



**European Committee
of the Regions**

European Committee of the Regions

Annual Activity Report for 2019

JUNE 2020

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INTRODUCTION

The Annual Activity Report is a key component of the strategic and programming cycle. It is the basis on which the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) takes its responsibility for the management of resources and the achievement of objectives, as a mirror of the Strategic Management Plan.

This Annual Report of the Authorising Officer by Delegation (the Secretary-General) is established on the basis of the Financial Regulation (art. 74.9 of the Financial Regulation), the internal rules on the implementation of the budget and the Charter of tasks and responsibilities of the Committee's Authorising Officer by Delegation.

As required by the above provisions, the Annual Activity Report covers the activities of the institution (the objectives and main achievements of the year under review), as well as the budget execution within the parameters of the control environment. The report also contains a declaration, signed by the Authorising Officer by Delegation, on the application of the principle of sound financial management to the use of the resources and on the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions in 2019.

Part 1 of the report is a brief summary of the political achievements of the institution in 2019.

Part 2 presents the main achievements and activities compared against the objectives set in the Strategic Management Plan 2019-2020.

Part 3 reports on the internal management and control systems. It outlines the characteristics of the CoR risk environment and gives a detailed description of internal control systems, such as verification, internal control standards and financial exceptions reporting. In addition, the chapter reports on actions taken on the comments and recommendations from the various supervisory bodies: recommendations made in connection with the budgetary discharge, the reports of the Court of Auditors as well as the internal audits.

Part 4 contains comments made by the Authorising Officer by Delegation on the management system he has put in place.

Finally, Part 5 is the declaration by the Authorising Officer by Delegation.

1. POLITICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

The mission of the CoR consists of its involvement in the EU decision-making process ensuring that the concerns and interests of local and regional authorities are taken on board in all stages of the legislative process - from the conception of the legislation and policies to their implementation. To contribute to this objective the CoR has two instruments: the adoption of opinions and the structured co-operation with the other EU institutions and with associations of local and regional authorities; a third element related to the citizens' outreach through regional and local authorities has emerged as a priority also related to the debate on the future of Europe. The CoR's activities, as well as the annual work programme of its commissions, are defined on the basis of the overall political strategy of the CoR, set out in the resolution on the political priorities.

2019 marked the CoR's 25th anniversary and was the last year of the CoR's sixth term of office 2015-2020 under the Presidency of Karl-Heinz Lambertz who took over as President in July 2017 and Markku Markkula who in turn became First Vice-President.

The CoR's broader political work was guided by the following priorities for the 5 years term of office, which were adopted in a resolution in June 2015:

1. A fresh start for the European economy: creating jobs and sustainable growth in cities and regions to provide a better quality of life for citizens.
2. The territorial dimension of EU legislation matters: working in the interest of citizens, no matter where they chose to live and work.
3. A simpler, more connected Europe: reconnecting citizens and businesses at local and regional level.
4. Stability and cooperation within and outside of the European Union: supporting our neighbours on their path towards European values.
5. Europe of the citizens is Europe of the future: enhancing forward-looking partnerships between European Union and its people.

In addition to these priorities, the CoR Members have set a clear political goal to get the assembly even further involved along the whole EU political and legislative cycle, building on the existing cooperation agreements with the European Parliament and the European Commission. This goal was already underlying the political priorities guiding the Strategic Management Plans 2016-2019:

- More involvement throughout all stages of the EU legislative process (European Commission, European Parliament and Council of the EU);
- Raise the CoR's institutional profile by building even more effective and trustful partnerships with other EU Institutions;
- Put regional and local authorities at the heart of designing and implementing European policies;
- Further develop the EU's decentralised communication with and within regions and cities.

Complementary to this framework, President Lambertz identified 4 "chantiers" for reinforcing the CoR and its impact which were broadly endorsed by the Conference of Presidents of the Political Groups, the Chairs of the commissions and the national delegations:

- Energising the functioning of the CoR statutory bodies
- Fostering our cooperation with the EU institutions, and our impact
- Strengthening our bonds with cities, regions, and their associations
- Leveraging communication, dialogue with citizens, and standing in public opinion

In 2019, the CoR met five times in Plenary Session in Brussels and two external Bureau meetings were organised marking the Romanian and Finnish Presidencies of the EU. The external Bureau in Romania was organised together with the 8th Summit of Regions and Cities: (Re)new Europe focussing on the need to rebuild Europe from ground up.

In terms of impact on the final legislation or importance of contribution to the inter-Institutional debate, the following work can be highlighted in 2019:

Mobilisation for the European elections

In 2019 the CoR supported the mobilisation campaign for the European elections and contributed the view of local and regional authorities to the priority-setting of the newly established Parliament and Commission through debates with key high level actors as well as through resolutions and opinions.

Reflecting on Europe process and Conference on the Future of Europe

Based on its recommendations on the Future of Europe delivered at the request of the then President of the European Council Donald Tusk and acknowledged in the European Council conclusions of 14 December 2018, the CoR contributed to the debate on the future of Europe which has led to the establishment of a Conference on the Future of Europe. The CoR will continue to cooperate with other EU Institutions in directly contribute to this format further, putting it into practice.

Green Deal for Europe

The CoR outlined its views on a Green Deal in partnership with local and regional authorities in a resolution adopted in December 2019 and presented in a debate with executive Vice-President of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans. The resolution stresses that an ambitious Green Deal is necessary to make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050 and welcomes that it puts sustainability at the heart of EU policy-making. It calls for the Green Deal to adopt a holistic, place-based approach that proposes concrete solutions that take into account the economic, social, geographic and environmental challenges and opportunities of the regions and cities and has the participation and involvement of local population in the design and implementation of future proposals. In its new mandate starting in 2020, the CoR will establish a working group for this key dossier that will coordinate the input from the local and regional level on this cross-cutting topic.

Investment in Europe's future

Following the debate launched by President Jean-Claude Juncker on the White Paper on the Future of Europe on 14 February 2018, the European Commission put forward scenarios on the future European budget beyond 2020. The CoR defended the position that EU cohesion policy must continue to represent at least one-third of the EU budget after 2020 and support all of the EU's regions. This message was delivered through an EU-wide campaign branded the #CohesionAlliance (with the main European territorial associations (AER, AEBR, CALRE, CEMR, CPMR, and Eurocities). The CoR closely followed the development of the discussions on the MFF proposals and recalled its positions in a debate with Commissioner Oettinger in October 2019.

Reinforced cooperation with the European Parliament

The cooperation with the EP has been systematically enhanced since the signing of the Cooperation Agreement in 2014. The CoR and the EP pursue effective bilateral cooperation on a set of selected priority files which are reviewed and updated every year. As the quality of the relationship with the EP continues to improve at all levels, it paved the way towards more structured forms of cooperation between the rapporteurs of both institutions, CoR commissions and EP committees, respective COPs and interaction with the Parliaments' CCC .

In addition, the cooperation in the field of communication was stepped up in view of the EU elections 2019. This cooperation included the participation of MEPs in citizens' dialogues organized by the CoR in the context of its Reflecting on Europe initiative as well as the EuroPCom.

More focused cooperation with the European Commission

In July 2018, the Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and 'Doing Less, More Efficiently', chaired by First Vice-President Frans Timmermans, handed over its final report to President Jean-Claude Juncker.

The conclusions of the Task Force were also endorsed by the European Commission in its Communication “The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality: Strengthening their role in the EU’s policymaking“, tabled on 23 October 2018. Apart from promoting a common understanding of subsidiarity and proportionality through the use of a Common Assessment Grid, the Commission called for a more active involvement of local and regional authorities, stating that it intends to amend its better regulation guidance to highlight the importance of capturing the views and experience of these levels of governance. This exercise has allowed strengthening the exchanges on active subsidiarity with national and regional parliaments as well as the formalization of structured cooperation on better law making with regions.

More targeted cooperation with the Council

The necessity for better regulation offers good grounds for developing and strengthening ties with the Council and its rotating Presidencies and provides for more transparency in the course of the EU decision-making process. The CoR's strategy is continuously steered towards more opportunities for effective active involvement in the EU trio Presidency's activities and the design of their future programmes as well as the opportunity to present CoR positions at Presidency events, Council Working Parties and Informal Council meetings. Official referrals by the rotating presidency of the European Council of the EU and presentation of priorities by the Presidency at CoR plenary sessions or statutory bodies meeting including in the Member State holding the rotating presidency have been consolidated.

The CoR has also developed cooperation initiatives with the Council secretariat on thematic priority files. The CoR opinions, as well as other relevant CoR documents (studies, consultation reports, impact assessments etc.), are presented in respective working parties of the Council. The CoR has also achieved to set up and information exchange on the respective internal planning documents.

A more detailed account of achievements is provided in the Annual Impact Report 2019.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN PER SERVICE

This chapter presents the implementation of the Strategic Management Plan per service.

The table below shows the staff of the Committee of the Regions as of 31 December 2019.

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	300	181	10	491
Contract staff (1)	18	30	0	48
External contract staff		0	0	25
Seconded national experts	11			11
Other outside personnel (specify) (2)	1			1
Total	330	211	10	576

(1) contract staff replacing absent staff (e.g. maternity leave) are not included.

(2) medical doctor

2.1 Secretariats of the Political Groups

2.1.1 EPP Group

Objective 1: Build on the stronghold of the EPP group as political motor		
<p>Result and/or impact indicators:</p> <p>Number of meetings held, EPP positions carried, members participated in CoR activities and events; rapporteurships secured on major issues, and amendments tabled and carried with the EPP line. Substantial contribution of the Group in the context of the CoR initiative to express the local and regional authorities' views to the European Parliament, in time for the hearings of the new Commissioners.</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020:</p> <p>The EPP Group will continue to reinforce its position in shaping policies, notably via its rapporteurs and amendments, and its meetings. It will seek to defend its common lines and values by generating debate and providing voting guidelines on each opinion and resolution. It will also dedicate its ordinary and extraordinary meetings to shaping and delivering EU policies in line with its values. The EPP Group will closely follow the evolution of the EC Work Programme through its coordinators in each of the CoR Commissions in order to appoint rapporteurs for key opinions, and to propose own-initiative opinions where new</p>	<p>Latest known result:</p> <p>Achieved: EPP meetings held (5 ordinary meetings, 5 Bureau meetings, 2 extraordinary meetings). The Group organised an EPP summit of local and regional leaders in Bucharest, Romania (March 2019) with the participation of around 4.000 elected politicians. Moreover, the Group held an external seminar in Zagreb, Croatia (November 2019).</p> <p>Achieved: An important number of rapporteurships were secured, covering topics of key importance to the group and most of the opinions were adopted unanimously with a small number which was by majority.</p> <p>Achieved: Resolutions - involvement and/or lead of EPP in all political resolutions.</p>

	<p>issues must be placed on the EU agenda. It will support the development of 'Active Subsidiarity' in the political work of the CoR.</p>	<p>Achieved: Participation, although not at 100%, has improved. Achieved in part: majority of amendments tabled or supported by the EPP were carried, further to the political coordination work.</p>
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Objective 2: Strengthen co-operation with other institutions and EPP Party

<p>Result and/or impact indicators: Number of MEPs and CoR members in each other's activities; number of CoR members in Council meetings; number of Commission representatives in Group meetings and activities; regional office and association representatives in group meetings and seminars.</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020: Continue to foster strong relations and working methods with the Party, in the run-up to, and beyond the European elections. Organise joint events which reinforce synergies between politicians from the various levels of government to best defend the values of the EPP family. Build links with newly appointed EPP Commissioners. Likewise with newly elected EPP MEPs and Committee Chairs. Work closely with key Committees in the European Parliament linked to the 2019-2020 priorities. Enhance the promotion of the legislative amendments of the CoR opinions to the European Parliament Committees' members. Contribute to building deeper relations with members of national parliaments via EPP Inter-Parliamentary debates.</p>	<p>Latest known result: Achieved: EPP-CoR Participation in EPP Political Assembly and Working Groups regularly assured. Achieved: EPP-CoR participation in the European Parliament's EPP Group meetings, external Bureau meetings, working group staff meetings and hearings. Achieved: participation of EPP MEPs, EPP Party members, and Commission representatives in ordinary and extraordinary EPP-CoR meetings. Achieved: Activities with the EPP Party, notably a meeting in the context of the EPP Congress in Zagreb.</p>
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Objective 3: Promote and improve visibility of EPP-CoR Members' work

<p>Result and/or impact indicators: Number of press releases and publications published and taken up by media or participants; audio-visual material published and</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020: Continue increasing the visibility of the EPP members and rapporteurs through intensified use of social media, the audio-visual project, the EPP-CoR site, various</p>	<p>Latest known result: Achieved: News were regularly published on the website. Social media activity was intensified as a means of communication, support and social media training provided to members .</p>
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<p>integrated onto the website; number of tweets/re-tweets, comments on Facebook page; visitors received in the CoR.</p>	<p>newsletters and e-newsletters, and other publications. Reach out to citizens and the media outside the 'Brussels bubble' via dedicated EPP communications projects.</p>	<p>Achieved: Printed newsletters and publications around EPP events, disseminated online and in printed form. The rEPPorter newsletter was published for each plenary session and 2 special editions were published for Bucharest and Zagreb.</p> <p>Achieved: Ongoing project launched in 2018 concerning a campaign of local dialogues with citizens, continued also in 2019.</p> <p>Achieved: Audio-visual project consisting of "On the Spot" video interviews with rapporteurs, continued.</p>
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Objective 4: Contribute to the running performance of the CoR, its Administration and budget		
<p>Result and/or impact indicators: Ownership of decisions increased; number of briefings prepared, meetings attended.</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020: Follow-up of political and administrative work especially by the relevant CFAA/EPP rapporteurs with improved implementation of CFAA recommendations; improving functioning of the CoR Commission, Bureau and plenary work. Implementation of all points concerning the on-going administrative agreement with the EESC.</p>	<p>Latest known result: Achieved: Adoption of the "CoR Digital Strategy" for the first time in the history of the institution. The strategy points to the absence of a structured involvement of CoR members in the design of digital tools supporting CoR political and communication activities, underlining the need for a member-centric approach.</p> <p>Achieved: active support to the implementation of the CoR building strategy resulted in the exchange of buildings with the European Commission.</p> <p>Achieved in part: As to the implementation of the current agreement, EPP acknowledged that the two key areas remain unsatisfactory as regards its implementation, namely the 50/50 distribution of space in the JDE building and transformation of the libraries.</p> <p>Achieved in part: Budget Beyond 2020 – EPP has requested also</p>

		through 2019 that political narrative is needed to achieve CoR sustainable long-term budgetary development which would guarantee the implementation of the CoR key political goals.
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Objective 5: Integration of new members in the EPP group		
Result and/or impact indicators: Responsibilities given to members: rapporteurship, participation in votes, occupying EPP seats in CoR bodies, inviting members to CoR and EPP activities.	Target for 2019-2020: With elections regularly taking place throughout Europe and a resulting movement in CoR membership, the EPP will continue to actively integrate all members of the EPP family in its cohesive work. Building on the expertise and added value that each individual can make, the group will make use of its broad membership to reinforce the work and representativeness of the CoR. It will also seek to incorporate members sharing the EPP values in the Group.	Latest known result: Achieved: During 2019, the EPP Group has welcomed successfully new members and alternates from Spain, Hungary, Portugal, The Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Italy, Belgium, Austria and Croatia. It has also re-integrated successfully members who have lost their mandate but returned as members. New members are regularly incorporated in the work of the EPP group in the CoR.

Human resources of the EPP Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	10	4		14
Contract staff	1			1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	11	4	0	15

2.1.2 PES Group

Objective 1: Strengthen PES Group's impact on the CoR political activities		
Result and/or impact indicators: Amendments tabled and votes on opinions and resolutions, decision on documents submitted for	Target for 2019-2020: The PES Group will contribute to the work of the different CoR commissions in order to better reflect the PES priorities on the	Latest known result: Achieved: In 2019, the PES Group organised meetings alongside each plenary session, each commission

<p>decisions in the various bodies in which PES members are sitting (plenary, commissions, Bureau, CFAA, ARLEM, CORLEAP, Working Group on budget, JCCs, working groups with third countries, etc.). PES Group meetings, resolutions, press releases, newsletters, etc.</p>	<p>strategic agenda of the EU. The PES Group will follow closely the rolling programme of the European Commission in order to appoint PES rapporteurs for major opinions. Nevertheless, as 2019 will be a year of transition, European elections and consequently a new European Parliament and new European Commission to be appointed, the PES Group will involve itself closely on the run up to the elections participating in the preparation of the Manifesto which will guide the campaign and once the new Parliament and Commission known establishing contacts with the new MEPs and with the progressive Commissioners.</p>	<p>meeting in Brussels and whenever it was possible for external meetings. The PES Group has also produced voting lists for opinions debated at the plenary sessions and also at the level of Commissions meetings. We furthermore organised a number of Progressive Local Labs in Bulgaria, Germany and Belgium.</p>
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Objective 2: Strengthen the CoR's impact on the EU decision making process		
<p>Result and/or impact indicators: Level of participation and intervention in meetings organised by the PES Group at interinstitutional level (mainly European Commission and European Parliament) or with external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020: The PES Group will reinforce its strategy on the follow-up of opinions or its contacts at inter-institutional level. As much as possible, the CoR PES rapporteurs would work closely with the counterparts at the European Parliament.</p>	<p>Latest known result: Achieved: During 2019, PES rapporteurs had meetings with their counterparts in other EU institutions, particularly with the counterparts at the European Parliament.</p>

Objective 3: Increase PES Group's monitoring of CoR administrative and budgetary affairs		
<p>Result and/or impact indicators: The result and impact will be evaluated through the modifications brought to the existing rules of procedure, to</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020: Follow up closely of the works of the new ad hoc Commission on the revision of the rules of procedure. Concerning the Cooperation</p>	<p>Latest known result: Achieved: The PES Members in CFAA and Bureau closely followed the advancement on the implementation of the</p>

<p>the work of the CFAA and the Bureau and to the relations with the EESC and the EP.</p>	<p>Agreement with the EESC, evaluation of the 13 fields for action and milestones for their implementation identified in the current cooperation agreement with the EESC 2016-2019. Close observation via CFAA and PMG on the negotiations for a new Cooperation Agreement with the EESC which should enter into force as of 1 January 2020. Finding a consensual solution for a building strategy and the future occupation of CoR/EESC buildings.</p>	<p>administrative cooperation agreement with the EESC and supported the prolongation of the current administrative cooperation agreement until the end of 2020.</p>
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Objective 4: Develop PES Communication strategy		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<p>Number of hits on the website</p>	<p>The new website delivered in February 2017 and improved in 2018-2019 will continue to be an important tool to communicate our activities. Our target is to improve the traffic on our website by at least 10%.</p>	<p>Partially achieved: The target of increasing the website visits was not fully achieved mainly because of the blocking of Facebook Advertisement, which was used by the PES Group in past years particularly for its photo competition and because the PES Group has shifted its communications priorities and targeted audiences in 2019 and therefore a period of adjustment is physiological. Even if the target of website traffic was not fully achieved, it should not be seen as a negative factor, because a more qualitative traffic with an increase of +116.40% on the average time per session was achieved. The pages/session average is 3.52, resulting in an increase of +73.09%. The bounce rate is now 16% lower than in 2018, meaning</p>

		that people who go to the website do not leave immediately. These numbers are a sign of more qualitative traffic to the website and that users spend more time on the website and visit more pages.
Number of recipients of the newsletter in our database	The newsletter is not sent anymore after every plenary session but according to the political opportunity. We are currently reviewing our strategy for the future of this product.	Partially achieved: The PES Group newsletter was restarted in July 2019 after a long period of pause due to technical development that took longer than expected (migration to new online system for mailing, website facelift). The number of recipients resulted in a slight decrease from 2018. Moreover, many contacts were lost due to inactive or not updated subscribers.
Number of participants in the photo competition	This year we will continue our engagement with citizens especially in view of the European elections. We are discussing the future strategy regarding a citizens' competition.	Achieved: Engagement with citizens was done and as foreseen, no competition was organised anymore.
Number of Facebook followers	We would like to better target our advertisement campaigns and look for an increase of 25% of our followers. We would like to increase our overall engagement on posts too. For this reason, we will also organise a training with our members on how to use social media and videos.	Partially achieved: The PES Group had a 15% increase of Facebook likes compared to the previous year, remaining the most followed political group of the Committee.
Number of Twitter followers	We would like to increase even more our Twitter followers. We would like to increase our overall engagement on posts too. For this reason, we will also organise a training with our members on how to use social media and videos.	Achieved: The PES Group had more than +20% increase of Twitter followers and remains the first most followed account on Twitter among the Committee's political groups.

Number of Instagram followers	We would like to increase our Instagram followers by 25%. We would like to increase our overall engagement on posts too. For this reason, we will also organise a training with our members on how to use social media and videos.	Achieved: The PES Group had more than +100% increase of Instagram followers and remains the first most followed account on Instagram among the Committee's political groups.
Number of visitor groups	We have increased the level but we do not plan to increase even more the number of groups as it is already high. Nevertheless, we will continue with our policy of welcoming citizens interested for our work.	Achieved: The PES Group maintained and slightly increased the number of visitors in the past year.
Organisation of events and public debates in Brussels or across the European Union to support our members and promote our political priorities;	The PES Group will continue to organise events and citizens debates in Brussels and across the EU, at the request of PES Group members. We would like to increase the numbers of this type of events in the next period aiming at reaching at least 1,000 citizens.	Achieved: The PES Group organised several events and reached citizens all over Europe.

Human resources of the PES Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	10	4		14
Contract staff		1		1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	10	5	0	15

2.1.3 Renew Europe Group

Objective 1: Propose ideas and solutions for Europe, EU legislation, and local and regional democracy		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<u>Speeches:</u> provided at every plenary	- To provide and deliver speeches at every plenary	For example the speech of the Renew Europe member

		on the Green Deal in the exchange with Frans Timmermans at the December plenary.
<u>Amendments</u> : tabled at every plenary and most commissions	- Tabled at each plenary and most commissions	Group amendments tabled at every plenary and most commission meetings
<u>Opinions</u> : successful approval in plenary	- 100% approved at plenary	All ALDE/ Renew Europe opinions were approved in 2019
<u>Input to ALDE Party Congress</u> : - Successful contributions to the ALDE Party Congress with the aim of raising awareness of the role of local and regional authorities.	Continue to contribute to raising the awareness of the ALDE/ Renew Europe - CoR group within the wider liberal family and to raise the concerns of local and regional authorities through tabling of resolutions, amendments, hosting of debates, providing a stand with a quiz and to continue finding new innovative ways of raising our profile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organisation of a debate on sustainable tourism with the participation of Renew Europe -CoR 1st Vice-President and the CoR rapporteur ➤ Organisation of bilateral meetings with candidates for the positions as ALDE party vice presidents. ➤ Providing an information stand at the Congress on 24-26 October.
<u>ALDE/Renew Europe Seminars, study visits and events</u> : concrete proposals and recommendations resulting from discussions and contributions to future policy work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue increasing participation and engagement rates during our events. - Take additional steps in researching interesting speakers for external seminars and events. - Organise all external seminars at the second half of the year, as it will be difficult to organise during the EP election period. 	Seminar in Düsseldorf on "Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence" and external group meeting, with two panel discussions on coal regions in transition and the Future of Europe (11-12 November). Several useful study visits showcased what NRW is doing to cope with the transition and to boost employment in the region.
<u>ALDE/Renew Europe Events in collaboration with the Liberal Family</u>	- Continue developing the Liberal Mayors Network and organise a larger summit at the next Congress in 2019. Further development of the Summit of	- 3 rd Summit of Young Elected Local and Regional Leaders allowed young politicians to share their own experiences on how

	<p>Young Elected Local and Regional Leaders together with European Liberal Youth.</p> <p>- Improve and modernise the organisation of all ALDE/ Renew Europe events to make them more engaging and political and thus increase member participation.</p>	<p>they engage citizens in their constituencies, as well as integrate to the wider work of the CoR.</p> <p>-5th Successful Liberal Mayors Summit (LMS) at the ALDE Party Congress;</p> <p>- It attracted several VIP participants and included a presentation from Mayor of Vilnius and the Vice-President of the European Commission Margrethe Vestager;- Second highest attendance of the 5 summits so far.</p> <p>- Fringe event on sustainable tourism at ALDE Party Congress explored various challenges that cities face due to tourism. The event attracted a knowledgeable and passionate audience and led to a number of proposals which will be included in further policy work of the group at a later stage.</p>
<p><u>Provide our members with a compilation of CoR proposals from this mandate which they can include in their citizen dialogues or national party communications with citizens</u></p>	<p>An update to be provided at the end of the CoR mandate.</p>	<p>Document made available to members in Spring 2019.</p>
<p>Objective 2: Ensure participation of ALDE/Renew Europe members in the work of the CoR and provide support for them ahead of statutory meetings</p>		
<p>Result and/or impact indicators:</p> <p><u>Briefings:</u> Provided for every statutory meeting</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020:</p> <p>100% briefings for all statutory meetings.</p> <p>- Redesign of briefings to facilitate digital transition of the CoR and continue working on video briefings,</p>	<p>Latest known result:</p> <p>Renew Europe written briefings, as well as a video briefing provided for all statutory meetings.</p>

	<p>as an additional service to members.</p> <p>- Continue to develop a new group meeting format to:</p> <p>a) generate discussion on ALDE/ Renew Europe positions on key dossiers at the plenary</p> <p>b) increase debate on amendments tabled for plenary or Commission meetings</p>	
<u>Rapporteurships:</u> ALDE/ Renew Europe obtains percentage (%) proportional to its relative size	More than 12,5 % of all CoR opinions approved	5 out of 49 opinions adopted in 2019 had a Renew Europe rapporteur (10, 2 %)
<u>Analysis of opinions from liberal perspective</u>	Maintain the same level of service to members. Re-design voting lists to make them more understandable and readable for members and make them available to members at an earlier point in time.	Analysis provided and amendments proposed for the majority of opinions. Voting lists re-designed to facilitate the voting process for members. The voting lists are made available at an early point in time.
<u>The setting up of meetings with local liberals for members when they go to meetings outside of the EU</u>	Continue organising meetings for our members when they travel to countries outside of the EU. We will continue organising meetings with liberals both at national and local level.	<p>- One of our Croatian member met with a member of the liberal party LDP and a local councillor from Kotor, alongside the JCC CoR-Montenegro in Tivat;</p> <p>- Our two members on the Working Group Western Balkans met with Vice-president of the liberal party Nasa Stranka alongside the meeting of the Working Group Western Balkans in Mostar.</p>

Objective 3: Help to ensure that the CoR's messages are reflected in the EU legislative process		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<u>Meetings:</u> Arranged for every ALDE/ Renew Europe rapporteur following plenary approval and during the	<u>Meetings for 100%</u> of ALDE/ Renew Europe rapporteurs.	- CoR rapporteur on the ERDF met with Renew Europe shadow rapporteur, during the REGI-

<p>process of preparing the opinion if considered appropriate.</p>		<p>COTER Renew Europe breakfast on 8 October. - CoR Renew Europe rapporteur for an own initiative opinion on a place based approach to EU industrial policy, met with Renew Europe member of ITRE, at the occasion of the industry dinner organised by the rapporteur for stakeholders on 24 September.</p>
<p><u>Proposals for amendments:</u> Submitted to MEP ahead of EP deadline</p>	<p><u>Amendment deadline:</u> 100% to be met</p>	<p>Submitted amendments to the EP resolution on the Conference on the Future of Europe.</p>

Objective 4: Contribute to organisation of CoR work and efficient running of the Administration

Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<p>Contribute to the strengthening of the CoR as it develops the cooperation agreement with the European Parliament, and increases its focus on its legislative impact</p>	<p>- Share with ALDE/ Renew Europe MEPs first results arising from the agreement and the final report of the Subsidiarity Task Force. - Continue to push for resources to be allocated to achieving impact of CoR on the legislative process and push for a greater proactive and strategic approach to obtaining visibility in the Brussels-based European media.</p>	<p>- Raising awareness of the importance of including the voice of local and regional authorities in the preparation of EU legislation among key Renew Europe MEPs. In this respect, a breakfast meeting was organised between Renew Europe MEPs active in REGI and Renew Europe members of COTER just before the official COTER-REGI meeting. This was a useful meeting, which will be replicated for some other committees/commissions. - Initiating internal discussions on increasing CoR's visibility in Brussels-based European media</p>
<p>Ensure a smooth transition for new ALDE/ Renew Europe members and efficient farewell for ALDE/ Renew Europe outgoing members</p>	<p>- Continue ensuring that all members receive the Renew Europe welcome pack (or Farewell Pack) punctually</p>	<p>- All members received the Renew Europe welcome pack (or Farewell Packs) and met the President, Coordinators and the Secretariat.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain a high level of problem solving when it comes to Dynamics failures. - Encourage outgoing members to contribute so the secretariat has more feedback in terms of service provided to the members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New members' contact details were punctually encoded. - Problems of Dynamics email delivery was fixed within a short period of time
Improve efficiency of mission budget expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systematic use of comparative search to find cheapest flight combinations and cheaper hotel rates whenever possible. - An even more efficient system or regular monitoring of the budget - Continue to book flights early whenever possible for a better price and a more efficient organisation of the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better deals for flights and hotels found for several missions. - staff booking flights themselves whenever possible to save on the agency fee. - use of MIMA to monitor the budget.

Objective 5: Increase the profile of the CoR towards specifically targeted stakeholders		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<p><u>Press releases and newsletters/brochures:</u> Circulated to CoR, ALDE/ Renew Europe MEPs, wider liberal caucus, and reflected in ALDE Party newsletter</p> <p>-</p>	<p><u>Press releases and newsletters:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital newsletter since May 2016. Rebuilding the numbers following the significant loss due to the introduction of GDPR. - increase the amount of newsletter recipients steadily and further content optimization to increase the open- and click rates - Possible survey to our readers to get feedback and better tailor content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newsletter following the Open Days produced and circulated. - Renew Europe - CoR Priorities for 2015-2020 and 'Liberals making a difference' brochures produced and circulated at different events. - Almost weekly presence of content contribution to the "Liberal Eyes" newsletter of the ALDE party - 814 contacts receiving our new sletter
<p><u>Events:</u> Attendance, new contacts developed, policy proposals agreed</p>	<p><u>Events:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase visibility of LMS and YELLL within the liberal family and in media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthened cooperation with key liberal parties across liberal family regarding LMS, YELL and other policy areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue developing the Liberal Mayors Network and improve the format and gender balance of the summit of Young Elected Local and Regional Leaders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solidified cooperation with LYMEC and further partnership regarding YELL. - Progress of developing new contacts with Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece, Romania, Hungary and more.
ALDE/Renew Europe presence on social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the twitter and Facebook followers total by 5% - Increase the LinkedIn followers by 10% and establish the LinkedIn account(s) as an integral part of ALDE COR's social media presence, on the same level in terms of activeness, engagement and reputation as Twitter & Facebook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accounts on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn (Page, Group & profile), Instagram (created in December 2019), YouTube (only for archive purposes). Tweets / Facebook / LinkedIn / Instagram posts published on average at least once a day. - Significant progress about the Renew Europe website development in terms of visits and visual identity. - Twitter grown organically to over 2,300 followers - Facebook grown to over 2,300 followers - LinkedIn currently 500+ connections (profile), 60+ followers (page) and 15 followers (group for former trainees) - Frequent and successful use of video cross-platforms

Human resources of the Renew Europe Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	5	3		8
Contract staff				
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	5	3	0	8

2.1.4 EA Group

Objective 1: Enhance the Political Identity of the European Alliance group and of the CoR in EU institutions, Regional and Local Authorities and Political Groups		
<p>Result and/or impact indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of joint meetings and initiatives ▪ Number of articles on EA group members activity in various publications ▪ Number of MEPs and CoR members in each other's activities 	<p>Target for 2019-2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint initiatives with the EP ▪ Cooperation with the EC <p>Key European events where EA members are speakers</p>	<p>Latest known result:</p> <p>Cooperation achieved with MEPs & European, National and Regional Political Parties. Substantial cooperation with the European Parliament in particular with EFA Group MEPs on Catalonia as well as BREXIT.</p> <p>Enhanced engagement on key themes such as Territorial cooperation (Interreg), EU framework for SMEs and local and regional authorities in permanent dialogue with citizens.</p> <p>EA members and rapporteurs were invited to European Commission and European Parliament meetings and MEPs and European Commission officials participated in EA group meetings and events.</p>

Objective 2: Achieve goals as defined by the EA group, organise group meetings, achieve 'rapporteur' positions in key policy areas.		
<p>Result and/or impact indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of successful group meetings held ▪ Number of EA seminars organised ▪ Number of meetings co-organised with the European Parliament ▪ Number of articles published 	<p>Target for 2019-2020:</p> <p>EA group meetings organised along each plenary session of the CoR in 2019-2020</p> <p>Focus for 2019 to be on EP elections and also the EC and its priorities</p> <p>EA extraordinary group meeting during 2019-2020</p> <p>Study visit for EA members</p>	<p>Latest known result:</p> <p>A group meeting was organised before every Plenary as well as two extraordinary meetings were held during this time. All outlined objectives were achieved.</p> <p>An extraordinary meeting was held in Ireland on 11 February on the theme "Helping towns and villages drive rural revival</p>

	<p>EWRC event.</p>	<p>in the EU " in presence of MEPs and Irish and Scottish ministers.</p> <p>We also focussed on "on the future of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) as part of our European Week of Regions and Cities seminar.</p> <p>We have also organised a workshop on the role of women in the fight against climate change.</p> <p>A study visit to Navarre was organised in January on the topic of energy efficiency and passive housing. The EA delegation also met with the Brexit observatory of Navarre.</p> <p>On 12 December we organised an extraordinary meeting focussing on Active Subsidiarity, as well as on EA and EFA Groups political priorities for the 2020-2025 term with EFA MEP .</p> <p>More information is provided on the main high-profile events in newsletters produced throughout the year. A successful year in ensuring media coverage in local and European press, including enhanced social media activities.</p>
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Objective 3: Ensure members are fully briefed on issues of importance to them in the context of CoR work; ensure that members have the opportunity to fully participate and influence the decision making process. Link with European Alliance Group political priorities 2015-2020.

<p>Result and/or impact indicator:</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020: Members to be briefed in advance before</p>	<p>Latest known result:</p>
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<p>Number of members participating, contributing and influencing meetings.</p>	<p>Commission meetings, several Working Groups meetings, Bureau meetings and plenary sessions along the year. 2019 will be a continued focus on the EC and EP priorities and influencing both in particular with a view to the European Parliament elections as well as the changeover of Commissioners</p>	<p>Members were briefed before all plenary sessions, commission meetings, working groups and other relevant meetings. The members' interaction with MEP's and stakeholders was increased. The European Alliance group organised a few lunchtime briefings informing the members and the Brussels public about Brexit, and in particular the impact on Scotland.</p>
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Objective 4: Increase the profile of the Institution among specifically targeted stakeholders. Link with European Alliance Group political priorities 2015-2020.

<p>Result and/or impact indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of secondary schools students participating in annual essay and multiple choice competition ▪ Number of primary schools participating in the annual children's art competitions: "my region, my....." ▪ Opening up a dialogue with specific stakeholders 	<p>Target for 2019-2020:</p> <p>Achieve greater interaction between students from different regions to discuss and debate Europe; More recognition of the annual primary schools competition; Increasing invitation to different events of specific stakeholders.</p>	<p>Latest known result:</p> <p>The Secondary Schools competition was a huge success in 2019 with students meeting CoR members and high ranked politicians. This increased the coverage / profile of the event. The Primary Schools competition has also increased in profile with the theme for 2019 being 'My Region, my Family'</p>
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Human resources of the EA Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	3	1		4
Contract staff	1			1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	4	1	0	5

2.1.5 ECR Group

Objective 1: Propose ideas and solutions for EU legislation, EU governance and local and regional democracy		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<u>Speeches</u> : the point/proposal made by the ECR being picked up on and taken-up.	Concrete proposal at each plenary.	Achieved. A number of ECR points have been picked up by guest speakers at CoR plenaries, including in debates with EU Commissioners for Education, Rule of Law, Budget and the representatives of the EU Presidencies.
<u>Amendments</u> : tabled at every plenary and most commissions. Key dossiers for prioritisation and key amendments to be signed-off by the Coordinator and focused on by the Secretariat.	Amendments to be tabled at each plenary session and most commissions.	Achieved. ECR amendments were tabled ahead of all CoR plenaries and approximately 90% of commission meetings. The total number of ECR amendments in 2019 was 84 at plenary level. Key dossiers were prioritised: taxation, EU budget, collaborative economy, energy, climate change and migration.
<u>Opinions</u> : successful approval in plenary	100% approved at plenary.	Achieved. All five ECR-led opinions were successfully adopted.
<u>ECR Extraordinary and external Group Meetings and Seminars</u> : further elaboration of and follow-up to ECR policy proposals. This can be linked to ECR position on CoR opinions (including opinions prepared by ECR rapporteurs) and ECR events such as panel discussions where ECR ideas are further developed. ECR events to also act as follow-up with the EU institutions.	External Group Meetings and seminar involve EU institutions and help further elaborate ideas on the subject identified.	Achieved. ECR Group organised on June 7 th its annual Localism Summit in Opsterland in the Netherlands, where a number of topics relevant to the CoR were discussed: sustainability, urban-rural divide and smart cities. Furthermore, the ECR Group organised its first ever Study Days in Venice , Italy on November 15 th . Key topics linked to the CoR priorities were

		subsidiarity and protection of cultural heritage. The Summit and the Study Days involved representatives of the European Commission, MEPs and ministers.
<u>Events addressing EU policy and or governance issues:</u> well-attended events that address policy and or governance issues and enable ideas and solutions to be discussed.	Continue organising well-attended events that address policy and or governance issues and enable ideas and solutions to be discussed.	Achieved. The ECR Group organised a conference on improving economic governance and investments in the EU as part of the European Week of Regions and Cities on October 9 th . This well-attended event concluded with a call on the European Commission for an obligatory inclusion of LRAs in the setting of country-specific recommendations as part of the European Semester. The event involved representatives of the European Commission and local and regional level from various parts of Europe.

Objective 2: Supporting the full participation of ECR members in the work of the CoR		
Result and/or impact indicator(s):	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<u>Briefings:</u> Provided for every meeting	100%	Achieved.
<u>Rapporteurships:</u> ECR obtains percentage (%) proportional to its relative size	Meet %	Achieved. ECR Members represented in 2019 6% of the total number of CoR Members and were rapporteurs on 10% of all CoR opinions.

<p><u>Administrative support:</u> preparation of speeches, voting lists, annotated plenary agendas, conducting research and gathering data, negotiating with counterparts making necessary logistical arrangements.</p>	<p>100%</p>	<p>Achieved. All materials were delivered to Members ahead of all plenary sessions, commission meetings and meetings of other CoR bodies.</p>
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<p>Objective 3: Show leadership and contribute to the organisation of CoR work and efficient running of the Administration and budget</p>		
<p>Result and/or impact indicators:</p>	<p>Target for 2019-2020:</p>	<p>Latest known result:</p>
<p><u>Proposals:</u> Make, clarify and or repeat at each meeting</p>	<p><u>Proposals:</u> follow activities closely and produce constructive solutions to tackle problems.</p>	<p>Achieved.</p>
<p><u>Adoption and application:</u> follow the application of key decisions relating to the running of the house e.g. CFAA and rules of procedure.</p>	<p><u>Adoption and application:</u> ask for updates as necessary, follow closely and review if and where necessary.</p>	<p>Achieved.</p>
<p><u>Budgets:</u> Working within allocated amounts</p>	<p><u>Budgets:</u> Not exceed overall budget allocation and use existing budget efficiently.</p>	<p>Achieved. None of the budget lines was surpassed. Particularly effective was the use of BL 1004 (71% execution rate); BL 264 (99.8%); BL 214 (100%); BL 2602 (99%); and BL 2546 (79%).</p>
<p><u>Documents for translation:</u> length and conciseness to be a key factor. Propose cuts to length of documents where necessary.</p>	<p><u>Documents for translation:</u> actively encourage concise and shorter documents.</p>	<p>Achieved.</p>
<p><u>Publicity:</u> sufficient and reasonable up-to-date publicity.</p>	<p><u>Publicity:</u> Keep publicity to a necessary and reasonable level. Keep leaflets and brochures updated.</p>	<p>Achieved. The ECR "About Us booklet" was updated several times. ECR newsletter was produced for every other CoR plenary session. Information booklets were prepared for the ECR Localism Summit, Study Days and the training sessions.</p>

Objective 4: Strengthen ECR Group and CoR profile vis-à-vis institutional clients		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<p><u>Press releases, newsletters and social media:</u> Newsletters to be circulated to members of our Group, ECR MEPs, relevant EP ECR Group Secretariat members, MPs, wider conservative and reformist circles, EU Commissioners and local and regional representations in Brussels. Tweets to be sent out on members' activities relating to their CoR membership. Press releases to be sent out on key ECR events and developments.</p>	<p><u>Press releases, newsletters and social media:</u> 100%</p>	<p>Achieved. Each ECR Group newsletter was circulated to 134 MEPs and other politicians. On Twitter we increased the number of our followers by more than 10%. More of our social media activity was done in Czech, Dutch, Italian and Polish languages.</p>
<p><u>Meetings:</u> Arranged for every ECR rapporteur in relation to their opinion and also arranged for Coordinators and members leading on a dossier as needed.</p>	<p><u>Meetings:</u> 100%</p>	<p>Achieved. Five stakeholders meetings and more than 100 bilateral meetings were organised for the rapporteurs, coordinators and members.</p>
<p><u>Follow-up of opinions:</u> opinions to be circulated to those working on the subject matter in other institutions. Additions to rapporteurs drafting their amendments or amendments to be proposed to MEPs in general for European Parliament reports.</p>	<p><u>Follow-up of opinions:</u> regular follow-up.</p>	<p>Achieved. Meetings organised between ECR rapporteurs and leading ECR MEPs, as well as with senior EU officials (example: bilateral meeting of rapporteur Adam Banaszak and Commissioner Christos Stylianides on the update of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in September).</p>
<p><u>Events:</u> Organisation, overall good attendance and attendance from EU institutions, high profile speakers, new contacts developed, policy proposals agreed.</p>	<p><u>Events:</u> Strengthen contacts with those working in the institutions, local and regional press and media, Conservative and Reformist family and Think tank(s).</p>	<p>Achieved. Organisation of four events:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Localism Summit; 2. ECR Study Days (new format);

		3. Training for ECR Members on presentation and public speaking (new format); 4. Conference as part of the EWRC.
<u>Hosting of ECR Group MEPs at ECR Group and/or Bureau meetings: participation of ECR Group MEPs in ECR Group meetings.</u>	<u>Hosting of ECR Group MEPs at ECR Group and/or Bureau meetings: 100%</u>	Achieved. Dozens of bilateral meetings between ECR CoR Members (especially the President and the leadership) and MEPs. Adam Bielan MEP attended the ECR Group meeting on 8 October.

Objective 5: Integration of new members in the ECR Group		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<u>Providing information and support to new members in terms of:</u> rapporteurship, participation in votes, taking ECR seats in CoR bodies, inviting them to ECR activities and supporting them in their overall participation in CoR activities.	to integrate all members of the ECR family in light of the approaching EU elections and local and regional elections taking place through the year across the EU. Also seek to incorporate members to the Group who share the ECR values.	Welcome Pack for new Members updated in the second half of 2019 and translated into all nine working languages of our political group. Individual training for assistants of new members.

Human resources of the ECR Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	3	1		4
Contract staff	1			1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	4	1	0	5

2.2 Directorate for Members and Plenaries (Dir A)

Objective 1: Facilitate the political activities carried out at the CoR by providing efficient legal, financial and administrative support to CoR members and bodies		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<p>For main output n°1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RoP adopted 	<p>For main output n°1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuous support to the works of the <i>ad hoc</i> commission for the preparation of the draft revision of the RoP whose mandate and composition were decided at the CoR plenary session of October 2018 - Adoption of the revised RoP by the CoR Plenary Assembly in late 2019 and entry into force in due time for the next CoR mandate starting in 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing: The ad hoc commission started its work on the basis of a report produced by a working group bringing together the secretariats of the political groups, the cabinets of the president and the secretary-general, and representatives from the administration; in addition, written contributions from the national delegations, which were also invited to comment, were incorporated into the work of the ad hoc commission - The ad hoc commission met four times and concluded its work in July 2019. The draft text it produced was submitted for decision to the Plenary Assembly in December 2019, so that the revised RoP should enter into force for the 2020-2025 term of office of the CoR - Given that the majority of members necessary to adopt the new Rules according to Rule 82(2) was not achieved, the new Rules were not adopted - It is now up to the Plenary Assembly to decide, by a majority of its members, whether to launch a new revision process, in which case it will have to appoint a new ad hoc commission and adopt its mandate

<p>For main output n° 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quality assessment based on feedback from all actors involved (members and their assistants, staff, including PGs, external guests, VIP guests, co-organizing partners) 	<p>For main output n° 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring the best possible language combination considering the conference rooms and the budget constraints - Ensuring the best possible technical services (sound, screens, web-streaming etc.) within the budget allocated - Ensuring that documents are available to Members in due time 	<p>For main output n° 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieved: the language regimes were requested to SCIC and EP interpretation services according to the CoR linguistic policy. The choice of room for each meeting is done taking into account the language regimes and the number of participants, while respecting what established in the Cooperation Agreement with the EESC. - Achieved: the CoR rooms are undergoing a technical renovation following the multiannual plan 2017-2021 to guarantee the best possible quality of sound and image. Webstreaming is provided on request. - Achieved: the Greffe workflow is operational and a system of reminders to the relevant services has been put in place
<p>For main output n° 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful renewal of the CoR mandate in 2020 	<p>For main output n° 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete data for new members encoded (December 2019-January 2020); - All members invited to the constitutive Plenary in due time, following nomination by the Council of the EU; - Smooth setting up of the new CoR constituent bodies and other bodies (February 2020) - Organisation of CoR constitutive Plenary of the new mandate in February/March 2020 	<p>For main output n° 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing: preparatory works have started as well as encoding of data for Members, which will be continued in January 2020. The invitation will be sent to Members in January 2020.
<p>For main output n° 4</p>	<p>For main output n° 4</p>	<p>For main output n° 4</p>

<p><u>E-reimbursement tool for members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of members using the new functionalities 	<p><u>E-reimbursement tool for members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E-reimbursement (paperless) tool for members to go live on 1/1/2019 on a voluntary basis for all members - The contract with CWT (Carlson Wagon Lit Travel) for a Travel Agency for CoR members operational as of 1/1/2019 - 60% of members using the system (by the end of 2019) 	<p><u>E-reimbursement tool for members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The e-reimbursement tool went live on 1st of January 2019. - During the year 2019, 18% of all the claims were submitted via e-reimbursement tool. - The CoR travel agent (CWT) is active since the 1st of January 2019. - 977 tickets were bought in 2019 via CWT by members and alternates for a total amount of 547 126 €, this corresponds to 15.47 % which is below the target that we have foreseen. - An awareness campaign has been launched during the meetings of the political groups preceding the plenary session as well as during the plenary session of February 2020 itself. - This campaign focussed on the use of the e-reimbursement tool as well as the use of the CoR travel agent. - Moreover, we launched with the travel agent the "Online booking tool" which facilitates the members to use the CoR travel agent for ordering their tickets as of the 1st of January 2020. The guideline on how to use the tool is on the website of the OSS.
<p><u>Adaptations in Members' Portal following the revision of the CoR RoP</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quality assessment of the new system in the phasing-in period 	<p><u>Adaptations in Members' Portal following the revision of the CoR RoP</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changes required by new RoP implemented in Members' Portal in time for the new CoR mandate in January 2020 	<p><u>Adaptations in Members' Portal following the revision of the CoR RoP</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not started yet, as the new RoP has not been adopted in 2019
<p><u>Rapporteur's amendments via Members' Portal</u></p>	<p><u>Rapporteur's amendments via Members' Portal</u></p>	<p><u>Rapporteur's amendments via Members' Portal</u></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of rapporteur's amendments (AMR) submitted in the new system - quality assessment based on users' feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - digital solution for AMR developed and implemented - 100% AMRs submitted via the new system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not started yet, as it is connected to the changes to be done once the new RoP is approved
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Objective 2: Improve the internal functioning and communication of the CoR by providing efficient legal, financial and administrative support and tools to CoR services		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<p>For main output n°1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of new documents created after the adoption of the new Filing Plan with the appropriate metadata filled in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated Filing Plan adopted by Bureau (SG Decision no 405/2006) and used by all Directorates - Updated Filing Plan integrated into document management systems (Document Manager and Adonis2) - Implementation of the following features in Adonis2: Adonis2Look; electronic workflow with document versioning; electronic signature; Adonis virtual stamp; expedition by Adonis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing: Almost finished, last contacts with the Audit, Cabinets and the Political Groups. - Ongoing: Waiting for an application to integrate the new Filing Plan into DM and Adonis. - Ongoing: After some delays during 2019 concerning the development of Adonis, during 2020 full priority will be given to the electronic workflows and the electronic signature.
<p>For main output n°2 <u>Meeting rooms</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical upgrade of conference rooms done 	<p>For main output n°2 <u>Meeting rooms</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Room JDE52 upgraded (summer 2019) - Room JDE51 upgraded by 2020 - Digital signage outside conference room upgraded (2020-2021) - Visitors entrance: video wall installation entrance by early 2019 	<p>For main output n°2 <u>Meeting rooms</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieved: room JDE52 was upgraded as planned. - Ongoing: the planning and the cabling to be done at the beginning of 2020, and the renovation of the room in the summer of 2020. - Ongoing: digital signage screens outside conference room to be upgraded at the beginning of 2020. - Achieved: video wall was installed as planned

<p><u>Documentation centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of users and transactions via the Documentation Centre's new system - Number of requests for information via Outlook - Number of workshops-conferences - Number of visits in the Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpreter consoles upgraded in conference rooms (2020-2021). <p><u>Documentation centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training for interested colleagues and Members on GOORFY (Good Reading for You Platform) during dedicated workshops organised in the Library on a regular basis; - Fine-tune a Customer Care Approach (CCA) for Cabinets, political groups and Commissions to make sure our services are needs-oriented in the most efficient way; - Further diversify the Library's services after first testing them with pools of colleagues-Double the number of events at the Library (book presentations & debates); - Double the no. of sources for the Wellbeing collection, organize at least 1 event each 3 months in connection to this topic and create a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing: interpreter consoles for rooms JDE53 have already been upgraded. The rest of the rooms will follow in 2020. - partially achieved: weekly trainings provided from January-April 2019 were interrupted; <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - non-replacement of the only librarian at the CoR (<i>interim</i> solution from July - December insufficient), combined with an AST long absence; - 95% Achieved: Library's subscriptions were deployed and users (services and individual users) were connected to the content they requested; <p>Detected inefficiency: the Business Source databasis with more than 3.000 online periodicals was not sufficiently used in 2019 (no active promotion);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieved: 5 successful tests with EPRS customised researches for CoR's Commissions were launched and performed in 2019. Deployment of this premium service should take place from May on, once the new librarian joins us. - Ongoing: Doubled the acquisitions for the wellbeing collection but not yet the events side (due to lack of staff at the CoR Library)
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	<p>Wellbeing newsletter to promote our collection;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create between 3 and 5 dedicated corners with specialized information (Cohesion Policy, COR Impact and history, Brexit); - Launch an e-Books service Double/triple the network of Libraries with whom we cooperate for content - Consolidate the cooperation with the ULB Master STIC for a twice a year traineeship program at the Documentation Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partially achieved: collection dedicated to Cohesion policy, CoR impact and history, Brexit continued to grow but online promotion slowed down; Reason: lack of staff and interim attendance insufficient on the whole spectrum of this task; - Partially achieved: got from the EP Library the right to access their e-book databasis in 2019 for all users but unable to sufficiently promote the contents Reason: see reason above - Unfulfilled: network remained stable (no increase); no consolidation with ULB for specialised training at the Library Reason: see the above
<p>For main output n°3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of training sessions provided - efficiency of approval workflows/complaints and accuracy of budget reports in the new system 	<p>For main output n°3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrated electronic workflows both on the operational and the financial level, budget planning and monitoring and foreseen meetings functionalities implemented by the end of 2020 	<p>For main output n°3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 half days of training sessions have been organised by unit A1 for initiating services, 2 half days beginning July 2019, 2 half days in November 2019. This last one was postponed to January 2020 because of a lack of interest at the initiating services after which Unit A1 draw the attention of Directors of directorates B, C and D of the importance that their staff attends these trainings. - Unfortunately directorate A, despite having prepared a complete flowchart for the IT department showing how to integrate all logistic workflows in AGORA,

		was confronted to the fact that IT does not dispose of the necessary resources to develop these requirements nor to further develop the financial monitoring tool to be constructed behind.
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In 2019, Directorate A organised 5 Plenary Sessions, 5 Bureau meetings and 1 external Bureau meeting (in Turku, Finland). In addition, Directorate A prepared and ensured the follow-up of 7 meetings of the Conference of Presidents (out of which 1 external meeting, in Turku, Finland), and contributed to the organization of the Summit of Regions and Cities in Bucharest (including the external Bureau meeting).

In total, 3,795 meetings (3,510 internal meetings and 285 external meetings) were organized in 2019, out of which 13.4% (509) with interpretation.

In 2019, the net cancellation rate for interpretation was 5.89%. The budgetary impact of these cancellations amounted to € 240,534, which represents 6.87% of the total budget spent for interpretation for 2019 (€ 3,496,929). Of these € 240,534:

- € 115,536 (48%) were due to commission meetings that ended earlier than anticipated, and that in the end did not make use of the afternoon slot, which is only cancelled the same day of the meeting.
- € 33,864 (14%) were due to the finalization of the Plenary Session of the 10-11 of April 2019, which finished at 18h30, and for which 68 slots (18:30-21:00) was only cancelled the day before, the 9th April 2019.

Directorate A also managed the successful execution of 34 calls for tender for interpretation services and mobile interpretation equipment (meetings organized outside Brussels) (a 10% decrease compared to 2018).

Directorate A continued its efforts to limit the need for paper files during Plenary sessions and Bureau meetings also in 2019. By the end of 2019, the number of paper files and amendments printed for the Plenary Sessions and Bureau meetings was further reduced, by 50% for the Plenary Sessions and 20% for the Bureau meetings. Thanks to an updated function of Agora, we were able to know the exact number of paper files requested by Members.

At the 5 Plenary Sessions held in 2019, in total 49 documents were adopted, out of which 44 opinions and 5 resolutions.

Directorate A continued to play an important role in ensuring a smooth cooperation with the national delegations and interregional groups, thereby contributing to the organisation of 6 meetings with the national coordinators, assisting the secretariats of 13 CoR's interregional groups and ensuring logistics for the 22 interregional groups meetings which took place on the CoR premises during 2019.

In 2019, **Members' Financial Service** treated a total of **5 793 reimbursement claims from members and alternate members**. These amount to a total of **8 047 travel days** and **8 120 meeting allowances**.

Human resources of Directorate A

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	22	28	1	51
Contract staff		12		12
External contract staff				1
Seconded national experts	1			1
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	23	40	1	65

2.3 Directorate for Legislative Works 1 (Dir B)

Objective 1: Support the political priorities of the mandate through thematic and strategic planning		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result (2019):
Annual Work programme for each commission	6 agreed commission WP 2018 by 1 st Bureau 2018 and WP 2019 by 1 st Bureau 2019	CIVEX achieved ENVE achieved NAT achieved
Annual Work programme of the joint consultative committees (JCC) and working groups (WG)	All JCCs covered by a work programme (2015-2020)	Achieved/implemented
Annual Work programme Subsidiarity and support to CoR participation in the EC Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and 'Doing less more efficiently' (Jan-July 2018)	Work programme 2019 by 1 st Bureau 2019	Achieved/implemented
Bi-annual Action Plan for ARLEM	Implement the current Action Plan in 2019 and adopt the new Action Plan by 2020	Achieved/implemented
Bi-annual Action Plan for CORLEAP	Agreed CORLEAP AP 2018/2019 by CORLEAP Bureau in 2018	Achieved/implemented
Bi-annual Work programme of the Ukraine Task Force	Implementation remaining activities from the Work programme 2018-2020	Achieved/implemented
Number of thematic strategies approved	100%	CIVEX: achieved

		ENVE: achieved NAT: achieved
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Objective 2: Provide timely and clearly defined support for the work of all CoR rapporteurs and other CoR commissions members		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result (2019):
Policy analysis prepared for each opinion	Yes	Yes
Stakeholder consultations/hearings organised at rapporteur's request	100%	100%
Number of studies (launched)	Approximately 10 studies per year (exact figure depending on scope and price of individual items)	15 studies launched in 2019: - 5 for CIVEX - 7 for ENVE - 2 for NAT - 1 for the cabinet of the President
Studies produced with EPRS	2-3	CIVEX: 9 ENVE: 0 NAT: 1

Objective 3: Follow up activities for all opinions and impact evaluation for all policy areas		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result (2019):
Have reliable objectives for each opinion that can be monitored throughout the process of its elaboration (via KIKLOS)	When inter-institutional procedure is finalised add the impact of the CoR opinion in KIKLOS	All opinions adopted in 2019 contain clear objectives in KIKLOS
Follow-up document for each commission meeting	1 follow-up document per commission meeting	All achieved: Minutes and summary of decisions (CIVEX) Minutes and summary of decisions (ENVE) Minutes and summary of decisions (NAT)
Organise once a year a debate in each commission on the impact evaluation for the previous year	Next debates to be organised in Q1 2018 and Q1 2019	Achieved (Q1 2019)
Annual Impact Report (AIR)	1/year presented mid-year (e.g. AIR 2018 presented in April 2019)	Achieved (AIR 2018 delivered in June 2019)

Objective 4: Coordinate and strengthen the inter-institutional relations of the CoR in order to increase the involvement of other EU institutions in activities related to CoR opinions, networks and platforms as well in the thematic planning process.		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020, per year:	Latest known results (2019):
Number of MEPs in commission meetings	CIVEX: 2 ENVE: 3 NAT:3	CIVEX: 3 ENVE: 3 NAT: 4
Number of CoR rapporteurs participating in EP committee meetings	CIVEX: 10 ENVE:1 NAT:2	CIVEX: 3 ¹ ENVE: 2 NAT: 4
Number of bilateral meetings between CoR and EP rapporteurs	CIVEX: 5 ENVE:4 NAT:4	CIVEX: 4 ENVE: 5 NAT: 7
Number of bilateral meetings between CoR rapporteurs and EC services	CIVEX: 10 ENVE: 8 NAT:5	CIVEX: 12 ENVE: 20 NAT: 19
Number of consultation meetings between CoR rapporteurs and other institutions (including EESC) and stakeholders	CIVEX: 28 ENVE:20 NAT:15	CIVEX: 36 ENVE: 29 NAT: 14
Number of CoR members participating systematically in the activities of the bodies set-up by the EC	CIVEX: 17 ENVE:3 NAT:2	CIVEX: 6 ² ENVE: 4 NAT: 5
Number of CoR members participating as speakers in the conferences and events organised by the EC	CIVEX: 10 ENVE:10 NAT:3	CIVEX: 5 ³ ENVE: 22 NAT: 9
Number of bilateral meetings between CoR rapporteurs and Permanent Representations on legislative dossiers ⁴	CIVEX:1 ENVE:6 NAT: 3	CIVEX: 0 ENVE: 1 NAT: 0
Participation of the CoR in events of the EU Presidency	CIVEX: 3 ENVE:2 NAT: 2	CIVEX: 1 ENVE: 1 NAT: 9
Number of CoR rapporteurs in Council workgroups ⁵	CIVEX: 1 ENVE:1 NAT:1	CIVEX: 0 ENVE: 0 NAT: 0

¹ The target is set on 2018 figures, when a joint CIVEX-AFCO debate took place. In 2019 there was no CIVEX-AFCO debate organised therefore the result is lower.

² Less meetings than expected were organised for these bodies.

³ Members from the CIVEX commission were invited as speakers to less events organised by the European Commission than expected.

⁴ The number of legislative files significantly decreased in 2019.

⁵ Day to day relations with the Council secretariat are good and constructive. However, the CoR's participation in Council Working Group meetings continues to be limited.

Objective 5: Foster co-operation with local and regional authorities and other partners		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known results (2019):
Number of new formal agreements or MoUs signed	Concrete follow-up on signed agreements	Directorate B followed up signed agreements throughout the year. No new formal agreements or MoU signed.
Number of joint events or thematic activities organised with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 14th Joint Technical Platform meeting: Enhancing Resilience of Urban Ecosystems through Green Infrastructure, organized with EC and EESC in January 2019, as part of the EnRoute-project; – Co-organisation of events with the Covenant of Mayors and Global Covenant; – Co-organisation of a thematic conference with the Union of Communities of Armenia, Autumn 2019; – Joint anniversary event with Congress, June 2019; – 11th Annual Dialogue with Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA); – Contribution to the preparation of the European Migration Forum, April 2019. Participation of CoR members; – Integration network (jointly with EC and other partners Eurocities, Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) etc.); – co-organised with EC (DG HOME) event on integration of migrants; – Sixth edition of the Forum "Cities and Regions for development cooperation" co-organised with EC (DG DEVCO), February 2019; – 9th Subsidiarity Conference in Rome, November 2019 – Participation of the ENVE Commission to annual conferences 	<p>Planned events and activities with partners have been organised. Moreover Directorate B organised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cities and Regions for Integration (several dates) <p>April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Smart territories: the future of rural, mountainous and sparsely populated areas (EP Intergroup RUMRA) <p>May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Challenges and Potential for freshwater Aquaculture (Romanian Presidency) – PermRep Meeting on NECPS, Brussels – High-Level conference on Biodiversity and Ecosystems services, Brussels <p>June:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opening ceremony of Exhibition with Romanian Presidency (Danube River Delta) – WHO RHN Conference "Keeping people at the centre of health care and sustainable development policies", partnered by WHO RHN, Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR), euPrevent – Joint 25th Anniversary of the CoR and the Congress "State of Local and Regional Democracy in Europe" <p>September:</p>

	<p>and joint events of Climate Alliance and ICLEI at COP;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SET-Plan Conference (ENVE together with Sector 3 - Bucharest, the Romanian Municipalities Association (AMR), the Romanian Government (Ministry of Energy) and the European Commission); - Meetings CoR/EC Technical Platform for Cooperation on the Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debate with NECSTouR: "Tourism: new trends, challenges and solutions" <p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EWRC session with UNDRR "Delivering disaster resilience at the local level" - EWRC Smart Specialisation and Interregional Cooperation in Emerging Sectors of Blue Economy Value Chains - EWRC workshop "How school meals can drive local and regional change", partnered by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability - World Food Day "Food 2030: Nourishing people and nurturing the planet through sustainable healthy diets for all" <p>November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The impact of the resolution on addressing the specific needs of rural, mountainous and remote areas in the work of the European Parliament post-2020 - New Innovations in Freshwater Aquaculture (Finish Presidency EWRC workshop) - Regional Forest Innovation (with European Forest Institute) - "SDGs for a Healthy and Social Europe", partnered by European Regional and Local Health Authorities (EUREGHA) <p>December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit to the Emergency Response Coordination Centre. EC, DG ECHO - 11th Annual Dialogue between the Committee of the Regions and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
<p>Number of events /</p>		<p>CIVEX: 47 ENVE: 86</p>

activities organised by partners and attended by the CoR		NAT: 102
Capacity building projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wrapping up of Peer-to-Peer pilot cooperation project between EU and Ukrainian LRAs with support of "U-LEAD with Europe" programme and building next steps of capacity building exchanges based on results achieved. – Further strengthening cooperation with Libyan municipalities in the framework of the Nicosia Initiative 	Achieved.

Objective 6: Increase the efficiency of the CoR administration by improving internal governance, co-ordination, co-operation, IT solutions and human resource development		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result (2019):
Attendance of meetings of the IT project KIKLOS	Regular participation to inter-service meetings	Achieved
Attendance of meetings organised within the "HR contact point" network	Regular participation to inter-service meetings	Achieved

Human resources of Directorate B

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	29	17		46
Contract staff	1			1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts	3			3
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	33	17	0	50

2.4 Directorate for legislative works 2 (Dir C)

Objective 1: Support the political priorities of the mandate through thematic and strategic planning		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Annual Work programme for each commission	3 agreed commission WP 2019 by 1 st Bureau 2019	Achieved: 100 %

Number of file notes and studies (launched)	COTER: 4 SEDEC: 2 each year ECON: 5 each year	COTER: 5 SEDEC: 2 ECON: 6
Number of events/seminars/workshops/hearings /stakeholder meetings	COTER: 15 EGTC: 8 (4 each year) TIA: 5 ECON: 12-15 each year SEDEC: 6-8 each year	COTER: 13 EGTC: 4 TIA: 5 ECON: 25 SEDEC: 20
Percentage of briefing notes/speeches	100 %	100 %
Percentage of analytical notes on key topics	100 %	100 %
Number of EGTC meetings	8	4
Number of EER applications	10	11
Number of participants in surveys/consultations	EGTC: 1 survey or 100% of requests of the rapporteurs ECON: - Survey on SDGs: ~150 - Survey on pp: ~120	EGTC: 0 (no requests of the rapporteurs in 2019) ECON: - Survey on SDGs: 400 - Survey on pp directives: 219 - Survey on CETA: 136 - Survey on Annex D (2019 European Semester): 26
Number of references of results of networks/platforms in CoR opinions/resolutions	EGTC: 2 opinions TIA: 2 opinions ECON / Monitoring of the European Semester: 2 RegHub consultations: 2-3	EGTC: 2 opinions TIA: 4 opinions ECON / Monitoring of the European Semester: 2 RegHub consultations: 3
Number of inputs from networks/platforms in CoR Thematic Commission debates / CoR conferences	EGTC: 2 per year ECON / Monitoring of the European Semester: 2 RegHub consultations: 2-3 Broadband platform: continued work; working programme to be agreed with DG CONNECT	EGTC: 2 ECON / Monitoring of the European Semester: 2 RegHub consultations: 90 (~30 replies to each of the 3 consultations) Knowledge Exchange Platform: 1 Broadband platform: 1

Objective 2: Provide Timely and clearly defined support for the work of all CoR rapporteurs and other CoR commissions members		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target 2019:	Latest known result:
Percentage of policy analysis prepared for each opinion	100 %	100 %
Percentage of stakeholder consultations or other specific monitoring activities organised at the request of rapporteurs	100 %	100 %
Percentage of studies delivered at the request of rapporteurs	100%	100%
Studies on EGTC	1 study every 2 years	1
Percentage of briefing notes/speeches	100 %	100 %
EPRS consultations	COTER: 4 ECON: 1-2 SEDEC: 1 (NB: those targets depend on Legislative files)	COTER: 3 ECON: 3 SEDEC: 3
Percentage of planning documents established for opinions	100% planning documents	100 %

EPRS consultations are launched under rapporteurs' request. However, considering the coincidence of regulatory files discussed at interinstitutional level and the EPRS automatically produced briefings on some of the same topics, which explains a slight difference between targets and achievements concerning this indicator.

Objective 3: Follow up activities for all opinions and impact evaluation for all policy areas		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Have reliable objectives for each planning/follow-up document that can be monitored throughout the process of elaborating an opinion (via KIKLOS)	Close planning documents when interinstitutional procedure is over and present impact of the opinion in KIKLOS.	Objectives for each opinion: 93 % Impact evaluation for each opinion: 78 %
Number of follow-up e-mails to the rapporteur sent	100%	100%
Number of leaflets produced	100%	100%
Number of "follow-up of opinions meetings" organised	COTER: 7 ECON: 5-10 SEDEC: 5	COTER: 7 ECON: 12 SEDEC: 9
Timely produce "Annual impact report"	100%	100 %

Impact evaluation is a regular analysis and depends on the date of the adoption of opinions as well as on related interinstitutional developments. Thus, for some opinions adopted at the end there is a need for more time to produce a concrete impact.

Objective 4: Coordinate and strengthen the inter-institutional relations of the CoR in order to increase the involvement of other EU institutions in activities related to the CoR opinions, networks and platforms as well in the thematic planning process		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020, per year:	Latest known result:
Number of MEPs/commissioners in commission meetings	ECON: 2 SEDEC 3 COTER: 40	ECON: 2 SEDEC: 0 COTER: 50
Number of CoR rapporteurs participating in EP committee meetings	ECON: 2 SEDEC 2 COTER: 2	ECON: 3 SEDEC: 1 COTER: 0
Number of bilateral meetings between CoR and EP rapporteurs	ECON: 5-7 SEDEC 5 COTER: 18 (depends on number of opinions)	ECON: 7 SEDEC: 7 COTER: 7
Number of bilateral meetings between CoR rapporteurs and EC	ECON: 12 SEDEC 13 COTER: 12 (depends on number of opinions)	ECON: 18 SEDEC: 19 COTER: 17
Number of bilateral meetings between CoR rapporteurs and Permanent Representations on legislative dossiers	ECON: 1 SEDEC 2 COTER: 2	ECON: 1 SEDEC: 3 COTER: 1 (non legislative file)
Participation of the CoR in events of the EU Presidency	ECON: 2 SEDEC 2 COTER: 7	ECON: 3 SEDEC: 6 COTER: 2
Number of occasions in which external experts (scholars and practitioners) contribute to activities of platforms and networks	Monitoring of the European Semester: 4 (on average 3 meetings + 1 study) per year RegHub: up to 3 speakers per workshop	Monitoring of the European Semester: 4 RegHub: 4 SEDEC : 9 (2 KEP Thematic Seminars, 1 KEP peer-to-peer, 3 Broadband platform, 3 Science meets regions)

2019 was the year of the European Parliament's term of office renewal and consequent limited amount of legislative and interinstitutional activities. On top of it, as every year the target set for number of MEPs participating in commission meetings is very challenging to meet. While the achievement of this target depends mainly on the MEPs interest and availability to attend, our directorate persists in setting as high objective as possible in order to leverage the overall efforts to increase MEP presence in the CoR meetings. The same applies vice versa to the CoR rapporteurs' participation in EP committees' meetings.

The number of bilateral meetings between CoR rapporteurs and EC depends not only on the number of opinions, but on the rapporteurs' availability, therefore, we are glad to see the high level of performance in this target.

On the other hand the same reasons explain why, in 2019, the number of bilateral meetings between CoR rapporteurs and Permanent Representations on legislative dossiers was less important than expected.

It should be noted that the participation of CoR representatives in Presidency events depends on the actual number of relevant Presidency activities as well as each Presidency's priorities related to the remits of the CoR's Commissions and which can vary from year to year.

Objective 5: Foster the co-operation with local and regional authorities and other partners		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result :
Number of events organised	EGTC: 8 (4 each year) OECD: 2 EER: 5-6 (3 Brussels-based events + up to 3 evaluation missions to EER regions) RegHub: 3 Monitoring of the European Semester: 1 SEDEC: 5	EGTC: 4 OECD: 5 EER: 7 RegHub: 5 Monitoring of the European Semester: 1 SEDEC: 14

This year, the cooperation with the OECD was very intense due to the preparatory discussions towards the Informal Ministerial meeting on Regional Policy (Athens 19-20 March). In addition, the CoR launched a survey targeting local and regional authorities, which contributed to the OECD report entitled "A territorial approach to SDGs". The common political interest on this topic implied the organisation of several joint events and mutual participation of CoR members or administrative staff in respective organised events.

Objective 6: Increase the efficiency of the CoR administration by improving internal governance, co-ordination, co-operation, IT solutions and human resource development		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Attendance of meetings of the IT project KIKLOS	Regular participation to inter-service meetings	Achieved: directorate represented in 100 % of the meetings
Attendance of meetings organised within the "HR contact point" network	Regular participation to inter-service meetings	Achieved: directorate represented in 100 % of the meetings

In 2019, on top of the above set objectives the CoR has adopted its Digital Strategy. In this context, several meetings were organised with the involvement of directorate C, notably through the Cluster 2. This is also included in 2020 objectives, as it will give an opportunity to increase the efficiency of the CoR administration.

Coordination team

Providing policy support regarding the CoR priorities and the monitoring of the interinstitutional relations, the coordination team of the Directorate C consolidated its input in support of the strategic planning of the Directorate and its contribution to the CoR Plenary sessions, Bureau, Conference of Presidents and CFAA.

As every year, coordination team was leading for the Strategic management plan and Budget 2020 and 2021 preparations. On top of this, in 2019, the team was highly involved in the CoR RoP revision process and the CoR Digital Strategy's development. Also, coordination team was leading and worked closely with the commission secretariats to prepare a smooth renewal of the CoR term of office 2020-2025.

Under the instructions of the Directorate's hierarchy, the coordination team has been the main contact point for ensuring internal coordination both in the preparatory phase and during the term of the rotating presidencies of the Council of the EU, helping establish a permanent and interactive exchange with the respective CoR National coordinators and Permanent Representations to the EU. This enhanced communication with the presidencies has led to an overall strengthening of CoR's cooperation with the Council.

Human resources of Directorate C

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	30	10	3	43
Contract staff	2			2
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts	5			5
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	37	10	3	50

2.5 Directorate for Communication (Dir D)

Objective 1: = Campaign 1: Engaging regional and local politicians for the future of Europe

There is a clear need for a better coordinated, open, two-way and participatory communication approach to ensure the CoR remains credible as the voice of Regions and cities in the EU and through this to reconnect the citizens with the EU institutions. In December 2014, the CoR listed a set of long-term recommendations to all the EU institutions in its own-initiative opinion on "Reconnecting Europe with its citizens," which addresses EU communication with the citizens as a joint responsibility of all EU institutions. CoR members as well as regional and local authorities and local activities of other EU institutions play a crucial role in this regard.

Specific objectives are to:

- work with other European institutions, particularly the European Parliament, to mobilise voters and raise awareness on the upcoming European elections;
- ensure the presence of up to 1,000 participants at the 8th European Summit of Regions and Cities in Bucharest; ensure effective dissemination of the output of the event (appeal/declaration) as input to Sibiu summit;
- continuous outreach to all regions and to associations representing the 92,900 local authorities and municipalities in the EU;
- engage in active cooperation with the EU institutions on a permanent structured dialogue mechanism including first tests. continue to collect replies to the online survey from all of the 27 Member States concerned using this at key moments such as the #SOTREG in October 2019;
- begin harvesting first results from the permanent structured dialogue mechanism as part of the handover to the next CoR term of office to be finalised in the December 2019 Plenary.

Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for —2019-2020:	Results in 2019
Media outreach attributable to campaign #1	Maintain 10% of total media mentions	850 media mentions on issues related to campaign #1 (= 6% of the total). The topic was not as high on the political agenda as the year before. The campaign entered the second phase which concentrated more on the exchange of experiences between regions and the collection of academic evidence in order to build up expertise on permanent structured dialogues. The greatest outreach was registered on the occasion of the CoR plenary session on 4/5 December, when President Lambertz addressed his third "State of the EU: The view of Regions and Cities" in the presence of the president of the EP, David Maria Sassoli. The key messages focused on the involvement of cities and regions in the newly launched Conference on the Future of Europe. 8 videos for the Summit of Regions and Cities

<p>Social media outreach on '#EULocal'</p>	<p>Maintain 15% of total social media outreach</p>	<p>(trailer opening video, thematic videos) received about 300,000 views, of which the one on "EU regions and cities building a sustainable future" 95,000, the one on "territorial cohesion" almost 57,000, on "social cohesion and integration" 55,000, on "strengthening European democracy" 37,500, on "shaping Europe together" 24,000 and finally, the one on "young local and regional leaders" more than 8,000 views.</p> <p>Achieved: (Main campaign 1 hashtag mentions 11 400 out of total 73 500 mentions)</p>
<p>Prepare for the 8th Summit of Regions and Cities in Bucharest on 14-15 March 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,000 politicians participate - dissemination to politicians - dissemination through media 	<p>820 'poids lourds'- 100 journalists invited (not CoR members). Participants: 948 delegates of whom 641 were elected politicians including 242 CoR members and 110 Young Elected Politicians. Delegates came from 34 countries.</p> <p>647 to the summit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 674 media mentions in media in 18 countries. Bucharest declaration disseminated to all 28 member states including top media.
<p>Organise 10th European Conference on Public Communication together with other EU institutions for up to 500 local communications</p>	<p>Quantitative: Maintain level of participation and quality of event</p> <p>Qualitative: platform for launch of new inter-institutional communication cooperation</p>	<p>1590 registrations. 1400 participants. 10th anniversary edition confirmed the role of EuroPCom as a key platform for inter-institutional communication.</p>
<p>Participation in the online survey/app</p>	<p>25,000 before the Summit</p>	<p>24,200 (this figure accumulates all surveys since the app was online in autumn 2017 :15,000 in 2017, 8,000 in 2018 and 1,200 in 2019).</p>
<p>Number of visitors groups and visitors welcomed to the CoR</p>	<p>Shift focus to quality: visits need to be sponsored by Members, who receive a full report on their usefulness.</p>	<p>15,329 visitors in 523 groups, out of which 75 groups brought in 1,459 local politicians.</p> <p>'Call for members' resulting in 23 members engaged in visits.</p>

Objective 2: = Campaign 2: Investing in regions and cities

The overall objective of this campaign is to ensure the active involvement of regional and local authorities in the negotiations on the EU's future finances and their legal bases, building on the success of the #CohesionAlliance. Specific objectives are to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop narratives on how cohesion policy reduces disparities between regions and how effective blending with notably private instruments can solve this problem; • develop "<i>Cohesion for what?</i>" narratives in key policy areas such as climate change, disaster resilience, integration, innovation, bridging the rural-urban divide and the social pillar; • Influence current European Parliament positions on the future MFF and cohesion policy; • Influence the EU Council position on the future MFF and cohesion policy; • Connect cohesion issues to the growing debate for the European Election 2019; • focus the 17th European Week of Regions and Cities 2019 on attracting designate Commissioners and/or relevant Members of the European Parliament to engage in political debate on the "<i>Cohesion for what?</i>" issues with regional and local politicians 		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Media outreach attributable to campaign #2	Maintain 30% of total media mentions	The most evident pick of relevance of the Cohesion Alliance platform on both institutional and communication levels was linked to the key question of ensuring adequate funding and governance to deliver the priorities of the new Commission (notably the Green Deal). Thus leading to outstanding results, especially in terms of quality of media. 3,454 media mentions were registered (=26% of the total), slightly under the target percentage, but the decrease was largely compensated by the quality of the media. And overall, quality of media means also media with greater outreach/readership at national level. 10 videos for the EU Regions' Week for a total of more than 131,500 views. A video promoting Cohesion Policy was launched on Twitter as a part of post-summit promotion, where it gained over 57,000 views. A video on Urban Farming was also produced to-relaunch the "EU is Cohesion" series that was discontinued for budgetary reasons. Not achieved- 4% of total social media mentions. Main CoR campaign events concluded in 2018.
Social media outreach on '#CohesionAlliance'	Maintain 40% of total social media outreach	
Deliver narratives for CoR members in all EU languages Increase the proportion of CoR members making use of them	- 7 'narratives' (information packs for CoR Members)	Relevant stories around members were produced by journalists, especially on the occasion of the EU Week but also plenary sessions.

	- 30% Members reading/using the narratives	
Deliver key events including the 17 th European Week of Regions and Cities.	#EURegionsWeek as a political platform/vehicle for #EURegionsWeek centred on politicians (including Members and potential future members)	EU Regions Week 2019 provided a solid platform for political messaging and exchange. Rich programme of 390 sessions with a wide spectrum of networking opportunities gathered around 600 politicians (CoR members, MEPs, local/regional/national politicians and young elected politicians) to the event.

Objective 3: = Campaign #3: Regions and cities delivering a sustainable Europe. In line with the overarching objective of demonstrating the added value of involving regions and cities in EU decision-making, this campaign will showcase regions, cities and local authorities taking action to provide practical solutions and tackling EU-level problems in areas identified by the CoR in its political priorities for 2015-2020: climate action and disaster resilience, migration/integration, and broader sustainable development. In so doing, the wealth of know-how as collected by CoR members and European associations and networks of local and regional authorities will be harvested through relevant communication activities.

Specific objectives are:

- to showcase regions, cities and local authorities' practical contribution to a stable and robust EU in areas such as climate change and sustainable development and to deliver also quantitative and qualitative elements on the contribution of the local and regional level to this problem (follow-up of the San Francisco Summit);
- to showcase delivery of CoR commitments to highlight local integration projects and the 'Alliance for Education and Skills';
- through the above, to help enshrine recent gains for regional and local authorities in the EU policy-making process.

Result and/or impact indicators:	Target 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Media outreach attributable to campaign #3	Maintain 10% of total media mentions	Outreach/outcome: 2,789 media mentions on issues related to this campaign (=21% of the total).
Social media outreach on '#Regions4change'; #Regions4climate etc	Maintain 20% of total social media outreach	Not achieved. 5% - 3800 mentions out of 73500. Campaign achievements were largely concentrated around 2 events: Launch of the integration initiative and COP25.
Deliver member-centric success stories	200 during 2019	The narrative was especially developed around regions and

		<p>cities' contribution to climate action. On the climate pillar, 25 web and social media stories were produced for COP25. Further stories were pitched by the press officers to media across the EU throughout the year. In addition, CoR members have conveyed their experiences and stories in dozens of events related to the energy transition, clean mobility or energy efficiency.</p> <p>On AV production, two videos "Regions and cities in action" + one trailer for "Cities and Regions for Development Cooperation" were produced in 2019.</p> <p>20 video stories were produced for #Regions4integration.</p> <p>16 graphic design products were also created to accompany the stories.</p>
<p>Revise approach to hosted events organised by external bodies and institutions</p>	<p>Focus events thematically; develop approach to knowledge-sharing by external organisers.</p> <p>Develop outreach, synergies and impact of these events.</p>	<p>Priority given to hosted events linked to CoR communication campaigns and other thematic priorities of CoR. Support of synergies via systematic use of Kiklos and individual contacts.</p>

Human resources of Directorate D

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	24	19	2	45
Contract staff	5	5		10
External contract staff				4
Seconded national experts	1			1
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	30	24	2	60

2.6 Directorate for Human Resources and Finance (Dir E)

Objective 1: Ensure appropriate allocation and sound and regular management of financial resources in the institution		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known results:
Acceptance of the CoR's 2020 budget by the Budget authority	CoR DB 2020 to be decided by the CoR's Plenary in April 2019	Achieved
Acceptance of 2019 external transfers by the Budget authority	100%	Achieved (4 out of 4)
% of commitment execution	98%	Achieved (99.6%)
% of payments execution	90%	Almost achieved (88.8%)
Average number of days for recording of invoices	1 day	Achieved (0.4 days)
% of invoices paid in the deadline	85%	Achieved (90% for commercial invoices and 99% for staff/members reimbursements)
Treasury balances	Max 2 Mio € balance on the account	Average monthly ending balance was 1.2 Mio €. Monthly end balance has exceeded 2 Mio € only once, due to unexpected cash inflows.

The **Draft Budget 2020** for the institution was prepared and deliberated upon at the CoR's Plenary session and sent to the EC, the EP and the Council in April 2019. The definite CoR 2020 budget was adopted by the Budget authority in November 2019.

The CoR Conference of Presidents has discussed the strategic guidelines for preparing the CoR **draft budget 2021** in autumn 2019. The CoR's President tabled the guidelines to the December 2019 CoR Bureau. Using these guidelines as a basis a more detailed first version of the CoR draft budget 2021 was developed in the same month for submission to the January 2020 CoR Commission for Financial and Administrative Affairs (CFAA).

Monthly budget execution reports including estimates for the execution of the salary related budget lines and other management reports have been submitted regularly throughout 2019. Quarterly in-depth budget execution reviews have been undertaken in 2019 and followed by the reallocation of appropriations if and when necessary and possible, if needed involving the Budget Authority.

Financial reporting was carried out during the year. Accounting and financial management reports covering the financial year 2018 were submitted to the EC and the **European Court of Auditors** already on 28 February 2019 (provisional) and on 28 June 2019 (final). No observations have been received from the Court in its 2018 Annual Report with regard to the information given.

Preparation for replacement of the salary-related IT HR application Centurio with the **Payment Factory** application continued in 2019 as the PMO did not yet provide a final Payment Factory for the use of the CoR.

Paperless workflow from invoice to payment was extended to a number of domains in the course of 2019.

Quarterly intercompany reconciliations have been timely performed through the Intercompany Reconciliation (ICR) tool.

Objective 2: Prepare and report on CFAA meetings		
Result and/or impact indicator:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Number of CFAA meetings organised in the year	5 per year	Achieved (5 in 2019)

All 5 CFAA meetings have been prepared and reported upon as intended.

Objective 3: Optimise the use of human resources and further develop a human resources policy adapted to the institution's priorities		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
% of occupied posts at the end of the year	96%	99.18%
Number of cases of internal mobility	15 (depending on reinforced mobility policy)	6
% of operational/overhead posts	Increase share of operational posts	The share of operational posts remains stable in 2019. 54% operational / 22% overhead (as at 1/01/2020)
Average number of training days per staff member	4.5 days	5.33
Number of Staff members on structural teleworking	70	60

Staff allocation and recruitment

2019 was a year of **consolidation and of adjustment of resources**. It was also marked by the continued effort to reinforce the political role of the Committee and to ensure optimised use of available expertise according to the political and administrative priorities of the institution. The CoR made several budget-neutral adjustments to the establishment plan to meet the increased need for permanent expertise in different domains and to use of the talent pool created by the internal competitions to motivate and retain experienced staff in the institution.

The first general **internal competition** in the history of the CoR was finalised in the first half of 2019 with a total of 40 laureates out of 113 candidate staff members.

The CoR published a record number of 48 vacancy and recruitment notices in 2019, resulting in the recruitment of 23 new officials. A senior management procedure was also organised in 2019 (CoR Secretary general) and the contract of the medical officer (special advisor) renewed.

Talent management

Signifying a shift in policy and implementation, the CoR Mobility service has for the first time actively contacted staff members having served more than 7 years in the same function (80 staff members) in order to actively promote and encourage **internal mobility**. These colleagues will be kept informed of all upcoming vacant posts and their names will be shared with the management team for long-term staff planning. The policy is voluntary but strongly recommended. To increase the success rate of the new policy, incentives should be introduced for staff who move internally and for managers who recruit internally.

During 2019 the CoR organised its first ever **job shadowing exercise** with the participation of 34 guests paired up with 18 hosting units, achieving a total satisfaction rate of 7.7/10 (based on the forms received during the evaluation period). The launching of the exercise coincided with the above-mentioned calls to those colleagues long in their function, reinforcing the stimulation of career reflections. The job shadowing exercise has been considered a valuable staff opportunity which may provide for a more flexible workforce in the long run.

In an effort to support **managerial excellence**, tailored training programmes and other support at the three levels of management (junior, middle and senior) have been provided throughout the year. A newly designed 360-degree feedback exercise for Directors was successfully introduced at the CoR for the first time.

Staff engagement

A new staff **appraisal system** was introduced in 2019 after a long social dialogue. The system is based on a qualitative assessment of each staff member performance against a predefined set of 9 competencies (12 for managers) clustered in 3 areas (ability, efficiency and conduct in the service) based on the CoR competency framework. Each staff member is involved more actively through an optional self-assessment. The new system creates a constructive dialogue aimed at motivating and developing each staff member's potential and a feedback focusing on the detailed assessment of individual performance during the reference period based on individual and collective objectives. The new system was accompanied by an electronic workflow for appraisal reports.

A new **promotion system** was introduced in parallel with the new appraisal system. Performance levels were introduced to reflect the quality of the annual reports established for each eligible staff member since the last promotion/appointment. They are awarded by the college of Directors and the Secretary-General and constitute, along with the use of languages and the level of responsibilities carried out, the basis for a comparative assessment of merits.

By adopting and continuously fine-tuning its **flexitime** and telework schemes the CoR strives to provide its staff with the appropriate tools to ensure adequate work life balance. In 2019, a pilot project was put in place on a voluntary basis to enlarge the use of the flexitime to include three political groups (PES, ECR and EA groups).

The HR Directorate engaged in an in-depth reflection on a complete overhaul of the telework system, taking account of the rules in place in the other EU institutions, the need to remove the rigidity of the

current system, the opinion of staff representatives as well as the disappearance of technical obstacles. This led to the adoption of a new **telework** decision rendering the scheme significantly more flexible both for staff and managers as it includes a wide range of teleworking formulae (from 0.5 day to 2.5 days in the week) and provides for a more flexible application and cancellation procedure.

Health and well-being

Particular attention has been placed on developing and upholding high-quality **health and well-being services** based on early prevention and intervention through close cooperation between the concerned HR services and awareness-raising programmes among staff and managers. In 2019, several HR sessions were held with managers at both junior, middle and senior level on the topic of absence management, in the presence of the CoR medical officer, to raise awareness of the importance of tight cooperation and active participation of the managers in the successful integration of colleagues after long-term absences. In this context, the scope of the annual medical check-up has been further broadened and includes, in addition to the standard features of preventive examination, a series of personalised tests allowing to identify risks and their further follow-up, including in the area of psycho-social risks.

In a concerted effort to **decrease absenteeism** and create the best conditions for a smooth integration after long term absence focused attention is placed on ensuring efficient absence management on the one hand and an active return to work policy on the other.

In order to have a policy in place for the institution to **handle alcohol and substance abuse** a working group has been established with cross-service participation, including representatives of the Staff Committee and the Joint Committee on Hygiene and Security. As a first initiative, an awareness-raising session was organised for all staff and managers.

HR implementing decisions and general matters

In nearly all fields of HR, concerted efforts have been made to **simplify HR processes** and reduce time spent on administrative aspects by the various actors involved. By way of example, all payments related to training, traineeships, medical and social costs are now paperless.

The HR related **internal communication** is gradually implemented and the third HR annual report was published.

The structured social dialogue with the CoR Staff Committee has been pursued on the basis of regular meetings at the level of Directorate E and also between the Staff Committee and the CFAA chair. In order to render the contributions of the Staff Committee opinions more constructive and increase its added value, staff representatives have been invited to take part in meetings on certain topics at a much earlier stage in the development of a decision/policy.

Through its 2019 **Equal Opportunities** (EO) action plan, the CoR has continued its efforts in tackling challenges related to the following three main areas of attention: gender, disability and diversity.

"Equal opportunities roadshows", i.e. visits at unit meeting by a team consisting of the EO officer (centrally working in the HR directorate), the EO contact person of the directorate concerned, a representative of the Joint Committee for Equal Opportunities and a representative of the Confidential Counsellors, were promoted during the year.

In order to support and encourage women to apply for and take up management positions, two initiatives are worth mentioning:

- Continuation of a management programme for managers below head of unit-level (Deputy Heads of Unit, Heads of Sector and Team leaders)
- Creation of a Network for Gender Balance in Management, including a mentoring scheme introduced towards the end of 2019 for women interested in a future career as managers, particularly in grade AD8 and higher.

However, notwithstanding strong efforts in stepping up the actions to tackle equal opportunities, with particular focus on gender balance, the institution has not managed to improve the figures regarding gender balance in management positions in 2019. In part, this is due to the retirement and subsequent replacement of a female senior manager position, for which no female candidates had applied.

Objective 4: Ensure effective internal control environment, effective support for the completion of the public procurement programme, and monitor the implementation of the Financial Regulation		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Number of remarks from ECA in the annual report on CoR internal control system and in the annual report on public procurement files	No remark	Achieved: no remark
Rate of return for correction of transactions (by verification service)	4-5%	Achieved: 2.22%
Number of exceptions	No significant increase as compared to previous year	Achieved: further reduction as compared to 2018
Timely verification of all files submitted to the Verification service (no late interest due to Verification service)	100%	Achieved: all files submitted verified

The year 2019 was the first full year during which the new **Internal Financial Rules** for the implementation of the CoR budget (IFR), which entered into force on 1 January 2019, applied. The transition to the new rules has proved to be a smooth process and 2019 saw a successful application of the rules in place.

Throughout 2019 the **public procurement** cell managed 19 calls for tenders above 15.000€, of which 13 were awarded in 2019, resulting in the signature of 13 contracts (the remaining procedures were cancelled or resulted in contact signature in the beginning of 2020).

Actions in the sphere of **internal control** continued to be monitored in the Internal Control Standards working group throughout 2019. More details are to be found in Chapter 3. As far as the specific issue of **exception reports** is concerned, the general decreasing trend since 2011 has been pursued.

The work of the **Verification Service** is reported on in Chapter 3.

Objective 5: Coordinate the management planning and reporting cycle, by defining the objectives of all services of the CoR in alignment with budget planning, monitoring and reporting the achievement of objectives through key performance indicators		
Result and/or impact indicator:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Discharge from Discharge Authority	Discharge obtained	Achieved: Discharge 2018 obtained

In addition to the elaboration of the 2018 Annual Activity Report and the 2020-2021 Strategic Management Plan (SMP), the new risk management methodology (adopted in autumn 2018) was applied for the first time on the objectives laid down in the 2019-2020 SMP, resulting in a consolidated 2019 **central Risk Register**, endorsed by the Board of Directors. The state-of-play of the mitigating actions identified in respect of the risks laid down in the central Risk Register was screened during the mid-term monitoring, launched in the summer 2019. More details are to be found in Chapter 3.

Objective 6: Carry out horizontal administrative functions in an efficient and transparent way		
Result and/or impact indicator:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
% of missions expenses reimbursed within time limit	Stay within a 5% margin as compared to 2018	Achieved: productivity and reactivity equivalent to 2018
% of staff responding to the mobility survey (if organised end 2019)	60%	58% in latest survey (2017)
% of staff coming to work by a green transport mode (walk, bike or public transport)	70% minimum	77.5% in latest survey (2017)

In the area of **mobility/transport**, awareness-raising campaigns fostering sustainable staff commuting modes were pursued in cooperation with other Brussels-based institutions.

In order to further rationalise the handling of **missions**, the "front office" modules of the Missions Management IT system (MIMA), with paperless workflows for mission files, have been deployed in November 2019.

Human resources of Directorate E

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	21	44	2	67
Contract staff	2			2
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (medical doctor)	1			1
Total	24	44	2	70

2.7 Protocol Service

Objective 1: Provide the Presidency, political groups and other CoR entities with protocol support and assistance		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020 :	Latest known result:
Number of VIPs	Non-programme-based	213
Number of official receptions	Non-programme-based	10

Objective 2: Assist with visa applications and relations with embassies and consulates		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Number of visas	Non-programme-based	1
Number of letters (acknowledgments, congratulations, condolence, etc) and verbal notes.	Non-programme-based	29

Objective 3: Reply to patronage requests		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Patronage answer letters	Non-programme-based	6

Human resources of Protocol Service

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	1	2		3
Contract staff		3		3
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	1	5	0	6

2.8 Internal Audit Service (IAS)

Objective 1: Provide the Authorising Officer with opinion on the adequacy of risk management, control and governance processes in the framework of his declarations for 2018 and 2019 and for the preparation of the 2020 declaration, with references to the areas already audited.		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Target for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Audit and advice coverage of CoR's activities based on their ranking as defined in the risk analysis established for the CoR by Internal Audit.	80 % of the 50 processes fully or partially covered by audits in the main process. 60 % of the 30 top risky processes fully covered by audits.	80 % of the 50 processes fully or partially covered by audits in the main process. 60 % of the 30 top risky processes fully covered by audits.

Objective 2: Support the audited sectors in implementing audit recommendations within a period of 12 months.				
Result and/or impact indicator:		Target for 2019-2020:		Latest known result:
Number of audit recommendations implemented within 12 months		75% of very important recommendations closed after 6 months 100% of very important recommendations closed after 12 months		57% of very important recommendations closed after 6 months 100% of very important recommendations closed after 12 months

Human resources of IAS

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	2	2		4
Contract staff				
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	2	2	0	4

2.9 Directorate for Logistics (DL)

Objective DL1: Provide modern, sustainable and effective management of the buildings of the Committees according to the adopted building strategy and improve the service to their occupants.		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
N° of building maintenance interventions (KAPI01) (equal to the number of request sent to the helpdesk "facilities")	N/A, the n° of interventions depends on the needs that arise (but remains +/- stable).	KAPI01=255 (average n° of interventions per month in 2019)
Building maintenance intervention lead time (KAPI02): % interventions < set time, which is either 2 days or 5 days, depending on the category of the intervention	Minimum 80%.	Achieved KAPI02=90,5% (average score in 2019)
Proposal of implementation of the building strategy	Signature with OIB of an agreement for the exchange of buildings Foreseen for the 1 st semester 2019.	Achieved An administrative agreement on the exchange of the B68 and the TR 74 buildings for the VMA building was signed by the Director of OIB and by both secretaries-general of

		the Committees on 28 August 2019. The exchange will take effect on 16 September 2022.
Improve building safety equipment following a safety audit	For 2020, the perimeter of all Committees' buildings should be secured	The works for the renovation of the entrance hall of the BvS building, with the main objective to increase the security level and the service for members, staff and visitors were completed in October 2019. During 2019, the perimeter of the BvS building (Remorqueur and Montoyer street) has been secured on the ground floor as well as the entire ground floor of the JDE building in Remorqueur street (kitchen, à la carte restaurant and offices).
Insulation and renovation of the JDE roofs, installation of green roof	Completion of works in 2019	Achieved Works completed in November 2019.
Securing of VMA entrance hall: studies	Completion of study in 2019	Achieved The major part of the works have been ordered in 2019.
Prepare technical specifications and launch the call for tender for the reinforcement of security and refurbishment of the BvS entrance hall (to be committed in 2019)	Works to be undertaken during 2019	Achieved Study and works completed in 2019.
Technical and environmental audit of VMA, in order to define different renovation programs	Completion of audit in 2019. Propose different renovation scenarios in 2020	Achieved VMA technical audit completed in 2019. 10 different scenarios of occupation proposed in 2019.

Renewal of environmental permits: obligatory environmental impact study	B68 to be renewed in 2019	Achieved B68's environmental permit has been renewed in July 2019.
JDE cafeteria transformation and upgrade	Study to be started in 2019	Achieved Study started in 2019.

In addition to the key actions signaled in the Strategic Management Plan, also several other maintenance works have been conducted during the year, such as the installation of new energy counters, a technical and environmental audit of the BvS building in order to define different renovation programs, renewal of floors in different areas, installation of a new cabling system for JDE conference rooms as well as new fiber connections between different technical rooms, enhancing thermal comfort of JDE conference rooms by improving the air distribution system, installation of a new kitchen hood in the JDE canteen, improving safety and security conditions during execution of works by external companies and upgrading of furniture.

In line with the building strategy, an administrative agreement on the exchange of the B68 and the TR 74 buildings with the VMA building was signed by the Secretaries-Generals of both Committees and the Director of OIB on 28 August 2019. The exchange will take effect on 16 September 2022. In December 2019, the European External Action Service (EEAS) informed the Committees that the Belliard 100 building would be available by early 2021 and proposed transferring its current lease to them. The B100 building contains about 165 housing units and is adjacent to the VMA building.

Similar to the renovation works of the JDE hall carried out in 2018, the hall of the BvS building was renovated in 2019 and the hall of the VMA building will be renovated in 2020. The main purpose of these works is to increase the security level and the service for members, staff and visitors. Furthermore, the perimeter of the BvS building has been secured on the ground floor as well as the ground floor of the JDE building in Remorqueur street.

Following the technical audit of the BvS building, the increase in both the capacity of the lifts and the ventilation of the meeting rooms was studied and works will be carried out in 2020 and 2021.

Following the technical audit of the VMA building, the works that must be carried out in the short term to enable the building to comply with the regulations in force and extend its lifespan by 10 years will be identified. The most important problems to handle are related to the air quality, the noise and the lightning. In order to explore the possibilities for occupying the VMA building after its renovation, several scenarios for occupying the building with different interior configurations have been studied.

Objective DL2: Environmental management according to the commitment of the committees to EMAS.		
Result and/or impact indicators: Measurable energy and water savings, reduction in the usage of paper, etc.,	Targets for 2019-2020: For all EMAS targets, refer to the EMAS	Latest known result: Data for year 2019. 2020 data will be available in spring 2021.

<p>as specified in the environmental action plan reviewed and updated annually. Number of non-conformities identified.</p>	<p>action plan on the Intranet.</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Results 2019</h2> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Electricity</p> <p>↓3% in 2019 ↓31% Since 2009</p> <hr/> <p>Gas</p> <p>↓15% in 2019 ↓57% Since 2009</p> <hr/> <p>Water</p> <p>↓8% in 2019 ↓35% Since 2009</p> <hr/> <p>Paper</p> <p>↓42% in 2019 ↓74% Since 2009</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Coment: the data related to waste are not yet available</p>
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In relation to EMAS, based on the performance measured in 2019, the Committees have already achieved almost all of their environmental Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set for 2020, compared to 2016. In the course of 2019, significant results were achieved in the area of paper consumption. For several other indicators, significant improvements were achieved in 2017 and 2018. However, no further improvements were noted in 2019.

Objective DL3: Provide the level of administrative and financial support necessary to ensure efficient and quality catering services.		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
<p>Number of complaints and other requests on the catering services</p>	<p>Follow up each request (separately for catering and vending machines as of 1/12/2015)</p>	<p>In 2019, 41 comments were received in total of which 27 were complaints. That makes 23% less complaints compared to 2018.</p>
<p>Carry out of satisfaction surveys in the different catering sites.</p>	<p>Receive the greatest possible feedback from staff</p>	<p>2 surveys carried out during 2019: -Satisfaction survey carried out by the external audit BVC at JDE Self (127 participants) -Members online satisfaction survey (100 participants)</p>
<p>Efficient and effective response to the needs for interventions in order to maximise the continuity and the quality of catering services.</p>	<p>- Follow up number of interventions in order to see which equipment's break down more often and probably need to be replaced - Replace old equipment</p>	<p>During 2019: - 53 breakdown interventions and 325 maintenance interventions - three ovens have been replaced by new ones in 2019.</p>

<p>Audits of catering points of sale by a new contractor (on hygiene, quality, service, etc.).</p>	<p>- 4 audits per year - follow up indicators and take appropriate actions if necessary</p>	<p>An external contractor (BVC) carried out 4 Audits on catering sale points in 2019 (on hygiene, quality, service, etc.). The results of the audit of the self-service restaurant and the "à la carte restaurant" were the following: - technical audit (hygiene, security): 92.5% compliance on average for 2019, compared to 92,7% in 2018; - commercial audit: in compliance with tender specifications (e.g. quality, service, prices, etc.)</p>
<p>Type and number of products sold in vending machines</p>	<p>- follow up indicators and take appropriate actions if necessary</p>	<p>Type of products sold: Cold drinks 11,536 (+3% compared to 2018) Hot drinks 36,734 (-8% compared to 2018) Snacks 13,700 (+6% compared to 2018)</p>
<p>Number of customers and purchased items in each point of sale (monthly indicator).</p>	<p>Keep up attendance of canteens and cafeterias.</p>	<p>Number of customers in 2019: 259,566 (+3.68% compared to 2018). Results for each point of sale: Restaurant JDE: 105,398 (+4.91%) Restaurant à la carte: 4,354 (-8.32%) Cafeteria JDE: 67,670 (+7.96%) Cafeteria BvS: 53,105 (+2.98%) Cafeteria B68: 29,039 (-6.00%) Number of purchased items in 2019: 522,170 (+1.73% compared to 2018). Results for each point of sale: Restaurant JDE: 247,989 (+3.20%)</p>

		<p>Cafeteria JDE: 126,398 (+4.48%)</p> <p>Cafeteria BvS: 95,961 (+1.09%)</p> <p>Cafeteria B68: 51,822 (-9.25%)</p> <p>Average customers for day for each point of sale in 2019:</p> <p>Restaurant JDE: 462,27 (+4%)</p> <p>Restaurant à la carte: 21,24 (-10%)</p> <p>Cafeteria JDE: 295,50 (+14%)</p> <p>Cafeteria BvS: 218,54 (+3%)</p> <p>Cafeteria B68: 120,49 (-6%)</p>
<p>Sustainable Canteen project - indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of sustainable fish - % of organic products - % of fairtrade products - seasonality of menus and salad bar - quantity of plastic utensils used - number of vegetarian plates sold during the Thursday Veggie Day 	<p>For this objective, see the EMAS action plan on the EMAS Intranet site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 24% of sustainable fish - 18 % of organic food - 8% of Fairtrade products (99% of the coffee, 94% of pineapples, 100% of the bananas are Fairtrade) - 83% of seasonal vegetables in the menus - 62% of seasonal vegetables in the salad bar - 7.055 vegetarian plates sold during the Thursday Veggie (19.726 vegetarian plates sold during 2019)

Objective DL4: Provide information systems, IT infrastructure and user support services, according to the best practice of IT management while optimising the use of human and financial resources. In accordance with the needs and priorities of the Committee, support its activities in 4 priority domains: Political work, Document production, Communication, Human resources and finance.

Result and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Infrastructure availability (KAPI21)	99%	99.80% Achieved
User support requests (KAPI22)	N/A, it depends on requests from users.	Average of 193 IT user support requests per helpdesk staff per month

Helpdesk reaction time (KAPI23)	94%	within	15s	95.8%
	98%	within 30s		97.9%

During 2019, the Committee adopted a Digital Strategy and work began on its implementation.

For **Political Work**, work focussed on the main back-office (Agora) and front-office (Members Portal) applications. For Agora, highlights included the development of a financial forecasting system and sub-workflows for meeting authorisation. For the Members Portal, significant developments include the improved document page and the form for administrative purposes in the Dashboard. The Phoenix application for managing reimbursements was adapted to work with e-invoices. Work on the Common Consultative Platforms included support for the "Network of Regional Hubs for EU Policy Implementation Review". The strategic management tool, KIKLOS, was developed in accordance with the roadmap agreed with stakeholders; in particular: integration of extra internal content, new navigation, filters and mobile experience and a new homepage.

For **Document Management**, new search engines were deployed. The Adonis document workflow tool was further improved notably by the addition of support for versioning in document workflows. There was continuous improvement of the other document and translation services and tools. For **Communication**, the existing catalogue of web services was maintained. The contact management applications were further developed and maintained. For **Human Resources and Finance**, the staff assessment application was deployed.

The main achievements for the **IT Infrastructure** service during 2019 were the migration of the e-mail system, a major upgrade of the virtualisation software, replacement of the forward and reverse proxies, phase-out of the oldest generation of office automation and application servers. There was also a significant upgrade to the network routing to streamline the configuration and improve efficiency.

IT User Support Services provide user support, develop user solutions, maintain user relations, organise logistics and manage user policies. The principle indicators in terms of activity (some 3,500 support requests per month) and performance (some 60% of incidents closed within one hour and an ongoing satisfaction ratio of 96%) remained stable. The principal project was the migration of the workstations. This project included not only the migration of the operating system but also many performance and security improvements. There was a significant increase in the number of "one PC" users.

Objective DL5: Production of Committee working documents; preparation of meeting files, dispatch of documents by courier service, postal services and by electronic means; printing of publications and of supporting material for the different meetings/conferences and for communication purposes.		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Copyshop productivity (KAPI11): n° copies per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	1.475.457/FTE (2.635.473 in 2018) – decrease by -44%

N° of copyshop print jobs (KAPI15): n° of print jobs at copyshop per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	10.959 print jobs/FTE (15.748 in 2018) – decrease by -30.4%
Offset productivity (KAPI12): n° equivalent print runs per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	1.024.866 print runs/FTE (2.064.436 in 2018) – decrease by -50.4%
Mailings productivity (KAPI13): n° mailings (transmissions) per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	6.351 mailings/FTE (9.079 in 2018) decrease by -30 %
Distribution of files for members productivity (KAPI14): n° files for members distributed per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	14.619 files/FTE (15.767 in 2018) – decrease by -7.3%
Copyshop productivity colour (KAPI16): n° copies per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	1.155.676/FTE (1.159.945 in 2018) – decrease by -0,4%
N° of copyshop colour print jobs (KAPI17): n° of print jobs at copyshop per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	6.641 print jobs/FTE (7.433 in 2018) – decrease by -10.6%
Mailings productivity per e-mail (KAPI18): n° mailings (transmissions) per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	6.880 mailings/FTE (7.812 in 2018) – decrease by -11.9%
Courrier express mailings (shipments) productivity (KAPI19): n° shipments per full-time employee	No targets set, statistics depend on the number of requests received.	627 mailings/FTE (823 in 2018) – decrease by -23.8%

During 2019, the Printshop took part in the inter-institutional printing project launched by the Publication Office (PO), and reinforced the collaboration with the EP, the Council and the OIB in order to reduce externalisation of work and to ensure business continuity of operations.

Objective DL6: Rigorous management within the DL in the areas of financial and contractual management, as well as planning and reporting of activities.		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
- N° of procedures launched (value above 25,000€)	Target 2019: launch of 10 procurement procedures Target 2020: launch of 11 procurement procedures	Results: 10 procurement procedures have been launched in 2019 Out of the 10 planned procedures, 1 was withdrawn by the owner service after the reassessment of their needs

		1 further not planned procedure was launched as well.
2019 Budget execution at end of year.	Minimum 97%.	C1: 99,43 % C8: 92,31 %

Objective DL7: The guarantee of a modern, effective and efficient security/safety service for the Committees.		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:
Number of avoidable activations of door alarms.	Ideally 0 (any occurrences will be investigated with a view to avoid similar occurrences in the future).	3 activations have been registered and investigated. New Equipment for access control has raised our security standards to the same level as EP and EC.
Investigation rate into attempts to use badges which are not valid.	100% (all invalid attempts will be followed up).	Achieved 0 attempts
Availability rate of security guards (percentage of number of man-hours per month in comparison to the number expected).	100%	Achieved 99.9%
Mutual Electronic Badge recognition with the EP in service. Starting negotiations with Commission and EEAS.	Operational with EP by 1 st Quarter 2019 and by end 2019/ beginning 2020 for EC and EEAS	Not achieved. Negotiations and testing with EP still ongoing and not started for EEAS and Commission
New preventive fire action plan	80% of the actions achieved	Achieved
Adaptation of CCTV guidelines	100%	Achieved

A series of measures have been implemented to ensure adequate security standards, but they cannot be reported on in a public document. It may be mentioned though that following the installations of new equipment for access control, the related security standards have reached the same level as the standards of the EP and the EC. Moreover, the first steps have been taken to buy a new visitor's management system that will be implemented in 2020.

Objective DL8: Following changes in numbers and distribution of offices to personnel, prepare the possible replacement of the VMA building, assess the impact in terms of office space needs and on the budget of the DL.		
Result and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019-2020:	Latest known result:

Assure sufficient space and meeting rooms to pursue the activities of the Committee.	Prepare the solution in terms of office/conference rooms availability after 2021	<p>An administrative agreement for the exchange of the B68 and the TR 74 buildings with the VMA building was signed on 28 August 2019. The exchange will take effect on 16 September 2022.</p> <p>In December 2019, the European External Action Service (EEAS) informed the Committees that the Belliard 100 building will be available by early 2021 and proposed transferring its current lease to them. This building contains about 165 housing units and is adjacent to the VMA.</p>
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Human resources of the Directorate of Logistics (CoR staff only)

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	9	18		27
Contract staff	4	8		12
External contract staff				20
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	13	26	0	59

2.10 Directorate for Translation (DT)

Objective DT1: To further deepen and develop the resource-efficient multilingualism policy for both Committees, in accordance with the Cooperation Agreement and the Code of Conduct for Translation		
Impact and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019:	Latest known result:
Deadline compliance	> 95% ⁶	95.4%

⁶ As established in Appendix I to the memo on Annual monitoring of the workload and productivity levels in the Directorate for Translation compared against interinstitutional benchmarks (KIAPs)

Revision rate	Between 40% and 60% ⁷	50.3%
Documents exceeding the maximum length as defined in the Code of Conduct	≤ 2018 level (5.8%)	6.8%
Percentage of new versions to documents in translation	<6% ⁸	10.3%
Timely submission of translation requests as defined in the Code of Conduct	≥ 90%	84.5%
Outsourcing rate	≥ 20% ⁹	16.7%
Proportion of pivot versions delivered on time	> 95% ¹⁰	96.1%

Objective DT2: To improve working methods and optimise human and financial resources management

Impact and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019:	Latest known result:
Staff using new TMS (Artemis)	100% (as of introduction of TMS)	N/A (Project delayed)
Proportion of pages translated using Studio	≥ 95%	97%
Proportion of CoR web texts translated in XML format	=100% of compatible texts	N/A (Project deferred)
Proportion of eligible texts translated via STS system	=100% (for available language combinations)	100%
Proportion of edited pages	= 25%	31%
Number of PM ² certified staff within Directorate	4	3
% of budget line 1420 used	Full coverage of needs	60 %
% of budget line 2622 used	Full coverage of needs	97 %

Objective 3: To consolidate relations with DT stakeholders and improve integration of translation in the legislative work of the Committee

Impact and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019:	Latest known result:
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⁷ Idem footnote 6

⁸ Idem footnote 6

⁹ Idem footnote 6

¹⁰ Idem footnote 6

Proportion of outsourced translation jobs for which written feedback given to external translation contractors	≥75%	75.5 %
Number of hours job shadowing/face-to-face coaching between DT and requesting services	60	30
Number of units in the own services targeted by awareness-raising measures (including job shadowing)	≥ 2018 level	9
Proportion of client feedback received	2019: >10%	2%

Objective DT4: To create synergies in the framework of interinstitutional cooperation in the field of translation

Impact and/or impact indicators:	Targets for 2019:	Latest known result:
KIAPI – Average cost per page	EUR 164.2 ¹¹	204 ¹²
Daily workload reference rate	DT: at least 8 pages	7.1
Work-sharing	≥ 2018 level (2573 translation pages; 105 editing pages) (if possible, and depending on the evolution of internal translation demand and staffing levels)	Translation pages accepted: 2560 Editing pages accepted: 2430
Representation at interinstitutional network meetings	100%	100%
Number of staff on exchanges/ILVs to other institutions (per year)	≥ 2018 level (3)	1

Human resources of Directorate for Translation (CoR staff only)

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	119	21	2	142
Contract staff				
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	119	21	2	142

¹¹ Average of the KIAPI moving average (2014-2018) for all institutions except the Translation Centre.

¹² Average cost per translated page in 2019

3. INTERNAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL SYSTEMS, AUDIT AND FOLLOW-UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY FINANCIAL CONTROL BODIES

3.1 Inherent nature and characteristics of the CoR risk environment

The CoR Strategic Management Plan (SMP) describes the actions which the CoR implements in order to reach its political objectives and administrative objectives. It reflects the budgetary and human resources mobilised and the actions undertaken. In parallel to the SMP, a yearly risk assessment exercise is carried out for each objective. Depending on the risk level, risks are stored in a central or decentralised risk register. Managers are required to manage their risks and to report at the moment of the midterm review, performed on the risks enumerated in the central risk register, whether risks have materialised and which corrective measures have been put in place.

The final results of actions are reported in the Annual Activity Report and in the Declaration of Assurance of the Authorising Officer by Delegation. Given that the CoR has no operational credits, its financial and political risks are predominantly tied to its administrative expenditure (and notably the risk of non-respect of the regulatory environment) and to internal organisation and functioning.

Given the political character of the Institution and the size of the budget, any resource inappropriately spent would indeed constitute a risk. To mitigate this risk, the CoR has organised a centrally monitored internal control environment and a central verification service which verifies all transactions, with "zero tolerance" towards inappropriate resource spending.

3.2 Internal control system

A compliance and effectiveness exercise was launched in 2019, to assess to what extent the CoR complied with the 16 Internal Control Standards (ICS) and to what extent their implementation was effective.

The exercise consisted of a questionnaire designed to evaluate compliance with and effectiveness of the requirements specified for each ICS, with contributions from members of the ICS Working Group responsible for their coordination (at least one person per Directorate). The results were discussed in the ICS Working Group meeting of 10 March 2020.

The 2019 compliance exercise has shown that the overall state of implementation and effectiveness of the requirements remained at a high level and relatively stable as compared to 2018.

Future efforts should focus on a cost-effective consolidation of the level achieved, together with targeted efforts to further step up the level of compliance and the degree of effectiveness of selected internal control measures in place. In 2020, special attention will be devoted to:

- ICS 1 (mission) and ICS 3 (staff allocation): With the start of the new political and administrative mandate, the mission statement(s) as well as the organisational structure will be aligned with the new priorities to maximise the CoR's impact. The strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT) analyses performed on key CoR activities and the workload assessment will guide this process.

- ICS 8 (processes and procedures) and ICS 11 (document management): Launch of an administrative REFIT exercise with the aim of cutting red tape and ensuring cost-effectiveness of controls across the institution. In this context, also further digitalisation of data storage and simplification of processes through paperless workflows shall be explored.
- ICS 10 (business continuity): taking account *i.a.* the experiences acquired during the current Covid-19 situation, an in-depth revamp of the existing Business Continuity Plan is foreseen for 2020.

3.3 Internal Financial Legal Framework

The Internal Financial Rules (IFR) for the implementation of the CoR Budget have been updated on 1 January 2019 (Decision No 0014/2018) and have been implemented throughout 2019.

In the revised IFR, the operational responsibilities are clearly defined by including the operational agents as formal actors in the financial approval workflow. Furthermore, the responsibilities of management are reflected in the financial approval workflow with the head of unit/director responsible for operational management appointed as Authorising Officer by Subdelegation. Finally, it is worth noting that a separate title is dedicated to the Internal Control Framework.

3.4 Budget planning, execution and monitoring

The CoR is a political body with a focussed mission. Its budget appropriations are included entirely under Administrative Heading 5 of the EU-budget (MFF 2014-2020). The CoR has no spending oriented programmes of the type the EC manages under other headings of the EU-budget.

The CoR applies a coherent political and supportive administrative system of budgeting, planning, execution and monitoring supporting the realisation of the CoR's political and administrative objectives. The performance oriented system works principally as follows:

- The CoR's President, after having obtained advice from the CoR's Conference of Presidents, presents guidelines for establishment of the CoR's draft budget to the CoR's Bureau for adoption.
- The CoR's draft budget, with appropriations allocated with a view to reach the political and administrative objectives, is established by the CoR's Secretary General based upon the adopted CoR Bureau guidelines.
- The draft budget is then vetted and approved by the CoR Member-driven Commission of Financial and Administrative Affairs (CFAA), then submitted to the CoR's Bureau and to the CoR's Plenary Session for adoption. In this way, subsequent expenditure is tied to the multi-annual planned objectives, actions and political priorities of the CoR Presidencies.
- Once the Budget Authority has adopted the CoR's budget for a given year, the appropriations for its activities are subject to a budget planning adopted at the beginning of the budget implementation year.
- The CoR's planning instructions established by the Secretary General based upon the CoR's political and administrative priorities require that the final appropriations for every budget line be linked to at least one action defined in the planning and there are requirements for establishment of indicators to measure implementation.

- The planning for a given year is executed by sub-delegated Authorising Officers empowered to that function by the CoR's Secretary General, acting in his capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation (AOD). Individual nominations are made by updating the general decision with coherence of delegations given and ABAC accesses granted.
- Prior to a specific actual budget implementation decision on what in detail the CoR will do in the specific political circumstances, it puts together proposals with estimates of how much appropriation are needed from various budget lines. The proposals are then scrutinised / followed up on by the CFAA.

The financial circuits applied in the CoR's budget implementation are established respecting the following principles and rules as outlined by the CoR's Internal Financial Rules:

- Segregation of duties between initiation, verification, authorisation and payment;
- Codification of the operational and financial responsibilities;
- Centralised financial ex-ante verification, and;
- Trained actors (delegations are given based upon followed training).

The monitoring of the CoR budget execution is carried out at several levels:

1. Regular monitoring of budget execution is required to be established and implemented by managing services to steer operations for budget lines falling under their responsibility and management;
2. An analytical tool for monitoring the budget execution, "Budget Watch", is used to centrally monitor the execution (commitments and payments) of all budget lines and sub-line for C1, C4, C5, C8 and C9 appropriations. This tool supports the identification of possible over- and under-spending at an early stage. Based on this tool, monthly budget execution notes are prepared and circulated to the Directorates' and financial actors of the CoR;
3. Progress of the overall budget execution of politically important budget lines is regularly monitored by the CoR CFAA;
4. Estimates of the execution of salaries' related budget lines, covering almost 60% of the CoR total budget, are carried out/updated each month.

In order to better prepare for the possible reallocation of appropriations, when conditions merit and opportunities exist, quarterly budget execution in-depth reviews are coordinated centrally but carried out by the CoR Authorising Officers by sub-delegation, per Directorate and for all CoR budget lines. This contributes to the optimisation of the budget execution through a better preparation for reallocation of resources within budget lines and, if and where estimated necessary, by initiating transfers of appropriations during the budget implementation year.

The CoR continuously remains open to assess if implementation of practices developed and tried with a successful result in other EU Institutions of a similar size and with a similar political representation would result in an improvement of the CoR's political decision making process.

3.5 Financial verification

Every budgetary or legal commitment as well as every payment is subject to ex ante verification within the CoR, except a few particular recurrent legal commitments which are subject to a simplified approval workflow pursuant to Art.15 of the IFR and where ex-ante verification would have little or no added value.

Apart from the aforementioned legal commitments, each transaction is subject to an ex ante financial verification in conformity with Art.74 FR, i.e. without sampling, with an average treatment time of 3 working day in 2019. The verification service has also a counselling role and is in a permanent dialogue with financial actors with a view to constantly improving financial management.

In 2019, the central verification service verified 17.152 files ex-ante within the prescribed timeframe. Files include budgetary commitments and legal commitments, payment orders, recovery orders, recruitment decisions, setting or modifying statutory rights, promotions, ...etc as well as the verification of the salaries. The overall workload was 11% higher than in 2018. The average monthly number of transactions verified by the service was 1.429 in 2019 compared to 1.289 in 2018, 1.350 in 2017 and 1.297 in 2016.

There are two types of file refusal by the verification service:

1. Refusal for correction (code SC): the transaction will be corrected afterwards by initiating agents before being resubmitted to verifying agents.
2. Final refusal (code SR): the financial transaction, if pursued, should be subject to a financial exception report. Service instruction 06/2018 "reporting exceptions" defines the procedure to be followed in order to ensure that each financial exception identified during the treatment of a file is justified and authorised at the appropriate level before the transaction is approved; the file with the exception report is refused in the formal sense using the code SR (Refusal).

In 2019, the combined rate of files returned for correction (SC) and budgetary transactions for which the verifying officer refused the file (SR) was of 2.2% and remained fairly comparable to the figures of 2018, 2017 and 2016 (between 2 and 2.5%).

The main causes for transactions being refused for correction (SC) or definitively refused (SR) includes for example incorrect types of commitment, calculation errors, wrong financial actors, incorrect GL accounts, missing or wrong certified correct, requests for information, missing file references, wrong or missing check-lists, posting criteria, incomplete files, miscellaneous mistakes on refunds and wrong bank accounts.

3.6 Ex-post control

An ex-post control exercise was carried out in 2019 using the methodology in place since 2007. The aim of this exercise is (1) to provide a tool for managers, to review internally their own procedures and operations in order to identify any potential systemic issues and (2) based on the findings, to propose and implement measures that would lead to structural improvements.

No major issues were identified. However, a recurrent recommendation resulting from the different ex-post exercises is the necessity to update written procedures. . In 2018 the completeness of the register of procedures increased with 8% compared to 2017. (93% in 2019 versus 85% in 2018). While the

completeness of the Register has increased, for 2020 services foresee further updates of procedures to accommodate regular legal, financial and operational changes.

3.7 Exception reports

For reporting purposes, an exception (administrative or financial) occurs when there is non-compliance with established rules and procedures detected and approved ex ante.

Financial exceptions

The overall number of financial exception reports further decreased compared to 2018.

The CoR maintains a central register of exceptions as well as a follow-up of the remedial measures. The reporting on exceptions is an important element of assurance for the AOD when drafting his declaration of assurance.

All authorising officers by sub-delegation (AOS) have to report to the AOD on financial exceptions and remedial measures when presenting their declarations of assurance for the budget lines for which they are responsible.

For the 2019 exercise all AOSs have signed their individual declarations of assurance (also see Annex 2). All exceptions reports in the central database were mentioned in the relevant declarations of assurance and corrective measures are being implemented and monitored to prevent these exceptions from reoccurring.

Administrative exceptions

Also a few administrative exception reports were registered for non-compliance with internal procedures and corrective measures are being implemented to prevent this type of exception from reoccurring.

3.8 Overall assessment of the costs and benefits of control

The budget of the CoR is a purely administrative budget for a political assembly. With regard to risks and loss, the CoR seeks not only to minimise financial loss but also to mitigate reputational risks when deploying controls. Therefore, the costs and benefits of controls cannot be appreciated merely in monetary terms but need also to be considered from a political angle.

Specifically, the benefits of controls which cannot be quantified in the context of the CoR concern deterrent effects and compliance with regulatory provisions.

The CoR has estimated the overall costs of controls in terms of the cost of all staff directly involved in control activities (including ex-ante financial verification, internal control, internal audit and control activities related to procurement procedures) to approximately EUR 2 M. In relation to the total budget of 2019 of EUR 98.75 M, around 2% was thus dedicated to control. However, since quantitative data of the volume and amounts of errors that have been prevented (ex-ante) or detected (ex-post) is not available, it is not possible to quantify the related benefits other than what can be deduced from the exception reports (cf. point 3.7 above), and thus to determine the cost-effectiveness of controls by comparing costs with benefits.

Given that ex-post controls did not identify any major issues (c.f. point 3.6 above), that financial exceptions were detected prior to validation of the expenditure (c.f. point 3.7 above) and that there are no ongoing litigations related to procurement decisions, CoR considers its controls to be effective. An

analysis is contemplated in 2020 to assess its the cost-effectiveness of the internal control environment in place.

3.9 Public procurement

The sector dedicated to the management of CoR's procurement procedures for contracts with a value equal to or greater than EUR 15.000 launched by the CoR Own Services has been operational since January 2016. A similar specialized procurement service assists operational services of the Joint Services when they launch tender procedures on behalf of the CoR.

The working arrangements and the allocation of responsibilities between the CoR's public procurement sector and organising departments for the implementation of Article 16(3) of the internal rules have been further clarified in the updated service instruction n°04/2019, adopted in December 2019.

3.10 Internal audit function

The monitoring of the internal audit function is provided by the Audit Committee (AC) composed of one member per political group of the CoR Commission of Financial and Administrative Affairs and one high-level external advisor.

In 2019, two meetings were held by the Audit Committee, where the IAS presented the 2018 annual internal audit report and the 2020 work programme. Members were also informed on the progress achieved with regard to the state of play of ongoing audits and the open recommendations as well as the related risks.

In accordance with Financial Rules art. 118.4, the internal auditor establishes an annual report to the AOD indicating the number and the type of audits carried out, the related audit recommendations and the follow-up given to these recommendations.

4. ISSUES PERTAINING TO THE DECLARATION OF ASSURANCE

Taking into account the conclusions of the review of the elements supporting assurance, it is possible to conclude that the internal controls systems implemented by the European Committee of the Regions provide sufficient assurance to adequately manage the risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions. Furthermore, it is also possible to conclude that the internal control systems provide sufficient assurance with regards to the achievement of the other internal control objectives.

5. THE DECLARATION OF ASSURANCE

I, Petr Blížkovský, Secretary-General of the European Committee of the Regions, in my capacity as authorising officer by delegation,

declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view,

state that I have a reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for the purposes intended in accordance with the principle of sound financial management and that the control procedures put in place provide satisfactory 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 Internal Control self-assessment, the ex post controls, the work of the internal auditor, and the lessons learnt from the reports of the Court of Auditors for years prior to the year of this declaration.

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

Done at Brussels,

Petr Blížkovský

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Financial resources

Annex 2: Declarations of the Authorising Officers by sub-delegation (table of names and date of signature)

Annex 3: Transfers of appropriations

Annex 4: Negotiated procedures 2019

Annex 5: Report on compliance of the time limits suspension

Annex 6: Provisional annual accounts 2019

Annex 7: Human resources table

Annex 8: Building policy

Annex 9: Activities of the Members of the CoR in 2019

Annex 10: Follow-up to the discharge resolution

ANNEX 1: Financial Resources

Total 2019 approved budget of the European Committee of the Regions ("CoR") was € 98.8 million (2.8% more than the final budget of 2018).

€ 98.4 million (99.6%) of all appropriations has been committed by the end of 2019 and € 87.7 million (88.8%) has been paid.

1 Use of resources

Commitments in 2019

At the end of the year, the percentage committed from the approved budget was 99.6%.

The commitment execution rate for Title 1 "Expenditure relating to persons working with the institution" was 99.6% and 99.7% for Title 2 "Buildings, furniture, equipment and miscellaneous operating expenditure".

€ 0.4 million (0.4%) of all C1 credits was uncommitted at the end of the year and thus was returned back to the EU budget. Both in relative and monetary terms, this was less compared to the result of 2018 where € 0.7 million (0.7%) was left uncommitted in C1 credits.

Payments in 2019

The overall execution rate for payments was 88.8%. This is comparable with the recent years. The execution rate in 2018 was 91.0% and 89.9% in 2017.

It should be noted that the final payment execution rate at the end of the budget cycle will be higher, as part of the committed credits related to 2019 was carried forward to C8 credits of 2020 and will be paid in 2020. The actual payment execution rate for 2019 will only be known by the end of 2020 when the final payment execution rate of C8 credits of 2020 will be determined.

Title 1: Expenditure relating to persons working with the institution

In this title, most of the payments relate to staff remunerations. For budgetary items 1200 and 1204, the total budget amounted to € 52.4 million of which 99.9% was paid in 2019. This is more than in 2018, when € 51.1 million (99.2%) was paid out.

Higher payment execution in 2019 was:

- partially the result of the lower average vacancy rate in 2019 (less than 2.0%) and
- partially the result of the reallocation of resources, i.e. transfers out of budget item 1200 during the year.

In 2019, the amount of € 7.3 million (81.6%) was paid from the budget item 1004 "Members travel and subsistence allowances, attendance at meetings and associated expenditure". This is lower in percentage and in monetary terms than in 2018 (€ 8.2 million and 93.7% respectively).

Title 2: Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous operating expenditure

In total, 73.2 % of the Title 2 budget was paid out in 2019, principally due to the 82.2% payment execution rate of chapter 20 "Buildings and associated costs". The other chapters of Title 2 showed lower payment execution rates.

Comparison with the previous years

The following table gives a comparative overview of execution rates for commitments and payments per title, for the years 2019, 2018 and 2017.

	2019			2018			2017		
	Budget 000 €	Commitments	Payments	Budget 000 €	Commitments	Payments	Budget 000 €	Commitments	Payments
Title 1	72,332	99.6%	94.5%	71,207	99.1%	95.9%	69,460	97.7%	94.3%
Title 2	26,420	99.7%	73.2%	24,893	99.6%	76.9%	23,835	99.0%	77.1%
Total	98,751	99.6%	88.8%	96,100	99.3%	91.0%	93,295	98.0%	89.9%

Title 1: Expenditure relating to persons working with the institution

The execution rate for commitments in 2019 was higher than in 2018 and 2017. The 2019 payment execution rate (more representative indicator) is lower than the rate of 2018 but slightly higher than the rate of 2017.

Title 2: Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous operating expenditure

The execution rate for commitments in 2019 was higher than the equivalent rate in 2018 and 2017. The payment execution rate (more representative indicator) is lower than the rate of 2018 and 2017.

2 Implementation of the budget

Current year appropriations (C1 Credits)

Ch./Item	Description	Budget [a]	Commit. [b]	% [b/a]	Payments [c]	% [c/a]
10	Members of the institution	9,050,500	9,050,500	100.0%	7,363,803	81.4%
1000	Salaries, allowances and payments	115,000	115,000	100.0%	81,785	71.1%
1004	Travel and subsistence allowances, attendance at meetings and associated expenditure	8,920,500	8,920,500	100.0%	7,277,940	81.6%
105	Courses for Members of the institution	15,000	15,000	100.0%	4,078	27.2%
12	Officials and temporary staff	52,640,629	52,520,775	99.8%	52,520,775	99.8%
1200	Remuneration and allowances	52,147,199	52,072,535	99.9%	52,072,535	99.9%
1202	Paid overtime	40,000	23,856	59.6%	23,856	59.6%
1204	Entitlements on entering the service, transfer and leaving the service	273,430	273,430	100.0%	273,430	100.0%
1220	Allowance for staff retired in the interests of the service	180,000	150,955	83.9%	150,955	83.9%
14	Other staff and external services	8,924,713	8,754,839	98.1%	7,159,574	80.2%
1400	Other staff	3,068,683	3,058,838	99.7%	2,900,316	94.5%
1402	Interpreters services	3,815,614	3,805,444	99.7%	2,622,102	68.7%
1404	Graduate traineeships, grants and exchanges of officials	794,829	788,557	99.2%	780,524	98.2%
1408	Entitlements on entering the service, transfer and leaving the service and others expenditure for services to staff during their career	140,000	140,000	100.0%	79,481	56.8%
1420	Supplementary services for the translation service	685,587	542,000	79.1%	452,550	66.0%
1422	Expert assistance related to consultative work	420,000	420,000	100.0%	324,600	77.3%
16	Other expenditure relating to persons working with the institution	1,715,661	1,686,809	98.3%	1,302,686	75.9%
1610	Miscellaneous expenditure on recruitment	40,000	17,775	44.4%	15,377	38.4%
1612	Further training, retraining and information for staff	400,136	400,083	100.0%	281,358	70.3%
162	Missions	440,000	440,000	100.0%	320,713	72.9%
1630	Social welfare	18,000	11,475	63.8%	6,750	37.5%
1632	Internal social policy	33,000	33,000	100.0%	28,286	85.7%
1633	Mobility/Transport	60,000	60,000	100.0%	24,550	40.9%
1634	Medical service	124,525	124,476	100.0%	31,279	25.1%
1638	Early Childhood Centre and approved day nurseries	600,000	600,000	100.0%	594,373	99.1%
20	Buildings and associated costs	16,707,353	16,691,458	99.9%	13,729,754	82.2%
2000	Rent	1,633,064	1,625,064	99.5%	1,586,801	97.2%
2001	Annual lease payments	9,136,876	9,132,640	100.0%	9,132,640	100.0%
2003	Acquisition of immovable property	0	0	NA	0	NA
2007	Fitting-out of premises	1,214,009	1,214,009	100.0%	81,863	6.7%
2008	Other expenditure on buildings	158,527	158,527	100.0%	18,092	11.4%
2022	Cleaning and maintenance	2,643,003	2,639,344	99.9%	1,000,673	37.9%
2024	Energy consumption	208,016	208,016	100.0%	208,016	100.0%
2026	Security and surveillance of buildings	1,682,630	1,682,630	100.0%	1,672,015	99.4%
2028	Insurance	31,228	31,228	100.0%	29,654	95.0%
21	Data processing, equipment and furniture: purchase, hire and maintenance	5,540,955	5,498,673	99.2%	3,722,360	67.2%
2100	Purchase, servicing and maintenance of equipment and software; related work	1,810,244	1,809,511	100.0%	1,178,960	65.1%

Ch. / Item	Description	Budget [a]	Commit. [b]	% [b/a]	Payments [c]	% [c/a]
2102	Outside assistance for the operation, development and maintenance of software systems	2,224,037	2,223,809	100.0%	1,408,424	63.3%
2103	Telecommunications	163,125	163,125	100.0%	163,125	100.0%
212	Furniture	99,623	93,119	93.5%	27,069	27.2%
214	Technical equipment and installations	1,190,068	1,155,251	97.1%	903,670	75.9%
216	Vehicles	53,858	53,858	100.0%	41,112	76.3%
23	Administrative expenditure	315,729	312,708	99.0%	163,805	51.9%
230	Stationery, office supplies and miscellaneous consumables	117,730	115,312	97.9%	53,253	45.2%
231	Financial charges	1,500	1,500	100.0%	157	10.5%
232	Legal costs and damages	30,000	30,000	100.0%	0	0.0%
236	Postage on correspondence and delivery charges	56,750	56,750	100.0%	29,871	52.6%
238	Other administrative expenditure	109,749	109,147	99.5%	80,524	73.4%
25	Meetings and conferences	962,347	962,347	100.0%	458,998	47.7%
2540	Costs of meetings organized in Brussels	145,000	145,000	100.0%	91,138	62.9%
2541	Third parties	298,700	298,700	100.0%	184,652	61.8%
2542	Organisation of events in partnership with local and regional authorities, associations and European Institutions	407,647	407,647	100.0%	145,582	35.7%
2546	Representation expenses	111,000	111,000	100.0%	37,627	33.9%
26	Expertise and information: acquisition, archiving, production and distribution	2,893,178	2,884,291	99.7%	1,253,060	43.3%
2600	Relationships with press, audio-visual support	794,854	794,846	100.0%	474,921	59.7%
2602	Web and Social Media, print materials	900,960	900,945	100.0%	296,834	32.9%
2604	Official Journal	39,731	39,731	100.0%	39,091	98.4%
2620	External expertise and studies	526,696	526,696	100.0%	217,750	41.3%
2622	Documentation and library expenditure	125,198	125,004	99.8%	61,671	49.3%
2624	Expenditure on archive resources	140,690	140,668	100.0%	112,267	79.8%
264	Expenditure on publishing, dissemination of information and participation in public events: information and communication activities	365,049	356,403	97.6%	50,526	13.8%
Total Budget:		98,751,065	98,362,401	99.6%	87,674,816	88.8%

Appropriations carried over from 2018 to 2019 (C8 credits of 2019)

The appropriations committed in 2018 but not yet paid out by the end of that year, were carried forward and converted into C8 credits of 2019. In total, € 8.9 million – or 9.3% of the CoR's 2018 budget – was transferred into C8 credits at the beginning of 2019. This amount was mainly derived from C1 credits of 2018.

The total amount of C8 credits carried forward from 2018 to 2019 was lower in monetary and percentage terms than in the previous year when € 9.2 million was carried forward to 2018 (or 9.8% of the CoR's 2017 budget).

The following table gives a summary per title of the carried forward appropriations from 2018 to 2019 (C8).

	Budget (€)	Commitments	Payments
Title 1	2,274,622	96.7%	87.9%
Title 2	6,600,155	98.3%	92.7%
Total	8,874,776	97.9%	91.5%

The execution rate for 2019 C8 credits was 91.5%. In total € 8.1 million was paid out during this year. This is higher than the payment execution level in 2018 (86.4%).

As a consequence, € 0.75 million or 8.5% of C8 credits of 2019 was left unused and returned back to the EU budget at the end of 2019.

Ch./ Item	Description	Budget [a]	Commit. [b]	% [b/a]	Payments [c]	% [c/a]
10	Members of the institution	599,734	599,734	100.0%	545,915	91.0%
1000	Salaries, allowances and payments	45,028	45,028	100.0%	13,363	29.7%
1004	Travel and subsistence allowances, attendance at meetings and associated expenditure	545,857	545,857	100.0%	527,947	96.7%
105	Courses for Members of the institution	8,849	8,849	100.0%	4,605	52.0%
12	Officials and temporary staff	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
1200	Remuneration and allowances	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
1202	Paid overtime	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
1204	Entitlements on entering the service, transfer and leaving the service	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
129	Allowance for staff retired in the interest of the service	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
14	Other staff and external services	1,261,368	1,241,236	98.4%	1,181,513	93.7%
1400	Other staff	92,529	89,619	96.9%	89,619	96.9%
1402	Interpreter services	911,153	909,878	99.9%	909,878	99.9%
1404	Graduate traineeships, grants and exchanges of officials	6,280	6,280	100.0%	4,205	67.0%
1408	Entitlements on entering the service, transfer and leaving the service and others expenditure for services to staff during their career	33,969	30,000	88.3%	30,000	88.3%
1420	Supplementary services for the translation service	135,028	123,051	91.1%	123,051	91.1%
1422	Expert assistance related to consultative work	82,409	82,409	100.0%	24,761	30.0%
16	Other expenditure relating to persons working with the institution	413,519	359,459	86.9%	271,754	65.7%
1610	Miscellaneous expenditure on recruitment	4,721	1,344	28.5%	1,344	28.5%

Ch. / Item	Description	Budget [a]	Commit. [b]	% [b/a]	Payments [c]	% [c/a]
1612	Further training, retraining and information for staff	69,212	61,726	89.2%	60,376	87.2%
162	Missions	160,419	160,419	100.0%	117,134	73.0%
1630	Social welfare	3,028	1,500	49.5%	1,500	49.5%
1632	Internal social policy	2,675	2,478	92.6%	2,000	74.8%
1633	Mobility/Transport	37,063	37,063	100.0%	36,274	97.9%
1634	Medical service	94,929	94,929	100.0%	53,125	56.0%
1638	Early Childhood Centre and approved day nurseries	41,473	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
20	Buildings and associated costs	2,642,862	2,637,721	99.8%	2,520,041	95.4%
2000	Rent	22,250	20,319	91.3%	20,319	91.3%
2001	Annual lease payments	0	0	NA	0	NA
2003	Acquisition of immovable property	0	0	NA	0	NA
2007	Fitting-out of premises	1,663,955	1,663,955	100.0%	1,643,311	98.8%
2008	Other expenditure on buildings	95,171	95,171	100.0%	94,732	99.5%
2022	Cleaning and maintenance	735,114	735,114	100.0%	650,528	88.5%
2024	Energy consumption	120,000	120,000	100.0%	108,149	90.1%
2026	Security and surveillance of buildings	5,872	2,662	45.3%	2,662	45.3%
2028	Insurance	500	500	100.0%	340	68.0%
21	Data processing, equipment and furniture: purchase, hire and maintenance	1,712,487	1,673,177	97.7%	1,637,657	95.6%
2100	Purchase, servicing and maintenance of equipment and software; related work	568,346	539,855	95.0%	525,276	92.4%
2102	Outside assistance for the operation, development and maintenance of software systems	640,941	638,734	99.7%	638,734	99.7%
2103	Telecommunications	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
212	Furniture	74,869	74,869	100.0%	68,264	91.2%
214	Technical equipment and installations	412,381	403,769	97.9%	403,456	97.8%
216	Vehicles	15,949	15,949	100.0%	1,927	12.1%
23	Administrative expenditure	125,690	74,812	59.5%	60,426	48.1%
230	Stationery, office supplies and miscellaneous consumables	21,617	19,282	89.2%	19,282	89.2%
231	Financial charges	1,361	41	3.0%	41	3.0%
232	Legal costs and damages	25,734	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
236	Postage on correspondence and delivery charges	20,802	5,371	25.8%	5,371	25.8%
238	Other administrative expenditure	56,175	50,117	89.2%	35,731	63.6%
25	Meetings and conferences	464,423	450,752	97.1%	413,394	89.0%
2540	Costs of meetings organized in Brussels	35,361	21,690	61.3%	21,690	61.3%
2541	Third parties	9,026	9,026	100.0%	3,836	42.5%
2542	Organisation of events in partnership with local and regional authorities, associations and European Institutions	353,467	353,467	100.0%	346,513	98.0%
2546	Representation expenses	66,570	66,570	100.0%	41,356	62.1%
26	Expertise and information: acquisition, archiving, production and distribution	1,654,693	1,649,111	99.7%	1,486,062	89.8%
2600	Relationships with press, audio-visual support	445,916	445,916	100.0%	386,339	86.6%
2602	Web and Social Media, print materials	598,210	595,957	99.6%	561,847	93.9%
2604	Official Journal	317	317	100.0%	0	0.0%
2620	External expertise and studies	253,055	253,055	100.0%	253,055	100.0%
2622	Documentation and library expenditure	64,714	64,714	100.0%	63,717	98.5%
2624	Expenditure on archive resources	72,304	68,975	95.4%	68,975	95.4%

Ch. / Item	Description	Budget [a]	Commit. [b]	% [b/a]	Payments [c]	% [c/a]
264	Expenditure on publishing, dissemination of information and participation in public events: information and communication activities	220,176	220,176	100.0%	152,129	69.1%
Total Budget:		8,874,776	8,686,002	97.9%	8,116,761	91.5%

ANNEX 2 - Declarations of the Authorising Officers by sub-delegation

According to the Committee of the Regions' Charter of Missions and Responsibilities of the Authorising Officer by delegation and the Authorising Officers by sub-delegation, the latter have, inter alia, a responsibility to contribute to the establishment of the annual report of the Authorising Officer by delegation through their reporting on the activities for which they have received sub-delegation. On top of the regular reporting, the Authorising Officer by delegation, in preparing the declaration in his annual report for the year 2019 asked the Authorising Officers by sub-delegation to report on the control environment for which they are responsible and to sign a declaration in the same format as his, as indicated below. Every AOSD had to report on individual exceptions and applied remedial measures to the Authorising Officer by Delegation when presenting his declaration of assurance for the budget lines for which he is responsible.

For the budget exercise 2019, 42 officials appointed as Authorising Officers by sub-delegation authorised transactions.

Authorising officers by sub-delegation: Declaration(s) signed on:

Bachotet Sophie	14 February 2020
Barber Ian	17 April 2020
Beljaars -Verhoeven Saskia	06 March 2020
Bodova Andrea	16 April 2020
Bouquerel Caroline	06 March 2020
Canoto Argüelles Juan Carlos	12 March 2020
Caruso Paola	18 February 2020
Cervilla Pedro	21 February 2020
Cercone Michele	12 May 2020
Champetter Claude	17 February 2020
Collins Michael	17 February 2020
Da Luz Cintia	26 February 2020
Damyanova Ani	03 March 2020
De Schrijver Patrick	20 February 2020
De Schuiteneer Bart	24 April 2020
Dobre Cristina	13 February 2020
Essender Boris	16 March 2020
Feral Pierre-Alexis	16 March 2020
Filipek Francois	10 February 2020
Firmin Thierry	12 February 2020
Gnan Reinhold	10 February 2020

Haenebalcke Tom	19 February 2020
Jakobsson Peder	12 February 2020
Janicaud Benjamin	18 February 2020
Kaduczak Joanna	28 February 2020
Kudlinska Agnieszka	10 February 2020
Ladwig Achim	12 February 2020
Lamour Michael	19 February 2020
Lavigne Eric	11 February 2020
Mitelman Anna	18 February 2020
Mokhtari Rachida	18 February 2020
Pankova Katia	11 February 2020
Nardi Serafino	15 April 2020
Petzold Wolfgang	16 April 2020
Schaumans Patrick	10 February 2020
Strautina Ineta	18 February 2020
Suciu Serban	10 February 2020
Taugne Beatrice	11 February 2020
Thieule Laurent	17 February 2020
Thome Florence	27 February 2020
Tsiriagos Kyriakos	10 February 2020
Van Hoeymissen Dimitri	10 February 2020

ANNEX 3 - Transfers of appropriations

During **2019** the following transfers of appropriations submitted by the CoR were approved by the Council and Parliament:

INF 1/2019

The purpose of this transfer was to reinforce budget line **264 "Expenditure on publications, information and on participation in public events: information and communication activities"** (also known as "Communication activities of the CoR Political Groups") in order to allow the CoR Members to carry out their main planned communications and outreach projects in 2019.

The amount of the transfer was € **200,000**. It was approved in February and executed thereafter.

INF 2/2019

The purpose of this transfer was to reinforce budget line **214 "Technical equipment and installations"** in order to allow the CoR to finance the renovation of a number of CoR meeting rooms in the CoR/EESC buildings (in particular JDE 51 and JDE 52).

The amount of the transfer was € **150,000**. It was approved in July and executed thereafter.

INF 3/2019

The purpose of this transfer of appropriations was to reinforce 6 budget lines, mainly in the domain of upkeep of buildings and IT. Namely:

Upkeep of buildings related:

- budget item 2007 "Fitting out of premises" with € 660,089;
- budget item 2008 "Other expenditure on buildings" with € 75,239;

IT related:

- budget item 2100 "IT" (software and hardware) with € 410,341;
- budget item 2102 "IT" (development and maintenance) with € 342,997;

Other domains:

- budget item 212 "Furniture" with € 4,236;
- budget item 2620 "External expertise and studies" with € 26,696.

The **total amount** of the transfer was € **1,519,598**. Most of that was the joint CoR/EESC expenditure (on buildings, IT and furniture) and for these domains the CoR was paying its share of the joint expenditure.

This reinforcement was needed mainly to finance a number of **buildings' renovation and IT projects** for which there was no financing available in the initial CoR 2019 budget. This transfer should allow financing projects based on the priorities established by the CoR/EESC joint Directorate for Logistics:

- 1) following increased security needs, ageing infrastructure, legal obligations and environmental aspects of their managed buildings;
- 2) following a need to modernise their IT related working methods in order to make them more effective, more efficient, more transparent and therefore compatible with the new ways of working.

This transfer was approved in November and executed thereafter.

INF 4/2019

The purpose of this transfer of appropriations was to reinforce 2 budget lines in the domain of upkeep of buildings and IT. Namely:

- **budget item 2007 "Fitting out of premises" with € 208,165;**
- **budget item 2100 "IT" (software and hardware) with € 102,128.**

The **total amount** of the transfer was **€ 310,293**. It was approved in November and executed thereafter.

Annex 4 - Negotiated procedures 2019

The present appendix shows, in accordance with article 74(10)FR, the list of contracts concluded in 2019 by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) under negotiated procedures in accordance with points (a) to (f) of point 11.1 and point 39 of Annex I to FR. This information is based on the list of contracts registered in the CoR database of contracts.

Numéro contrat	Direction	Unité/Service	Nom du fournisseur	Intitulé du contrat	Type de contrat	Type de procédure	Montant (€)
*CDR/COM/143/2018	Direction D - Communication	D1 Presse - Relation Médias	Agenzia ANSA	Media Partnership with national press agencies from Italy	Contrat direct	Procédure négociée art. 134 1. b) RAP RF 2012	60.000,00
*CDR/COM/144/2018	Direction D - Communication	D1 Presse - Relation Médias	Polska Agencja Prasowa	Media Partnership with national press agencies from Poland	Contrat direct	Procédure négociée art. 134 1. b) RAP RF 2012	60.000,00
CDR/DL/77/2019	Direction L - Logistique	DL Unité IT	Consortium CGI-Intrasoft	IT services for Development and maintenance of production information systems.	Contrat cadre interinstitutionnel	Proc.négociée Point 11.1 c) Annexe1 RF 2018	3.446.937,20
CDR/DL/99/2019	Direction L - Logistique	DL Unité IT	BT Global Service Belgium (ex BT Limited Belgian Branch)	Contrat-cadre DI 7780 - Telecommunications services	Contrat cadre interinstitutionnel	Proc.négociée Point 11.1 b) Annexe1 RF 2018	903,60
CDR/DL/112/2019	Direction L - Logistique	DL Unité IT	Proximus	Contrat-cadre n° DI-7800 - Provision of Career Infrastructure Services (CSI II)	Contrat cadre interinstitutionnel	Proc.négociée Point 11.1 b) Annexe1 RF 2018	1.208.614,63
CDR/DL/121/2019	Direction L - Logistique	DL Unité IT	SAP Belgium	Contrat-cadre DI 7790 - Acquisition of software licenses, Maintenance/Support and Cloud-based services	Contrat cadre interinstitutionnel	Proc.négociée Point 11.1 b) Annexe1 RF 2018	1.533.440,00

*The tender procedure has been launched in 2018 under Financial Regulation 2012 but the contract was signed in 2019 under Financial Regulation 2018

ANNEX 5 – Report on compliance with and suspension of time-limits for payment of the institution's creditors

Article 116 of the Financial Regulation¹³ (FR) defines the time-limits that should be respected for payments made to the institution's creditors and specify the circumstances in which those creditors paid late are entitled to receive default interest charged to the budget heading from which the principal was paid.

Article 116(6) also lays down the obligation for each institution to submit to the budgetary authority a report on compliance with and the suspension of the time-limits for paying its creditors.

Over the years, the Committee of the Regions has set up different actions to enable the authorising services to improve their performance in relation to payment time limits:

- Close monitoring of the payment deadlines by the accounting officer;
- Regular reports (quarterly and on an ad-hoc basis if needed) addressed to the authorising services on the follow up of payment deadlines;
- Communication and financial trainings given to members of staff involved in financial transactions;
- Improvement of the workflows;
- Recent introduction of paperless workflows and electronic invoices.

Moreover, the integrated system of financial and budgetary management ABAC (owned by the Commission and used by the CoR since 1 January 2007) possesses specific functionalities that make possible:

- the real time visualisation by the authorising services of the tracking of invoices and corresponding payments throughout the internal chain of verification and approval;
- the production of specific follow-up or warning reports that integrate the management of suspension of time limits for payment and the automatic calculation of default interest to be paid on any invoices paid late.

¹³ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 193 of 30/07/2018)

The table below presents the evolution of the average time taken for payments and the number of days of suspension over the years:

Financial year	Commercial Invoices		Average time taken for payment (in days)	Number of suspension of time-limits
	Number	Amounts		
2008	2.109	30.366.149	29,64	86
2009	2.523	32.549.780	25,77	201
2010	2.255	33.263.362	28,49	220
2011	1.956	34.277.780	22,99	244
2012	1.938	35.768.277	18,86	205
2013	1.820	31.123.497	18,85	124
2014	1.711	29.238.586	19,72	105
2015	1.790	28.956.837	19,52	96
2016	1.997	31.190.480	26,31	93
2017	2.197	30.642.991	22,71	140
2018	2.452	32.619.280	16,39	96
2019	2.839	32.640.808	17,23	87

The minimum requirement under the FR is that payments need to be made within 30 days. The CoR continues its work to take part in the efforts proposed by the Commission in April 2009¹⁴ in order to improve the financial situation of undertakings, particularly in this period of crisis.

At CoR, the average time for payment in 2019 was only slightly higher than in 2018 with 17 days on average.

As far as the automatic payment of default interest is concerned, the analysis of data for the financial year shows that there was one case of payment of mandatory default interest in 2019 of EUR 301 (case where the amount of default interest exceeds the threshold of EUR 200 defined in Article 116(5) FR).

¹⁴ Communication of the Commission of 8 April 2009 on streamlining financial rules and accelerating budget implementation to help economic recovery (SEC (2009) 477 final).

ANNEX 6 - Provisional Annual Accounts 2019

Balance Sheet

	31.12.2019	31.12.2018
NON-CURRENT ASSEIS		
Intangible assets	195,005	97,501
Property, plant and equipment	59,157,423	61,941,897
	59,352,428	62,039,398
CURRENT ASSEIS		
Exchange receivables and non-exchange recoverables	9,334,479	9,120,105
Cash and cash equivalents	3,593,488	1,464,656
	12,927,967	10,584,761
TOTAL ASSEIS	72,280,394	72,624,158
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Financial liabilities	-46,597,157	-50,162,443
	-46,597,157	-50,162,443
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Financial liabilities	-3,565,285	-3,354,520
Payables	-556,098	-537,297
Accrued charges and deferred income	-5,923,493	-3,889,674
	-10,044,876	-7,781,491
TOTAL LIABILITIES	-56,642,034	-57,943,934
NET ASSEIS	15,638,361	14,680,225
Accumulated surplus	14,680,225	14,507,861
Economic result of the year	958,136	172,364
NET ASSEIS	15,638,361	14,680,225

Statement of financial performance

	2019	2018
REVENUE		
Revenue from non-exchange transactions		
Funding from the Commission	87,200,000	85,500,000
	87,200,000	85,500,000
Revenue from exchange transactions		
Other exchange revenue	11,770,701	11,307,693
	11,770,701	11,307,693
Total revenue	98,970,701	96,807,693
EXPENSES		
Other		
Operating costs		
Staff costs	-55,901,654	-54,452,758
Finance costs	-4,840,430	-4,841,766
Other expenses	-37,270,481	-37,340,805
Total expenses	-98,012,566	-96,635,329
ECONOMIC RESULT OF THE YEAR	958,136	172,364

Cash flow

	2019	2018
Economic result of the year	958,136	172,364
Operating activities		
Amortisation and impairments - intangible fixed assets	88,615	52,974
Depreciation and impairments - Property Plant & Equipment	3,417,709	3,364,095
(Increase)/decrease in exchange receivables and non-exchange recoverables	-214,374	-275,018
Increase/(decrease) in financial liabilities	-3,354,520	-3,155,438
Increase/(decrease) in payables	18,801	-112,076
Increase/(decrease) in accrued charges and deferred revenue	2,033,819	1,034,514
Investing activities		
(Increase)/decrease in intangible assets and property, plant and equipment	-819,355	-641,586
NET CASHFLOW	2,128,832	439,828
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	2,128,832	439,828
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	1,464,656	1,024,828
Cash and cash equivalents at year-end	3,593,488	1,464,656

Statement of changes in net assets

			<i>EUR</i>
	Accumulated Surplus/ (Deficit)	Economic result of the year	Net Assets
BALANCE AS AT 31.12.2017	15,645,213	-1,137,352	14,507,861
Allocation 2017 economic result	-1,137,352	1,137,352	-
Economic result of the year	-	172,364	-
BALANCE AS AT 31.12.2018	14,507,861	172,364	14,680,225
Allocation 2018 economic result	172,364	-172,364	-
Economic result of the year	-	958,136	-
BALANCE AS AT 31.12.2019	14,680,225	958,136	15,638,361

ANNEX 7: Human Resources figures of the European Committee of the Regions for 2019

(situation on 31/12/2019)

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	300	181	10	491
Contract staff (1)	17	30	0	47
External contract staff				25
Seconded national experts	11			11
Other outside personnel (specify) (2)	1			1
Total	329	211	10	575

(posts)
(people)
(people)
(people)
(people)

(1) contract staff replacing absent staff (e.g. maternity leave) are not included.
(2) medical doctor

President's Cabinet

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	6	3		9
Contract staff				0
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts	1			1
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	7	3	0	10

Secretary General's Cabinet

Type	SG	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	1	5	3		9
Contract staff					0
External contract staff					
Seconded national experts					
Other outside personnel (specify)					
Total	1	5	3	0	9

Directorate D

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	24	19	2	45
Contract staff	5	5		10
External contract staff				4
Seconded national experts	1			1
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	30	24	2	60

EPP Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan*	10	4		14
Contract staff	1			1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	11	4	0	15

Protocol Service

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	1	2		3
Contract staff		3		3
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	1	5	0	6

Directorate E

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	21	44	2	67
Contract staff	2			2
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (medical doctor)	1			1
Total	24	44	2	70

PES Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan*	10	4		14
Contract staff		1		1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	10	5	0	15

Internal Audit Service

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	2	2		4
Contract staff				
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	2	2	0	4

Directorate for Translation (CoR staff only)

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	119	21	2	142
Contract staff				
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	119	21	2	142

Renew Europe Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	5	3		8
Contract staff				
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	5	3	0	8

Directorate A

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	22	28	1	51
Contract staff		12		12
External contract staff				1
Seconded national experts	1			1
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	23	40	1	65

Directorate for Logistics (CoR staff only)

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	9	18		27
Contract staff	4	8		12
External contract staff				20
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	13	26	0	59

EA Group Secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	3	1		4
Contract staff	1			1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	4	1	0	5

Directorate B

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	29	17		46
Contract staff	1			1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts	3			3
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	33	17	0	50

Staff Committee

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan		1		1
Contract staff		1		1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total		2		2

ECR Group secretariat

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	3	1		4
Contract staff	1			1
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts				
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	4	1	0	5

Directorate C

Type	AD	AST	AST/SC	Total
Establishment plan	30	10	3	43
Contract staff	2			2
External contract staff				
Seconded national experts	5			5
Other outside personnel (specify)				
Total	37	10	3	50

Annex 8 : Building Policy



European Economic
and Social Committee



European Committee
of the Regions

*Joint Services – Directorate for Logistics
The Directors*

REPORT BY THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE
AND THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS¹⁵
TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL
IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 266 OF THE FINANCIAL REGULATION

1) ARTICLE 266 FR

Each institution shall provide the European Parliament and the Council, by 1 June each year, with a working document on its building policy, which shall incorporate the following information:

- a) for each building, the expenditure and surface area covered by the appropriations of the corresponding budget lines. The expenditure shall include the costs of the fitting-out of buildings but not the other charges;
- b) the expected evolution of the global programming of surface area and locations for the coming years with a description of the building projects in planning phase which are already identified;
- c) the final terms and costs, as well as relevant information regarding project implementation of new building projects previously submitted to the European Parliament and to the Council under the procedure set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 and not included in the preceding year's working documents.

2) Part 1: The expenditure and surface area for each building

The information about the office premises of the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions can be found in the attached table.

¹⁵ The two Committees are sharing buildings in line with the Cooperation Agreement they signed in July 2015.

3) Part 2: The expected evolution of the global programming

A buildings strategy was approved by the Bureau of the European Economic and Social Committee on 17 October 2017 and by the Bureau of the Committee of the Regions on 29 November 2017.

This **buildings strategy** provides a reliable and flexible framework for future decisions in this area, and contains a set of guiding principles, which include:

- geographical concentration;
- preference for ownership rather than lease and exercising options to buy;
- sustainable buildings management; and
- multi-annual planning.

Regarding the main priority for the buildings strategy – "geographical concentration" – several scenarios were explored in 2018 by the Directorate for Logistics. The preferred scenarios all include retaining the VMA building (rue Van Maerlant 2) for the use of the EESC and the CoR after 2021.

It should be noted here that, in 2016, the European Commission secretary-general informed the Committees that the Administrative Agreement on renting the VMA would not be extended beyond February 2019, and that the Commission intended to demolish the building after that date and to rebuild a new one solely for its own use. Following negotiations, the Administrative Agreement was ultimately extended until the end of 2021, but no arrangement was made for further use of this building by the Committees beyond that year.

After further negotiations, an agreement in principle was reached with the OIB at the beginning of 2019 on the exchange of the Committees' B68 (rue Belliard 68) and TRE74 (rue de Trèves 74) buildings against the Commission's VMA building. On 21 August 2019, the secretaries-general of the two Committees confirmed to the Budgetary Authority their intention to sign an Administrative Agreement to proceed with that exchange.

The Administrative Agreement on the buildings exchange was signed by the Director of the OIB and the secretaries-general of both Committees on 28 August 2019. The exchange will become effective on 16 September 2022, the date on which the value of both sets of buildings will be identical¹⁶.

The signing of the Administrative Agreement was accompanied by an exchange of letters between Commissioner Günther Oettinger, the President of the Committee of the Regions Karl-Heinz Lambertz and the President of the European Economic and Social Committee Luca Jahier signed on the same day.

NEED FOR A NEW BUILDING

Exchanging the B68 and TRE buildings for the VMA will, however, result in a significant loss of 10 440 m² of office space for the two Committees¹⁷, which cannot be entirely offset by alternative measures in the short term such as stepping up the office-space density of the other buildings and increasing teleworking.

¹⁶ This date was determined by an external real estate expert and takes into account the market price of the buildings minus the long-term lease instalments still to be paid.

¹⁷ 13 396 m² minus the VMA surface area of 2 956 m² currently occupied by the European Commission. The other part of the building is already occupied by the Committees.

On 11 December 2019, the European External Action Service (EEAS) informed the Committees that the Belliard 100 building would be available by early 2021 and proposed transferring its current lease to them. With 5 200 m², the Belliard 100 building would enable the Committees to partially offset the loss of office space following the buildings exchange scheduled for September 2022. In addition, renting the B100 as from early 2021 would enable the Committees to accommodate some of the staff vacating the VMA building during the refurbishment works planned between spring 2021 and summer 2022. As the B100 is adjacent to the VMA building, taking over its rental contract will also have the advantage for the Committees of having a fully interconnected single group of buildings.

Considering these elements, the Bureaux of the two Committees mandated the secretaries-general in February 2020 to undertake negotiations with the EEAS in view of concluding an agreement enabling the Committees to take over the rental contract of B100 as from early 2021.

The negotiations started in March 2020, with the aim of being concluded successfully before summer 2020. The Administrative Agreement for the take-over of the rental contract of B100 building as from early 2021 is expected to be signed before the end of 2020.

Following the exchange of buildings with the Commission, savings compared to the situation in 2019 will begin to be made from the beginning of 2023, due to lower costs in renting the entire VMA compared to the present situation with three buildings to pay for: these savings will be sufficient to cover the rent of B100.

For the years 2021 and 2022, i.e. before the exchange of buildings, the rent for the B100 will represent an additional one-off cost for both Committees¹⁸ compared to the present situation.

NEED TO REFURBISH VMA

The VMA is a 35-year-old building. It needs to be refurbished as soon as possible (2020-2022) in order to function properly in the coming years. It should be noted that if the buildings exchange were not happening, the Committees would still need to refurbish the B68 and TRE74 in more or less the same period.

The estimated budget for the refurbishment works of the VMA is EUR 6 million¹⁹. Ideally, the total budget for the renovation works should be available at the beginning of 2021, in order to allow these works to start early in 2021 and to be finished by June 2022. This would enable the VMA to be refurbished and operational again before its exchange against B68/TRE74 in September 2022.

In accordance with Article 266 of the Financial Regulation, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions are hereby sending an early warning to the budgetary authority on the

¹⁸ The rent is around EUR 1 500 000 for a full year.

¹⁹ These works on the VMA will require the organisation of several removals and the housing of the concerned staff in other buildings, which will have an additional cost of EUR 1.94 million.

need to undertake renovation works in the VMA building between 2021 and 2022 for an amount estimated at EUR 6 million.

This amount represents around 3% of the total accounting value of the two Committees' buildings. For the purpose of these refurbishment works, a call for tenders will be launched in the coming months.

LIFT OF PURCHASE OPTIONS

In their letter 001071-01909 of 11 December 2014, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions informed the budgetary authority of their intention to lift the purchase option provided in the long-term leasehold contracts for five buildings occupied jointly, namely:

- JDE building, on Rue Belliard 99-101, 1040 Brussels
- BvS building, on Rue Montoyer 92-102, 1000, Brussels
- B68 building, on Rue Belliard 68, 1000, Brussels
- TRE building, on Rue de Trèves 74, 1000, Brussels
- REM building, on Rue Belliard 93, 1000, Brussels

The budgetary and financial cost of acquiring the residual property rights is a symbolic sum of EUR 1 per building, this being the price under the contracts for the exercise of the purchase options, to which the indirect costs of legal services and notarial fees have to be added.

It is also important to note that exercising the purchase option will not change the financial conditions set out in the long-term leasehold contracts. The European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions will still have to continue paying the annual leasehold fees in accordance with the contracts for the remainder of their term.

The option to purchase the JDE building was exercised with the signing of the deed on 19 November 2018.

The option to purchase the BVS and REM buildings was exercised with the signing of both deeds on 9 December 2019.

As the Committees will swap the B68 and TRE buildings for the VMA building, the exercise of the purchase options of the B68 and TRE buildings will have to be carried out by the Commission in due time.

The Committees will exercise the option to purchase the VMA building between 1 September 2028 and 31 October 2028 as provided for in the long-term lease contract.

In conclusion, the budgetary authority is informed about:

- the signing on 28 August 2019 of an Administrative Agreement between the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions concerning the exchange of the Committees' B68/TRE74 buildings for the Commission's VMA building ²⁰;

²⁰ Both sets of buildings will have the same value on 16 September 2022, the date when the exchange will take effect.

- the intention of the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions to sign, by the end of 2020, an Administrative Agreement with the European External Action Service for the take-over of the rental contract of the B100 building as from early 2021;
- an early warning pursuant to Article 266 FR concerning the launch of a call for tenders for the renovation works for the VMA building, to be undertaken between 2020 and 2022, for an estimated amount of EUR 6 million;
- the state of play related to the exercising of the options to purchase the buildings occupied by the Committees.

4) Part 3: Project implementation of new building projects previously submitted to the European Parliament and the Council

No projects were presented to the European Parliament and the Council during the year 2019.

Item	Building	Area above ground (m ²)	Type of contract	Lease and rent 2021 (EUR)	
2001 (Annual lease payments)	<i>Office space</i>	JDE	22 026	Owned (Option to buy exercised in November 2018)	6 948 609
		BVS	18 280	Owned (Option to buy exercised in December 2019)	5 835 419
		REM	2 324		196 735
		B-68	7 283	Leasehold with option to buy not yet exercised	2 334 101
		TRE	5 387		1 498 547
	<i>Non-office space</i>	JDE	14 353	See above	4 528 077
		BVS	2 285		729 531
		REM	0		0
		B-68	22		6 987
		TRE	692		192 405
Total item		72 652		22 270 411	
2000 (Rent)	<i>Office space</i>	VMA	8 244	Rent	2 764 996
		B100 (as of early 2021)	3 698 ²¹		827 842 ²²
	<i>Non-office space</i>	VMA	3 162		1 060 519
		B100 (as of early 2021)	1 827 ⁷		297 158
	Total item		16 931		
GRAND TOTALS		89 583		27 220 926	

Share of office space in total space (%)	75.1%
Share of non-office space in total space (%)	24.9%
Workplaces to be accommodated	1 558
Office space / workplaces (m²)	43

²¹ These surfaces are calculated according to the Measurement code adopted by the European Institutions at the request of the Court of Auditors. They differ from the gross surfaces commonly used in the real estate market for the calculation of the amount of the rent per square meter.

²² Net rent amount without taxes and contribution to one-off investments made in 2018.

Annex 9 – Activities of the members of the CoR in 2019

Statutory meetings

Number	Title	Place
5	Plenary Sessions	Brussels
1	Summit	Romania
1	External Bureau meetings	Bulgaria and Austria
3	Extraordinary Conferences of Presidents	Belgium and Ireland
25	Commission meetings	Brussels
5	External Commission meetings	Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece (2) and Spain
5	Commissions for administrative & financial affairs	Brussels
2	Meetings of the Working Group Turkey	Brussels and Turkey
2	Meetings of the Working Group Western Balkans	Brussels and Western Balkans
2	Meetings of the JCC North Macedonia	Brussels and North Macedonia
2	Meetings of the JCC Serbia	Brussels and Serbia
2	Meetings of the JCC Montenegro	Brussels and Montenegro
1	Enlargement Day	Brussels
1	Meetings of the Task Force Ukraine	Brussels and Ukraine
6	Meetings of the political groups outside Brussels	Italy, Romania, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands
2	Meetings of the political groups in Brussels	Brussels
3	Meeting of the Ad Hoc Commission Internal Rules	Brussels

Thematic and other political activities

13	Seminars/Study visits organised by commission secretariats	Outside Brussels
2	Seminars/conferences organised by commission secretariats	Brussels
1	European Week of regions and Cities	Brussels
1	Seminars organised by political groups	Brussels
2	Seminars organised by political groups	Greece and Croatia
1	ARLEM plenary session	Spain
1	ARLEM commission	Brussels
1	EUROPCOM	Brussels
1	CORLEAP Bureau meeting	Armenia
1	CORLEAP Plenary Session	Turku

Various

132	Individual presences of the President, 1st Vice President various or replacements
272	Individual presences for rapporteurs
99	Individual presences for political groups
5	Individual presences for CFAA
13	Local events with Members' attendance (see details in appendix below)

The breakdown of the total expenses of 7 277 940 € per body is the following:

- Plenary Sessions (5) 2 422 730 €
- Summit (1) 368 319 €
- Extraordinary Bureau meetings outside Brussels (1) 65 327 €
- Extraordinary meetings of the Conference of Presidents 22 530 €
- Commissions 2 691 442 €
- CAFA 42 915 €
- Working groups, JCC's and ad hoc commissions 169 345 €
- Political groups 154 049 €
- Seminars of commissions and political groups 441 392 €
- ARLEM and CORLEAP 106 405 €
- Presidency 95 460 €
- Communication activities 26 983 €
- Individual presences 412 460 €
- Additional political activities 187 818 €
- Management Fee for the CoR travel agency 70 765 €

Appendix: details on Members attendance to local events organised in 2019

Overall, the accumulated costs incurred for individual Members' participation in local events throughout 2019 are of € 10,703.27.

Country	City	Title	Date	CoR members involved
Italy	Rome	The EC work programme 2019: the point of view of LRAs	21/01/2019	Micaela Fanelli (IT/PES), Vincenzo Bianco (IT/PES), Guido Milana (IT/PES), Salvatore De Meo (IT/EPP), Donato Toma (IT/EPP)
Germany	Saarbrücken	Future of Europe debate	08/02/2019	Roby Biwer (LU/PES), Barbara Duden (DE/PES), Catuscia Marini (IT/PES), Isolde Ries (DE/PES)
Italy	Pontecorvo	Dì la tua sul futuro dell'Europa	09/02/2019	Micaela Fanelli (IT/PES), Guido Milana (IT/PES)
Italy	Locri	Series of students' debates in Calabria region	09/02/2019	Giuseppe Varacalli (IT/PES), Vincenzo Bianco (IT/PES)
Germany	Osnabrück	Die Zukunft der Europäischen Union: Sie haben die Wahl!	11/02/2019	Ulrike Hiller (DE/PES)
Spain	Merida	Tus recetas para el futuro de Europa	15/02/2019	Guillermo Fernández Vara (ES/PES), Rosa Balas Torres (ES/PES)
Italy	Lamezia Terme	Series of students' debates in Calabria region	15/02/2019	Nicola Irto (IT/PES), Franco Iacop (IT/PES), Giuseppe Varacalli (IT/PES), Antonio Scalzo (IT/ECR)
Italy	Roccella	Series of students' debates in Calabria region	16/02/2019	Giuseppe Varacalli (IT/PES), Guido Milana (IT/PES), Antonio Scalzo (IT/ECR)
Romania	Alba Iulia	New technologies and digitalisation: Connectivity and smart city opportunities	20/02/2019	Adrian Ovidiu Teban (RO/EPP), Robert Negoită (PES, RO)
Belgium	Brussels	The economic impact of Brexit in Europe	22/02/2019	Albert Bore (UK/PES), Michael Murphy (IE/EPP)
Poland	Gdansk	Europe under Polish Sky - Cohesion Policy and European Parliament elections	28/02/2019	Mieczysław Struk (PL/EPP)
Cyprus	Strovolos	Citizens' Dialogue on the future of Europe	05/06/2019	Andreas Papacharalambous (CY/EPP), Stavros Stavrinos (CY/PES), Karl-Heinz Lambertz, (BE/PES)
Finland	Turku	European Forum	29/08/2019	Pauliina Haijanen (FI/EPP), Sirpa Hertell (FI/EPP), Anne Karjalainen (FI/PES)

ANNEX 10 - Follow-up to the 2018 discharge resolution

The present annex integrates the answers and explanations on the implementation of the recommendations formulated in the European Parliament's discharge resolution adopted on 13 May 2020.

Nr.	Resolution text	Follow-up by the CoR
1	<i>Notes with satisfaction that in its 2018 annual report, the Court of Auditors (the 'Court') identified no significant weaknesses with respect to the audited topics relating to human resources and procurement for the Committee of the Regions (the 'Committee').</i>	-
2	<i>Welcomes the Court's conclusion that the payments as a whole for the year ended 31 December 2018 for the Committee's administrative expenditure were free from material error and that the examined supervisory and control systems were effective.</i>	-
3	<i>Regrets, as a general observation, that chapter 10 'Administration' of the Court's 2018 Annual Report has a rather limited scope and conclusions, notwithstanding the fact that the Multiannual Financial Framework Heading 5 'Administration' is considered to be low risk;</i>	-
4	<i>Notes that the Court selected a sample of 45 transactions from Multiannual Financial Framework Heading 5 of all Union institutions and bodies; notes that the sample was designed to be representative of the range of spending under Heading 5, which represents 6,3 % of the Union budget; notes that the Court's work indicates administrative expenditure as low risk; considers, however, the amount of transactions selected in relation to the 'other institutions' to be insufficient and asks the Court to</i>	-

	<i>increase the number of transactions to be examined by at least 10 %;</i>	
5	<i>Notes that in 2018 the Committee's budget amounted to EUR 96 101 000, compared to EUR 93 295 000 in 2017, corresponding to an increase of 3 %; notes that 99,3 % of all appropriations have been committed by the end of 2018 (compared to 98 % in 2017 and 98,7 % in 2016) and 91 % have been paid in 2018 (compared to 89,9 % in 2017 and 89,6 % in 2016);</i>	-
6	<i>Welcomes the overall prudent and sound financial management of the Committee in the 2018 budget period; welcomes the fact that the commitment rate for Title 1 'Expenditure relating to persons working with the Committee' was 99,1 % and for Title 2 'Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous operating expenditure' 99,6 %.</i>	-
7	<i>Notes the Committee's answer related to the payment execution rates (76,9 % in 2018, 77,1 % in 2017 and 74,5 % in 2016) for Title 2; notes that invoices mainly for maintenance and energy consumption arrive only at the beginning of the following year; asks the Committee to improve the situation, where possible by formulating balanced payment terms over the year in the related service contracts.</i>	Most of the related service contracts are Inter-institutional for which the CoR is not the leading Institution and therefore has not the possibility to change the payment terms. The payment terms in place are normal for the commodities field such as electricity, gas and water.
8	<i>Notes the unused appropriations for several budget lines, such as courses for members (item 105) with 59,0 %, missions for staff (item 162) with 33,3 %, medical services (item 1634) with 77,9 % and fitting-out premises (item 2007) with 92,7 %; recalls the need for measures in order to minimise budget overestimates;</i>	The CoR's internal budget procedure is structured and includes vetting at several stages at administrative and political level prior to the CoR's Plenary adoption of the CoR's draft budget. The draft appropriation levels of individual budget items are re-assessed each year based upon estimates at the time. As examples taking into accounts that sometimes there are variations when the budget is actually implemented, the final payment budget implementation rates for 2018 for budget items mentioned with somewhat bigger appropriations positions are as follows (C1 appropriations of 2018 and adding 2018 C8 appropriations executed in 2019): missions for staff – budget item 162: almost 92% and fitting out of premises – budget item 2007: almost 98%. It should also be recalled that it has

		already been noted in point 5 of the resolution text that the CoR's total budget commitment rate, including all budget items, is actually around 99% for 2018.
9	<i>Stresses that notwithstanding the Committee's political activities, its budget is considered to be purely administrative and accounts for 1 % of the Administrative Heading 5 of the Union Budget; welcomes the Committee's efforts in applying performance-based budget principles in its daily operations and its willingness to improve further together with other Union institutions and bodies; notes the successful tools, such as the budget execution reviews, in order to monitor and help to improve the Committee's budget execution rates; welcomes overall the Committee's performance oriented approach;</i>	<p>In substance, the CoR budget is only partially administrative. Our budget finances to a big extent the work of the Committee as a political assembly. The CoR Members' political activity, both in Brussels and in their constituencies, is essential for the political legitimacy of the Union.</p> <p>By means of the CoR, local and regional authorities contribute to the adoption of EU legislation fit for the purpose on the ground and they are in charge of implementing and enforcing up to two thirds of this same legislation. They are responsible for more than 50% of public investment and 33 % of public expenditure. Without their support no EU policy will fly.</p> <p>Being the government level closest to the citizens, regions and local authorities are also in the frontline of actively communicating EU policies to the public. The CoR is an essential tool for them to deliver on this task.</p>
10	<i>Notes that the Committee maintains a central register of reporting exceptions related to non-compliance with internal procedures and corrective measures; welcomes that the overall number of financial exceptions decreased by 6,8% compared to 2017;</i>	-
11	<i>Welcomes the Committee's efforts to reduce the average time for payment (under the Financial Regulation payments need to be made within 30 days) to 16 days on average in 2018 which is the best rate for 10 years (compared to 23 days in 2017, 26 days in 2016 and 20 days in 2015); notes that no case of payment of mandatory default interest was recorded in 2018;</i>	-
12	<i>Notes that the Committee launched an exercise for the 16 internal control standards (ICS) by means of a questionnaire, designed to evaluate compliance and effectiveness of the requirements specified for each ICS; notes the positive outcome and the conclusions to focus strongly on ICS 3, staff allocation, ICS 10, business continuity, and ICS 12, information and communication, due to the future challenges, such as a new mandate and the 25-year anniversary of the Committee;</i>	-

<p>13</p>	<p><i>Recognises that the monitoring of the internal audit function is provided by an audit committee composed of one member per political group of the Committee's Commission of Financial and Administrative Affairs and one high-level external advisor; notes that the 2018 target to close 75 % of very important recommendations after six months was achieved at a rate of 50 %, and the target to close 100 % of very important recommendations after 12 months was achieved at a rate of 100 %;</i></p>	<p>-</p>
<p>14</p>	<p><i>Reiterates the importance of interinstitutional cooperation, such as service-level agreements for human resources and other administrative agreements; calls on the Committee to inform Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control of the amounts paid under such agreements in the next annual activity report;</i></p>	<p>The CoR paid some €6 million under Service Level Agreements set with other EU-Institutions in 2019.</p>
<p>15</p>	<p><i>Stresses the importance of promoting the involvement of regional and local authorities given their role in the implementation of Union policies;</i></p>	<p>Given its mission, the CoR promotes in general the role of regional and local authorities in implementing and shaping EU policies. The underlying “two-ways” principle means that EU policy-making works best when regions and cities are involved in the whole policy cycle. In this respect, the CoR has developed a wide range of communication tools and channels, which are permanently adapted in view of, for example, emerging online means. The most important tools include stakeholder consultations, networks and events, all of which building on intensive cooperation with and direct participation of regions and cities. These are often represented and supported by their 300 representation offices in Brussels and/or about 80 European and national associations representing local and regional interests. With regards to communication, the three 2019 campaigns of the CoR, which will be continued at large in 2020 and beyond, make regional and local authorities one of the two target groups (the second one being the EU institutions). Most prominent examples of regions and cities' involvement from 2019 include the CoR's participation in the European Commission's “Task Force on Subsidiarity and Proportionality”, which resulted, among others, in the creation of a new network of 36 regional and local authorities (“RegHub”) assessing EU legislation, the 8th CoR Summit in Bucharest in March, which involved about 640 locally elected politicians and numerous representatives from European and national associations, the CoR contributions to the debate on the Conference on the Future of Europe and citizens' participation, among others through a compendium of best practices in citizens' involvement at local and regional level published in September, the 17th EU Regions' Week in October with almost 10,000 participants, two thirds of whom from regional and</p>

		<p>local authorities, and the involvement of 3,600 mostly local representatives in CoR events on issues such as climate change and the European Green Deal, held throughout the year and labelled “regions getting results”. Finally, on the occasion of its Bucharest Summit, the CoR launched a “Young Elected Politicians” (YEPs) programme for locally elected politicians below the age of 40. 250 YEPs – selected from more than 1,300 applicants based on criteria such on geographical origin, gender and political affiliation – are now part of the programme and profit from visits, seminars and an online exchange platform.</p>
<p>16</p>	<p><i>Notes that the administrative cooperation agreement entered into between the Committee, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and Parliament in 2014 came to end on 31 December 2019; notes that until now the 2014 agreement has not been renegotiated or extended; is of the opinion that the 2014 agreement was very unbalanced for the Committee and the EESC (the ‘Committees’) which transferred in total 60 translators to Parliament (36 from the EESC) and in exchange only got to use the services of the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS); notes with concern that as a consequence the Committees had to hire contract staff and outsource their translation services; notes with concern that to compensate for the reduction in translation staff, Parliament has provided additional funds (EUR 1 200 000 since 2015 to 2016) to the Committees to cover the outsourcing of translation services and that this amount can be reallocated to other policy areas if it is not fully used for outsourced translation (the EESC used this reallocation possibility in the last three years); is of the opinion that these circumstances are not in line with the criteria of overall prudent and sound financial management and should be reconsidered in the case of an extension of the present contract or negotiation of a new agreement; recognises that, from a political point of view, the agreement must be updated to face today’s challenges, such as the new Multiannual Financial Framework or the new cohesion policy rules;</i></p>	<p>The cooperation agreement with the European Parliament concluded in 2014 contains no expiry date. The CoR’s annual evaluation of the cooperation has shown that the political cooperation has progressed only slowly since the conclusion of the agreement. There is substantial room for further strengthening the cooperation at political level including the support from the EPRS. This depends to a large extent on the willingness of the European Parliament to further develop this cooperation. The CoR insists above all on its involvement in all stages of the legislative process in full respect of the Treaties and the relevant ECJ jurisprudence. This involves a reconsultation of the Committee regarding draft legislation for which the Parliament has introduced substantial amendments after the first consultation of the CoR. This will have to be enshrined in the cooperation agreement in the same way as in the cooperation agreement between the CoR and the European Commission.</p> <p>The CoR’s political priorities for the new mandate 2020-2025 will aim for an ever-closer inter-institutional cooperation and alliance-building with key partners. This includes systematic bilateral meetings between rapporteurs and their counterparts in the European Parliament, joint meetings between CoR commissions and EP committees.</p> <p>Concerning the administrative part of the agreement, that also comprises the EESC, the CoR has cooperated closely with the EP to achieve the reinstatement of the additional funds for outsourcing of translation during the annual budget procedures.</p>

17	<p><i>Welcomes the 'Reflecting on Europe/Future of Europe' campaign amounting to more than 209 events carried out in total (until February 2019); notes that the Committee is following up on this success to develop a model for permanent European citizens' consultations together with other Union institutions and bodies with the aim of combining local debates with a feedback mechanism to inform decision-makers at Union level; calls on the Committee to report back on the results achieved in its next annual activity report;</i></p>	<p>Between January and February 2019, 34 CoR members took part in 13 local citizens' dialogues in Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Germany (2), Italy (5), Poland, Romania and Spain. Given the active involvement of local politicians and partly the European Commission and/or EDICs in these events, the costs for the CoR of covered travel expenses for its members and remained below EUR 20,000 for all 13 citizens' dialogues. The question of how to link local citizens' dialogues with debates at EU level was discussed with politicians and experts in the context of a series of five seminars between April and May, the findings of which were summarised in a compendium. CoR views on the matter were presented on several occasions, among others by the then-President of the CoR, Karl-Heinz Lambertz, during a hearing of the EP's AFCCO Committee on 4 November on the Conference on the Future of Europe.</p>
18	<p><i>Welcomes for transparency reasons a list of events for 2017 and 2018 in the context of the 'Reflecting on Europe/Future of Europe' campaign in its annual activity report; notes the names of the involved Committee members, title, date, place and the overall cost amounting to EUR 41 747,87 in 2018 (compared to EUR 45 505,93 in 2017);</i></p>	-
19	<p><i>Appreciates the Committee's success on social media with 12 658 page likes on Facebook in 2018 (compared to 9 013 in 2017) and 3 727 followers on Twitter in 2018 (compared to 3 425 in 2017); acknowledges the successful use of the online survey/mobile app 'Have your say on Europe!' across the Union; congratulates the Committee on its new website with 101 983 page views in 2018 (compared to 43 748 in 2017); welcomes the open online course (MOOC) in January 2018 under the headline "make the most of EU resources for your region or city" with almost 15 000 participants (compared to 8 500 in 2015 and 5 500 in 2016);</i></p>	-
20	<p><i>Welcomes the Committee's achievement in increasing its publication of studies, amounting to 27 and surpassing the target of 15; notes that all of those studies have been published on the Committee's website;</i></p>	-
21	<p><i>Notes that the agreement between the Committees, and the Commission on the exchange of the Commission's VMA building for the Committees BEL68/TRE 74</i></p>	<p>The guiding principles of the CoR's building strategy are, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the geographical concentration of buildings,

	<p><i>buildings was signed on 28 August 2019; notes that the exchange will become effective on 16 September 2022; notes with concern that the main priority identified by the Committees' buildings policy is the geographical concentration of the buildings; notes with concern that this exchange results in a loss of office space of 10 440 m² and, thus, a need to find extra offices to accommodate around 200 members of staff after the exchange, which cannot be entirely offset by alternative measures in the short-term, such as densifying the use of space in the other buildings and increased teleworking, but will necessitate the purchase of another adjacent building to compensate this reduction; notes also the need to renovate the VMA building in the short to medium term; fears the consequences that this agreement will have not only for the finances of the Committee but also for the wellbeing of the concerned staff; regrets that the legal service has not been consulted on a matter of such scope and importance for the Committee;</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preference for ownership rather than lease and for exercising options to buy, • a sustainable building management, and • multi-annual planning. <p>The CoR has requested the budget for the renovation of the VMA building and for renting additional office space in the B100 building as a separate one-off package with its budget estimates for 2021.</p>
22	<p><i>Notes that the Committees have recently established a joint working group for the purpose of preparing a further analysis in order to find adequate solutions; notes that another working group is tasked with reflecting on new ways of working; stresses that in no case must the staff well-being, manner of work and work space suffer negative consequences arising from the exchange of buildings; recalls the requirement that members of staff be consulted on the exchange of buildings and that their opinion be taken into account; calls on the Committees to inform Parliament's Committees on Budgetary Control and Budgets on any results achieved;</i></p>	<p>The joint working group established guidelines for the attribution of office space, taking into account the situation in other institutions. These parameters were presented to and discussed with staff representatives in dedicated meetings of the working group. Based on these parameters, the secretaries general of the CoR and the EESC agreed on the future attribution of floors during and after the renovation of the VMA building. Currently, the allocation of workspace within the floors attributed to the CoR is ongoing and managers have been invited to closely involve staff in this operation.</p>
23	<p><i>Expresses serious concerns about the confirmation of presence of asbestos in critical places of the VMA building including the parking area; deeply deplores that an inventory realised by an specialised external contractor was carried out in September 2019, only one month after the signature of the agreement with the Commission; deplores the fact that the agreement was signed without informing all stakeholders in due time</i></p>	<p>The detailed information published on the CoR intranet shows that its buildings are either asbestos free or, as in the case of the VMA building, asbestos-safe. The new Secretary General, Mr Blížkovský, has taken this issue very seriously from the beginning of his mandate in December 2019 and has taken a transparent and cooperative approach vis-à-vis staff representatives and the concerns expressed directly to him by staff. An in situ visit with staff representatives and interested staff was organized on 21 February 2020 in the context of the social dialogue. All staff were informed about the result of this visit.</p>

	<i>about the possibly presence of asbestos in the VMA building; also deplores that members and staff have not been informed about the situation and considers that it is not sufficient that the information has been published on the ESSC intranet where it is difficult to find;</i>	
24	<i>Notes that the Committees received an asbestos-safe certificate for the VMA building in September 2019 and that this certificate specifies that the building contains asbestos without risk for normal use of the building; taking into account especially that the next use of the building will not be normal use, but a situation of construction, is deeply concerned about the future developments relating to this issue;</i>	The Secretary General of the CoR together with his EESC counterpart has given instructions to remove the asbestos in autumn 2020 in full respect of the necessary protection measures during the works.
25	<i>Notes that the effects of prolonged and unsafe asbestos exposure on human health are well documented and are always a source of concern and alarm among the population in general; asks both Committees to carry out a policy of total and proactive transparency and information about the management of the situation before and after the effective occupation of the VMA building while at the same time avoiding unnecessary alarmism;</i>	See points 23 and 24.
26	<i>Acknowledges the Committee's building strategy approved on 29 November 2017 with the priority of 'geographical concentration' and 'physical connection' to the Committees' main building, Jacques Delors, providing significant financial and non-financial benefits; notes that the VMA building will require a minor refurbishment at the earliest moment possible (2020-2022) and a more thorough renovation when the Committees have complete proprietorship of the VMA building in 2028; notes that the costs will be covered by the Committees according to the sharing key applicable under the administrative cooperation agreement;</i>	See point 21.
27	<i>Welcomes all the measures implemented so far to ensure adequate (cyber-)security standards; notes that, following the installation of the new equipment for access control and the IT Security actions, the related security standards have reached the same level as the standards of Parliament and the Commission;</i>	-

28	<p><i>Regrets that the Committee does not yet have a legal framework with which to deal with harassment cases involving its members; reiterates the European Ombudsman's call on the institutions to adopt rules on harassment applicable to their members; asks the Committee to urgently adopt such rules, along the lines of Parliament's Bureau Decision of 2 July 2018 on harassment complaints; calls on the Committee to report back on its follow-up actions to Parliament;</i></p>	<p>The CoR adopted on 5 December 2019 a Code of Conduct for its members, which was published in the Official Journal on 24 January 2020 (L 20) and is since then binding for the CoR and its members. The Code lays down a detailed procedure in the event of alleged harassment of a staff member by a CoR member (Article 9) that is in fact largely based on the Parliament's Bureau Decision of 2 July 2018 on harassment complaints. The Code also includes a number of sanctions in order to ensure its observance.</p> <p>The CoR has setup its Advisory Board on Harassment.</p>
29	<p><i>Urges the Committee to strengthen its efforts related to the planned Code of Conduct for its members related to the prevention and fight of conflict of interests; asks the Committee to ensure the publication of the concerned rules and procedures on its websites;</i></p>	<p>The Code of Conduct adopted on 5 December 2019 is mentioned in the Members' page of the CoR website, with link to a dedicated page. The CoR intends to translate the dedicated page into all official languages.</p> <p>The Code of Conduct includes provisions that specifically aim to avoid instances of conflict of interests, including the obligation to submit a declaration of financial interests (Article 6). The CoR is currently implementing these provisions.</p>
30	<p><i>Recognises the robust mechanism in place to tackle harassment cases involving staff only with internal rules that implement the relevant provisions of the Staff Regulations; welcomes the organisation of trainings for all staff on the topic of prevention of harassment which focuses on the rules, provisions and procedures in place regarding harassment complaints; notes that the Committee has a functioning team of confidential counsellors (currently six are appointed and two have been placed on a reserve list) who have all received training before taking up their function;</i></p>	-
31	<p><i>Notes that the appropriations for translation outsourcing increased in the context of the cooperation agreement signed with Parliament and the resulting reduction in translation staff; notes that in 2018 translation outsourcing reached 20,2 %, slightly above the 20 % target, also partly caused by the high workload (21 % higher compared to the same period in 2017); notes further that the total cost of outsourced translation in 2018 was EUR 3 251 855 compared to</i></p>	-

	<i>EUR 5 263 108, which would have been the total cost of in-house translation;</i>	
32	<i>Recognises the Committees' efforts that resulted in a significant reorganisation under a new strategy for a more resource efficient multilingualism; regrets that from 2014 to 2017 transfers of posts from the linguistic services to the services of Parliament needed to be compensated by an increased number of contractual staff; calls on the Committee to inform Parliament regularly of the related developments;</i>	
33	<i>Notes the evaluation report on the pilot project for the common management of some translation units which identified, apart from a reduction in management overheads, additional synergies at translation assistance level once all translation units are merged and all necessary technical conditions are in place; notes that the Committee's Bureau gave a mandate to its Secretary-General to draw up and propose a new establishment plan, in cooperation with the EESC's Secretary-General; notes that the merger of the pilot units is confirmed and that two more mergers shall take place in 2019; calls on the Committee to report back on all actions taken to make translation output sustainable;</i>	On 1 June 2019, the Maltese and the Slovenian translation units were merged. On 1 October 2019, the Danish and Finnish and Swedish translation units were merged as well. The Directorate for Translation has thus gone from 24 to 19 translation units (units already merged: CS-SK, DA-FI-SV, EN-GA, and MT-SL). The merging process will continue, as head of unit posts become vacant. Two additional translation units will be merged by mid-2020.
34	<i>Notes the efforts to further simplify human resources processes, in particular through the gradual introduction of paperless workflows, such as invoices, missions and files; calls on the Committee to strengthen its efforts in the modernisation of its procurement processes related to IT tools, setting-up an electronic workflow to permit a paperless mode; notes the good progress made with e-invoicing which is now fully operational from an IT point of view;</i>	<p>As far as <i>paperless financial transactions</i> are concerned, the existing 'Paperless workflow from invoice to payment' procedure was extended to a number of additional Units/Directorates in the course of 2019 (and extended further in 2020).</p> <p>The objective for the coming years is to broaden the scope of the paperless workflows also to other types of transactions (commitments, recovery orders, etc) taking into account available IT resources.</p> <p>The current Covid-19 situation has induced the deployment of new types of electronic financial circuits. The experience may support an extension of electronic circuits in the CoR on a more structural basis in coming years.</p> <p>Concerning <i>paperless tendering processes</i>, it may be noted that, at CoR, negotiated procedures below the directive's threshold (139.000€) are currently organized in a semi-paperless setting: documents are generated and signed in the traditional way (no internal electronic workflow), but tender documents</p>

		<p>are sent and offers are received electronically. Open and restricted procedures above the directive's threshold are launched electronically (contract notice and tender documents published via TED and e-Notices), but offers are received and the procedure is handled in a paper based manner.</p> <p>Furthermore, the internal procedures for running procurement procedures at CoR have been adapted in late 2019 so as to allow a number of formerly paper based decisions (such as appointment of evaluation committee members) to be adopted in a paperless format.</p> <p>The CoR may deploy an e-Submission tool by contracting services that could be provided by DIGIT for this purpose if the CoR obtains sufficient budgetary appropriations in the annual budget procedures to pay for invoices established under the European Commission's new chargeback mechanism. This would allow the CoR to take further steps towards e-tendering for procedures of a value above the directive's threshold.</p> <p>Further perspectives to attain a fully paperless tendering environment for all procedures (above and below directive's threshold) would imply that CoR acquires the PPM tool (Public Procurement Management tool) developed by JRC, in parallel with the deployment of the Commission's ARES as back-office document management system. Given the significant operational and financial implications of such a change further evaluations are required including the possibilities for the CoR to secure sufficient budget appropriations in the yearly budget procedures to enable payment of inter-institutional invoices established based upon the European Commission's new chargeback mechanism</p>
35	<p><i>Notes an establishment plan of 538 staff members in 2018 (compared to 533 in 2017); welcomes the lower vacancy rate of posts in 2018 (less than 2 %) than in 2017 (approximately 2,5 %); welcomes the fact that a workload assessment exercise was initiated in 2018 to have an overview of the efficient use of human resources in the Committee and to identify possible gaps; notes that the final report was delivered in Spring 2019; requests a detailed follow-up of the situation in its next annual activity report;</i></p>	<p>The new CoR Secretary-General, Mr Petr Blížkovský, who took up his duties in December 2019, will use the results of the workload assessment exercise, finalized in 2019, and a SWOT analysis provided by all directorates for a potential re-organization of the institution with the objective to make further efficiency gains and create synergies. Given the CoR's very tight staff situation the CoR political leadership underlined in a letter to Commissioner Hahn that the unjustified structural disadvantage of the CoR in comparison to the European Economic and Social Committee (CoR: 491 posts, EESC: 668) has finally to be addressed by the EU budgetary authorities and progressively rebalanced.</p>
36	<p><i>Welcomes the introduction of a new appraisal system focusing on individual performance and a new promotion scheme based on merit which were the subject of an intensive social dialogue in 2018; recognises that the implementation of an action plan</i></p>	-

	<i>following a staff satisfaction survey organised late 2016 resulted in a management programme for both middle and junior managers covering topics which are linked to staff satisfaction;</i>	
37	<i>Welcomes the fact that the rate of absenteeism has decreased over the years (from 4,86% in 2015, 4,6 % in 2016 and 4,5 % in 2017 to 4,29 % in 2018); notes, however, that 23 staff members were on sick leave for more than 90 days in 2018, including three cases which respectively lasted 352, 296,5, and 280,5 days, and corresponded to serious illnesses; acknowledges the Committee's comprehensive policy on absence management, including follow-up of absences and the implementation of a structured return-to-work policy;</i>	-
38	<i>Welcomes the fact that, with regard to equal opportunities, all the measures taken with respect to disability, diversity and gender balance, such as the network of the local equal opportunities contact points in the respective directorates to raise awareness and implement actions within all Committee departments; welcomes the Committee's efforts with respect to flexible working conditions in order to allow colleagues of both genders to carry out managerial duties by better reconciling their family and professional responsibilities;</i>	-
39	<i>Notes with interest that the Committee adopted an integrated talent management strategy covering a wide range of areas and policies for ultimately contributing to staff performance and staff commitment; notes that the level of deputy heads of unit, heads of sector and team leaders has been officially recognised as a new management level and that the Committee organised related in-house training courses;</i>	-
40	<i>Recognises the Committee's efforts to achieve geographical balance for the Committee's managers, in particular with respect to the Member States that joined the Union in or after 2014, which has reached 22,2 % (compared to the target of 20 %), which is slightly above the proportion of population these</i>	-

	<p><i>countries represent compared to the total Union population;</i></p>	
<p>41</p>	<p><i>Notes the Committee's difficulties in increasing the proportion of women in middle and senior management positions (35,6% women in management positions); acknowledges the fact that the Committee is an institution of limited size with a relatively young group of middle managers; notes the efforts such as the Guide to Good Practice relating to Recruitment, reworked into a service instruction, introducing a binding rule to include both male and female panel members in every recruitment panel; calls on the Committee to strengthen further its efforts and to report back on any improvements achieved;</i></p>	<p>The situation in terms of gender balance in middle and senior management positions has remained relatively stable since 2018.</p> <p>A new equal opportunity strategy containing concrete objectives to be reached by 2025 is being adopted and should enter in force in 2020.</p> <p>In the upcoming years, several senior and middle management post will fall vacant. Besides the measures already mentioned, such as the service instruction introducing mandatory presence of both genders in selection panels, the CoR will actively encourage female applicants for all managerial positions. Since 2017, a new functional management structure has been put in place (deputy heads of unit, heads of sector, team leaders) for colleagues carrying out managerial responsibilities below head of unit level. This population, in majority composed of women, represents a pool of potential candidates for formal managerial positions. Specific training sessions are available for female staff who wishes to prepare for a managerial career, such as a development center for aspiring female middle managers. An informal network of female managers has been established to promote and accompany potential female staff members to pursue a management career path. The CoR has also decided in 2019 to publish its middle management positions internally first (according to the provisions Article 29§1 a)) to create more opportunities for these internal candidates.</p> <p>The CoR also made its working conditions and working patterns more flexible in order to allow colleagues of both genders carrying out managerial duties to better reconcile their family and professional responsibilities. With the support of the functional managerial structure, more managers can opt for more flexible working arrangements (part times), telework etc.</p> <p>In 2020, the CoR also launched a new format for its vacancy notices, with special attention being given to gender neutral language and contents. The upcoming vacancy notices for senior managers might also be promoted to targeted audiences via a social media campaign.</p>
<p>42</p>	<p><i>Reiterates the need to streamline and speed up the discharge procedure; proposes in this regard to set a deadline for the submission of the annual activity reports of 31 March of the year following the accounting year; welcomes the Committee's readiness to follow this best practice which should help to</i></p>	<p>The CoR continues to respect the Financial Regulation and the European Union year-end consolidation instructions issued by the Accounting officer of the European Commission as well as the work of the European Court of Auditors (ECA).</p>

	<p><i>support the request to shorten the timeline for the discharge procedure;</i></p>	<p>The 2019 provisional accounts and other requested information was sent to the European Commission's Accounting Officer and to the ECA on 1 March 2020.</p> <p>The CoR's 2019 Annual Activity Report, including the Secretary General's declaration of assurance, is foreseen to be sent to the European Parliament. The 2019 certified final annual accounts and other requested information will be sent to the European Commission's Accounting Officer and to the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the ECA, once the ECA has finalized its audits and reported the result thereof to the CoR.</p> <p>As a result of the agreement between the Commission and ECA on the earlier closure timetable with the objective for the EU Accounts to be adopted by 30 June, the CoR was requested to send final accounting data to the Commission's Accounting officer by 31 May 2020.</p>
<p>43</p>	<p><i>Welcomes the fact that overall the mid-term assessment completed in early 2018 concluded that the interinstitutional cooperation agreement between the Committees is working well; notes that the joint services serve both Committees in the fields of translation, infrastructure, logistics and IT; notes that together with the salary related expenditures concerned, the annual monetary value of the joint services operations exceeds EUR 100 million;</i></p>	<p>The good implementation of the CoR-EESC cooperation agreement must not hide that the CoR for decades has been facing an unjustified structural disadvantage in comparison to the European Economic and Social Committee (CoR: 491 posts, EESC: 668; 40% more budget per EESC member etc.) This has finally to be addressed by the EU budgetary authorities and progressively rebalanced.</p>
<p>44</p>	<p><i>Notes that the cooperation agreement between the Committees, signed in 2016, establishes a firm legal framework for long-term, efficient and effective cooperation, and demonstrates that the two Committees are acting in partnership while respecting each other's powers and prerogatives; notes that the agreement ended on 31 December 2019 and that it has been decided to extend it for one year while a new agreement is being negotiated; asks both Committees to make the necessary efforts to conclude a new agreement as soon as possible in order to allow further synergies and savings;</i></p>	<p>The CoR has relaunched the preparation of the negotiations immediately after the start of its new mandate in early 2020. The current prolongation of the agreement has allowed for effective coordination and synergies between the committees for the measures taken in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
<p>45</p>	<p><i>Recalls that once again both Committees dedicated less than 3 % of their total budget to IT and that IT projects and equipment have suffered from structurally underfinancing for several years; notes with concern that in order to address their backlog with respect to IT projects and systems, the two Committees continue</i></p>	<p>The European Committee of the Regions Bureau approved on 19 May 2020 a document on getting the CoR ready for the post-COVID Digital World. This underlines the need to implement the new digital strategy as soon as possible (start in 2020) and to build a multi-annual plan for 2021 and beyond.</p>

	<i>to use mopping-up exercises at the end of the year to finance IT projects; asks both Committees to implement as soon as possible the new digital strategy and multiannual IT expenditure plan;</i>	<p>The developments are linked to the availability of budget appropriations that in turn is dependent on also on the support the CoR receives in the annual budget procedures.</p> <p>In order to address this shortcoming, the CoR has asked in 2020 for several external budget transfers to reallocate non used budget due to the Covid 19 crisis.</p>
46	<i>Calls on the Committee to analyse further the situation in order to identify additional areas for joint services with the EESC; highlights that this kind of interinstitutional cooperation could significantly reduce the overall expenditure of the Committee; calls on the Committee to inform Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control of any results achieved;</i>	<p>The CoR has relaunched the preparation of the negotiations immediately after the start of its new mandate in early 2020. A horizontal analysis of different solutions for further optimization of the CoR's administration has been launched by the Secretary General and will be pursued in the coming months. This analysis also looks into the strengths and weaknesses of the current cooperation structures with other institutions. The CoR-EESC cooperation agreement must, however, not hide that the CoR for decades has been facing an unjustified structural disadvantage in comparison to the European Economic and Social Committee (CoR: 491 posts, EESC: 668; 40% more budget per EESC member etc.) This has finally to be addressed by the EU budgetary authorities and progressively rebalanced.</p>
47	<i>Congratulates the Committee on its e-learning training with a specific area dedicated to ethics designed mainly for newcomers and placed on the first page of the Committee's intranet for easy access for all; appreciates, in the interests of transparency, the publication of policies, such as whistleblowing procedures and policies on occupational activities of former senior officials, on the Committee's website; encourages the Committee to continue a real policy for the digitalisation of its services;</i>	See point 45.
48	<i>Recalls that on 23 August 2018 a former internal auditor lodged a complaint with the appointing authority against the Committee on the basis of Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations, following the Committee's decision of 24 May 2018 to refuse to recognise him as a bona fide whistleblower; deeply regrets the Committee's decision that is in contradiction with Parliament's position that the internal auditor is a bona fide whistleblower, confirmed in Parliament's resolution of 13 January 2004; encourages the Committee to fully recognise the internal auditor's status and to publicly apologise for the mishandling of his case;</i>	<p>Mr McCoy requested to be recognized as whistle-blower under Article 22a of the Staff Regulations. However, the CoR, which is bound to comply with the Staff Regulations, rejected his request and his subsequent complaint for the following reasons:</p> <p>(i) The judgment in case F-156/12 already dismissed Mr McCoy's allegation that the CoR had breached Article 22a of the Staff Regulations.</p> <p>(ii) Article 22a did not even exist at the time he reported those irregularities and cannot be applied retroactively to his case.</p>

		<p>(iii) An alternative recognition as whistleblower under the internal CoR rules in place at that time (CoR Decision No 294/99) is not possible either. Indeed, Mr McCoy did not respect these rules, which required him to inform OLAF directly.</p> <p>(iv) The irregularities that he reported did not concern a conduct of a certain gravity, like fraud or corruption, which is at present a condition under Article 22a of the Staff Regulations; it should be noted in this respect that the Court of Auditors concluded in February 2004 that there had not been substantial infringements of the budgetary or financial rules.</p> <p>(v) His complaint of 23 August 2018 was inadmissible given the considerable time (15 years) elapsed since he reported certain irregularities internally and to the Parliament's Budget Committee and also the fact that the purpose of Article 22a of the Staff Regulations is to safeguard the interests of the Union, not to satisfy personal interests.</p> <p>Mr McCoy decided not to challenge in Court the CoR's decision not to recognize him as whistleblower under article 22a of the Staff Regulations.</p>
49	<p><i>Notes that on 20 December 2019, the Committee made a proposal to the former internal auditor for an out of court settlement subject to a non-disclosure agreement, which was rejected by the former internal auditor based on the lack of transparency; encourages the Committee to revise its proposal in order to formally recognise the former internal auditor as a bona fide whistleblower and to allow any conciliation agreement to be public in the interests of transparency;</i></p>	<p>On 20 December 2019, the CoR made a proposal to Mr McCoy that consisted of a draft amicable settlement and a draft public statement. The draft public statement included most of the elements mentioned in the draft amicable settlement but omitted in particular the amount that Mr McCoy would receive as financial compensation. Therefore, the accusation of lack of transparency is unwarranted.</p> <p>Furthermore, the CoR did its utmost, while complying with the Staff Regulations, to accommodate Mr McCoy's demand to be recognized as whistleblowing. In this respect, the draft amicable settlement and the draft public statement included the following wording: '<i>Mr McCoy was acting in good faith and in the interest of the European Union by reporting certain irregularities; in doing so he acted as a whistleblower in the general sense of the word before a provision on whistleblowing was introduced in the Staff Regulations in the year 2004</i>'.</p> <p>Mr McCoy rejected the CoR's proposal of 20 December 2019.</p>
50	<p><i>Regrets that the launch of a mediation process between the Committee and the former internal auditor, requested in Resolution (EU) 2019/14291, has not yet taken place and is only planned for the beginning of 2020; further regrets that it took over 20 years for the Committee to enter into a mediation process with the former internal auditor; reiterates its strong support,</i></p>	<p>Until recently, the CoR had no legal grounds to negotiate an agreement with Mr McCoy, notably because of pending Court rulings and the medical nature of Mr McCoy's request, on which the Appointing Authority had no power to decide. It was only after the Invalidity Committee concluded on 24 May 2019 that his invalidity arose from an occupational disease that there were legal grounds for a negotiation.</p>

	<i>as expressed in numerous Parliament's resolutions, for the just and fair settlement with the former internal auditor and Committee's public apology for its wrongdoings in handling of that case;</i>	<p>Following the appointment of MEP Sophie in't Veld as mediator, the CoR entered into a mediation process lead by MEP Sophie in't Veld, as far as she was able to attend some of the mediation meetings.</p> <p>Keen to put an end to this dispute before the end of the previous CoR mandate, the CoR pursued the scheduled mediation meetings with Mr McCoy, preceded by three informal meetings. The result was the abovementioned proposal of 20 December 2020 presented under point 49.</p>
51	<i>Notes the decision of the third invalidity committee, which unanimously confirms that the internal auditor was invalidated out on occupational grounds and was subjected to a process of bullying by the Committee;</i>	<p>On 26 June 2019, the CoR formally endorsed the conclusions of the Invalidity Committee according to which Mr McCoy's invalidity arose from an occupational disease. Consequently, the Paymaster Office of the EU (PMO), responsible for calculating and reimbursing the contributions of the pension scheme in accordance with Article 45 of Annex VIII to the Staff Regulations, reimbursed Mr McCoy in July 2019, pursuant to Article 78(5) of the Staff Regulations, of the entire contributions to the pension scheme between the date of his admission to the benefit of the invalidity allowance (1 July 2007) and the day before his admission to the retirement pension (31 July 2010).</p>
52	<i>Notes that on 20 December 2019, the Committee presented a proposal for an out-of-court settlement and a draft public statement, which was rejected by the former internal auditor, who expressed the wish for a mediation process to be activated as the most appropriate vehicle for a fair resolution of the case;</i>	<p>The CoR did its utmost to maintain the mediation process in absence of MEP Sophie in't Veld, who started the mediation process with a meeting on 8 October with the CoR and was then constantly kept informed about the mediation process, which took place between October and December 2019.</p>
53	<i>Welcomes the appointment of MEP Sophie in't Veld as mediator in the case of the former internal auditor with a view to reaching a compromise settlement in the case; reminds of its request that such a mediation should also address the bona-fide whistleblower status of the former internal auditor (as recognised by Parliament in its 2004 discharge resolution) and the fact that he was acting in the interests of the Union by reporting wrongdoings within the Union institutions.</i>	<p>MEP Sophie in't Veld was appointed by the Parliament without consultation of the CoR. The CoR was informed by letter of MEP Arndt Kohn of 7 February 2019, before the adoption of the conclusions of the Invalidity Committee of 24 May 2019.</p> <p>As already indicated above in reply to point 49, the CoR's proposal of 20 December 2019, which was rejected by Mr McCoy, included the following wording: <i>'Mr McCoy was acting in good faith and in the interest of the European Union by reporting certain irregularities; in doing so he acted as a whistleblower in the general sense of the word before a provision on whistleblowing was introduced in the Staff Regulations in the year 2004'</i>.</p>
54	<i>Requests that the Committees promptly accept the mediation in order to implement the decision by the third invalidity committee, taking all necessary measures as to respond to the requests made in Parliament's previous resolutions;</i>	<p>The CoR is willing to resume the negotiations with Mr McCoy, subject to the approval of the CoR Bureau, which is his Appointing Authority. The Bureau was supposed to take a decision at its meeting of 24 March 2020 but due to the Covid-19 pandemic this discussion had to be postponed. During this period, pursuant to the CoR Rules of Procedure (Rule 38.6), the Bureau cannot take a decision relating to individuals (like Mr McCoy's) by written procedure. The Bureau will take a decision at an upcoming meeting.</p>
55	<i>Notes that the Committee, in the context of its 'revolving doors' policy, ensures that all staff leaving</i>	-

	<p><i>the service, and senior managers in particular, are proactively and systematically reminded of their obligation to declare their intention to engage in an occupational activity; welcomes the fact that the Committee reminds also staff leaving the service temporarily for unpaid leave or for invalidity of their obligations under Article 16 of the Staff Regulations and the Committee's internal decision No 66/2014 on outside activities and assignments;</i></p>	
56	<p><i>Notes that the Council stipulated that from the date that the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the Union becomes legally effective, three out of the 24 seats currently attributed to the United Kingdom will be attributed to Estonia, Cyprus and Luxemburg; notes that the number of Committee seats would thus only be reduced by 21;</i></p>	-
57	<p><i>Highlights all the results achieved in the last years in areas such as the performance-based budgeting, the ethical framework with all its related rules and procedures, the enhanced communication activities and the increasing amount of measures to improve transparency; welcomes the significant amount of interinstitutional service and cooperation agreements; underlines the importance of the collaboration and sharing of experience among the Union institutions and bodies; suggests that the Committee analyses the possibility of formalised networking activities in different domains to share best practices and develop common solutions.</i></p>	-