



# Management Plan 2018

Structural Reform Support Service

SRSS





## Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	4
PART 1: MAIN OUTPUTS FOR THE YEAR.....	5
TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR MEMBER STATES .....	5
SUPPORT TOWARDS CONVERGENCE FOR NON-EURO-AREA MEMBER STATES .....	5
COORDINATION OF THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE COMMISSION TO MEMBER STATES .....	5
SUPPORT FOR THE TURKISH-CYPRIOIOT COMMUNITY (TCC) .....	5
Specific objective 1.1: Help Member States to prepare and implement growth-enhancing administrative and structural reforms, in particular in the context of EU economic governance processes, through the provision of relevant technical support .....	6
Specific objective 1.2: Efficient steering and coordination of technical support provision to Member States across different Commission services as well as with respect to external actors in the field .....	7
Specific objective 1.3: Provision of assistance to the Turkish Cypriot community and efficient coordination of the Commission's efforts to support the process of reunification of Cyprus.....	8
PART 2: MAIN ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT OUTPUTS FOR THE YEAR.....	9
A. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT .....	9
B. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: INTERNAL CONTROL AND RISK MANAGEMENT.....	10
C. BETTER REGULATION .....	13
D. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ASPECTS.....	13
E. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES .....	14
F. EXAMPLE(S) OF INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY OF FINANCIAL AND NON-FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE DG.....	15

## INTRODUCTION

The European Commission has committed itself to a positive agenda to help Member States unlock the growth potential of their economies to the benefit of all the population.

Effective implementation of structural reforms, timely and adequate transposition and implementation of the Union acquis and efficient and effective use of the EU funds are vital for encouraging investment, unlocking the growth potential, raising living standards and supporting the process of convergence in the EU.

To help Member States to address this implementation challenge, the European Commission set up the Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS) in July 2015.

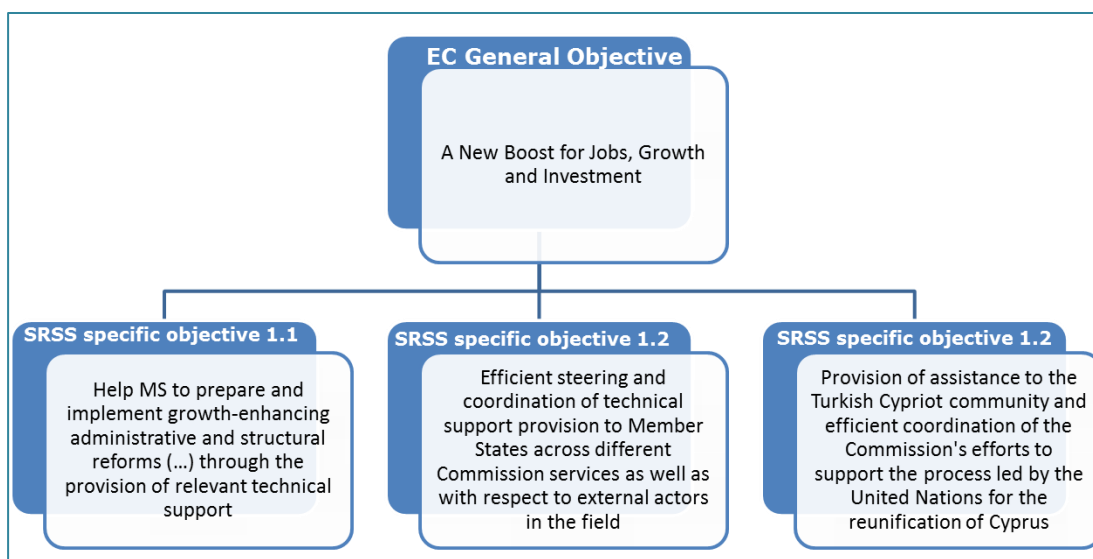
The SRSS, acting upon requests for support from Member States, steers and coordinates the delivery of technical support in cooperation with other Commission services, other Member States and/or international organisations. Support is provided for institutional, structural and administrative reforms, including assistance for the efficient and effective use of the Union Funds.

In addition to providing and coordinating the provision of support for reforms in Member States, the SRSS coordinates the Commission's efforts to support the process led by the United Nations for the reunification of Cyprus. The SRSS is also responsible for the implementation of the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community and for monitoring the application of the Green Line Regulation.

The SRSS, in close collaboration with the relevant Commission services and EU agencies, supports the Greek Authorities on migration management. The Head of the SRSS is the EU-coordinator for the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement on migration, reporting directly to the President of the Commission.

As set out in its strategic plan for 2016-2020<sup>1</sup>, the SRSS contributes primarily to the achievement of the Commission's General Objective 1, A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment, through 3 Specific Objectives.

**Figure 1: General and Specific Objectives for the SRSS, 2016-2020**



<sup>1</sup> Strategic plan 2016-2020 – Structural Reform Support Service consultable at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/strategic-plan-2016-2020-structural-reform-support-service\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/strategic-plan-2016-2020-structural-reform-support-service_en)

## **PART 1: MAIN OUTPUTS FOR THE YEAR**

### **Technical support for Member States**

Regulation (EU) 2017/825 on the establishment of the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) for the period 2017 to 2020 entered in force on 20 May 2017. The objective of the SRSP is to strengthen the capacity of Member States to prepare and implement growth-enhancing reforms. With a budget of EUR 142.8 million (2017-2020), the entry-into-force of the SRSP marks a significant milestone for future SRSS engagements with Member States.

Under the SRSP 2017 cycle (launched in June 2017), the SRSS received 271 requests from 15 Member States. After the selection procedure, 157 projects, covering 15 Member States, were selected to receive funding from the SRSP in 2017.

Under the SRSP 2018 cycle (launched in November 2017) the SRSS received 444 requests from over 20 Member States. The final list of projects to be financed under the SRSP 2018 will be adopted during the first quarter of 2018. A key objective of the year for the SRSS will be to design and successfully implement the support projects decided under the SRSP 2017 and 2018 cycles.

### **Support towards convergence for non-euro-area Member States**

Following the 2017 State of the Union speech and the letter of intent from President Juncker to President Tajani and Prime Minister Ratas, on December 6 2017, the Commission adopted a package of concrete measures to deepen EU's Economic and Monetary Union, including a roadmap of steps to be taken over the next 18 months. Two elements in the package are directly related to the work of the SRSS - the amendment of the SRSP Regulation and the Communication on new budgetary instruments for a stable euro area within the Union framework. The communication on new budgetary instruments for a stable euro area discusses four specific essential functions for the euro area, which also include support for structural reforms and a dedicated convergence facility for Member States on their way to joining the euro area. The dedicated convergence facility for euro-area-membership support will be integrated in the new technical support programme for the programming period post-2020. The proposal to amend the current SRSP Regulation envisages an increase in the SRSP budget in 2019-2020 by EUR 80 million and changes the general objective in Article 4 of the SRSP Regulation to add support for the non-euro-area Member States to prepare for participation in the euro area should they wish to avail of such support. The amendment of the SRSP Regulation will be discussed with the co-legislators already in 2018.

### **Coordination of the support provided by the Commission to Member States**

The SRSS has set up a mechanism to coordinate the support the Commission provides to Member States (support provided by the SRSS and all other Commission services). This includes both a steering committee and country teams with representatives from across the Commission. This coordination will continue throughout 2018.

### **Support for the Turkish Cypriot community (TCc)**

As regards the Aid Programme, the SRSS objective will be to continue to deliver the objectives of the Aid Regulation.

**Specific objective 1.1: Help Member States to prepare and implement growth-enhancing administrative and structural reforms, in particular in the context of EU economic governance processes, through the provision of relevant technical support**

With respect to specific objective 1.1 *Help Member States to prepare and implement growth-enhancing administrative and structural reforms, in particular in the context of EU economic governance processes, through the provision of relevant technical support*, the output indicated is related to the indicator chosen in the SP 2016-2020: "The extent to which the support provided helps MS prepare and implement structural reforms, *inter alia*, reforms related to country-specific recommendations".

The main challenges for 2018 are:

- to provide timely delivery of the technical support projects agreed with the Member States under SRSP 2017 and SRSP 2018;
- to ensure the relevance and high-quality of this support; and
- to prepare the proposal for a new technical support programme for the post-2020 programming period (Multiannual Financial Framework – MFF)<sup>2</sup>.

<b>Relevant general objective: A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment</b>		
<b>Specific objective: 1.1 Help Member States to prepare and implement growth-enhancing administrative and structural reforms, in particular in the context of EU economic governance processes, through the provision of relevant technical support</b>		Related to spending programme: YES
<b>Main outputs in 2018:</b>		
<b>Important items from work programmes/financing decisions/operational programmes<sup>3</sup></b>		
Output	Indicator	Target
<i>SRSP Annual Work Programme</i>	<i>Adoption by the Commission</i>	<i>Q1 2018</i>
<i>Technical support projects delivered, agreed under SRSP2017 and SRSP2018</i>	<i>Number of projects related to structural reforms that have at least started (procurement procedures or other means of implementation concluded)</i>	<i>100% of the project selected for funding under SRSP 2017 and 70% of the projects selected for funding in SRSP2018 will be on going or closed by Q4 2018</i>

<sup>2</sup> See also CWP 2018 in Annex I. Comprehensive proposal for the future Multi-annual Financial Framework beyond 2020 (to be adopted by the Commission in May 2018)

<sup>3</sup> For a complete listing of expenditure-related outputs, please refer to the Programme Statements published together with the [Draft Budget for 2018](#).

<i>Feedback from beneficiary authorities on the support delivered</i>	<i>System for collecting the feedback of the beneficiary authorities on the timing and quality of the support provided is in place.</i>	<i>System in place by Q3 2018 First feedback collected by Q4 2018</i>
<i>Post-2020 MFF technical support programme proposal</i>	<i>Adoption by the Commission</i>	<i>Q2 2018</i>
<b>Other important outputs</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
<i>Ex-post evaluation of the activities of the Task Force for Greece (TFGR)</i>	<i>Staff Working Document published</i>	<i>Q4 2018</i>

***Specific objective 1.2: Efficient steering and coordination of technical support provision to Member States across different Commission services as well as with respect to external actors in the field***

As a matter of principle, technical support provided at the request of a Member State should foster synergies, and be complementary and add value to the existing EU policy initiatives or projects, including funding programmes.

In order to achieve these objectives, the SRSS established a coordination mechanism in 2017, comprising both horizontal and country-specific coordination amongst the relevant Commission services. The coordination mechanism aims at: (i) aligning the technical support provided with the policy priorities of the Commission and the reform priorities of the Member States; (ii) enhancing synergies and complementarity and avoiding overlaps across the support activities of the Commission; and (iii) ensuring the consistency of communication with Member States that have requested support.

The coordination of technical support is needed not only within the Commission but also with other stakeholders, such as international organisations that provide technical support in the countries requesting support from the SRSS.

<b>Relevant general objective: A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment</b>		
<b>Specific objective 1.2: Efficient steering and coordination of technical support provision to Member States across different Commission services as well as with respect to external actors in the field</b>		Related to spending programme: NO
<b>Main outputs in 2018:</b>		
<b>Other important outputs</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
<i>Ensure effective functioning of the Commission internal coordination mechanism</i>	<i>Country-specific coordination: technical support country teams have been put in place (or a technical support strand is integrated in the European Semester country teams) for all countries that have requested support under the SRSP.</i>	<i>One month after a new MS requests support</i>

	<i>Horizontal coordination: regular meetings of the Technical Support Working Group taking place to monitor the roll-out of SRSP 2017 and SRSP 2018</i>	<i>3 meetings by the end of 2018</i>
	<i>Steering: regular meetings of the High Level Steering Committee taking place to monitor the roll-out of SRSP 2017 and SRSP 2018</i>	<i>2 meetings by the end of 2018</i>
<i>Coordination with international organisations</i>	<i>Number of operational arrangements with international organisations</i>	<i>2 by end of 2018</i>
<i>Coordination with Member States</i>	<i>Meetings with Member-State coordinating authorities to take stock of the provision of technical support and ensure coordination of the support</i>	<i>1 meeting per year for each Member State receiving support</i>

**Specific objective 1.3: Provision of assistance to the Turkish Cypriot community and efficient coordination of the Commission's efforts to support the process of reunification of Cyprus**

For specific objective 1.3, which includes all the Commission's activities relating to the reunification of Cyprus, the SRSS objective is to continue to deliver the objectives of the Aid Programme.

The SRSS also remains ready to provide any assistance that both leaders and the United Nations would find most useful and to contribute in the context of possible future settlement discussions. The extent of this activity depends critically on the political process on the island.

<b>Relevant general objective: A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment</b>		
<b>Specific objective 1.3: Provision of assistance to the Turkish Cypriot community and efficient coordination of the Commission's efforts to support the process of reunification of Cyprus</b>		Related to spending programme : YES
<b>Main outputs in 2018:</b>		
<b>Important items from work programmes/financing decisions/operational programmes</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
<i>Social/economic development actions in the Turkish Cypriot community</i>	<i>Number of major social/economic development actions contracted</i>	<i>30 by the end of 2018<sup>4</sup></i>
<i>EU acquis preparation</i>	<i>Number of TAIEX actions, with specific</i>	<i>200 TAIEX</i>

<sup>4</sup> Indicative estimates given the uncertainty regarding timely conclusion of grant agreements in the context of call for proposals.



<i>of the Turkish Cypriot community and monitoring of the implementation of the Green Line Regulation</i>	<i>reference to independent expert Green-Line missions (fresh fish, honey, phytosanitary issues)</i>	<i>actions, of which 10 Green Line missions by end-2018</i>
<i>Increase EU visibility within the Turkish Cypriot community</i>	<i>Number of communication actions</i>	<i>100 by end of 2018</i>
<b>Other important outputs</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
<i>Interim Evaluation of Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community</i>	<i>Roadmap published on Europa website</i>	<i>Q2 2018</i>

## **PART 2: MAIN ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT OUTPUTS FOR THE YEAR**

### **A. Human resource management**

In 2018, the SRSS is likely to continue to face the challenge of an increased workload and constraints on staff resources. This will require the SRSS to continue to prioritize its activities and continue to search for as much efficiency gains as possible. It will also require the SRSS to maintain a flexible structure, enabling staff to work across the service, depending on the emerging needs.

To aid this process, the SRSS intends to develop an IT tool in 2018, which will monitor the state of development of the SRSP projects and identify possible bottlenecks. Improvements in working procedures, setting up project teams across the structure, and increased use of flexible instruments for delivering support to Member States (for example: use of the TAIEX instrument, use of framework contracts, etc.) should contribute to further increasing the efficiency of the service.

In the field of **learning and development**, efforts will continue to help staff to develop skills and knowledge to match the needs of the SRSS. This includes, in particular, training in project, budgetary and financial management.

In the field **equal opportunities**, SRSS will pursue its efforts to contribute to the Commission-wide targets for the recruitment of women to management positions, in particular for middle management, where the objective is to have at least 40% of female managers by the end of 2019.

During 2018 the SRSS will continue to have a series of well-being actions. It will also prepare the follow-up to the results of the 2018 staff satisfaction survey results.

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

**Main outputs in 2018:**

Output	Indicator	Target
<i>Foster female applications for management positions</i>	<i>% of female candidates interviewed for management positions</i>	<i>&gt;30% of female candidates in interviews for management positions</i>
<i>Follow-up to the results of the 2018 staff satisfaction survey results</i>	<i>SRSS action plan for addressing the issues identified in the 2018 staff satisfaction survey</i>	<i>Follow-up action plan to the 2018 staff survey is developed</i>
<i>SRSS Fit@work actions</i>	<i>Number of actions</i>	<i>3</i>

## **B. Financial Management: Internal control and risk management**

The SRSS expenditure in 2018 is aimed at providing technical support to Member States for the implementation of structural reforms and providing financial support to the Turkish Cypriot community to encourage its economic development. To this end the SRSS will respectively:

- ✓ Implement the 2018 Financing Decisions:
  - The 2018 work programme for the Structural Reform Support Programme – implemented by direct and indirect management; and
  - The 2018 Action Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community – implemented by direct and indirect management;
- ✓ continue to implement activities under previously-established Financing Decisions<sup>5</sup>:
  - The 2017 work programme for the Structural Reform Support Programme C(2017)5780 – implemented by direct and indirect management;
  - The Annual Action Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community for the year 2017 and earlier years - implemented by direct and indirect management;
  - The 2016 work programme for operational technical assistance managed by the Commission at the request of the Hellenic Republic in the framework of the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and

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<sup>5</sup> Including their amendments as appropriate

Cohesion Fund (C(2016)3835 of 21.6.2016) – implemented by direct and indirect management;

- Ongoing commitments to the work programme for operational technical assistance to implement the activities of the Structural Reform Support Service in Cyprus at the initiative of the Commission in the framework of the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund;
- Ongoing commitments to the Preparatory Action "Capacity development and institution building to support the implementation of economic reforms" (C(2016) 4011 of 30.6.2016) – implemented by direct and indirect management; and
- Ongoing commitments to work programmes for operational technical assistance to implement the activities of the Support Group for Cyprus and the Task force for Greece.

In 2018, the SRSS will use the internal control indicators (qualitative and quantitative) developed as part of its own internal control framework to start monitoring the functioning of the 17 control principles established under the Commission Internal Control Framework<sup>6</sup>. On such a basis, the SRSS will also carry out the annual assessment of the SRSS internal control framework as part of the Annual Activity Report exercise.

Finally, in 2018, the SRSS will continue to implement the activities foreseen in the action plan of its Anti-Fraud Strategy.

**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 2018:**

Output	Indicator	Target
<i>Legality and regularity of the underlying transactions in the Service</i>	<i>Error rate detected on the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions</i>	<i>Error rate below 2%</i>
<i>Performing ex-post control activities</i>	<i>implementation of ex-post control plan</i>	<i>100% ex-post control activities included in the control plan, completed by December 2018</i>

<sup>6</sup> C(2017) 2373 final

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

**Main outputs in 2018:**

Output	Indicator	Target
<i>Execution of the annual voted budget, in compliance with the legal requirements applying to transactions</i>	<i>% of operational budget commitment appropriations made</i>	<i>95%</i>
<i>Timely execution of payments</i>	<i>Percentage of payments on the budget made within the contractual time limits</i>	<i>&gt;66%</i>
<i>Procurement/grant procedures carried out in compliance with the principles and rules governing public procurement and grant management at the Commission and according to sound financial management</i>	<i>Number of legal proceedings following complaints in procurement/grant procedures</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Timely awarding of grants</i>	<i>Percentage of grant agreement signed within: - 6 weeks from-request to financial unit (directly awarded grants) or -6 weeks from reception of the file by financial unit following evaluation (for grants following a call for proposal)</i>	<i>&gt;75%</i>
<i>Annual assessment of the cost-effectiveness of controls</i>	<i>Control costs/expenditure</i>	<i>Positive or stable trend compared to previous year</i>
<i>Implementation of the new Internal Control Framework (ICF)</i>	<i>Completion status of the implementation of the revised internal control framework</i>	<i>17 Principles</i>
<i>Follow-up of progress in addressing the Internal Audit Service (IAS)'s recommendations</i>	<i>Number of outstanding recommendations</i>	<i>By December 2018, no outstanding recommendation marked as 'critical' or 'very important'</i>
<i>Open</i>	<i>Number of critical</i>	<i>None</i>

<i>recommendations from European Court of Auditors (ECA)</i>	<i>recommendations from ECA overdue for more than 6 months</i>	
<i>Follow up of exception reporting</i>	Number of exceptions per year	less than 10 exceptions per year
<b>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.</b>		
<b>Main outputs in 2018:</b>		
Output	Indicator	Target
<i>Implementation of the SRSS anti-fraud strategy as planned for 2018</i>	<i>% of implementation of actions planned for 2018 in the anti-fraud strategy</i>	100%
<i>Increased level of anti-fraud awareness</i>	<i>Survey on the staff members' fraud awareness</i>	≥70% positive response rate

### C. Better Regulation

The main planned outputs linked to the Better Regulation objective in the Strategic Plan are listed in Part 1 under the relevant specific objective in the tables.

### D. Information management aspects

In 2018, the SRSS will continue to contribute to the SG high standards in the areas of data and document management. Focus will be put on reinforcing:

- awareness about effective data and document management;
- filing and retrieving requirements;
- the use of electronic practices, such as e-signatory and automatic registration of emails; and
- the use of collaborative platforms to broaden networking/information-sharing capabilities and make knowledge management part of business processes.

**Objective: Information and knowledge in your DG is shared and reusable by other DGs. Important documents are registered, filed and retrievable.**

**Main outputs in 2018:**

Output	Indicator	Target
<i>Reinforcing staff awareness about the use of ARES, including registration of important emails via Areslook</i>	<i>Organising presentations by Document Management Officer to SRSS staff/Units to promote consistent and correct use of ARES</i>	<i>Q4 2018</i>
	<i>Monitoring reports on unfiled documents</i>	<i>Decreasing rate</i>
	<i>Monitoring reports of emails registered by Areslook</i>	<i>Increasing rate</i>
<i>Better use of electronic workflows, to reduce paper consumption/storage</i>	<i>Number of registered documents with a fully approved e-signatory (no paper circulation in parallel)</i>	<i>Increasing rate</i>
<i>Increasing staff usage of Connected</i>	<i>No. of active users (users who have viewed at least 1 item in the last 30 days)</i>	<i>Increasing rate</i>

## **E. External communication activities**

As regards the technical support provided to Member States:

In 2017, the SRSS developed a communication action plan aimed at increasing the awareness of the technical support offered by the service to Member States and communicating on specific technical support projects to provide evidence of the added value of this support. For example, it: developed a corporate information brochure and specific case studies illustrating the support measures the SRSS provides; operationalised a new SRSP website; and put in place a media planner tool.

In 2018, the SRSS will continue to implement communication actions, notably:

- continue advanced media planning, in cooperation with the Spokesperson's Office and the cabinet of Vice-President Dombrovskis to ensure timely preparation of media activities;
- continue to develop case studies to illustrate successful support projects; and
- establish a workflow with the European Semester Officers and develop an approach for communicating on SRSS projects at the local level.

The SRSS's communication actions on technical support to Member States have limited requirements in terms of budget.

Bringing the Turkish Cypriot community closer to the EU is one of the objectives of the Aid Programme. For this purpose, the EU Infopoint in the northern part of Cyprus aims to improve the public knowledge, awareness and understanding of the EU, its values,

policies and programmes within the Turkish Cypriot community by providing information to the public.

**Objective: Citizens perceive that the EU is working to improve their lives and engage with the EU. They feel that their concerns are taken into consideration in European decision making and they know about their rights in the EU.**

**Main outputs in 2018:**

Output	Indicator	Target
<i>Implementation of the SRSS communication action plan</i>	<i>% of actions implemented from the SRSS communication action plan</i>	<i>75% by end 2018</i>

**Annual spending on communication:**

Baseline (2017)	Estimated commitments (2018)
0	0

**F. Example(s) of initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities of the DG**

The SRSS is currently reviewing the workflows and templates linked to the preparation and implementation of projects for technical support, and will explore possible simplification measures, which should result in efficiency gains across the service in 2018.

In addition, several IT tools should be implemented in 2018, in particular:

- An IT tool to facilitate the financial programming of the service. The aim of this tool is to monitor the efficiency and accountability of the implementation of budgetary resources related to the support activities; and
- An IT tool to facilitate the monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the support projects managed by the service.