procedure and with Court of Auditors performance audits**. This will enable staff to become familiar with the overall process and also to understand how to deal with the Court and what the specific procedures and timetables related to the Court are.

Presentation of main outputs for organisational management- Human resources

Objective (definition): The DG deploys effectively its resources in support of the delivery of the Commission's priorities and core business, has a competent and engaged workforce, which is driven by an effective and gender-balanced management and which can deploy its full potential within supportive and healthy working conditions.

Main outputs in 2016:

Description	Indicator	Target
Monitor gender balance in middle management positions	Increase in female representation in middle management positions	39% by end 2016
Provide training and mentoring opportunities for potential managerial colleagues	Applicants are better informed and prepared to apply for middle management positions	Identified colleagues receive appropriate training/mentoring in 2016
Appointment of women to first middle management function	Increase number of women appointed to first time middle management functions.	Appoint 1 woman to first time management position by end 2016

<p>Promote an appropriate work life balance for staff</p>	<p>Staff request appropriate working conditions (part-time, flexitime and teleworking) to match their particular work life balance considerations</p>	<p>100% of staff using flexitime</p> <p>10% of colleagues teleworking by end 2016</p> <p>100% of eligible requests for part-time validated</p>
<p>Promote awareness of fit@ work campaign including mental and physical health & wellbeing activities</p>	<p>Staff attend and participate in activities which increase staff understanding of the importance of mental and physical health to their overall well being</p>	<p>Organise minimum 6 fit@work workshops on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ergonomics Physical health Social-psychological issues <p>Organise weekly well-being activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yoga Chair massage Pilates
<p>Improve DG NEAR score on Staff engagement index in Staff Survey</p>	<p>Staff have the necessary tools, information & training, receive appropriate feedback and timely communication to enable them to understand their role and contribution to the overall DG NEAR and EU objectives</p>	<p>Roll out the 2016 Staff Engagement Action Plan tackling the staff engagement issues raised in the 2014 Staff survey namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared DG NEAR vision and purpose Effective internal communication Managing Performance Enhancing 'people' management skills Working conditions & work /life balance Career advice, career paths,

		<p>opportunities & mobility</p> <p>Training & training budget.</p> <p>Take 'temperature' mid-year on the 7 areas contributing to overall staff engagement.</p>
--	--	--

To deliver on its overall human resource objective of effectively deploying resources, ensuring a competent and engaged workforce led by a gender balanced management, in 2016 DG NEAR will focus on 3 organisational management issues, namely:

- Increase **gender balance in middle management representation** in DG NEAR
- Promote a more holistic approach to **staff wellbeing** in line with the Commission's fit@work strategy and
- Address the core issues which contribute to the **staff engagement index** namely ensuring that all DG NEAR staff have the tools, training and information they need to do a good job and feel valued for the contribution they make to DG NEAR and the EU project.

Presentation of main outputs for financial management: Internal Control and Risk Management

Objective 1: Effective and reliable internal control system giving the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and the regularity of the underlying transactions

Main outputs in 2016:

Description	Indicator	Target
<p>The control system is in place and provides management with the necessary controls and information as to determine reasonable assurance on the transactions.</p> <p>Instructions regarding Manuals, Financial circuits, sub delegation, deputisations, prior approvals and deviations are available to staff. Training is realised where necessary. NEAR MAP as near to</p>	<p>-Instructions available on the Intranet.</p> <p>-Training and awareness raising provided to staff.</p> <p>-Staff is in place and following instructions.</p> <p>-Reporting on ineligible expenditure and problems/issues detected by the controls in place (see also indicator on ineligible expenditure</p>	<p>-All staff aware of the current guidance and instructions.</p> <p>-All financial transactions checked following the DG's instructions and Guidance.</p> <p>-All controls are in place and functioning well.</p>

<p>finalisation as possible.</p> <p>Also, all financial transactions should be checked following the DG's instructions and Guidance on the matter.</p> <p>All possible controls are implemented and functioning well. Problems are reported when found and solutions found.</p>	<p>below).</p>	
<p>Reporting of deviations. The Non-compliance events and exceptions are reported on, their causes analysed and mitigating measures proposed when possible.</p> <p>Also the cases of "Passer-Outre" are recorded and reported on.</p>	<p>-Reporting on Non-compliance events and exceptions is undertaken on a regular basis.</p> <p>-The causes of Non-compliance events and exceptions are analysed and mitigating measures are proposed when possible.</p>	<p>-A report on Non-compliance and exceptions should be made, at a minimum, on a yearly basis. Analysis of the causes of these deviations should also be made on a yearly basis and mitigating measures proposed.</p>
<p>The Reporting system is in place and gives a true and fair view of the activities.</p>	<p>-Quality of reports and respect of deadlines for reports. EAMR and KPI system in place and functioning.</p>	<p>-All the necessary reports (see list in Internal Control Strategy) are produced in time and are of good quality.</p>
<p>The Annual Audit Plan that has been approved is being implemented.</p>	<p>-1- % implementation of the Annual Audit Plan: year N</p> <p>-2-% implementation of the Annual Audit Plan: year N-1</p> <p>-3-% implementation of the Annual Audit Plan: year N-2.</p>	<p>-1-At least 60%</p> <p>-2-At least 85%</p> <p>-3-At least 95%</p>
<p>The controls in place are</p>	<p>DG NEAR will use two</p>	<p>-1- Target 2% for ineligible</p>

effective and detect ineligible expenditures, be it by ex-ante controls or by audits.	sub set of indicators: -1- Ineligible amounts identified by ex-ante controls, in relation to DG NEAR annual overall spending. -2- Ineligible amounts identified by audits as a % of the audited amount.	amounts by ex-ante controls (in relation to total spending of the DG). -2- Target of 2% for ineligible amounts identified by audits (in relation to the amounts audited).
The action plans to audit recommendations from the Court of Auditors, the IAS and recommendations from the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers are being implemented.	Number of critical and very important recommendations overdue for more than 6 months, whose action plan has not been fully implemented yet.	No critical or very important audit recommendations overdue for more than 6 months after the date established in the action plan.
The residual error rate is calculated on a yearly basis for IPA and ENI instruments and has a coverage of at least 90% of the DG expenditures.	Estimated residual error rate	Benchmark for IPA and ENI < 2% through implementation of effective and efficient control systems.
The Estimated overall amount at risk is calculated each year.	Estimated overall amount at risk	The amount at risk is contained.

Objective 2: Effective and reliable internal control system in line with sound financial management.

Main outputs in 2016:

Description	Indicator	Target
-Execution of payments and commitments in DG NEAR are following forecasts. -The RAL (RAC+RAP) is under control (indicator 3 and 6). -The prefinancings are cleared regularly on the basis of contractual landmarks.	-1-Accuracy of initial annual financial forecast for payments. -2- Accuracy of initial annual financial forecast for contracts. -3- RAL absorption period.	1-Between 90% and 110% 2-Between 90% and 110% 3-Not more than 4 years 4-Decrease by 25% at least 5-Not more than 15% 6-Decrease by 25% at least

-The expired contracts are closed. -The payments are made in time.	-4- Reduction of Old Pre-financing. -5- Expired Contracts as a % of the contract portfolio. -6- Reduction of Old RAL. -7- % of payments paid within the EC internal target of 30 days.	7-At least 66%
The cost effectiveness of controls is assessed on a yearly basis.	Cost effectiveness of Controls	Costs of controls are under 5% of the DG overall spending.
The Internal Control Standards are assessed on an annual basis in Delegations and at Headquarters. Internal Control weaknesses are detected and mitigating measures proposed.	Assessment of Internal Control Standards. Internal Control Standards report.	The Internal Control Standards are assessed every year, through different means (KPIs in the EAMR, Survey or Desk review). An Internal Control Standards report is drafted every year.
Safeguarding of information. Documents should be registered and filed according to the defined rules. Access to confidential documents should be restricted.	Application of the rules as regards filing and archiving. Restricted access to confidential documents.	All documents are registered and filed according to the instructions. Confidentiality of documents is ensured.

Objective 3: Minimisation of the risk of fraud through application of effective anti-fraud measures, integrated in all activities of the DG, based on the DG's anti-fraud strategy (AFS) aimed at the prevention, detection and reparation of fraud.

Main outputs in 2016:

Description	Indicator	Target
Minimisation of the risk of fraud through application of effective anti-fraud measures, integrated in all activities of the DG, based on the DG's	-1- Updated anti-fraud strategy of DG NEAR, elaborated on the basis of the methodology provided by OLAF.	-1- The AFS will be updated every two years; the next update will be made by the end of 2017. -2- The target is to raise the anti-fraud awareness of over 10% for

<p>anti-fraud strategy (AFS) aimed at the prevention, detection and reparation of fraud.</p>	<p>-2- Fraud awareness is increased for target population(s) as identified in the DG's AFS.</p> <p>-3- Regular monitoring of the implementation of the anti-fraud strategy and reporting on its result to management.</p> <p>-4- The number of cases/suspected frauds reported to OLAF in 2016 and the number of cases closed.</p> <p>-5- Amounts recovered following recommendations of an OLAF investigation.</p>	<p>the whole of DG NEAR (establishment plan posts as of 01/01/2016): The adoption and dissemination of an OLAF manual; the completion of an anti-fraud questionnaire; and, other training/awareness raising initiatives.</p> <p>-3- Implementation of the AFS will be reported upon twice a year as part of the Management Report to the Commissioner, or as part of an equivalent management report.</p> <p>-4- The target is to: 1) Ensure the application of fraud awareness within the control system, demonstrated by the reporting of suspected cases of fraud to OLAF (target of > 30 transmissions to be made during 2016); and, 2) to have over 30 cases closed.</p>
--	---	--

The Authorising Officer by Delegation should have reasonable assurance that resources have been used 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 including prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities.

The three objectives indicated below are the objectives of the Strategic Management Plan for the period 2016-2020. Main outputs, indicators and targets have been indicated for these three objectives. While objective 1 relates to the legality and regularity of underlying transactions (what we do), objective 2 deals with the cost effectiveness of the system and sound financial management (how we do it). Objective 3 is about the effectiveness of the anti-fraud policy of the DG.

Presentation of main outputs for Better regulation

Objective Prepare new policy initiatives and manage the EU's acquis in line with better regulation practices to ensure that EU policy objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently.

Main outputs in 2016:

Description	Indicator	Target
Thematic evaluation on the support to SME competitiveness	The evaluation will assess the performance, good examples and lessons learned from the past assistance in the area of SME competitiveness in the enlargement and neighbourhood countries. It should serve to provide evidence and advice in designing future EU assistance. Agenda planning reference: 2016/NEAR/003	3rd quarter 2016
Thematic evaluation on support to Economic Governance in enlargement	The evaluation should serve to provide advice and evidence in future EU assistance on economic governance. (ongoing through 2016) Agenda planning reference: 2016/NEAR/001	4th quarter 2016
Thematic evaluation on social protection (2007-2013)	The objective of the evaluation is to assess the EU support provided in external action for social protection during the period 2007-2013. Agenda planning reference: 2016/NEAR/002	4th quarter 2016

In 2016, DG NEAR will finalize the **three evaluations above according to the "Better Regulation" principles.**

These will assess the performance, good examples and lessons learnt from the pre-existing assistance in areas related to SME competitiveness, economic governance and social protection. They will provide advice and evidence for the design of future policies and financial instruments. In particular, they will help to identify lessons learnt to feed into the Mid-term review of 2014-2020 instruments and the impact assessments of possible successor instruments after 2020.

In 2016, DG NEAR will also launch of the mid-term evaluations of the ENI and IPAIL instruments which will feed into the mid-term review of the external financial instruments. These two evaluations should be finalized in 3rd quarter 2017

Presentation of main outputs for Information Management aspects

Objective: Information Management aspects

Main outputs in 2016:

Description	Indicator	Target
Electronic filing of registered documents in Ares	Number of registered and filed documents in Ares	100%
E-Signatory (ARES) for all invoices as from 18 April 2016	Number of e-signatories for invoices in Ares (from 18 April 2016)	100% of invoices arrived to HQ and Delegations with e-signatory in ARES documenting internal approval process (operational and financial visas and AOSD)

Concerning Document Management, the year 2016 will focus on the sound filing of documents in ARES

Presentation of main outputs – External communication

Better communicating and promoting the objectives and the results of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the enlargement process will be a priority for DG NEAR.

Improved public diplomacy will contribute to better explaining the rationale of EU policies and the positive impact of concrete EU actions in the neighbouring countries. Similarly, effective communication on how the enlargement process works and its implications for citizens' lives remains essential for ensuring public support. Both require a joint effort of the EU and its Member States plus as well as of the governments and civil society in the partner countries.

The external communication activities of the DG will support the ten political priorities of the Commission as defined in the Political Guidelines, in particular priority number 9 "A Stronger Global Actor" as well as the other priorities relevant for the DG. Cooperation and synergies with other DGs will be sought where relevant.

Objective: To increase knowledge and understanding of the European neighbourhood policy, including the use and objectives of EU funds for the neighbourhood

Main outputs in 2016:

Description	Indicator	Target
Press trips for EU journalists to neighbourhood regions	Number of participants	55
	Cost per contact	n/a
	Indirect audience reach:	n/a

	audience of the media covering the event who might have seen the articles – Opportunities to see (OTS)	
	Number of participants who declare the event met their expectations	>60% of participants
	Useful contacts made	>40% of participants
	Likelihood to share the info	>50% of participants
	Better understanding of the policy/related funding	>50% of participants
Training seminars on EU visibility and communication for beneficiaries in the neighbourhood	Number of participants	40
	Cost per contact	n/a
	Event met expectations	>65% of participants
	Likelihood to share the info	>50% of participants
OPEN Neighbourhood Regional Programme: Opportunities, Participation, Engagement and Networking with people from the Neighbourhood area; covers: 1) Thematic integrated communication campaigns targeting audiences in one or several partner countries 2) Journalist trainings will generate media outputs on EU related issues	1) - focus groups, surveys - web analytics - number of subscribers to news alert system 2) number of pick-ups of audio visuals produced, publication /distribution of outputs	1) To be defined in inception report as depending on theme of campaigns – potentially decision makers, journalists, young people in partner countries 2) General public in neighbourhood
Objective : To increase knowledge and understanding of the enlargement policy, including the use and objectives of EU pre-accession funds		
Main outputs in 2016:		
Description	Indicator	Target
Youth Conference (in line with Vienna	Number of participants	150
	Cost per contact	n/a

Summit Conclusions)	Event met expectations	>60% of participants
	Useful contacts made	>50% of participants
	Likelihood to share the info	>50% of participants
	Better understanding of the policy/related funding	>50% of participants
	Better opinion of the EU/its institutions	>35% of participants
Series of policy events in the EU Member States	Number of participants	1500
	Cost per contact	n/a
	Event met expectations	>60% of participants
	Likelihood to share the info	>25% of participants
	Better understanding of the policy/related funding	>50% of participants
	Better opinion of the EU/its institutions	>20% of participants
Study visits of EU stakeholders to enlargement region	Number of participants	55
	Cost per contact	n/a
	Event met expectations	>50% of participants
	Useful contacts made	>40% of participants
	Likelihood to share the info	>50% of participants
	Better understanding of the policy/related funding	>40% of participants
	Better opinion of the EU/its institutions	>25% of participants

Press trips for EU journalists to enlargement region: same indicators and targets as for press trips to neighbourhood regions, except for target number of participants, which is 150.

Objective: Dissemination of information through DG NEAR website and social media

Main outputs in 2016:

Description	Indicator	Target
DG NEAR website*	Number of visits	1.500.000
	Number of unique visitors	1.000.000
	Number of page views	3.000.000
	Top pages viewed by users	n/a
	Pages per visit	n/a

DG NEAR social media (Facebook and Twitter)	Number of people reached	Facebook / average reach by post: 60,000
	Number of impressions	Twitter: 450,000 (overall)
	Fan engagement rate:	Facebook: 3% / Twitter: 1% (Average number of engagements by post Facebook: 1450 / Twitter: 36)

**Online surveys are foreseen in the future after the digital transformation project has been finalised.*

For external communication overall spending:

Annual communication spending (based on estimated commitments):	
Baseline (2015):	Target (2016):
EUR 18,258,542.97	EUR 22,655,000