



EUROPEAN  
COURT  
OF AUDITORS

Report on the annual accounts  
of the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union  
for the financial year 2014  
  
together with the Centre's reply

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (hereinafter “the Centre”, aka “CDT”), which is located in Luxembourg, was created by Council Regulation (EC) No 2965/94<sup>1</sup>. The Centre's task is to provide any European Union institutions and bodies which call upon its services with the translation services necessary for their activities<sup>2</sup>.

## **INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF THE STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

2. The audit approach taken by the Court comprises analytical audit procedures, direct testing of transactions and an assessment of key controls of the Centre’s supervisory and control systems. This is supplemented by evidence provided by the work of other auditors and an analysis of management representations.

### **STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

3. Pursuant to the provisions of Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Court has audited:

- (a) the annual accounts of the Centre, which comprise the financial statements<sup>3</sup> and the reports on the implementation of the budget<sup>4</sup> for the financial year ended 31 December 2014, and
- (b) the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying those accounts.

#### ***The management’s responsibility***

4. The management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the annual accounts of the Centre and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions<sup>5</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> OJ L 314, 7.12.1994, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> ***Annex II*** summarises the Centre's competences and activities. It is presented for information purposes.

<sup>3</sup> These include the balance sheet and the statement of financial performance, the cash flow table, the statement of changes in net assets and a summary of the significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

<sup>4</sup> These comprise the budgetary outturn account and the annex to the budgetary outturn account.

- (a) The management's responsibilities in respect of the Centre's annual accounts include designing, implementing and maintaining an internal control system relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies on the basis of the accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer<sup>6</sup>; making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances. The Director approves the annual accounts of the Centre after its accounting officer has prepared them on the basis of all available information and established a note to accompany the accounts in which he declares, inter alia, that he has reasonable assurance that they present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Centre in all material respects.
- (b) The management's responsibilities in respect of the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions and compliance with the principle of sound financial management consist of designing, implementing and maintaining an effective and efficient internal control system comprising adequate supervision and appropriate measures to prevent irregularities and fraud and, if necessary, legal proceedings to recover funds wrongly paid or used.

***The auditor's responsibility***

5. The Court's responsibility is, on the basis of its audit, to provide the European Parliament and the Council<sup>7</sup> with a statement of assurance as to the reliability of the annual accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions. The Court conducts its audit in accordance with the IFAC International Standards on Auditing and Codes of Ethics and the INTOSAI International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions. These standards require the Court to plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance as to whether the annual accounts of the Centre are free from material misstatement and the transactions underlying them are legal and regular.
6. The audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions. The

<sup>5</sup> Articles 39 and 50 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1271/2013 (OJ L 328, 7.12.2013, p. 42).

<sup>6</sup> The accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer are derived from the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) issued by the International Federation of Accountants or, where relevant, the International Accounting Standards (IAS)/International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) issued by the International Accounting Standards Board.

<sup>7</sup> Article 107 of Regulation (EU) No 1271/2013.

procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, which is based on an assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the accounts and material non-compliance by the underlying transactions with the requirements in the legal framework of the European Union, whether due to fraud or error. In assessing these risks, the auditor considers any internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the accounts, as well as the supervisory and control systems that are implemented to ensure the legality and regularity of underlying transactions, and designs audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances. The audit also entails evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies, the reasonableness of accounting estimates and the overall presentation of the accounts. In preparing this report and Statement of Assurance, the Court considered the audit work of the independent external auditor performed on the Centre's accounts as stipulated in Article 208(4) of the EU Financial Regulation<sup>8</sup>.

7. The Court considers that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for its statement of assurance.

#### **Opinion on the reliability of the accounts**

8. In the Court's opinion, the Centre's annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2014 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation and the accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer.

#### **Opinion on the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts**

9. In the Court's opinion, the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2014 are legal and regular in all material respects.

10. The comments which follow do not call the Court's opinions into question.

#### **OTHER COMMENTS**

11. Cash and short term deposits held by the Centre further increased from 40 million euro at the end of 2013 to 44 million euro at the end of 2014 (budgetary surplus and reserves

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<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1).

increased from 37,5 million euro to 40,4 million euro). This indicates scope to reduce prices, as was the case in previous years.

#### **FOLLOW-UP OF PREVIOUS YEARS' COMMENTS**

12. An overview of the corrective actions taken in response to the Court's comments from the previous years is provided in **Annex I**.

This Report was adopted by Chamber IV, headed by Mr Milan Martin CVIKL, Member of the Court of Auditors, in Luxembourg at its meeting of 8 September 2015.

*For the Court of Auditors*

Vítor Manuel da SILVA CALDEIRA

*President*

**Follow-up of previous years' comments**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Court's comment</b>	<b>Status of corrective action (Completed / Ongoing / Outstanding / N/A)</b>
<b>Since 2012 (merged)</b>	Since 2012, the Centre's cash and short term deposits and its budgetary surplus and reserves have been excessive. This indicates scope to reduce prices.	Outstanding
<b>2012</b>	The Founding Regulation of 20 regulatory agencies audited by the Court in 2012 requires them to use the Centre for all their translation needs (the Centre's Founding Regulation stipulates the same for four other agencies). Other agencies are not obliged to use the Centre. For non-technical documents agencies could reduce their costs by using local services. In the Court's opinion the legislator should consider allowing all agencies to do so.	Ongoing
<b>2013</b>	In 2008 the Centre concluded 472 framework contracts with translation services providers for a maximum period of four years. In order to obtain better conditions for the new framework contracts to be signed in 2012, the Centre wanted to participate in the Commission's ongoing procurement procedure for translation services. However, no agreement on the contract terms could be reached with the Commission. Instead, the Centre extended its existing framework contracts for one more year. Although based on a derogation duly approved by the Centre's Director, such an extension is not in compliance with the implementing rules for the Centre's financial regulation, which provide for a maximum period of four years for framework contracts.	<b>Completed</b>

Year	Court's comment	Status of corrective action (Completed / Ongoing / Outstanding / N/A)
2013	Formal delegations (sub-delegations) from authorising officers (authorising officers by delegation) are not always consistent with the authorisation rights for transactions in the ABAC accounting system.	Completed
2013	The Centre became operational in 1994 and has, to date, worked on the basis of correspondence and exchanges with the host Member State. However, there is no comprehensive headquarters agreement between the Centre and the Member State. Such an agreement would further promote transparency in respect of the conditions under which the Centre and its staff operate.	Completed

**Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union****(Luxembourg)****Competences and activities**

<b>Areas of Union competence deriving from the Treaty</b>	The representatives of the Member States' governments adopted by mutual agreement a declaration concerning the creation, under the aegis of the Commission's translation departments in Luxembourg, of a Translation Centre for the bodies of the Union, which would provide the necessary translation services for the operation of the bodies and services whose seats were established by the Decision of 29 October 1993.
<b>Competences of the Centre</b> <i>(Council Regulation (EC) No 2965/94, as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 1645/2003</i>	<b>Objectives</b> To provide the necessary translation services for the operation of the following bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– European Environment Agency;</li> <li>– European Training Foundation;</li> <li>– European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction;</li> <li>– European Medicines Agency;</li> <li>– European Agency for Safety and Health at Work;</li> <li>– Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market (Trademarks and Designs);</li> <li>– European Police Office (Europol) and Europol Drugs Unit.</li> </ul> Bodies set up by the Council other than the above may use the Centre's services. The institutions and bodies of the European Union which already have their own translation services may, if need be, call upon the Centre's services on a voluntary basis. The Centre plays a full part in the work of the Interinstitutional Translation Committee. <b>Tasks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To make arrangements for cooperation with the bodies and institutions;</li> <li>– to participate in the work of the Interinstitutional Translation Committee.</li> </ul>
<b>Governance</b>	<b>Management Board</b> <i>Composition</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– One representative per Member State;</li> <li>– two representatives from the Commission;</li> <li>– one representative from each body or institution calling upon the Centre's services.</li> </ul> <i>Tasks</i> To adopt the Centre's annual budget and work programme, establishment plan



	<p>and annual reports.</p> <p><b>Director</b> Appointed by the Management Board on a proposal from the Commission.</p> <p><b>External audit</b> European Court of Auditors.</p> <p><b>Internal audit</b> European Commission's Internal Audit Service (IAS).</p> <p><b>Discharge authority</b> European Parliament, acting on a recommendation from the Council.</p>
<b>Resources made available to the Centre in 2014 (2013)</b>	<p><b>Final Budget:</b> 56,268 (52,194) million euro</p> <p><b>Staff:</b> 203 (206) posts provided for in the establishment plan, of which 191 (193) were occupied. +28 (23) contract staff Total staff: 219 (216), undertaking the following tasks: operational: 120 (118) administrative: 99 (98)</p>
<b>Products and services 2014 (2013)</b>	<p><b>Number of pages translated:</b> 758 061 (804 986)</p> <p><b>Number of pages by languages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– official languages: 751 064 (800 221)</li> <li>– other languages: 6 997 (4 765)</li> </ul> <p><b>Number of pages per client:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– bodies: 747 951 (780 310)</li> <li>– institutions: 10 110 (24 676)</li> </ul> <p><b>Number of pages translated by freelances:</b> 503 153 (512 524)</p>

Source: Annex supplied by the Centre.

**THE CENTRE'S REPLY**

11. The Centre is aware of the high level of cash and recurrent budgetary surpluses and has taken various steps to reverse this trend. The Centre decreased the 2014 prices and a further decrease in prices was introduced in the 2015 budget. In 2015 the Centre also reimbursed to clients part of the reserve for stability pricing, amounting to 2,3 million euro.

To avoid any further increase in the surplus, the Centre has introduced an automatic reimbursement of the budget surplus to clients. Based on this new mechanism the budget result of 2014, amounting to 2,6 million euro, will be paid back to clients after approval of the second amending budget for 2015.