



Strategic Plan 2016-2020*

DG Interpretation

*The current Commission's term of office runs until 31 October 2019. New political orientations provided by the incoming Commission for the subsequent period will be appropriately reflected in the strategic planning process.

Contents

PART 1. Strategic vision for 2016 - 2020.....	3
A. Mission statement.....	3
B. Operating context.....	4
C. Key performance indicators (KPIs).....	10
PART 2. Organisational management.....	11
A. Human Resource Management	11
B. Financial Management: Internal control and Risk management.....	12
C. Information management	13
D. External communication	14

PART 1. Strategic vision for 2016 - 2020

A. Mission statement

DG Interpretation's mission is to support multilingual communication and to facilitate a transparent, efficient and democratic EU decision-making.

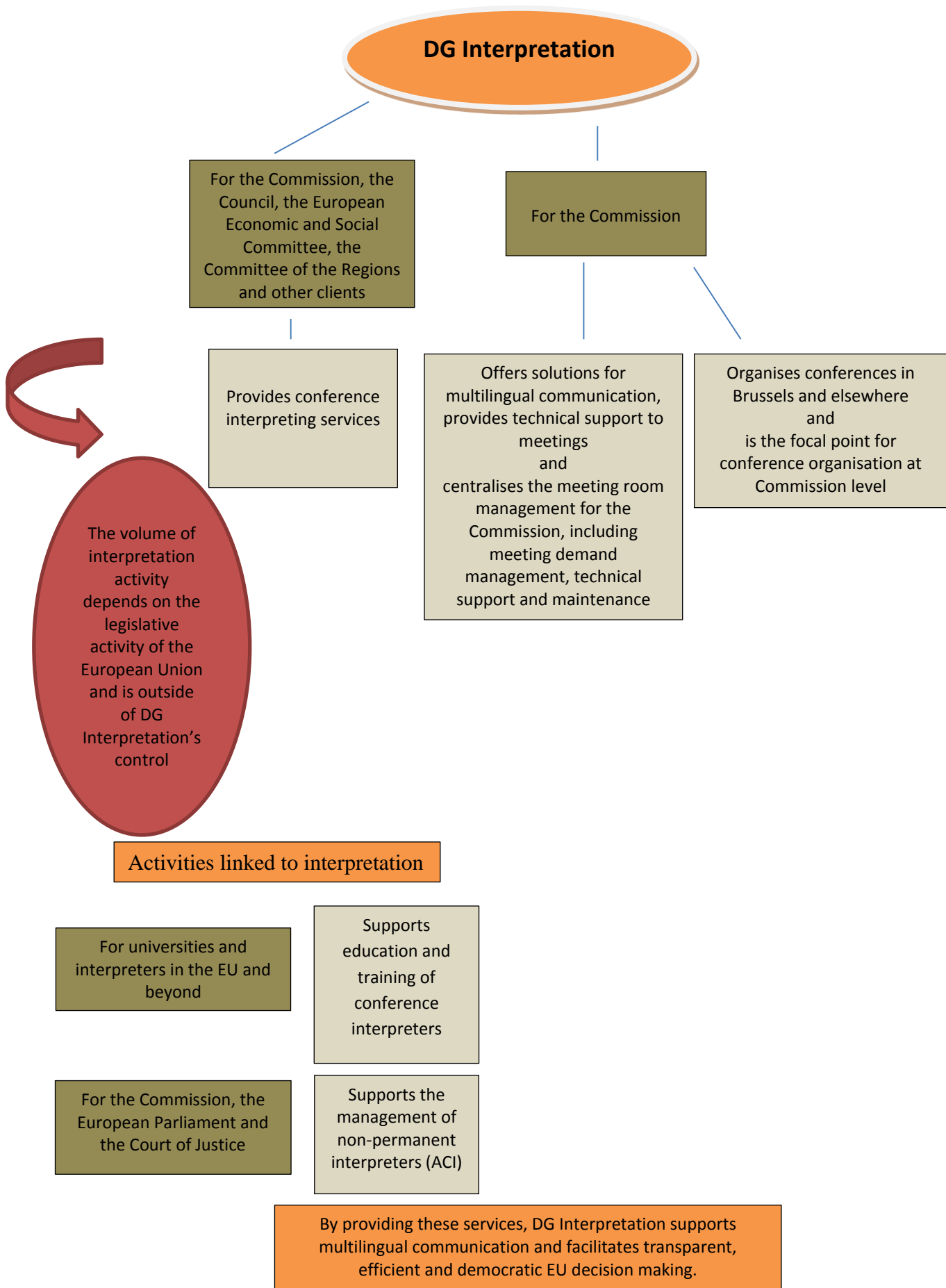
To achieve these objectives, DG Interpretation is the European Commission's

- conference interpreting service,
- meeting room management service (i.e. booking and technical services),
- focal point for conference organisation.

DG Interpretation also provides interpretation to other European Institutions (the European Council, the Council of the European Union, rotating Presidencies of the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the European Investment Bank) and external users (European offices and agencies in the Member States, and third countries in the framework of contacts with the EU).

Finally, it provides support to interpreters' education and training, in relation with universities in the EU and beyond.

B. Operating context



C. Strategy

DG Interpretation contributes to attain the Commission’s general objective **"To help achieve the overall political objectives, the Commission will effectively and efficiently manage and safeguard assets and resources, and attract and develop the best talents"**.

To this end, DG Interpretation, as the Commission's interpreting and conference service, carries out three main activities:

- it provides services in conference interpreting to ensure that people can communicate effectively
- it is the Commission’s corporate meeting room manager¹
- it is the Commission's “focal point” for conference organisation².

In support of the delivery of its general objective, DG Interpretation has defined the following specific objectives, which by nature are recurrent rather than multi-annual.

Interpretation and related activities

General objective: To help achieve the overall political objectives, the Commission will effectively and efficiently manage and safeguard assets and resources, and attract and develop the best talents.	
Impact indicator 1: Trust in the European Commission	
Source of data: Eurobarometer on Public Opinion in the European Union	
Baseline (2015)	Target (2020)
40% tend to trust	Increase
Impact indicator 2: Staff engagement index in the Commission	
Source of the data: European Commission	
Baseline (2015)	Target (2020)
74.2%	Increase
Specific objective 1: Interpreting services meet our clients’ demand and are cost effective.	Not related to a spending programme

DG Interpretation aims at meeting its users' demand for quality interpretation (covering EU and third-countries languages) whilst providing cost-effective services.

In this context, a **key objective will be to charge external users with a price³ which adequately reflects the DG's cost structure.** However, it has few, if any, control over two critical components, i.e.

¹ Pending the adoption of the decisions implementing the “Synergy and Efficiency review”

² Id.

³ DG Interpretation invoices its external clients for the interpretation provided. The billing unit in use (i-slot) represents roughly half a day of an interpreter. The cost is calculated by dividing the expected remuneration costs for staff and non-permanent interpreters (ACIs) and indirect costs by the expected volume of interpretation to be provided. When demand is significantly different from what was expected at the time the i-slot price was set (January n-1), DG Interpretation’s budget is no longer balanced, as most costs are fixed.

the evolution of fixed costs (linked to permanent staff remuneration) and the demand from external users.

As a consequence, should the demand remain at the level reached in 2015 or should it further decrease, DG Interpretation will have to

- decide whether it should pursue its traditional approach towards a maximum satisfaction of demand from its clients,
- adapt its existing workforce, in particular through redeploying staff and further cutting back on ACI recruitment,
- consider an adjustment of its financing model,
- continue to closely monitor the daily average cost of ACI contracts⁴.

<p>Result indicator 1: Coverage of i-slot costs by i-slot price (in %) <i>The i-slot is calculated by dividing the expenses related to the provision of interpretation and linked activities (staff, ACIs, parts of training, IT, missions) by the expected amount of interpretation to be provided.</i> Source of data: SCIC Budget and Finance Unit</p>	
<p>Baseline (2015)</p>	<p>Target (2020)</p>
<p>92.3% (i-slot price: 446€, i-slot cost: 483€)</p>	<p>Between 98% and 102%</p>
<p>Result indicator 2: Standby rate and reserve of staff interpreters and ACIs, excluding periods of low interpretation activity (% of available working time) Monitoring the amount of standby which goes beyond a certain reserve necessary to provide the flexibility to meet operational needs enables DG Interpretation to check whether we manage our resources efficiently. Source of data: SCICView</p>	
<p>Baseline (2015)</p>	<p>Target (2020) <i>In the current context of unpredictable demand, the target of 15 % can only be met for the 5 biggest languages (FR/DE/EN/IT/ES)</i></p>
<p>18.5%</p>	<p>15%</p>
<p>Result indicator 3: Percentage of external client requests DG Interpretation was able to satisfy This indicator measures the share of active languages requested by the Council and the Committees we are able to grant on the basis of available interpreters (staff and ACIs). For the most used languages (EN, FR, DE, IT, ES) this indicator is close to 100%, for less-used languages demand may be more difficult to meet. Source of data: SCICView</p>	
<p>Baseline (2015)</p>	<p>Target (2020) <i>This target is considered in line with available resources. A marginal increase of the satisfaction could entail a far bigger increase in costs (i.e. hiring of expensive ACIs not living in Brussels). This is the reason why the target is set below the baseline.</i></p>

⁴ The daily average cost of an ACI contract is the average of all costs related to ACI recruitment remuneration, subsistence allowance, flat-rate travel allowance, accommodation costs, travel expenses and travel agency charges, employer costs and premiums (e.g. pension, accident insurance) and additional compensatory payments (non-worked days, tiring missions etc.).

96%	≥95%
Result indicator 4: Number of Commission meetings refused at arbitration and percentage of 1st priority meetings DG Interpretation is able to satisfy As DG Interpretation's ability to satisfy Commission DGs' meeting requests is limited by the number of available meeting facilities, the indicator we use for external clients' satisfaction is not applicable for the Commission. For the Commission we therefore measure the number of meetings refused at arbitration and the percentage of 1 st priority meetings satisfied. Source of data: Planning and Programming Unit	
Baseline (2015)	Target (2020) <i>This target is considered satisfactory and in line with available resources</i>
Number of meetings refused at arbitration: 529	≤ to 2015 number
Percentage of 1 st priority meetings satisfied	>99%

Following the decision taken in the “Synergy and Efficiency” review exercise to pool Commission meeting rooms and entrust DG Interpretation with their management, the number of Commission meetings refused due to a shortage of meeting facilities could decrease in coming years because meetings without interpretation could be moved to rooms without interpretation facilities.

Specific objective 2: The quality of interpretation meets our clients' needs Not related to a spending programme

DG Interpretation's key mission is to support multilingual communication and to facilitate transparent, efficient and democratic EU decision-making by providing quality interpretation. Quality mostly depends on the efforts of the DG to recruit interpreters with excellent language skills and an adequate language combination and to provide life-long learning to interpreters. Given the complexity and diversity of subjects discussed in meetings, DG Interpretation has to **continuously invest in language and thematic training for its staff**.

The quality of interpretation may be negatively impacted by different factors (e.g. a limited language coverage in meetings due to budget restrictions in Member States, the quality of the speakers' contributions, speakers not using their mother tongue or reading out speeches), which are out of DG Interpretation's control.

Result indicator 1: Percentage of satisfaction with the quality of interpretation expressed by our users The results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey which DG Interpretation carries out every 2 years enable us to measure whether the quality of our service meets our users' expectations and to detect areas which can be improved. Source of data: DG Interpretation's Customer Satisfaction Survey	
Baseline (2015)	Target (2020) <i>This target is considered in line with available resources. A marginal increase of the satisfaction could entail a far bigger increase in costs (i.e. hiring of expensive ACIs not living in Brussels). This is the reason why the target is set below the baseline.</i>
88.7%	>85%
Result indicator 2: Percentage of recruitment of ACIs with a quality rating ≥ 2 Based on regular quality reports, ACIs are assigned a quality rating by their head of unit which together with a certain number of points for the professional domicile and the number of languages offered by the ACI is part of the recruitment coefficient which enables DG Interpretation to recruit interpreters with the best possible qualifications. Source of data: SCICView	

Baseline (2015)	Target (2020) <i>Based on past experience, this percentage is considered achievable but ambitious. Each extra percentage point in recruitment of ACIs with a quality rating ≥ 2 costs money, if it means that DG Interpretation has to recruit ACIs from outside Brussels to meet the quality criteria.</i>
87.7%	>85%

Support and assistance to conferences, events and meetings

Specific objective 3: Services provided in meetings meet Commission needs.

Not related to a spending programme

The services DG Interpretation provides in meetings organised in Commission premises include **multilingual audio-/videoconferencing services** (web streaming, etc.), the **operation of the conferencing systems** needed for the provision of interpreting services, the provision of first-line **support to users** of the DG's technical equipment, and **conference clerks**. The growing number of videoconferences enables Commission services to reduce mission costs.

Further to the "Synergies and Efficiency review", the **centralisation of the corporate meeting room management** (including bookings, technical support and maintenance) in DG Interpretation⁵ aims at reducing under-occupancy, design and operational costs and at bringing about price reductions with suppliers and contractors. This centralisation will also allow the Commission to adopt a modern approach and take full advantage of the latest technological trends.

Result indicator 1: Satisfaction of meeting organisers with the services related to meetings and conference rooms

After each meeting, meeting organisers are requested to fill in a short questionnaire on their satisfaction with the request procedure, interpretation and technical equipment and support. The result indicator is the global satisfaction rate with the services provided by DG Interpretation.

Source of data: WebDOR Feedback

Baseline (2015)	Target (2020) <i>Standard satisfaction rate which is considered satisfactory and in line with DG Interpretation's ability to meet demand from Commission services (e.g. available facilities, quality of existing meeting rooms, etc.). A marginal increase of the satisfaction could entail a far bigger increase in costs. This is the reason why the target is set below the baseline.</i>
96,9%	>85%

Result indicator 2: Satisfaction of meeting participants with the services related to meetings and conference rooms

DG Interpretation organised its 1st survey on the satisfaction of meeting participants in 2015 and will carry out a similar survey every two years to make sure that our services are in line with our customers' needs and to improve service where necessary.

Source of data: Results of the 2015 Customer Satisfaction Survey on Conference services

Baseline (2015)	Target (2020) <i>Standard satisfaction rate which is considered satisfactory. A marginal increase of the satisfaction could entail a far bigger increase in costs. This is the reason why the target is set below the baseline.</i>

⁵ Pending the adoption of the decisions implementing the "Synergy and Efficiency review"

91.6%	>85%
Result indicator 3: Percentage of multilingual streaming services without incidents DG Interpretation provides web streaming services (both multilingual and monolingual) for meetings in Commission meeting rooms managed by DG Interpretation. Streaming transmissions are both live and on-demand (recorded). The indicator shows the reliability of this service, by calculating the aggregate amount of minutes without incidents that affected user satisfaction in the live transmissions. Source of data: number of hours from SCICView; Incidents registered in log file maintained by SCIC Streaming	
Baseline (2015)	Target (2020) <i>This target is considered satisfactory and in line with available resources</i>
98%	98%

Specific objective 4: DG Interpretation's conference organisation services meet Commission needs.	Not related to a spending programme
--	-------------------------------------

DG Interpretation provides a **fully-fledged conference organisation service** to Commission DGs or provides **consultancy for setting up large events**.

Further to the "Synergy and Efficiency review", DG Interpretation will be the **"focal point"** for event/conference organisation in the Commission. DG Interpretation will manage a compulsory register providing an overview of the number of conferences or "events"⁶ organised and related expenditure. DG Interpretation will also gradually centralise framework contracts related to conference organisation.

Result indicator 1: Satisfaction of Commission DGs with the services related to conference organisation services This indicator is related to services delivered by DG Interpretation. It reflects the average scores obtained from the DGs for whom conference organisation services were provided. The scores rate the satisfaction levels on services provided before and during the event, including DG Interpretation's staff and financial management. Source of data: Conference organisers' ongoing satisfaction surveys	
Baseline (2015)	Target (2020) <i>A 90% satisfaction rate is considered by DG Interpretation's management as an ambitious and reachable target. A marginal increase of the satisfaction could entail a far bigger increase in costs. This is the reason why the target is set below the baseline.</i>
90.4%	90%
Result indicator 2: Conferences are registered in DG Interpretation Source of data: n/a	
Baseline (2015)	Target (2017)
n/a	To be set by the Steering Committee on Conference and Meeting room management

⁶ In the context of the Synergy and Efficiency Review, "conferences" (or "events") are meetings which are not related to comitology and with a large number of participants from outside the Commission. They often feature high-level participants and speakers (Commissioners, ministers,...)

D. Key performance indicators (KPIs)

KPI	Target
Coverage of i-slot cost by i-slot price (%) (objective 1: Interpreting services meet our clients' demand and are cost effective)	Between 98% and 102%
Standby rate and reserve of interpreters (staff and ACIs), excluding periods of low interpretation activity (objective 1: Interpreting services meet our clients' demand and are cost effective)	15%
Overall satisfaction with the quality of interpretation (objective 2: The quality of interpretation meets our clients' needs)	85%
Overall satisfaction with DG Interpretation's support to conferences, events and meetings (objective 4: Services provided in meetings meet our customers' needs)	85%

PART 2. Organisational management

A. Human Resource Management

Objective: 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.

DG Interpretation already benefits from a gender-balanced management. Particular efforts will continue to be made to motivate staff by implementing the new decision on telework and flexible working methods for administrative staff and by enabling interpreters to diversify their tasks.

In line with the current action plan and following the new corporate strategy on Diversity and Inclusion, female ADs (68% AD staff) are encouraged to take up managerial functions. The actions include formal and informal learning paths as well as appointment to ad interim managerial posts, when available.

The selection panels follow the corporate guidelines on equal opportunity.

Indicator 1: Percentage of female representation in middle management

Source of data: HR dashboard

Baseline (2015)	Target (2020)
50%	50%

Indicator 2 : Percentage of staff who feel that the Commission cares about their well-being

Source of data: Commission staff survey

Baseline (2015)	Target (2020)
43.3%	50%

The low baseline is partly due to the poor quality of the buildings and physical working conditions of DG Interpretation's staff. The appropriate design of the new conference centre foreseen for 2022 is of strategic importance to DG Interpretation also in terms of contributing to appreciable attention to staff's needs.

Indicator 3: Staff engagement index

Source of data: Commission staff survey

Baseline (2015)	Target (2020)
74.2%	75%

The target is to maintain the high level of engagement by increasing occasions for structured and collective fora enabling different parts and hierarchical levels of the service to meet.

Indicator 4: Average number of passive languages and retours per interpreter

Source of data: SCICview	
Baseline (2015)	Target (2020)
4.2	4.2

This indicator measures the ability of DG Interpretation to satisfy its customers' requests for various symmetric and asymmetric language regimes. This is all the more relevant in the context of the prospective retirement of experienced interpreters with extended language combinations.

DG Interpretation's efforts in the area of interpreter training also include cooperation with universities in member states and candidate countries to support the education of future interpreters.

B. Financial Management: Internal control and Risk management

Overarching objective: 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, investigation, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities.

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

Indicator 1: Estimated residual error rate

Based on a risk analysis, ex-post controls are performed on a sampling basis on non-local ACIs expenditure (which accounted for 75.2% of DG Interpretation's executed budget in 2015). Ex-post controls are also performed on ACI payments made on behalf of the European Parliament and the Court of Justice. All errors detected in the course of these ex-post controls are corrected immediately.

Given the limited number of expenditure transactions (grants, procurement), DG Interpretation's financial circuits are based on systemic ex-ante controls rather than ex-post controls.

Source of data: Ex-post control report (Budget and Finance Unit)

Baseline (2015)	Target
0.048%	<1%

Indicator 2: Estimated overall amount at risk for the year for the entire budget under the DG's responsibility

The overall amount at risk is related to the expenditures under management of the DG. It does not include the payments made on behalf of the European Parliament and the Court of Justice (around €20M).

Source of data: Ex-post control report (Budget and Finance Unit)

Baseline	Target
25K	25K

Indicator 3: Estimated future corrections

Not relevant to the DG's activities which are not multi-annual

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

DG Interpretation has created an overall indicator of the cost of controls for all areas under direct management mode and related to the provision of interpreting and conferencing services. The controls involved cover the payments of ACI remunerations, procurement and grants.

Indicator 1: Conclusion reached on cost-effectiveness of controls (<i>Positive conclusion = Yes</i>)	
Source of data: SCICView (on the basis of DG BUDG guidelines for the 2014 AARs)	
Baseline (2015)	Target
Yes	Yes

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.

Indicator 1: Updated anti-fraud strategy of DG Interpretation elaborated on the basis of the methodology provided by OLAF

Source of data: Budget and Finance Unit

Baseline	Target
Date of the last update: 2015	Yearly update

Indicator 2: Fraud awareness is increased for target population(s) as identified in the DG's AFS

Source of data: DG's AFS

Baseline	Target
DG Interpretation's management is informed of updates of the AFS every year in a dedicated management meeting	Dedicated management meeting once a year

Indicator 3: Regular monitoring of the implementation of the anti-fraud strategy and reporting on its result to management

Source of data: Budget and Finance Unit

Baseline	Target
Before December 2016	Once a year

C. Information management

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

The use of ARES in DG Interpretation is mainstreamed and staff at all levels have been involved in the conception and creation of the DG's filing plan which is reflected in the relatively high percentage of registered documents that are filed.

DG Interpretation holds a significant amount of data which contain personal information and therefore, under data protection legislation, cannot be transparent. This is reflected in the target of 70% of all files in ARES that should be accessible by all units in the DG. The publication of the DG's short and medium-term archive policy will look at the possibility of opening the closed files to all units before their transfer or destruction. The creation of files in DG Interpretation is centralised and at the moment of creation, each unit's files should be reviewed. In the case where units request the creation of a file with restricted access, they will be asked to justify this decision enabling future campaigns to address this issue.

Indicator 1: Percentage of registered documents that are not filed	
Source of data: Hermes-Ares-Nomcom (HAN) statistics	
Baseline 2015	Target
5.98%	5%

Indicator 2: Number of HAN files readable/accessible by all units in the DG	
Source of data: <i>Hermes-Ares-Nomcom (HAN) statistics</i>	
Baseline 2015	Target
56%	70%

D. External communication

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.

DG Interpretation carries out actions targeting students and potential future interpreters, by e.g. participating in language fairs and community management activities (facebook page), videos, etc.

Indicator 1: Percentage of EU citizens having a positive image of the EU	
Eurobarometer measures the state of public opinion in the EU Member States. This global indicator is influenced by many factors, including the work of other EU institutions and national governments, as well as political and economic factors, not just the communication actions of the Commission. It is relevant as a proxy for the overall perception of the EU citizens. Positive visibility for the EU is the desirable corporate outcome of Commission communication, even if individual DGs' actions may only make a small contribution.	
Source of data: Standard Eurobarometer (DG COMM budget)	
Baseline: November 2014	Target: 2020
Total "Positive": 39% Neutral: 37 % Total "Negative": 22%	Positive image of the EU ≥ 50%