European Commission

Annual Activity Report 2019

PUBLICATIONS OFFICE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

March 2020

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THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICE IN BRIEF

Mission: access to EU law and publications

The Publications Office of the European Union ('the Office') provides interinstitutional publishing services on behalf of all the EU institutions, agencies and other bodies. Its mission is to publish EU law and other information and to make it available for easy long-term access and reuse.

Activities

The Office's activities comprise the production, the access to and the reuse, as well as the long-term preservation of public information produced by the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies established by or under the EU Treaties (hereinafter EU institutions). The organisation and operation of the Office are governed by Decision 2009/496/EC, Euratom ([1]).

Under its mandate, the Office has competence, amongst others, for the following:

— publishing the *Official Journal of the European Union* and other mandatory publications;

— publishing non-mandatory publications in the context of the EU institutions' communication activities;

— referencing, preserving EU public data and making it available to the public.

In order to fulfil its mandate, the Office has implemented and manages the following online services:

— EUR-Lex — access to legal information and the authentic Official Journal;

— OP Portal — an access point progressively bringing together the different collections of official documents, publications and reference data managed by the Office (EU Law, EU Publications, EU Vocabularies and EU Whoiswho);

— TED (Tenders Electronic Daily) — access to public procurement notices (*Supplement to the Official Journal*);

— EU Open Data Portal and European Data Portal — access to the EU institutions' and European countries' structured data to facilitate reuse;

— CORDIS (the Community Research and Development Information Service) — the primary public repository and service for the dissemination and the reuse of EU-funded research projects and their results;

— *Interinstitutional style guide* — a reference tool for linguistic harmonisation across all official EU languages.

The core stakeholders of the Office are the EU institutions. At the same time, its activities are also society oriented: the free access to EU law and the legislative and decision-making process, together with the long-term preservation activity, play a key role to the transparency and openness of EU institutions, as well as to their accountability and better policy-making process. The reuse of data activity extends throughout a whole reuse community, formed of researchers, statisticians, IT developers, businesses, public administrations, interest groups, etc.

The Office operates in a changing environment and it must constantly adapt to technological improvements and innovations. Following a successful transition from a paper-based publishing model to a new paradigm of handling digital information, the Office continues to embrace and benefit of new technologies (e.g. linked open data, artificial intelligence, etc.) in order to improve service provision and develop synergies and efficiencies for the EU institutions.

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[1]   OJ L 168, 30.6.2009, p. 41.

Governance and organisation

The Office is governed by an interinstitutional Management Committee, which, in the common interest of EU institutions, adopts the strategic objectives of the Office, sets the guidelines for the general policies and ensures that the Office contributes within its areas of competence to the formulation and implementation of the EU institutions' information and communication policies.

Based in Luxembourg, the Office is structured around four directorates and has 567 staff members.

Budget matters

Budget items delegated by the Commission to the Director-General of the Office concern expenditure for administrative purposes and/or contract management and are in direct management. Therefore, compared to shared or indirect budget management, the inherent risk is low.

Accountability and reporting

The Office uses infrastructure (mainly IT), outsourcing and human resources, therefore its main risks and risk management activities, including internal control, are concentrated on these areas. The reporting of authorising officers by subdelegation contains financial data and main aspects concerning controls and risks, and formally documents any significant problems.

Quarterly information reports on the Office's production, dissemination and administrative tasks are communicated by the Office's Director-General to the Management Committee. Each year the Management Committee adopts an Annual Management Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Activity Report is a management report of the Director-General of the Publications Office 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 Treaties ([2]).

a) Key results and progress towards the achievement of general and specific objectives of the Publications Office (executive summary of section 1)

ENHANCED INTEROPERABILITY FOR THE EU INSTITUTIONS' DOCUMENTS

Interinstitutional cooperation to develop and maintain common standards for both the structuring of content and the exchange of information continued under the guidance of the Interinstitutional Metadata and Formats Committee (IMFC).

The use of the IMMC exchange protocol was extended with the addition of new types of documents from the European Parliament and the Commission. Almost all legal data exchanges between the EU institutions and between the institutions and the Office are conducted through the IMMC exchange protocol in a secure manner.

For the structuring of content, a new version of Akoma Ntoso for EU (AKN4EU) was published on the EU Vocabularies website. It was based on progress made within the Common Vocabulary to gather common structural and semantic concepts for the first examples of the European Parliament's texts (legislative resolutions) and amending acts. Work on the new major version will be completed in the first quarter of 2020. First transmissions, as part of the legislative process based on AKN4EU, are expected at the end of 2020.

An analysis conducted by the Office on the various guides within the EU institutions concluded that the Interinstitutional Style Guide functioned as a central reference work in a landscape of more specialised guides for legislative drafting, clear writing or visual identity. However, there were several discrepancies between the different guides. Therefore, a revived Interinstitutional Style Guide Steering Committee agreed to look for synergies between the different guides and to eliminate discrepancies where possible.

The Office finalised a study on the EU citation styles. It recommended a harmonised approach to cite EU content across all EU institutions. The recommendations will be extended to digital content, and an online citation tool will be developed.

INTERINSTITUTIONAL SYNERGIES IN THE PUBLISHING DOMAIN

The Office refined its vision for the Domain Leadership Publications around four interlinked fields of action, namely collaborative planning and governance for publications, editorial advice and performance measurement, translation request management, and centralised production of publications. Foundations were laid for services with a higher added value, whose scale-up is strongly linked to the full deployment of Domain Leadership Publications.

Comprehensive services were offered to all EU institutions to meet the growing demand for more interactive and complex media products — audiovisual, animated content, apps, web pages, containing more infographics and data visualisations. A first virtual reality application was developed and made available.

A new generic template was developed to help authors to structure documents at source

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and to produce accessible publications for readers with disabilities. The tool is being tested in Eurolook, with a roll-out to the whole Commission planned for early 2020. A stand-alone version will be provided to other EU institutions. In order to further support accessible publishing, the Office produced and will make available to decision-makers and author services a set of videos and e learning modules on accessibility.

A toolkit of images and visuals was created to provide author services with reusable materials and design-related advice. It was finalised and tested at the end of 2019, and it will be online in early 2020.

ACCESS AND REUSE, LINKING AND VISUALISATION OF DATA

The EUR-Lex user experience was enhanced with the introduction of new features (e.g. table of contents, multilingual display for mobile devices, more clarity on the status of an act when it has been amended, update of tutorials), and the improvement of the search and metadata quality. A usability study was finalised, and the implementation of the conclusions started. The display of interinstitutional law making and internal procedures was enriched with new information. The national transposition measures are now directly accessible via EUR-Lex for 12 Member States.

Following the adoption of the new regulation on electronic public procurement notification forms (eForms), the Office published the first version of the eForms XML schemas and started work on the new online tool for the submission of public procurement notices to be published in the Official Journal S.

The Office actively supported the EU institutions in putting their open data and reuse policies into practice and collaborated, within the scope of the European Data Portal, with open data services in the Member States and beyond.

The Office organised the third EU Datathon competition on the reuse of data from the EU Open Data Portal in partnership, among others, with the Romanian Presidency of the Council. The competition challenged teams to create applications addressing specific policy or societal issues related to innovation, economics and climate change. With participants from all over Europe, the event was very successful and effectively reached new and younger audiences. The results provided invaluable insights on what can be achieved through the reuse of open data.

The Office organised the first international data visualisation conference dedicated to the public sector in Europe — the EU DataViz 2019. Experts from inside and outside public administrations shared knowledge and experience from their own data visualisation projects. The conference triggered the setting-up of an interinstitutional data visualisation community, to be managed by the Office and the Joint Research Centre. Additionally, the Office ran a comprehensive data visualisation training programme, including training courses, workshops and webinars, offered to EU staff and public sector staff in the Member States. The focus was on strengthening data visualisation skills and facilitating the sharing of knowledge between services through the creation of an active data visualisation community.

CORDIS launched EuroSciVoc, a multilingual taxonomy of fields of science, built with artificial intelligence techniques. It allows for the classification of over 30 years of EU-funded projects on CORDIS and can serve as a reference vocabulary for the open science community.

LONG-TERM PRESERVATION

The Office produced a draft of the EU legal deposit scheme, intended to establish a fully operational legal deposit for the publications of the EU institutions. Consultations on this are currently taking place, with a formal validation expected in mid-2020.

UNDERLYING INFRASTUCTURE HIGHLIGHTS

Functional analyses were conducted for the production workflow management systems for legal and general publications, and the possibility of creating synergies at a technical level — via a unified production platform including these historically separate production workflows — was examined and agreed upon. The solutions will be implemented from 2020 onwards.

The OP Portal's operations were outsourced to a managed services provider. Smooth access was ensured to all content and functionalities of the portal, which now runs on a public cloud infrastructure. The internal infrastructure was decommissioned.

Under the Office's cloud-first policy, whereby the cloud should gradually become the default deployment model, the migration of three complex information systems — EUR-Lex, EUR-Lex Search and the Cellar — was accomplished. In partnership with DG Informatics, the Office also migrated 95 % of its information systems to the corporate infrastructure. Thus, the part of the Mercier data centre dedicated to information systems will be decommissioned in early 2020.

b) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

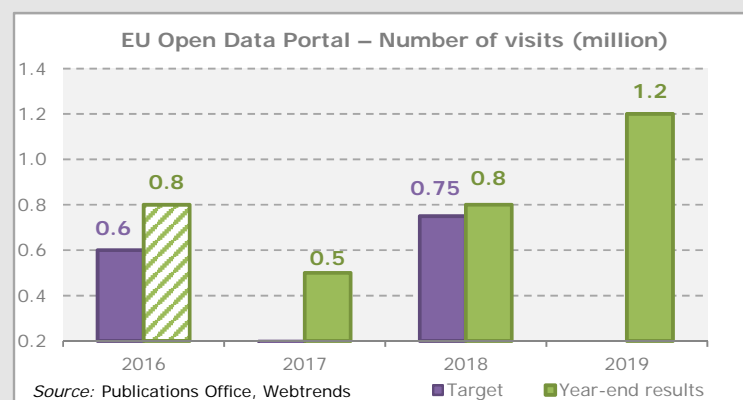| Result/Impact indicator (description)	Target 2020	Results 2019
KPI 1 – Percentage of Official Journal issues produced without delay in 23 or 24 language versions	100 %	100 %
KPI 2 – Coverage (percentage of completeness of the archive regarding the entire collection of the Official Journal of the European Union and all other mandatory publications)	99.9 %	99.8 %
KPI 3 – Number of visits to EUR-Lex website	74 million	56.2 million

EUR-Lex – Number of visits (million)

- 2017: 50.1
- 2018: 58.1
- 2019: 56.2

Source: Publications Office, Webtrends

KPI 4 – Number of visits to OP Portal (including EU Publications)	5 million	7.6 million

OP Portal – Number of visits (million)

- 2016: Target 2.8, Year-end results 2.9
- 2017: Target 3.3, Year-end results 3.1
- 2018: Target 3.8, Year-end results 7.0
- 2019: Target 4.4, Year-end results 7.6

Source: Publications Office, Webtrends ■ Target ■ Year-end results
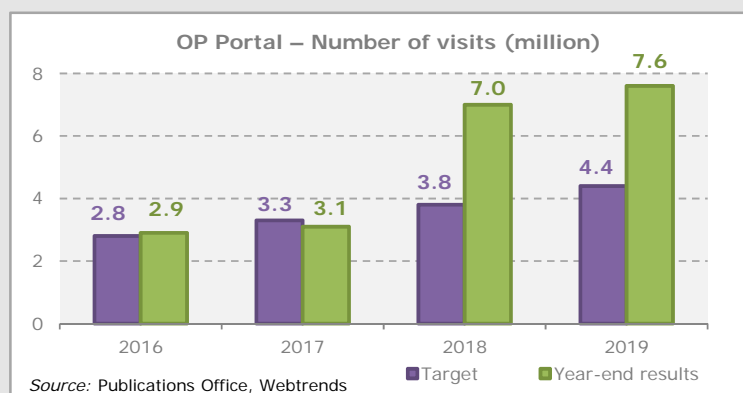
The scope of the OP Portal statistics increased in 2018 with the integration of the subsites.

KPI 5 – Number of visits to the EU Open Data Portal	1 million	1.2 million

EU Open Data Portal – Number of visits (million)

- 2016: Target 0.6, Year-end results 0.8
- 2017: Year-end results 0.5
- 2018: Target 0.75, Year-end results 0.8
- 2019: Year-end results 1.2

Source: Publications Office, Webtrends ■ Target ■ Year-end results

A different technology for collecting statistics was implemented. Results as from 2017 are not comparable with the previous years.

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 and of its interinstitutional Management Committee, the Office 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 Office has assessed its internal control systems during the reporting year and has concluded that it is effective and the components and the principles are present and function well overall, but some improvements are needed as deficiencies were identified related to the IT governance practices for monitoring programmes and projects. Please refer to AAR section 2.1.3 for further details.

In addition, the Office has systematically examined the available control results and indicators, including those for supervising entities to which it has entrusted budget implementation tasks, 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 Director-General, 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 Office and the Cabinet of the relevant Commissioner on management matters, the main elements of this report and assurance declaration will be brought to the attention of Commissioner Hahn, responsible for relations with the Office.

1. KEY RESULTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICE

The Publications Office contributes to the following Commission general objective:

> **General objective 11: 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**

However, in accordance with its interinstitutional mandate, the Office's activities go beyond the Commission framework. Within its area of expertise, the Office is a support service for all EU institutions and consequently did not include in its strategic plan the Commission corporate impact indicators associated to general objective 11.

The Annual Activity Report 2019 reports with reference to the objectives and related indicators established in the Strategic Plan 2016-2020 together with the annual outputs set up in the Management Plan 2019. It also reports on the interinstitutional Strategic objectives 2017-2025, unanimously approved by the Office's Management Committee on 30 June 2017.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 11.1: AUTOMATED WORKFLOWS FOR MORE DYNAMIC WAYS OF PRODUCING AND PUBLISHING LEGAL CONTENT ARE OPTIMISED AND IMPLEMENTED

Official Journal of the European Union

> #### *Strategic objective 5 — The Official Journal act by act*
>
> One of the main activities was the discussion with the EU institutions about the changes introduced by an act-by-act production process for the Official Journal.
>
> An impact analysis and the specifications for a new information system for the act-by-act production process were completed. However, the Office decided to integrate the production of the Official Journal into a unified platform for legal and general publications; a decision on a specific implementation model for this will be taken in 2020.
>
> A new information system (e-Seal) was developed to introduce the possibility to authenticate the Official Journal with an electronic seal ([3]). The system has been operational since November and the electronic seal will be activated in 2020.

Official Journal: number of pages per series

Series	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
OJ L (Legislation)	709 289	779 470	726 753	717 899	891 329
OJ C (Information and Notices)	454 171	655 143	624 074	639 360	481 845
Other budgetary documents	82 715	86 285	84 894	120 934	87 742
Total	**1 246 175**	**1 520 898**	**1 435 811**	**1 478 193**	**1 460 916**

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[3]   Council Regulation (EU) 2018/2056 of 6 December 2018 amending Regulation (EU) No 216/2013 on the electronic publication of the *Official Journal of the European Union* (OJ L 329, 27.12.2018, p. 1).

OJ Production - Average global price per page (EUR)

Source: OP.B.1
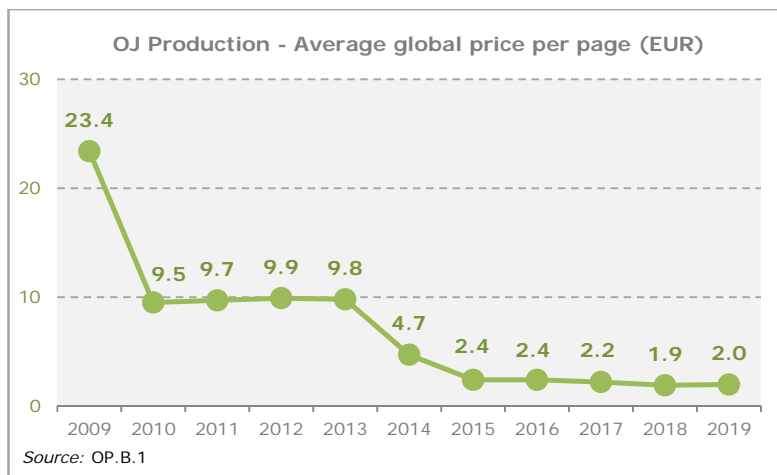
The number of pages published for the Official Journal L (legislation) series increased considerably, by 24.2 % to 891 329 from 717 899 the previous year. The number of pages published in the Official Journal C (resolutions, recommendations, opinions, information, preparatory acts, notices, etc.) series decreased by 24.6 % to 481 845 from 639 360. The overall number of pages published remained at a comparable level, showing only a slight increase of 1.2 % to 1 373 174.

OJ L and C PRODUCTION
Evolution of the number of pages (all linguistic versions)
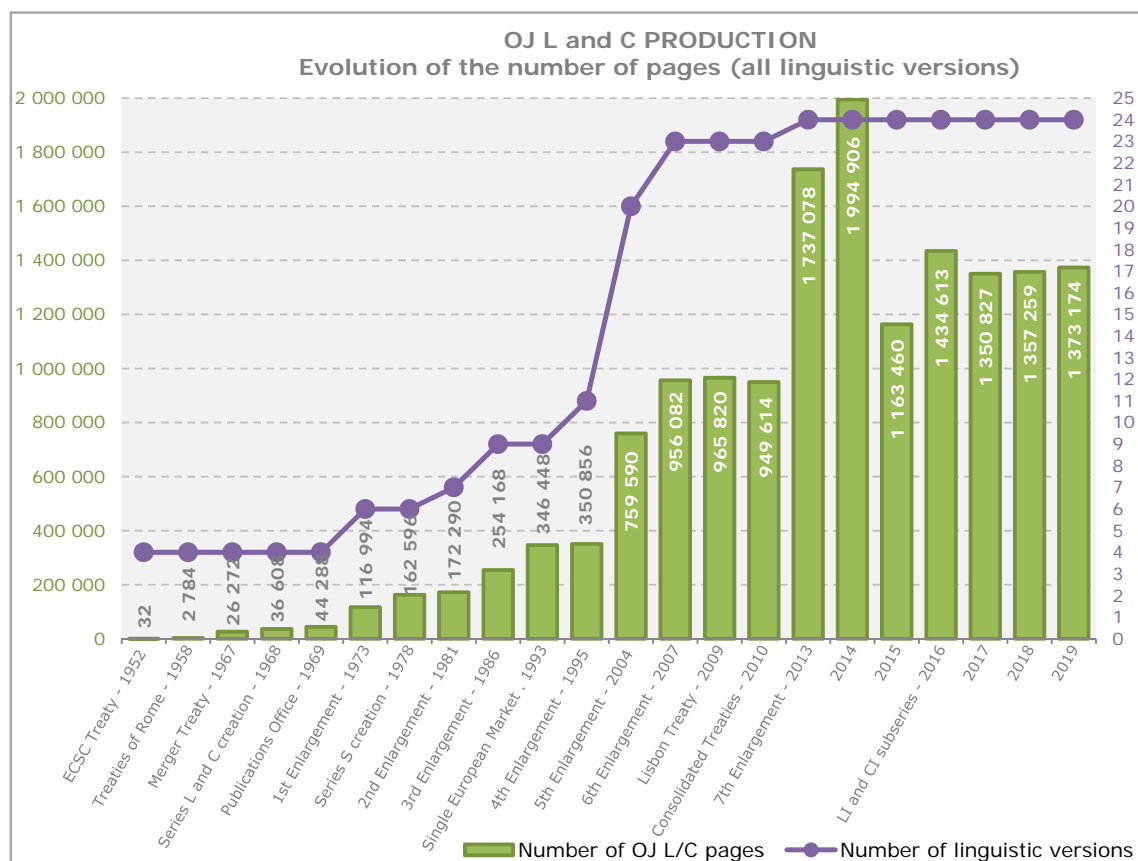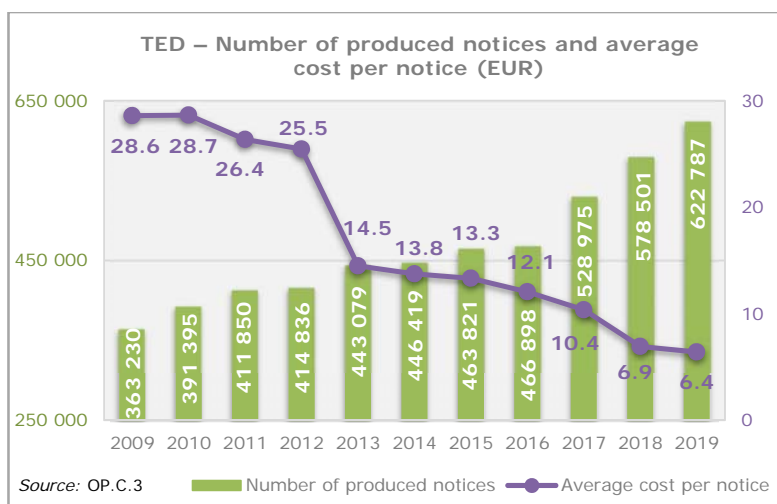

Case-law of the European Court of Justice

Case-law was solely produced on a document-by-document basis according to the judicial calendar of the Court of Justice. More than 52 000 documents (– 4.1 % compared to 2018), corresponding to over 411 000 pages (+ 2.1 % compared to 2018), were published.

Case-law: number of documents and pages produced

	Number of documents		Number of pages	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
Court of Justice	33 702	27 738	292 039	272 806
General Court	20 810	24 592	110 540	138 323
Civil Service Tribunal	49	—	124	—
Total	**54 561**	**52 330**	**402 703**	**411 129**

Supplement to the Official Journal

A record 622 787 public procurement notices were published in the *Supplement to the Official Journal* (Official Journal S), an increase of 7.7 % compared to 2018. Notices received in structured electronic format accounted for 99.6 % of the total.

TED — Number of produced notices and average cost per notice (EUR)

Source: OP.C.3 — Number of produced notices — Average cost per notice

In close cooperation with the Commission's DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, the Office established a data model for procurement information as the basis for new electronic notification forms. This new generation of standard forms (eForms) was adopted by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1780 (⁴).

Due to the new legislative framework, major updates and developments in the reception, processing and dissemination systems are needed, in order to provide for full exploitation of data input and the implementation of the new public procurement data model. As a first step, the Office defined the necessary schemas for data exchange. The schemas are based on the Universal Business Language (UBL) standard and aligned with the eProcurement Ontology.

(⁴) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1780 of 23 September 2019 establishing standard forms for the publication of notices in the field of public procurement and repealing Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1986 (eForms) (OJ L 272, 25.10.2019, p. 7).

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 11.2: COLLABORATIVE PRODUCTION SERVICES, OPTIMISED FOR MULTICHANNEL DISSEMINATION, ARE PROVIDED TO ALL EU INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES AND BODIES

General publications

Strategic objective 2 — Rationalisation of the production of publications

The rationalisation of the production of publications was addressed through two main projects.

The first concerns the development of a new unified production platform for general and legal publications, supporting the whole process from reception of requests to the delivery of final products that are ready for dissemination. The functional analyses completed for both general and legal publications will be supplemented by an analysis of synergies via simplification of these historically separate production workflows.

The second project covers all activities aimed at producing more structured, reusable and accessible publications. A generic template for the creation of well-structured manuscripts is being tested, and it is expected to be deployed in the Commission within Eurolook in early 2020. It will be available to all EU institutions as a stand-alone version.

A set of videos and e-learning modules on accessibility aimed at decision-makers and author services was developed. A dedicated web page will be set up in the first half of 2020 containing all accessibility-related material: guidelines, handouts, videos and e-learning modules.

The Office worked on the implementation of the pilot project 'Reading disability and document access, a possible approach', aimed at improving the accessibility of the Commission's and the EU institutions' publications/documents and websites for people with reading disabilities. The first phase, completed in 2019, included a detailed study assessing the current tools and technologies available, identifying the documents and websites to be made available with the utmost priority and laying out a roadmap for a 'reading disorder friendly' environment for the EU institutions. Several recommendations from the study were implemented.

The overall number of projects from author services for general publications decreased compared to the previous year (– 10 %). Thus, 27.9 % fewer titles were produced. The decrease in projects can be attributed to the end of term for the European Parliament and the Commission; furthermore, the decrease in the number of titles reflects a decrease in the number of language versions produced per project. The demand for urgent production grew, notably from the Commission Spokesperson's Service, which had to produce politically sensitive content within a very short space of time, such as materials for the Sibiu Summit or factsheets on the European Green Deal.

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION 1986-2000

HISTORY AND MEMORIES OF AN INSTITUTION

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As domain leader in the field of publications, the Office fine-tuned its methodology and estimates and presented its vision on four interlinked fields of action: 1. Collaborative planning and better governance for publications; 2. Editorial advice and performance measurement; 3. Translation request management; and 4. Centralised production of publications. A revised presentation to the Commission's Corporate Management Board is planned in spring 2020.

For collaborative planning, data requirements are being tested with four pilot directorates-general based on a simple platform, and a governance schema was designed and agreed with the Commission's central services. Performance measurement methods (comprehensive analysis of data on physical distribution, web analytics and social media coverage, and other indicators when applicable) were designed and tested. A pilot project was conducted with DG Translation with a view to centralising the management of translation requests on behalf of author services. A comprehensive training programme is being developed in order to foster knowledge sharing and professionalise the community in respect of the various aspects of publishing. A toolbox of copyright-free visual materials and resources that can be used without charge, plus copyright and design advice, was developed and will be online in early 2020.

Publications: production, by institution (titles)

Institution/agency	2018	2019	Change 2019/2018 (%)
European Parliament	661	325	- 50.8 %
Council	247	356	44.1 %
Commission	9 322	5 955	- 36.1 %
Court of Justice	214	212	- 0.9 %
Court of Auditors	947	1 191	25.8 %
European Economic and Social Committee	8	2	- 75 %
European Committee of the Regions	5	2	- 60 %
Decentralised agencies	1 939	1 614	- 16.8 %
Other	348	209	- 39.9 %
Total	**13 691**	**9 866**	**- 27.9 %**

There was a continued increase in the number of publications that require a greater investment of time in project management, such as infographics and data visualisations. E-book production increased by 22 %, and the production of new types of media (audiovisual products, apps, HTML, etc.) increased by 18 %. Several digital publications were produced using new interactive technologies, including data visualisation and virtual reality.

The regular update of apps and the management of corporate app accounts remained a notable area of activity: 51 app releases involving 19 different apps and 510 updates (all language versions in all stores). The Office developed and published a first virtual reality application, and a second one is being produced.

Language editing

The total number of standard pages ([5]) processed was 2 171 238 (2 005 113 in 2018), or an overall increase of 8.2 %. This is mainly linked to an increase in the number of pages corrected for the Official Journal (+ 19.5 %). The number of pages corrected decreased by 1.2 % for general publications and by 5.2 % for case-law. The slight decrease for general publications is due to a shift towards more visual communication; for case-law it is linked to a normal fluctuation of the workload.

However, the workload for copy-editing tasks in English, mostly processed in-house, increased from 31 % of the number of pages processed in 2018 for general publications to 41 %. This was driven mainly by work on the third volume of *The European Commission — History and memories of an institution*.

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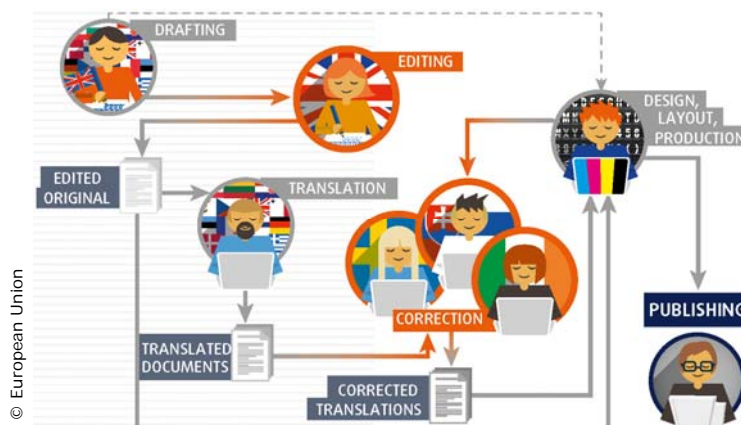
Corrected pages: Official Journal, general publications and case-law

Corrected pages	2018	2019	Change 2019/2018 (%)
Official Journal	1 038 884	1 240 968	19.5 %
General publications	361 504	357 120	- 1.2 %
Case-law	604 725	573 150	- 5.2 %
Total	**2 005 113**	**2 171 238**	**8.3 %**

([5]) A standard page is 1 500 characters without spaces.

Interinstitutional Style Guide

The Office conducted an analysis of the various style guides produced and used by the EU institutions. The report made clear that the *Interinstitutional Style Guide* functioned as a central reference work in a landscape of more specialised guides. However, the report also concluded that there were a number of discrepancies between the different guides. Therefore, it was decided to revitalise the Interinstitutional Style Guide Steering Committee, which subsequently met in October and agreed to strive for synergies and to eliminate discrepancies where possible.

Towards a new concept for the distribution policy

Strategic objective 7 — Zero surplus stock

The campaign to raise awareness on the need to reduce stocks had several elements. The Director-General wrote to the author services about this subject, and statistics were sent quarterly to all stock owners. The issue was addressed during seminars with the author services and during an open doors day, which allowed them to actually see the physical stock. The need for more accurate estimations of print runs was also addressed with the Commission's corporate services. Proposals for destocking outdated publications were sent quarterly to stock owners, resulting in a significant increase in destocking: 2.74 million copies were destocked in 2019 compared to 1.95 million copies in 2018 (+ 40.3 %).

The number of paper copies distributed reached 6.14 million, compared to 8.28 million in 2018, marking a decrease of 25.9 %. The overall long-term trend towards the distribution of fewer printed copies of publications persisted, with 82.8 % fewer copies distributed when compared to 2010 (35.7 million).

	Number of copies 2018	Number of copies 2019	Change 2019/2018 (%)
Stock on 1 January	12 349 390	12 410 472	0.5 %
In-stock entries	10 296 658	6 021 848	− 41.5 %
Distribution (via mailing lists and individual orders)	− 8 283 367	− 6 135 101	− 25.9 %
Stock reduction	− 1 952 209	- 2 739 678	40.3 %
Stock on 31 December	**12 410 472**	**9 557 441**	**- 23 %**

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 11.3: STRUCTURING OF DATA [CONTENT AND METADATA (IMFC)] IS FACILITATED THROUGH SYNERGIES IN TOOLS AND FORMATS ON THE INTERINSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Strategic objective 1 — Secured and automated exchange of legal data

The work of the IMFC on the Common Vocabulary and on AKN4EU ([6]) resulted in its approval of the intermediate deliverable AKN4EU version 2.1, which was published on the EU Vocabularies website. This was immediately followed by preparations for version 3.0.

The Formex to Akoma Ntoso converter (FMX2AKN) was updated to reflect the most recent version of AKN4EU. Initial preparations started to provide FMX2AKN as a web service.

The use of the IMMC exchange protocol — for automated transfer of metadata and documents between and within the EU institutions — was extended to cover additional document types from the European Parliament and the Commission. Nearly all legal data exchanges between the EU institutions themselves, and the institutions and the Office, are conducted through the IMMC exchange protocol in a secure manner.

Interoperability of document formats

The new version of AKN4EU gathered common structural and semantic concepts to cover first examples of a European Parliament text (legislative resolution) as well as amending acts. Work on a new major version will be completed in the first quarter of 2020.

First transmissions as part of the legislative process based on AKN4EU are expected at the end of 2020.

Standardisation of metadata

Under the guidance of the IMFC, the use of the IMMC exchange protocol was extended. New versions of the protocol and the associated authority tables were published on the EU Vocabularies website. Work started on a new version consolidating numerous ones currently used by the different institutions and their stakeholders.

Management of controlled vocabularies

Two new versions of the multilingual thesaurus EuroVoc ([7]) were published, bringing the total number of multilingual concepts covering EU policies and activities to 7 243.

In order to reinforce interoperability and avoid duplication of efforts in the domain of controlled vocabulary maintenance and dissemination, work continued on the alignment of the controlled vocabularies of the EU institutions with EuroVoc. Key controlled vocabularies used at the Commission and other institutions were classified according to their types and features. Some 10 of them were aligned using semantic technologies.

In partnership with DG Informatics and the Secretariat-General, work started on preparing a corporate reference data management policy at the Commission. The aim is to establish a list of common vocabularies under corporate governance and to provide access and support to services of the EU institutions and public administrations in the Member States.

([6]) Formerly Common Exchange Model.
([7]) https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eu-vocabularies/th-dataset/-/resource/dataset/eurovoc

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 11.4: EU DIGITAL INFORMATION AND DATA ARE ARCHIVED, PRESERVED OVER TIME AND EXTENDED TO NEW CONTENT TYPES

Long-term preservation

To supervise the Office's activities in the field of long-term preservation, the Interinstitutional Committee on the Long-term Preservation Services of the Office was established. It is responsible for overseeing the implementation and governance of the digital preservation plan, in which the Office's long-term vision and strategy are set out. A permanent subcommittee on web preservation was also established.

> **Strategic objective 9 — Legal deposit scheme**
>
> The Office prepared a draft of the EU legal deposit scheme, which is intended to establish a fully operational legal deposit for all the publications of the EU institutions. Consultations are now being held with the institutions, and a formal validation is expected in mid-2020.

The remaining collections to be migrated to the new long-term preservation repository EUDOR V3 [8] are being handled one by one in order of priority. The formal validation of the migration is ongoing.

Some 270 000 new resources, corresponding to 1 300 000 language versions, were archived. A resource comprises all linguistics versions and all available digital formats. By the end of 2019, the electronic archive contained a total of 1 068 000 resources and over 10 600 000 language versions, which is an increase of about 30 % compared to 2018.

Web preservation

The Office is responsible for the web preservation service offered to the EU institutions, which ensures long term preservation of, and continuous access to, the content of the websites owned by the EU institutions. The basic service consists of quarterly archiving of these websites. At the request of several institutions, tailor-made crawls were also carried out for websites that were to be taken offline or were going to change substantially.

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(8)   EUDOR: European Union Document Repository, the long-term digital archive of the EU institutions managed by the Office.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 11.5: EU AUTHENTIC INFORMATION IS EASILY ACCESSIBLE ONLINE AND ITS DISCOVERABILITY IS ENHANCED
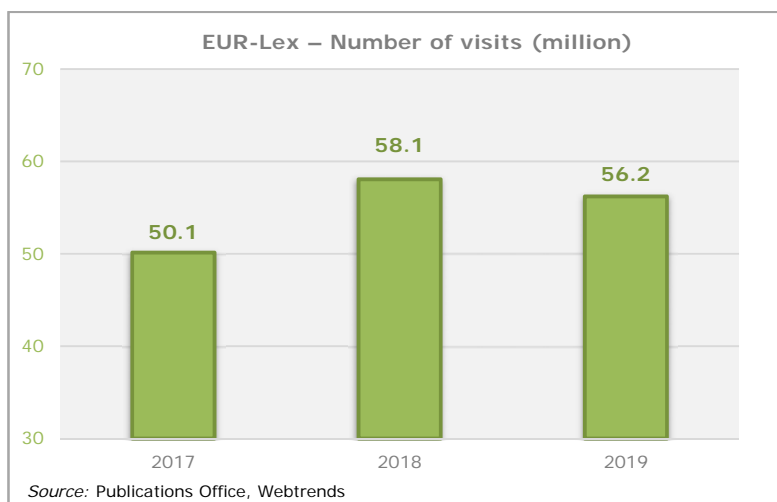
EUR-Lex — access to EU law

The Office enhanced the user experience of the EUR-Lex website by introducing new features and functionalities to ensure more effective and wider access to EU law.

The key improvements include a table of contents which makes the navigation easier within legal acts and which is available on both desktop and mobile devices, and the multilingual display now available on some mobile devices. Additionally, notification that an act has been amended and a link to the consolidated version were added on the document landing page, making it easier for the user to understand the status of the act. Further improvements were made to the quick search function.

The display of interinstitutional procedures was enhanced for the European Parliament's consent and consultation procedures. As for the Commission, a new type of document (factual summary report of public consultations) and three new events, all belonging to the planning phase, were added to the display. The internal procedures of the European Economic and Social Committee were also made available on EUR-Lex.

EUR-Lex — Number of visits (million)

2017	2018	2019
50.1	58.1	56.2

Source: Publications Office, Webtrends

The Office started a project with the European Central Bank on integrating the legal content of its website into EUR-Lex. This will allow the European Central Bank, on the one hand, to benefit from enhanced functionalities such as easier access, search options, retrieval and visualisation of legal acts and, on the other hand, to introduce formats and processes which make it possible to collect relevant statistics, analyse data and measure user interaction. The resulting 'European Central Bank Legal Framework' section on EUR-Lex is planned for production in June 2020. Consequently, a widget to this section will be implemented on the European Central Bank's website.

Four more Member States (Czechia, France, Malta and Poland) agreed to publish the text of their national transposition measures via EUR-Lex, bringing the number of Member States doing this to 12 (⁹).

Improvements were also made to the N-Lex website (¹⁰), a single entry point to national legislation websites in the Member States. In particular, a new section labelled 'Translated legislation' was created to enhance access to, and discoverability of, translated legislation on national legislation websites — this section was available for six countries (Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Slovenia and Sweden). Furthermore, the home page was slightly revamped, giving more visibility to non-EU countries and providing links to legislation databases around the world.

A proof of concept for a new website, EU Law in Force, was developed and presented to multiple stakeholders, and received positive feedback. The aim is to give users a simple and easy way that responds to their various needs and to provide easy access to specific collections of legal documents.

Consolidation

The number of legal acts in force that were consolidated (in at least one linguistic version) reached 4 805. The number of newly produced consolidated versions of legal acts was 1 802.

More than 2.8 million PDF pages of consolidated texts were produced (16 % more than in 2018). The access to the consolidated texts on EUR-Lex was improved — if an act has been amended this is now explicitly indicated and a link to the consolidated versions is provided.

Summaries of EU legislation

A total of 201 summaries of EU legislation were produced or completely redrafted and a further 163 summaries were updated taking into account the most recent legislative changes. Some 94 % of the active summaries are available in all official EU languages, and 1 687 acts which have never been published in the Irish language have their summaries in Irish. Links between archived summaries and active summaries, on the same or a closely related topic, were introduced in EUR-Lex.

TED — access to public procurement information

More than 46 million notices were viewed on the TED website (¹¹) and approximately 12 000 new public procurement notices were published per week in five daily editions in the 24 official EU languages.

A new TED dissemination contract commenced in March 2019. This presented an opportunity to fine-tune the search criteria by allowing the query of additional fields. At the same time, the Office performed an optimisation of the mobile version of the TED website, completed a project on data visualisation on a geographical map and extended the archive scope to 10 years.

(⁹)   Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Spain, France, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Poland and Slovenia.
(¹⁰)   http://eur-lex.europa.eu/n-lex/index_en
(¹¹)   TED: Tenders Electronic Daily (http://ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do).

TED – Number of visits and tender notices consulted (million)

Source: Publications Office, Webtrends
A different technology for collecting statistics was implemented. Results as from 2017 are not comparable with the previous years.
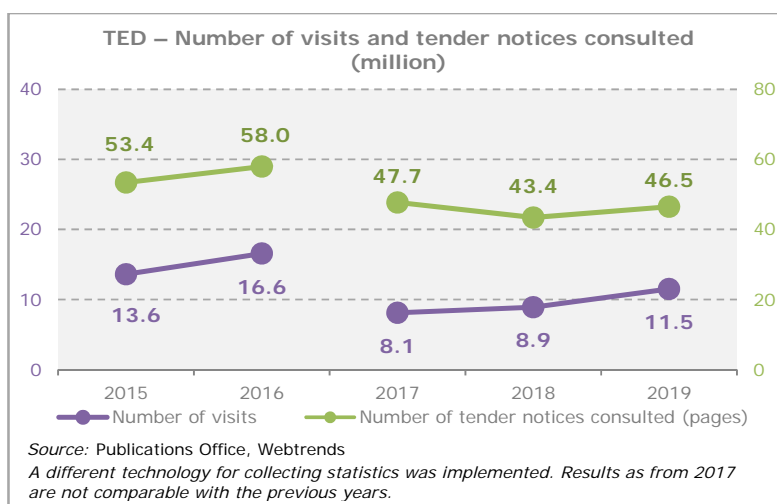
Strategic objective 8 — Single point of access for public procurement

The Office further enhanced the usability of the TED website, with an improved mobile version and more search options. The breadth of information was also increased, with a visual display of contracts' place of delivery on a map and reports on contracts awarded by the EU institutions.

Following the adoption of the new regulation on electronic public procurement notification forms (eForms) ([12]), the Office drafted the functional requirements for the new online tool (eNotices2) for preparing and publishing public procurement notices in the Official Journal S. Work also started on drafting the functional requirements for a new central validation service. The tool will facilitate the uniform validation and treatment of incoming public procurement data and will increase their quality and completeness in line with the eForms.

The eNotification part of the eProcurement Ontology was almost finalised. In parallel, 43 public procurement authority tables (code lists) were published on the EU Vocabularies site.

As part of ongoing efforts to improve the quality of data received, the Office introduced several rules in its reception applications to detect and prevent human error. Moreover, it explored the possibility of using artificial intelligence techniques to clean and normalise its existing data, and ensure better reporting and market analysis, and enhanced transparency.

eTendering platform

The Office continued working on the interface of the eTendering (eAccess) platform ([13]) and the Procurement Planning and Management Tool of the Joint Research Centre in order to enable automatic data transfer between the two applications, which are both part of the Commission's corporate eProcurement platform. The most notable developments relate to adapting the application to support the negotiated procedure for middle- and low-value contracts and the list of vendors in the context of calls for expressions of interest.

New services were developed in order to integrate procurement into the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal under the SEDIA ([14]) project. Moreover, the Office provided support for negotiated and restricted procurement procedures in the eSubmission application managed by DG Informatics.

([12]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1780 of 23 September 2019 establishing standard forms for the publication of notices in the field of public procurement and repealing Implementing Regulation.
([13]) https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/general/page.html?name=home
([14]) SEDIA: Single Electronic Data Interchange Area.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 11.6: THE VARIOUS COLLECTIONS OF EU CONTENT ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH A SINGLE POINT OF ACCESS BASED ON COMMONLY AGREED STANDARDS
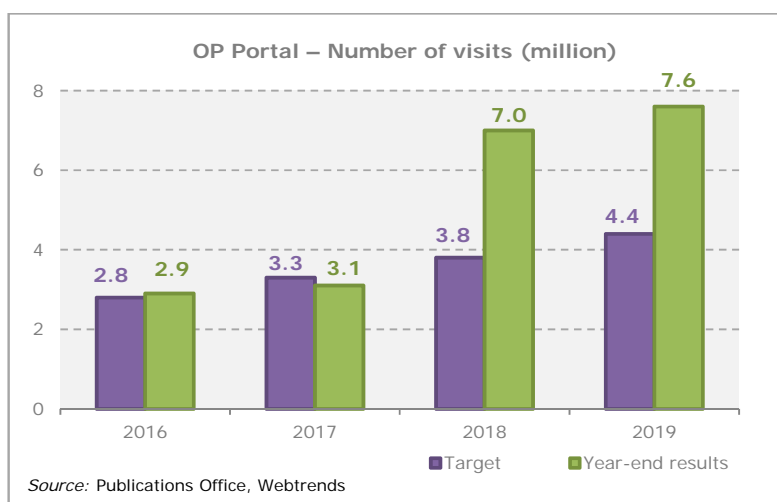
The OP Portal — access to the collections managed by the Office

The OP Portal's search relevancy was enhanced following the full integration of EU Vocabularies and EU Whoiswho content. The legacy sites of EU Whoiswho, EuroVoc, Metadata Registry and Formex were gradually phased out and decommissioned.

> **Strategic objective 4 — Linked EU information, increased interoperability and federated search**
>
> The EU Vocabularies ([15]) and EU Whoiswho ([16]) websites were fully integrated into the OP Portal, thus providing seamless access to reference data managed by the Office, such as the EuroVoc multilingual thesaurus, authority tables and the official directory of the European Union.

The OP Portal's operations were outsourced to a managed services provider (MSP). The transition was successfully accomplished by ensuring smooth access to all content and functionalities of the portal, which now runs on a public cloud infrastructure. The internal infrastructure was decommissioned. A comprehensive security risk assessment was carried out and preparations started for a call for tender to ensure the business continuity of managed services for the OP Portal, CORDIS and TED.

OP Portal – Number of visits (million)

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	2.8	3.3	3.8	4.4
Year-end results	2.9	3.1	7.0	7.6

Source: Publications Office, Webtrends

The number of publications downloaded (PDFs and e-books) on EU Publications remained stable, and total visitors increased from 2.5 million to 2.8 million. The portal's 'privileged user' facility accounted for more than 76 % of all copies ordered. The Office produced monthly and ad hoc detailed statistical reports about the publications requested online and the feedback received from users, and these were forwarded to the author services to help them in formulating and carrying out their communication activities.

Improved discoverability of documents and publications

The Office created 25 595 records enabling their corresponding publications to be made available online. These records contained standardised descriptive metadata as well as EuroVoc indexation terms and a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) based persistent link to the publication content, contributing to the improved discoverability of the publications on the web. As well as identifying monographs (21 878) DOIs were also assigned to journal articles (595) and to digitised publications (2 101). The service to identify datasets was also initiated with a first batch of 19 DOIs assigned.

([15])   https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eu-vocabularies/
([16])   https://op.europa.eu/en/web/who-is-who/

A wider visibility of EU general publications was promoted through the dissemination of the Office's bibliographic records to external audiences, in particular through its Online Public Access Catalogue (OPac), which provides advanced search functionalities and permits the download of records into local catalogues. The Office also offered customised exports to an established list of clients, both commercial and non-commercial; 197 375 new or modified records were exported. Cooperation with content dissemination platforms enabled the Office to reach even larger audiences whilst reducing the number of individual partners.

Exports between third parties

Exports by the Publications Office

- Metadata (with link to content)
- EU Publications website
- Libraries and discovering services
- Catalogues all over the world

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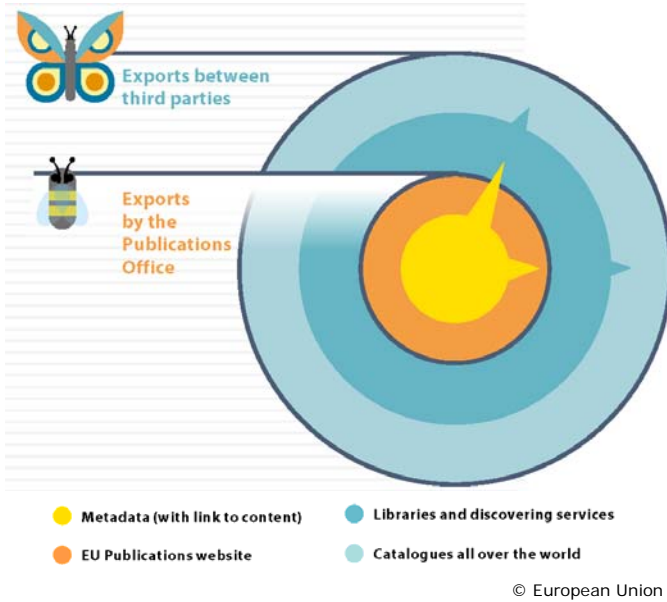
Feedback mechanism: web analytics services

The EU Publications Analytics, which provides easy access to the main indicators related to the consultation of publications and the consultation context (visits, page views, languages used, downloads, geography, searched terms used, etc.), was presented to various EU institutions and agencies in order to gather feedback. The dashboard has been operational since June 2019 and it has gradually been made available to the EU institutions.

The Cellar – a single repository for all digital content managed by the Office
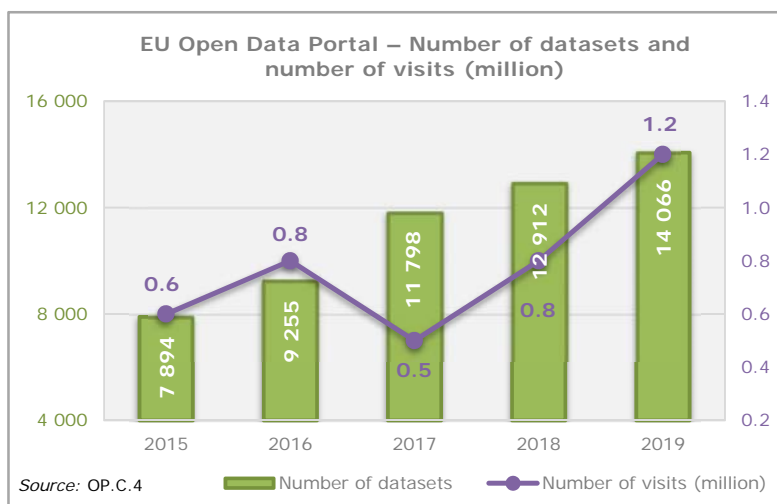
By the end of 2019, the Cellar contained more than 137 million files, an increase of 3 % compared to the end of 2018. The predominant file formats are XML (Formex), HTML and PDF. The quality of the content and metadata stored in the Cellar was constantly checked and improved where necessary.

Cellar
The semantic repository of the Publications Office

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On average there were more than 25 million requests for data from the Cellar per day, corresponding to more than 292 queries per second. The tracing of the requests was improved. About 6.4 % of all requests came directly from the web, while the remainder passed through one of the Office's public websites, in particular EUR-Lex, or were triggered by the Office's production systems. The migration of the Cellar to the cloud was successfully finalised, and since December the Cellar has been fully operational in the public cloud.
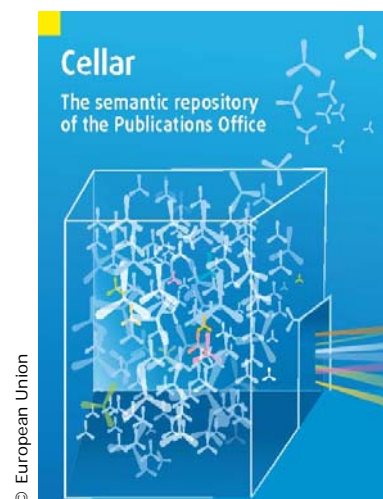
Open data portals — access to EU institutions' and European countries' reusable data

The publishing of datasets on the EU Open Data Portal grew with access to over 14 000 datasets stemming from 81 data providers: 33 Commission services, the European Parliament, the Council, the European Central Bank, the European Court of Auditors, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Investment Bank, the European Ombudsman, the European Data Protection Supervisor and 32 agencies and other bodies.

EU Open Data Portal — Number of datasets and number of visits (million)

Source: OP.C.4   Number of datasets   Number of visits (million)

The European Data Portal collection of data is also steadily growing, currently publishing 975 000 datasets from 81 data catalogues from European countries. The portal improved its front end, performance and reliability, integrated real time data sources and enhanced the graphical and geospatial visualisation as well as the metadata quality tool. The yearly open data maturity report gained significant recognition in the Member States and is becoming the main reference point for open data assessment in Europe.

Strategic objective 10 — Central point of access and reuse
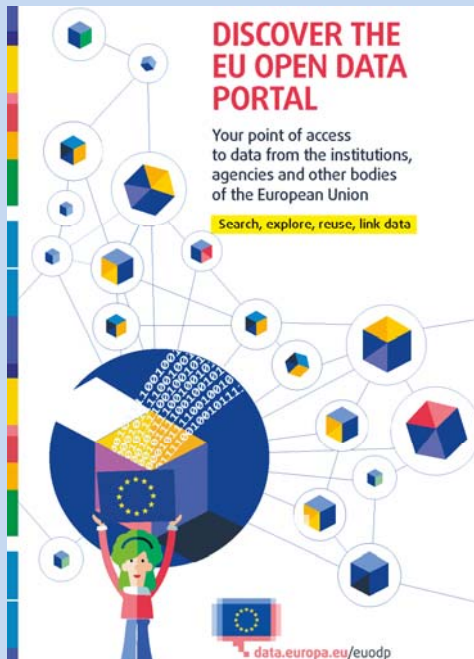
The Office actively supported the EU institutions in implementing their open data and reuse policies, in particular the Council ([17]), the European Commission ([18]) and the European Court of Auditors. The Creative Commons licence adopted in February ([19]) was promoted as a main reuse instrument and it started to be applied to the content published on the EU Open Data Portal.

The Office was actively involved in implementing the Data Strategy@EC Action Plan, in particular in the data inventory exercise. It also contributed to other areas, such as data governance and policies, the data catalogue, the data platform and data advisory.

The EU Open Data Portal enriched its collection of reuse examples; it now has 110 web and mobile apps described on the 'Applications' tab.

An internal analysis sought synergies by bringing together the two data portals — the EU Open Data Portal and the European Data Portal. A common European open data platform will allow for a more comprehensive and contextualised range of data, a user-centric provision of data services to (re)users and better discoverability of EU content on the web.

In order to strengthen the reuse of public data, involve citizens in the co creation of public services and boost data-driven innovation in the European public sector, the Office organised the third EU Datathon competition on the reuse of data from the EU Open Data Portal in partnership with, among others, the Romanian Presidency of the Council, five Commission directorates-general, the European Central Bank and the European Environment Agency.

The competition challenged teams to create applications addressing specific policy or societal issues related to innovation, economics and climate change.

The event was very successful, with participants (enterprises, start-ups, developers, students, researchers, data journalists, etc.) from all over Europe, and provided invaluable insights into what can be achieved through the reuse of open data. The EU Datathon was among the finalists for the European Ombudsman Award for Good Administration.

([17]) Council Decision (EU) 2017/1842 of 9 October 2017 on the open data policy of the Council and the reuse of Council documents.

([18]) Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39).

([19]) Commission Decision C(2019)1655 of 22 February 2019 adopting Creative Commons as an open licence under the European Commission's reuse policy.

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Under the ISA[2] programme ([20]) the Office organised EU DataViz 2019 ([21]), a conference on data visualisation with international experts, professionals and solution-seekers. The event, the first of its kind in Europe, addressed the specific needs of the public sector data visualisation community, with the objective of maximising data's potential to better serve EU citizens.

Experts from outside and within public administrations shared knowledge and experience from their own projects and initiatives.

The conference triggered the setting-up of an interinstitutional data visualisation community.

CORDIS — access to research results information

The CORDIS ([22]) data repository continued to grow, through the addition of Horizon 2020 projects, reports, deliverables and publications submitted by beneficiaries to the Commission, and provided transparent access to this public information. Enhanced CORDIS datasets on the EU Open Data Portal continued to be amongst the top 10 most viewed.

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In cooperation with clients in the research and innovation (R & I) family of directorates-general, executive agencies and joint undertakings, CORDIS produced or updated a record 21 *Results Packs* covering topical themes including breast cancer, digital government, the circular economy, solar power, clean energy, ocean plastics, automated driving, nano-enhanced materials, graphene and exoplanets. Ten issues of *Research*eu* magazine were distributed to over 5 100 subscribers worldwide.

To make research projects more understandable to a broader audience, CORDIS science writers began summarising the objectives of the hundreds of new projects published online every month. The editorial teams wrote over 1 300 articles highlighting the results of EU-funded research and innovation projects, aimed at professionals in the field and available in English, French, German, Italian, Polish and Spanish.

Within its data strategy, CORDIS developed and published EuroSciVoc, a new multilingual taxonomy that represents the fields of science discovered from CORDIS content and is organised through a semi-automatic process based on artificial intelligence. It contains almost 1 000 categories in six languages ([23]), which are mapped to EuroVoc terms where available. Each category is enriched with relevant keywords extracted from the textual description of CORDIS projects. EuroSciVoc allows the rich classification of over 30 years of EU-funded projects and can also serve as a reference vocabulary for the open science community.

([20]) https://ec.europa.eu/isa2/home_en
([21]) https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eudataviz/home
([22]) CORDIS: the Community Research and Development Information Service at https://cordis.europa.eu is financed within Horizon 2020 on a budget line co-delegated by DG Research and Innovation for the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework.
([23]) English, French, German, Italian, Polish and Spanish.

The Office coordinated CORDIS activities with the reorganised Common Implementation Centre at DG Research and Innovation, as well as with other Commission stakeholders. Discussions started on how the Office could contribute to maximising the impact of the next Horizon Europe R & I framework programme.

Source: Publications Office, Webtrends
The variations are mainly due to changes in Google algorithms which can favour or penalise traffic.
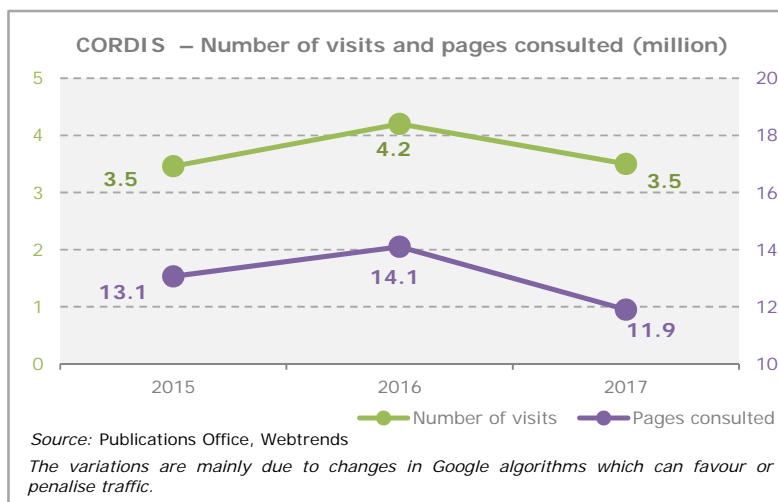
Preparatory action 'Linked open data in European public administration'

The aim of the preparatory action 'Linked open data in European public administration' is to identify, assess and support the exploitation of the potential of linked open data for European public administrations, enhance the active and passive use of open data by linking it and thus facilitate the generation of new data, information and knowledge.

The EU Vocabularies were linked to DBpedia and Wikidata to kick off cooperation with the most active linked open data communities in the world to further disseminate the content of the EU institutions. Documentation about the Office's data sources was created in order to help external reusers to access the data in an automated way and to better understand the data models. The EU Open Data Portal integrated a SPARQL wizard allowing non-professional users to write powerful queries for linked open datasets. The interlinking and automated indexing of datasets were improved. The EU Open Data Portal also integrated the possibility to assign DOIs, which enables users to cite the datasets and data providers to better follow and understand where their data is used. A licence for the Qlik Sense platform now permits user-friendly data analytics and the creation and publication of interactive dashboards.

A study was conducted to assess the successful usage of linked open data services in the public sector in Europe. The EU Datathon highlighted the potential of linking data from EU institutions and Member States.

European Legislation Identifier

European Legislation Identifiers (ELIs) were assigned to EU treaties, secondary legislation, corrigenda and consolidated texts. A total of 14 legislation publishers ([24]) had implemented ELI in their national systems by the end of 2019. Information was updated as appropriate in the ELI registry ([25]) on EUR-Lex. The Office initiated a project to integrate ELI subdivisions into the daily legislation production workflow.

Two meetings were organised with the stakeholder group that governs the ELI initiative and the Office contributed to two expert group meetings hosted by the Council. Three workshops provided hands-on support to Member States interested in implementing the ELI standard in their legislation publishing systems.

([24]) Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, the United Kingdom and the Office.
([25]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli-register/about.html

2. ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL

This section explains *how* the Office delivered the achievements described in the previous section. This section is divided into two subsections.

The first subsection reports the control results and other relevant information that support management's assurance on the achievement of the financial management and internal control objectives ([26]). It includes any additional information necessary to establish that the available evidence is reliable, complete and comprehensive. It covers all activities, programmes and management modes relevant to the Office.

The second subsection deals with the other components of organisational management: human resources, information management and external communication.

2.1 Financial management and internal control

Assurance is an objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an assessment of the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

This examination is carried out by management, who monitors the functioning of the internal control systems on a continuous basis, and by internal and external auditors. The results are explicitly documented and reported to the Director-General. These are:

— the reports by the authorising officers by subdelegation (including reports on the financial data and the main points concerning controls and risks, follow-up of actions on audit recommendations, and significant problems);

— the quarterly reports to the Office's Management Committee;

— the reports of the ex-post and second level ex-ante financial controls;

— specific analyses performed by the Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit and review of important processes and procedures and their documentation, including the reports on recorded exceptions and non-compliance events;

— the monitoring of the implementation of the Anti-Fraud Strategy;

— the contribution by the Head of Unit in charge of risk management and internal control, including the results of internal control monitoring at the Office level;

— the limited conclusion of the internal auditor on the state of control, and the observations and recommendations of the Internal Audit Service (IAS);

— observations and recommendations reported by the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

This section is for reporting 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 is for reporting and assessing the elements identified by management which support the assurance on the achievement of the internal control objectives ([27]). The Office's assurance building and materiality criteria are outlined in the AAR Annex 4. Annex 5 outlines the main risks together with the control processes to mitigate them and the indicators used to measure the performance of the relevant control systems.

([26]) Article 36(2) of the Financial Regulation: a) effectiveness, efficiency and economy of operations; b) reliability of reporting; c) safeguarding of assets and information; d) prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities; and e) adequate management of risks relating to the legality and regularity of underlying transactions.

([27]) 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 (Article 36(2) of the Financial Regulation).

Financial resources managed by the Office fall into four types:

— administrative expenditure (salaries, buildings and financing the Office's activities such as the production of publications, access and reuse, and long-term preservation) managed through the Office's own budget, which is annexed to that of the Commission;

— operational expenditure financed through budget lines delegated or co-delegated to the Director-General of the Office (financing TED, CORDIS and services related to the production, storage and dissemination of publications);

— internal assigned revenue under Article 21(3)(c) of the Financial Regulation (administrative or operational expenditure financing the publication of the *Official Journal of the European Union* and services related to the production, storage and dissemination of publications);

— revenue received from the sale of publications. This revenue is transferred to the EU institutions and Commission directorates-general concerned. Sales revenue has constantly decreased and has become insignificant. In 2019 it amounted to EUR 46 988.

Within the Office, a partly decentralised financial circuit is applied and a simplified payment workflow exists for low-risk items. The reorganisation of the budget cells was completed with the amalgamation of the two remaining budget cells into the newly created Budget Execution section of the Finance Unit. There were no cases in the Office to be reported upon under Article 92(3), Article 125(3), Article 130(4) and Article 193(2) of the new Financial Regulation.

Overall conclusion table

Risk-type/ Activities	Procurement (e.g. minor or major values)	NEI, e.g. Revenues, Assets, OBS [(in)tangible or financial assets & liabilities]	ICO indicators available at this level? (cf. L&R, SFM, AFS, SAI, TFV)	Independent info from auditors (IAS, ECA) on assurance or on new/overdue critical recommendations available?	Any reservation?
Direct management Procurement (Publications)	€ 43 137 789.8	Internal assigned revenue = 5 544 051.61 Assets = 4 709 526.10	**RER < 2 %**	Y	NO
Totals (coverage)	€ 43 137 789.8	Assigned revenue = 5 544 051.61 Assets = 4 709 526.10	**RER < 2 %**	Y	NA
ICO-related indicators available at this level? (cf. L&R, SFM, AFS, SAI, TFV)	**RER estimated: 0.12 %** **CEC = YES** **AFS = OK**	*Clean management declaration* **SAI = OK** **TFV = YES**	**RER estimated: 0.12 %** **AFS = OK** **SAI = OK** **TFV = YES**	**No critical issue** **No new critical recommendation** **No critical or very important recommendation overdue**	**NA**
Links to AAR Annex 3	*Overall total = 43 137 789.8 €. This amount represents the total of payments on credits C1, C4, C5 and C8, including credits co-delegated from other directorates-general to the Office (as per Table 2 — payments made).*	*Assigned revenue = 5 544 051.61 (as per Table 7) Assets = 4 709 526.10 (as per Table 4)*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*

Notes:

Legend for the abbreviations: NEI = non-expenditure item(s), OBS= off-balance sheet, ICO = internal control objective, L&R = legality and regularity, SFM = sound financial management, AFS = anti-fraud strategy measures, SAI = safeguarding assets and information, TFV = true and fair view, RER = residual error rate, CEC = cost-effectiveness of controls.

A total of EUR 11 161 819.60 were charged back by the Office from other Commission directorates-general using type II and III co-delegations (EUR 10 898 054.28) and recovery orders (EUR 263 765.32). It should be noted that the Office does not apply any standard costing models and only charges back externally contracted costs. The Guidance on the provision of services to other EU institutions, agencies and bodies is not applicable to the Office.

1. *Effectiveness = the control results and benefits*

- *Legality and regularity of the transactions*

The Office 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 multiannual character of programmes as well as the nature of the payments concerned.

In order to ensure that **procurement procedures** do not lead to incorrect attribution of contracts, the Office maintains a *Comité des achats et marchés* (CAM) to give an opinion to the Authorising Officers by Subdelegation about the attribution decision and its basis. The committee delivered **9 favourable opinions**. All contracts over EUR 500 000 were preceded by an analysis before launching the procurement procedure.

With a view to mitigating the risk of improper implementation of contracts, liquidated damages amounting to EUR 11 972 were applied by the operational services in 14 cases concerning 6 contracts.

The Financial Control section of the Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit carries out two types of control of specific financial transactions in order to ensure that **commitments and payments** are legal and regular, and **recovery orders** are correctly established for all services rendered: controls that are made before signature of the transaction, only on commitments and recovery orders (ex-ante), and controls on all types of completed transactions (ex-post). Both verifications are organised on a sample basis.

All sampled transactions found to have errors were **examined in detail** and recommendations were formulated. From the control exercises carried out, 5 cases were identified and controlled in depth by Financial Control, representing a total value of EUR 0.14 million, with a final financial consequence of EUR 64 886.3. To ensure that **transfers and write-offs** are regular and legal, Financial Control checks all requests for transfers and write-offs. The 3 requests for transfers and the 4 requests for write-off were **legal and regular**.

Controls carried out in the Office and the indicators cover the management of all types of financial resources, including revenue.

Financial control results are extrapolated to determine the amount at risk. This is carried out in accordance with the Commission Guidance on sampling methods for audit authorities.

The results of controls on procurement activities (compliance with requirements regarding analysis of contracts and CAM opinions), the very low residual error rate calculated based on ex-post controls performed on commitments and payments, and the overall regularity and legality of all other transactions (recovery orders, transfers and write-offs) **demonstrate the effectiveness and sufficiency** of the controls in place.

In the context of the protection of the EU budget, the Office's estimated overall risk at payment, estimated future corrections and risk at closure are consolidated at Commission level.

The Office's data is shown in Table X and its accompanying notes below.

The estimated overall risk *at payment* for 2019 expenditure is EUR 0.052 million. This is the Authorising Officer by Delegation's best, conservative estimation of the amount of *relevant expenditure* during the year (EUR 43.14 million) not in conformity with the contractual and regulatory provisions applicable at the time the payment was made.

Taking into account the nature of the Office's expenditure, in particular its low error rate, as well as the existing controls in place, the Office considers it is unlikely that future corrections for the 2019 payments will be made. Therefore, the estimated future corrections for 2019 expenditure are EUR 0 million.

The difference between those two amounts leads to the estimated overall risk *at closure* for the 2019 expenditure of **EUR 51 765**. The detected error rate is stable compared to the previous year; the decrease in the estimated overall amount at risk at payment is due to the decrease of funds managed (payments volume).

Table X — Estimated overall amount at risk at closure

Publications Office	Payments made (FY; m€)	*Minus* new prefinancing [*plus* retentions made] (in FY; m€)	*Plus* cleared prefinancing [*minus* retentions (partially) released and deductions of expenditure made by MS] (in FY; m€)	**= Relevant expenditure (for the FY; m€)**	Average error rate (%) (*weighted AER*; %)	Estimated overall amount at risk *at payment* (FY; m€)	Average recoveries and corrections (***adjusted ARC***; %)	Estimated future corrections [and deductions] (for FY; m€)	**Estimated overall amount at risk *at closure*** (m€)
(1)	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*	*(5)*	*(6)*	*(7)*	*(8)*	*(9)*	*(10)*
						= (5) x (6)		= (5) x (8)	= (7) − (9)
Publications	43.14 mEUR	0 mEUR	0 mEUR	43.14 mEUR	0.12 %	0.052 mEUR	0 %	0 mEUR	= 0.052 mEUR; and 0.12 % of (5)
Overall, total	43.14 mEUR	0 mEUR	0 mEUR	43.14 mEUR	0.12 %	= 0.052 mEUR; and 0.12 % of (5)	0 %	= 0 mEUR; and 0 % of (5)	= 0.052 mEUR; and 0.12 % of (5)

(2)   Payments made or equivalent, e.g. expenditure registered in the Commission's accounting system, accepted expenditure or cleared prefinancing. In any case, this means after the preventive (ex-ante) control measures have already been implemented earlier in the cycle. In all cases of co-delegations (Internal Rules, Article 3), 'payments made' are covered by the delegated DGs. For cross subdelegations (Internal Rules, Article 12), they remain with the delegating DGs. The Office uses information from AAR Annex 3, Table 2.

(5)   For the purpose of equivalence with the ECA's scope of the EC funds with potential exposure to legality and regularity errors (see the ECA's Annual Report methodological Annex 1.1), our concept of 'relevant expenditure' includes the payments made, subtracts the new pre-financing paid out, and adds the previous pre-financing actually cleared during the FY. This is a separate and 'hybrid' concept, intentionally combining elements from the budgetary accounting and from the general ledger accounting. The Office does not use pre-financing so 5 = 2.

(6)   In order to calculate the weighted average error rate (AER) for the total relevant expenditure in the reporting year, the detected error rates have been used — or an equivalent. For low-risk types of expenditure, where there are indications that the equivalent error rate might be close to 'zero' (e.g. administrative expenditure, operating subsidies to agencies), it is nevertheless recommended that 0.5 % be used as a conservative estimate. Despite this, the Office uses the error rate detected as a result of the ex-post controls performed by the Financial Control section. This is carried out in accordance with the Commission Guidance on sampling methods for audit authorities.

(8)   Even though to some extent based on the 7 years historic average of recoveries and financial corrections (ARC), which is the best available indication of the corrective capacity of the ex-post control systems implemented by the DG over the past years, the AOD has adjusted this historic average (from 0.2 % to 0 %) to obtain the best but conservative estimate for the current Multiannual Financial Framework. Taking into account the nature of the Office's expenditure, in particular its low error rate, as well as the existing controls in place, the Office considers it is unlikely that future corrections for the 2019 payments will be made. Therefore, the estimated future corrections for 2019 expenditure are EUR 0 million.

- **Fraud prevention, detection and correction**

The Office has developed and implemented its own anti-fraud strategy since 2014, on the basis of the methodology provided by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). It was last updated in 2016. Following the release in summer 2019 of the new Commission's Anti-Fraud Strategy, the Office prepared a **new own strategy** which will be submitted to OLAF for consultation in the first part of 2020.

The Office continued to raise the Office's staff **awareness on fraud prevention and detection**, by regular communications on the Office's intranet and targeted reminders to heads of units. Additionally, training courses on fraud prevention and ethics have been advertised to staff.

The Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit monitors the anti-fraud strategy through the follow-up of the action plan linked to it, including the performance indicators defined in the Management Plan.

The controls aimed at preventing and detecting fraud are essentially similar to those intended to ensure the legality and regularity of transactions.

To implement the Anti-Fraud Strategy, several **analyses were performed**, such as the analysis of the register of exceptions and the concentration of contracts, the follow-up of the CAM opinions, the analysis of contracts before renewal, and the follow-up of approvals by the Governance Committee. In order to follow up the only recommendation addressed by OLAF to the Office, internal analysis of the file, contradictory procedure and consultation with the Commission's Legal Service were undertaken in 2019.

In order to identify risk of fraud the Office screens the register of exceptions and the transactions where errors have a financial impact (as identified by Financial Control). These transactions were subject to a more in-depth analysis and **no indication of risk of fraud was found**.

During the reporting year, 3 entries in the register of exceptions concerning taking over of costs by the Office and 4 concerning contractual overrides, categorised as fraud prevention indicators, were identified. This represented 0.15 % of the total number and 0.22 % of the total value of the Office's transactions during the period analysed. This is lower than both the materiality limit and the target. The analysis of these cases **did not lead to any suspicion of fraud**.

The conclusion is that the anti-fraud strategy of the Office is comprehensive and reliable. Its periodical review was carried out in 2019 and a new strategy will be issued in 2020.

- *Other control objectives: safeguarding of assets and information*

The main assets of the Office are:

— information and data stored electronically. Since 1 January 2018, all physical IT assets together with resources and operational responsibility were transferred to DG Informatics, however the system and data owners remain at the Office. Access to applications is protected either by EU Login or legacy user IDs and passwords authentication. DG Informatics ensures daily backups, a secondary site for high availability, data replication, safeguarding and business continuity;

— in stocks of publications. These are stored and managed in a secure location by an external contractor who maintains a perpetual inventory.

Unused material, equipment and archives are **stored in secure locations**. A procedure for missing assets is in force to handle discrepancies. All write-offs of assets have to be endorsed by a committee consisting of delegates of the Directorates-General in Luxembourg which manage assets, and a president independent from asset management. There were **no cases of security breach** and all **write-off requests** to the write-off committee were **authorised**.

For legislative documents to be published in the Official Journal, the Office uses the **secure transfer** (eTrustEX/eDelivery) from the Commission, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the European Committee of Regions. With the European Court of Auditors and the European Central Bank, the Office receives data via the IMMCbuilder, which is also secured by EU Login and https protocol.
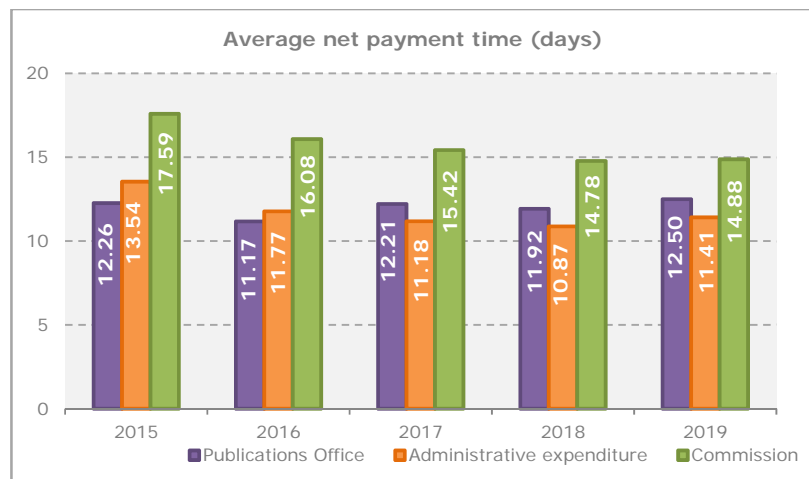
Following IAS recommendations, the reporting on testing operations on business continuity was implemented.

Based on the control of write-off files and inventory procedures, and the assessment of risks and of compliance with internal control principles, it can be concluded that **assets and information managed by the Office are properly protected**.

2. *Efficiency = the time-to-pay*

In 2019 the Office made 3 248 payments out of which **99.85 %** were within time limit. The average net payment time was 12.5 days. Results show that the controls in place ensured the **timely execution of payments** and therefore are **effective and efficient**. The amalgamation of the remaining two budget cells into the newly created Budget Execution section of the Finance Unit will allow for a **more efficient use of resources** dedicated to the management of financial transactions.

Average net payment time (days)

(Bar chart showing average net payment time in days for the years 2015–2019, grouped by Publications Office, Administrative expenditure, and Commission.)

Year	Publications Office	Administrative expenditure	Commission
2015	12.26	13.54	17.59
2016	11.17	11.77	16.08
2017	12.21	11.18	15.42
2018	11.92	10.87	14.78
2019	12.50	11.41	14.88

3. Economy = the cost of controls

Every year, in cooperation with all units, the Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit estimates the costs of controls in place by reviewing the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff members and their activity-ratio dedicated to control tasks, and by monitoring the total number of transactions carried out by types. For 2019, the corporate methodology for the estimation, assessment and reporting on the cost-effectiveness of controls was applied and the costs of controls were separated by the applicable control system in ex-ante and ex-post controls. The detailed breakdown of costs of controls is presented in Annex 10.

Overall controls

Overall controls (including control of procurement, control of financial circuits, financial control, control related to budget and accounting, coordination and internal control, control related to IT security) cost EUR 3.4 million The ratios of the estimated cost of controls per relevant control systems are between 2 % and 5 %, within the same range of last year. The ratio of the overall estimated cost of control at Commission level calculated against the total value of transactions in the scope of control is 4.19 %. In 2018, the costs of controls were EUR 3.36 million.

Given that no changes were performed in 2019 in the control strategy, and there is only a slight increase of costs of controls, the Office concludes that the **controls are cost-effective**.

4. Conclusion on the cost-effectiveness of controls

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

In non-financial terms, the benefits of control include better value for money, deterrent and preventive effects, efficiency gains, system improvements and compliance with regulatory provisions.

To reach a conclusion on the relative efficiency of controls, it is necessary to analyse the evolution of these efficiency indicators over time and/or compare them to relevant benchmarks. Comparison of financial control results and the proportion of exceptions to materiality criteria, as well as of the time to pay to legal requirements, indicates that **controls are effective**.

Taking into account the historical error rate shortly after having started the second level ex-ante and the ex-post controls, which was between 5 and 7 %, it can be assumed that the costs of controls are lower than the benefits derived from avoiding errors. The changes between the years in percentages and costs per transaction originate from the difference in the number and value of transactions.

The procurement, commitment and payment procedures are, to a large extent, a regulatory requirement which cannot be curtailed. Therefore, the Office considers that

the **necessity of these controls is undeniable** and, as shown by the risks outlined in Annex 5, a significant proportion of the appropriations would be at risk should they not be in place. Controls are carried out on a sample basis, applying a stratified methodology since the beginning of 2017. Furthermore, second level ex-ante controls are focused on the most relevant period. However, when the result of these controls is not satisfactory, ex-ante controls are extended to cover other periods.

The Office reviews its control strategy on a regular basis depending on identified needs and risks. Financial Control section continued to apply the sampling process and the extrapolation method to determine the estimated amount at risk as reviewed and aligned with the Commission Guidance on sampling methods for audit authorities. The reorganisation in 2019 of the budget cells in one section will allow for a **more efficient use of resources** dedicated to the management of financial transactions.

The Office is reviewing its processes to update the risk assessment and to identify further efficiencies including in terms 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.

The Office is audited by both internal and external independent auditors: the Commission's IAS and the ECA.

Recommendations following audits carried out by the IAS

During the period of reference, the IAS produced the final report on the **multi-DG audit on intellectual property rights** supporting activities in the Commission which took place in 2018. The audit focused on the effectiveness and the efficiency of the controls put in place to prevent and detect infringement of intellectual property rights of third parties by publications of the Commission. One important recommendation, concerning the intellectual property rights management for EU publications, was formulated for the Office. Based on the action plan accepted by the IAS, the Office provided information on **the corrective measures taken** within the target deadline **in view of review** by the IAS.

An **audit on IT governance and project management**, started by the IAS in December 2018, was finalised. One very important recommendation concerning the IT governance practices for monitoring programmes and two important recommendations, one on IT security in the project lifecycle and one on project management practices, were formulated. The action plan submitted was accepted by the IAS and the work on all three recommendations started in 2019 and is progressing as planned. Several action points related to these recommendations **have already been implemented**.

The **last open recommendation** of the 2016 IAS **audit on business continuity was implemented**.

Limited conclusion of the internal auditor on the state of the internal control

Based on all work undertaken by the IAS in the period 2017-2019 and taking into account that: (a) management has accepted all the recommendations issued in 2017-2019; (b) 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; (c) the implementation of these action plans is monitored through reports by management and follow-up audits by the IAS; and (d) management has assessed a number of action plans as implemented which have not yet been followed up by the IAS, the internal auditor concluded that the internal control systems in place for the audited processes are effective, except for the observations giving rise to the 'very important' recommendation. This recommendation needs to be addressed, in line with the agreed action plans.

As regards the one very important recommendation, work on its implementation started in 2019, and most of the related actions are in progress. In order to improve the project status reporting to make it more objective and fact-based, the Office works on a proposal which will be submitted to the Office's Governance Committee for approval. An IT multiannual plan is in course of finalisation, with a first draft already discussed with the senior management. Work also started on the update of the IT governance framework. As regards the update of core business processes and supporting information systems, the Office finalised the project initiation request in 2019, and this was approved by the Governance Committee; the related 'BPM@OP' project was kicked-off in January 2020. As for the definition and documentation of the roles and responsibilities of the project support office, a proposal will be submitted for approval to the Governance Committee.

Recommendations following audits carried out by the ECA

The Office is the lead service for two recommendations arising from the **ECA's performance audit** on access to the EU institutions' public procurement ([28]) as well as for two additional recommendations originating from the European Parliament's resolution on 2015 discharge. The recommendations refer to the creation of a one-stop shop for the EU institutions' procurement activities and to the establishment of a single public repository for information related to procurement contracts in order to increase transparency. The implementation of these recommendations is in progress. Regarding the single public repository, the recommendations are partially implemented.

Conclusions

There were no audit recommendations which would shed doubt on the achievement of objectives or the quality of financial management of the Office.

No critical or very important audit recommendations were significantly overdue at the end of the year. Consequently, the current state-of-play **does not lead to assurance-related concerns**.

2.1.3 Assessment of the effectiveness of the 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 Office 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 Office **fully implemented the new Internal Control Principles**. Individual meetings were held with the heads of units on internal control matters, and the elements of the framework were discussed. Following these meetings and after a dedicated desk-review exercise **the internal control plan was reviewed** and the **internal control monitoring criteria were defined**.

Assessment of the internal control systems

The internal control systems of the Office are assessed on a continuous basis.

Financial control results show that there are **no material risks** in financial operations and that first level operational and financial controls are satisfactory.

The analysis of the register of exceptions shows that the number of exceptions is insignificant and there is **no specific risk**.

The Evaluation section of the Strategy, Governance and Internal Control Unit carries out evaluations, assists in the evaluations and analyses of contracts carried out by other

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([28]) Special Report No 17/2016: *The EU institutions can do more to facilitate access to their public procurement*.

units, and monitors the completion of evaluations and analyses of contracts where the section is not involved. The evaluations and analyses contribute to the quality of preparation of renewed contracts and show that the objectives of actions evaluated were attained. Discussions with all heads of unit in the Office take place to review the effectiveness of the internal control systems.

A **specific assessment** of the internal control system was carried out for 2019 in accordance with the methodology established in the 'Implementation guide of the internal control framework of the Commission'. The presence and functioning of the components and principles of the internal control system was done based on the strengths and weaknesses identified during the year and the measurement of the monitoring criteria. The report is presented to and **validated by the Director-General**.

The internal auditor concluded that the internal control systems in place for the audited processes are effective, except for the observations giving rise to the 'very important' recommendation. The Office has already started in 2019 the work on the implementation of this very important recommendation. None of the connected residual risks has materialised, and there is no impact on the declaration of assurance.

The Office 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 function well overall**, but some improvements are needed as deficiencies were identified related to the IT governance practices for monitoring programmes and projects.

The improvements and/or remedial measures implemented or envisaged are detailed in the action plan following the IAS audit on IT governance and project management in the Office.

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 subconclusions 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 stems from the results of monitoring carried out by management and auditors, and contained in the reports listed in section 2.1. These reports result from a systematic analysis of the evidence available. This approach provides sufficient guarantees as to the completeness and reliability of the information reported and results in a comprehensive coverage of the budget delegated to the Director-General of the Office.

Results of controls of procurement, financial control and the analysis of exceptions support the conclusion that **resources are used for the intended purpose** and **operations of the Office are legal and regular**.

Analysis of the control results, ex-ante analysis of contracts and evaluation activities ensure sound financial management; the measures taken to protect information and assets also give **assurance concerning safeguarding of assets and information**.

The follow-up of audit recommendations, the assessment of the internal control systems and the implementation of the anti-fraud strategy provide **reasonable assurance** that the **control systems work as intended and fraud is prevented and detected**.

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 Director-General, 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,

Director-General of the Publications Office,

In my capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation,

Declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view [29].

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

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

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

Luxembourg, 31 March 2020

Rudolf STROHMEIER

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[29]   True and fair in this context means a reliable, complete and correct view on the state of affairs in the service.

2.2 Other organisational management dimensions

2.2.1 Human resource management

Staff engagement and well-being, and gender-balanced management

According to the 2018 Commission staff survey, staff engagement at the Office is at 67 % (– 1.5 percentage points compared to 2016), which remains very close to the 2020 target (70 %). The Office also approaches the 50 % target set for staff well-being with a result of 43 % (+ 1 % percentage points compared to 2016). The findings were analysed, communicated and followed-up by an action plan.

Internal communication relied on the Office's intranet (YourOP), which is the pivotal instrument for informing staff about corporate and managerial matters. Important events and news items were published daily, with emphasis on the 2018 staff survey. The intranet also served as a platform for staff to inform others about recent developments in their work. 257 articles were published in the 'News' and 'People' sections of the intranet and 14 videos were produced, some in cooperation with other Commission directorates-general.

In 2019, the Office celebrated 50 years since its establishment, and several events took place to mark the anniversary and thank its staff. These included an anniversary day organised in Neumünster Abbey in Luxembourg with games and quizzes on the Office's history.

In the framework of a Commission renewed approach to reach at least 40 % female managers by 2019 ([30]), a sub target of 4 female appointments at middle management level was set for 2019, out of which three first female appointment to a head of unit position had been done by the end of 2018 (one in 2017 and two in 2018). The fourth appointment took place on 1 January 2019. Two senior management positions were published and will be filled in 2020.

Resource efficiency

The management of IT projects improved following a broad use of the PM² methodology, with the systematic use of project initiation requests and the production of status reports and end reports. Relevant training for all project managers was organised.

Following the rationalisation process carried out in cooperation with all operational units, the Office managed to further reduce the number of its own contracts from 200 at the end of 2018 to 159 at the end of 2019.

Training priorities focused on the development of technical expertise in information and communications technology relating to the production, storage, dissemination and reuse of documents and publications. This reflects the technological evolution and changing concepts in the information management and publishing domains.

Data centre consolidation and cloud migration

In accordance with the Office's cloud-first policy, whereby the cloud should gradually become the default deployment model, the migration of three complex information systems (Cellar, EUR-Lex and EUR-Lex Search) was achieved. Additionally, in partnership with DG Informatics, the Office migrated 95 % of its information systems to the corporate infrastructure local data centre.

([30])   SEC(2017)359 of 19 July 2017.

SPECIFIC EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY

SYNERGIES AND EFFICIENCIES IN THE PUBLISHING DOMAIN

As Domain Leader in the field of publications, the Office fine-tuned its methodology and estimates in collaboration with the Commission's central services. Foundations were laid for high added-value services under four interlinked action fields: 1. Collaborative planning and governance for publications, 2. Editorial advice and performance measurement, 3. Translation request management, and 4. Centralised production of publications. Their scale-up is strongly linked to the full deployment of Domain Leadership Publications and will bring a decrease in the number of publications and related resources while raising publications' quality and impact.

SIMPLIFICATION OF BUDGET MANAGEMENT

The Office pursued further the rationalisation and simplification of budget management related to direct costs of mandatory publications. By eliminating the need of monthly reporting and combining the management of different budget lines into one budget line, the Office's Finance Unit reduced 2 FTEs. This also allowed for resource savings in all EU institutions concerned.

2.2.2 Information management aspects

Data, information and knowledge management

Under the Commission's communication on 'Data, information and knowledge management at the European Commission' (³¹), the Office promoted the better gathering, sharing and use of information and knowledge among EU staff and among other EU institutions. The Office took an **active role** in all actions of the Data Strategy@EC, aimed at transforming the Commission into a data-driven organisation, in particular in the data inventory exercise led by the Joint Research Centre, where it was responsible for thematic coordination of open data. Furthermore, the Office contributed to the Commission's Information Management Steering Board (IMSB) bi-annual work programme 2018-2019 on actions related to data publishing on the EU Open Data Portal, data landscaping and inventory, development of data visualisation capabilities, semantic interoperability, alignment of controlled vocabularies, and services based upon unique and persistent identification. A study conducted by the Office on EU citation styles recommended harmonised methods and tools for **a standardised citation of EU content across all EU institutions**. Its recommendations will be extended to the citation of digital content, with the development of an online citation tool.

In order to **rationalise resources** in the area of data and information management, the Office implemented the corporate decision to merge the open data contact points with the local data correspondents.

Data protection

The Office established a **complete inventory** of its processing operations of personal data. These were assessed against compliance with the principles and rules of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 and the Commission's Data Protection Action Plan (³²). Actions as included in the Data Protection Action Plan (e.g. information to staff about the new applicable rules in personal data protection) were also taken.

All legacy notifications were converted into Data Protection Management System records; several obsolete notifications were archived, while all others were **updated** before publishing them in the Commission's Register of the Data Protection Officer (DPO). All

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(³¹)   C(2016) 6626 final.
(³²)   C(2018) 7425 final.

privacy statements were updated and made **compliant** with the Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, so that data subjects have the latest information at their disposal in an easy-to-read format and, in most cases, in all official EU languages. In addition, several new records were established for processing operations of personal data which had not been covered so far by a notification/record. Most of these were also completed in 2019 and published in the DPO's Register. Personal data processing at the Office does not entail any restriction to data subjects' rights.

Document management

Document management was monitored through **regular reports** on non-filed documents, non-closed tasks, NomCom ([33]) files not used for one year etc.; awareness was raised and information was shared through a dedicated network and other means of communication (e.g. guidance on the Office's intranet).

The percentage of the **files shared** with other Commission directorates-general increased significantly. The ratio of documents registered with an e-signatory increased, and the Office will continue to promote the use of the e-signatory.

2.2.3 External communication activities

Not applicable. The Office does not carry out external communication activities but ensures the promotion of EU information and publications of the EU institutions, and manages websites for their dissemination.

([33]) NomCom: *Nomenclature commune*. It is the application for the centralised management of the Commission's documents filing plan.