



Annual Activity Report 2020

Office for Administration and Payment of
individual entitlements (PMO)

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PMO IN BRIEF - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of the Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements (PMO) is to provide to current and former staff of the European Commission and many of the other EU institutions and agencies the following services:

- establishment of individual financial rights for staff, pensioners and rights holders;
- payment of salaries, pensions and related entitlements;
- reimbursement of health insurance, mission and expert claims;
- delivery of EU laissez-passer and handling of third-country visas for staff.

PMO contributes to general objective 7 of the Commission towards a modern, high performing and sustainable European Commission. The PMO's expenditure is exclusively administrative in nature and is implemented under centralised direct management.

The PMO has a certain degree of autonomy for reasons of economy and quality of service and subsequently has a specific management and supervision structure:

- The Head of Service, who is the authorising officer by delegation, the appointing authority for the establishment of rights and has the responsibility of producing a declaration of assurance and an annual activity report;
- The PMO Management Committee, chaired by the Director-General of DG Human Resources and Security and composed of eight members representing the main stakeholders and clients of the Office.

This Annual Activity Report is a management report of the Head of PMO to the College of Commissioners. Annual Activity Reports are the main instrument of management accountability within the Commission and constitute the basis on which the College takes political responsibility for the decisions it takes as well as for the coordinating, executive and management functions it exercises, as laid down in the Treaties¹.

A. Key results and progress towards the achievement of the Commission's general objectives and PMO's specific objectives (executive summary of section 1)

The main challenges in 2020 being the departure of the UK from the European Union and the Covid-19 pandemic did not hinder PMO's objective to maintain continuity of its activities, efficiency and effectiveness in various processes, while improving service for everyone.

In a nutshell, in 2020, PMO managed individual rights of over 42.000 agents from the Commission, the Council, the EEAS, the Court of Auditors, Ombudsman and EU agencies and paid more than 49.000 salaries and 27.000 pensions every month; it also reimbursed close

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

to 2,5 million medical claims. Missions and expert reimbursements were primarily carried out until the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Communication with current and former staff and affiliates:

Communication with active and retired staff on matters relating to pay and benefits remained important. In 2020, 11 editions of HR Staff Matters Newsletter were sent to active staff and 11 PMO News to staff of the other Institutions and Agencies. The PMO also publishes articles in the pensioners' reviews: VOX (1 edition in 2020) and Info Senior (3 editions in 2020) and using also the Newsroom system to contact pensioners and unemployed.

Linked to specific objective 2 (medical/mission/expert claims), the "Staff Contact" portal remains the preferred platform for all questions on staff matters. Staff Contact is a modern and secure information portal, in which staff can find replies to their questions, using their EU-login. Through this platform, PMO answered on average more than 7.300 online queries per month in 2020, at par with the previous year. The average time taken to reply to online queries was 7 days (9 days in 2019), while queries processed outside the deadline of 15 working days amounted to 13% (17% in 2019).



The analysis of 'smileys' – green, yellow and red – to indicate the level of satisfaction from interaction with the service, shows a status quo in client satisfaction at 83%. The PMO works to continuously improve client service; with the analysis of the yellow and red reactions, possible new areas of improvement can be envisaged and implemented.

Effectiveness and efficiency of operational structure:

In 2020, PMO remained fully operational in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic taking this opportunity to put particular attention to rendering procedures and processes "paperless". In addition, it proved ready to offer support to the staff of the Institutions by putting in place online training and information sessions, as well as, under extreme time constraints, the framework for reimbursing office material for teleworking; it also provided the JSIS application platform to help out with the Covid-19 alert campaign; and last but not least, in 2020 PMO continued to prepare and perform all tasks at hand.

In more detail, the average time needed for reimbursement of medical expenses was 11 days in 2020, within the target of 12 days set in the PMO Strategic Plan. The number of claims that were handled in less than 30 days also stayed within target at 98%, of which 71% were reimbursed within 15 days. The positive evolution regarding the processing of inward transfers of pension entitlements continued, with nearly 2.250 files finalised in 2020.

Although the mission's activities remained at normal level until end of March, a drastic reduction of volumes was encountered due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In response, the

GEMI centralisation project² was launched, aimed at developing new synergies with the DGs, increasing efficiency in the area of missions management and raising awareness on the ecological impact of missions. By end of 2020, eight DGs participated in the project by transferring the role and tasks of their GEMI(s) to the PMO without transfers of resources.

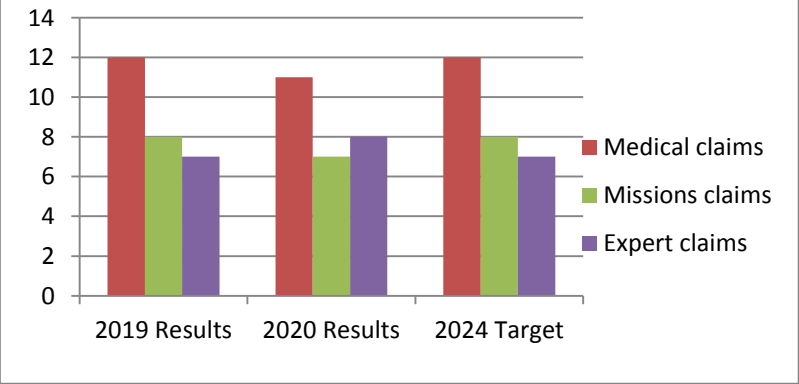
In 2020, the EU laissez-passer (EULP) Central Service processed applications for staff members and special applicants from 23 institutions and agencies, out of a total of 48 entities that have signed an SLA with the Commission. Brussels remains the main office with 1.800 files processed in 2020, while Luxembourg handled 160 files.

Data Quality, Data Security and Data Privacy rely heavily on the IT processes. In 2020, PMO improved its capacity to coordinate efforts in these three inter-related facets of Data Management through its dedicated IT Task Force. Operational since 2017, the IT Task Force aims to drive forward the development of PMO's IT tools to achieve increased efficiencies. The Data Quality & Security team started a complete review of the Security Plans for PMO IT Systems and established stronger collaboration with the Data Protection team.

This report covers the management of former Head of Service of PMO, Giuseppe Scognamiglio, who was in office until 31 January 2021 and is signed by Alexander Gemberg-Wiesike, PMO Head of Service since then, on the basis of, inter alia, the handover note.

² Gestionnaire Missions

B. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

<p>Most relevant KPI 1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Average time to handle reimbursement claims (in days)</p>  <p>(source: Management Statistics based on relevant IT systems used)</p>
<p>Most relevant KPI 2</p>	<p><i>Estimated risk at closure</i></p> <p>2019: < 1% 2020: < 1% Target 2024: < 1% of operational expenditures (source: extrapolation of results of controls)</p>
<p>Most relevant KPI 3</p>	<p><i>Achievement of the IT strategy – percentage of programmed project milestones implemented on time</i></p> <p>2019: 85% 2020: 85% Target 2024: 85%</p>
<p>Most relevant KPI 4</p>	<p><i>Average waiting time to reply to Staff contact online enquiries (in days).</i></p> <p>2019: 9 2020: 7 Target 2024 : 8 (source: Staff contact)</p>
<p>Most relevant KPI 5</p>	<p><i>Customer satisfaction and staff engagement</i></p> <p>2018: 83% 2019, 2020: no survey conducted Target 2024 : 85% (source:European Commission staff survey)</p>

C. Key conclusions on Financial management and Internal control (executive summary of section 2.1)

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

To ensure the achievement of policy and management objectives, the Commission has adopted a set of internal control principles, based on international good practice. The financial regulation requires that the organisational structure and the internal control systems used to implement the budget be set up in accordance with these principles. The PMO has assessed its internal control systems during the reporting year and has concluded that these are effective overall, with improvements needed. Please refer to AAR section 2.1.3 for further details.

In addition, the PMO has systematically examined the available control results and indicators, as well as the observations and recommendations issued by the internal auditor and the European Court of Auditors. These elements have been assessed to determine their impact on management's assurance about the achievement of the control objectives. Please refer to Section 2.1 for further details.

In conclusion, management has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable controls are in place and working as intended; risks are being appropriately monitored and mitigated; and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented. The Head of Service, in his capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation has signed the Declaration of Assurance.

D. Provision of information to the Commissioner

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

E. Specific actions on COVID-19

In 2020, Europe was strongly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Commission has proposed a strong and coordinated response to the health crisis as well as to the impact on Europe's economy and society. Covid-19 has also posed challenges as regards performance, control, audit and assurance in relation to the 2020 EU budget. In an exercise coordinated at corporate level, all Commission services have promoted the consistent and rigorous protection of the EU budget ensuring that appropriate mitigating measures were put in place.

PMO managed to remain operational from the beginning of the pandemic: following the general guidelines issued by the central services, all financial procedures became "paperless"; procurement procedures also became "paperless", with the explicit mention that once back to a normal working status, all documents would be revisited to ensure that the standard obligations (e.g. signature in blue ink) were observed. Communication with active and post-active staff was transferred online, covering all aspects of the procedures to follow.

Following difficulties to obtain administrative documents from Member States, ad hoc measures have been implemented in particular for post active staff (specific statement for unemployed, suspension of the transmission of the biannual declaration and pension slips for pensioners).

With regard to training sessions, either to newly arrived staff or pensioners, these took place online – with the result of an even greater audience being able to participate and benefit.

Activities related to missions and experts were heavily impacted by COVID-19. Thus, in order to cope with a significant reduction of workload for those two sectors, PMO proceeded with the redeployment of resources to support services for which the workload increased. In addition, PMO launched the GEMI centralisation pilot project.

To support the DG HR Medical Service, PMO implemented a new functionality on its PMO mobile application, allowing the registration of confirmed COVID-19 cases among EC staff.

Most important, in order to help Commission staff properly furnish their home offices, PMO actively contributed to the home equipment reimbursement scheme, in particular for office chairs and computer screens. As part of direct support to the COVID-19 measures, where teleworking plays a bigger part in the working life, PMO set up in late 2020 a number of processes so that eligible staff can claim and receive reimbursement. This action was a great success and continues in 2021.

1. Key results and progress towards the achievement of the Commission's general objectives and DG's specific objectives

All targets related to the specific objectives have been achieved. Further details on the main outputs related to these objectives can be found in Annex 2.

The main challenge in 2020 was to uphold efficiency and effectiveness of the PMO's activities while facing the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic. It managed individual rights of over 42.000 staff from the Commission, the Council, the EEAS, the European Court of Auditors, the European Ombudsman and EU agencies and paid more than 49.000 salaries and 27.000 pensions every month; it also reimbursed close to 2,5 million medical claims. At the same time, faced with the Covid-19 pandemic, volumes of mission claims and expert files decreased drastically compared to the previous year.

Offering a correct and timely payment of salaries, pensions and other related entitlements, a swift reimbursement of health insurance, mission and expert claims, a smooth delivery of EU laissez-passer and visas, and more generally accessible and customer-friendly services, is essential to allow the Commission – and increasingly staff from other Institutions and outside bodies – to carry out their duties unhindered. Special focus on Security & Privacy complete the overall picture.

1.1 Specific objective 1: Ensuring at all times the correct and timely handling of all types of transactions

The low rate of Article 90 complaints upheld, below the maximum set as a target of 10%, and a detected error rate below 1%, confirm the high quality of PMO services (see details in Part 2 of the report).

The positive trend with regard to the reimbursement time continues. The average time needed for reimbursement of medical claims remained stable at 11 days, compared to 2019. The number of claims handled in less than 30 days remained within target at 98%, of which 71% were reimbursed within 15 days.

Further details regarding the main outputs related to this objective can be found in Annex 2.

1.2 Specific objective 2: Maintain high quality standards of customer service

Since 2019, Staff Contact is an improved, modernised and secure information portal, in which staff can find replies to their questions, using their EU-login. By the end of 2020, it received more than 7.300 online tickets per month, remaining stable in comparison to

2019.

The average time taken to reply to online queries slightly decreased to 7 days compared to 9 in 2019. The percentage of queries processed outside the deadline of 15 working days was reported at 13%, despite the complexity of the questions received.

In 2017, PMO became system owner of the new IT tool for management and reimbursement of experts "AGM" (Advanced Gateway to EU Meetings). Throughout 2020, the number of experts processed was drastically reduced due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In view of a picking-up of activity, the PMO will look into the possibility of developing a "hybrid" meeting reimbursement module, with physical presence and participation through videoconference combined in future meetings.

The extension of services to other institutions required all systems underpinning the functioning of the PMO activities to absorb new activities. The IT systems were further improved in the light of this objective. In 2020, efforts continued to (i) streamline procedures and business processes which underpin the organisation; (ii) extend the coverage of information systems especially for individual pecuniary rights; (iii) roll-out aspects of new systems (Payment Factory and Staff Contact); (iv) analysing the future replacement of payroll application (NAP); (v) develop the inter-institutional dimension of eServices (Payment Factory, Sysper-rights); (vi) as from September 2020 a new IT system integrated in Sysper Post Activity, dedicated to the unemployment rights, with a Front Office for the unemployed.

PMO estimates to have achieved 85% of the planned IT developments, in line with the expected target foreseen in 2020 and despite some delays in Sysper projects for which development priorities have changed because of the on-boarding of the European Council and of Agencies.

The PMO commitment to communication with active and post-active staff on matters relating to pay and benefits remained high. The PMO contributed to the HR Staff Matters Newsletter, of which 11 editions were sent to active staff. For staff of the other Institutions and Agencies, 11 newsletters PMO News were sent. The PMO also published articles in the pensioners' reviews: VOX (1 edition in 2020) and Info Senior (3 editions in 2020), also using the Newsroom system to contact pensioners and unemployed.

In 2020 PMO organised more than 100 information sessions provided by videoconference on pension rights, unemployment benefits and transfer of pension rights. Those presentations, dedicated to the staff of the European institutions and agencies, proved very successful with an ever increasing number of participations. The presentations continue in 2021.

In 2020, AIACE continued to be an important partner for the PMO: it gave assistance on pensioner matters and it provided a useful intermediary in concluding agreements with private clinics in specific countries to administer flu vaccines to post-active population. It also addressed the question of the parity coefficient for the UK, with arrangements to be applied as of 2022. In this context of partnership, the network of AIACE Ambassadors made it easier to reach a larger number of people and therefore meet the expectations of a larger number of pensioners. The ambassadors relay information, help solve problem cases, help to understand the needs and specific situations encountered in the Member States. In order to be more efficient in PMO's relations with the AIACE, these are managed by the JSIS

through a single point of contact, which is the Centre of Excellence of the JSIS Front Office. Although PMO attaches great importance to participation in meetings with AIACE international and local sections, these meetings were unfortunately suspended during 2020.

With regard to the JSIS, new health-screening programmes continued to be launched in 2020, albeit with a slight delay due to change in priorities in view of the pandemic. The programme aims to combine a visit to a general practitioner, a set of relevant examinations and a complete debriefing again with the general practitioner. The JSIS continued the negotiations with potentially interested health centres and hospitals to ensure the best possible arrangements.

Additionally, the project for a mobile application (front office application to allow the JSIS members to access certain services through their mobile phones) was used together with DG HR. Used primarily to signal absence due to Covid-19, the application can also be used for declarations and rights.

JSIS is putting a particular emphasis on client services and especially on its most vulnerable members. New teams have been dedicated to persons with serious illness and disabilities and to front office welcome desks, where members benefit from personalised support and information. The organisation of the JSIS through dedicated centres of excellence ensures the same high level of service to members, regardless of where they are located.

Several improvements in MiPS, the application for the management of mission claims, were implemented in 2020 and will continue in 2021, including credit card analysis and handling of advance payments. Work continued on the development of the MiPS mobile platform, with the second phase launched in 2020.

Several procurement procedures are in the process of finalisation with regard to travel insurance, avions taxi and credit cards.

Visa request files were further simplified and the use of paper is now limited to documents explicitly required by the Embassies.

Further details on the main outputs related to this objective can be found in Annex 12.

1.3 Specific objective 3: Deepening inter-institutional synergies

Following the on-boarding of the European Council and the European Ombudsman in 2019, PMO continued with the on-boarding of several other Agencies for the full catalogue of services.

These services are based on either statutory provisions or Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Following the new directives on data protection, the SLAs have been revised. The majority already have been signed in 2020, with two (out of 60) remaining SLAs expected to be signed by mid 2021.

The SLAs cover also the financing of the services provided, either through invoicing or through direct transfer of budget for obligatory tasks in line with Article 65 of the Financial Regulation. The charge-back methodology is in line with the Commission Guidance on the provision of services to other EU Institutions and Agencies as well as other external Bodies.

In September 2020, the Unemployment part of Sysper Post Activity was opened to clients. Electronic communication between the Commission and the unemployed has eliminated the risk of non-secured information transfer.

2. Modern and efficient administration and internal control

2.1 Financial management and internal control

Assurance is provided on the basis of an objective examination of evidence of the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

This examination is carried out by management, who monitors the functioning of the internal control systems on a continuous basis, and by internal and external auditors. Its results are explicitly documented and reported to the Head of Service. The following reports have been considered:

- the reports by AOSDs;
- the contribution of the Internal Control Coordinator;
- the reports on ex-ante/a posteriori/ex-post controls;
- the register of exceptions and non-compliance events;
- the limited conclusion of the internal auditor on the state of control, and the observations and recommendations reported by the Internal Audit Service (IAS);
- the observations and the recommendations reported by the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

These reports result from a systematic analysis of the evidence available. This approach provides sufficient guarantees as to the completeness and reliability of the information reported and results in a complete coverage of the budget delegated to the Head of Service of PMO.

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

2.1.1 Control results

This section reports and assesses the elements identified by management which support the assurance on the achievement of the internal control objectives³. The DG's assurance building and materiality criteria are outlined in AAR Annex 5. Annex 6 outlines the main

³ 1) Effectiveness, efficiency and economy of operations; 2) reliability of reporting; 3) safeguarding of assets and information; 4) prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities; and 5) adequate management of the risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, taking into account the multiannual character of programmes as well as the nature of the payments (FR Art 36.2). The 2nd and/or 3rd Internal Control Objective(s) (ICO) only when applicable, given the DG's activities.

risks together with the control processes to mitigate them and the indicators used to measure the performance of the relevant control systems.

To illustrate the weight of the different operational domains and related controls, this table shows the total payments⁴ made per main type of PMO activity as well as revenues collected.

PMO expenditure 2020	Expenditure (MEUR)	Percentage
Salaries and other entitlements	3.336,1	57,2 %
Post activity (pensions, unemployment and other entitlements)	2.139,1	36,7 %
Total "salaries, post-activity and associated entitlements" (domain/ RCS 1)	5.475,2	93,9 %
Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme (JSIS)	320,2	5,5 %
Missions	22,6	0,4 %
Experts and candidates	7,9	0,1 %
Total "reimbursement of medical, expert and mission claims" (domain/ RCS 2)	350,7	6,0%
Other	3,5	
Total	5.829,4	100 %

Source: budget implementation, PMO

⁴ The total shown is different from tables in Annex 3:

- for the total payment appropriations, the present table includes extra-budgetary managed funds (JSIS for EUR 320,2 million and Unemployment Fund for EUR 32,8 million). It does not include PMO operating expenditure (EUR 54,6 million in total and EUR 39,1 after subdelegated credits to other DGs).
- for the revenues and income, the present table includes contributions extra budgetary managed (JSIS, unemployment and insurance) for EUR 391,6 million.

PMO revenues and income 2020	Revenues (EUR million)	Percentage
Contributions (taxes, pension)	1.084,6	71,4%
Contributions (JSIS, unemployment, insurance) – extra-budgetary managed	391,6	25,8%
Total of contributions (RCS 3)	1.476,2	97,2%
Charge-back of services to other Institutions and bodies (RCS 4)	13,8	0,9%
Other	29,4	1,9%
Total	1.519,4	100 %

Source: budget implementation, PMO

With regard to additional reporting requirements introduced by the 2018 Financial Regulation (FR), there were two cases of ‘confirmation of instructions’ (new FR art 92.3). The other new requirements are not applicable to the Office.

PMO's management factually concludes that the control results, presented in the following sections and related annexes are complete and reliable and thus provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of the internal control objectives.

The overall conclusion table demonstrates the completeness of the coverage:

- Financial information, including total of payments on credits, delegated credits, financial assets and liabilities in Annex 3,
- Relevant Control Systems (RCSs) for budget implementation for the areas listed above in Annex 6.

1. Effectiveness = the control results and benefits

- Legality and regularity of the transactions

The PMO is using internal control processes to ensure the adequate management of the risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions it is responsible for, taking into account the nature of the payments concerned. The control objective is to ensure that the residual error rate does not exceed 2% (cf. materiality criteria in annex 5).

The PMO control strategy is based on the principle that to establish an entitlement or the request for reimbursement, a case handler compares the submitted documents to the relevant eligibility criteria. Every decision is supervised, except for some allowances where the review of some lower risk and less complex files is performed on a sample basis (e.g. in JSIS simple reimbursement claims), due to the high number of declarations received.

Depending on the complexity of the claim, a more detailed analysis will be carried out to arrive at a sound decision. It should be noted that in 2020, the PMO's control strategy has remained stable, with no impact being reported due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Given the repetitiveness of the main PMO activities, this leads to a continuous adjustment and improvement of the internal control system. Corrective measures are taken when an error is linked to a system weakness. Such measures involve training, reallocation of files, tighter verification or focused ex-post checks.

The results of ex-post controls are analysed and they too may result in corrective measures. When the result of an ex-post control indicates a need to take further action, a detailed action plan is formulated.

Since the PMO is characterized by high numbers of transactions often dealt with by mass operations, the incorporation of multiple layers of automatic controls in the IT-applications is essential.

Every transaction **in Salaries, Post Activity & Associated Entitlements** is subject to ex-ante verification. All errors are corrected retroactively and the results of corrections influence the accuracy of future transactions. The ex-ante controls revealed no material errors.

The results **for ex-ante controls in the area of medical, expert and mission claims** show that the total detected error rate of the ex-ante controls remains well below the materiality threshold of 2%, as shown in the table below. The samples taken are considered as representative of their individual population, and are then weighted against the total population of their sectors. Extrapolating to the overall population, minus the population controlled and corrected, the weighted error rate is calculated 0,07 % for this domain (2).

Scope ex-ante control	# files verified	Total amount verified (EUR)	% Value Total of population covered	Weighted error rate 2020
Reimbursement of medical, mission and expert claims - domain 2	6.403	5.464.557	1,56%	0,07%

Source: reports on ex ante controls, PMO

The table below gives an overview of the results of the ex-post controls carried out during the year.

Scope ex-post control (expenditure areas)	# files verified	Total amount verified (euro)	% Value Total of population covered	Weighted error rate 2020
Salaries, pensions and associated entitlements -domain 1	1049	133.010.551,93	2.43%	0,03%

Reimbursement of mission and expert claims - domain 2 ⁵	6.486	821.345,01	0,23%	0,26%
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Source: reports on ex post controls, PMO

For Salaries & Associated Entitlements, the results of the ex-post controls show a total detected error rate estimated at 0,03% (weighted).

For reimbursement of expert and mission claims, the total weighted error rate of all ex-post controls, of which many are targeted to the higher risk areas, remains well below the materiality threshold of 2%; confirming the accuracy and quality of transactions processing by the PMO and the effectiveness of the ex-ante controls. The financial impact is low, and the corrections are usually made directly in the system (recovery from salaries). The detected error rate is calculated at 0,26% (weighted).

Samples for these ex-post controls are selected on a random and representative basis to detect errors in the files controlled, calculate the financial impact of these, proceed with the necessary corrections and/or structural modifications. Not included are targeted controls that focus on specific areas/issues and usually cover 100% of the population in question.

The reimbursement of medical claims in the framework of the Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme and the payment of unemployment benefits result in additional control objectives for the related JSIS fund and the Unemployment Fund (handling unemployment allowances following termination of service). Hence, a number of control actions are in place:

- an independent audit is carried out every year by an external auditor on the JSIS accounts, which resulted in a clean audit opinion on the financial year 2020;
- The evolution of the Unemployment Fund is carefully followed by the PMO with different services of the Commission (DG HR and DG BUDG). The fund decreased to EUR 29,4 million at the end of 2020 vs. 2019. The Commission reports every two years to the European Parliament and the Council on the evolution of this fund, the last report was issued in March 2020.

In conclusion, both funds are subject to follow-up controls set up by the PMO, revealing no material issues.

To sum up, the PMO considers that the information provided on the controls is factual, complete and reliable. As such, the controls in place are considered effective.

PMO's relevant expenditure, estimated overall risk at payment, estimated future corrections and risk at closure are disclosed in Table [X].

In the context of the protection of the EU budget, at the Commission's corporate level, the PMO estimated overall amounts at risk and their estimated future corrections at an overall

⁵ in 2020, all ex post controls based on risk-based samples were not included in the error calculation, as these results cannot be extrapolated

amount at risk at payment of EUR 29,1 million and an overall amount at risk for revenue and income at EUR 7,5 million – taking into consideration the recommended proxy of 0,5% for administrative expenditure. This is the AOD's best, conservative estimation of the amount of relevant expenditure during the year not in conformity with the contractual and regulatory provisions applicable at the time the payment was made.

This expenditure will subsequently be subject to ex-post controls and a proportion of the underlying errors will be detected and corrected in subsequent years. The nature of PMO activities, payment of salaries, pensions and reimbursement of claims, makes for an easy recovery of found errors, as corrections can be deducted from monthly salary or pension payments, with a relatively stable population (staff and their families). This implies that corrections made following the identification of errors have a positive impact not only in the past but also in the future. The conservatively estimated future corrections for 2020 expenditure amount to zero. This is the amount of errors that the Service conservatively estimates will be identified and corrected by controls planned to be carried out in subsequent years. No historic information is available for revenue and income.

This results in the estimated overall risk at closure of EUR 29,1 million for expenditures and EUR 7,5 million for revenues, representing 0,5% of the PMO's total financial flows for 2020. This is stable over time.

Table X - Estimated risk at closure

PMO	"payments made" (FY; m€)	<i>minus</i> new prefinancing [<i>plus</i> retentions made*] (in FY; m€)	<i>plus</i> cleared prefinancing [<i>minus</i> retentions released* and deductions of expenditure made by MS] (in FY; m€)	= "relevant expenditure" (for the FY; m€)	Average Error Rate (<i>weighted</i> AER; %)	estimated risk <i>at payment</i> (FY; m€)	Average Recoveries and Corrections (<i>adjusted</i> ARC; %)	estimated future corrections [and deductions] (for FY; m€)	estimated risk <i>at closure</i> (FY; m€)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Management of salaries, post-activity and related entitlements (RCS1)	5.475,2	N/A	N/A	5.475,2	0,5%	27,4			
Management of medical, expert and mission claims (RCS2)	350,7	N/A	N/A	350,7	0,5%	1,7			
Other	3,5	N/A	N/A	3,5	0,5%				
Overall operational payments	5.829,4	N/A	N/A	5.829,4	0,5%	29,1 or 0,5% of (5)	0		29,1
Deduction of extra budgetary managed funds (11)	-353,0	N/A	N/A	-353,0					
PMO operating expenditure	39,1	N/A	N/A	39,1					
Overall payments (as	5.515,5	N/A	N/A	5.515,5	0,5%	29,1	0		29,1

per Annex 3)									
Contributions (RCS 3)	1.476,2	N/A	N/A	1.476,2	0,5%	7,4			
Charge back (RCS 4)	13,8	N/A	N/A	13,8	0,5%	0,1			
Other	29.4 (12)	N/A	N/A	29.4	0	0			
Overall revenue and income (11)	1.519,4	N/A	N/A	1.519,4	0,5%	7,5			7,5
Deduction of extra budgetary managed funds (11)	-391,6								
Overall revenue and income (as per Annex 3)	1.127,8	N/A	N/A	1.127,8	0,5%	7,5			7,5

Notes to the table X

(1) differentiated for the relevant portfolio segments at a level which is lower than the PMO total

(2) Payments made or equivalent, e.g. expenditure registered in the Commission's accounting system, accepted expenditure or cleared pre-financing. In any case, this means after the preventive (ex-ante) control measures have already been implemented earlier in the cycle.

(5) as (1).

(6) In order to calculate the weighted Average Error Rate (AER) for the total relevant expenditure in the reporting year, the recommended administrative proxy has been used, even if it is way above the error rate as per PMO's ex ante and ex post controls.

(11) Extra-budgetary managed funds: Unemployment Fund for EUR 32,8 million (RCS 1) and JSIS for EUR 320,2 million (RCS 2). The revenues and income includes contributions extra budgetary managed (JSIS, unemployment and insurance) for EUR 391,6 million (RCS 3).

(12) Budget regularisation between Services

- **Fraud prevention, detection and correction**

The PMO has developed and implemented its own anti-fraud strategy since 2013, on the basis of the methodology provided by OLAF. It was last updated in December 2017, with a new revision foreseen in 2021. Its implementation is being monitored and reported to the management at regular intervals. All necessary actions have been implemented.

The PMO also contributed to the Commission anti-fraud strategy and followed up all OLAF's *financial* recommendations (issued in 2016-2020).

The results achieved during the year with regard to the anti-fraud measures in place can be summarised as follows:

The legal sector ascertains the appropriate treatment of all potential cases (transfer to OLAF and IDOC⁶). Four cases were transferred in 2020 and these are still ongoing. Four other cases were followed up from 2019.

In addition, the regular ex-post supervision carried out, as well as specific anti-fraud related checks are embedded in the internal control strategy. The authorising officers by sub-delegation (AOSD) report on their activities to the Head of Service with the obligation to explicitly mention any anomalies that occurred. No material issues were reported. The degree of implementation of the anti-fraud strategy, internal control results and the evaluation of the annual risk analysis exercise covering also fraud-related risks, give reasonable assurance that the fraud risk is sufficiently managed and mitigated.

On the basis of the available information, the PMO has reasonable assurance that the anti-fraud measures in place are effective overall, with an additional improvement envisaged once the revised anti-fraud strategy is in place.

- **Other control objectives: safeguarding of information, reliability of reporting**

Due to the nature of the activities carried out by the PMO, the sensitivity of personal data managed and the increased importance attributed to privacy and security issues, there is particular interest in the management of information. To obtain sufficient assurance that all data processed is accurately and sufficiently protected, specific measures have been created and specific indicators are closely supervised.

- A systematic verification of all persons with access to the financial information systems is carried out.
- The exception registry is kept up to date on a day-to-day basis. Two exceptions/non-compliance events were registered during the year.

⁶ Investigation and Disciplinary Office of the Commission

- In 2020, PMO reported 27 cases of data breach out of a total of close to 4 million operations performed (it should be noted that PMO reported each data breach, even for minor cases, when there was no risk for the data subject).
- Regarding the basis on which PMO takes decisions, an indicator is used for the number of article 90 complaints that are upheld. The indicator for 2020 was 8,55% of all complaints received. However, the decision to uphold an article 90 complaint does not necessarily indicate that an error was committed when taking the initial decision.

Benefits of control: There are non-quantifiable benefits resulting from the controls implemented to safeguard assets. In principle, they ensure compliance with regulatory provisions and safeguard the resources, thus avoiding potential reputational risk.

Given the improvements observed and the measures in place towards a full coverage rate in the future and as no significant issue having a material impact was encountered during 2020, PMO management considers that the control results are complete and reliable and that the control objective is achieved.

2. **Efficiency = the Time-to-pay indicator**

Timely Payments	DG Score	EC Score
	90%	99%

The delay is due to the technical closure of the Commission accounting system ABAC (15 days in January) which has a significant impact on the reimbursement of missions and experts fees.

3. **Economy = the estimated cost of controls**

PMO has analysed the costs and benefits of the two main control processes, i.e. ex-ante and ex-post controls. However, since a quantitative estimation of the volume of errors prevented is not available, it is only possible to quantify a part of the related benefits, other than the amounts recovered because of these controls. In consequence, the cost-benefits of controls are analysed on the basis of an estimation of the costs of control in relation to the value of the related funds managed.

The cost estimates are based on the overall cost of an official or contract agent, as estimated by the Commission. The estimated full-time equivalents (FTEs) allocated to the control-related functions are validated by line managers (heads of sectors / heads of units) for each staff member separately based on the actual assignment of responsibilities and distribution of tasks.

In domain 1 (**salaries, post-activity and associated entitlements**) an estimated EUR 3,03 million were invested in controlling financial transactions worth approximately EUR 5,44 billion. Thus 0,06% of the total value of transactions checked was dedicated to controls.

In domain 2 (**reimbursement of medical, expert and mission claims**) an estimated EUR 0,41 million were invested in controlling financial transactions worth approximately EUR 0,35 billion. Thus 0,12% of the total value of transactions checked was dedicated to controls.

In addition, the cost of coordinating data protection aspects in the PMO is EUR 82.000.

4. Conclusion on the cost-effectiveness of controls

Based on the most relevant key indicators and control results, the PMO has assessed the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of its control system and reached a positive conclusion on the cost-effectiveness of the controls for which it is responsible.

Control is inherent to the core activities of the PMO and is structured around four pillars: high level and well trained staff, control by design in our IT systems, ex ante and ex post controls. During 2020, this control environment has remained stable, with no impact reported due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

To calculate the cost of control, staff performing ex ante and ex post controls as well as authorising expenses are taken into account and attributed the annual average FTE costs including “habillage” by DG BUDG. In 2021, a screening will take place to reassess the actual number of staff involved and adjust the number of FTEs if necessary.

An overall estimation of the cost of control for ex-ante controls and ex post controls, carried out in PMO (including JSIS), and for the financial verification is roughly estimated at EUR 3,44 million, which corresponds to 0,06% of total payments made by PMO (EUR 5.829.4 million). The unique nature of the PMO's activities, consisting mainly of recurrent mass payments of salaries and pensions, explains why a limited number of transactions cover a vast amount of payments. The variety of control mechanisms, but in particular the control by design and automated controls, guarantee a high degree of reliability at a low cost of control.

2.1.2 Audit observations and recommendations

This section sets out the observations, opinions and conclusions reported by auditors – including the limited conclusion of the Internal Auditor on the state of internal control. Summaries of the management measures taken in response to the audit recommendations are also included, together with an assessment of the likely material impact of the findings on the achievement of the internal control objectives, and therefore on management's assurance.

2.1.2.1. Audits by the IAS

The IAS “very important” recommendations that remain opened in the context of IAS audits concluded until 31.01.21 are:

1. Audit on control strategy for the JSIS, including accidents’ insurance (2018), which resulted in two recommendations rated “very important”: Verification of the statistical sampling used in JSIS control strategy and formalisation and consolidation in one control strategy document for all the components that make up this strategy. The actions already taken towards implementation of the recommendation in the first quarter of 2021 provide sufficient assurance that it does not have an impact on the declaration of assurance.
2. Audit on the charge back process (2016), where one recommendation remains open, signature of SLAs (two out of 60 remaining). Mitigating measures were put in place to ensure equal treatment of all clients. Actions already taken towards implementation of this recommendation provide sufficient assurance that it does not have an impact on the declaration of assurance.

2.1.2.2. Opinion of the IAS

Based on all work undertaken by the Internal Audit Service in the period 2018-2020, namely,

- Consulting engagement on the accounting for JSIS direct billing in PMO (2018);
- Audit on control strategy for the JSIS, including accidents’ insurance (2018)

and taking into account that:

- Management has accepted all the recommendations issued in 2018-2020;
- Management has adopted action plans to implement all the accepted recommendations. The IAS considers that these action plans are adequate to address the residual risks identified by the auditors;
- The implementation of these action plans is monitored through reports by management and follow-up audits by the IAS;

- Management has assessed a number of action plans as implemented, which have not yet been followed up by the IAS.

The Director General of the IAS concluded that the internal control systems in place for the audited processes are effective, except for the observations giving rise to the 'very important' recommendations. These recommendations still need to be addressed, in line with the agreed action plans or by the submission and implementation of an agreed action plan.

2.1.2.3 Court of Auditors

In the context of DAS 2020 (launched in the second half of 2020), PMO has replied to questions and additional requests for information from the Court. A recurrent issue involved the management of family allowances for staff members. PMO has already put in place several measures to further improve the update of the personal situation and the management of family allowances:

- use of the IT tool SYSPER for easier and direct encoding by agents
- the rights granted for a limited period or with a specific end date, allowing for regular controls
- extended communication through dedicated channels and on exchanges of information on obligation of agents to update their information.

Furthermore, PMO put in place a control exercise of all non-declared situations of allowances received from other sources.

At the time of issuance of this report, the final report from the Court for DAS 2020 has not been received yet.

2.1.2.4 Other recommendations

In 2020, PMO received 3 recommendations included in the Mediation Service 2019 annual report, two of which welcomed the work already carried out by the PMO. On the third recommendation, the PMO is actively working towards a review of internal procedures in order to respond to it.

With regard to recommendations issued by the Ombudsman, none were received, as all claims were settled.

2.1.2.5 Conclusion

The audit work and opinions by both internal and external auditors reveal that the internal control systems in place at the PMO for the audited processes give reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of the business objectives.

2.1.3 Assessment of the effectiveness of internal control systems

The Commission has adopted an Internal Control Framework based on international good practice, to ensure the achievement of its policy and management objectives. Compliance with the internal control framework is a compulsory requirement.

The PMO uses the organisational structure and the internal control systems suited to achieving its policy and internal control objectives in accordance with the internal control principles and has due regard to the risks associated with the environment in which it operates.

The inherent risks to which the PMO is exposed are related to the main fields of activity:

- The establishment of entitlements requires profound knowledge and experience of the staff regulations and legality and regularity criteria. A decision on an entitlement has recurring material financial implications for a long period (depending on the nature of the entitlement);
- A reimbursement claim can result from a decision made by another service (recruitment, mission, leave, etc.) or from an individual request from a staff member. The vast number of claims, the shared responsibility with other services and the varying complexity are also inherent risks to the achievement of PMO objectives.

PMO has assessed its internal control system during the reporting year and has concluded that it is effective and that the components and principles are present and functioning as intended, with some minor improvements needed.

This assessment was based on interviews with all PMO units together with individual contributions received, and consolidated for PMO as a whole. The evaluation of the internal control principles did not reveal material issues about the reasonable assurance given by the Head of Service, given that completion of any remaining issues was already underway. The implementation of the principles shows no deterioration compared to previous years. As a step towards further improving and strengthening the role of internal control in PMO, a particular focus has been given on including internal control issues (e.g. discussion on control reports) in the management meetings in 2020. This ensures increased awareness and participation of PMO management in the process.

PMO keeps an up-to-date register of all its exceptions and non-compliance events, which are duly notified to the Head of Service, registered in Ares and published on MyIntracomm. Two exceptions/non-compliance events were registered for the year 2020.

Further to this, a thorough risk analysis exercise in 2020 enabled the Office to update its risk registry, together with an ad-hoc exercise at Commission level on Covid-19. The risk analysis shows that the main risks are sufficiently managed by the Internal Control System.

In 2020, there was one critical risk identified, that is common throughout the European Commission. Mitigating measures are already underway, both at horizontal level but also, and more specifically, at PMO level, and as such do not have an impact on the internal control.

In 2020, five sensitive posts are still occupied by the same staff member for a period surpassing the five-year threshold due to resource constraints. A risk analysis, already performed in 2015, revealed that the most cost-efficient solution was to not remove the persons but add a level of supplementary review by management. PMO has structural difficulties attracting new candidates for these sensitive functions and is currently looking into ways of ensuring knowledge transfer.

Finally, the results of ex-ante and ex-post controls carried out throughout the PMO in 2020 confirm that the total error rate remains consistently low. The ex-post results also provide assurance on the effectiveness of the ex-ante controls. With its circular process, both for itself but also for its clientele, the PMO is continuously reflecting to improve the cost effectiveness of its control strategy using the control results. When there are errors detected, they are immediately corrected. In cases where errors that are detected are of a systemic nature, a revision of procedures and systems takes place. The low rate of errors found in ex-post controls together with the low percentage of error established year after year by the Court of Auditors show that the internal control is effective. It should also be noted that in 2020 there was no impact due to Covid-19.

The PMO has assessed its internal control system during the reporting year and has concluded that **it is effective and the components and principles are present and functioning well overall, but minor improvements are needed related to** the “control environment” and “control activities” of the internal control components, mainly relating to completion of revisions in objectives, procedures and control strategies, already underway.

2.1.4 Conclusions on the assurance

This section reviews the assessment of the elements already reported above (in Sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3), and the sub-conclusions already reached. It draws an overall conclusion to support the declaration of assurance and whether it should be qualified with reservations.

The information reported in Section 2.1 stems from the results of management and auditor monitoring contained in the reports listed. These reports result from a systematic analysis of the evidence available. This approach provides sufficient guarantees as to the completeness and reliability of the information reported and results in a comprehensive coverage of the budget delegated to the Head of Service of PMO.

- Proper follow-up of the audit recommendations by ECA and IAS is carried out to ensure their effective implementation;
- All procurement procedures reviewed by GAMA received a positive opinion;

- Ex-post control results did not raise any serious error;
- No significant issue was mentioned in the reports from the authorising officers by sub-delegation (AOSD) to the AOD;
- None of the registered exceptions had a significant impact on the assurance of the Office;
- All the identified risks are properly mitigated and managed and the risk assessment process is effective;
- PMO's internal control system has been assessed as compliant with the requirements of the internal control principles. Efforts are made to ensure its continuous improvement;
- The risk of fraud is well mitigated;
- The controls in place to ensure the safeguarding of assets did not reveal any significant issue with material impact;

Taking into account the above elements supporting PMO's assurance, it can be concluded that the internal control systems implemented provide reasonable assurance as to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions as well as to the achievement of the other internal control objectives (true and fair view, resources used for the intended purpose, sound financial management, non-omission of significant information, efficiency of controls, prevention and detection of fraud, and the safeguarding of assets).

Overall Conclusion

In conclusion, management has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable controls are in place and working as intended; risks are being appropriately monitored and mitigated; and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented. The Head of Service of PMO, in his capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation, has signed the Declaration of Assurance.

2.1.5 Declaration of Assurance

Declaration of Assurance

I, the undersigned, Alexander Gemberg-Wiesike

Head of Service of PMO

In my capacity as authorising officer by delegation

Declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view⁷.

State that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement, the handover report of my predecessor, and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of the self-assessment, ex-post controls, the work of the Internal Audit Service and the lessons learnt from the reports of the Court of Auditors for years prior to the year of this declaration.

Confirm that I am not aware of anything not reported here which could harm the interests of the institution or those of the Commission.

Brussels, 6 May 2021

(e-signed)

Alexander Gemberg-Wiesike

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

2.2 Modern and efficient administration – other aspects

2.2.1 Human resource management

PMO is committed to supporting gender balance in middle management. With women in middle management posts representing 42,9% on 1/1/2020, PMO also achieved its target of one female appointment to Head of unit in Mid-February 2020 (College decision SEC(2017)359).

PMO participates in the pilot exercise for the centralisation of the Local Information Security Officer (LISO) function, which has proven to be a positive experience. The PMO LISO has been placed at the disposal of DIGIT since 01/03/2018.

Following the reception of the 2018 staff satisfaction survey results in May 2019, the PMO HR.BC team and PMO Communication team have implemented a series of actions detailed in its development plan to respond to the main concerns of PMO staff. The Commission Fit@work policy is implemented through a multi-annual health and well-being programme that was renewed in 2020. Since PMO's move into a collaborative workspace, OIB and PMO Offices offer a wide range of activities in the shared well-being room and PMO events are organised regularly. PMO is also enlarging the well-being activity offers as much as possible.

There is now better visibility for career opportunities with publication of all vacant posts on My PMO News and on the Contractual Agents' Job Market.

In general, PMO has continued to support communication to staff on corporate HR priorities by publishing available information on its internet and through targeted communications, when appropriate.

Job related:

- Formalisation of the welcoming of new colleagues by providing general information and organising once or twice a year (depending on the number of new colleagues), an induction session to present the horizontal services and to allow the newcomers to develop an internal network;
- Establishment of training priorities based on collection and analysis of training needs provided by the units. These priorities are reviewed yearly to best meet the needs of the teams and enable the Office to maintain high quality standards in terms of customer service.
- Organisation of chats with the Head of Service to provide regular info about the sanitary crisis and any topics that matter to staff. At the end of the year, success stories and acknowledgement from management and from the Board for the work done in this difficult period.
- Implementation of a strategy for managing psychosocial risks for managers/team leaders and PMO staff to reduce the emotional charge of specific files. It first focused on selected teams (very serious illness/survivor pension/handicap) and due to its high success and added-value, it will be enlarged to all PMO staff;
- Support of the simplification of processes within the HR delivery model while ensuring business continuity and quality of service in the three PMO sites (Brussels, Luxemburg and Ispra);

Working environment:

- Development of social activities: PMO has developed a “Better Together Campaign” to maintain contacts with the colleagues and share culinary, cultural, sports and artistic experience;

Development of the local fit@work strategy in line with the fit@work Commission programme; and enlargement of the well-being activity offers through providing new sports activities, new creative activities. Due to the pandemic context, PMO converted, as much as possible, its sports activities into online courses and enlarged its well-being activity offers – through the “stay safe, stay healthy” campaign. A further campaign for a first return to the offices in Spring 2020 was developed to inform colleagues of maintaining good habits. The following table shows the total human resources available within the Office as of 01/01/2021 (including the OLAF Supervisory Committee Secretariat – 8 posts).

Activity	Officials and temporary staff	Contractual agents	Other groups	Total
Administration	160 (1)	442	25	627

(1) 160 job quotas available in Sysper on 01/01/2021: 40 AD and 119 AST posts and 1 SC.

2.2.2 Digital transformation and information management

In line with the 2018 European Commission Digital Strategy, PMO pursues implementation of the core principles for its key IT systems.

PMO made also progress by developing two key solutions, namely PMO Mobile and EU Login 4 Life in the context of Digital Solutions Modernisation plan: PMO Mobile application is a first mobile web application allowing users to access medical, mission, expert and in the future post activity functionalities from mobile devices; EU 4 Life makes relevant key services and applications available to pensioners, once they leave the institutions.

In 2020, in line with the corporate approach, PMO started collaboration with the HRT programme on data governance. In addition, the PMO IT Taskforce organigram was aligned to reflect the Digital Strategy.

During 2020, the management of unemployment was integrated within SYSPER and NAP under the project “Sysper Post Activity”. At present, all payments of unemployment allowances are carried out through NAP and Payment Factory (PF), for the almost 2.000 beneficiaries. Sysper Post Activity also offers a Front Office (FO) to the unemployed and enables them to claim their rights to the allowance and family related rights. Furthermore, a secure exchange of the information between PMO and the unemployed is in the process of being set up so that the beneficiaries can upload documents directly to the system.

The recent opening in PF of a Front Office for legal and banking data will also facilitate the entry into service workflow and the communication of personal data, supporting the implementation of the Once Only principle.

Already in 2020, the JSIS application allowed staff to view and request insurance information as well as to declare medical absences and communicate Covid-19 related statuses directly from their mobile phones. This application will fit in the mobile strategy for the HR family.

With regard to the possibility to replace the NAP payroll, this will need to be reevaluated, as it would result in a major refactoring towards the existing SYSPER interfaces.

In 2018, the Commission adopted a Data Protection Action Plan (C(2018) 7432) aimed at ensuring compliance of all Commission departments with the new rules.

With regard to the Data controllers' obligations, the following can be noted in 2020:

In 2020, the PMO integrated all its former notifications (created on the basis of Regulation 45/2001) into the new register DPMS (article 31 of the Regulation 2018/1725). All texts were carefully checked and completed. Obsolete notifications have been archived. The 22 records have all been published in the DPO register.

The PMO also conducted a data protection impact assessment for the Assmal application given the amount and sensitivity of data processed via the application (medical data).

Privacy statements are published in the front and back office platforms of the IT applications. To ensure greater transparency a dedicated webpage will be created in the intranet that will include all the privacy statements of the PMO.

The PMO updated its procedures to ensure appropriate follow up of data breaches: it has taken an approach of full transparency, so that all data incidents were notified to the DPO, even where it was unlikely they presented a risk for the data subject. All data breaches that were likely to result in a risk for the data subject have been notified to the EDPS.

Notification procedures are being streamlined based on the experience gathered. The PMO continued its training sessions for staff: general trainings on regulation 2018/1725 and Commission Decision 2017/46 were given to staff of all units of the PMO.

Given the high number of personal data processed on a daily basis, the number of data incidents should be considered as low.

The SLAs include an annex on data protection, approved by the Commission DPO and the EDPS.

The PMO analysed all the contracts it signed in the context of international transfers to ensure that any personal data transfer outside of the EU was compliant with the IDPR⁸ (e.g. appropriate safeguards such as standard contractual clauses have been taken).

2.2.3 Sound environmental management

The following can be noted in 2020 for PMO:

Due to the pandemic, all PMO staff have been teleworking since mid-March 2020. New working methods have been implemented with a drastic reduction in paper printing and in waste (water bottles, food, etc.).

In addition, a Blue Book trainee has reinforced the HR team as from March 2021. Her main task will be to help the team in developing the EMAS policy within the PMO.

Finally, in December 2020, PMO brought its support to the “BEST” action (Building Energy Savings Together) launched by OIB to all the Commission staff and DGs in powering down buildings due to a very low occupancy-rate. The aim of this joint action was to reduce energy consumption of our building by 70%.

2.2.4 Examples of initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities

With regard to non-financial activities, PMO is committed to the most effective and economical implementation solution, ensuring alignment with other programmes, while appropriately responding to the specific needs of the clients. With this in mind, PMO continues to seek effective communication with active and post-active staff and user-friendliness of the IT applications. Staff Contact, which entered into force in May 2019, represents a modern and secure information portal, in which staff can find replies to their questions, using their EU-login. This communication was further elaborated in 2020 with the development of mobile applications for JSIS and Mips to allow users to access certain services through their mobile phones.

For financial activities, please refer to point 2.1.1.

⁸ Institutions Data Protection Regulation