

DECISION No GB/2026/4

of

**The Governing Board of the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research
Competence Centre**

Adopting the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2025

THE GOVERNING BOARD,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/887 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and the Network of National Coordination Centres (hereinafter “the Regulation”),¹ and in particular Article 13(3)(d), Article 17(f) and Article 27;

Having regard to the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/715 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies set up under the TFEU and Euratom Treaty and referred to in Article 70 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council,² in particular Article 48 thereof;

Whereas:

- 1) In order to report on the achievements and progress of the Authority in 2025, it is necessary to adopt a consolidated annual activity report for 2025.
- 2) According to Article 13(3)(d) of the Regulation, the Governing Board shall adopt the annual activity report on the progress made by the ECCC in the previous calendar year.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Sole Article

The consolidated annual activity report of the ECCC for the year 2025 is hereby adopted.

Done at Bucharest on 29/06/2026,

For the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre

(e-signed)

Pascal Steichen

Chairperson of the Governing Board

¹ OJ L 202, 8.6.2021, p. 1-31

² 86, 11.7.2019, p. 21–56. 2 Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/715 of 18 December 2018 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies set up under the TFEU and Euratom Treaty and referred to in Article 70 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council, C/2018/8599, OJ L 122, 10.5.2019, p. 1–38



ECCC Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2025

**Adopted by the ECCC Governing Board
Decision number GB 2026/4**

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LEGAL NOTICE

This publication presents the annual activity report of the ECCC for 2025 as adopted by the ECCC Governing Board Decision 4/2026. The report is based on the ECCC Single Programming Document (SPD) 2025-2027 and Budget of 2025 as approved by the Governing Board in line with the Decision No GB/2024/13 and two consolidated amendments as in Decisions No GB/2025/7 and GB/2025/16.

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GOVERNING BOARD'S ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

The Governing Board (GB) of the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC) takes note of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) prepared by the ECCC for the year 2025, and submitted for adoption, in accordance with Article 13(3)(d) of the ECCC regulation. The GB provides here below its assessment of the CAAR as required by Article 48(1)(b) of the Framework Financial Regulation¹.

The GB, based on its analysis and assessment of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2025:

- Welcomes that the ECCC moved to its permanent premises in April 2025.
- Acknowledges the ratification in early 2025 by the Romanian Parliament of the Host Agreement concluded with the Government of Romania in September 2024.
- Acknowledges the closing of the accounts for 2025 and welcomes the CAAR 2025 report of the ECCC.
- Welcomes the adoption of the first ECCC DEP Work Programme relying on Digital Europe funding for cybersecurity for 2025-2027 adopted in March 2025.
- The GB takes note of the results achieved of the ECCC, and of the activities delivered during 2025:
 - The evaluation of the calls for proposals, the signature of grants and the management of the projects retained for funding under the Digital Europe Programme and under Horizon Europe Programme.
 - The preparation and approval of two amendments of the ECCC DEP WP for cybersecurity for 2025-2027 in June and in October.
 - The preparation and approval of the programming documents SPD 2026-2028 and Draft SPD 2027-2029 of the ECCC; the amendments of the SPD 2025-2027 to reflect the changes and priorities updates also triggered by DEP WP amendments.
 - The ECCC's overall staff occupancy rate achieved on 31.12.2025 is 87% and included the onboarding of the Head of Units in early 2025.
 - The development of a Risk Assessment methodology and the performance of the ECCC's first fully-fledged risk assessment exercise.
 - Preparation and approval of deliverables arising from Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2023/2841 laying down measures for a high common level of cybersecurity at the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union.

¹ Framework Financial Regulation (FFR) 715/2019 is implemented by ECCC with Decision No GB/2023/1 of the GB of the ECCC on the ECCC's Financial Rules; this assessment is reflecting also the Annex II of FFR, namely C(2020) 2297 final of 20.04.2020, covering the template for CAAR.

The GB welcomes the collaboration, through SLAs and MoUs, with different Directorates and executive agencies of the European Commission. The GB also welcomes the collaboration with ENISA that continued relying on the SLA and MoU prepared and signed with the aim to foster synergies and efficiency gains and to support the implementation of the ECSC (European CyberSecurity Challenges).

Furthermore, the GB acknowledges that the reporting requirements under Article 27 of the ECCC regulation were covered by the ECCC early this year and in addition the report is also included as an additional dedicated Annex IX in this CAAR.

The GB remarks that while not all tasks foreseen in the ECCC 2025 work programme were delivered by the end of that year², there are no critical issues to be reported.

The ECCC GB, having concluded the above assessment, taking account of the Article 27(3) of the ECCC regulation, and article 48 of FFR regulation, hereby instructs the Secretariat of the GB to finalize the process. Namely, to publish the annual activity report and to submit the Consolidated Annual Activity Report for 2025, together with this assessment, to the Court of Auditors, to the Commission, to the European Parliament and the Council as soon as possible.

For the Governing Board,

Pascal Steichen

Chairperson of the Government Board

10 June 2026

² The ECCC GB mandated during 2025 the GB Working Group 4 on Strategic Advice to start preparations for the future Strategic Agenda in 2026. The work will be done in parallel with the preparation of performance indicators and the monitoring of the current Strategic agenda still valid until 2027.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GOVERNING BOARD'S ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
PART I. ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2025	10
1.1 ACHIEVED RESULTS IN ACTIVITY DOMAIN #1	10
1.2 ACHIEVED RESULTS IN ACTIVITY DOMAIN #2	16
1.3 ACHIEVED RESULTS IN ACTIVITY DOMAIN #3	21
1.4 ACHIEVED RESULTS IN 2025 FOR PREVIOUS YEAR	23
PART II. MANAGEMENT	24
2.1. GOVERNING BOARD	24
2.2. MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS	24
2.3. BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	25
2.4. DELEGATION AND SUB-DELEGATION	25
2.5 HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) MANAGEMENT	25
2.6. STRATEGY FOR EFFICIENCY GAINS	26
2.7 ASSESSMENT OF AUDIT AND EX-POST EVALUATION RESULTS DURING THE REPORTING YEAR	27
2.8A FOLLOW UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLANS FOR AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS	28
2.8B FOLLOW UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS ISSUED FOLLOWING INVESTIGATIONS OF OLAF	28
2.9 FOLLOW UP OF OBSERVATIONS FROM DISCHARGE AUTHORITY	28
2.10 ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT	28
2.11. ASSESSMENT BY MANAGEMENT	28
PART III. ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS	30
3.1 EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS	30

3.2 ASSESSMENT RESULT	30
3.2 CONCLUSIONS OF ASSESSMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS	35
3.3 STATEMENT OF THE INTERNAL CONTROL COORDINATOR	36
PART IV. MANAGEMENT ASSURANCE	37
4.1 REVIEW OF THE ELEMENTS SUPPORTING ASSURANCE	37
4.2 RESERVATIONS	37
PART V. DECLARATION OF ASSURANCE	38
DECLARATION OF ASSURANCE	38
ANNEXES	39
ANNEX I. CORE BUSINESS STATISTICS	39
ANNEX II. STATISTICS ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	40
ANNEX III. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART	42
ANNEX IV. ESTABLISHMENT PLAN AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	42
ANNEX V. HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES BY ACTIVITY	43
ANNEX VI. CONTRIBUTION, GRANT AND SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS. FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS	45
ANNEX VII. ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT	45
ANNEX VIII. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS	47
ANNEX IX. ADDITIONAL DATA ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 27 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	49
ANNEX X. LIST OF ACRONYMS	54
ANNEX XI. STANDARD RESERVATION FOR ENTITIES IMPLEMENTING DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME (DEP) IN 2025	55
ANNEX XII. STANDARD RESERVATION FOR ENTITIES IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE PROGRAMME (HE) IN 2025	61

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC) and the Network of National Coordination Centres (NCCs) were set up by Regulation (EU) 2021/887³ (the ‘Founding Regulation’) that entered into force on 28 June 2021. It aims, in particular, to strengthen the capacities of the cybersecurity technology community, protect our economy and society from cyber incidents, increase excellence in research and innovation, and reinforce the competitiveness of the EU cyber industry.

In September 2024 the ECCC achieved its financial autonomy and signed⁴ a Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country. 2025 therefore marks the first year of autonomy and the first Annual Activity Report of the ECCC as an autonomous EU body.

The ECCC⁵ is mandated to design and implement, with the support of relevant stakeholders, a common agenda for the development and growth of the European industrial, technological and research sector in the area of cybersecurity, including SMEs and in areas of public interest. For this purpose, the ECCC implements parts of the Digital Europe⁶ (‘DEP’) and Horizon Europe⁷ (‘HEP’) funding programmes. For DEP, the ECCC establishes and implements the Work Programme (WP) while for HEP the Centre implements the associated calls and projects without being involved directly in the drafting of the Work Programme. The ECCC aims to create a framework for strategic and coordinated investment in cybersecurity with contributions from the EU level, Member States and relevant cybersecurity constituencies, including industry and academia.

This report reflects the achievements of the ECCC during 2025, a year full of results and achievements. During 2025 the ECCC consolidated its autonomy, had its Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country ratified by the Romanian Parliament, adopted the first ECCC Cybersecurity DEP WP 2025-2027⁸, launched several DEP and HEP calls and continued to deliver on its tasks. The Centre also strengthened its administrative and management structures while expanding its human and financial resources. Throughout the year, the ECCC made significant progress across all assigned tasks and successfully delivered on its mandate.

The ECCC continued in 2025 to carry out all previous activities, including the implementation of the DEP and HEP Work Programmes as well as the evaluation of the calls for proposals, the signature of grants and the management of the projects retained for funding.

The present document has been structured following the guidelines for Consolidated Annual Activity Report as detailed in C(2020) 2297 final⁹, Annex 2, of the Communication from the Commission on the strengthening of the governance of

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/887 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and the Network of National Coordination Centres (OJ L 202, 8.6.2021, p. 1), referred further in the document as founding/ECCC regulation.

⁴ The Agreement was finally ratified by the Romanian Parliament in Q1/2025.

⁵ https://cybersecurity-centre.europa.eu/index_en

⁶ Digital Europe Programme established by Reg (EU) 2021/694 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing the Digital Europe Programme and repealing Decision (EU) 2015/2240 (OJ L 166, 11.5.2021, p. 1).

⁷ Horizon Europe Programme established by Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013 (OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 1).

⁸ In consultation with ECCG GB, the ECCC prepared the first ECCC DEP WP for Cybersecurity for 2025-2027, adopted and published in March 2025. The WP has been meanwhile amended to reflect the updated EU priorities.

⁹ In pursuance of FR 2018/1046 and FFR No 2019/715, Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/715 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies set up under the TFEU and Euratom Treaty and referred to in Article 70 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 122, 10.5.2019, p. 1).

Union Bodies under Article 70 of the Financial Regulation (EC) 2018/1046, and on the guidelines¹⁰ for the SPD and the Consolidated Annual Activity Report.

In addition, this report covers the requirements of Article 27 of the ECCC regulation and a more detailed overview of the results to address these requirements is provided in Section 1.2 and in Annex IX.

The main achievements of the ECCC during 2025 include:

- Activities related to setup and internal consolidation of the ECCC:
 - Romanian Parliament ratified the headquarters agreement in Q1 2025.
 - Moved to permanent premises in April 2025.
 - Reached 87% staff occupancy and established key HR processes and tools. Early 2025 two Heads of Unit were onboarded and by 31/12/25 one Temporary Agent, two Contract Agents and one SNE were in the onboarding process, having accepted offers or undergoing medical examinations.
 - Advanced IT preparations and approved deliverables under Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2023/2841 on cybersecurity.
 - The development and implementation of the ECCC Risk Assessment exercise.
 - Preparation and approval of the ECCC reporting and programming documents: CAAR 2024, amendments of SPD 2025-2027, draft and final SPD 2026-2028, DEP cybersecurity WP 2025-2027 and amendments, draft SPD 2027-2029.
- Operational activities, delivering on the core tasks of the ECCC:
 - Preparing the implementation of DEP, launching the relevant calls for proposals, calls for expressions of interest and joint procurements, evaluating the proposals received and signing grant agreements on several DEP topics.
 - Implementation of the HEP, including launching the relevant calls for proposals, evaluating the proposals received and signing grants agreement on several HE topics.
 - Running and monitoring projects under DEP and HEP.
- Activities dedicated to empowering the community and to the operationalization of NCCs network:
 - Launched ATLAS platform for the Cybersecurity Community, updates to the Community registration guidelines.
 - Prepared and launched the call for the Strategic Advisory Group, to be set-up during 2026.
 - Results of the several working groups under the GB.
 - Organization of 3 networking days for the Network of NCCs.

As can be seen from the bullets above, the ECCC increased its engagement and delivery on all the tasks foreseen in its founding Regulation. The ECCC, the NCCs and

¹⁰ C(2020) 2297 final Annex 1, Annex to the Communication from the Commission on the strengthening of the governance of Union Bodies under Article 70 of the Financial Regulation 2018/1046 and on the guidelines for the Single Programming Document and the Consolidated Annual Activity Report

the Community will continue to steadily grow in view to deliver fully on their mission and objectives regarding cybersecurity investment, innovation and uptake, and thus help make the EU more cyber resilient and prosperous.

The ECCC operates in an evolving landscape of EU cybersecurity policy, including the recently adopted revision of the NIS Directive, the adoption of the Cyber Resilience Act and Cyber Solidarity Act early 2025, policy initiatives such as the Communications on cyber defence, on the Cyber Skills Academy or cybersecurity for hospitals and healthcare providers or Communication on cables security. The ECCC continued to adjust its activities to this continuously evolving landscape and integrated in two of its calls these new priorities – i.e. the calls dedicated to implement the priorities on cybersecurity for hospitals and healthcare providers and for the cybersecurity of the regional (undersea) cables.

The ECCC, together with the NCCs and the Community are an important component of this overall effort to enhance cybersecurity capabilities and resilience in the EU.

Luca Tagliaretti
Executive Director

PART I. ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2025

The first part of this report details the objectives approved in the 2025 Work Programme¹¹ and presents the achievements of the ECCC during 2025.

The next sections provide a view on the achievements or on the progress in the process of delivering these priorities. The structure of this Part I reflects the structure of the ECCC Work programme 2025, as adopted by the ECCC GB in the SPD 2025-2027 document (and amendments) and covers the achievements of the following activity domains:

- ✓ Activity #1: Deployment of resources for cybersecurity
- ✓ Activity #2: Strategic advice, cooperation and coordination for cybersecurity
- ✓ Activity #3: Governance, establishment and compliance of ECCC.

1.1 Achieved results in ACTIVITY DOMAIN #1

Activity domain “#1: *Deployment of resources for cybersecurity*” contributes to the objectives of Article 4 (b) of the ECCC Regulation: “*implementing actions under relevant Union funding programmes in accordance with the relevant work programmes and the Union legislative acts establishing those funding programmes; and (d) where relevant and appropriate, acquiring and operating ICT infrastructure and services where necessary to fulfil the tasks set out in Article 5 and in accordance with the respective work programs set out in point (b) of Article 5(3).*”

Building on the work delivered in previous years, the ECCC, together with the Network of NCCs, will continue to implement the actions under Specific Objective 3 (Cybersecurity and Trust) of the DEP and specific actions under HEP. This includes the management of projects awarded under the DEP work programmes 2021-2022 and 2023-2024, as well as the publication of related calls, evaluation of proposals/tenders, signature of grants/contracts and management of the projects retained for funding under the *ECCC Work Programme implementing the cybersecurity parts of the Digital Europe Programme (in particular actions related to Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2021/694) for 2025-2027* and HEP work programme 2025.

The Horizon Europe Work Programme for 2025 was adopted by the Commission in May 2025¹². The Commission concluded a contribution agreement with the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC) for the implementation of Horizon Europe cybersecurity actions not co-funded by Member States, in accordance with Article 5(5) of Regulation (EU) 2021/887.

¹¹ Please see ECCC GB Decision 13/2024 on final SPD 2025-2027 and the amendments 1 and 2 in ECCC GB Decisions 7/2025 and 16/2025 available at: https://cybersecurity-centre.europa.eu/governing-board_en

¹² Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025, 6. Civil Security for Society, (European Commission Decision C(2025) 2779 of 14 May 2025), available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-6-civil-security-for-society_horizon-2025_en.pdf

Further to the contribution agreement, the ECCC launched a call to implement the part on “Increased Cybersecurity”, as specified in and in accordance with Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025 for Cluster 3¹³, with the following topics:

- HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-01: Generative AI for Cybersecurity applications
- HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-02: New advanced tools and processes for Operational Cybersecurity
- HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-03: Privacy Enhancing Technologies
- HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-04: Security evaluations of Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC) primitives
- HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-05: Security of implementations of Post Quantum Cryptography algorithms
- HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-06: Integration of Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC) algorithms into high-level protocols

The ECCC Work Programme 2025-2027 implementing the cybersecurity parts of the Digital Europe Programme (in particular actions related to Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2021/694) was adopted by the ECCC GB, with decision no 2025/04 in March 2025¹⁴, and subsequently amended (in June 2025 and October 2025). A high-level overview is included here below, covering the main areas of work:

- New technologies. AI & post-quantum transition
- Cyber Solidarity Implementation
- Additional actions improving EU cyber resilience
- Programme Support Actions

For the full details please consult the related *ECCC Work Programme 2025-2027 implementing the cybersecurity parts of the Digital Europe Programme*, which includes the details on the topics, their indicative planning and their budget allocation and which should be considered to complement the present document with the related information.

The following tables summarise the ECCC calls and topics, under the Digital Europe Programme, opened in 2025 and their status when drafting this section.

Call DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08

TOPIC	Budget	Closing Date	Outcome
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOYCYBER-08-PUBLICPQ	15,000,000 €	07/10/2025	Number of proposals funded: 3 ECCC requested contribution: 9,674,549.99 €
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOYCYBER-08-NCC	10,000,000 €	07/10/2025	Number of proposals funded: 6 ECCC requested contribution: 14,591,781.76 €
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOYCYBER-08-CYBERHEALTH	30,000,000 €	07/10/2025	Number of proposals funded: 7 ECCC requested contribution: 29,922,260.19 €

¹³ Please see Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025, 6. Civil Security for Society, (European Commission Decision C(2025) 2779 of 14 May 2025), available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-6-civil-security-for-society_horizon-2025_en.pdf see page 91-92 for detailed allocation of budget and type of actions.

¹⁴ The ECCC Work Programme 2025-2027 implementing the cybersecurity parts of the Digital Europe Programme and the GB decisions on the initial version and amendments are available here: https://cybersecurity-centre.europa.eu/governing-board_en

Call DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-09

TOPIC	Budget	Closing Date	Outcome
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-09- CYBERAI	15,000,000 €	31/03/2026	Evaluation ongoing
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-09- UPTAKE	15,000,000 €	31/03/2026	Evaluation ongoing
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-09-COORDPREP	10,000,000 €	31/03/2026	Evaluation ongoing
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-09-CABLEHUBS	10,000,000 €	31/03/2026	Evaluation ongoing

Call DIGITAL-ECCC-2026-DEPLOY-CYBER-10

TOPIC	Budget	Closing Date	Outcome
DIGITAL-ECCC-2026-DEPLOY-CYBER-10-NCH	2,000,000 €	28/05/2026	Evaluation ongoing
DIGITAL-ECCC-2026-DEPLOY-CYBER-10-CBCH	2,000,000 €	28/05//2025	Evaluation ongoing

The following statistics cover the DEP calls launched in 2025:

DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08

- Opening date 12 June 2025 and Deadline date 07 October 2025
- Call budget – 55 M EURO for 3 Topics
- Nr proposals received: 61
- Nr proposals retained for funding: 16
- Grant agreement phase ongoing

DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-09

- Opening date 28 October 2025 and Deadline date 31 March 2026
- Call budget – 50 M EUR for 4 Topics
- Evaluation ongoing
- Results to be announced: June - July 2026

DIGITAL-ECCC-2026-DEPLOY-CYBER-10

- Opening date 09 December 2025 and Deadline date 28 May 2026
- Call budget – 4 M EUR
- Evaluation ongoing
- Results to be announced: July – August 2026

The following statistics cover the DEP evaluations and GAPs signed in 2025:

DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07

- Opening date 04 July 2024 and Deadline date 27 March 2025
- Call budget – 102,8 M EURO for 6 Topics
- Nr proposals received: 172
- Nr proposals retained for funding: 32
- Projects signed and running

The following table summarises the ECCC calls and topics, under the Horizon Europe Programme, opened in 2025.

Call HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC

TOPIC	Budget	Closing Date	Outcome
HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-01	40,000,000 €	12/11/2025	Grant Agreement. Preparation ongoing
HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-02	23,550,000 €	12/11/2025	Grant Agreement. Preparation ongoing
HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-03	11,000,000 €	12/11/2025	Grant Agreement. Preparation ongoing
HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-04	4,000,000 €	12/11/2025	Grant Agreement. Preparation ongoing
HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-05	6,000,000 €	12/11/2025	Grant Agreement. Preparation ongoing
HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC-06	6,000,000 €	12/11/2025	Grant Agreement. Preparation ongoing

The following statistics cover the HE calls launched in 2025:

HORIZON-CL3-2025-02-CS-ECCC

- Opening date 12 June 2025 and Deadline date 12 November 2025
- Call budget – 90,550,000 M EURO for 6 Topics
- Nr proposals received: 265
- Nr proposals retained for funding: 15
- Grant agreement phase ongoing

The following statistics cover the HE evaluations and GAPs signed in 2025:

HORIZON-CL3-2024-CS-01

- Opening date 27 June 2024 and Deadline date 20 November 2024
- Call budget – 60,4 M EURO for 2 Topics
- Nr proposals received: 152
- Nr proposals retained for funding: 12
- Projects signed and running

The table below provides an overview of the status of implementation of the activities:

Expected activities [defined in SPD]	Expected results [defined in SPD]	Achieved results by end of 2025
DEP Implementation		
<p>Management of projects from DEP WP 2021-2022 and WP 2023-2024.</p> <p>Implement DEP calls for WP 2025-2026 (take financing decisions, launch calls, organise evaluations, conclude grant agreements) taking account of the adopted Strategic Agenda Where necessary, adopt guidelines for proposals and projects, model grant agreement, methodology to calculate MS in-kind contribution</p>	<p>Launch call for proposals and follow up on it</p> <p>Fulfilment of DEP KPIs:</p> <p>[DEP] Indicator 3.1a: Cybersecurity infrastructure and/or tools jointly procured: 15 tools and/or infrastructures by 2027¹⁵</p> <p>[DEP] Indicator 3.1b: Cybersecurity infrastructure and/or tools deployed: 165 infrastructure (15) and/or tools (150) deployed by 2027¹⁶</p> <p>[DEP] Indicator 3.2: Users and communities getting access to European cybersecurity facilities¹⁷: -150 by 2027 & 300 by 2028</p>	<p>DEP Project portfolio (by Dec 2025) 165 ongoing projects</p> <p><u>DEP Reporting and Payment</u> 51 payments were fully processed within the year.</p> <p><u>DEP Amendments</u> 44 amendments were fully signed within the year</p> <p><u>Calls</u> (launched in 2025) please see above the statistics. <u>Calls</u> (evaluated and GAPs signed in 2025) please see above the statistics.</p> <p>DEP Projects <i>3.1a: Cybersecurity infrastructure and/or tools jointly procured</i> Joint Procurements ongoing</p> <p><i>3.1b: Cybersecurity infrastructure and/or tools deployed</i> During 2025, the Digital Europe funded projects produced a variety of cybersecurity tools, services and solutions based on a wide range of technologies. The technology that was developed or used to develop tools and solutions is by far Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML). Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI) and Security Operation Centres (SOCs) are the next most frequent, reflecting the EU's strong push toward threat intelligence sharing and detection infrastructure. The most common project outputs are Platforms followed by Frameworks, Services, and Toolkits. This reflects a trend toward integrated, multi-component solutions rather than single-purpose tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 SIEM/Log Monitoring • 23 Cyber Threat Intelligence • 20 Vulnerability scanning / assessment • 19 EDR/XDR/NDR (Endpoint Detection and Response, Extended Detection and Response and Network Detection and Response) • 17 Firewalls (NextGeneration (NG), Web Application Firewalls (WAF) and Anti DDOS) • 14 SOAR / Automation (Security Orchestration, Automation, and Response) • 13 Penetration Testing • 12 Access Management (Identity AM, Privilege (AM)) • 11 Intrusion Detection (IDS, IPS) • 9 Dark Web Monitoring • 8 Honeypots • 7 Cyber Ranges • 6 CRA compliance • 5 Sandboxing • 4 Cryptography and PQC tools • 3 Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML) • 2 Bug bounty platforms

¹⁵ [Method for setting the target] The number of joint infrastructure or joint actions will be defined by the ECC. No joint action has been defined yet.

¹⁶ [Method for setting the target] The number of joint infrastructures or joint actions will be defined by the ECC. It should be noted that infrastructure and tools may be of a varied nature: the target for infrastructures is 15 and the number of tools is 150.

¹⁷ [Method for setting the target] The target is to have at least 20 Member States using each facility.

Expected activities [defined in SPD]	Expected results [defined in SPD]	Achieved results by end of 2025
		<p><i>3.2: Users and communities getting access to European cybersecurity facilities</i> More than 4000 individual users have been reported to have gained access to European Cybersecurity facilities from around 20 identified communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) · Academia /Universities · Research Institutions · Public Administration · Large Enterprises · Sector-specific groups · Individuals · Civil society and NGOs · Other type of Organizations <p>DEP NCC Projects <i>3.1a: Cybersecurity infrastructure and/or tools jointly procured</i> N/A <i>3.1b: Cybersecurity infrastructure and/or tools deployed</i> Infrastructure deployment is concentrated: 6 of 18 NCCs deployed technical tools, with NCC-IS and NCC-LU-S accounting for the majority of tools and users. This concentration highlights both centres of excellence and an opportunity for other NCCs to leverage shared platforms. The most common project outputs are: Monitoring solutions, Testing tools and Platforms. Furthermore, the NCCs were highly engaged in Raising Awareness activities, Conferences and Training sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A total of 19 cybersecurity tools or solutions were deployed across 6 projects, with NCC-IS leading in tool deployment (10 tools). · Training and capacity-building sessions totalled over 47 structured sessions, with CyberUP and NCC-AT among the most active. · 29 cross-border cybersecurity actions or exercises were recorded, reflecting strong inter-NCC collaboration. · Estimated total community participants across all events: 23,000+, covering SMEs, public authorities, academia, large companies, and the general public. <p>Tool types recoded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Log monitoring, security detection tools, training material, cloud security solutions · Observatory, Testing Platform, OpenXeco, Project Proposal Submission Platform · Atlas registration/community system, quiz & test platform · OpenXeco platform · FSTP procedure platform for Bulgarian SMEs · API-based community registration & assessment solution integrated with CIS <p><i>3.2: Users and communities getting access to European cybersecurity facilities</i> · 320+ users formally accessed EU cybersecurity facilities, primarily through NCC-LU-S's platforms. · Estimated total community participants across all events: 23,000+, covering SMEs, public authorities, academia, large companies, and the general public</p>
HEP Implementation		
Manage part of HEP further to EC services' delegation.	Fulfil HEP KPIs.	<p><u>HE Project portfolio</u> (by Dec 2025) 40 projects ongoing and under preparation <u>HE Reporting and Payment</u> No payments were executed within the reporting year (under HORIZON-CL3-2023-CS-01 payments are expected to be processed within 2026). <u>HE Amendments</u> 7 amendments were fully signed within the year <u>Calls</u> (launched in 2025) – please see info and statistics above. <u>Calls</u> (evaluated and GAPs signed in 2025) – please see info and statistics above.</p>
Joint Actions		
Identify possible joint actions to be supported by contributions from some MS and by EU budget from DEP or HEP	Fulfil KPIs associated with joint actions.	No Joint Actions were implemented in 2025

Annex IX provides more detailed operational and financial reporting data regarding the calls, the SMEs and the MS applying for grants or receiving grants, as required by the ECCC regulation Article 27.

Deployment of a European testing infrastructure for the transition to post-quantum cryptography (PQC) in different usage domains.

On 19 December 2025, the ECCC launched the call for tenders for the deployment of a European testing infrastructure for the transition to post-quantum cryptography (PQC) in different usage domains.

This procurement is intended to establish a European PQC testing and validation infrastructure providing physical and remote facilities for the assessment of PQC algorithms, protocols and systems in realistic conditions. The planned infrastructure is designed to support testing across key dimensions such as security, performance, interoperability and integration.

The launch of the call marked an important operational step for the ECCC in the PQC area, as it aims to create a trusted European capability for testing and comparing PQC solutions, while supporting the practical transition towards quantum-resilient cryptography by public authorities, industry, SMEs and research actors.

Following publication of the call, the evaluation of tenders and the award process will continue in 2026. This will prepare the ground for the implementation of the infrastructure and the start of the related testing and validation activities.

Implementation of the Cyber Solidarity Act (CSoA): establishing national and cross-border Cyberhubs

The implementation of the Cyber Solidarity Act (CSoA) marks a major step towards a more coordinated and operational European cybersecurity architecture. In this context, the ECCC, in close cooperation with the European Commission (DG CNECT) and Member States, has advanced the establishment of national and cross-border Cyber Hubs designed to strengthen real-time information sharing and joint situational awareness across the Union. By integrating advanced capabilities, including AI-driven detection and shared threat intelligence platforms, these hubs are expected to enhance the EU's capacity to prevent, detect and respond to large-scale cyber incidents.

To date, four national Cyber Hubs and three cross-border Cyber Hubs have been launched, bringing together 19 EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. The first two cross-border hubs, ATHENA (europeAn THreat intelligence, rEspoNse and prepAredness) and ENSOC (European Network of Security Operations Centres), are being established through joint procurements complemented by dedicated grants. Procurement Phase 1 for ENSOC was launched in May 2024 (Notice No 266426-2024) and for ATHENA in June 2024 (Notice No 398255-2024), followed by candidate evaluations and the launch of Phase 2. For ATHENA, Lots 1, 2 and 3 were launched in December 2025. For ENSOC, Lot 1 was launched in July 2025, Lots 2, 5 and 6 in August 2025, and Lot 4 in October 2025. As no candidate was successful in ENSOC Lot 2 during Phase 1, completed on 17 March 2025, the ECCC launched a negotiated procedure without prior publication in February 2026.

Following the second call for expression of interest for Cyber Hubs, Belgium joined the ATHENA consortium and Slovenia joined ENSOC. In parallel, the Nordic-Baltic Cyber Consortium (NBCC) was established as the third cross-border Cyber Hub, bringing together seven additional countries, while national Cyber Hub projects were launched in Latvia, Spain, Iceland and Slovakia. In line with the CSoA, complementary grants supporting all new joint procurement activities—both cross-border and national—were signed in 2025, further accelerating the operational deployment of the European Cybersecurity Alert System.

As these infrastructures mature, Cyber Hubs are expected to play a central role in implementing the Cyber Solidarity Act by strengthening cross-border cooperation, mutual assistance and collective preparedness across the Union. They also provide a scalable framework linking research, innovation and operational deployment, contributing to a stronger, more resilient and interconnected European cybersecurity ecosystem.

The table below provides an overview of Member States’s participation in cross-border and national cyber hubs:

Cyberhubs	Countries' Participation
Cross-border: ATHENA	Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Bulgaria, Belgium
Cross-border: ENSOC	Spain, Italy, Portugal, Austria, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovenia
Cross-border: NBCC	Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Letonia, Latvia, Norway
National: CERT.LV-SOC-LV	Latvia
National: SK-SOC	Slovakia
National: CyberHubES	Spain
National: NSOC	Iceland

1.2 Achieved results in ACTIVITY DOMAIN #2

This section covers the activity domain “#2: Strategic advice, cooperation and coordination for cybersecurity”.

The following actions were proposed and delivered:

(a) Strategic advice and promotion of research, innovation and deployment of cybersecurity

ECCC consulted its stakeholders, including EC, MSs and ENISA to develop together priorities for promoting research, innovation and deployment in the area of cybersecurity. The main purpose of this task is to ensure a strong European cybersecurity ecosystem that brings together the relevant stakeholders. The results from this work contributed to the other areas of this Activity, including in the delivery and amendment of the DEP Cybersecurity WP 2025-2027 and to the dissemination efforts.

(b) Revision and monitoring of Strategic Agenda, development of ECCC Work programmes under DEP and HEP.

According to Article 2 point (8) of the Regulation, the “Agenda” is a comprehensive and sustainable cybersecurity industrial, technology and research strategy which sets out recommendations for the development and growth of the European cybersecurity industrial, technological and research sector, as well as priorities for the ECCC’s

activities; it is non-binding with respect to decisions to be taken on the annual work programmes. The Strategic Agenda, as adopted by the GB¹⁸, is currently being monitored. To support its review and monitoring, there is ongoing work that will be finalized in 2026 to develop and agree with the GB on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to support a quantitative and qualitative analysis. This work is carried out in close collaboration with the NCCs and GB, as it is developed with WG4 (*Strategic advice* – please see below) of the GB. Following this exercise, annual reports will be available in upcoming years.

(c) Fostering cooperation and coordination with NCCs and the EU Cybersecurity Competence Community

The Network of NCCs is composed of all NCCs notified to the GB by the MS (Article 6.7 of the Regulation). NCCs function as contact points at the national level for the Community and the ECCC (Article 7.1(a) of the Regulation). They also provide support to carry out actions under the ECCC Regulation, and they can pass on financial support to local actors (Article 7.1(f) of the Regulation). 27 MS and 2 associated countries have notified to the GB the entities acting as their NCCs.

The dedicated Working Groups of the GB, revised during 2024, cooperate closely with the NCCs Network and deliver activities on the following:

- WG1: Community Building
- WG 2: Boost application process success
- WG 3: International awareness
- WG 4: Strategic advice
- WG 5: Cyber skills
- WG 6: Cyber Hubs

The ECCC provides support to the NCCs Network, and to the European Cybersecurity Competence Community.

Meetings of the NCCs and activities of the (2025) GB Working Groups

WG	Focus area	Activities and status
WG 1	Community building	During 2025, the WG focused on two main workstreams: developing recommendations following the WG in-person meeting and developing the survey on community needs. Recommendations address different topics related to community building and the community platform, such as better defining membership in the cybersecurity community, ATLAS platform functionalities, the functioning of the NCC network, and support to and from the ECCC. The community needs survey has collected a total of 350 responses and closed end of March 2026. Preliminary results indicate that 85% of respondents are not fully aware of the tasks of NCCs, 50% are willing to participate in the community, and 60% would like access to an experts' network and knowledge-sharing opportunities.
WG 2	Boost application Process Success	The WG has met regularly and has worked towards developing its work plan. The WG has received presentations and exchanged with the EDIH network. The Chair noted that a stronger mandate from the GB, further alignment between WGs mandates and common shared space for documents would be positive.
WG 3	International Awareness	Although the WG has not been active in 2025, it is still expected for the role of the group to grow. In the context of cooperation with Ukraine and other third countries, the group could serve as a valuable forum for discussion.
WG 4	Strategic Advice	During 2025 the group's priorities were focused on four areas: reflection on the ECF proposal, assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Agenda and contribution to the ECCC's KPI evaluation exercise, the post-2027 vision and Strategic Agenda, and, future-looking, on opportunities for Joint Actions managed by the ECCC.

¹⁸ Article 13.3(a) of the Regulation.

WG	Focus area	Activities and status
WG 5	Cyber Skills	The monthly meetings of the group remained well attended (30+ participants) in 2025, with the group functioning primarily as a platform for information sharing. The group focused on follow-up on the survey of group members to identify priority actions and topics, as well as received various presentations from the EC and ENISA on topics such as the industry-Academia Network and the training repository.
WG 6	Cyber Hubs	The WG met several times during 2025 and has started the work on defining its mandate in Annex I. The Working Group on Cyber Hubs (WG6) continued to serve as an important forum for advancing the implementation of the Cyber Solidarity Act. It actively contributed to ENISA's drafting of the Cyber Hub Interoperability Guidelines under Article 6(4) CSoA, which links to a wider collaboration between the Commission, ENISA, ECCC, Cross-Border Cyber Hubs, CSIRTs Network members and the ECCC-funded Coordination and Support Action CHIEF (Cybersecurity Hubs Interoperability and Cooperation Framework). Through the Working Group, input was provided on practical interoperability needs, information-sharing formats and protocols, including for the exchange of cyber threat intelligence and the use of standards and tools such as MISP, CSAF, STIX and TAXII. The Guidelines were finalized in February 2026. In parallel, the Working Group also supported the ECCC's mapping of the tools, infrastructure and services necessary to establish or enhance the capabilities of Cyber Hubs, which is mandated in Article 9(4) CSoA.

Supporting the NCCs Network. During 2025, the Network of NCCs had regular meetings and interactions, implementing its tasks as set out in the founding Regulation, and functioning as an integrated Network.

Three NCC Days were held (see table below). NCC Days are meetings of the NCC representatives, usually held in connection to Governing Board meetings to allow networking and live discussion on common issues, as well as to increase visibility of EU cybersecurity expertise, products and services.

NCC before 10th GB Meeting April 2025, Warsaw	NCCs focused on technical and strategic discussions on the ATLAS platform. An update to the Rules of Procedure of the Network was proposed, regarding the rotation of the Chairmanship to align with the EU Presidency.
NCC before 11th GB Meeting July 2025, Rome	Updated Rules of Procedure were confirmed to take effect from the following NCC Day. Discussions focused on the set up of the first Strategic Advisory Group and its procedure. A presentation was held on the lessons learned in cyber resilience in Ukraine.
NCC before 12th GB Meeting October 2025, Leon	The meeting marked the first chair (NCC-IE) and co-chair (NCC-CY) rotation, as well as the selection of the voluntary co-chair (NCC-ES). The Network was informed of the cybersecurity state of play in Moldova.

ECCC continued to provide secretarial support to the Network. The Mattermost communication tool, updated with the new configuration of the Working Groups, continued to be provided. There was an increase in access requests and in communication through the platform, such as for setting priorities for NCCs days etc.

ECCC started the consultation on the migration from Mattermost to an ECCC-owned MS365 solution that would also address other requests from NCCs (e.g. possibility to work together on shared documents, phone book with NCCs members, common mailing list etc.).

ECCC continued to manage the functional mailbox available to NCCs (ncc@eccc.europa.eu), through which NCCs communicate with the ECCC and can also request the dissemination of their messages to the whole network. An increased number of partner search requests have been shared through the functional mailbox.

Working with the Cybersecurity Competence Community. The ATLAS platform to support the Cybersecurity Competence Community has been designed to gather a large, open, and diverse group of actors involved in cybersecurity technology, including in particular research entities, supply/demand-side industries and the public sector that conduct activities in line with EU strategic autonomy.

Atlas cybersecurity platform went live on 1st December 2025. NCCs have the possibility to send the information on national communities' entities to Atlas. Atlas members can currently view professional contact details of other registered entities. The number of entities registered in the platform has continuously increased. Registrations were delayed for some NCCs due to issues with the open-source middleware solution (OpenXeco) they used. NCCs continued to develop and finalise their national registrations tools. Leading up to the go-live of ATLAS, the Data Privacy Notice was updated and made available on the Atlas portal. The Data Sharing Agreement was finalised. To date, almost all NCCs have signed the Data Sharing Agreement with the ECCC.

The Cybersecurity Competence Community, particularly through the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), is expected to provide, as of Q2/2026, input to the activities and work plan of the ECCC, and it benefits from the Community-building activities of the ECCC and the Network. (The call for SAG was launched at the end of 2025, and the group is expected to function as of Q2/2026).

The ECCC continued to undertake certain tasks in cooperation with ENISA (Article 3.2 of the Regulation) that are delivered in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two organisations in August 2023.

Important actions undertaken in this activity area in 2025 include the following:

Area	Expected activities (defined in SPD)	Expected results (defined in SPD)	Achieved results by end of 2025
Strategic advice and promotion of research, innovation and deployment of cybersecurity	Priorities for promoting research, innovation and deployment of cybersecurity Dissemination activities and strategic advice	Develop or update priorities for promoting research, innovation and deployment of cybersecurity Dissemination activities and strategic advice ECCC supports the respective Working Groups of the ECCC GB and its Chairs as secretariat and is seeking collaboration with ENISA.	In 2025, the ECCC continued to implement its communication and dissemination strategy (approved in 2024) and its communication plan. With the achievement of financial autonomy in autumn 2024, the team also fully took over the communication tasks previously handled by the European Commission. The main actions undertaken to promote the Centre's work included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of Info Days (I) to inform stakeholders about ECCC funding opportunities and to facilitate consortia building. • Participation with ECCC booths at two major European cybersecurity events. • Ad-hoc participation in events organized, for example, by National Coordination Centres. • Adoption of a multi-channel approach to reach a wider audience, using the website, social media accounts, and newsletter as the main communication tools. • Conclusion of a Contribution Agreement with ENISA through which Team Europe and OpenECSC activities are supported. • Continuous content and secretariat support to the activity of the five active Working Groups.
Revision and monitoring of Strategic Agenda, development of Work programmes for ECCC, DEP, HEP	Strategic Agenda Revision of the adopted Strategic Agenda, following consultation with all relevant actors (EC, NCCs, Community, ENISA, SAG) to prepare next version of the Strategic Agenda Monitoring the implementation of the previous Strategic Agenda adopted in 2023. Periodic reporting on the monitoring of the Strategic Agenda. Dissemination of the Agenda to relevant stakeholders,	- Preparation of the revised version of the Strategic Agenda by Q3/25 - Report on the implementation of the current Strategic Agenda by Q2/25 - Contributions to dissemination activities regarding the Agenda and research and innovation priorities	At the Governing Board meeting in October 2025, the Board mandated WG4 to carry an assessment regarding the role of ECCC in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and proposed ECF (European Competitiveness Fund) and to start working toward future strategic agenda in 2026. The WG4 worked closely with ECCC to reflect on the upcoming policy documents and the role of ECCC in the next MFF and also discussed the tentative KPIs to measure the implementation of the ECCC Strategic Agenda (this activity will continue during 2026 when the first monitoring of the Strategic Agenda implantation will be prepared). The ECCC provided updates of the ECCC activities at each GB meeting. Such updates included also the report on the implementation of the Work Programmes. Annex IX provides an overview of the calls launched during 2025. During 2025 the ECCC GB adopted the DEP WP for Cybersecurity 2025-2027. The WP was amended twice during

Area	Expected activities (defined in SPD)	Expected results (defined in SPD)	Achieved results by end of 2025
	<p>including the HEP Program Committee</p> <p>Work programmes related activities</p> <p>Development, adoption and monitoring of the multiannual work programme and the annual work programme for ECCC and for DEP and HEP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of draft and final SPDs by statutory deadlines - Report on the implementation of the 2025-2027 DEP Work Programme by Q4/25 - Timely input into the consultation related to DEP or HEP 	<p>2025 to reflect the updating cybersecurity context and needs for financing - including of regional (undersea) cable hubs. The Draft and final SPD 2026-2028 were adopted according to the statutory deadlines; furthermore SPD 2025-2027 was amended twice in 2025 to reflect the adoption of HE 2025 programme and the amendments of DEP WP 2025-2027. While the ECCC is the author of the Cybersecurity DEP WP 2025-2027, the ECCC contributed, via EC, to the discussions for the preparation of the HEP.</p>
<p>Fostering cooperation and coordination with NCCs and the EU cybersecurity competence community</p>	<p>Network of National Coordination Centres:</p> <p>Complete the setting-up of the Network and smooth functioning as an integrated Network</p> <p>Implement and update the indicative "service catalogue" for NCCs</p> <p>Further definition and implementation of modalities of interaction between the ECCC and the Network of NCCs (coordination mechanisms, alignment of activities, organisation of workshops/recurrent meetings, etc.)</p> <p>Cybersecurity Competence Community (stakeholders):</p> <p>Community registrations and development of associated tools</p> <p>Support new Community registrations, develop relevant tools and stimulate activities</p> <p>Community participation to the activities of the working groups, where relevant</p> <p>Maintain the EU "cybersecurity market observatory" in coordination with ENISA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Network of National Coordination Centres (NCCs) is fully established and functioning seamlessly, enabling effective communication and collaboration among member countries with approved rules of procedures and reporting forms by Q2/25 - A comprehensive and up-to-date "service catalogue" for NCCs is implemented and maintained. This catalogue outlines the range of common services and capabilities offered by NCCs to the Cybersecurity Competence Community (CCC) by Q4/25 - ECCC facilitates the registration process of national members to the CCC, including on clear organisational and technical guidelines. - Well-defined and efficient coordination mechanisms are established between the ECCC and the Network of NCC set up by Q3/25. Regular workshops and meetings are organized to facilitate alignment of activities, sharing of best practices, and collaborative efforts. - Measures to sustain the NCC's to ensure the continuous functioning of the network and ensuring appropriate funding in line with DEP WP. 	<p><i>Network of National Coordination Centres</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completed. By the end of 2023 all MS had notified their NCCs. The network meets regularly in a plenary format, at least three times a year on the margins of regular Governing Board meeting. The Network has increasingly met in informal formats as well. The Network has continued to use Mattermost shared communication and information platform. The Secretariat regularly informs the Network of relevant developments, related to governance documents or events of interest. Secretariat also supports the Network by disseminating requests for partner search related to the ongoing calls. The Rules of Procedure for the NCC Network were updated on the occasion of the NCCs Day in July 2025. - In progress. The tasks assigned to the NCCs by Article 7 of the ECCC Regulation are progressively being implemented. NCCs also directly communicate with their national communities about the range of services they are able to provide. The large majority of NCCs benefit from DEP grants. - In progress, continuous. The Rules of Procedure for the NCC Network were updated on at the NCCs Day in July 2025. The October NCC Network Day marked the rotation of a new NCC Network Chair and Vice-Chair, and the election of the voluntary Deputy Chair according to the updated NCC Network Rules of Procedure (RoP). <p>ECCC continued to provide secretarial support to the Network and continue to manage the communication channels. An increased number of partner search requests have been shared through the functional mailbox. Several NCCs Network Days and informal meetings were organized (see below "NCC meetings and interactions" table).</p> <p><i>Cybersecurity Competence Community (stakeholders):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieved, in progress continuously. Atlas cybersecurity platform went live on 1st December 2025. The community registration form was also updated and approved by the GB. The Community registration Guidelines were also updated and serve as an internal guidance document for the NCCs when considering entities' applications. - New community registrations are continuously being supported. ECCC regularly shares information with the Network about the status of registrations to Atlas. - The Market Observatory developed by ECCO was transferred to the ECCC at the end of 2024. Currently it is not open to NCCs users, security aspects are still being addressed. - During 2025, the call for the expression of interest for membership to the Strategic Advisory Group was prepared and launched. The appointment of the first iteration of the SAG will be finalised in 2026.

1.3 Achieved results in ACTIVITY DOMAIN #3

This section covers the activity domain “#3: Governance, establishment and compliance of ECCC”. The Activity focusses on all the managerial and administrative activities required to support the operational tasks of the ECCC.

After achieving its financial autonomy, the ECCC focuses mainly on its operational tasks, benefitting from the governance structures, rules, procedures and infrastructure in place. During 2025 the ECCC moved into the new premises and had the final ratification of the Headquarters Agreement with the Romanian Parliament. As 2025 was the first year after reaching autonomy, the focus has been on ensuring efficient and effective use of existing resources.

The main actions delivered during 2025 under this activity are as follows:

- Management of assets and (of financial and human) resources
 - Staff turnover from 14% in 2024 to 0% in 2025.
 - Achieved gender balance at staff level (58% female / 42 male%).
 - Increased outreach, leading to a significant rise in vacancy applications.
 - Set up core HR processes (appraisal, reclassification, objective setting).
 - Introduced IT tools to streamline recruitment and significantly reduce processing time.
 - Established the ECCC Staff Committee, as well as the Joint and Joint Reclassification Committee.
 - Finalised and implemented the interim workers framework contract.
 - Delegated Appointing Authority and Authorising Officer powers to strengthen ownership and accountability.
 - Developed an initial capability map to support competency-based HR management.
 - Established and strengthened procurement capacity to support operations.
 - Host Agreement signed in 2024 and ratified in 2025.
 - Rolled out core digital tools (Microsoft 365, ARES, Anaplan, Power BI) to enable integrated workflows.

Enhanced the data/server room in the new premises to support the internal network and resources. Drafted internal cybersecurity policies, governance, and risk management measures in line with statutory obligations.

- Governance, coordination and compliance
 - Risk assessment exercise developed and performed.
 - ED office, coordination and management of the ECCC.
 - Planning and programming activities and documents.
 - Relation with GB and ECCC stakeholders including host country; Secretariat for ECCC GB.
 - Liaison activities with other EU bodies in the remit of ECCC mandate.
 - Compliance and internal control.

- Initial work on several important internal control documents (Control Strategy, Deviations reporting procedure, Business Continuity Plan, decision on sensitive functions etc.), that was finalised in 2026.
- Communication, dissemination and outreach.
- Successful migration to HAN (Hermes – Ares – NomCom), while ensuring the functioning of the integrated systems (COMPASS, ABAC, MIPS, PPMT etc.).

In addition, in 2025, the ECCC operationalised the Staff Committee following the adoption of electoral rules by the general staff meeting on 17 March 2025. The Committee became operational during the year, providing a formal channel for staff representation and dialogue with management.

Important actions undertaken in this activity area during 2025 include the following:

Area	Expected activities (defined in SPD)	Expected results (defined in SPD)	Achieved results by end of 2025
<p>Governance, coordination and compliance</p>	<p>ED office, coordination and management of ECCC Planning and related programming activities and documents. Implement performance indicators. Relation with GB and ECCC stakeholders including host MS; Secretariat for ECCC GB Liaison activities with the other EU bodies in the remit of ECCC mandate Compliance and internal control Communication, dissemination and outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timely preparation, consultations, reviews and adoption of documents dedicated to planning and programming in line with the agreed timelines. - Transparency in decision making and involvement of relevant staff or staff committee as appropriate. - Satisfactory support to the relevant stakeholders – to be measure with a survey in Q3/25 - SLAs and MoUs agreed indicating the associated efficiency gains - High level of compliance with reduced number of recommendations following audits - Communication strategy development and implementation by Q4/25 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The statutory documents, SPDs (draft and final), CAAR have been consulted and adopted by the ECCC GB according to the agreed or statutory timelines. - Publishable minutes of the GB meetings are available on the ECCC website as well as the decisions of the ECCC GB. - The ECCC Staff Committee has been elected in 2025. A satisfaction survey has been launched in 2025. - The ECCC ran a GB satisfaction support survey for 2025 and aims to use the recommendations to improve the activities with the Board. - The ECCC continued to collaborate with ENISA based on the SLA and MOU and with other agencies and bodies. - The ECCC was audited by ECA during their audit on EU joint undertakings for the 2024 financial year. The Court issued an unqualified (clean) opinion on the reliability of the accounts, the legality and regularity of revenue and the legality and regularity of payments. The Audit report was published on 31.10.2025 and contains two recommendations for the ECCC. Several actions were defined and implemented to address the recommendations, and the ECCC considers them closed (pending confirmation from ECA). - In 2025, the ECCC continued to implement its communication and dissemination strategy (approved in 2024) and its communication plan. With the achievement of financial autonomy in autumn 2024, the team also fully took over the communication tasks previously handled by the European Commission.
<p>Management of assets and (of financial and human) resources</p>	<p>Consolidate financial and human resources Consolidate IT tools, ICT assets, security rules and other logistics aspects Building and facilities management, including environmental management Relations with host MS and adequate implementation of the Host Agreement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget implementation in line with the ICF KPI - HR policies and implementing rules in place, satisfaction of staff (survey launched in Q1/25) - Sustainable and environmentally friendly working conditions (survey launched in Q2/25) - Coordination team with Host Country set up by Q1/25 	<p>The ECCC reached an overall budget implementation of 89% for commitment appropriations and 69% for payment appropriations. The works for the Permanent Premises for the ECCC have been substantially completed in line with the defined requirements, and as of 31 March 2025, staff members have begun occupying the new facilities. These facilities are expected to provide a secure and efficient working environment for ECCC staff while supporting its operational needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Related to IT consolidation, in 2025 it was set-up the IT resources for the permanent premises (peripherals, LAN/Wi-Fi networks, printers). - Implementation of ARES platform. - Strengthened the use of collaboration tools, including Microsoft 365, Power BI, and SharePoint.

Area	Expected activities (defined in SPD)	Expected results (defined in SPD)	Achieved results by end of 2025
	Monitoring, evaluations, access to documents, reporting	- Timely reporting and timely follow up on requests, evaluations and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafted cybersecurity policies, governance, and risk controls to meet regulatory requirements - Implemented security monitoring services in accordance with the SLA with CERT-EU. - HR policies and implementing rules adopted in 2025 included decisions on teleworking equipment reimbursement, missions and travel reimbursement, and anti-harassment. In addition, the ECCC established and operationalised the Staff Committee and the Joint Reclassification Committee. - Recruitment and selection procedures: In 2025, recruitment activities resulted in the employment and onboarding of middle management AD12 as the Head of Administration and Head of Operations, and in the approval of Executive Director reserve lists for the following profiles: ECCC/2025/17 – AD 11 Finance, Procurement and Budget Lead, ECCC/CA/2025/19 – Programme Officer (FG IV), ECCC/2025/18 – Seconded National Expert, and ECCC/CA/2024/16 – Legal Officer.

1.4 Achieved results in 2025 for previous year

Some of the activities planned for 2024 were finalized only during 2025 and were therefore only partially reflected in the CAAR 2024:

- The ECCC moved to its final premises in April 2025.
- The Cybersecurity Competence Community platform Atlas was operationalized by the end of 2025, with the registration ongoing.
- The preparation for the Strategic Advisory Group was finalized in 2025, and the call was launched.
- Several activities related to the Internal Control System and Strategy, as well as IT governance and strategy were concluded during 2025.

PART II. MANAGEMENT

2.1. Governing Board

During 2025 three official meetings of the GB were organized and one additional Ad-Hoc meeting in November dedicated to the final consultation regarding DEP WP 2025-2027.

During these meetings several important decisions and topics were covered¹⁹ which are necessary for the functioning of the Centre. In 2025, the GB adopted the first DEP Cybersecurity WP 2025-2027 with two amendments, the SPD 2025-2027 has been amended twice to take account of the HE WP 2025 and the amendments of the DEP Cybersecurity WP 2025-2027, the draft SPD 2026-2028 and the associated budget. Other decisions covered the update of set-up of specific working groups of the GB dedicated to areas of interest as well as rules for recruitment of SNE and other rules, like anti-harassment rules or mission reimbursement rules.

2.2. Major Developments

The Governing Board formally met 3 times and had one more Ad-Hoc meeting during 2025. The GB provided strategic guidance to the ECCC by adopting decisions necessary for the ECCC to operate, including Cybersecurity DEP WP 2025-2027.

If 2024 the ECCC become financially autonomous from the European Commission, signed with the Romanian Government a Host agreement, the ratification in the Romanian Parliament took place in Q1/2025 and also in April 2025 the ECCC moved to the permanent premises. In 2025 the Centre welcomed the two Heads of Units and progressed with the covering of the establishment plan.

The ECCC evolves in a dynamic cybersecurity political context. The NIS Directive 2 has been transposed in many national laws in 2025 while the Cyber Resilience Act and Cyber Solidarity Act were adopted early 2025 and entered into force. Within this broader framework of EU policy priorities in cybersecurity, the ECCC will pool resources from the EU, MS and other constituencies to improve and strengthen technological and industrial cybersecurity capacities, enhancing the EU's open strategic autonomy, and offering a possibility to consolidate part of the cybersecurity-related activities funded under HEP and DEP.

The ECCC and the Network of NCCs will contribute to maximising the effects of investments to strengthen the EU's leadership and open strategic autonomy in the field of cybersecurity and support technological capacities, capabilities and skills, and to increase the EU's global competitiveness. They will do so with input from industry and academic communities in cybersecurity, including SMEs and research centres, which will benefit from a more systematic, inclusive and strategic collaboration, having regard to the cohesion of the EU and all of its MS. The ECCC, the Network and the Community will benefit from the experience and the collaboration of the relevant stakeholders.

¹⁹ For a complete list of decisions and minutes of GB meetings please visit the page dedicated to GB on ECCC website: https://cybersecurity-centre.europa.eu/governing-board_en

Furthermore, the ECCC shall cooperate with relevant EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, in particular with ENISA, in order to ensure consistency and complementarity while avoiding any duplication of effort.

In general, the objectives of ECCC and the work carried out by now by ECCC reflect the EU's policy priorities, while containing common, industrial, technology and research priorities which are based on the needs identified by MS in cooperation with the Community and which require the focus of EU financial support, including key technologies and domains for developing the EU's own capabilities in cybersecurity (Article 13 of the ECCC Regulation).

2.3. Budgetary and financial management

The ECCC gained its financial autonomy on 24 September 2024 and 2025 was the first year of autonomy.

In 2025, the ECCC achieved 89 % rate of commitment appropriations implementation and 69% of payment appropriations.

Following the EU General Budget approved by the budgetary authority, the ECCC's voted budget for the financial year 2025 was amended as follows:

- EUR 55.0 million in payment appropriations had been added to the budget for the Horizon Europe Programme²⁰
- EUR 15.0 million of commitment appropriations had been returned to the EU General Budget for the Digital Europe Programme.
- EUR 90.55 million had been inscribed to the 2025 budget as assigned revenue following the Contribution Agreement signed between the European Commission and the ECCC.²¹

For further details please see Annex II.

2.4. Delegation and sub-delegation

N/A.

2.5 Human Resources (HR) management

In 2025, the ECCC recorded an average occupancy rate of 87% of active employees relative to the establishment plan. At the end of 2025, the ECCC had 33 out of the 37 posts occupied. The overall staff turnover rate was 0% with no departure.

For Temporary Agents (TAs), 80% of positions were filled, with 8 out of 10 posts occupied. Contract Agents (CAs) show a higher occupancy rate, with 93% of posts filled (25 out of 27). While the recruitment procedure for the Seconded National Expert (SNE) was completed in 2025, the onboarding is expected to be finalised in Q1 2026.

Despite no staff turnover recorded during the year, recruitment activities faced notable challenges. Out of the 15 job offers issued across various grades and functions, 7 offers

²⁰ DECISION No GB/2025/7

²¹ Contribution Agreement 1/2025 – ARES(2025)7087348 – 01/09/2025

were declined, all relating exclusively to FG IV positions (Legal Officer, Programme Officer and Financial Officer).

Occupancy Rates by Staff Category:

- **Temporary Agents (TAs):** 80% (8 out of 10 posts filled)
- **Contract Agents (CAs):** 93% (25 out of 27 posts filled)
- **Seconded National Experts (SNEs):** 0% (0 out of 1 post filled)

Staff-Related Decisions Adopted in 2025:

1. **ECCC GB Decision No. 2025/10 on Mission Guide** – implementing rules for the missions of staff.
2. **ECCC GB Decision No.2025/17 on Anti-harassment** – implementing rules.

Gender representation

	Female	Male	Grand Total
Count	19	14	33
Percent	58%	42%	100%

These developments reflect the ECCC’s ongoing efforts to support staff welfare and improve working conditions. While the main challenges identified in 2024 remained relevant, 2025 was marked by a transition requiring new organisational structures, HR processes and staffing levels.

The ECCC faced the following main challenges:

- **Attraction of Talent for CA Posts:** Despite the significant increase in number of applications for the ECCC, there has been difficulty in attracting qualified candidates to fill Contract Agent positions effectively due also to the very low correction coefficient of Romania.
- **Geographical Balance:** Ensuring equitable representation across different regions remains a priority, aligning with organisational goals for diversity and inclusion.
- **Change management related to the move to permanent premises:** Although the relocation was completed in 2025, the working space remained subject to ongoing re-adaptation to support operational and staff needs.

2.6. Strategy for efficiency gains

Since July 2022, the ECCC is an observer and then a member of the EU Agencies Network (EUAN), which gives access to a Network of agencies, JUs (Joint Undertakings) and other EU bodies, and the opportunity to exchange knowledge and best practices on horizontal issues for EU bodies.

Several SLAs with EPSO, DG HR, PMO, DIGIT, DG BUDG, CERT-EU, SG, CDT and RTD are in place and they were initially signed during 2024 to support the financial autonomy process.

The ECCC and ENISA signed a service level agreement (SLA) regarding shared services (i.e. Data Protection Officer and Accounting Officer services) that was afterwards extended. In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with ENISA in October 2023 with the aim to synchronize cybersecurity related activities. In addition, during 2025 the ECCC signed with ENISA a contribution agreement to facilitate the co-funding and the support of European Cybersecurity Challenges during 2026.

In 2025 the ECCC signed an SLA with EFSA for the management of serviced office premises in Brussels.

Please also see Annex VI for other SLAs.

2.7 Assessment of audit and ex-post evaluation results during the reporting year

The ex-post audits for Digital Europe Programme fall under the DEP Ex-post Audit Strategy (approved by the EU Commission and endorsed by all DEP implementing bodies) and HaDEA's DEP Ex-post Audit Work Programme.

For Horizon Europe (HE), the body responsible for the ex-post audits is the European Commission's Common Audit Service (CAS).

The overall representative error rate, at HE programme level is 4.38%, while the residual error rate is 4.05%.

The error rates based on the results of ex-post controls for Digital Europe on 31 December 2025 are:

- Detected error rate (DER) for the audits at family level finalised in 2025: 2,22%
- Residual error rate (RER) for the audits at family level finalised in 2025: 2,21%

These results stem from the initial 20 audits (23 participations) carried out so far, representing just 2.25% of the total Digital Europe population at the end of 2025. As most of the audits were closed in the last quarter of 2025, the implementation of the audit results is ongoing and could not yet lead to a reduction of the residual error rate as compared to the detected error rate.

As set out in the Digital Europe audit strategy, given that the number of audits will be limited during the first years of the implementation of the programme and that the resulting DEP error rate will therefore not be representative, the error rate of the Horizon Europe programme will be used as a reference for reporting purposes.

Digital Europe and Horizon Europe have similar grant conditions and in particular similar cost eligibility criteria and a comparable profile of beneficiaries. An analysis performed in early 2025 shows that Digital Europe is the programme (together with Erasmus 2027) that shares the most beneficiaries with Horizon Europe (approx. 48% of DEP unique beneficiaries). Both programmes therefore present a relatively similar risk of error.

Consequently, in the 2025 CAAR, the Horizon Europe error rates (4.38% DER, OWN RER) will be used for the estimation of the amount at risk for the Digital Europe grant expenditure.

Reservations are issued in the Consolidated Annual Activity Report as the residual error rates, for both DEP and HE are, at the end of 2025, above the 2% materiality threshold.

More details about this can be found in section 4.2 Reservations and in Annexes XI and XII of the present CAAR.

2.8a Follow up of recommendations and action plans for audits and evaluations

Following the Annual audit from the European Court of Auditors (ECA)²², for the financial year 2024, there were two recommendations addressed at the ECCC.

Recommendation 4

To ensure full end-of-year disclosure in the annual accounts on its achievements, the ECCC should collect data, monitor and report on the member states' voluntary financial and in-kind contributions to its joint actions, as well as their related financial contributions to its administrative costs.

Deadline for implementation: mid-2026.

Recommendation 6

The ECCC should complete implementation of its internal control framework to ensure the effectiveness of its management and control systems.

Deadline for implementation: mid-2026.

For both recommendations several actions were defined and implemented. The status was communicated to ECA on 24.04.2026 and formal closure is expected with the occasion of ECA's Annual Report for the financial year 2025.

2.8b Follow up of recommendations issued following investigations of OLAF

Not applicable. There were no recommendations from OLAF in the reporting period.

2.9 Follow up of observations from discharge authority

There are currently no observations from discharge authority addressed at the ECCC.

2.10 Environment management

The ECCC is not registered with EMAS yet. Its premises, provided by the Romanian authorities in Q2 2025, are located in a shared building on the Technical University campus. The building incorporates sustainable features, including south-oriented glazing for natural light and thermal gain, photovoltaic panels, a heat recovery system, automated lighting and water-saving fixtures, thermal insulation, and systems for optimizing indoor climate, lighting, energy use, and recovery.

2.11. Assessment by management

The ECCC's operational and corporate activities were implemented in accordance with the 2025 work programme, with the necessary guidance and support of the Governing Board. The ECCC conducts its operations in compliance with relevant legal

²² [Annual report on EU joint undertakings for the 2024 financial year](#)

requirements in an open manner via the management team, which monitors the implementation of operational and corporate activities on a regular basis.

The ECCC's management has reasonable assurance that the internal controls put in place are appropriate and functioning as intended. The assessment of the ECCC's internal control framework did not reveal any significant weaknesses, while some areas for improvement have been identified. In 2025, some risks were identified and managed, as further confirmed by the results of both internal and external audits performed throughout the year.

PART III. ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS

3.1 Effectiveness of internal control systems

The Governing Board of the ECCC adopted the ECCC's Internal Control Framework (ICF) on 6 December 2023²³ and the ECCC's revised Financial Rules on 15.04.2024²⁴.

The ICF is a principle-based system consisting of five Internal Control Components (Control environment, Risk Assessment, Control Activities, Information and communication, Monitoring activities) and 17 Internal Control Principles. Its aim is to ensure robust internal controls with the necessary flexibility to adapt to specific characteristics and circumstances of the ECCC.

All the internal control components and principles are interrelated and must be present and functioning at all levels of the organisation to be considered effective. Internal control monitoring criteria have been defined to ensure an adequate assessment of the presence and functioning of all internal control principles. The assessment is done at the level of principles, components, and the overall system.

In 2024, the ECCC developed Internal Control Framework (ICF) Indicators for monitoring the validity and effectiveness of its ICF²⁵.

In the first quarter of 2026, an assessment of the functioning and efficiency of the ICF in the year 2025 is performed based on the ICF Indicators. The results of the assessment show the presence and adequate functioning of all internal control components for the reporting year.

3.2 Assessment result

Internal control strengths and deficiencies

The identification of the internal control strengths and deficiencies was performed by analysing several sources:

Self-assessment by the ECCC

The self-assessment resulted in 85% of internal control monitoring indicators achieved or partially achieved in 2025.

This is an improvement of 19.55 percentual points over the results of 2024.

²³ [DECISION No GB/2023/12 of the Governing Board of the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre on the Internal Control Framework for effective management applicable to the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre, Ref.Ares\(2024\)157857-10/01/2024](#)

²⁴ [DECISION No GB/2024/3 of the Governing Board of the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre - Revision of DECISION No GB/2023/1 on the ECCC's Financial Rules](#)

²⁵ DECISION No ED/2024/1 of the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre Executive Director on the List of Internal Control Framework (ICF) Indicators

Internal control monitoring indicators	2025	Percentage
Achieved	43	71.67%
Not achieved	3	5%
Partially achieved	8	13.33%
Not available	6	10%
Total numbers of indicators	60	100%

The results are justified by the phase of the implementation of the ECCC, for which 2025 was the first full year of functioning as an independent body. The ECCC had to fulfil all the necessary activities, roles and functions with limited resources, which implied a clear prioritization of the things to be achieved. However, even in these conditions, constant progress has been made and this resulted in improved results of the internal control monitoring criteria.

Based on the Internal Control Monitoring Criteria, the Internal Control strengths and weaknesses were identified.

The table below highlights the main strengths and deficiencies/ actions to address them.

Assessment of ICF components

ICF components	Strengths	Actions to address deficiencies
I Control environment	Management sets the "tone at the top" and encourages staff to follow ethics training and compulsory "refresh" training. Internal control monitoring criteria (indicators) have been defined, together with their respective targets. Objectives are set for the most significant activities, and they are monitored. The Financial circuits ensure segregation of duties and respect of the "4-eyes" principle.	Revision of training Plan Fine tuning of the job descriptions and individual objectives for staff Establishing Mission statements specified for each unit. Declarations of assurance by the AODs, to be signed before the AO's declaration in the CAAR 2025.
II Risk assessment	Completion of the ECCC Risk Assessment exercise 2025, with the involvement of all relevant functions, and considering strategic and operational risks at all levels.	
III Control activities	The ECCC's IT Officer keeps an inventory of the IT assets. Adopted Cybersecurity Plan. ECCC log repository has been onboarded to CERT-EU monitoring services. The ECCC's Control Strategy was approved in early 2026.	Finalization of business continuity plan and performance vulnerability and scans for critical/ essential functions Draft an IT strategy
IV Information and communication	Definition and implementation of an external communication strategy and its implementation plan. Crisis communication has been included in the ECCC's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) as timely and clear communication is a critical aspect of responding effectively to a business disruption. Design of the whistleblowing process and preparation of the Guidelines on Whistleblowing	Create a comprehensive map of ECCC's stakeholders.
V Monitoring activities	Regular monitoring of non-conformities and follow-up	Monitor participation/ attendance at ethics and integrity capabilities/ training session Better document the risk-based and periodical assessment process,

Weaknesses spontaneously reported by staff

There were no weaknesses spontaneously reported by staff.

Exceptions and non-compliance events

The exceptions and non-compliance events are recorded in a Register, maintained by the Compliance Officer.

In 2025, there were 3 non-compliance events, and 4 exceptions registered.

For all the non-compliance events and the exceptions, the root cause analysis was performed, and corrections and corrective actions were defined and implemented.

Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of control and anti-fraud strategies

The ECCC's Anti-Fraud Strategy 2024-2026 and the related Action Plan were approved by the ECCC Governing Board on 27.06.2024. The Anti-fraud strategy 2024-2026 was drafted following completion of a dedicated Fraud Risk Assessment.

The Action Plan was implemented as follows:

- Total actions: 23
- Completed actions: 13 (+2 compared to last assessment)
- On-going actions: 2 (+1 compared to last assessment)
- Not-started actions: 7 (-2 compared to last assessment)
- Not applicable (no cases): 1 (-1 compared to last assessment)

Audit conclusions, findings and recommendations

In 2025, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) performed its annual audit for the financial year 2024. The ECCC was part of ECA's audit of the Joint Undertakings.

The Annual report for the 2024 financial year was published on 31.10.2025²⁶.

There are two recommendations addressed at the ECCC:

Recommendation 4: To ensure full end-of-year disclosure in the annual accounts on its achievements, the ECCC should collect data, monitor and report on the member states' voluntary financial and in-kind contributions to its joint actions, as well as their related financial contributions to its administrative costs. Deadline for implementation: mid-2026.

Recommendation 6: The ECCC should complete implementation of its internal control framework to ensure the effectiveness of its management and control systems. Deadline for implementation: mid-2026.

The ECCC has implemented actions to address these recommendations, and a status update was sent to ECA on 24.04.2026, in view of closing the recommendations.

In the spring of 2025, ECA has also started a performance audit on Significant and large-scale cybersecurity incidents. The auditees are: the European Commission (DG CNECT), ENISA and the ECCC. The clearing letter was received in January 2026, and

²⁶ [Annual report on EU joint undertakings for the 2024 financial year | European Court of Auditors](#)

written comments were provided, with the coordination of the Commission. The draft audit report was received on 22.04.2026.

The Internal Audit Service (IAS) made a risk assessment visit in 2025. As a result, the IAS strategic internal audit plan for 2026-2028 was established and communicated to the ECCC.

Overall, the results of the 2025 assessment show that ECCC's internal control system is present and functioning well (category 1). All the components and principles are present and functioning as intended, with only two principles that would benefit from adjustments and improvements that would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the principle and its elements.

I. CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The control environment component comprises a set of standards of conduct, processes, and structures that provide the basis for carrying out internal control activities across an organization.

At the management level, the overall tone regarding the importance of internal controls, including expected standards of conduct, is set by the parent DG CNECT - European Commission, the Governing Board, the Executive Director, and the rest of the top management.

The control environment component of the ICF is present and functioning well (Category 1).

ECCC initiated its commitment to integrity and ethical values, in particular by highlighting the importance of the ethics training and identification of a compulsory "refresher" training.

On short term, ECCC is planning to fine tune the job descriptions and individual objectives in Sysper for staff.

Principle	Assessment
1. Demonstrates commitment to integrity and ethical values	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
2. Exercises oversight responsibility	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
3. Establishes structure, authority and responsibility	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
4. Demonstrates commitment to competence	The principle is present and functioning, but some improvements are needed (category 2).
5. Enforces accountability	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).

II. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is a dynamic and iterative process for identifying and assessing risks that could affect the achievement of objectives and for determining how such risks should be managed.

The risk assessment component of the ICF is present and functioning well (Category 1).

In 2025, the ECCC has performed its first fully-fledged Risk Assessment, based on a risk assessment methodology that involved all relevant functions. The fraud risks and the IT risks are now followed-up in the general risk register of the ECCC

The ECCC has also taken part to the EUAN Peer review risk assessment exercise, where it provided input in the form of its most significant risks.

In 2026, substantial efforts will be dedicated to identifying the sensitive functions and implementing the business continuity plan of the ECCC.

Principle	Assessment
6. Specifies suitable objectives	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
7. Identifies and analyses risk	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
8. Assesses fraud risk	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
9. Identifies and analyses significant changes	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).

III. CONTROL ACTIVITIES

Control activities ensure the mitigation of risks related to the achievement of policies, operational and internal control objectives. They are performed at all levels of the organization, at various stages of business processes, and across the technology environment.

They may be preventive or detective, and they encompass a range of manual and automated activities, as well as segregation of duties. The control activities component of the ICF is present and functioning well (Category 1).

Principle	Assessment
10. Selects and develops control activities	The principle is present and functioning, but some improvements are needed (category 2).
11. Selects and develops general control over technology	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
12. Deploys through policies and procedures	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).

IV. Information and communication

Information delivered by means of internal and external communication is necessary for any organisation to carry out internal control activities and to support the achievement of objectives.

Internal communication provides staff with the information it needs to achieve its objectives and to carry out day-to-day controls, while external communication provides the public and stakeholders with information on the ECCC's policy objectives and actions. The information and communication component is present and functioning well (Category 1).

The ECCC's information and communication activities follow procedures that support the achievement of broader organizational objectives. In 2025, the ECCC has initiated a crisis communication strategy, as part of the business continuity plan.

An on-going action is the creation of a stakeholders map of the ECCC.

Principle	Assessment
13. Uses relevant information	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
14. Communicates internally	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
15. Communicates externally	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).

V. Monitoring activities

ECCC engages in continuous and specific assessments to ascertain whether each of the five ICF components is present and functioning. Continuous assessments, built into processes at different levels of the organization, provide timely information on any possible deficiencies.

ECCC regularly assesses all findings and promptly communicates and corrects deficiencies found.

The monitoring activities component is present and functioning well (Category 1). The ECCC continues to strengthen the monitoring and assessment of its internal controls which are based on input from reporting activities, external audits, analysis of exceptions and non-compliance events, internal risk register, implementation of the anti-fraud strategy.

In 2026, the ECCC shall better document the risk-based and periodical assessment process.

Principle	Assessment
16. Conducts ongoing and/or separate assessments	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).
17. Assesses and communicates deficiencies	The principle is present and functioning well (category 1).

Some of the improvement measures started in 2025 and their implementation will be finished in 2026 considering the ICF implementation planning deadlines (e.g. the ECCC control strategy). Progress will be monitored as part of the monitoring cycle.

Overall, in light with the results of the assessment, we can consider that the ECCC's control system as a whole works as planned and adequately mitigates the main risks to the achievement of ECCC's objectives.

Some moderate improvements are needed as mentioned above.

The monitoring of the functioning of ICF is continuous throughout the year (via specific assessment on parts of internal control which are riskier) and potential internal control deficiencies are discussed at the management level.

In conclusion, management has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable controls are in place and work as intended.

3.2 Conclusions of assessment of internal control systems

The conclusion of the assessment for 2025 is that the ECCC is compliant with its Internal Control Framework. However, some areas for improvement have been identified (as described above). These areas for improvement are justified by the maturity level of the organization and by the limited resources of the Centre, which required prioritization.

With regards to implementing the potential improvements identified in this exercise, a consolidated list of actions was established corresponding to each internal control principle (described above), which will be monitored throughout the year 2026.

3.3 Statement of the Internal Control Coordinator

Statement of the Internal Control Coordinator in charge of risk management and internal control

I, the undersigned,

Sorin Cursaru,

in my capacity as Internal Control Coordinator, in charge of risk management and internal control, declare that in accordance with the internal control framework adopted by the Governing Board of ECCC, I have reported my advice and recommendations on the overall state of internal control in the EU body to the Executive Director.

I hereby certify that the information provided in the present Consolidated Annual Activity Report and in its annexes is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and complete.

Bucharest, 2.06.2026

(e-signed)

Sorin Cursaru

Internal Control Coordinator

PART IV. MANAGEMENT ASSURANCE

4.1 REVIEW OF THE ELEMENTS SUPPORTING ASSURANCE

The declaration of assurance, provided by the authorising officer, is mainly based on the following four pillars:

- Regular monitoring of the KPIs set for operational, administrative and financial tasks through the formal periodical management reporting,
- Effectiveness of the internal controls and processes to detect weaknesses and to identify areas for improvement,
- The declarations of assurance of the Authorising Officers by Delegation (AODs),
- Assessment and reports from independent bodies (external evaluators, financial auditors (the ECA, complemented by a private audit firm), internal auditors (the IAS), etc.). As highlighted in the previous sections, by the operational, administrative and financial KPIs, and by the positive opinion of the ECA on the reliability of the provisional accounts and on the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the provisional accounts, and as no critical risks have been formulated by the IAS, management has sufficient assurance that the ECCC is adequately managed so as to safeguard its financial resources and to pursue the tasks which it was entrusted with.

4.2 RESERVATIONS

Considering the results of the 2024 annual audit performed by the ECA (published in 2025) and of the IAS Risk assessment performed in 2025, the 2025 results of the internal controls (ex post controls, review of the register of exceptions, the internal control framework assessment) and the 2025 results of the key financial and operational indicators, the authorising officer can conclude that the ECCC has operated in 2025 in such a way as to manage appropriately the risks.

In addition, the authorising officer has reasonable assurance that the allocated resources were used for their intended purpose, in compliance with the legal framework and in accordance with the principle of sound financial management.

The ex-post audits for the Digital Europe Programme (DEP) are managed by HaDEA, as per the DEP Ex-post Audit Strategy. Following the results of the audits performed by HaDEA in 2025, all entities implementing DEP were requested to include in the CAAR 2025 a reservation, as per Annex XI of the present document.

In addition, Annex XII contains the standard text, provided by DG RTD CAS, of a reservation related to the Horizon Europe error rates. However, it should be noted that no ECCC projects funded under Horizon Europe were audited in 2025.

PART V. DECLARATION OF ASSURANCE

DECLARATION OF ASSURANCE

I, the undersigned, Luca Tagliaretti, Executive Director of ECCC, in my capacity as authorising officer,

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

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement, on the information at my disposal, such as the results of the self-assessment and ex-post controls, and on the information provided by the Authorising Officers by Delegation (AODs).

- Confirm that I am not aware of anything not reported here which could harm the interests of the agency.
- Take note of the reservations on Digital Europe Programme and Horizon Europe Programme provided in Annexes XI and XII.

Bucharest, 2/06/2026

(e-signed)

Luca Tagliaretti

Executive Director

ANNEXES

ANNEX I. CORE BUSINESS STATISTICS

The Centre adopted in March 2025 its first DEP Work Programme 2025-2027 relying on the ECCC strategic agenda. Building on the consultation with the EC and MSs, the DEP WP was amended twice in 2025, refining this way topics for EU investment in cybersecurity to be implemented by ECCC for 2025-2027. Several calls for proposals were published in 2025, and joint procurements were also launched.

Member States and countries associated to the ECCC have set up their National Coordination Centres, in most cases supported by EU funding, which significantly increased their activity throughout 2025, many NCCs applied again to top up their resources in the new call dedicated to NCCs. They have also structured cooperation amongst themselves through the Network of NCCs, which started to meet regularly in 2023 and continued to meet also in 2025. The ECCC working groups (WGs) structure has been updated during 2024 and in 2025 their rules of procedure were updated with clear scope for each of them.

The Governing Board formally met 3 times in 2025 and held one more Ad-Hoc meeting in November 2025. The ECCC GB continue to provide strategic guidance to the ECCC and adopted decisions necessary for the ECCC to operate.

ANNEX II. STATISTICS ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Budget Outturn Report

The budget outturn for the financial year corresponds to the total EU Contribution and other external/internal assigned revenues cashed, minus the total eligible expenditures incurred during the financial year (executed payments and appropriations carried over) adjusted with items originating from the previous financial year. The purpose of this calculation is to determine the amount of balancing subsidy that is considered as revenue of the ECCC out of the pre-financing balancing subsidy cashed for the year.

in EUR	2025
Revenue	
Balancing subsidy from Commission / Contribution agreement	246,203,837.34
Recoveries Operation	1,070,463.20
Total revenue (a)	247,274,300.54
Expenditure	
Title 1 - Staff expenditures	
Payments	2,708,773.02
Appropriations carried over to the following year	165,366.40
Title 2 - Infrastructure and operating expenditures	
Payments	423,184.83
Appropriations carried over to the following year	706,879.22
Title 3 - Operational expenditures	
Payments	174,833,374.24
Appropriations carried over to the following year	100,000.00
Total expenditure (b)	178,937,577.71
Outturn for the financial year (a)-(b)	68,336,722.83
Cancellation of unused payment appropriations carried over from previous year	14,197,563.67
Adjustment for carry-over from the prev. year of appropriations available at 31.12 arising from assigned revenue	91,557.02
Exchange rate differences	-404.29
BALANCE OF THE OUTTURN ACCOUNT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	82,625,439.23

Implementation of budget expenditure

- *Current year appropriations – breakdown and changes in commitment appropriations*

		Budget appropriations							Additional appropriations		Total appopr. available
	Item	Initial adopted budget	Amending budgets	Transfers	Final adopted budget	Carry-overs	Assigned revenue	Total			
		1	2	3	4=1+2+3	5	6	7=5+6	8=4+7		
A-1111	Salaries and allowances for temporary and permanent	1 350	0	80	1 430	66	0	66	1 496		
A-1121	Salaries and allowances for contractual agents	1 800	0	(255)	1 545	15	0	15	1 560		
A-1131	Seconded national experts, interim staff and train	100	0	0	100	0	0	0	100		
A-1141	Trainings and Recruitment	184	0	0	184	38	0	38	221		
A-1151	Social welfare and medical services	95	0	0	95	16	0	16	111		
Total Title A-1		3 529	0	(175)	3 354	135	0	135	3 488		
A-2111	Rental of building and associated costs	60	0	36	96	0	0	0	96		
A-2121	Computer centre operations and data processing	350	0	334	684	115	0	115	799		
A-2131	Moveable property and associated costs	100	0	(100)	0	2	0	2	2		
A-2141	Current administrative expenditure	450	0	(96)	354	15	0	15	369		
Total Title A-2		960	0	175	1 135	133	0	133	1 268		
B3-111	DEP Programme	114 717	(15 000)	0	99 717	42 623	100	42 723	142 440		
B3-121	Horizon Programme	0	0	0	0	29 256	90 550	119 806	119 806		
B3-131	Evaluations and Programme tools	1 000	0	180	1 180	0	0	0	1 180		
B3-141	Publication, communication and translation costs	110	0	(81)	29	35	0	35	64		
B3-151	Statutory, technical meetings and Studies	200	0	(79)	121	1	0	1	122		
B3-161	Missions	180	0	(20)	160	38	0	38	198		
Total Title B0-3		116 207	(15 000)	0	101 207	71 952	90 650	162 602	263 810		
GRAND TOTAL		120 696	(15 000)	(0)	105 696	72 219	90 650	162 869	268 565		

- Current year appropriations – breakdown and changes in payment appropriations

EUR '000											
Item	Budget appropriations					Additional appropriations			Total	Total approp. available	
	Initial adopted budget	Amending budgets	Transfers	Final adopted budget	Carry-overs	Assigned revenue	7=5+6	8=4+7			
	1	2	3	4=1+2+3	5	6					
A-1111 Salaries and allowances for temporary and permanent	1 350	0	80	1 430	74	0	74	1504			
A-1121 Salaries and allowances for contractual agents	1 800	0	(255)	1 545	15	0	15	1 560			
A-1131 Seconded national experts, interim staff and train	100	0	0	100	15	0	15	115			
A-1141 Trainings and Recruitment	184	0	0	184	62	0	62	246			
A-1151 Social welfare and medical services	95	0	0	95	18	0	18	113			
Total Title A-1	3 529	0	(175)	3 354	185	0	185	3 538			
A-2111 Rental of building and associated costs	60	0	36	96	20	0	20	116			
A-2121 Computer centre operations and data processing	350	0	334	684	555	0	555	1 240			
A-2131 Moveable property and associated costs	100	0	(100)	0	2	0	2	2			
A-2141 Current administrative expenditure	450	0	(96)	354	100	0	100	454			
Total Title A-2	960	0	175	1 135	677	0	677	1 812			
B3-111 DEP Programme	185 985	0	0	185 985	343	100	443	186 428			
B3-121 Horizon Programme	0	55 000	0	55 000	16 904	0	16 904	71 904			
B3-131 Evaluations and Programme tools	1 000	0	180	1 180	0	0	0	1 180			
B3-141 Publication, communication and translation costs	110	0	(81)	29	36	0	36	64			
B3-151 Statutory, technical meetings and Studies	200	0	(79)	121	68	0	68	189			
B3-161 Missions	180	0	(20)	160	50	0	50	210			
Total Title B0-3	187 475	55 000	0	242 475	17 400	100	17 500	259 975			
GRAND TOTAL	191 964	55 000	(0)	246 964	18 262	100	18 362	265 326			

- Implementation of commitment appropriations

EUR '000													
Item	Total approp. available	Commitments made					Appropriations carried over to 2026			Appropriations lapsing			
		from final adopt. Budget	from carry-overs	from assign. Revenue	Total	%	Assign. Revenue	By decision	Total	from final adopt. Budget	from carry-overs	from assign. Revenue	Total
		C1 funds	C2 funds	R0 funds	5=2+3+4	6=5%	C4 funds	C2 funds	9=7+8	C1 funds	C2 funds	R0 funds	13=10+11+12
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
A-1111 Salaries and allowances for temporary and	1 496	1 387	0	0	1 387	93 %	0	0	0	43	66	0	109
A-1121 Salaries and allowances for contractual agents	1 560	1 303	0	0	1 303	84 %	0	0	0	242	15	0	257
A-1131 Seconded national experts, interim staff and train	100	66	0	0	66	66 %	0	0	0	34	0	0	34
A-1141 Trainings and Recruitment	221	100	0	0	100	45 %	0	0	0	84	38	0	121
A-1151 Social welfare and medical services	111	19	0	0	19	17 %	0	0	0	76	16	0	92
Total Title A-1	3 488	2 874	0	0	2 874	82 %	0	0	0	479	135	0	614
A-2111 Rental of building and associated costs	96	96	0	0	96	100 %	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A-2121 Computer centre operations and data processing	799	680	0	0	680	85 %	0	0	0	5	115	0	120
A-2131 Moveable property and associated costs	2	0	0	0	0	0 %	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
A-2141 Current administrative expenditure	369	354	0	0	354	96 %	0	0	0	0	15	0	15
Total Title A-2	1 268	1 130	0	0	1 130	89 %	0	0	0	5	133	0	138
B3-111 DEP Programme	142 440	99 717	42 623	0	142 340	100 %	100	0	100	0	0	0	0
B3-121 Horizon Programme	119 806	0	0	90 550	90 550	76 %	0	0	0	0	29 256	0	29 256
B3-131 Evaluations and Programme tools	1 180	1 175	0	0	1 175	100 %	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
B3-131 REA - Expert evaluations													
B3-141 Publication, communication and translation costs	64	28	0	0	28	45 %	0	0	0	0	35	0	35
B3-151 Statutory, technical meetings and Studies	122	75	0	0	75	62 %	0	0	0	46	1	0	47
B3-161 Missions	198	140	0	0	140	71 %	0	0	0	20	38	0	58
Total Title B0-3	263 810	101 136	42 623	90 550	234 308	89 %	100	0	100	56	29 597	0	29 401
GRAND TOTAL	268 565	105 140	42 623	90 550	238	89 %	100	0	100	56	29 597	0	30 153

- Implementation of payment appropriations

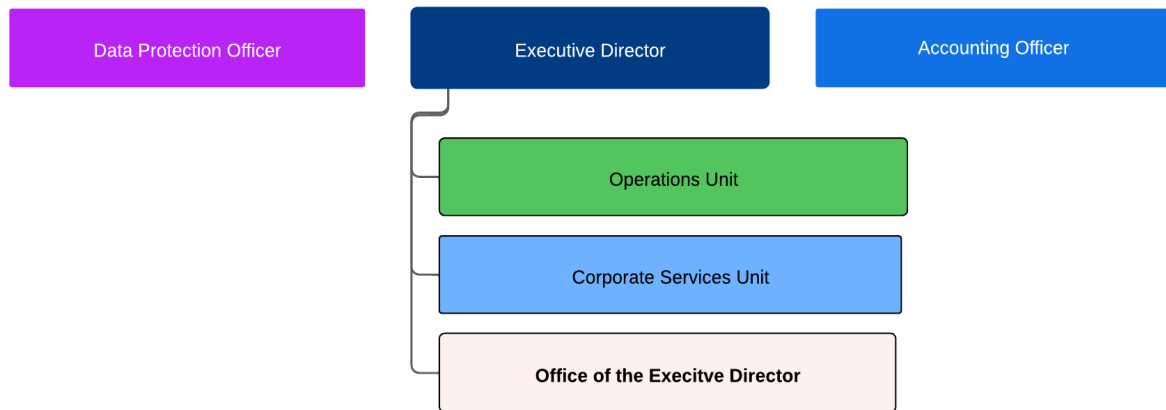
EUR '000														
Item	Total approp. availab.	Payments made					Appropriations carried over to 2026				Appropriations lapsing			
		from final adopt. Budget	from carry-overs	from assign. Revenue	Total	%	Autom. carry-overs	By decision	Assigned rev.	Total	from final adopt. Budget	from carry-overs	from assign. Revenue	Total
		C1 funds	C2/CB funds	R0 funds	5=2+3+4	6=5%	C1 funds	C2 funds	C4 funds	10=C7+B9	C1 funds	C2/CB funds	R0 funds	14=11+12+13
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
A-1111 Salaries and allowances for temporary and permanent	1 504	1 350	8	0	1 358	90 %	37	0	0	37	43	66	0	109
A-1121 Salaries and allowances for contractual agents	1 560	1 303	0	0	1 303	84 %	0	0	0	0	242	15	0	257
A-1131 Seconded national experts, interim staff and train	115	32	15	0	47	41 %	34	0	0	34	34	0	0	34
A-1141 Trainings and Recruitment	246	8	18	0	26	10 %	92	0	0	92	84	45	0	129
A-1151 Social welfare and medical services	113	16	0	0	16	14 %	3	0	0	3	76	18	0	94
Total Title A-1	3 538	2 709	41	0	2 749	78 %	165	0	0	165	479	144	0	623
A-2111 Rental of building and associated costs	116	49	14	0	63	54 %	47	0	0	47	0	5	0	5
A-2121 Computer centre operations and data processing	1 240	206	437	0	644	52 %	473	0	0	473	5	118	0	123
A-2131 Moveable property and associated costs	2	0	0	0	0	0 %	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
A-2141 Current administrative expenditure	454	168	81	0	249	55 %	186	0	0	186	0	19	0	19
Total Title A-2	1 812	423	533	0	956	53 %	707	0	0	707	5	145	0	149
B3-111 DEP Programme	186 428	120 154	343	0	120 497	65 %	0	0	100	100	65 831	0	0	65 831
B3-121 Horizon Programme	71 904	53 876	3 148	0	57 025	79 %	0	0	0	0	1 124	13 756	0	14 879
B3-131 Evaluations and Programme tools	1 180	536	0	0	536	45 %	0	0	0	0	644	0	0	644
B3-131 REA - Expert evaluations														
B3-141 Publication, communication and translation costs	64	29	0	0	29	45 %	0	0	0	0	0	36	0	36
B3-151 Statutory, technical meetings and Studies	189	114	0	0	114	61 %	0	0	0	0	7	68	0	74
B3-161 Missions	210	123	0	0	123	59 %	0	0	0	0	37	50	0	87
Total Title B0-3	299 975	174 833	3 491	0	178 324	69 %	0	0	100	100	67 642	13 909	0	81 551
GRAND TOTAL	265 326	177 968	4 064	0	182 030	69 %	872	0	100	972	68 128	14 198	0	82 324

Overview of outstanding commitments

Item	Commitments outstanding at the end of previous year				Commitments of the current year				Total commit. outstanding at year-end 9=4+8
	Commitment carried forward from previous year 1	Discommit. Revaluation Cancellations 2	Payments 3	Total 4=1+2+3	Commitments made during the year 5	Payments 6	Cancellation of commit. which cannot be carried forward 7	Commit. outstanding at year-end 8=5-6-7	
A-1111 Salaries and allowances for temporary and permanent	8	(0)	8	0	1 387	1 350	0	37	37
A-1121 Salaries and allowances for contractual agents	0	0	0	0	1 303	1 303	0	0	0
A-1131 Seconded national experts, interim staff and train	15	0	15	0	66	32	0	34	34
A-1141 Trainings and Recruitment	25	(7)	18	0	100	8	0	92	92
A-1151 Social welfare and medical services	2	(2)	0	0	19	16	0	3	3
Total Title A-1	50	(9)	41	0	2 874	2 709	0	165	165
A-2111 Rental of building and associated costs	20	(5)	14	0	96	49	0	47	47
A-2121 Computer centre operations and data processing	440	(3)	437	0	680	206	0	473	473
A-2141 Current administrative expenditure	95	(4)	91	0	354	158	0	195	195
Total Title A-2	545	(12)	533	0	1 130	423	0	707	707
B3-111 DEF Programme	358 850	(3 200)	89 124	295 536	142 340	31 373	0	110 967	377 503
B3-121 Horizon Programme	82 740	0	57 025	25 715	90 550	0	0	90 550	116 265
B3-131 Evaluations and Programme tools	397	0	9	388	1 175	527	0	648	1 036
B3-141 Publication, communication and translation costs	1	(0)	0	0	28	28	0	0	0
B3-151 Statutory, technical meetings and Studies	79	(5)	74	0	75	41	0	34	34
B3-161 Missions	12	(2)	10	0	140	113	0	27	27
Total Title BB-3	442 089	(3 208)	146 242	292 639	234 308	32 082	0	202 226	494 865
GRAND TOTAL	442 684	(3 229)	146 816	292 639	238 312	35 214	0	203 099	495 737

ANNEX III. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

An organisational chart was approved by the Executive Director in March 2025 and is presented below. The Data Protection Officer and the Accounting Officer functions are provided by ENISA under a service-level agreement (SLA).



ANNEX IV. ESTABLISHMENT PLAN AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

ECCC Establishment Plan 2025 included 10 TA posts, 27 CA and 1 SNE.

Temporary Agents

Function group and grade	Establishment plan 2025	Posts filled 31.12.2025	Posts vacant
AD 16			
AD 15			
AD 14	1	1	
AD 13			
AD 12	2	2	0
AD 11	2		2
AD 10			
AD 9			
AD 8	3	3	
AD 7	2	2	
AD 6			
AD 5			
AD TOTAL	10	8	2

Contract Agents and Seconded National Experts

Function group and grade	Authorised budget 2025	Headcount 31.12.2025	Vacant
FGIV	21	19	2
FGIII	2	2	0
FGII	4	4	0
TOTAL	27	25	2
Seconded national experts	Authorised budget 2025	Headcount 31.12.2025	Vacant
TOTAL	1	0	1

The table below presents the levels at which the key functions listed by the Commission are represented at the ECCC.

Function group and grade	Type of contract (TA or CA)	Function group, grade of recruitment	Administrative support or operations
Head of Unit (level 2)	TA	AD 12	administration/operations
Senior Officer	TA	AD 8, AD7	administration/operations
Officer	CA	FG IV	administration/operations
Assistants	CA	FG III, FG II	administration/operations

ECCC benchmarking exercise

Job type category	2025	Overall %
Administrative support and Coordination	8	24%
Administrative support	6	
Coordination	2	
Operational	19	58%
Programme management and Implementation	13	
Top level Operational Coordination	2	
General Operational	4	
Neutral	6	18%
Finance / Control	6	
Linguistics	0	

ANNEX V. HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES BY ACTIVITY

No	Activity name	TA	CA & SNE (FTE's)
1	Deployment of resources or cybersecurity	4	15
2	Strategic advice, cooperation and coordination for cybersecurity	3	3
3	Governance, establishment and compliance of the ECCC	3	10
Total allocations		10	28

Multi-annual staff policy

Function group and grade	2025				2026		2027		2027		2028	
	Authorised Budget		Actually filled as of 31/12/2025		Authorised Budget		Envisaged		Requested		Envisaged	
	Permanent posts	Temporary posts	Permanent posts	Temporary posts	Permanent posts	Temporary posts	Permanent posts	Temporary posts	Permanent posts	Temporary posts	Permanent posts	Temporary posts
AD 16												
AD 15												1
AD 14		1		1		1		1		1		
AD 13												
AD 12		2		2		2		2		2		2
AD 11		2		0		2		2		2		2
AD 10												
AD 9						1		3		3		3
AD 8		3		3		3		3		3		3
AD 7		2		2		2				4		
AD 6												
AD 5												
AD TOTAL		10		8		11		11		15		11
AST 11												
AST 10												
AST 9												
AST 8												
AST 7												
AST 6												
AST 5						1		1		2		1
AST 4												
AST 3												
AST 2												
AST 1												
AST TOTAL		0		0		1		1		2		1
AST/SC 6												
AST/SC 5												
AST/SC 4												
AST/SC 3												
AST/SC 2												
AST/SC 1												
AST/SC TOTAL		0		0		0		0		0		0
TOTAL		10		8		12		12		17		12
GRAND TOTAL		10		8		12		12		17		12

- External personnel Contract Agents*

Contract agents	Authorised posts 2025	Executed FTE as of 31/12/2025	Execution Rate %	FTE corresponding to the authorised budget 2026	FTE requested 2027	FTE requested 2028	FTE requested 2029
Function Group IV	21	19	90.5%	21	30*	30*	30*
Function Group III	2	2	100.0%	2	4**	4**	4**
Function Group II	4	4	100.0%	4	0	0	0
Function Group I	0	0		0	0	0	0
TOTAL	27	25	92.6%	27	34	34	34

* includes upgrading 2 FGIII and 7 additional resources for the implementation of Horizon Europe

** includes upgrading 4 FGII due to low country coefficient and nature of tasks

For Contract Agents, for the years 2027-2029 the function groups were revised and updated upwards, given the current context of the ECCC, its staffing and its location.

Seconded National Experts

Seconded National Experts	FTE corresponding to the authorised budget 2025	Executed FTE as of 31/12/2025	Headcount as of 31/12/2025	FTE corresponding to the authorised budget 2026	FTE requested 2027	FTE requested 2028	FTE requested 2029
TOTAL	1	0	0	1	2	2	2

ANNEX VI. CONTRIBUTION, GRANT AND SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS. FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

The ECCC does not receive any form of grant. Contribution Agreements related to Digital Europe Programme and Horizon Europe Programme were signed for 2025.

Service-level agreement	Signature status	Total amount (€)	Duration	Counter-part	Short description
DG DIGIT	Signed	98.425,15	1 year (automatic renewal)	DIGIT	Global SLA for the provision of IT services
DG HR	signed	143.834,00	1 year (automatic renewal)	HR	SLA where DG HR provides implementation and operation of SYSPER and related services to ECCC.
PMO	Signed	12.000,00	1 year (automatic renewal)	PMO	SLA for general assistance and/or provision of applications for which the PMO is system owner
EPSO	Signed	25.000,00	1 year (automatic renewal)	EPSO	SLA providing to ECCC assistance and access to Job opportunities page, reserve lists, EPSO's planning, ex-post controls, 3 rd language testing and organisation of tailor-made selections.
EUAN (EU Agencies Network)	Signed	1.000,00	Indefinite period of time	SG	SLA to mutualise the costs for the Shared Support Office
ENISA	Signed	54,604.32	1 year (automatic renewal)	ENISA	SLA for the provision of data protection officer services and accounting officer services. In addition, a MoU was signed in 2023 between ENISA and ECCC.
DG BUDG	Signed	128.220,00	1 year (automatic renewal)	DG BUDG	SLA for implementation and usage of ABAC.
e-Procurement +cloud services	Signed	30.000,00	1 year (automatic renewal)	DIGIT	Amendment to SLA for access to eProcurement tool and Cloud service
TESTA MoU	Signed	N/A	1 year (automatic renewal)	DIGIT	MoU for TESTA access/provision
CERT-EU	Signed	11.001,77	Rest of 2024, then yearly automatic renewal	DIGIT	Amendment to SLA for the use of CERT-EU
SG	Signed	19 040,00	1 year (automatic renewal)	SG	SLA for the provision of SG services (Migration to HAN)
CDT	Signed	30.102,00	1 year (automatic renewal)	CDT	Translation services and editing
RTD	Signed	N/A	1 year (automatic renewal)	RTD	eGrants (2024's amount covered by CNECT)
Expert management and services	Signed	N/A	1 year (automatic renewal)	REA	Provision of expert management services for the evaluation of grants within the framework of the HEP and the calls for expression of interest for the Funding and Tenders Portal Expert Database. (as of 1/1/2026) -

ANNEX VII. ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT

The ECCC is not registered with EMAS. The ECCC operates in a single location and shares a building with other users. The CAMPUS building in which the ECCC's premises are located, is managed by the Romanian authorities through the Technical University of Bucharest and is sustainable and includes features such as:

- Orientation of the heavily glazed area towards the south to obtain maximum sunlight and generate green thermal energy.
- Photovoltaic cells placed on the south facade and on the roof for generating green electricity.
- A heat recovery area at the floor level which captures solar light and heat during the day through the greenhouse effect and releases the heat throughout the building during the night.
- Automatic switching off of electric lights.

- Water-saving, automatically operated by sensors sanitary fixtures.
- The building envelope is thermally insulated.
- Indoor microclimate and lighting control and optimization systems.
- Use of building systems featuring consumption optimization and energy recovery.

The ECCC staff operate in a hybrid office/teleworking regime that helps reduce the environmental impact of commuting. The staff are encouraged to:

- Use green means of transport. The CAMPUS building is equipped with charging stations for electric vehicles and bicycle racks. The ECCC premises include shower facilities for bicycle users.
- Keep document printing to a minimum.
- Behave responsibly when opening/closing windows, being aware of the need to reduce energy loss.
- Minimize the amount of waste.
- Dispose of waste in the appropriate recycling bins in the cafeterias.
- Include clauses on green public procurement in contracts.

ANNEX VIII. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Statement of financial position

in EUR	Note	31.12.2025	31.12.2024
I. NON-CURRENT ASSETS		160.846.178	112.895.827
Tangible fixed assets	<i>Error! Reference source not found.</i>	93.161	128.096
Long term pre-financing given for operational grant (*)	<i>Error! Reference source not found.</i>	160.753.017	112.767.731
II. CURRENT ASSETS		297.391.319	139.273.074
Short term pre-financing given for operational grant (*)	<i>Error! Reference source not found.</i>	184.824.141	95.984.092
Exchange receivables and non-exchange recoverable	<i>Error! Reference source not found.</i>	112.567.179	43.288.982
Cash and cash Equivalents	<i>Error! Reference source not found.</i>	0	0
TOTAL ASSETS (I. + II.)		458.237.498	252.168.901
III. NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		105.869.487	0
Long term payables for operational grant (*)	4.2.6	105.869.487	0
IV. CURRENT LIABILITIES		132.167.737	24.569.959
Payables and other liabilities (*)	4.2.6	132.044.207	24.333.806
Accrued charges and deferred income	4.2.7	123.530	236.153
TOTAL LIABILITIES (III. + IV)		238.037.224	24.569.959
V. NET ASSETS		220.200.274	227.598.941
Contribution from owners	4.2.8	149.798.060	148.483.142
Accumulated surplus/deficit		79.115.799	0
Economic result of the year		-8.713.585	79.115.799
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS (III. + IV. + V.)		458.237.498	252.168.901

(*) As from 2025, to ensure consistency with other EU agencies and bodies, the pre-financing, payables and expenditures related to operational grant are calculated on the maximum remaining contractual value of the grant contract (and not only on the actual payments made to the grant beneficiaries as it was performed in 2024 - whereas ECCC has gained financial autonomy as from 24/09/2024, the 2024 and 2025 amounts are not comparable).

Statement of financial performance

in EUR	Note	01.01.2025 - 31.12.2025	24.09.2024 - 31.12.2024 ⁽¹⁾
Revenue			
I. Revenue from non-exchange transactions	<i>Error! Reference source not found.</i>	164.338.398	101.506.556
Recovery of expenses		164.338.398	101.506.556

II. Revenue from exchange transactions	Error! Reference source not found.Error! Reference source not found.	3.213	0
Financial revenue	4.3.6	3.213	0
Other exchange revenue			0
III. TOTAL REVENUE (I. +II.)		164.341.611	101.506.556
Expenses			
Operating costs (*)	Error! Reference source not found.	168.942.529	21.346.397
Staff costs	Error! Reference source not found.	2.866.262	561.882
Other expenses	Error! Reference source not found.	1.242.786	482.088
Financial expenses	Error! Reference source not found.	3.619	390
IV. TOTAL EXPENSES		173.055.196	22.390.757
ECONOMIC RESULT OF THE YEAR (III. – IV.)		-8.713.585	79.115.799

(*) As from 2025, to ensure consistency with other EU agencies and bodies, the pre-financing, payables and expenditures related to operational grant are calculated on the maximum remaining contractual value of the grant contract (and not only on the actual payments made to the grant beneficiaries as it was performed in 2024 - whereas ECCC has gained financial autonomy as from 24/09/2024, the 2024 and 2025 amounts are not comparable).

(**) In the statement of financial performance, whereas the ECCC has gained its financial autonomy on 24 September 2024, the 2025 figures represent the economic result during the period from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025, while the prior period figures represent the economic result of 2024 being the year of transition to financial autonomy from the period of 24 September 2024 to 31 December 2024. Consequently, the presented values of the two reporting periods are not comparable. The details on the respective movements are disclosed in the corresponding note for each line item presented

Cash-flow statement

in EUR	01.01.2025 - 31.12.2025	24.09.2024 - 31.12.2024 (**)
Economic result of the year	-8.713.585	79.115.799
<u>Operating activities</u>		
Depreciation and amortisation (+)	34.935	11.645
(Increase)/Decrease in pre-financing	-136.825.335	-208.751.823
(Increase)/Decrease in exchange receivables and non-exchange	-69.278.197	-43.288.982
Increase/(Decrease) in payables	213.579.888	24.333.806
Increase/(Decrease) in accrued charges & deferred income	-112.624	236.154
Increase/(Decrease) in contribution from owners	1.314.918	148.483.142
<u>Investing activities</u>		
(Increase)/Decrease in intangible assets and property, plant, equipment	0	-139.741
Net Cashflow	0	0
Net Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	0	0
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	0	0
Cash and cash equivalents at year-end	0	0

(**)Comparative figures relate to a shorter reporting period (24 September–31 December 2024) and are therefore not directly comparable.

Statement of changes in net assets

	Contribution from Owners	Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit) (**)	Economic result of the year (**)	Net Assets
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BALANCE AS AT 01.01.2025	148.483.142	-	79.115.799	227.598.941
<i>Contribution from owners</i>	<i>1.314.918</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1.314.918</i>
<i>Allocation economic result ⁽³⁾</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>79.115.799</i>	<i>-79.115.799</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Economic result of the year</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-8.713.585</i>	<i>-8.713.585</i>
BALANCE AS AT 31.12.2025	148.483.142	79.115.799	-8.713.585	220.200.274

(**) Comparative figures relate to a shorter reporting period (24 September–31 December 2024) and are therefore not directly comparable.

ANNEX IX. ADDITIONAL DATA ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 27 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Annex IX provides quantitative data on submissions and selections and breakdown by participant type, including SMEs and countries. For each of the calls launched during 2025 there are 3 tables presenting the type of applicants, the SME and countries participation.

A. DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07

Applicants' activity type

Topic	Number of participants from higher or secondary education		Number of participants from research organisations		Number of participants from private / for profit organisations (excl. education)		Number of participants from public body (excl. research and education)		Number of participants from other type of organisation		Total number of participants	
	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-CYBERSEC-02	9	6	13	6	81	41	25	7	12	8	140	68
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-KEYTECH	34	9	26	8	369	94	15	2	21	4	465	117
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER	21	1	21	6	137	31	15	1	41	8	235	47
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-SOC	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	3	0	0	5	5
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-SOCPLAT	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	11	0	0	11	11
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-SOCSYS	7	0	9	0	21	0	7	3	11	2	55	5
TOTAL	71	16	70	21	609	167	76	27	85	22	927	253

SME participation

Topic	Number of SMEs in evaluated proposals	Total requested EU contribution of SMEs in evaluated proposals	Number of SMEs in retained for funding proposals	Total requested EU contribution of SMEs in retained for funding proposals
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-CYBERSEC-02	47	16,158,617.06 €	28	8,913,009.05 €
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-KEYTECH	295	178,724,379.16 €	73	30,956,837.22 €
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER	120	92,006,635.70 €	23	24,162,186.81 €
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-SOC	0	0	0	0
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-SOCPLAT	0	0	0	0
DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-SOCSYS	17	3,388,874.04 €	1	532,860 €
TOTAL	479	290,278,505.96 €	125	64,564,893.08 €

Country participation and share of requested EU contribution

Country Group	Country	N. Participations in evaluated proposals	N. Participations in retained for funding proposals	Requested EU contribution in evaluated proposals	Requested EU contribution retained for funding proposals
Associated Countries	Iceland	3	2	2,714,221.22 €	1,268,506.23 €
Associated Countries	Norway	8	1	5,371,581.90 €	135,676.00 €
Other (Non-Associated Countries to DEP Work programme)	North Macedonia	2	0	233,260.00 €	0.00 €
Other (Non-Associated Countries to DEP Work programme)	United Kingdom	1	0	26,750.00 €	0.00 €
		14	3	8,345,813.12 €	1,404,182.23 €
EU Member States	Austria	26	6	11,986,027.75 €	1,951,679.00 €
EU Member States	Belgium	63	16	50,966,082.52 €	9,330,338.31 €
EU Member States	Bulgaria	28	8	16,842,016.95 €	2,034,284.00 €

EU Member States	Croatia	15	6	12,595,713.65 €	3,768,973.35 €
EU Member States	Cyprus	73	27	25,122,534.82 €	10,849,398.75 €
EU Member States	Czechia	11	3	6,680,876.27 €	263,273.50 €
EU Member States	Denmark	11	5	4,256,208.82 €	1,946,107.98 €
EU Member States	Estonia	15	6	5,287,010.09 €	2,754,072.75 €
EU Member States	Finland	8	2	2,196,991.45 €	406,118.00 €
EU Member States	France	45	13	23,945,329.41 €	6,320,654.97 €
EU Member States	Germany	53	12	29,587,229.35 €	3,592,595.23 €
EU Member States	Greece	145	50	67,178,378.75 €	14,260,972.88 €
EU Member States	Hungary	7	2	8,138,059.96 €	405,880.96 €
EU Member States	Ireland	22	4	22,582,520.43 €	5,524,766.31 €
EU Member States	Italy	75	18	28,505,324.59 €	4,086,885.33 €
EU Member States	Latvia	4	3	2,329,871.00 €	1,559,471.00 €
EU Member States	Lithuania	8	3	3,727,131.00 €	585,076.00 €
EU Member States	Luxembourg	26	6	18,754,308.51 €	4,772,949.00 €
EU Member States	Malta	3	0	2,234,149.84 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Netherlands	30	7	11,481,421.22 €	2,173,050.16 €
EU Member States	Poland	28	3	25,002,015.43 €	3,899,588.25 €
EU Member States	Portugal	27	3	7,548,971.98 €	1,152,951.75 €
EU Member States	Romania	53	14	20,647,462.09 €	7,371,230.00 €
EU Member States	Slovakia	18	6	28,434,315.01 €	5,914,002.00 €
EU Member States	Slovenia	23	7	7,278,112.14 €	1,316,969.01 €
EU Member States	Spain	68	19	28,254,017.60 €	4,395,420.31 €
EU Member States	Sweden	12	1	7,729,116.86 €	44,116.10 €
EU Member States		897	250	479,291,197.49 €	100,680,824.90 €
	GRAND TOTAL	911	253	487,637,010.61 €	102,085,007.13 €

B. DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08

Applicants' activity type

Topic	Number of participants from higher or secondary education		Number of participants from research organisations		Number of participants from private/ for profit organisations (excl. education)		Number of participants from public body (excl. research and education)		Number of participants from other type of organisation		Total number of participants	
	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08-PUBLICPQC	6	3	4	3	37	20	1	1	5	1	53	28
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08-NCC	5	1	3	1	9	0	15	9	12	4	44	15
DIIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08-CYBERHEALTH	29	9	47	20	186	41	66	14	54	15	382	99
TOTAL	40	13	54	24	232	61	82	24	71	20	479	142

SME participation

Topic	Number of SMEs in evaluated proposals	Total requested EU contribution of SMEs in evaluated proposals	Number of SMEs in retained for funding proposals	Total requested EU contribution of SMEs in retained for funding proposals
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08-PUBLICPOC	21	5,643,985.22 €	7	268,249.00 €
DIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08-NCC	10	4,572,166.18 €	1	1,867,306.22 €
DIIGITAL-ECCC-2025-DEPLOY-CYBER-08-CYBERHEALTH	89	27,667,002.10 €	31	12,295,386.06 €
TOTAL	120	37,883,153.50 €	39	14,430,941.28 €

Country participation and share of requested EU contribution

Country Group	Country	N. Participations in evaluated proposals	N. Participations in retained for funding proposals	Requested EU contribution in evaluated proposals	Requested EU contribution in retained for funding proposals
Associated Countries	Iceland	7	0	1,862,816.00 €	0.00 €
Associated Countries	Norway	5	1	3,477,901.25 €	148,195.00 €
Other (Non-Associated Countries to DEP Work programme)	Ukraine	1	0	43,228.00 €	0.00 €
		13	1	5,383,945.25 €	148,195.00 €
EU Member States	Austria	5	2	4,107,942.93 €	655,508.75 €
EU Member States	Belgium	38	25	10,927,920.72 €	7,229,605.35 €
EU Member States	Bulgaria	3	0	3,374,928.20 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Croatia	20	7	6,074,568.70 €	2,296,164.90 €
EU Member States	Cyprus	32	9	7,707,944.07 €	2,609,328.75 €
EU Member States	Czechia	16	0	647,787.85 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Denmark	2	2	841,162.85 €	841,162.85 €
EU Member States	Estonia	4	2	2,109,943.70 €	484,934.70 €
EU Member States	Finland	5	1	1,594,285.56 €	254,660.00 €
EU Member States	France	20	4	5,209,939.86 €	1,342,301.75 €
EU Member States	Germany	22	7	6,750,571.16 €	2,673,881.85 €
EU Member States	Greece	50	24	13,910,875.26 €	7,313,824.50 €
EU Member States	Hungary	9	0	2,540,126.50 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Ireland	4	1	661,019.25 €	201,695.00 €
EU Member States	Italy	17	9	5,490,175.35 €	4,007,043.00 €
EU Member States	Latvia	6	4	3,703,648.73 €	3,510,604.73 €
EU Member States	Lithuania	22	5	6,949,891.50 €	2,550,825.97 €
EU Member States	Luxembourg	10	5	5,044,403.72 €	2,089,652.22 €
EU Member States	Malta	2	1	1,826,066.82 €	1,758,389.32 €
EU Member States	Netherlands	10	2	3,525,607.20 €	802,103.03 €
EU Member States	Poland	23	1	4,791,534.40 €	2,504,476.24 €
EU Member States	Portugal	9	3	2,000,855.07 €	1,346,819.17 €
EU Member States	Romania	45	6	8,987,139.50 €	1,727,996.50 €
EU Member States	Slovakia	20	0	2,058,430.73 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Slovenia	23	7	5,424,295.99 €	2,444,623.65 €
EU Member States	Spain	23	11	5,613,001.74 €	2,159,003.21 €
EU Member States	Sweden	10	3	3,949,963.54 €	3,235,791.50 €
EU Member States		450	141	125,824,030.90 €	54,040,396.94 €
GRAND TOTAL		463	142	131,207,976.15 €	54,188,591.94 €

C. HORIZON-CL3-2024-CS-01

Applicants' activity type

Topic	Number of participants from higher or secondary education		Number of participants from research organisations		Number of participants from private/ for profit organisations (excl. education)		Number of participants from public body (excl. research and education)		Number of participants from other type of organisation		Total number of participants	
	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals	in evaluated proposals	retained for funding proposals
HORIZON-CL3-2024-CS-01-01	321	15	232	19	832	54	17	0	52	2	1454	90
HORIZON-CL3-2024-CS-01-02	163	20	81	16	313	44	13	6	18	3	588	89
TOTAL	484	35	313	35	1145	98	30	6	70	5	2042	179

SME participation

Topic	Number of SMEs in evaluated proposals	Total requested EU contribution of SMEs in evaluated proposals	Number of SMEs in retained for funding proposals	Total requested EU contribution of SMEs in retained for funding proposals
HORIZON-CL3-2024-CS-01-01	538	177,953,267.93 €	36	7,811,421.25 €
HORIZON-CL3-2024-CS-01-02	150	64,802,442.50 €	23	9,381,358.55 €
TOTAL	688	242,755,710.43 €	59	17,192,779.80 €

Country participation and share of requested EU contribution

Country Group	Country	N. Participations in evaluated proposals	N. Participations in retained for funding proposals	Requested EU contribution in evaluated proposals	Requested EU contribution retained for funding proposals
Associated Countries	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	0	522,675.00 €	0.00 €
Associated Countries	Georgia	2	0	222,337.50 €	0.00 €
Associated Countries	Iceland	3	0	1,823,980.00 €	0.00 €
Associated Countries	Israel	9	2	4,569,442.50 €	865,000.00 €
Associated Countries	Moldova (Republic of)	1	0	325,653.13 €	0.00 €
Associated Countries	Norway	25	6	14,438,934.06 €	2,882,125.00 €
Associated Countries	Serbia	8	0	2,514,481.75 €	0.00 €
Associated Countries	Tunisia	2	0	1,634,286.88 €	0.00 €
Associated Countries	Türkiye	31	3	8,915,881.95 €	184,537.50 €
Associated Countries	Ukraine	9	2	1,430,132.25 €	0.00 €
Associated Countries	United Kingdom	106	5	48,173,434.51 €	2,973,847.50 €
Associated Countries		199	18	84,571,239.53 €	6,905,510.00 €
EU Member States	Austria	64	4	29,206,173.24 €	1,779,500.00 €
EU Member States	Belgium	75	3	32,125,505.95 €	1,186,605.00 €
EU Member States	Bulgaria	29	3	8,623,221.50 €	662,000.00 €
EU Member States	Croatia	1	0	218,750.00 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Cyprus	79	5	28,254,705.03 €	2,150,537.50 €
EU Member States	Czechia	20	9	7,837,160.00 €	3,984,587.50 €
EU Member States	Denmark	14	0	7,451,957.50 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Estonia	33	4	12,642,139.23 €	1,105,417.50 €
EU Member States	Finland	32	2	12,874,987.44 €	476,350.00 €
EU Member States	France	170	8	82,434,843.33 €	3,307,095.49 €
EU Member States	Germany	226	24	115,677,270.87 €	11,921,844.58 €
EU Member States	Greece	249	17	92,839,519.95 €	6,768,559.12 €
EU Member States	Hungary	24	2	10,584,905.63 €	340,593.75 €
EU Member States	Ireland	50	5	22,993,399.38 €	2,038,460.90 €
EU Member States	Italy	178	14	68,480,504.93 €	4,638,228.97 €
EU Member States	Latvia	3	2	1,076,572.00 €	790,250.00 €
EU Member States	Lithuania	4	0	1,090,340.66 €	0.00 €

EU Member States	Luxembourg	37	1	15,558,929.10 €	505,500.00 €
EU Member States	Malta	1	0	252,525.00 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Netherlands	65	3	31,979,787.36 €	1,287,393.09 €
EU Member States	Poland	26	10	10,395,691.88 €	3,709,356.25 €
EU Member States	Portugal	60	2	24,377,864.42 €	554,385.84 €
EU Member States	Romania	56	6	18,316,866.44 €	1,451,268.75 €
EU Member States	Slovakia	5	1	1,742,805.65 €	200,500.00 €
EU Member States	Slovenia	15	0	4,144,760.25 €	0.00 €
EU Member States	Spain	219	28	84,573,763.45 €	11,581,803.95 €
EU Member States	Sweden	36	0	18,356,839.86 €	0.00 €
EU Member States		1771	153	744,111,790.05 €	60,440,238.19 €
Third countries	Canada	8	0	4,203,081.88 €	0.00 €
Third countries	Liberia	1	0	170,375.00 €	0.00 €
Third countries	Pakistan	1	0	130,075.00 €	0.00 €
Third countries	Switzerland	61	8	0.00 €	0.00 €
Third countries	United States	1	0	0.00 €	0.00 €
Third countries		72	8	4,503,531.88 €	0.00 €
GRAND TOTAL		2042	179	833,186,561.46 €	67,345,748.19 €

ANNEX X. LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABAC	Accrual-based accounting
AD	Administrator
AST	Assistant
CA	Contract agent
CAAR	Consolidated Annual Activity Report
CRA	Cyber Resilience Act
CSA	Cybersecurity Act
CSoA	Cyber Solidarity Act
DEP	Digital Europe Programme
DG CONNECT	EC Directorate
EC	European Commission
ECA	European Court of Auditors
ECCC	European Cybersecurity Competence Centre
ED	Executive Director
ENISA	European Union Agency for Cybersecurity
EU	European Union
EUAN	EU Agencies Network
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GB	Governing Board (of the ECCC)
HEP	Horizon Europe Programme
ICT	Information and communication technology
IT	Information technology
JU	Joint Undertaking
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
MS	Member State(s)
NCCs	National Coordination Centres
NIS	Networks and information systems
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SLA	Service-level agreement
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SPD	Single Programming Document
TA	Temporary agent
TESTA	Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

ANNEX XI. STANDARD RESERVATION FOR ENTITIES IMPLEMENTING DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME (DEP) IN 2025

Section 2.1.2 Effectiveness of controls

A. Control Objective

For the Digital Europe programme, the **general control objective** is to ensure that the residual error rate, i.e. the level of errors which remain undetected and uncorrected, does not exceed 2% by the end of the programme's management cycle.

As set out in the Digital Europe audit strategy⁽¹⁾, given that the number of audits will be limited during the first years of the implementation of the programme and that the resulting error rate will therefore not be representative, the error rate of the Horizon Europe programme will be used as a reference for reporting purposes.

Due to its multi-annual nature, the effectiveness of the ex-post control strategy can only be measured and assessed fully in the final stages of the programme, once the ex-post audit strategy has been fully implemented, and errors, including those of a systemic nature, have been detected and corrected.

Annex 7 presents the audit coverage for Digital Europe and the implementation of the audit target for 2025.

B. Control results

Digital Europe

Like for Horizon Europe, 2025 was the fifth year of implementation of the Digital Europe programme. The first ex-post audits for Digital Europe were launched in the second half of 2024 once a meaningful number of payments was available for audit and in line with the Programme's ex post audit strategy.

HaDEA in its role of audit centre for the whole Digital Europe family implements the ex-post audit strategy for all granting authorities managing Digital Europe grants and calculated the overall residual error rate for the whole Digital Europe family.

The error rates based on the results of ex-post controls for Digital Europe on 31 December 2025 are:

- **Detected error rate (DER)** for the audits at family level finalised in 2025 ⁽²⁾: **2,22%**
- **Residual error rate (RER)** for the audits at family level finalised in 2025: **2,21%**

These results stem from the initial 20 audits (23 participations) carried out so far, representing just 2.25% of the total Digital Europe population at the end of 2025. As most of the audits were closed in the last quarter of 2025, the implementation of the audit results is ongoing and could not yet lead to a reduction of the residual error rate as compared to the detected error rate.

As set out in the Digital Europe audit strategy⁽³⁾, given that the number of audits will be limited during the first years of the implementation of the programme and that the resulting DEP error rate will therefore not be representative, the error rate of the Horizon Europe programme will be used as a reference for reporting purposes.

Digital Europe and Horizon Europe have similar grant conditions and in particular similar cost eligibility criteria and a comparable profile of beneficiaries. An analysis performed in early 2025 shows that Digital Europe is the programme (together with Erasmus 2027) that shares the

most beneficiaries with Horizon Europe (approx. 48% of DEP unique beneficiaries). Both programmes therefore present a relatively similar risk of error.

Consequently, in the 2025 AAR, the Horizon Europe error rates (4.38% DER, OWN RER) will be used for the estimation of the amount at risk for the Digital Europe grant expenditure.

A reservation is issued in the Annual Activity Report as the residual error rate is, at the end of 2025, above the 2% materiality threshold.

Annex 5 Materiality Criteria

Digital EUROPE programme

For Digital Europe the general control objective is to ensure that the residual error rate, i.e. the level of errors which remain undetected and uncorrected, does not exceed 2%.

HaDEA implements the audit strategy for the grant part of the whole Digital Europe Programme, serving all granting authorities of the programme [\(L4\)](#). The audit strategy for Digital Europe Programme was drafted in consultation with the Digital Europe stakeholders and adopted on 5 July 2024.

The population of the programme is determined by the costs declared and paid to the beneficiaries or affiliated entities through financial statements which are the basis for the calculation of the EU contribution. The harmonised System for Grant Management (SyGMa) is the data source for the audit population and audit selection is performed via Selection Module SELMOD (AUDEX).

Error rate calculation

- **Detected error rates**

The interval sample delivers the Detected Error Rate (DER) per programme.

Calculation of the detected error rate [\(L5\)](#):

$$\text{DER (\%)} = \frac{\text{Amount of detected errors (EC share of)}}{\text{Sampled amount (EC share of)}}$$

The amount of detected errors corresponds to the amount of ineligible expenditure that results in a financial adjustment. It is equal to: [the EC-share of] the costs claimed as initially accepted, after the ex-ante controls (on the basis of which the audited payment was made), minus, [the EC-share of] the costs claimed as finally accepted, after the ex-post control (audit).

The sampled amount must be used as a denominator to calculate the detected error rate [\(L6\)](#).

In the performance of an audit, the sampling applied is to ascertain the risk of a material error in the financial statement of a beneficiary. For cost-efficiency reasons, it might be lower than the cost accepted by the Agency.

- **Residual error rate**

Given that usually only a sample of the programme's payments made is subject to ex-post audits, not all payments can be fully cleared from errors. In reality, the larger part of payments remains un-audited and thus un-corrected; hence probably still affected by errors of the magnitude of the detected error rate.

The estimated **Residual Error per programme** is calculated as follows:

Residual Error = Uncorrected Errors + (Total EU Contribution – Total Sampled Contribution) * DER

The Residual Error is then divided by Total EU Contribution to give the **Residual Error Rate (RER)** expressed as a percentage as follows:

$$\text{RER (\%)} = \frac{\text{Residual Error (EC share of)}}{\text{Total EU Contribution}}$$

The RER represents the estimated error rate that remains in the population after audit corrections are implemented.

- **Multi-annual Residual Error Rate**

Residual Error Rates are calculated on a multi-annual basis to reflect the multi-annual nature of the programme and projects.

Although not derived by statistical parameters that can be extrapolated to the unaudited payment population with statistical confidence, the detected error rate and the residual error rate from the ex-post audits are a key building block in the assurance building process.

Annex 7 Specific annexes related to "financial management"

Digital Europe control results

Like for Horizon Europe, 2025 was the fifth year of implementation of the Digital Europe programme. The first ex-post audits for Digital Europe were launched in the second half of 2024 once a meaningful number of payments was available for audit and in line with the Programme's ex post audit strategy.

The error rates based on the results of ex-post controls for the Digital Europe on 31 December 2025 are:

- **Detected error rate (DER)** for the DEP audits at family level finalised in 2025 ⁽¹⁷⁾: **2,22%**
- **Residual error rate (RER)** for the DEP audits at family level finalised in 2025: **2,21%**

As set out in the Digital Europe audit strategy⁽⁸⁾, given that the number of audits will be limited during the first years of the implementation of the programme and that the resulting DEP error rate will therefore not be representative, the error rate of the Horizon Europe programme will be used as a reference for reporting purposes.

Horizon Europe has similar cost eligibility criteria and a comparable profile of beneficiaries to DEP. An analysis performed in early 2025 shows that DEP is the programme (together with Erasmus 2027) that shares the most beneficiary with HE (approx. 48% of DEP unique beneficiaries). Both programmes therefore present a relatively similar risk of error.

Consequently, in the 2025 AAR, the Horizon Europe error rates (4.38% DER, OWN% RER) will be used to for the estimation of the amount at risk for the Digital Europe Grant Expenditure.

Audit coverage

Digital Europe

Like for Horizon Europe, 2025 was the fifth year of implementation of the Digital Europe programme. The first ex-post audits for Digital Europe were launched in the second half of 2024 once a meaningful number of payments was available for audit and in line with the Programme's ex post audit strategy.

In its role of audit centre for the Digital Europe, HaDEA performed 20 audits (23 participations), representing just 2.25% of the total Digital Europe population at the end of 2025. As most of the audits were closed in the last quarter of 2025, efforts to implement the audit results and reduce the residual error rate are still underway and could not yet impact the reduction of the residual error rate. The goal is to focus on risk-prone areas, preventing errors and reinforce communication campaigns on eligibility rules to beneficiaries.

Actions taken to reduce the error rate on Digital Europe

The audit campaigns started and, in line with the Digital Europe Audit strategy, HaDEA performed the audit of 23 participations covering 8,8 Mio EUR EU contribution.

Information campaigns were organised. In particular, during the meetings with the National Contract Points of 25 June 2025 and 24 October 2025, CONNECT provided training on cost reporting with a specific focus on aspects which can be a source of errors.

Since the start of the programme, the Annotated Model Grant Agreement was regularly updated to include relevant guidance on the correct management of the grants.

CONNECT also explored the possibilities of a wider use of lump sums for Digital Europe grants given that lump sums are considered as an important tool to reduce financial errors, achieve simplification and cut administrative burden.

Annex 9 - Reservation Fiche Digital Europe

DG	Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology
Title of the reservation, including its scope	Reservation concerning the rate of the residual error within grant payments in the Digital Europe programme, implemented directly and indirectly by DG CONNECT.
Domain	Direct and indirect management – grants Digital Europe
Programme (or other relevant segment) in which the reservation is made and total (annual) amount of this programme	RCS1 - Grants RCS 2 – Entrusted entities Scope Amount (Annual payment of segment):
Reason for the reservation	At the end of 2025, the residual error rate is significantly above the 2% materiality threshold foreseen for the multi-annual period.
Materiality criterion/criteria	The materiality criterion is the residual error rate, defined as the level of errors that remain undetected and uncorrected by the end of the programme cycle. The control objective is to ensure that the residual error rate in the overall population is below 2% at the conclusion of the programme cycle. If the residual error rate remains above 2% at the end of a reporting year within the Digital Europe Programme lifecycle, a reservation will be made.
Quantification of the financial impact (amount at risk)	The error rate for 2025 is calculated on basis of a small number of audits (20 audits, 23 participations). It is not representative and should be considered with caution. Hence the error rate calculated for the Horizon Europe programme which has similar eligibility criteria and similar beneficiaries is used for the calculation of the amount at risk. Quantified Relevant Expenditure of the Segment: EUR Amount at Risk (Financial exposure/impact): EUR Financial exposure/impact (in Percentage): % Residual Error Rate: OWN%
Impact on the assurance	Legality and regularity of the affected transactions (interim payments and balance payments).
Responsibility for the weakness	The errors with highest financial impact were primarily identified in the personnel cost category. Additional errors were found in other areas such as internal invoicing and equipment costs.
Responsibility for the corrective action	The audit campaigns started and in line with the Digital Europe Audit strategy, HaDEA performed the audit of 23 participations covering 8,8 Mio EUR EU contribution. Information campaigns were organised. In particular, during the meetings with the National Contract Points of 25 June 2025 and 24 October 2025, CONNECT provided training on cost reporting with a specific focus on aspects which can be a source of errors. Since the beginning of the programme, the Annotated Model Grant Agreement was regularly updated to include relevant guidance on the correct management of the grants. CONNECT also explored the possibilities of a wider use of lump sums for Digital Europe grants given that lump sums are considered as an important tool to reduce financial errors, achieve simplification and cut administrative burden. CONNECT will continue working on improved guidance and training. NCP training and info sessions will continue to be organised. On a regular basis, HaDEA will perform an analysis of the audit findings deriving from the execution of the ex post audit strategy and share it with CONNECT and the DEP stakeholders. The aim is to identify and correct errors earlier in the project lifecycle, draw attention to relatively riskier areas, in view to aim to prevent errors, improve the ex ante controls and ultimately reduce the residual error rates of the programme.

2: Ex post controls

Effectiveness, efficiency and qualitative benefits are detailed per stages A to D. Economy is calculated overall for the ex-post controls.

A - Reviews, audits and monitoring

Main control objectives: Measuring the level of error in the population after ex ante controls have been undertaken; detect and correct any error or fraud remaining undetected after the implementation ex ante controls; identifying possible systemic weaknesses in the ex-ante controls, or weaknesses in the rules.

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	How to determine coverage, frequency and depth	Cost-Effectiveness indicators (effectiveness, efficiency, economy)
<p>For H2020 and Horizon Europe The ex ante controls (as such) do not prevent, detect and correct erroneous payments or attempted fraud to an extent going beyond a tolerable rate of error. Lack of consistency in the audit strategy within the family, also as regards technical reviews in lump sum grants. Lack of efficiency for absence of coordination: multiple audits/ technical reviews in lump sums on the same beneficiary, same programme: reputational risk and high administrative burden on the beneficiaries' side</p>	<p>Common ex post control strategy centrally implemented by the Common Audit Service (CAS) part of the Common Implementation Centre (in DG R&I) for H2020 and HE and by HaDEA for DIGITAL, and with ex post technical reviews performed by the implementing bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At intervals carry out audits of a representative sample of operations to measure the level of error in the population after ex ante controls have been performed; Calculates the representative error rate for the R&I programme Additional sample to address specific risks; When relevant, joint audits with the Court of Auditors <p>Multi-annual basis (programme's lifecycle) and coordination with other AOs concerned. Validate audit/technical review results with beneficiary. In case of systemic error detected, extrapolation to all the projects run by the audited beneficiary. Specifically for lump sum grants, technical reviews will be carried out by the implementing service for in-depth assessment of work package completion. Error rate to be measured based on technical review results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common Representative audit Sample (CRS) for actual costs and lump sum strata: MUS sample across the programme to draw valid management conclusions on the error rate in the population. The population from which the samples are drawn will be divided in two strata, one for actual cost and one for lump sum grants Risk-based sample, determined in accordance with the selected risk criteria, aimed to maximise deterrent effect and prevention of fraud or serious error 	<p>Effectiveness: Representative and residual error rate identified Number of audits/technical reviews finalised % of beneficiaries & value coverage Audit direct coverage. Monitoring of audit burden and burden from technical reviews on beneficiaries. Efficiency: Percentage of implementation of audit plan also for technical reviews for HE (to be brought as closely as possible to 100%)</p>

(The above is to be included only by those services implementing HE H2020.)

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	Coverage, frequency and depth of controls	Cost-Effectiveness indicators (three E's)
<p>For Digital - The ex-ante controls (as such) do not prevent, detect and correct erroneous payments or attempted fraud to an extent going beyond a tolerable rate of error. - Lack of consistency in the audit strategy within the family. -Lack of efficiency for absence of coordination: multiple</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HaDEA is implementing the common Ex post audit strategy for the Digital Europe Programme. The strategy is implemented through annual audit plans. Carry out audits on a sample of operations to measure the level of error in the population after ex-ante controls have been performed. Calculate the error rate for the DEP programme Validate audit results with the beneficiary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage and frequency are determined according to a Ex post audit strategy for the Digital Europe Programme. A common sample is drawn Risk-based sample, determined in accordance with the selected risk criteria, aimed to maximise deterrent effect and prevention of fraud or serious error 	<p>Effectiveness: detected and residual error rates for the programme. Number of audits finalised Direct Audit coverage Efficiency: Percentage implementation of audit plan. Economy: cost per ex-post audit.</p>

audits on the same beneficiary, same programme: reputational risk and high administrative burden on the beneficiaries' side	-In case of systemic error detected, extrapolation to all the projects run by the audited beneficiary.		
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B - Implementing results from ex-post audits/controls

Main control objectives: Ensuring that the (audit and extensions) results from the ex-post controls lead to effective recoveries; Ensuring appropriate accounting of the recoveries made.

Main risks It may happen (again) that...	Mitigating controls	How to determine coverage, frequency and depth	Cost-Effectiveness indicators (effectiveness, efficiency, economy)
The financial recommendations stemming from the ex-post audit and/or from the ex-post technical review are not implemented. Cases of fraud detected are not addressed or not addressed in a timely manner	Systematic registration of audit / control results to be implemented and actual implementation. Validation of recovery in accordance with financial circuits. Authorisation by AOSD. Coordination at the level of the R&I family/ DEP family: Fraud and Irregularities in Research (FAIR) committee. If needed: - Notification to OLAF and regular follow up of detected potential fraud. - Reinforced monitoring implemented on ongoing projects	Coverage: 100% of final audit results with a financial impact. Depth: All audit results are examined in-depth in making the final recoveries. Systemic errors are extended to all the non-audited projects of the same beneficiary (or closed within two years)	Effectiveness: Amounts being recovered and offset Efficiency: Number/value/% of audit results pending implementation, Number/value/% of audit results implemented

Overall economy for ex-post control

			Economy: Estimation of cost of staff involved in the coordination and execution of the ex post audit strategy and in the implementation of audits and technical reviews Costs of the appointment of audit firms and missions. Costs of external experts and possible on-site visits for technical reviews. Details of the estimated cost related to shared/pooled control activities carried out by the REA and hosted by DG Research and Innovation (DG R&I) (Common Implementation Centre, including the Common Audit Service; Common Policy Centre) for the Research and Innovation family are reported in the annual activity reports of REA and DG R&I. Similarly, for Digital Europe, HaDEA is carrying out the ex post audits for the programme's implementing bodies, hence the cost of ex post controls incurred in HaDEA will be reported by the Agency in its annual activity report.
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(1) [Ares\(2024\)4864697](#) Digital Europe Ex-Post Audit Strategy par. 4.5.1

(^[2]) Based on a first batch of 20 audits (corresponding to 23 participations) finalised in 2025 which concerned CONNECT and HaDEA participations, no other DEP stakeholder having been audited in 2025.

(^[3]) [Ares\(2024\)4864697](#) Digital Europe Ex-Post Audit Strategy par. 4.5.1

(^[4]) In accordance with Annex I of the Delegation act to HaDEA, Commission Decision C(2021)948 final – 12/02/2021.

(^[5]) AAR standing instructions, additional guidance on the calculation of error rates, the financial exposure as amount at risk, the materiality for a potential reservation and the impact on the AOD's declaration (2022 version), available on BUDGWeb.

(^[6]) The European Court of Auditors in its 2018 Annual Report and its review of the Commission's ex-post audits observed that for Horizon 2020 the Commission's methodology for calculating the Error Rate leads to an understatement of the Error Rate the extent of which cannot be quantified. As a result of further related guidance received by the central services for the AAR 2019, the predecessor's entities have adapted their methodology for the calculation of the Error Rate in line with the Court's observations. Previously, the detected Error Rate was calculated by considering the full value of an audited financial statement in the denominator. Therefore, the Detected Error Rate calculation is based on the sampled EU contribution as the denominator for a more conservative approach.

(^[7]) Based on a first batch of 20 audits (corresponding to 23 participations) finalised in 2025 which concerned only CONNECT and HaDEA, no other DEP stakeholder having been audited in 2025.

(^[8]) [Ares\(2024\)4864697](#) Digital Europe Ex-Post Audit Strategy par. 4.5.1.

ANNEX XII. STANDARD RESERVATION FOR ENTITIES IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE PROGRAMME (HE) IN 2025

Title of the reservation, including its scope: Reservation concerning the rate of the residual error within grant payments in the Horizon Europe Framework Programme (including Euratom), implemented directly and indirectly by DG RTD.

Reservation Details

Record Identification	RTD-RESE-2	DG / EA	RTD
Local ID	RTD-RESE-2	Occurrence	NEW
Creation Date	27/10/2025	Initial Reporting Year	2025
Last Update Date	14/01/2026 17:00:36	Reservation Type	Expenditure
Reputational	No	Reporting AAR Status	To report

Description

Reservation regarding the rate of residual error in grant payments in the Horizon Europe Framework Programme (including EURATOM), directly and indirectly implemented by DG RTD

Domain

Direct and indirect management – grants Horizon Europe (including Euratom)

Programme

RCS A - Grants Horizon Europe and Euratom Horizon Europe

RCS B - Horizon Europe - Contributions to article 187 and 185 bodies

Scope Amount (Annual payment of segment): EUR 1 000 170 078

Quantification Type

Quantified

DG/EA Total Payments/Incomes (euros)	2 228 577 552	Scope Amount (Annual payment of segment - euros)	1 000 170 078
Scope percentage	45%		
Relevant Expenditure of the segment (euros)	Not provided yet by the user	Amount at Risk (Financial exposure/impact - euros)	Not provided yet by the user
Residual Error Rate	Not provided yet by the user	Financial exposure/impact	Not provided yet by the user
Impact Quantification			
The estimated impact is (The relevant expenditure (payt-prefi+clearings) for the calculation of the estimated impact are not yet available)			

Reservation Reason

At the end of 2025, the residual error rate is significantly above the 2% materiality threshold foreseen for the multi-annual period.

Materiality Criteria

The materiality criterion is the residual error rate, defined as the level of errors that remain undetected and uncorrected by the end of the management cycle. The control objective is to ensure that the residual error rate in the overall population is below 2% at the conclusion of the management cycle. If the residual error rate remains above 2% at the end of a reporting year within the Framework Programme's management lifecycle, a reservation will be made.

Impact on Assurance

Legality and regularity of the affected transactions (interim payments and balance payments).

Weakness Responsibility

Most of the errors relate to incorrect claims for actual personnel costs, mainly due to beneficiaries' incorrect application of the Horizon Europe rules, despite the introduced simplifications. Newcomers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are more prone to errors compared to more experienced or larger beneficiaries. Due to the relatively small number of ex-post audits and technical reviews completed by the end of 2025, the error rate calculation is highly sensitive to few extreme results. Excluding the latter cases, the Representative Error Rate would be below the materiality threshold of 2%.

Responsibility for the Corrective Actions

The action plan focuses on outreach, training, and increased use of lump sums. These actions are designed to minimise errors by enhancing participant understanding and simplifying financial reporting. This includes outreach events addressing participants directly or through the Legal and Financial National Contact Points as well as trainings for EU staff to help them support beneficiaries in the best possible way. In addition, the roll-out of lump sums in Horizon Europe will continue, reaching a 50% share in the call budget by 2027. At this level, lump sums are expected to lower the programme's error rate significantly. These actions are all ongoing and will continue throughout Horizon Europe. The services responsible for these actions are RTD.H.3 and RTD.H.1.

MFF Reference(s)

- 2021-2027

Management Mode(s)

- Direct,
- Indirect

Associated DG/EA

The research and Innovation family

Internal Control Principle(s) affected

- 10. The Commission selects and develops control activities that contribute to the mitigation of risks to the achievement of objectives to acceptable levels
- 12. The Commission deploys control activities through corporate policies that establish what is expected and in procedures that put policies into action