

CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

In pursuance of FR 2018/1046, FFR No 2019/715



Contents

Management Board's analysis and assessment	3
Executive summary	12
Introduction.....	18
1. Agency in Brief.....	18
2. Year 2023 in numbers.....	19
Part I: Achievements of the year	20
1. Support to BEREC Working Groups (WGs), Sustainability Expert Networking Group (ENG) and phase II cases.....	20
2. High level meetings and support to the Boards	24
3. Information and communication technology (ICT) support to BEREC	25
4. Information gathering and distribution	29
5. BEREC communications activities	34
Part II: Management.....	39
1. Management Board	39
2. Major developments.....	39
3. Budgetary and financial management 2023	46
4. Public procurement	50
5. Delegation and sub-delegation.....	52
6. Human resources (HR) management.....	53
7. Strategy for efficiency gains	59
8. Assessment of audit and ex-post evaluation results during the reporting year	65
9. Environment management	68
10. Access to documents and data protection.....	69
11. Assessment by management.....	70
Part III: Assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control systems.....	74
1. Risk management.....	74
2. Compliance and effectiveness of internal control principles	74

3.	Independent auditor's report on the provisional annual accounts as at 31 December 2023	76
4.	Validation of local accounting systems by the Commission's accounting officer.....	77
5.	Statement of the Manager in charge of risk management and internal control	78
Part IV: Management assurance		79
1.	Review of the elements supporting assurance	79
2.	Reservations and overall conclusions on assurance	80
Part V: Declaration of Assurance.....		81
Annexes.....		82
Annex I: Core business information and statistics.....		82
Annex II: Statistics on financial management.....		100
Annex III: Organisational chart of the BEREC Office		107
Annex IV: Establishment plan		108
Annex V: Human and financial resources by BEREC Office activity		121
Annex VI: Specific annexes related to Part II		123
Annex VII: Final annual accounts		128
Annex VIII: Environment management		129
Annex IX: Overview of the key performance indicators (KPIs)		132

Management Board's analysis and assessment

The Management Board of the Agency for Support for BEREC,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 2018/1971 of the European Parliament (EP) and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and the Agency for Support for BEREC (BEREC Office, Agency), amending Regulation (EU) 2015/2120 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1211/2009¹ (the BEREC Regulation) and, in particular Article 16(c) and Article 27 thereof;

Having regard to Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the EP and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code² (EECC);

Having regard to Article 48 of Management Board (MB) Decision No MB/2019/13 on the financial regulation applicable to the BEREC Office;

Having regard to the BEREC Office Single Programming Document (SPD) for 2023-2025, as amended, containing the BEREC Office Work Programme (WP) 2023³, which was developed to support the achievement of the objectives of the BEREC WP 2023⁴;

Having regard to the 2023 Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) of the BEREC Office submitted by the Director ad interim, as authorising officer, to the MB on the performance of the duties of the Agency's Director;

Whereas,

- (1) In 2023 the BEREC Office supported an extremely ambitious BEREC WP, which included the work on a considerable number of regulatory best practices, implementation reports, studies and other documents aiming at fostering a transparent, harmonised and effective application of the legal framework in the area of electronic communications networks and services at the European Union (EU), and ensuring a consistent and predictable application of the rules across the European digital single market;
- (2) Against this background the Agency needed to ensure its support to BEREC in financially

¹ OJ L 321, 17.12.2018, p.01- 35,

² OJ L 321, 17.12.2018, p. 36-214, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018L1972&qid=1621506784842>

³ See document MB (23) 54, [Amendment No 1 to The Single Programming Document of the Agency for Support for BEREC \('BEREC Office'\) for the period 2023-2025](https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec-office/berec-office-work-programmes/amendment-no-1-to-the-single-programming-document-of-the-agency-for-support-for-berec-berec-office-for-the-period-2023-2025), 29.06.2023, <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec-office/berec-office-work-programmes/amendment-no-1-to-the-single-programming-document-of-the-agency-for-support-for-berec-berec-office-for-the-period-2023-2025>

⁴ See document BoR (22) 193, [BEREC Work Programme 2023](https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec/berec-strategies-and-work-programmes/berec-work-programme-2023), 12/12/2022, <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec/berec-strategies-and-work-programmes/berec-work-programme-2023>

unfavorable environment associated with the continuous high inflation in the host Member State (9.1%⁵) and the increase in the prices resulting from the war in Ukraine, specifically affecting the energy prices, which put pressure on the Agency's expenditure part of budget, especially taking into account the fact that the increase in the EU contribution of 3.7 % was significantly lower compared to the increase in the day-to-day costs for running the BEREC Office;

- (3) This resulted in a rigorous budgetary scrutiny of each and every expenditure item and the need to re-prioritise, scale-down or suspend some of the BEREC Office activities for the day-to-day running of the Agency but also in support to BEREC;
- (4) Irrespectively of the challenges, the BEREC Office management and most of the staff demonstrated good resilience and managed adequately to address the challenges mentioned above;
- (5) The BEREC Office Director/ Authorising Officer mobilised in an efficient and effective manner all available financial and human resources and despite the challenging circumstances, the BEREC Office continued to deliver its services to its main client – BEREC, by undertaking the following actions:
 - a) providing high-quality administrative and professional support to the BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR), the BEREC Contact Network (CN), the BEREC Working Groups (WGs), including the Ad Hoc WGs and the BEREC Office Advisory Group (BAG), in particular by supporting the organisation of:
 - i. four ordinary and one extraordinary BoR meetings;
 - ii. four ordinary and two extraordinary CN meetings;
 - iii. 21 physical and 490 virtual WGs meetings, including five external workshops and eight third party meetings organised by the BEREC Office for the WGs;
 - iv. three high-level workshops and 24 meetings of the BEREC Chair and Vice-Chairs;
 - v. 54 other events attended by the BEREC Chair and 17 international events;
 - vi. four BAG meetings.
 - b) providing safe and secure information and communication technology (ICT) tools (hardware and software) ensuring the smooth virtual functioning of the decision-making and the activity of the BEREC preparatory bodies, enabling BEREC to maintain appropriate communication channels with its stakeholders under the circumstances mentioned above, incl. by putting into operation new and ensuring the functioning of the

⁵ https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-surveillance-eu-economies/latvia/economic-forecast-latvia_en#:~:text=Headline%20inflation%20averaged%20a%20still,food%20and%20energy%20posting%209.7%

already existing ICT tools, such as:

- i. the electronic voting tool;
 - ii. the audio-video conference (AVC) facilities in Brussels and Riga;
 - iii. the platform for video-recording and streaming services;
 - iv. the enhanced systems for business continuity, disaster recovery and information technology (IT) security;
- c) managing the following studies for BEREC:
- i. Study on the trends and policy regulatory challenges of cloudification, virtualisation and softwarisation in telecommunication;
 - ii. Study on evolution of competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies not directly providing retail services;
 - iii. Study on wholesale mobile access connectivity, trends and issues for emerging mobile technologies and deployments (ordered in 2022 and finalised in 2023).
- d) contributing to the deployment of the Pan-European telecommunication services and ensuring compliance with BEREC's obligations stemming out from the EECC in the area of general authorisation and numbering by developing and putting into operation of EU General Authorisation and Numbering Databases, as required by the provisions of Article 12 (4) and Article 93 of the EECC;
- e) maintaining the recently implemented Union-wide database of numbering ranges for value-added services in each Member State (MS) and Union-wide database of means of access to emergency services according to Article 16 of the Regulation (EU) 2022/612 of the EP and of the Council of 6 April 2022 on roaming on public mobile communications networks within the Union (Roaming Regulation);
- f) providing the historic data needed for the calculation of the weighted average cost of capital (WACC) by BEREC - for use by the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) and the European Commission (EC);
- g) increasing the visibility of BEREC's work by implementing the communications activities foreseen for the Agency in the annual BEREC Communications plan, including organising one BEREC Stakeholder Forum, as well as four BEREC public debriefings, as well as multiple other events, projects and activities;
- h) supporting the preparation of 48 public and nine internal BEREC deliverables;
- i) organising 14 public consultations and calls for input for collecting views of all interest parties on draft BEREC deliverables and preparing summary reports on the outcome of the consultations;

- j) organising professional training for the NRAs' experts on the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications;
 - k) continuing and improving the IT support to BEREC, including through the use of specialised ICT and IT security services provided by IT service providers, the EC services (the Directorate-General for Informatics), the EU Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-EU), other EU agencies (EUIPO) and joint undertakings;
- (6) The BEREC Office maintained its stable day-to-day operation and introduced further improvements in its operations, irrespectively of the challenges associated with the on-going Russian invasion in Ukraine and its impact on the security and local markets in the host MS, which resulted in increase in the day-to-day operations of the Agency:
- a) utilising the necessary flexibility in managing the limited human and financial resources in accordance with the priorities set up by the MB and taking into account the challenging conditions in which the Agency worked as outlined in the current report;
 - b) implementing further security projects in order to strengthen the technical and physical security of the BEREC Office premises, assets and staff, incl. the establishment of a bomb shelter and its equipment for meeting the requirement of the local authorities for the 72h concept;
 - c) achieving excellent results in budget and finance, namely – 99.96% budget execution rate⁶, highest ever payment execution rate at 88.20%⁷; very low carry-over cancellation rate of 1.08%⁸; historically lowest number of budgetary transfers⁹, as well as 98.4% of timely payments;
 - d) ensuring the necessary capacity for executing the Agency's mandate by maintaining fully staffed situation and providing additional resources for managing specific projects;
 - e) continuing the modernisation of the IT environment of the Agency, including by the deploying qualified electronic signature and additional IT tools in the area of HR and BEREC's activities;
 - f) continuing the work on the new BEREC Office premises project within the umbrella of the new House of Europe project in Riga initiated by the EP and EC;
 - g) continuing the commitment to enable young graduates to gain experience in the work of the EU in general and in the work of BEREC and the BEREC Office in

⁶ Commitment execution rate 99.99% in 2022 and 99.97% in 2021

⁷ Payment execution rate 82.78% in 2022 and 69.33% in 2021

⁸ 1.37% in 2022 and 1.14% in 2021

⁹ 3 budgetary transfers in 2024, 4 in 2023 and 5 in 2022

- particular by providing traineeship to 7 trainees in 2023;
- h) offering legal services to staff, comprehensive induction programme and other services oriented to facilitating the establishment and retaining staff;
 - i) continuing the implementation of the internal control framework in force as of January 2019 and maintaining efficient and effective internal control systems at the BEREC Office;
- (7) Following the decision of the EC services to terminate the Service Level Agreement for the provision of the accounting officer function, the Agency managed to smoothly recruit an accounting officer on the newly established temporary agent post and to internalise this important function as of 1 November 2023;
 - (8) Regrets that the BEREC Office needed to suspend certain projects such as, the external training courses on regulatory framework to junior NRA, the subscription to regulatory database and the Traineeship programme, and scaling down the Agency's support to BEREC in relation to the subscription to financial software and necessary historical data sets for the calculation of certain parameters underlying the weighted average cost of capital (WACC) because of financial constraints and called to the EC and the Budgetary authority to consider up-dating the EU contribution with % close to the inflation in the host MS ; other projects in support to BEREC;
 - (9) Takes note of the fact that the use of managed ICT services was also re-considered and replaced by more cost-efficient in-house managed solution, however, while this solution is cost-effective, it increases the workload for BEREC experts and the staff of the Agency;
 - (10) Expresses its concern from the lack of progress with the accreditation of the European School in Latvia, which according to Article 21 (2) of the Headquarters agreement was expected for the school year 2022/2023 and calls upon the Government of the host MS to ensure completion of its commitments;
 - (11) The MB is assured that the limited BEREC Office resources were managed in the best possible manner but is concerned by the fact that the increase in the EU contribution does not follow the level of the inflation in the host MS, which has put certain constraints on the Agency's activity;
 - (12) The MB is assured of the reliability of the accounts and of the legality and regularity of the transactions undertaken.

Following an analysis of the CAAR 2023 submitted by the Director ad interim, the following conclusions have been reached:

1. The BEREC Office managed to cope with its increasing tasks and assignments stemming from the BEREC Work Programme 2023, the EU regulatory framework and other legal requirements under the conditions of a continuous war in Ukraine and energy crisis in Europe, which put additional pressure on the Agency's budget and generates some risks for the security.
2. The BEREC Office demonstrated good mobilisation of all its available resources: financial and human, and maintained its capacity to support BEREC during times of high demand of services from the side of BEREC on the one side and a global crisis – on the other side.
3. The BEREC Office reacted swiftly on any new request for services coming from BEREC and provided BEREC with high-quality professional and administrative support, including for the preparation of high-quality BEREC deliverables.
4. Irrespectively of the challenges, the internal control systems at the BEREC Office continue to work as intended; the European Court of Auditors (ECA) and the independent auditor issued in 2023 clean opinions on the legality and regularity of the 2023 Agency's accounts.
5. The information contained in the CAAR presents a true and fair view of the 2023 BEREC Office activities and demonstrates further improvements in the BEREC Office's performance in 2023 in achieving its objectives, as defined in the BEREC Regulation and the BEREC Office SPD 2023-2025, as amended.
6. The resources assigned to the activities described in the report were used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principle of sound financial management.
7. The control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.
8. In a year of extreme and continuous challenges, the BEREC Office, under the management of its Director, has met all targets and expectations for its performance, which is recognised as an achievement.

The Director is invited to:

1. Maintain the high level of operational support to BEREC, in line with its Annual WP and the Rules of Procedure;
2. Address the challenges associated with the war in Ukraine after the attack by Russia, including via maintaining high level of IT and physical security of the Agency's premises, assets and staff;

3. Work towards improving the working conditions for the staff and the living conditions for the staff and their families in the host MS, including, where necessary, in cooperation with the host MS, the EC and the EP in order to achieve full implementation of the spirit of the Article 47 of the BEREC Regulation;
4. Work towards long term stability in staffing with reshuffling the available resources, if necessary, implement appropriate measures aimed at attracting and retaining highly qualified staff and maintaining the staff turnover at low levels;
5. Implement in cooperation with the Staff Committee the action plan for social welfare measures with the limits of the voted budget;
6. Maintain efficient and effective internal control systems at the BEREC Office in compliance with the risks at the Agency;
7. Maintain good level of budget planning and management with a view to ensuring compliance with the key performance indicators adopted by the MB;
8. Report regularly on the achievement of key performance indicators by the BEREC Office and progress towards addressing any remaining open issues raised by the discharge authority and/or in the ECA in previous years' reports.

26 June 2024

For the Management Board

(e-signed)

Tonko Obuljen

Chairperson

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ABAC	Accrual Based Accounting
AD	Administrator
AST	Assistant
AST/SC	Secretaries and clerks
AVC	Audio-video conference
BAG	BEREC Office Advisory Group
BEREC	Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications
BEREC Office	Agency for Support for BEREC
BEREC Regulation	Regulation (EU) No 2018/1971 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018, replacing Regulation (EC) No 1211/2009
BoR	Board of Regulators
CA	Contract agent
CdT	Translation Centre of the EU
CERT-EU	EU Computer Emergency Response Team
CN	Contact Network
DG	Directorate General of the European Commission
DG BUDG	DG for Budget
DG DIGIT	DG for Informatics
DG HR	DG for Human Resources and Security
DPO	Data Protection Officer
ECA	European Court of Auditors
EECC	Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ENISA	European Union Agency for Network and Information Security
EP	European Parliament

Abbreviation	Meaning
EU	European Union
FG	Function group
FTE	Full-time equivalent
FWC	Framework contract
GADB	General authorisation data base
HQA	Headquarters Agreement
HR	Human resources
IAS	Internal Audit Service
ICF	Internal Control Framework
ICT	Information and communications technology
IIC	International Institute for Communications
ISP	Information Sharing Portal
IT	Information technology
MB	Management Board
MS	Member State
NRA	National regulatory authority
OJ	Official Journal of the European Union
PMO	Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements
RBFM	Report on budgetary and financial management
SLA	Service level agreement
SNE	Seconded national expert
SPD	Single programming document
TA	Temporary agent
WACC	Weighted average cost of capital
WG	Working Group
WP	Work Programme

Executive summary

This consolidated annual activity report (CAAR) provides an overview of the activities carried out by the Agency for Support for BEREC (BEREC Office, Agency) in 2023 with the aim to inform the BEREC Office Management Board (MB) and the public of the progress in the implementation of its Work Programme (WP) for 2023 and its multiannual strategy for the period 2023-2025, as defined in the Single Programming Document (SPD) for 2023-2025, as amended.

The CAAR contains detailed information on the operations carried out by the Agency in 2023. It evaluates these activities against the objectives and performance criteria outlined in the above-mentioned SPD, considering associated risks, resource utilisation, and the efficiency and effectiveness of internal control systems. The report also includes an overall assessment of the costs and benefits of controls and information on how authorised operational expenditures contribute to the achievement of strategic objectives of the European Union (EU) and generate EU added value.

Achievements in recurring activities

To provide support in achieving the tasks and objectives outlined in the BEREC WP, the Agency has facilitated the setting up of the 12 BEREC Working Groups (WGs) and provided support for organisation of the workshops and meetings – altogether 21 in physical and 490 in virtual mode. Five external workshops requested by the WGs in accordance with the BEREC WP and eight 3rd party meetings were fully organised and logistically supported by the BEREC Office.

To ensure transparency and accountability of BEREC's activities, the Agency has assisted the launch of 14 public consultations and calls for input by providing its support in launching, collecting stakeholders' contributions and summarising those. Additionally, the BEREC Office has regularly drafted reports on major EU-level progress in telecommunications regulation, key regulatory initiatives, EU national market analysis, and supported the BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR) in the preparation BEREC's annual activity report, as well as specific reports detailing market developments in the electronic communications sector.

The BEREC Office contributed to enhancing the professional knowledge of the experts from the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) by providing a four-session training course to the Co-Chairs of the WG and BEREC Office expert networking groups (ENGs) with a focus on planning and moderating the work of the WGs and ENGs. Several training sessions were organised for junior experts by using internal resources of BEREC and the BEREC Office by disseminating knowledge and expertise accumulated by the WG and ENG Co-Chairs.

In 2023 the BEREC Office finalised the study on wholesale mobile access connectivity, trends and issues for emerging technologies and deployment; and procured two new studies: one on

the trends and cloudification, virtualisation, and softwarisation in telecommunication, and another on the evolution of the competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies not directly providing retail services.

The BEREC Office facilitated information exchange among NRAs and contributed to drafting reports on specific communication market aspects. The Agency provided data sets and databases to calculate parameters for the BEREC Report on Regulatory Accounting in Practice 2023. Additionally, the Agency engaged a contractor to train BEREC experts on using a specialised terminal for calculation of the Weighted Average Cost of Capital (WACC) enabling real-time financial market data analysis. The BEREC Office continued administrating the Information Sharing Portal and regularly promoted the new content uploaded by the NRAs.

In the reporting period, the Agency supported the organisation and execution of five BoR meetings and four MB meetings, six Contact Network (CN) meetings, four BEREC Office Advisory Group (BAG) meetings, and 18 meetings of the BEREC Chair and Vice-Chairs. In addition, the Agency supported the organisation of one four-lateral BEREC, EaPeReg, Regulatel and EMERG Summit, seven BEREC international events and 60 other events attended by the BEREC Chair.

The BEREC Office continued to provide professional and administrative support to the Chair/Chairperson for the organisation of altogether 22 BoR and MB electronic voting procedures, respectively 16 and six.

In 2023 the BEREC Office provided in a timely manner BEREC with information technology (IT) support, licenses, hardware and business continuity in accordance with the needs and the specifics of work of BEREC. All information and communication technology (ICT) services and systems support were delivered as initially foreseen, with a service availability ratio of more than 99%.

Throughout 2023, the BEREC Office continued supporting BEREC in enhancing its reputation as the independent, future-orientated European expert body. In support to the BEREC Chair the Agency ensured the daily communications activities by drafting and distributing information on the work of BEREC and its Chair. Four public debriefings on the outcomes of the BoR ordinary meetings were conducted – three online and one in hybrid mode – attracting over 485 stakeholders.

The BEREC Office in cooperation with the incoming BEREC Chair (HAKOM, Croatia) organised the most prominent annual public event, the BEREC Stakeholder Forum, which received a record-high number of registrations and physical attendance. The Conference part of the event focused on the EU Data Act, an accessible future for end-users with disabilities, the future of regulation in the Digital era, and the early call for input to the BEREC WP 2024. The *Meet&Greet*

sessions, part of the Forum, provided an opportunity to meet the BEREC co-Chairs for an informal exchange of ideas on the topics related to the telecoms market.

2023 specific activities and achievements in support to BEREC

The BEREC Office coordinated the activities under Article 32/33 procedures of Directive (EU) 2018/1972, the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC). In 2023 this included establishing one ad hoc WG in response to a serious doubts letter of the European Commission (EC) regarding the wholesale market for access to mobile services in the Czech Republic. The ad hoc WG held nine virtual meetings, leading to adoption of the BEREC opinion on the case.

The BEREC Office staff provided efficient support to the Sustainability ENG for the activities focusing on the drafting of the Greening Action Plan 2024-2026 by updating relevant data estimations and having a series of coordination meetings regarding the topic.

The Agency supported the revision of the Working Arrangements concerning the participation of the NRAs from the Western Balkan countries and Ukraine in the work of BEREC and BEREC Office. The six Working Arrangements with the Western Balkan NRAs were approved and entered into force in June 2023 and the one with the Ukrainian NRA was approved in January 2024.

The key ICT project of 2023 was the Migration of the Primary datacentre, which was successfully completed ahead of schedule compared to the initial planning. The upgrade of the ICT infrastructure and IT systems contributed to overall efficiency and optimization of ICT resources, consequently reducing costs wherever possible.

In the reporting period the Agency developed 'in-house' a new voting tool for the BoR and MB electronic voting procedures. During the development the BEREC Office took into account several enhancements suggested by BEREC members, which added additional value of the new voting tool for its end-users.

In line with decision MB/2023/06 to further enhance the security of BERECNet+, the BEREC Office, with the support of the ICT ENG, implemented the multi factor authentication (MFA) method using the one time passcode (OTP) for this platform.

The Agency made further progress with the modernisation of its core audio-video conference (AVC) equipment in order to ensure higher productivity and efficiency and to improve the collaboration between BEREC members and the Agency in Riga in a user-friendly way.

One of the key communications projects was the development of a new design and content of the BEREC website, which is undergoing a complete redesign and upgrade. The creation of over 45 new website design templates in both desktop and mobile version was completed. The

development of the design was initiated and progressed with receiving an intermediate release at the end of 2023. The new website is envisaged to be launched in the middle of 2024.

War in Ukraine

The war in Ukraine has become the new normal. Despite no new threats to the Agency were identified, Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine had direct and constant implications on the activities of the BEREC Office. The Crisis Task Force, established in the beginning of 2022, maintained its commitment to monitor security developments in Ukraine and the region, assessing and mitigating risks to the safety of the Agency staff and assets.

As part of the business continuity and emergency plan, the work for improving the safety and security of staff in response to the war was finalised by refurbishing and equipping the bomb shelter as a solution for a temporary sheltering the staff should war deployments require so.

The Agency was in close contact with the Latvian Authorities, other EU Agencies in the region and the EC services and followed closely any changes of the security of the host Member State (MS) and the region, as a whole, - to be able to react on any critical situation. In the need for more efforts to support Ukraine, also with ICT equipment, the BEREC Office partnered with the Latvian association Tavi Draugi and became the only collection hub in the Republic of Latvia for the laptops and ICT devices for Ukraine. This initiative aimed at gathering laptops, smartphones and tablets from collection hubs all over the EU to provide aid to schools, hospitals and public administrations in Ukraine's most affected war regions.

The increased inflation and the impact of the on-going war in Ukraine on the prices of the energy resources required more effort in terms of budget planning and management in 2023, including some re-prioritisation of the BEREC Office activities.

Developments in the relations with the Latvian Authorities

In 2023 the BEREC Office continued its fruitful cooperation with the Latvian authorities and in particular with the Ministry of Transport, on the basis of the Headquarters Agreement (HQA), which entered into force on 15 June 2021 and the Service level agreement (SLA) which entered into force on 16 June 2022. The Liaison Office, established by the Latvian Government according to the SLA provisions, effectively supported the smooth functioning of the BEREC Office and the establishment of the Agency's staff and their family member in the host MS. During the reporting period, the Agency utilised joint procurement procedures with the Latvian Government for purchases on two occasions and improved the procedure for proving the contribution for covering part of the schooling costs paid by the Agency in the Republic of Latvia, as a temporary measure. The Agency and the staff made active use of the service of the Liaison Officer, which proved to be very useful and effective. The staff of the Liaison Office was more deeply involved in the on-boarding of the new comers, including in facilitating their arrival to Riga and proving them with a proper induction programme. Their services have been highly

appreciated also by the *seasoned* staff in dealing with formalities with the Latvian authorities, health care service providers, schooling and VAT reimbursement (if and when applicable).

While there has been significant progress in providing the necessary conditions for the smooth and efficient functioning of the BEREC Office by the host MS, a concern persists regarding the delay in establishing an accredited European school.

Horizontal activities

As part of its contribution to achieving BEREC's objectives the BEREC Office ensured the smooth day-to-day operation of the Agency by carrying out the recurring administrative and financial activities in line with the legislation in force, namely, managing the budget in accordance with the activity-based budget management (ABM) approach, preparing all financial transaction for timely execution, coordinating the internal, external and independent audits, ensuring centralised staff mission management, coordinating the internal control framework implementation at the Agency and preparing documents of horizontal nature.

The main challenges in the reporting period continued to be high inflation in the host Member. Tackling this resulted in a rigorous budget management, re-prioritization and scaling-down on some of the activities. The ongoing war in Ukraine also had direct and constant implications on the way the BEREC Office carried out its activities in 2023. Agency took all necessary measures to ensure the smooth functioning of the Agency taking into account the new security challenges.

In the reporting period BEREC Office continued its commitment for further digitalization of the Agency in 2023 with the objective gradually to make the Agency a smart and paperless Agency. For this, in 2023 BEREC Office continued to introduce smart tools and innovation in its daily work, such as: additional modules for EC human resource (HR) management tool; integration of the Qualified electronic signature (QES) in the existing document management system; launching new project for modernization of the Contract Register and started to use the new contract notice tool "eForms". BEREC Office also continued to improve ICT security of provided applications and databases and the entire ICT security perimeter.

In the area of communication, BEREC Office organised various activities to support raising awareness of BEREC and the BEREC Office's work among citizens of its hosting country, Latvia. These initiatives included: Charity campaign Laptops for Ukraine; participation in the youth-oriented European Skills Festival and an annual event dedicated to World Telecommunications day and Charity Bazaar of the International Women's Club of Riga.

In the area of budget and finance management in 2023 BEREC Office demonstrated excellent results, namely – 99.96% budget execution rate , highest ever payment execution rate at 88.20% ; very low carry-over cancellation rate of 1.08% ; historically lowest number of budgetary transfers, as well as historically best indicator for timely payments at 98.4%.

The BEREC Office managed 20 procurement procedures in 2023. All procurement procedures with the exception of reopening of competition were managed via the EC Public Procurement

Management Tool (PPMT), which increased the efficiency of the management of the procedures and ensured compliance with the legislation and internal rules in force.

During 2023 the BEREC Office HR management was oriented towards maintaining full staffing situation to enable the Agency to deliver its mandate and offering better working and living conditions to the staff members. Main challenge in the area of HR remains the availability and length of stay of experts seconded to the BEREC Office by the NRAs and the low attractiveness of the Agency for candidates from outside the host MS.

Introduction

1. Agency in Brief

The Agency for Support for BEREC (BEREC Office, Agency) was established by Regulation (EU) No 2018/1971 of the European Parliament (EP) and of the Council of 11 December 2018 (BEREC Regulation), replacing Regulation (EC) No 1211/2009. The BEREC Office is established as a body of the European Union (EU) with a legal personality.

The BEREC Office comprises:

- the Management Board;
- the Director.

The Director is in charge of the administrative management of the BEREC Office.

The number of staff available to the Agency in 2023 was 48 persons, split into the following categories: 17 temporary agents (including the Director), 22 contract agents and 9 seconded national experts.

Pursuant to Article 5 of the BEREC Regulation, the BEREC Office has the following tasks:

- to provide professional and administrative support services to BEREC, in particular in fulfilling its regulatory tasks;
- to collect information from national regulatory authorities (NRAs) and to exchange and transmit information in relation to the regulatory tasks assigned to BEREC;
- to produce, on the basis of the information received from NRAs in relation to the regulatory tasks assigned to BEREC, regular draft reports on specific aspects of developments in the European electronic communications market, such as roaming and benchmarking reports, to be submitted to BEREC;
- to disseminate regulatory best practices among NRAs;
- to assist BEREC in establishing and maintaining registries and databases, in establishing and managing an information and communications system and in conducting public consultations;
- to assist in the preparation of the work and provide other administrative and content-related support to ensure the smooth functioning of the BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR);
- to assist in setting up BEREC working groups (WGs), upon request of the BoR, contribute to the regulatory work and provide administrative support to ensure the smooth functioning of those groups;
- to carry out other tasks assigned to it by this Regulation or by other EU legal acts.

The BEREC Office has its headquarters at Zigfrida Annas Meierovica Bulvaris 14, Riga, Latvia.

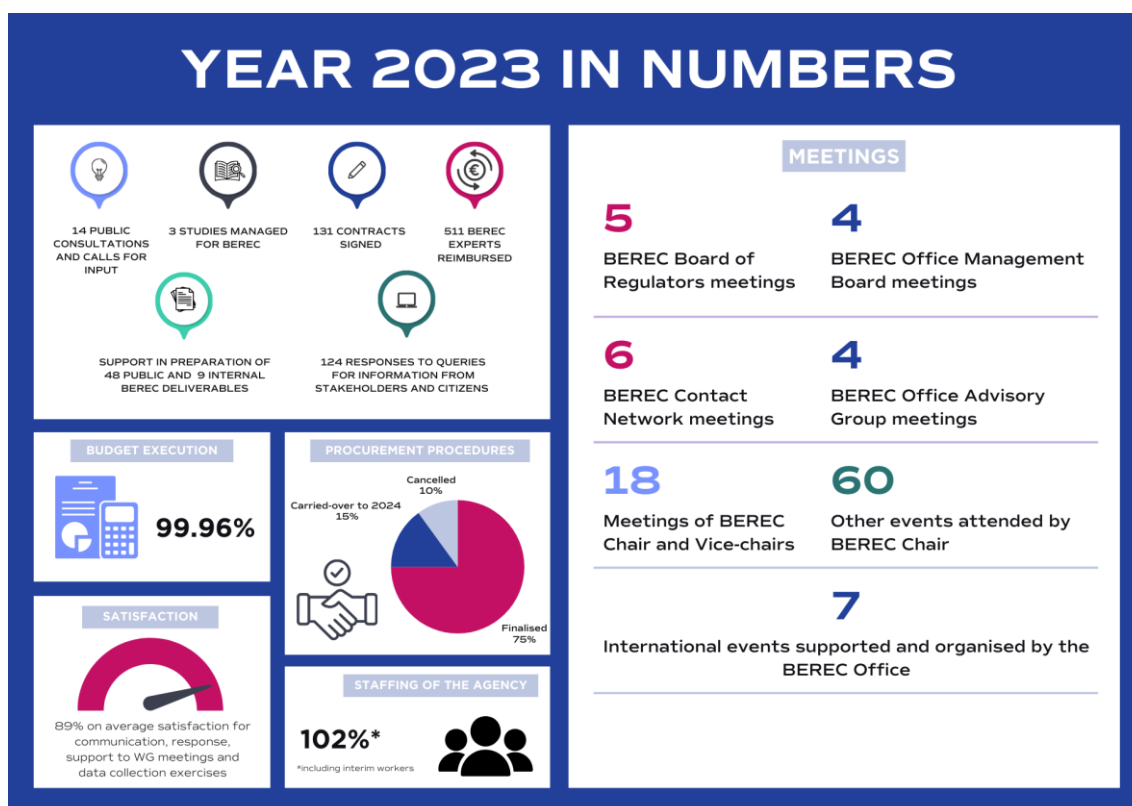
BEREC is the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications established by Regulation (EU) 2018/1971, which replaced the previous regulation, Regulation (EC) No 1211/2009. BEREC commenced its activities in January 2010. BEREC is composed of the heads or nominated high-level representatives of the NRAs of the EU Member States.

BEREC's overall task is to assist the European Commission (EC), the other European Institutions and the NRAs as a permanent advisory body on the electronic communications markets and networks. To this end, BEREC issues guidelines on several topics, and produces opinions, recommendations, common positions, best practices and methodologies. In addition, BEREC reports on technical matters, and keeps registers, lists and databases.

The role of BEREC has been enhanced by the new BEREC Regulation and by Directive (EU) 2018/1972 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC), which sets out a significant number of new tasks. BEREC fulfils its tasks also in compliance with the Roaming Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 2022/612), Telecoms Single Market Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2015/2120) and the Digital Markets Act Regulation ((EU) 2022/1925 (DMA))

More information on BEREC and the BEREC Office can be found on the BEREC website (berec.europa.eu).

2. Year 2023 in numbers



Part I: Achievements of the year

1. Support to BEREC Working Groups (WGs), Sustainability Expert Networking Group (ENG) and phase II cases

The total resources planned and used for the support to BEREC WGs, including assistance in setting up WGs, organisation and coordination of WG meetings (both internal and external) and meetings of ad hoc WGs under the Article 32/33 procedure, are as follows:

Resource type	Planned resources, as envisaged in the WP 2023	Resources used
Financial resources (EUR)	1,768,320.73	1,825,417.35
Full-time equivalent (FTE) posts	17.77	17.28

In 2023, the BEREC Office collected the resource commitments from the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) for setting up the WGs and managed the email lists and email exploders related to their activity. There were 12 WGs established by a decision of the BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR) (Annex I, Table 1).

The BEREC Office supported the organisation of 21 physical and 490 virtual meetings of the WGs in 2023, including five external workshops and eight 3rd party meetings. The BEREC Office reimbursed the travel expenses of 169 meeting participants for the above events.

According to the BEREC Work Programme (WP) in 2023 the BEREC Office provided organisational and logistical support to five **external workshops** as requested by the WGs and organised in a hybrid mode.

The external workshops organised by the BEREC Office in 2023 were as follows:

1. BEREC Workshop on secure and reliable connectivity from the low earth orbits (LEO) satellite fleets that took place on 13 April 2023¹⁰;

¹⁰ <https://berec.europa.eu/en/events/berec-events-2023/berec-workshop-on-secure-and-reliable-connectivity-from-leo-satellite-fleets><https://berec.europa.eu/en/events/berec-events-2023/berec-workshop-on-secure-and-reliable-connectivity-from-leo-satellite-fleets>

2. BEREC Workshop on switching and interoperability of data processing services that took place on 28 April 2023¹¹;
3. BEREC Workshop on competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies held on 20 June 2023¹²;
4. BEREC Workshop on international submarine connectivity in the EU held on 21 September 2023¹³ and
5. BEREC Workshop on Internet of Things: perspectives and competition held on 26 October 2023¹⁴.

The BEREC Office coordinated BEREC's activities under **Article 32/33 procedures** pursuant to Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC). Under this activity in 2023, the BEREC Office has contributed to the establishment of one ad hoc WG following the EC serious doubts letter that opened on 30/1/2023 phase II investigations pursuant under Article 32 of Directive (EU) 2018/1972 concerning the wholesale market for access to mobile services in the Czech Republic. The ad hoc WG had nine virtual meetings and BEREC adopted one opinion¹⁵.

Furthermore, the BEREC Office regularly updated the **Article 32 and 33 database** on registered notifications and Phase II cases and updated the list of focal points yearly. In 2023, the BEREC Office made 60 records in the database of all Market Analysis notifications to the EC.

On behalf of BEREC the BEREC Office launching 14 **public consultations** and **calls for input**, envisaged in the annual BEREC WP for 2023. The public consultations were launched to consult the stakeholders on the reports and guidelines under preparation by BEREC last year. In addition to launching the consultation and collecting the stakeholders' contributions, the BEREC

¹¹ <https://berec.europa.eu/en/events/berec-events-2023/berec-workshop-on-switching-and-interoperability-of-data-processing-services>

¹² See, <https://berec.europa.eu/en/events/berec-events-2023/berec-market-and-economic-analysis-working-group-workshop-on-competition-dynamics-of-tower-and-access-infrastructure-companies>

¹³ See, <https://berec.europa.eu/en/events/berec-events-2023/berec-workshop-on-international-submarine-connectivity-in-the-eu>

¹⁴ See, <https://berec.europa.eu/en/events/berec-events-2023/berec-workshop-on-internet-of-things-perspectives-and-competition>

¹⁵ BoR (23) 49: BEREC Opinion on Phase II investigation pursuant to Article 32 of Directive (EU) 2018/1972 - Case CZ/2022/2421 Wholesale access and call origination on public mobile telephone networks in the Czech Republic, see, <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec/opinions/berec-opinion-on-phase-ii-investigation-pursuant-to-article-32-of-directive-eu-20181972-case-cz20222421-wholesale-access-and-call-origination-on-public-mobile-telephone-networks-in-the-czech-republic>

Office also summarising the received contributions (Annex 1, Table 2: List of BEREC public consultations managed by the BEREC Office in 2023).

Under this activity in 2023, the BEREC Office received and responded to **124** different **queries for information** from stakeholders and citizens.

The BEREC Office prepared and disseminated a variety of BEREC **information and/or analyses on collected market data** relating to the objectives of the WGs (see more details in Annex I, Table 3: Data collection exercises organised by the BEREC Office for the BEREC Working Groups (WGs) in 2023).

The BEREC Office produced regular draft reports on specific aspects of developments in the European electronic communications market, such as **the intra-European Economic Area communications report, International roaming benchmark report and the report on transparency and comparability of international roaming tariffs** (see more details in Annex I, Table 8: BEREC Working group deliverables, prepared with the support of the BEREC Office in 2023).

Additionally, the BEREC Office assisted the BoR in preparing the **BEREC's annual activity report and the reports** on market developments in the electronic communications sector (Annex I, Table 8: BEREC Working group deliverables, prepared with the support of the BEREC Office in 2023).

To measure the key performance indicators (KPIs), "Quality of support to BEREC and its WGs", the BEREC Office consulted the BEREC Chair and the BEREC WGs co-Chairs on a quarterly basis through satisfaction surveys. The main objective of the BEREC Office was to timely provide efficient support to WGs in fulfilling their responsibilities. This objective was achieved by the provision of professional, financial, and administrative support to the WGs meetings, the organisation of public consultations, procurements, workshops, and the smooth operation of the BERECNet+. In 2023, almost all KPIs met the 85% target except for one indicator: "The level of satisfaction with data collection exercises".

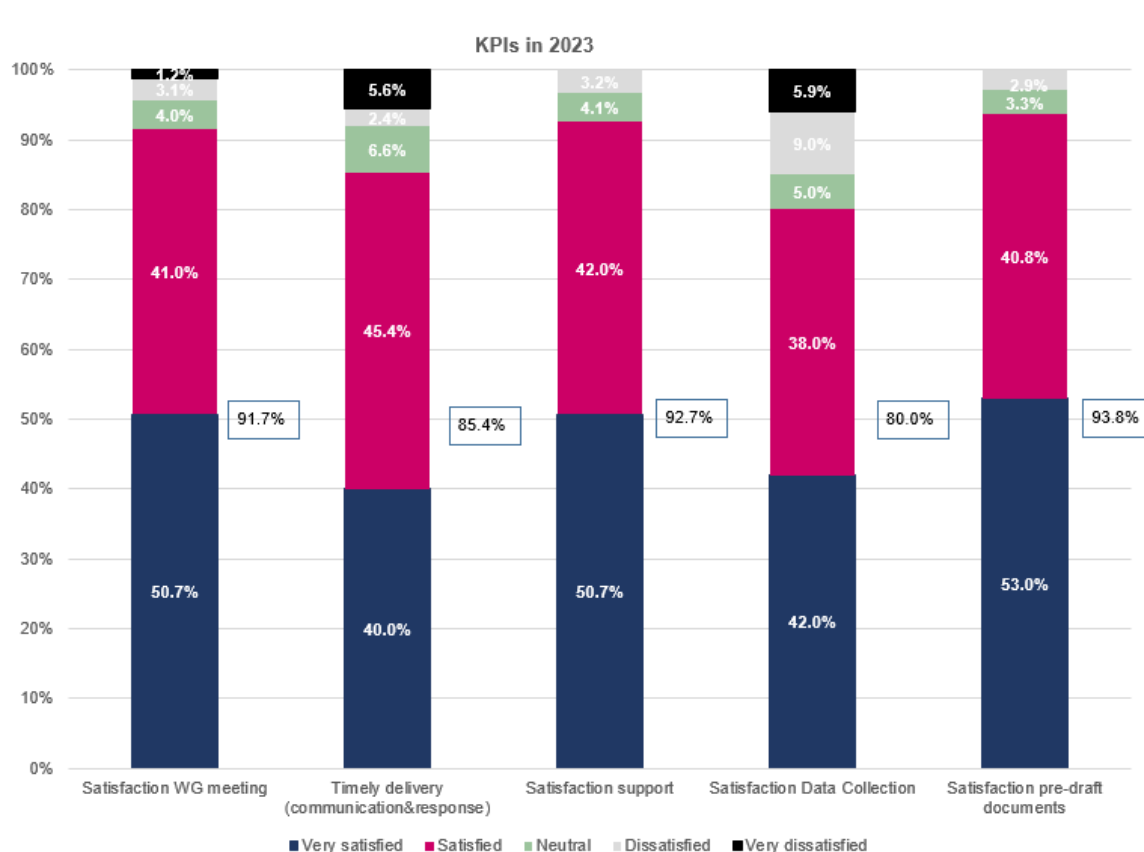


Figure 1 KPIs in 2023

The **Table 1** below represents the summary of the support to BEREC WGs.

5 Workshops	1 Ad-hoc WGs under Art.32/33	14 public consultations & calls for inputs	124 Responses to citizens/stakeholders	48 Deliverables

Table 1: Summary of the support to BEREC WGs in 2023

2. High level meetings and support to the Boards

The total resources planned and used for the support to high level meetings and the Boards meetings are, as follows:

Resource type	Planned resources, as envisaged in the WP 2023	Resources used
Financial resources (EUR)	803,365.77	729,739.39
Full-time equivalent (FTE) posts	3.25	3.13

In the reporting period, the BEREC Office supported the organisation of 38 high level meetings and events, as follows:

- five BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR);
- four BEREC Office Management Board (MB) meetings;
- one Four-lateral BEREC, EaPeReg, Regulate1 and EMERG Summit;
- six BEREC Contact Network (CN) meetings;
- four BEREC Office Advisory Group (BAG) meetings;
- 18 meetings of the BEREC Chair and Vice-Chairs (BEREC Mini Board).

In addition, the BEREC Office supported the organisation of 60 other events attended by the BEREC Chair and seven BEREC international events (see Annex I, Table 4 and Table 5).

The BEREC Office also provided the secretariat for the BoR and the MB and their respective preparatory bodies, i.e. the BEREC Mini Board, the CN and the BAG.

Following the Court of Justice judgment¹⁶ the BEREC Office supported the revision of the Working arrangements concerning the participation of the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) from the Western Balkan countries and Ukraine in the work of BEREC and BEREC Office that allowed these NRAs to participate in the work of BEREC and BEREC Office as a participant without voting rights. The Working arrangements with the Western Balkan NRAs were approved and entered into force in June 2023 and the one with the Ukrainian NRA was approved in January 2024.

In the reporting period the BEREC Office provided logistical support to all the above-mentioned meetings, including registration of meeting participants and the timely preparation and dissemination of meeting documents. It also reimbursed the travel expenses of 289 experts participating in high-level BEREC events, amounting to EUR 314.309,52.

¹⁶ See, Judgement of the Court of Justice of 17 January 2023, Case C-632/20, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:62020CJ0632>

The BEREC Office also provided professional and administrative support services to the Chair/Chairperson for the organisation of BoR and MB electronic voting procedures when the organisation of a meeting for adoption of the decision needed was not possible or practicable and the adoption of the decision could not be postponed until the next ordinary meeting. In total, 16 electronic voting procedures were organised for the BoR and six electronic voting procedures were held for the MB. A detailed list of the documents adopted by the MB, including via electronic voting procedures, can be found in Annex VI.

To measure NRAs' satisfaction with the services and support provided by the Agency the BEREC Office convened two surveys among the BoR, MB, CN and BAG members. In both cases the BEREC Office got high satisfaction levels receiving respectively 91% and 94% of responses to 11 questions in the two highest marks.

3. Information and communication technology (ICT) support to BEREC

The resources planned and used for ICT support to BEREC are, as follows:

Resource type	Planned resources, as envisaged in the WP 2023	Resources used
Financial resources (EUR)	638,579.28	561,876.05
Full-time equivalent (FTE) posts	3.16	4.29

3.1. Information technology (IT) support, licenses, hardware and Business Continuity for BEREC

Throughout 2023 the IT support, licenses, hardware, back-up and business continuity for BEREC has been provided continuously, based on BEREC needs. The Agency supported BEREC's operations by maintaining high availability of infrastructure and IT services, with availability ratio more than 99%.

Moreover, all information and communication technology (ICT) services and systems support have been delivered as initially foreseen, including different audio-video conferencing solutions/platforms for virtual collaborations, streaming and recording services, ICT security administration, Information system technological updates, IT support and licenses for the management of email distribution groups and managed security services for email communication system, backups and end-user support for all operational systems.

In 2023, the Agency continued to provide and maintain the corporate website with a support provided under excellent inter-institutional collaboration with the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO). This collaboration is practical example of ICT knowledge sharing between agencies and fostering of inter-institutional synergies. In the second half of 2023, however, EUIPO formally requested the BEREC Office to migrate out its corporate website from

the EUPaaS environment currently provided for BEREC Office needs. The BEREC Office established communication with the highest level of senior management of EUIPO in order to discuss the modalities and timing for such a transition. Possibly this would result into project activity of 2025, preceded by planning phase carried out during 2024, and possibly higher costs for the corporate website compared to previous years.

The BEREC Office continued to allocate the operational costs including system infrastructure, maintenance and further improvements, licenses and managed service related to BERECNet+, General Authorisation Database (GADB) and the databases implemented in 2022 - Union-wide database of numbering ranges for value-added services (VAS) and Union-wide database of means of access to emergency services (Emergency database).

Figure 2 below illustrates the total number of records uploaded by NRAs into the GADB. Presently, 23¹⁷ MSs regularly upload notifications into this database.

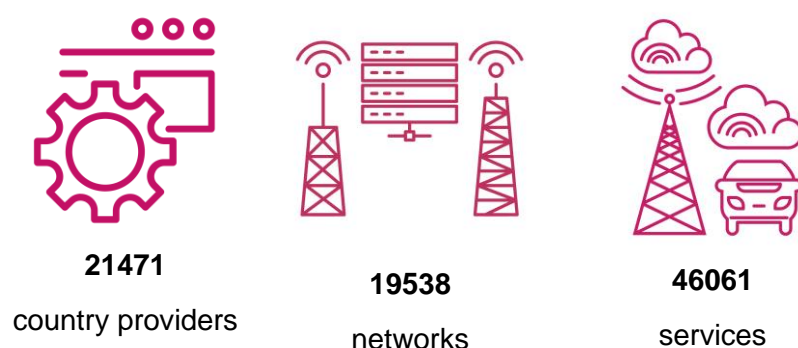


Figure 2: Summary of GADB records in 2023

In accordance with Article 24 of the Regulation (EU) 2022/612 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 April 2022 on roaming on public mobile communications networks within the Union (Roaming Regulation)¹⁸, the obligations of roaming providers to provide information about numbering ranges for value-added services and information about alternative means of access to emergency services applies from 1 June 2023. This means that operators were requested to provide this type of information to roaming consumers by 1 June 2023 at the latest. Pursuant to Article 16 of the Roaming Regulation, national regulatory authorities or other competent authorities must provide necessary information and relevant updates to BEREC by electronic means without undue delay.

¹⁷ AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, HR, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, RO, SK, SI, and SE.

¹⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022R0612&qid=1710934802976>

Pursuant to the respective BEREC procedures ¹⁹ from 1 June 2023 and every 3 months afterwards, an automatic email is sent to the relevant NRAs and/or other competent authorities in order to check if the data in the databases are up-to-date.

Figure 3 below illustrates a huge visitor's interest to these databases.

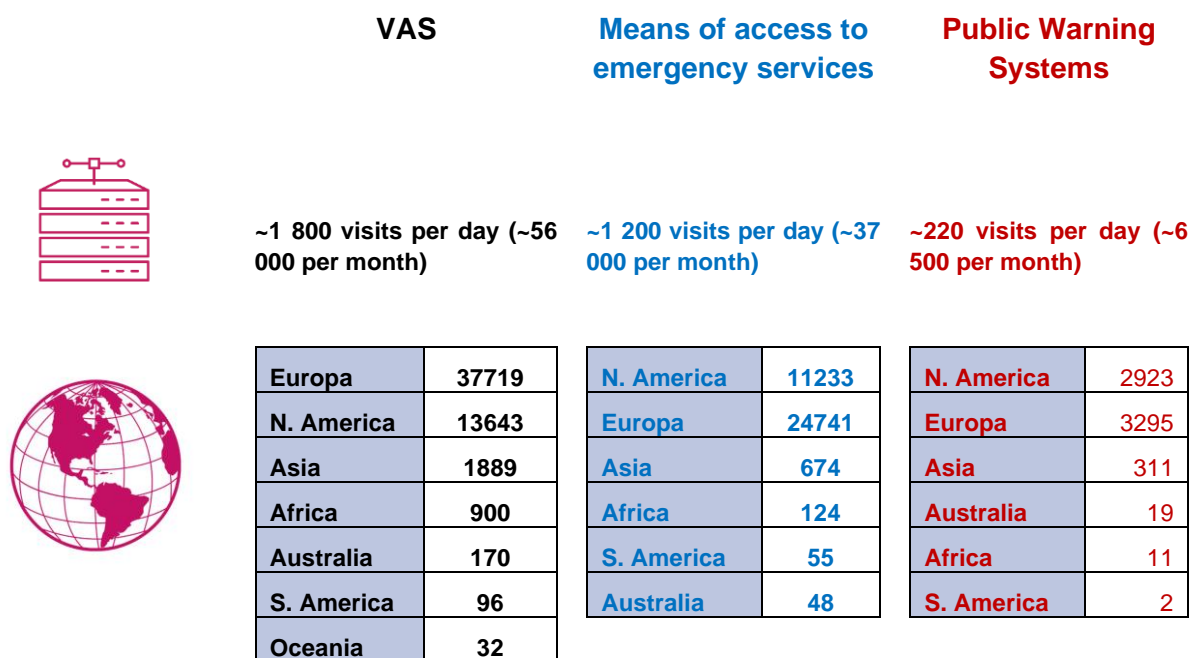


Figure 3: Visit statistics in 2023 for VAS and Emergency access databases

The BEREC Office continued the provision of audio video conferencing (AVC) services to the BEREC and the BEREC Office staff, incl. in the premises of the BEREC Brussels presence and the Agency's headquarters in Riga as an enabler for higher productivity, efficiency and collaboration in a user-friendly way. While for AVC services in Brussels the BEREC Office extended service contract until the end of the Framework contract, in Riga the BEREC Office introduced new modern touchscreen AVC boards replacing previous managed AVC devices provided under service managed model. This has introduced additional capabilities for interactive collaboration (touch screen), wireless sharing and seamless MS Teams and Webex meeting compatibility while reducing costs. Due to limited financial resources in 2023 the purchase and provision of mobile AVC equipment in portable AVC suitcases could not take

¹⁹ BoR (23) 24 Revision of Procedures for the BEREC databases of numbering ranges for value-added services and means of access to emergency services for roaming users, see: <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec/others/revision-of-procedures-for-the-berec-databases-of-numbering-ranges-for-value-added-services-and-means-of-access-to-emergency-services-for-roaming-users>

place and will be further evaluated as solution possibly in next programming period taking into account actual needs and investment costs.

The preparation of a data management strategy was not activated in 2023 due to budgetary reasons. Instead of this a priority was given to development of ICT strategy during 2024 – 2026 (included in Single Programming Document for 2024-2026) and preparation has started already in 2023. ICT strategy aims at including different aspects of IT - cybersecurity, IT systems, platforms, tools, data etc.

3.2. Information technology (IT) projects for BEREC

In 2023 the BEREC Office implemented the following important IT projects and activities in support to BEREC:

- In-house development and implementation of new electronic voting tool;
- Multi-factor authentication (MFA) of BERECNet+;
- Migration of BERECNet+, GADB and infrastructure to other datacentres in Europe.

Specifically, the BEREC Office developed a new voting tool for the BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR) and BEREC Office Management Board (MB) electronic voting procedures by using internal resources of the Agency. Already during the development, the BEREC Office implemented several enhancements suggested by BEREC members for the new voting tool. Internal resources to be planned for further improvements and maintenance of the new voting tool during course of upcoming years. The implementation of the in-house developed tool allowed to save budgetary resources required for the annual purchase of the license subscription from the private company. The 'in-house' development is also serving as a proof of the skills and competences of the BEREC Office staff.

The most important and challenging task requiring substantial internal human resources was migration of most of the information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and IT systems (BERECNet+ and GADB) to the new datacentres located in other locations in Europe. This was required due to expiry of Cloud Broker Framework Contract previously used over five years with trusted partner company. The project required assignation of significant part of available ICT human resources in order to plan, coordinate and execute many migration related tasks, as well as additional budgetary resources for ICT infrastructure, licenses and services in new datacentres, and external support for migration in order to ensure smooth migration and practically very little downtimes of few hours only. Timely executed migration allowed earlier as planned the decommissioning of the former datacentre services and reduce some of the operational costs resulting in budget savings. The BEREC Office successfully completed migration to new datacentres in advance with the initial planning. The overall efficiency and optimization of the ICT resources was key consideration during the migration which was successfully achieved.

Support to the activities of the ICT Expert Networking Group (ENG)

Throughout the whole year the BEREC Office provide full support to the ICT ENG for the implementation of its mandate and the completion of its assignments.

In the beginning of 2023, the ICT ENG organised a one-day hybrid workshop in Riga in order to present the challenges and the limitations of the current solution for the email distribution groups and to introduce a new solution and plan the important testing sessions to be organized between the BEREC Office, the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) and the European Commission. The outcome of the workshop contributed to the successful tests of the new email distribution solution where three scenarios were completed, thus allowing to implement the new solution in production as of 30 March 2023.

Another important activity of ICT ENG of 2023 was the implementation of the MFA method using the one time passcode (OTP) for BERECNet+. This was implemented in line with the decision MB/2023/06 from 10 March 2023 to further enhance the security of BERECNet+.

At the end of 2023 the work of ICT ENG was focused on contributing to the upcoming implementation of the e-voting solution in BERECNet+, to be used by NRAs for the e-voting procedures of the BoR and the MB. The development and testing phase of the e-Voting tool was successfully carried out with the aim to be officially adopted and introduced in 2024.

As envisaged under the Single Programming Document of 2023-2025, in the course of 2023 the ICT ENG held eight virtual and one physical meeting by collaborating on different activity streams and sharing the experience and the best practices among the NRAs.

4. Information gathering and distribution

The total resources planned and used for support Information gathering and distribution activities were as follows:

Resource type	Planned resources, as envisaged in the WP 2023	Resources used
Financial resources (EUR)	348,613.81	329,796.97
Full-time equivalent (FTE) posts	0.46	0.40

The BEREC Office contributed to enhancing the professional knowledge of experts from the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) – under the umbrella of a framework contract. During the first half of 2023, the BEREC Office provided a training course to the Co-Chairs of the BEREC Working Group (WG) and of the Expert Networking Group (ENG) with a focus on planning and moderating the work of the BEREC WGs and ENGs. The training course consisted of four sessions organised remotely. The overall satisfaction level was at 82% following a survey conducted by the Agency among the training participants.

Later on the BEREC Office continued providing training sessions covering latest developments of the legal framework and trends within the digital sector for junior experts of the BEREC NRAs.

This training was organised by using internal resources of BEREC and WG Co-Chairs and ENG Co-Chairs contributed with their expertise on the topics and areas of BEREC activities.

4.1. Studies and other projects for BEREC

Considering the important market trends and developments in the European electronic communications sector in 2023, focusing on market dynamics and the development of European Union (EU) public policies and regulatory practices under Article 4(1)(j)(v) of the BEREC Regulation and in accordance with the BEREC Work Programme, the Agency successfully finalised two procurement procedures²⁰ and signed service contracts for the development of two studies for BEREC.

Additionally the work on one study was carried-over from 2022 and the study was finalised in April 2023.

The 2023 Studies were focusing on the following aspects:

- Assessment of the nature, evolution and market conditions of new business models that are enabled by new 5G capabilities and technologies;
- Analysis of the technology trends, market and business developments as well as the impacts on competition and regulation of cloudification, virtualization and softwarization in telecommunications, and
- Analysis of the evolution of the competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies that are not directly providing retail services.

The studies and other projects that were undertaken in 2023 in support to BEREC are described below in more details.

4.1.1. Study on wholesale mobile access connectivity, trends and issues for emerging mobile technologies and deployments

This study examined the technical developments in the mobile connectivity, their implications on the value chain and the possible roles that could be played by various stakeholders including mobile network operators, MVNOs, verticals and other stakeholders. It looks at the consequences for sustainable competition and consumer welfare, and discusses the possible

²⁰ One procurement procedure was initiated in 2022 and was finalised in April 2023, the other two were started and finalised in 2023.

roles that NRAs could play in supporting competition, innovation and digital inclusion in the context of these technological developments in mobile communications.

The Study on wholesale mobile access connectivity, trends and issues for emerging mobile technologies and deployments²¹ was approved the BEREC Board of Regulators on 13 April 2023.

4.1.2. Study on the trends and cloudification, virtualisation, and softwarisation in telecommunication

In 2023 the BEREC Office commissioned a study on the technology trends, market and business developments and impacts on competition and regulation of cloudification, virtualisation and softwarisation in telecommunication.

The approach to this exploratory study was based in a mixed methodology, combining desk research and stakeholder interviews. More than 20 interviews were conducted which enabled to assess preliminary findings against the experiences and expertise of stakeholders, to get their real-world insights, and help disentangle hype from reality.

The study addresses the issues and trends associated with cloudification, virtualisation, and softwarisation in the provision of electronic communications networks and services. It comprises, on the one hand, the description of the current state of the art related to network virtualization, the identification of key actors in the value chain and use cases and, on the other hand, a more analytical analysis on the identification of potential regulatory and competition problems and challenges and of expected future trends, including possible new business models that can be enabled by virtualization.

The Study on the trends and cloudification, virtualisation, and softwarisation in telecommunication²² was completed on 7 December 2023.

This study will serve as an input for the BEREC Report on cloud and edge computing services that was approved for a public consultation in March 2024.

²¹ BoR (23) 41: Study on wholesale mobile connectivity, trends and issues for emerging mobile technologies and deployments, see: <https://www.berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec/reports/study-on-wholesale-mobile-connectivity-trends-and-issues-for-emerging-mobile-technologies-and-deployments>

²² BoR (23) 208, Study on the trends and cloudification, virtualization, and softwarization in telecommunications, see: <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec/reports/external-study-on-the-trends-and-cloudification-virtualization-and-softwarization-in-telecommunications>

4.1.3. Study on the evolution of the competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies not directly providing retail services²³

In line with the BEREC Work Programme 2023, the BEREC Office commissioned a study in order to analyse the evolution of the competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies that are not directly providing retail services. The purpose of the study was to provide BEREC with in-depth data and analysis on the impact of the new trends towards divestitures of key network assets (by contrast to the previous features of vertical integration) on the competitive environment in the telecoms sector and the most appropriate means to address it.

4.1.4. Data sets for calculating the Weighted Average Cost of Capital (WACC)

The BEREC Office is required by BEREC to collect, exchange and transmit information between NRAs regarding regulatory tasks assigned to BEREC. The BEREC Office is also mandated to contribute to draft reports on specific aspects of the communications market, such as roaming and benchmarking of termination rates. Considering the amount and the complexity of the data collection, the BEREC Office has purchased and provided to BEREC data sets and database for the calculation of certain parameters underlying the WACC and other financial parameters that was required for the data collected for the BEREC Report on Regulatory Accounting in Practice 2023. The report summarised the findings of a detailed regulatory accounting systems in the regulatory context in access markets across Europe.

In addition the BEREC Office has engaged with the contractor for the provision of training on the use of a specialised terminal for calculating the financial parameters underlying the WACC for legacy infrastructure. The services provided by the contractor allowed to monitor and analyse real-time financial market data. The training was provided to the BEREC Remedies and Market Monitoring Working Group experts during 2023.

4.1.5. Information Sharing Portal

The Information Sharing Portal (ISP) is designed to complement the information available on the websites of the national regulatory authorities (NRAs). The ISP provides a one-stop access point to public documents in the field of electronic communications and ensures public access to a comprehensive, regularly updated list of documents. The ISP includes several sections and covers all categories of documents issued by NRAs for public use. The BEREC Office acts as an administrator of this portal and regularly promotes the links uploaded by the NRAs.

²³ BoR (23) 206, Study on the evolution of the competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies not directly providing retail services; see: <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec/reports/external-study-on-the-evolution-of-the-competition-dynamics-of-tower-and-access-infrastructure-companies-not-directly-providing-retail-services>

Detailed statistics on this portal are available for different sections in Annex I. For instance, statistics are available on the number of uploaded links for each section of the ISP (Table 6: Number of uploaded links per section of the ISP in 2023), the links uploaded on the ISP by NRAs (Figure 4), the ISP Visitors maps (World-wide & Europa) in 2023 (Figure 5), the number of visits to the ISP by country (top 20) (Figure 6), and the most viewed documents on the ISP (Table 7: Top 10 most viewed documents on the Information sharing portal (ISP)).

4.1.6. Language services for BEREC

The translation services required for the functioning of BEREC were provided by the Translation Centre of the Bodies of the European Union (CdT). The Agency used the services of the CdT also in 2023 for proofreading of the BEREC documents intended for public use. Namely, in 2023, the language services were used for editing the BEREC Annual Reports 2023, draft BEREC Action Plan 2030 and BEREC Work Programme 2024.

Upon request from BEREC, the language services are available further on to ensure high quality of BEREC documents.

4.1.7. Advanced gateway for meetings (AGM)

The BEREC Office concluded a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the European Commission (EC) Office for Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements (PMO) for the use of the AGM tool in order to automate the meeting registration and expert reimbursement process.







All physical and hybrid BEREC meetings²⁴ organised by the BEREC Office in 2023, amounting to 74 in total, were managed through the AGM tool, incl. the reimbursement of the expenses to the experts participating in those meetings.

To enable the experts from the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) to use the full potential of the tool, BEREC Office continuously disseminated information regarding the usage of the tool and provided the necessary assistance required by experts, incl. for the launch of 2-factor authentication (2FA) due to security reasons.

In 2023 the BEREC Office processed total of 511 reimbursements through the tool, which has proved to ensure streamlines processing of reimbursement and has made the execution of payments to the NRAs faster.

The **Table 2** below represents the summary of activities performed under information gathering and distribution.

²⁴ These are meetings organised through the AGM tool, such as CNs, BoRs meetings, BEREC Chair's events, International travels, WG meetings, ENG's meetings and other events organised by the BEREC Office for BEREC throughout 2023

		
2 Training courses for NRA experts	IS Portal	3 Studies
		
WACC data sets	511 reimbursements via AGM	3 CDT translations/proof-readings

5. BEREC communications activities

The total resources planned and used for support to BEREC communications activities were as follows:

Resource type	Planned resources, as envisaged in the WP 2023	Resources used
Financial resources (EUR)	511,136.20	619,823.48
Full-time equivalent (FTE) posts	2.82	3.34

In March 2023 the BEREC Office successfully organised the 11th BEREC Stakeholder Forum, which was the major annual public event organised in 2023 by the Agency. The event had a record-high physical attendance of over 260 participants and almost 400 online viewers from 37 countries. The event was divided into two parts: *Meet&Greet* sessions with the BEREC Working Group Co-Chairs in the morning, and the Conference – in the afternoon. The *Meet&Greet* sessions provide an opportunity to meet BEREC Co-Chairs for an informal exchange of ideas on the topics related to the telecoms market, whilst the Conference provides insights into specific topics and opportunity for stakeholders to engage with BEREC and other speakers. This time, the Conference focused on the EU Data Act, an accessible future for end-users with

disabilities, the future of regulation in the Digital era, and the early call for input to the BEREC Work Programme 2024.

The feedback of attendees and participants from multiple sources, including a survey, showed a high-level satisfaction of content and logistics of the event. For users with functional diversity (people with special needs, disability, impairment and handicap), the BEREC Office ensured physical accessibility at the event by allocation of ramps (for wheelchairs and similar), availability of elevator for getting to the *Meet&Greet* sessions and hostesses guidance upon request. Within the conference part at the meeting venue a text on tap, e.g., speech converted in written text was ensured, whilst live captioning for livestream followers. The event's website was built according to suggestions by the association of people with disabilities. Besides, the BEREC Office also ensured reimbursement of the assistants to the speakers with disabilities.

The Agency promoted the event through a dedicated website, with a social media campaign on Twitter/X and LinkedIn, with news items on the BEREC website, newsletters to stakeholders and media. Additionally, the Agency ensured the livestream on the BEREC's official social media channels. The BEREC Office upcycled the video clips previously produced for a different project – *Faces of BEREC* – to enrich the campaign's content, increase the efficiency of its use, and help increase awareness and interest in the work topics of respective BEREC Working Groups.

The BEREC Office also organised the BEREC public debriefings. The aim of these public events was to present the main outcomes of all BEREC plenary meetings. Throughout the year, the BEREC Office arranged four public debriefings (three online and one hybrid), which were attended by 485 stakeholders.

In 2023 the BEREC Office worked on redesigning and upgrading the BEREC website. The creation of over 45 design templates for the new website in both desktop and mobile version was completed. Following, the development of the design was initiated and progressed with receiving an intermediate release at the end of 2023. This was thoroughly tested and feedback provided. The Agency collaborated with the BEREC Working Group Co-Chairs and the Communications ENG to finalise new written and audio-visual content for the website. In 2024, the BEREC Office will continue development of new sections for the website's content, whilst focusing on finalizing the development of the new website design, which will be completed with thorough testing and executing a security check. It also aims at launching the new design in the middle of 2024, following with an external educational campaign towards the end of the year.

In the first half of 2023 the BEREC Office successfully completed one of the Communications Plan's projects, namely, *Sustainability icons*. It is a set of icons related to telecommunications sustainability aspect that was created to be used in different materials, such as BEREC documents, presentations and communications assets.

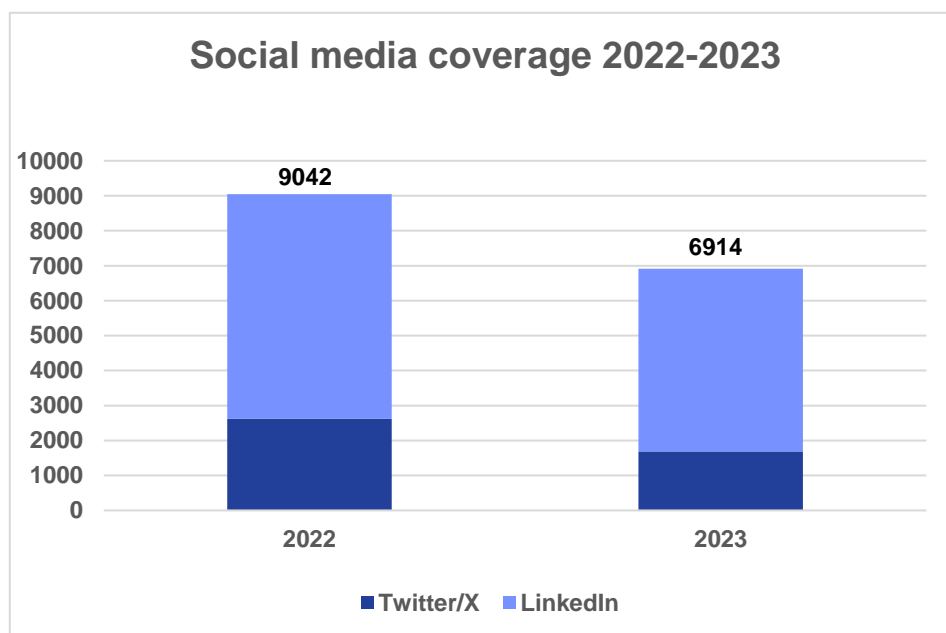
Examples:



Additionally, the BEREC Office created a digital design version of the [BEREC Annual Reports 2022](#) and [Work Programme 2024](#), available on the BEREC website. In addition, the BEREC and the BEREC Office visual identity guidelines were updated with a set of general telecommunications icons and Excel templates for charts and graphs.

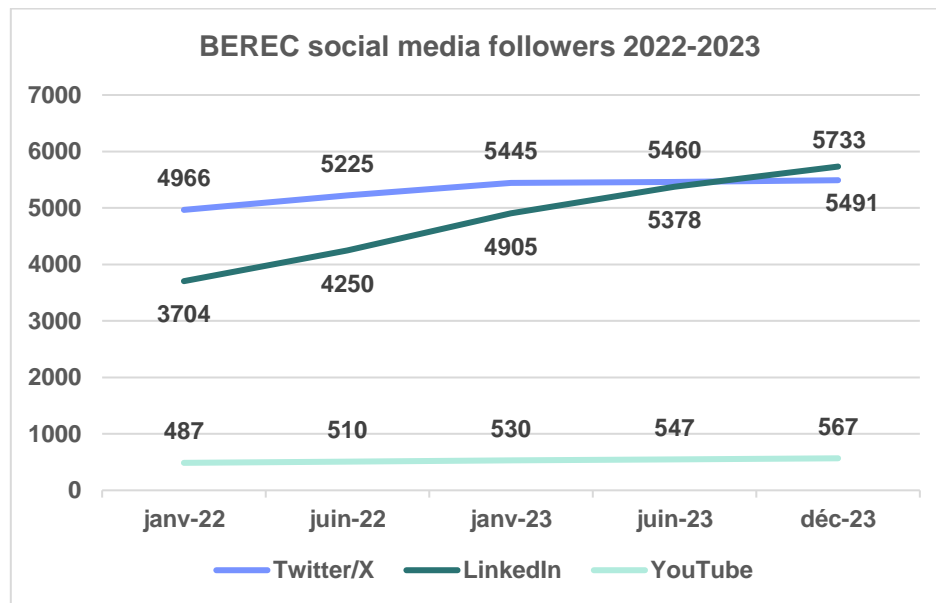
During the past year the BEREC Office was responsible for coordinating, drafting, and publishing various communications materials related to BEREC activities and the external engagements of the BEREC Chair. Additionally, the Agency supported promotion of public consultations on draft BEREC documents and workshops. The BEREC website was continuously updated with information on events and adopted documents throughout this period. The charts below provide general overview of certain key performance indicators (KPIs), such as social media coverage that includes number of engagements on social media Twitter/X and LinkedIn, supported by the number of followers on the official BEREC social media channels, and the number of livestream viewers during the public events.

Charts

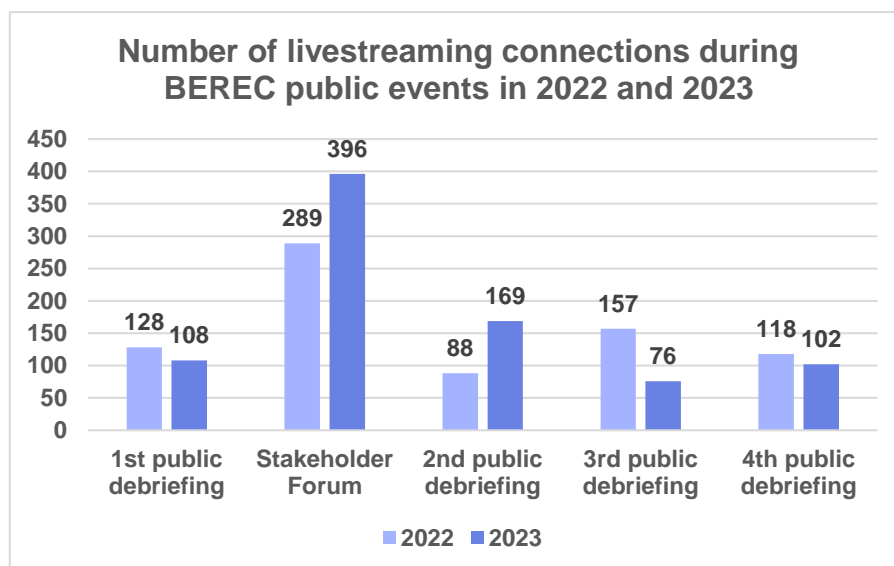


BEREC Social media coverage includes number of engagements (for Twitter/X: likes, replies, retweets; for LinkedIn: reactions, comments, reposts). There are two known factors that have

direct impact on the total number of engagements in 2023 compared to 2022. As of middle of summer 2023 an indicator previously used for engagement results, e.g., “mentions”, is not available any longer within the Analytics of both social media platforms and, therefore, was not counted in a total number of engagement. Another factor, specifically for Twitter/X, was a change of the management of the platform followed by several important changes to its operations and principles that negatively affected number of impressions and engagement for BEREC account. Some complementing elements of impact are explained within the next chart on the BEREC social media followers. This leads to the understanding that two years are no longer comparable, based on the fact that the same metrics are no longer available.



The growth of followers on all BEREC official social media channels is mainly influenced by reconsidered and upgraded way of audio-visual and standard content, the consistent and regular promotion of it on numerous topics, events and work streams of BEREC, as well as specific social media campaigns; and it also includes a natural growth. In terms of Twitter/X, in 2022, there were 439 new followers for the account, but in 2023 – 46. One of the reasons for such a difference in new followers count is that in 2023, after a change of the management of the platform, it started removing the accounts that had no activity at all for several years. Additionally, the algorithm has changed, showing posts from the subscribed accounts (paid) significantly more rather than posts from the basic users (free of charge), which means that it is more difficult for BEREC to gain new followers, since it is using free of charge account.



The significant increase of livestream connections for the Stakeholder Forum is linked to extra efforts put in communications campaigns and promotions, as well as arrangement of the livestreaming on multiple platforms (entry points), including social media channels. The interest of stakeholders in the public debriefings is linked to importance of presented topics.

5.1. BEREC Communications Experts Networking Group (ENG)

In order to ensure smooth implementation of the mandate and tasks of the BEREC Communications ENG, the BEREC Office appointed a secretary to the ENG. Besides, the Agency has allocated its communications resources from the Communication Team in support to the execution of ENG projects within the BEREC Communications Plan. The BEREC Office collected the resource commitments for the Communications ENG and supported the election of new Co-Chairs. In 2023 the Communications ENG has 32 members from 16 BEREC NRAs. The BEREC Office assisted the Co-Chairs in preparing documents and presentations for the meetings of the BEREC Office Advisory Group, the Contact Network and the Management Board (MB). The Agency also supported the organisation of regular bi-weekly online briefings with the Co-Chairs, three BEREC Communications ENG hybrid meetings, and two online meeting. During these meetings, members discussed implementation of the annual BEREC Communications Plan, planned activities for the upcoming year and had a separate brainstorming session on the possible changes to the traditional BEREC public debriefings. Two dedicated sessions within the meetings were focused on preparing and drafting of the BEREC Communications Plan 2024 that was successfully adopted at the end of 2023. To strengthen the internal collaboration and increase the multiplication of the communications materials on BEREC activities, the BEREC Office shared with the Communications ENG published news items, press releases, social media posts and MB newsletters.

Part II: Management

1. Management Board

In 2023 the BEREC Office Management Board (MB) held four ordinary meetings, during which it discussed different topics related to the functioning of the BEREC Office. In addition, the MB Chairperson organised six electronic voting procedures for the adoption of BEREC Office documents in accordance with a preliminary plan. The full list of electronic voting procedures and information about their outcomes is available in Annex VI, Table 1.

As required by Article 3 of the Rules of Procedure²⁵, all decisions taken by the MB during its ordinary meetings or through the electronic voting procedures were reviewed by the BEREC Office Advisory Group (BAG). The BAG opinions were approved either electronically or during meetings organised by video-conference (four in total – see Annex I, Table 5). The BAG did not organise any physical meetings.

As a result of these events, in 2023 the BEREC Office MB adopted 13 decisions, including the Agency's Single Programming Documents for 2024-2026²⁶ and for 2025-2027; Amendment No 1 to the BEREC Office Budget and Establishment plan 2023-, the BEREC Office Budget and Establishment plan 2024, one opinion concerning the financial accounts of the BEREC Office for 2022 and the assessment and analysis of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report for 2022.

The full list of all public documents adopted in 2023 by the MB is available in Annex VI, Table 2.

2. Major developments

In 2023 the BEREC Office supported an extremely ambitious BEREC Work Programme (WP), which included the work on a considerable number of regulatory best practices, implementation reports, studies and other documents aiming at fostering a transparent, harmonised and effective application of the legal framework in the area of electronic communications networks and services, and ensuring a consistent and predictable application of the rules across the European digital single market. The key deliverables that were set out in the BEREC WP were focusing on BEREC's three strategic goals: promoting full connectivity, supporting sustainable open digital markets and empowering end users. The Agency actively contributed to the successful implementation of this remarkably ambitious WP with its high level of commitment and professionalism.

Against this background the Agency needed to ensure its support to BEREC in financially unfavourable environment associated with the continuous high inflation in the host Member

²⁵ MB (19) 95Rev.1 '[Rules of Procedure of the Management Board of the BEREC Office](#)'.

²⁶ Including its Amendment No 1

State (9.1%²⁷) and the increase in the prices resulting from the war in Ukraine, specifically affecting the energy prices, which put pressure on the Agency's expenditure part of budget, especially taking into account the fact that the increase in the EU contribution (3.7 %) was significantly lower compared to the increase in the day-to-day costs for running the BEREC Office.

This resulted in a rigorous budgetary scrutiny of each and every expenditure item and the need to re-prioritise, scale-down or suspend some of the BEREC Office activities, such as: trainings of BEREC Office staff, traineeship programme, use of interim workers for running specific projects for which the Agency has no internal capacity; as well as some logistics and premises related costs: office space, consumables, physical security and other premises-related services.

The BEREC Office needed to make some savings in relation to its expenditure in support to BEREC. Therefore, the BEREC Office promoted participation in on-line meetings and trainings instead of physical ones, therefore less physical meetings were organised in 2023 compared to the previous year thus savings were made on expert reimbursements. The BEREC Office also relied on internal capabilities instead of external service providers in projects where feasible, such as: the external training courses on regulatory framework to junior NRA experts was suspended in 2023 and replaced by trainings offered by BEREC senior experts instead of external contractors. The subscription to regulatory database in 2023 was suspended and the subscription to financial software and necessary historical data sets for the calculation of certain parameters underlying the weighted average cost of capital (WACC) was reduced from subscription to two terminals to subscription to one terminal. A new e-Voting tool was developed 'in-house' by the BEREC Office staff to replace the annual subscription to such a tool in the past, which will have a long-term positive impact on the expenditure part of the budget. The use of managed information and communication technology (ICT) services was also re-considered and replaced by more cost-efficient in-house managed solution. However, it should be pointed out that while this solution is cost-effective, it increases the workload for BEREC experts and the staff of the Agency.

This approach has led to decrease in the number of procurement procedures and the number of financial transactions, which required less human resources for the horizontal activities, in particular in the area of procurement and finance. As a consequence the management reviewed the staffing needs and taking into account the increasing BEREC needs of specialists in data management and analysis, in December 2023 it was proposed to the Management Board to transfer one contract agent function group IV post from the Administration and Finance to the Programme Management Unit as of 1 January 2024.

The management took all necessary measures to alleviate the negative impact of the past crises and to ensure the smooth functioning of the Agency as much as possible taking into account

²⁷ https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-surveillance-eu-economies/latvia/economic-forecast-latvia_en#:~:text=Headline%20inflation%20averaged%20a%20still,food%20and%20energy%20posting%209.7%

the new security challenges, the energy crises caused by the war in Ukraine and the subsequent high inflation in the Republic of Latvia.

Specifically the major developments in 2023 include the following:

2.1 War in Ukraine and its implication

The war in Ukraine affected the work both of BEREC and the BEREC Office. Specially, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, BEREC with the support of the BEREC Office, closely followed the telecommunications sector's response to the crisis and the measures provided to refugees from the war in Ukraine voluntarily by European Union (EU) operators. Based on data gathered by the BEREC Office from EU and Ukrainian operators about the applied retail measures a Joint Statement was agreed, which established a stable framework to help people fleeing the war in Ukraine to stay connected with their families and friends back home and maintain access to information.

The continuing conflict had direct and constant implications on the way the BEREC Office carried out its activities in 2023. The Crisis Task Force, established in the beginning of 2022, continued its regular monitoring on the security developments in Ukraine, the host Member State (MS) and the region in order to assess and mitigate the risks to the security and safety of the Agency's staff and assets.

The work of the Crisis Task Force throughout the 2023 was based on the established risk assessment register, action plan and the monthly flash reports, providing the information on the physical and cybersecurity activities. All of the document were updated and monitored during the monthly meetings by reacting on the current and the potential future security developments in the Member State and the region.

The BEREC Office used the established communication sources and contacts with the European Commission, with the local MS security services at national level, as well as with the other Agencies in the region to further strengthen the cooperation in the field of security and share the best practices.

Furthermore, the Agency dedicated efforts to strengthen its business continuity operations by revising the existing ICT and physical security provisions and upgrading its autonomous power supply system with the notification module to improve the response and recovery time in case of a power failure.

To ensure the safety and security of its staff the BEREC Office decided to rent additional space in the cellar of the building²⁸, which was fully refurbished in order to be used as a bomb shelter in case of unforeseen circumstances and was equipped in accordance with the 72 hours

²⁸ space amounting to 158 m²

concept of the local authorities.

2.2. Relations between the BEREC Office and the Government of the Republic of Latvian authorities

In 2023 the BEREC Office and the authorities of the host Member State (MS) continued their fruitful cooperation on the basis of Headquarters Agreement (HQA) between the BEREC Office and the Government of the Republic of Latvia in force as of 15 June 2021 and the Service Level Agreement (SLA) which entered into force on 16 June 2022.

While keeping in mind the objective of the SLA to further detail the provisions of the HQA and establish in practice the working arrangements between both parties for the implementation of the HQA, the following achievements and points of cooperation have been reached and implemented also in 2023:

- the Liaison Office established by the Latvian Government successfully operates and provides support to the BEREC Office and its staff

Also in 2023 the Liaison Office brought certain benefits for the staff in relation to facilitating the integration in Latvia of the new comers and their families (incl. the provision of an induction programme), practical and procedural support in applying for VAT exemption, car registration, opening of bank accounts and facilitating the relations with the schools and the local authorities.

- the joint procurement procedures with the Latvian Government;

Through the Latvian electronic procurement system (EIS) the BEREC Office has access to the centralized procurement procedures organized by the Latvian public authorities and in 2023 the BEREC Office used this system for two purchases. More details on EIS are provided in Section 5.3 of this document.

- the procedure for the contribution towards the schooling costs paid by Agency in the Republic of Latvia as a temporary measure before the establishment of an accredited European School.

This procedure has been continued also in 2023 in particular taking into account the fact that the commitment of the Latvian side to establish an accredited European School by the school year 2022/2023 did not materialise.

The BEREC Office, in cooperation with the Latvian Authorities, implemented the activities due for 2023 in the Multiannual plan for access to measure of social nature in the period 2023-2027 adopted by Decision No MB/2023/05 of the Management Board of the Agency. More information on the activities in this area is presented in Section 6.1. below.

As the conclusion, while there has been a very good progress in providing the necessary conditions for ensuring the smooth and efficient functioning of the BEREC Office by the host MS, a point of concern remains the delay in the establishment of accredited European school.

The BEREC Office remains committed to support the competent authorities of the host MS in their endeavours to advance the project and will recall at each occasion the importance of this measure both for the BEREC Office and for the local community.

In addition, an annual meeting concerning administrative and financial matters in connection with the SLA was organised between the BEREC Office and the Ministry of Transport of Latvia on 19 January 2023 in order to continue effective collaboration and to ensure good relationships between both parties.

2.3. Further digitalisation of the Agency and strengthening of its cybersecurity

The efforts for further digitalisation of the BEREC Office continued in 2023 with the objective gradually to make the Agency a smart and paperless Agency.

To ensure adequate response to the global security threats and, in particular, those associated with the war in Ukraine, in cooperation with CERT-EU and other partners special attention was paid to the IT security.

All procurement procedures with the exception of reopening of competition have been managed via the EC services Public Procurement Management Tool (PPMT), which increased the efficiency of the management of the procurement procedures, the quality of documentation and the completeness of the files.

Additionally, as of 25 October 2023 the BEREC Office started to use the new contract notice eForms to launch new calls for tenders with a contract notice and the procurement documents are being published on the Funding &Tenders Portal.

Furthermore, in order to maximise the use of the IT tool for Activity based budget management, in 2023 the BEREC Office launched a project for deployment of Contract register module in the tool.

As per the agreement with the EC services in 2022 the BEREC Office continued the deployment of additional modules of the EC human resources management tool, more information which is available in 7.3.b below.

On 21 June 2023 the BEREC Office went in production with the qualified electronic signature (QES) integrated with the records and document management system – ARES. This solution enabled the BEREC Office to sign and seal electronic documents, as well as to validate and extend existing signatures and seals on electronic documents. It enabled paperless processes within the Agency with the highest levels of trust and security, also ensuring the origin and integrity of electronic documents.

Following the introduction of the QES the BEREC Office started signing all documents, which required a blue-ink signature (e.g., all legal commitments, employment contracts of staff, etc.), thus allowing the Agency to be practically paperless. Taking into account the significant number

of contracts signed by the Agency per year (around 200), this action will have also positive impact on the environment protection.

The new Cybersecurity Regulation laying down measures for a high common level of cybersecurity at the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union was adopted on 13 December 2023 and requires, among others, that each entity (i) shall establish its own internal cybersecurity framework, then (ii) it shall approve the entity's own cybersecurity baseline to address the risks identified in the framework, (iii) shall appoint a Local Cybersecurity Officer, (iv) shall carry out a cybersecurity maturity assessment at least every three years and (v) shall approve and regularly update its cybersecurity plan. The implementation of new Cybersecurity Regulation is planned to start in the course of 2024 and, given that the necessary resources are allocated as requested in terms of 2 FTEs, could be finalised in 2025.

The BEREC Office also continued to improve ICT security of provided applications and databases and the entire ICT security perimeter. One of such measures recently implemented is Multi-factor authentication (MFA) that has been introduced for BERECNet+. MFA introduced third security element in addition to usernames and passwords - one time passcodes. During the implementation of MFA, testing efforts of new security feature were coordinated with ICT ENG and involved BEREC members and European Commission. After implementation of MFA the performance of solution was closely monitored and user support provided. After the go-live the performance of the MFA solution was further optimised and main aim of this project – improved ICT security of BERECNet+ has been achieved. Additionally, password management was made more user friendly and implemented according to the requests received prior and during the MFA implementation.

2.4. BEREC Office external communication

In 2023, the BEREC Office organized various communications activities to support raising awareness of BEREC and the BEREC Office's work among citizens of its hosting country, Latvia.

One of the key initiatives of the year was Laptops for Ukraine. The BEREC Office in cooperation with the Latvian association *Tavi Draugi* became the first collection hub in Latvia for ICT equipment. This initiative aimed at collecting laptops, smartphones, tablets and other equipment from all over the EU to provide aid to schools, hospitals, and public administrations in the most war affected regions of Ukraine. The initiative was supported by information campaign, which was targeted to local stakeholders, including embassies and other institutions, as well as to Agency's online followers.

To mark Europe's Day in May, the BEREC Office participated in the youth-oriented European Skills Festival, organized by the European Commission's Representation in Latvia. During the festival, the Agency representatives engaged with students through puzzle-solving activities and shared information on the Agency's work.

In May, the BEREC Office and the Embassy of Sweden in Riga held an annual event dedicated to World Telecommunications and Information Society Day. The keynote speakers emphasized the importance of connectivity and bridging the digital divide.

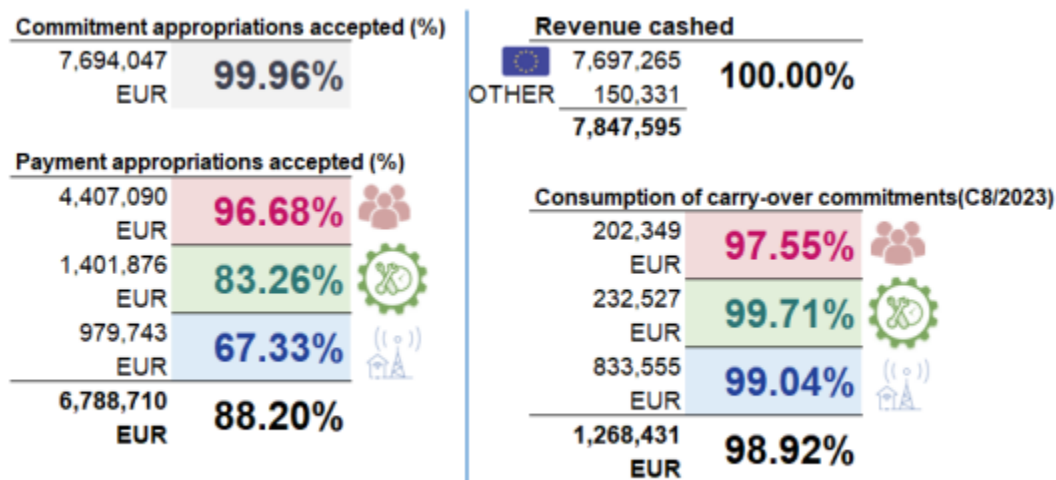
In December, the Agency participated at the Charity Bazaar organized by the International Women Club of Riga. At the physical event, with a dedicated stand, the BEREC Office provided the photo booth and popcorn, and shared to interested attendees information on the Agency's mission and tasks. Additionally, as previous years, the BEREC Office provided the event organizers with a dedicated online auction platform. The organizers were very grateful for the BEREC Office contributions.

3. Budgetary and financial management 2023

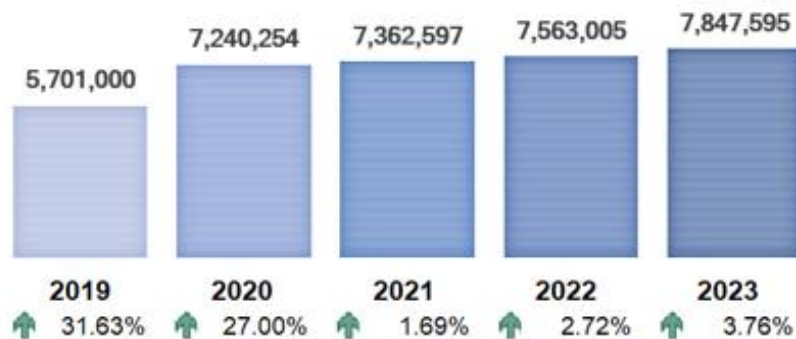
The BEREC Office Budget 2023 (revenue and expenditure), as adopted by the Management Board (MB), amounted to EUR 7 697 265 (in 2022: EUR 7 428 46). The main revenue in the 2023 BEREC Office budget was the EU contribution, which was fully cashed. In addition, in line with the SLA with the Latvian Government, in 2023 the BEREC Office collected EUR 134 666 as a voluntary contribution from the host Member State, to the BEREC Office budget to cover partially the schooling fees of the children of the BEREC Office staff. The BEREC Office also collected EUR 15 914 as Administrative operations and miscellaneous income.

In 2023 BEREC Office demonstrated excellent results in budget and finance management, namely – 99.96% budget execution rate , highest ever payment execution rate at 88.20% ; very low carry-over cancellation rate of 1.08% ; historically lowest number of budgetary transfers , as well as historically best indicator for timely payments at 98.4%. These results can be attributed to the rigorous budget management practices in place, namely: financial software tool Anaplan for budget planning and management; consistent regiment of budget overview meetings (quarterly, mid-term and ad-hoc managerial level), as well as the commitment and expertise of staff involved in contract and financial management.

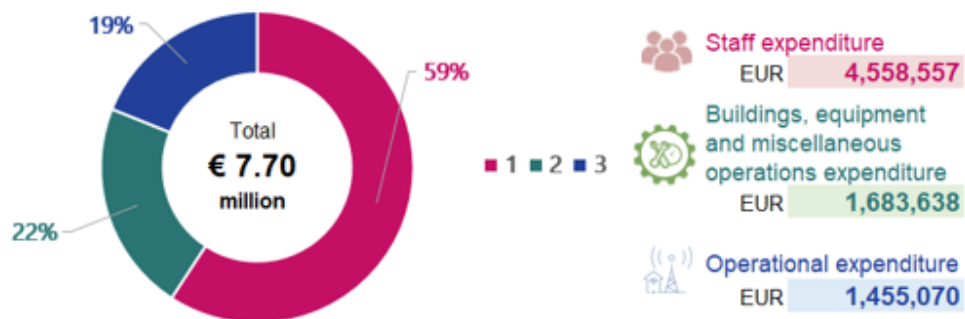
3.1. Budget 2023 in figures



Graph 1: BEREC Office total budget (EUR) and changes to prior year (%)



Graph 2: BEREC OFFICE BUDGET 2023 (C1 credits)



3.2. Revenue

The BEREC Office Budget 2023 (revenue and expenditure), as adopted by the Management Board, amounted to EUR 7,697,265 (in 2022 – EUR 7,428,456).




The main revenue in the 2023 BEREC Office budget was the EU contribution, which was fully cashed. In addition, in line with the Service Level Agreement with the Latvian Government, in 2023 the BEREC Office collected EUR 134,666.00 as a voluntary contribution from the host Member State (Latvia) to the BEREC Office Budget to cover partially the schooling fees of the children of the BEREC Office staff. The BEREC Office collected also EUR 15,664.59 as Administrative operations and miscellaneous income. The contribution from the Latvian side and the revenue from administrative and miscellaneous operations were assigned to the respective concerned budget lines.

The BEREC Office revenue cashed in financial year 2023 is reflected in the table below:

Revenue type	Voted revenue by MB	Revenue cashed
1. EU Subsidy	7,697,264.87	7,697,264.87
2. Third countries contribution (incl. EFTA and candidate countries)	p.m.	0
3. Other contributions (Member states, NRAs, etc.)	p.m.	134,666.00
4. Administrative operations	p.m.	15,664.59
<i>Of which interest generated by funds paid by the Commission by way of the EU contribution</i>	0	0
TOTAL	7,697,264.87	7,847,595.46




3.3. Expenditure

The execution of commitment and payment appropriations by budget titles in 2022 is as follows:

Expenditure	Credit Available, EUR	Commitments Accepted, EUR	% Committed	Payments Accepted, EUR	% Paid
TITLE 1 	4,558,556.87	4,558,368.95	100%	4,407,090.24	96.68%
TITLE 2 	1,683,637.68	1,680,815.5	99.83%	1,401,876.16	83.26%
TITLE 3 	1,455,070.32	1,454,862.22	99.99%	979,743.25	67.33%
TOTAL	7,697,264.87	7,694,046.67	99.96%	6,788,709.65	88.20%

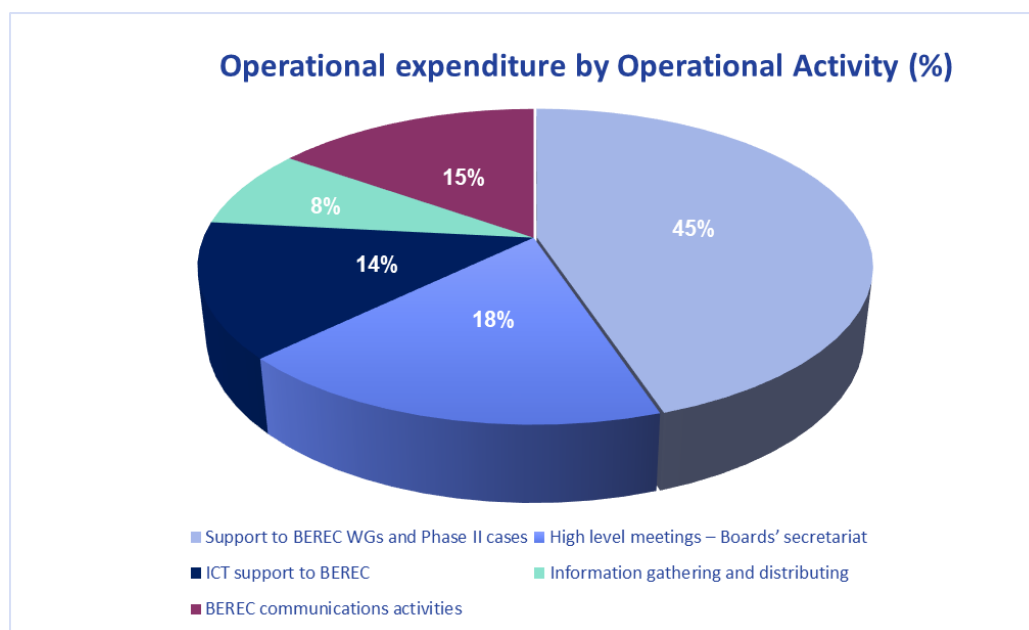
In 2023, the budget implementation in commitments was 99.96% and in payments - 88.20%.

The BEREC Office has also reported very good figures in relation to the cancellation of the amounts to be carried forward (C8/2023 credits), with a cancellation rate of **1.08 %**, as follows:

Title / fund source	Payment / Commitment appropriations	Payments made	Cancellation of payment appropriations (EUR)	Cancellation %
TITLE 1 /C8 	207,426.60	202,348.55	-5,078.05	2.45%
TITLE 2 /C8 	233,210.52	232,527.05	-683.47	0.29%
TITLE 3 /C8 	841,611.60	833,555.44	-8,056.16	0.96%
TOTAL	1,282,248.72	1,268,431.04	-13,817.68	1.08%

3.4. Operational expenditure

To ensure the delivery of its core mandate in 2023 the BEREC Office committed EUR 4,066,653.24 which were used to fund the following operational activities:



For a detailed breakdown of human and financial resources by operational activity, see Annex V.

More information on the budget execution is provided in the BEREC Office Report on budgetary and financial management (RBFM) 2023, available on the BEREC Website:

<https://bereg.europa.eu/en/document-categories/bereg-office/budget-of-the-office/reports-on-the-budgetary-and-financial-management/bereg-office-report-on-budgetary-and-financial-management-2023>

The report provides detailed information on:

- the general context and legal framework
- the results of the implementation of the budget in 2023

3.5. Budgetary transfers

During 2023 the BEREC Office Director executed three budgetary transfers in order to ensure the best use of the financial resources available to the BEREC Office Office. The list of transfers and final budget figures are available in Table 2 of Annex II. Detailed information on each transfer executed is available on the Agency's Website²⁹.

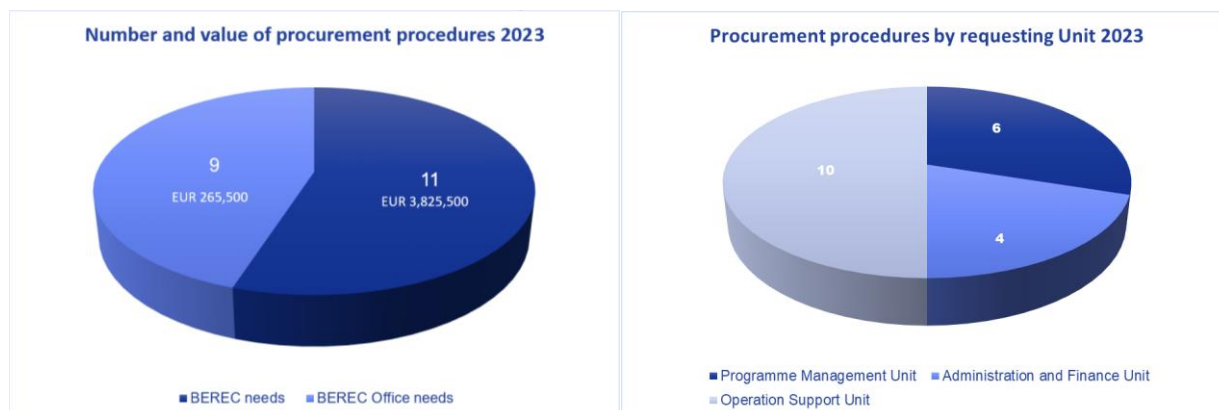
4. Public procurement

To provide BEREC with all means necessary for the implementation of the BEREC work programme (WP) and to ensure the proper functioning of the BEREC Office, in 2023 the Agency managed 20 procurement procedures (19 launched in 2023 and 1 carried-over from 2022), broken down into the following types:

- Very low-value negotiated procurement procedures for contracts not exceeding EUR 15 000.00 - 4;
- Low-value negotiated procurement procedures for contracts between EUR 15 000.01 and EUR 60 000.00 – 1;
- Middle-value negotiated procedures for contracts between EUR 60 000.01 and the threshold established in the Directive - 3;
- Open tender procedures for contracts equal to or above EUR 140 000.00 - 2;
- Negotiated procedure without prior publication of a contract notice – 1;
- Reopening of competition – 9.

²⁹

<https://bereg.europa.eu/en/document-categories/bereg-office/budget-of-the-office/bereg-office-budget/information-on-the-transfers-by-the-director-of-the-bereg-office-in-the-bereg-office-budget-in-2023>



Out of these 20 procurement procedures, 15 resulted in the signature of a contract; three procedures were not finalised by the end of 2023 and consequently were carried-over to 2024 and two resulted in the cancellation of the procedure by the decision of Responsible Authorising Officer.

The public procurement procedures of the BEREC Office were initiated by its units in compliance with their responsibilities and the BEREC Office Procurement Plan and were managed in a central manner by the procurement officers from the Agency's administration.

Procurement procedures were sequentially numbered to ensure control over them, including completeness of the list for review purposes. To ensure the control objectives set out in Article 30(2) of the 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 (FFR), each procurement undergoes at least the 4-eye principle, most of them the 6-eye principle.

In terms of volumes, the procurement procedures in support of BEREC needs significantly exceeded those for the administrative needs of the Agency.

To improve efficiency and to ensure higher compliance with the procurement rules, the European Commission's Public Procurement Management Tool (PPMT) was used for all the procedures launched in 2023 with the exception of reopening of competition for which the tool has not been designed.

To reduce the administrative burden on staff, in 2023 the BEREC Office continued to use inter-institutional framework contracts (FWCs) and FWCs established by the BEREC Office.

In 2023, the BEREC Office was invited to join 21 inter-institutional procurement procedures and expressed its interest to join 20 of them, which at the end of 2023 were still ongoing. In 2023 the Agency became a participating contracting authority to seven new inter-institutional FWCs. The Agency established two FWCs itself.

In 2023 the BEREC Office signed 95 specific contracts under the FWCs in force and six direct service/supply contracts.

In total in 2023 the BEREC Office signed 129 contract for supporting BEREC's activity and for ensuring the day-to-day operation of the Agency.

5. Delegation and sub-delegation

In accordance with the Financial Regulation of the European Union and the BEREC Office Management Board Decision No MB/2019/13, and in particular Articles 41 and 46 thereof, the Authorising Officer of the BEREC Office, delegates, on an yearly basis, the powers of budget implementation to the Authorising Officers by sub-delegation. The Delegation of Powers is exercised in accordance with the Charter for Authorising Officers by Delegation, containing a series of tasks and responsibilities for the Authorising officers by delegation, which are carried out on the basis of both paper documents signed manually and computerised management systems signed electronically. These delegations apply to a series of predefined transactions having the articles and items listed in an annexed page and providing specific limits for each transaction.

For the financial year 2023, the BEREC Office Authorising Officer has partly delegated his budget implementation powers to the three Heads of Units. The corresponding budget lines reflecting the nature of each unit's activities were respectively assigned for authorisation to the Authorising Officers by sub-delegation. The correct implementation of these delegations is to be checked also on a yearly basis, during the periodic validation of user access rights granted in ABAC. The process consists in cross-checking that access rights granted in ABAC are in line with the delegations and responsibilities entrusted, and it is performed by a neutral verifier as per requirements. The results of these verifications were disclosed to the Authorising Officers (by delegation) and to the entity in charge of these controls within the European Commission Directorate-General for Budget.

6. Human resources (HR) management

6.1. Staff retention and working conditions

During 2023 the BEREC Office HR management was oriented towards maintaining full staffing situation to enable the Agency to deliver its mandate, as defined in Regulation (EU) 2018/1971 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018.

The average length of service of staff at the BEREC Office in 2023 (incl. TAs, CAs, SNEs) was 3.37 years, which represents a slight increase compared to previous years (2022: 3.12; 2021: 2.47).

The average duration of contracts by category of staff is as follows:

Category of staff \ Year	2021	2022	2023
Temporary agents category (TAs) 2(f) ³⁰	4,12 years	4,17 years	4,48 years
Contract agents (CAs)	2,36 years	2.56 years	2,86 years
CAs + TAs 2(f) (excluding SNEs and TA 2(a))	3,23 years	3.33 years	3,60 years

During 2023 two statutory staff members resigned³¹ which is an improvement in comparison with 2022 when five resignations were recorded. Consequently, the statutory staff turn-over rate went down.

The main reasons for the resignations of BEREC Office statutory staff in 2023 was related to the limited opportunities for career growth at the Agency, in particular in relation to the unfavourable ratio between TA and CA.

Taking into account this unfavourable ratio between TA and CA the efforts to retain and further develop highly specialised staff continued through different measures. The BEREC Office cares for its staff by seeking to provide a functional, comfortable and environmentally friendly working space, taking into account the limitations of its current premises.

The implementation of all other projects launched in the previous years (assistance with home care or care for a sick child, legal assistance for the staff provided by a legal firm, general and language training courses and others) aimed at contributing to the retention of highly qualified

³¹ One of the resignations was related to the acceptance of a job offer at the Agency for a different category of staff following external selection.

staff continued throughout 2023.

While the situation with statutory staff stabilised in 2023, a matter of concern remains the provision of experts seconded to the BEREC Office by the national regulatory authorities. By design the seconded national experts are intended to work at the BEREC Office for limited period of time and their turn-over is natural. However, all SNEs who left the BEREC Office in 2023 were seconded at the BEREC Office for a period shorter than the maximum period envisaged for secondment (e.g. maximum 6 years) and their average secondment at the BEREC Office was for a period of 3 years due to the wish of the seconding organisations to have those SNEs back at their national administrations.

Annual Turnover Rate %³² in 2023

Category of staff	Number of staff ³³		Average	Nr of leavers (staff who resigned and effectively left the Agency ³⁴ or whose contracts ended)	Staff turnover (%)
	01.01.	31.12.			
TAs	16	16	16	0	0%
CAs	20	20	20	1	5.00%
SNEs	7	9	8	3	37.50%
All	43	45	44	4	9.09% ³⁵

Under the flexible working time arrangements which following the adoption by analogy of the Commission Decision of 24.03.2022 on working time and hybrid working, has become the default working time arrangement in force at the BEREC Office, the Agency's staff were granted a total of 124³⁶ days of flexitime recuperation in 2023. Furthermore, in the same reporting period 3513 days of telework from the place of employment have been recorded meaning that on average a staff member made use of 66 days of telework from the place of employment. Finally yet importantly, the Decision introduces the possibility to request telework from outside the place of employment, an entitlement which did not exist previously. In 2023, 216 days of telework outside the place of employment have been granted as per the following breakdown: i) 173 days – telework outside place of employment; ii) 74 days – exceptional telework outside place of employment.

During the reporting period initially in June 2023 there was an intermediate update of the

³² Number of employees who left/ (Beginning + ending number of employees)/ 2) x 100%

³³ Incl. job offers sent and accepted and submitted and accepted resignations

³⁴ Staff who resigned to take up new duties within the Agency following external selection are not counted as leavers

³⁵ For comparison, the staff turnover in 2022 was 16.3% and in 2021 - 4.6%

³⁶ For more details on the flexitime recuperation days taken in each grade, see Annex IV, Table 7

remuneration amounting to 1,7% with a retroactive effect from 1 January 2023 which was accompanied by a slight decrease of the correction coefficient from 85,9% to 85%. Then on 30 November 2023 the 2023 annual updated of the remuneration was approved and entailed an additional increase of 1% with a retroactive effect from 1 July 2023 in conjunction with a significant increase of the correction coefficient from 85% to 88%. The aforementioned two salary updates in conjunction with increase of the correction coefficient led to the restructuring of the staff expenditure which included the following mitigating measures: i) reduction of the paid training for the BEREC Office staff; ii) suspension of the traineeship programme as of October 2023 iii) limiting the staff missions only to business critical ones.

Offering better working and living conditions to the staff members throughout the reporting period in question remained one of the priorities for the Agency and was translated into following concrete actions: provision of legal advice for staff members' private matters regarding their life in Latvia, financial support for kindergarten, payment of tuition fees for enrolment in international schools in Latvia, general and language courses in conjunction with an extensive package consisting of goods and services for the personal needs of the eligible statutory staff and SNE exempted from the value added tax, comprehensive induction programme for new comers, support to the family members in their establishment in Latvia and others. Many of these measures were implemented jointly with the Latvian authorities in accordance with provisions of the HQ Agreement and subsequent SLA concluded between the Agency and the Government of the Republic of Latvia.

The BEREC Office, in cooperation with the Latvian Authorities, implemented the activities due for 2023 in the Multiannual plan for access to measure of social nature in the period 2023-2027 adopted by Decision No MB/2023/05 of the Management Board of the Agency, for which both sides spent in total EUR 343,742.96.

More details about the specific measures in place in 2023 and their financial implication, where applicable, are presented in Annex V, Table 8. The biggest part of the expenditure for social welfare in 2023 was spent on the temporary financial support for schooling until the establishment of accredited European school. For the purpose the BEREC Office concluded agreements with six schools for provision of schooling to the children of the BEREC Office staff in English, French and German. In the calendar year 2023, 23 children of BEREC Office statutory staff and seconded national experts were enrolled in four international schools. The total schooling costs for 2023 amounted to EUR 332,791.00. Out of this amount, the Latvian Government contributed to the BEREC Office budget with EUR 134,666.00 and EUR 2,570.00 were received as municipality grant/co-financing. The final expense for schooling under the agreements with the international schools in Latvia for the BEREC Office budget, therefore, amounted to EUR 195,555.00 or 96 % of the total direct expenditure for social welfare.

The BEREC Office offered traineeship to seven trainees until the end of September 2023, when due to financial constraints as indicated in Part II, point 2 above, the Traineeship Programme has been suspended.

6.2. Changes in establishment plan and number of posts

In 2023 the number of establishment plan posts allocated to the BEREC Office increased with 1 administrator (AD) as of 1 July 2023 following the adoption of Amendment No 1 to 2023 Budget and Establishment plan of the Agency³⁷. As result the BEREC Office number of posts envisaged in the establishment plan at 31 December 2023 consisted of 17 posts out of which 14 posts were assigned to the AD function group (FG) and the remaining three posts - to the assistants (AST) FG.

The number of external staff was maintained at the 2020 levels and included: 22 contract agents (CAs) and nine seconded national experts (SNEs). To maintain appropriate capacity for supporting BEREC in executing its tasks and activities in 2023 and to ensure the running of the Agency, the entity in charge of HR ensured the availability of 49³⁸ staff members.

Following the adoption of Amendment No 1 to the BEREC Office SPD for 2023-2025 a new Organizational Chart of the BEREC Office entered into force on 1 September 2023. The above mentioned new Organizational Chart entailed the following changes:

- i) the post of the legal and data protection officer has been reassigned to the Administration and Finance Unit;
- ii) following the increase of the establishment plan with the post of the Accounting officer, the former Finance and Procurement Team has been divided into two new teams namely the Legal and Procurement Team and the Finance and Accounting Team. The rationale of the above mentioned changes aims to ensure business continuity between the staff with legal back-ground and to increase the synergies between them and to further enhance the financial and accounting capabilities of the Agency by the establishment of a new Team in the area and finance and accounting.

6.3. Recruitment and selection

In 2023 the BEREC Office recruited three contract agents (FG IV): two in support to BEREC³⁹ and one with horizontal assignment, one senior officer to fill in the new function of the accounting officer, four programme managers (seconded national experts - SNEs) for BEREC's needs and two assistants⁴⁰ for the administration.

The programme managers were hired from an existing reserve list established following the Call for Expression of Interest for SNEs at the BEREC Office - BEREC/2021/06, one of the assistants

³⁷ [https://www.berec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-](https://www.berec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/MB%20%2823%29%2053_Amendment%20No%201_BEREC%20Office%20Budget_2023.pdf)

[06/MB%20%2823%29%2053_Amendment%20No%201_BEREC%20Office%20Budget_2023.pdf](https://www.berec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/MB%20%2823%29%2053_Amendment%20No%201_BEREC%20Office%20Budget_2023.pdf)

³⁸ At 31/12/2023 the staff available at the BEREC Office included 16 TAs, 20 CAs, 9 SNEs and 4 interim workers (3 for filling in vacant post and 1 – for the management of a specific project)

³⁹ One of them started his assignment on 01/01/2024

⁴⁰ One of them started his assignment on 01/02/2024

was recruited for a reserve list of another EU body and all other staff were recruited from newly established reserve lists for the respective post.

While the recruitment of CAs in FG IV and senior officer was smooth and there was no rejection of job offers, the BEREC Office has experienced some serious difficulties in attracting candidates for the assistants posts, in particular from other nationalities than the nationality of the host Member State.

For example, to fill in the post of Human resources (HR) assistant (CA FGIII), which became vacant in the first half of 2023, the authority authorised to conclude contracts of employment (AACC) first made use of a valid reserve list established via the use of the EPSO data base but all job offers sent were declined and the BEREC Office needed to publish a new vacancy for that post. Similar difficulties were faced in attracting candidates for the post of the Finance and Accounting Assistant. Based on the data from 2023 the rate of rejection of job offers from candidates for the assistant posts with other nationality than Latvian was 100%.

To attract more candidates from the under and not-represented Member States the BEREC Office systematically advertises its vacancies throughout the EU by disseminating the information via the EPSO portal, the website of the EU Agencies' Network, the members of the Management Board, the Communication Expert Networking Group, the diplomatic mission of the EU Member States and BEREC countries in Latvia and the Permanent Representations of the EU Member States to the EU. However, the broad advertisement of the vacancies does not increase the job acceptance rate by representative of the under and not-represented countries, as the salaries for the assistant posts and specifically for the CAs (FG II and III) seem to be not attractive for ex-pats.

This leads to continuous increase of the number of staff with Latvian nationality at the Agency and specifically at the assistant posts and gradual loss of the geographical balance.

To ensure business continuity for posts that either remained vacant or the incumbents were on long term absence, the Agency used interim workers. Additional interim workers provided services for filling missing capacities for which no posts were envisaged (such as: Interim Communication Project Manager and Interim ICT Project Manager).

At the end of the reporting period the BEREC Office carried over to 2024 two selection procedures that were launched in 2023, namely for the selection of Director and HR assistant.

In 2023 the BEREC Office continued to maintain its reserve lists, which ensure fast track recruitment in case of vacancies and at the end of the 2023 managed to slightly increase the number of the active reserve lists to 24⁴¹ valid reserve lists.

⁴¹ One additional reserve list in comparison with 2022.

6.4. Talent Management

The 2023 annual appraisal exercise was launched in February 2023, whereas the 2023 reclassification exercise was launched in July 2023. Both exercises were successfully finalised.

Throughout the year 2023 the Agency staff members benefited from training sessions covering 97 topics including 49 topics offered *in-house* on subjects, such as: document management, budget planning and monitoring in accordance with the principle of activity-based budget management, use of the EC account tools, such as: ABAC Workflow, ABAC Assets, ABAC data warehouse, use of the EC Public Procurement Management Tool (PPMT), specifics of the cooperation with the PMO, use of Sysper2 and the NDP module, etc. In addition the BEREC Office organised eight in house training classes for the purpose of learning foreign languages (French, Spanish, English and Latvian) attended by 18 staff members.

Finally yet importantly in September 2023 the Agency organised *All Agency Training* on the topic of *Integrity, Ethical Values and Fraud Prevention*. The aim of the training was to remind all staff members the relevant legal provisions contained in multiple legal acts, alongside with scenario based situation and the recommended behaviour of staff members in such circumstances taking into consideration the diverse legal framework.

6.5. Gender and geographical balance of the staff

At the end of 2023 (on 31 December 2023) the BEREC Office managed to ensure gender balance within the staff, namely: 50% female and 50% male. Considering that the BEREC Office has only three middle management positions, an acceptable gender balance was also achieved in middle management, with one woman and two men.

Bearing in mind the small size of the Agency, a good geographical balance was achieved, with representatives of 11 Member States⁴² and two Western Balkan countries (on 31 December 2023). However, following the suspension of the Traineeship programme as of October 2023, the BEREC Office has lost representative of two EU Member States and at 31 December 2023⁴³ there were less representative of EU Member States in comparison with the data at 31 December 2022. While the host Member State (MS) is over-represented, 16 EU MSs are not represented at all at the Agency. The main reason for the low interest of national of the non-represented MSs to apply and/or to accept job offers at the BEREC Office is the low correction coefficient and the low entry grades of the so called “horizontal” jobs in comparison with the other EU employers.

A detailed overview of the gender and geographical distribution of the BEREC Office staff members is available in Table 3 and Table 4 of Annex IV.

⁴² A tendency towards an increase in Latvian nationals working at the BEREC Office has been identified.

⁴³ Data for 2022: representatives of 14 EU member states and 2 Western Balkan countries

6.6. Implementing rules

In 2023 there were no new staff implementing rules applicable to the BEREC Office staff.

6.7. Benchmarking

In line with the obligations deriving from Article 29 of the Framework Financial Regulation (FFR), the BEREC Office annually conducts a benchmarking exercise, which shows the internal distribution of the Agency's human resources according to the role of each job. The compared results for 2021, 2022 and 2023 are reported in Table 5 of Annex IV.

The identification of the above-mentioned organisational roles is obtained through a job screening conducted on the basis of the specific methodology common to all agencies and the list of the roles corresponding to each job is reflected in Table 2 of Annex IV.

The final results of these exercises reflect the distribution of tasks and responsibilities following the entry into force of the new BEREC Regulation at the end of 2018 and the change in the Agency's staffing associated with the creation of the new accounting officer function as of 1 July 2023.

7. Strategy for efficiency gains

7.1. Highlights

The actions for achieving efficiency gains in 2023 were aimed at the following main areas:

1. efficiency gains via further centralisation of some functions.
2. efficiency gains in the field of procurement;
3. efficiency gains achieved through the increased use of EC IT applications or the introduction of new ones;
4. use of external resources to compensate lacking HR capacity or for tasks of a technical and auxiliary nature.

These actions have led to the following results:

7.2. Efficiency gains and synergies in the area of premises management and security

Together with the local offices of the European Commission (EC) and the European Parliament (EP) in 2021 the BEREC Office identified a new area for possible further efficiency gains and synergies related to the sharing a joint building in the future House of Europe in Riga, which will ensure synergies and efficiency gains in terms of security, IT services, benefits from sharing a joint conference facility, joint procurement and increased visibility.

Specifically in 2023 the BEREC Office finalised its requirement for the office space necessary for the needs of the Agency and provided its input to the lead contracting authority – the EP. To ensure further synergies in the use of the future common premises, in cooperation with the EP

the BEREC Office has identified additionally approximately 400 m² from its support and, technical areas, such as reception, wardrobes, storages and kitchen, which can be shared with the EU Institutions.

The BEREC Office highly appreciates the cooperation at expert level with the EP and EC in the development of this project, and will invest all its efforts to make the project possible from its side.

7.3. Efficiency gains in the field of procurement

Joint purchasing arrangements give rise to efficiency gains, in particular, due to economies of scale, which lead to cost savings such as lower purchase prices or improved client services for the same price. Inter-institutional procurement procedures or joint procurement with the authorities of the host Member State also save human resources for the BEREC Office, which due to its small size has a very limited number of staff available to manage the Agency's procurement⁴⁴.

Consequently, in 2023 the BEREC Office continued the use of inter-institutional procurement procedures and joined 20 inter-institutional procurement procedures (out of 21 invitations received), which resulted in the conclusion of 7 FWCs during the reporting period.

Additionally, based on the provisions of the new BEREC Office Financial Regulation, since 2019 the BEREC Office has access to the Latvian electronic procurement system – EIS, and is being gradually added as a contracting authority in new procurement procedures by the Latvian side. In 2023, the BEREC Office was authorised to use three catalogues of the joint procurement with the Latvian contracting authorities, namely for the purchase of IT hardware and software, office supplies, furniture, stationery and household goods.

7.4. Efficiency gains achieved via the higher use or introduction of additional EC IT applications

One of the means for ensuring efficiency gains is the digitalisation of the services used and offered, as well the use of automation. The BEREC Office does not have sufficient resources to develop and implement its own administrative IT tools, as most of its IT specialised staff is dedicated to support to BEREC. Consequently, the BEREC Office tries to make maximum use of the IT tools developed by the Commission's services and develop its own tools only in the absence of such EC tools.

In 2023, the Agency made progress with the introduction and use of the following tools:

⁴⁴ In 2023, the BEREC Office dedicated 0.6 Temporary Agent AD 7, 0.8 Contract Agent FG IV, 0.5 Contract Agent FG II

a) Advanced Gateways for Meetings (AGM)

In order to automate the meeting registration and experts reimbursement process, the BEREC Office uses the AGM tool. In 2023 the BEREC Office has processed all the BEREC meetings and events organised in a hybrid mode through this tool. The AGM tool allowed for a streamlined process of encoding meetings and experts and executing payments to the NRAs. All the experts' reimbursement claims were processed through the tool since the beginning of 2023. BEREC Office continued communicating all the relevant information regarding the usage of the tool to the experts. Some additional information and assistance was required by experts due to the launch of 2-factor authentication (2FA) of the tool for security reasons.

Please refer to point 4.1.7 under Part I for more information.

b) Use of additional modules of Sysper2 for managing the Agency's human resources (HR)

The BEREC Office was among the first EU agencies, which started the use of the European Commission (EC) HR management tool - Sysper2, for managing the Agency's staff and is continuing its commitment to put in production all its module in order to benefit from the use of the tool in full. More specifically, during the course of reporting period the following additional Sysper2 modules have become operational: i) Objectives (OBJ) module is in production since 31 January 2023; ii) Ethics (ETH) module is in production since 1 June 2023. The aforementioned modules further contributes to the digitalisation of the existing HR process which enables both staff member and BEREC Office administration to handle setting and approval of work related objectives as well as the handling of obligations of the statutory staff envisaged in the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union in a timely and accurate manner.

Furthermore during the second part of the reporting period the BEREC Office has reiterated its interest in regards to the HR Reporting/Analytics module for which we had already expressed our interested in 2022. Once implemented the module will enable HR professionals to retrieve up to 56 various reports from Sysper2. Concomitantly, in 2023 the BEREC Office also expressed interest for Evaluation (EVAL) and Promotion (PROMO) module which will allow the conduct of the annual appraisal and reclassification exercise exclusively via Sysper2. The BEREC Office request for on-boarding additional two Sysper2 modules has been acknowledged by the EC's relevant services and the possibility of implementation would be reassessed during the course of 2024 taking into consideration the limited capacity of the EC's relevant services which are also responsible for the design and rollout of the new HR Transformation (HRT) initially at the EC.

7.5. Use of external resources to compensate missing capacities or for tasks of technical and auxiliary nature

Since its establishment the BEREC Office has been operating with lacking human resources (HR) capacity for certain posts such as payroll officer, medical officer, translators, security guards, etc. and is fully dependant on external resources. In other areas, which require high specialisation and/or specific knowledge the Agency has developed limited capacities and is partially dependant on external resources, such as information technologies (IT), incl. IT security, procurement, staff selection, HR management, etc. Additionally, the Agency has neither clerks nor secretaries and consequently many staff members are engaged in secretarial and clerical tasks, irrespective of their grade.

To compensate some of the lacking capacity, where possible, the BEREC Office uses such services when they are offered by the European Commission (EC) or other agencies of the EU as a first priority.

In 2023 the Agency used the following services offered by the EC or other agencies and bodies of the EU:

a) In the area of human resources (HR):

Services offered by the EC Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements (PMO)

- Sickness, accidents, occupational disease
- Unemployment
- Pensions, invalidity allowance, transfers and severance grant
- Salary calculation and payment
- Use of IT tool for salary calculation and reporting (NAP)
- Determination of individual entitlements for active staff – allowances and reimbursements on taking up appointment, transfer
- Use of Sysper2 rights module for PMO (stand-alone)
- Determination of mission expenses

Services offered by the DG Human Resources and Security (DG HR)

- Learning and development
- Health and Wellbeing - Medical services

Services offered by European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO and the European School of Administration (EUSA)

- Selection and training of staff

b) In the area of finance and accounting:

- Accounting Officer services (Directorate General for Budget - DG BUDG)⁴⁵
- Reimbursement of expenses of experts (PMO)

c) In the area of IT and security:

- IT services (EUIPO)
- Security services (CERT-EU)
- sTesta services (DG for Informatics - DG DIGIT)
- Production of security badges and entry permits for the EC premises (DG HR)
- Financial and accounting systems: ABAC Workflow, ABAC Accounting (SAP), ABAC Datawarehouse and ABAC Assets (DG BUDG, DG DIGIT)
- e-PRIOR for procurement (DG DIGIT)
- ICT procurement (DG DIGIT)
- EU Learn (DG HR)
- My IntraComm (DG DIGIT)
- MiPs/MiPS+ (PMO)
- NAP / BOXI (PMO)
- Sysper2, incl. NDP and ComRef database (DG HR)
- HERMES-ARES-NomCom (SecGen)
- EU SIGN (DG DIGIT)
- AGM (PMO)

d) Publications and language services:

- Publication services (Publication Office)
- Interpretation services [DG Interpretation (SCIC)] and translations and other language services [Translation Centre of the EU (CdT)]

When the services needed by the BEREC Office, for which internal capacity was missing, were not offered by the EC or other bodies of the EU, the BEREC Office acquired those services via the SLA with the Latvian public authorities or commercial contracts, for example in the field of IT, physical security, logistics, cleaning, staff selection and others.

Interim workers were hired for specific short-term projects for which the BEREC Office had no

⁴⁵ The provision of this service was terminated upon request of DG BUDG as of 1 November 2023.

posts in its organisational structure, for example for the implementation of the BERECweb project (technical and content), data analysis / IT project management and premises project management.

This approach has enabled the BEREC Office to address tasks in its mandate by making extensive use of the professional knowledge of the hired staff in the interest of the service.

7.6. Efficiency gains from further digitalisation and centralisation of some functions

The BEREC Office is largely an IT-based agency, viewing information and communication technologies (ICT) as key enabler for the work that it carries out in support to BEREC and for its day-to-day operations. The availability of all data in digital format ensures accessibility and automation in the processing of that data and saves time for printing, filing in paper files and sending documents by post and is a further enabler of going paperless.

Therefore in 2023 the Agency introduced for its administrative processes qualified electronic signature, which has led to also full abolition of the paper workflows. Documents on paper are processes only when the external partners of the Agency have no qualified electronic signature or explicitly request the use of paper. This has led to savings in terms of costs related to printing, preservation of paper files and sending by post, as well as in terms of saving time for the staff previously processing the paper files.

In addition, to achieve further efficiency gains, as well as to ensure business continuity, the post of the Legal Officer/Data Protection Officer was transferred to the Administration and Finance as of 1 September 2023. The job holder will be involved in some of the horizontal activities of the Unit and will be supported / backed-up by the Unit staff members.

7.7. Conclusions

The implementation of the above-mentioned actions has led to improved service quality, lower prices and/or higher quality and the use of fewer FTEs for administrative tasks.

Any freed-up capacity from the implementation of the strategy for efficiency gains has been re-invested in support to BEREC. In particular due to efficiency gains in 2023 the administration has released ½ FTE to be assigned to direct support to BEREC due to synergies and efficiency gains.

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

8.1. BEREC Office evaluation according to Article 48 of the BEREC Regulation

8.1.1. Assessment by BEREC (BEREC report)

During 2023 BEREC carried out an assessment of the activities and performance of BEREC and the BEREC Office for the period 2018-2023.

The assessment was carried out in parallel to the EC assessment (see, Section 8.1.2.) with the aim to contribute to the EC's evaluation triggered by Article 48 of the BEREC Regulation, setting out that the EC must evaluate the performance of BEREC and BEREC Office by the end of 2023.

In its opinion BEREC concluded that the BEREC Office, which is the smallest European decentralised Agency, had delivered on its statutory goals and had accordingly worked properly supporting BEREC, while also complying with the extensive administrative requirements applying to it, despite its limited size, even under the conditions of a worldwide outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine and extremely high inflation in the host Member State. Further improvements could be implemented to reduce administrative burden, as well as to allow the Agency to rely on more specialised skills, especially given the high staff turnover in recent years, the potential need for specialists in new areas and the significant workload pressure on the Agency's staff.

The full content of the document can be consulted on the following link: <https://bereg.europa.eu/en/document-categories/bereg/reports/bereg-input-to-the-european-commission-on-the-functioning-of-bereg-and-the-bereg-office-in-view-of-the-evaluation-under-article-48-of-the-bereg-regulation>

8.1.2. Evaluation by the European Commission (EC)

As per Article 48 of the BEREC Regulations, by 21 December 2023, and every five years thereafter, the EC shall carry out an evaluation in compliance with the EC guidelines to assess BEREC's and the BEREC Office's performance in relation to their objectives, mandate, tasks and location. The evaluation shall, in particular, address the possible need to modify the structure or mandate of BEREC and the BEREC Office, and the financial implications of any such modification. The EC shall report to the European Parliament, the Council and the Management Board on the findings of its evaluation and shall make those findings public.

In the course of 2023 the EC carried out the assessment by conducting interviews and surveys with BEREC, the BEREC Office and other stakeholders.

The report and the results of the evaluation are still expected.

8.2. Internal Audit Service (IAS)

According to the provisions of the BEREC Office Financial Regulation, specifically the provisions set out in Chapter 7 thereof, the European Commission's IAS is the internal auditor of the BEREC Office. Following the full risk assessment carried out in 2020 and according to the audit plan for the period 2021-2023, the IAS started in late 2021 its preliminary interviews for the audit of the organisational preparedness for the implementation of BEREC Working Groups' activities. The audit fieldwork continued also in January 2022.

The audit report contained three important recommendations for which the BEREC Office prepared an action plan. Following the acceptance of the action plan by the IAS, the BEREC Office started its implementation and managed to submit for review in 2023 all 3 recommendations. During 2023, the IAS review and closed the first recommendation referring to the Satisfaction survey to working group co-Chairs. In early 2024, the IAS closed also the pending recommendations, namely Induction to the BEREC Office and the use of BEREC Net+ and Access to BEREC Net+.

8.3. Internal audit capability

Not applicable⁴⁶.

8.4. European Court of Auditors (ECA)

In the ECA's opinion⁴⁷, the BEREC Office's accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022 present fairly, in all material respects, the BEREC Office's financial position at 31 December 2022, the results of its operations, its cash flows, and the changes in net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with its Financial Regulation and with accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer. These are based on internationally accepted accounting standards for the public sector.

ECA also concluded that the revenues and payments underlying the accounts for the year 2022 are legal and regular in all material respects.

Following the action taken in response to the ECA's observations from previous financial years, all the opened observations were closed and BEREC Office obtained for the second time in the history of the agency a clean opinion.

8.5. Follow-up of observations made by the discharge authority

In terms of the discharge, the BEREC Office followed up with the European Parliament (EP) on its recommendations in respect of the 2021 report and submitted its replies to the observations. These replies moreover followed-up the EP observations on previous years ECA findings,

⁴⁶ The BEREC Office has no internal audit capacity

⁴⁷ [Annual report on EU agencies for the financial year 2022](#)

usage of KPIs in certain areas of activity, gender balance at the level of Management Board and in the Agency, usage of shared services in the area on internal controls, publication of CVs and declaration of conflict of interests of its Management Board, prevention of conflict of interests, development of a cybersecurity policy and collaboration with other agencies in this respect, digitalisation and developing of synergies in all areas of activity.

Additionally the BEREC Office contributed by submitting comments and inputs to the 2022 Discharge exercise in the second part of 2023.

On 11 April 2024 the EP decided to grant discharge in respect of the implementation of the BEREC Office budget for the financial year 2022 and to close the accounts for that financial year.

The resolution accompanying the discharge decision to the EP welcomes the achievements of the Agency in the fields of budget monitoring and implementation, usage of key performance to assess the implementation of its objectives, provision of high quality administrative and professional support to BEREC, efficiency gains in different areas of activity of the Agency and successful cooperation with EUIPO in the area of IT, the efforts and initiatives taken to enhance staff members work-life conditions incl. the policy on protecting the dignity of the person and preventing psychological and sexual harassment.

In the area of prevention and management of conflict of interest and transparency, the discharge authority took note that the Agency publishes on its website the CVs and declarations on conflict of interest of its management board members. In addition, in the same resolution, it is also underlined that prior to commencing their roles at the Agency, statutory staff, seconded national experts, trainees, and interim workers are required to submit a declaration of interest, which is then reviewed by the appointing authority or director before assignment approval. It is also noted that the BEREC Office via its anti-fraud strategy 2023-2025 aims at improving the detection, sanctioning and prevention of fraud and counteract any other illegal activities that may affect its financial interest. In addition, the EP welcomes that the Agency deployed in production the ethics modules in Sysper2, which covers the conflict of interest declaration, gift or hospitality declaration, publication declaration, request for authorisation of outside activity, request for outside activity while on leave on personal grounds, spouse employment declaration.

It is also acknowledged the fact that as of 2022 the Agency started the use of the European Commission (EC) Public Procurement Management Tool (PPMT), which has further streamlined its public procurement processes and ensures the use of the latest EC templates and best practices in each step of the process.

Further acknowledgements refer to the increase of the cybersecurity and protection of the digital records in Agency's possession and, also, it is welcomed the efforts of the Agency to treat with priority the new legislation laying down measures on cybersecurity.

Other remarks for which the Agency is praised refer to the target limit of implementation of the EMAS certification, to establishing a collaborative framework to address connectivity challenges

and pave the way for harmonizing Ukrainian electronic communications regulations with the European telecoms framework, to the Agency's efforts in 2022 to increase public awareness of its mandate and work in Latvia and, also, that fact that the local offices of Parliament and the Commission in Riga and the Agency have joined their efforts to work together to establish a joint House of Europe, which will be the "home" of all Union Institutions and the Agency in Latvia.

On the other hand, the EP draws the attention that the Agency needs to take all the necessary security measures to avoid any risk to the online security of the information processed and insist on the need to step up action against cyberattacks or infiltration attempts particularly originating from Russia or China. Also, in the area of staff policy the Agency to analyse the reasons for the high staff turnover and make the necessary steps to avoid it in the future and report back.

Another aspect underlined by the EP refers to is the adoption of the "Charter on diversity and inclusion" and encourages the Agency to adopt it.

All recommendations and points for which the Agency was invited to comment will be addressed by the BEREC Office and reported to the Discharge Authority.

8.6. Follow up of recommendations issued following investigations by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)⁴⁸

Not applicable.⁴⁹

9. Environment management

The BEREC Office takes into consideration the impact of its operation on the environment and has worked in 2023 on implementing to major work streams⁵⁰ in order to achieve and maintain long-term a reduction of its and BEREC's environmental footprint:

1. A Greening Action Plan for BEREC and for the BEREC Office that will include targets and steps for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reductions.
2. Launching the process of preparing for EMAS certification (EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) by setting up of a BEREC Office cross-unit taskforce and to include this as a task in the BEREC Office SPD, aiming for certification by the end of 2025.

These two main actions will set clear targets and actions to achieve resource-efficient operations by, in particular, setting up a path to carbon neutrality by 2030 and to apply an

⁴⁸ Article 11 Regulation (EU/Euratom) 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)

⁴⁹ The BEREC Office has not been subject to OLAF investigations.

⁵⁰ The BEREC Office Management Board (MB) on 7 October 2022 at the 52nd Ordinary Plenary Meeting mandated the ENG Sustainability and the BEREC Office (BO) for implementing these work streams.

environmental management system to all its activities by obtaining and maintaining registration with the EU's Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS).

These two work streams are implemented in a constant process of integrating the actions into the management of the BEREC Office and incrementally adapting these actions in annual reviews over the coming years. In a major first step, even though only at the first Plenary Meeting in 2024, the BEREC Office Management Board adopted the Greening Action Plan prepared by the BEREC ENG Sustainability.

For more detailed explanations and descriptions on the measures already taken to reduce the environmental impact, please refer to Annex VIII of this report.

10. Access to documents and data protection

In 2023 the BEREC Office received 4 requests for access to documents under Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001: two requests were for access to BEREC Office documents, and two – for access to BEREC documents (see Annex I, Table 9).

In the area of data protection, in 2023 the BEREC Office continued its efforts to ensure compliance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, which entered into force as of 11 December 2018. During 2022, the Agency made substantial progress to enhance data protection policies and procedures reaching a satisfactory level of compliance. Although progress was made, a continuous focus is needed in 2024, and likely beyond to address the emerging challenges, in particular for what concerns the compliance of the use of digital tools and service-providers based outside the EU/EEA.

The concrete 2023 outputs in terms of data protection can be summarised as follows:

- The BEREC Office staff and newcomers have received two tailored trainings on the data protection obligations to observe when processing personal data in the course of their duties.
- The BEREC Office developed and adopted seven data protection policies covering processing of personal data in the administrative area and operational area.
- The Agency has responded to the EDPS enforcement action on the role, responsibilities and tasks of data protection officers in the EU Institutions, bodies, offices and agencies.
- The DPO has provided several advices on data protection matters arising both from BEREC and BEREC Office activities.
- The Data Protection Officer (DPO) handled one data subject's complaint and helped to document and assess one data breach.

The above-mentioned activities will be described in more detail in the DPO Annual Activity Report 2023 which the DPO will submit to the Management Board pursuant to Article 7.3 of Decision No MB/2019/14.

As in the previous year, in 2023 the role of the DPO was exercised by the BEREC Office Legal

Officer.

11. Assessment by management

The year 2023 was another year, during which the Agency for Support for BEREC (BEREC Office, Agency) had to work under extraordinary circumstances: from one side to ensure efficient and effective support to an extremely ambitious BEREC Work Programme (WP) and on the other side to cope with high inflation and rising energy costs, posing challenges to the budget planning and execution. Against this background, the BEREC Office found the most efficient way to finance all existing and emerging priorities, while keeping sufficient room for manoeuvre to react to potential further new developments given the unpredictable economic and geopolitical environment.

In 2023, the year when the war in Ukraine became a new normal, the most important and challenging tasks were the strengthening of ICT security (e. g. by introducing multi-factor authentication for BERECNet+) and the migration of most of the ICT infrastructure and ICT systems to the new datacentres. This was required by the expiry of a framework contract with one of the key Agency's providers, the high risk of cyber threats caused by the war in Ukraine and the need for overall efficiency and optimisation of the ICT resources. As a result, the operations from new datacentres could allow to minimise the respective costs. Migration was completed seamlessly in December 2023, without any interruptions for the users.

Furthermore, the BEREC Office developed its own electronic voting tool for the need of the BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR) and the BEREC Office Management Board (MB). The new tool replaced the e-voting platform that the BEREC Office was previously purchasing on the market. It is based on the Microsoft SharePoint platform (BERECnet) and delivers the same user experience as the commercial tool. For the first time the Agency used its own resources to develop a tool and thus generating savings of approximately kEUR 55 per year in the BEREC Office budget and ensured decrease of the dependence of the Agency on 3rd party tools and contracts.

Irrespective of the extraordinary circumstances mentioned above, with optimal use of the limited available human and financial resources and restructuring the BEREC Office priorities for the year, the BEREC Office managed to effectively deliver its Annual WP for 2023⁵¹, to meet the expectations of the stakeholders and to ensure safe and secure day-to-day running of the Agency and the ICT tools made available to BEREC.

⁵¹<https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec-office/berec-office-work-programmes/single-programming-document-of-the-berec-office-for-the-period-2023-2025>

In particular, the BEREC Office has ensured the necessary professional and administrative support to BEREC and has contributed to promoting full connectivity, supporting sustainable and open digital markets and empowering end-users by undertaking the following activities:

- setting up 12 BEREC Working Groups (WGs) in line with the BEREC WP 2023⁵² and one Ad Hoc WG for dealing with phase II cases under Articles 32/33 of Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC);
- organising five ordinary plenary meetings of the BoR and four of the MB, four public debriefings for presenting the results from the plenary meetings, four ordinary and two extraordinary meetings of the BEREC Contact Network and 490 BEREC WG events (incl. nine meetings of the phase II cases under Articles 32/33 WGs, 3rd party meetings of the WG Co-chairs and five workshops with external stakeholders);
- supporting BEREC in managing the relations with its stakeholders and interested parties by organising 14 public consultations and calls for input on key draft BEREC documents and the 11th Stakeholder Forum as a mean to further gather the stakeholders' feed-back on BEREC draft documents, to enhance the dialogue with the interested parties in relation to improving the consistency in the implementation of the EU regulatory rules and practices and to gather input to new potential areas of work, such as artificial intelligence, future trends and regulation of digital platforms and the effective enforcement of the Digital Markets Act.

As in previous years, the BEREC Office contributed to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of the experts from the national regulatory authorities (NRA) via offering a variety of information and communication technology (ICT) tools to BEREC, to enable remote and collaborative work of all BEREC bodies, which allowed unprecedentedly high level of participation in the BEREC WG events from all NRAs (more than 9 000 participants in 2023). The use of ICT tools required less travel and therefore contributed to higher sustainability of BEREC's operations. Security and user-friendliness of the BEREC information exchange platform BERECNet+ was improved by introducing the MFA for access to the platform by reducing simultaneously the complexity and increase the duration of passwords.

The BEREC Office contributed to enhance the professional knowledge of the NRA experts via the provision of training courses on regulatory aspects of the electronic communications.

In 2023 the BEREC Office managed the following studies for BEREC:

- Study on the trends and policy/regulatory challenges of cloudification, virtualisation, and softwarisation in telecommunication and

⁵² <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec/berec-strategies-and-work-programmes/berec-work-programme-2023>

- Study on the evolution of the competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies not directly providing retail services.

Moreover one on the studies for which the contract was signed already in 2022, was finalised in 2023, namely:

- Study on the wholesale mobile access connectivity, trends and issues for emerging mobile technologies and deployments.

The Agency also ensured the provision of financial software and historical data sets for the calculation of certain parameters underlying the weighted average cost of capital (WACC) and other financial parameters the provision and maintenance of the General Authorisation Database and the establishment of BEREC databases of numbering ranges for value-added services and means of access to emergency services for roaming users⁵³.

The war in Ukraine affected the work both of BEREC and the BEREC Office. Specially, following the Russian invasion in Ukraine, BEREC with the support of the BEREC Office, closely followed the telecommunications sector's response to the crisis and the measures provided to refugees from the war in Ukraine voluntarily by EU operators. Based on data gathered by the BEREC Office from EU and Ukrainian operators about the applied retail measures a Joint Statement was agreed, which established a stable framework to help people fleeing the war in Ukraine to stay connected with their families and friends back home and maintain access to information.

Furthermore, the BEREC Office coordinated the process of revising the Working arrangements with the Western Balkan NRAs and the NRA of Ukraine that allowed them to become participants without the voting right in BEREC and the BEREC Office.

The BEREC Office achievements in 2023 go beyond responding to the new crisis situation and, irrespectively of the additional effort and resources required for the activities related to the measures targeting to respond to the security issues related to the war in Ukraine, the Agency continued its efforts related to the implementation of the new Headquarters Agreement (HQA), increasing digitalisation and ensuring compliance with the *horizontal* legislation in force.

Specifically, on 16 June 2022 the BEREC Office and the Latvian Government signed a Service level agreement (SLA), which was an important prerequisite for the practical implementation of many of the provisions of the HQA. Following that the Latvian Government established a Liaison Office as a means to ensure the smooth operation of the Agency in Latvia and to support the BEREC Office staff and their families in their establishment in the host Member State.

In line with the provisions of the SLA the Government of Latvia also provided voluntary contribution to the BEREC Office budget for sharing the costs for schooling offered to the children of the BEREC Office staff amounting to EUR 134,666.00.

⁵³ <https://berec.europa.eu/en/berec/berec-databases-of-numbering-ranges-for-value-added-services-and-means-of-access-to-emergency-services-for-roaming-users>

Despite the exceptional circumstances mentioned above, the internal control systems put in place have functioned as intended to ensure the appropriate management of financial flows and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, based on 100% *ex ante* verifications of financial transactions and procurement procedures.

The objective of the systems is to ensure that the BEREC Office management has reasonable assurance that the total amount of any financial operation authorised during the reporting year that does not comply with contractual and regulatory provisions does not exceed 2% of total expenditure.

Based on the principle of cross-reliance on audits based on internationally accepted audit standards and taking into account the limited human and financial resources of the Agency and low risks (incl. very low risk of fraud) to which the Agency is exposed, in 2023 the BEREC Office management has not considered it necessary to introduce additional ex-post controls.

In 2023 the BEREC Office management to implement all recommendations stemming from previous years' audit (ECA and IAS) and all of them were closed by the respective auditors.

Part III: Assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control systems

1. Risk management

In accordance with the relevant international standards in July 2020 the Internal Audit Service (IAS) of the European Commission (EC) carried out an in-depth risk assessment covering all BEREC Office auditable entities. The outcome of the risk assessment proved that the BEREC Office remains a low risk Agency.

2. Compliance and effectiveness of internal control principles

2.1. Efficiency and effectiveness of internal control systems

2.1.1. Assessment

On 23 October 2023, the BEREC Office management reviewed during its weekly management meeting the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal control system of the [BEREC Office Internal Control Framework](#) (ICF) as defined by the Management Board in document MC (18) 69⁵⁴.

The overview of the outcome of the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the BEREC Office internal control system (ICS) in the period 2019-2022, the results of the financial audits performed by the European Court of Auditors (ECA)⁵⁵ and external auditors⁵⁶ the IAS audit⁵⁷ and the results of the validation of accounting systems in the last years⁵⁸, they all have reached all the same conclusion that the internal controls are in place, fit for purpose, are efficient and effective and reliable for the managers.

2.1.2. Conclusions

The management discussed the matter and based on their consideration expressed during the discussion and having into regards the provisions of Article 127 of the [Financial regulation](#) referring to the cross-reliance of audits, agreed on performing a light review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the ICF in 2023.

2.2. Costs and benefits of controls

The costs of controls at the BEREC Office for the financial year 2023 have been, as follows:

2.2.1. Outsourced:

⁵⁴ See, <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec-office/others/berec-office-internal-control-framework>

⁵⁵ ECA Specific Annual report for the financial year 2020, Ares(2021)7193320 and ECA Specific Annual report for the financial year 2021, Ares(2022)8056988

⁵⁶ External auditors audit report for the financial year 2021, Ares(2022) 4383521 and for the financial year 2022 Ares(2023)4233383

⁵⁷ IAS final audit report, Ares(2022)3558149

⁵⁸ Validation of the accounting systems- 2021 results Ares(2021)7799431, Validation of the accounting systems- 2022 results Ares(2022)8091060

- verification of the BEREC Office annual accounts by an independent external auditor in accordance with the provision of Article 70 (6) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012⁵⁹ - kEUR 11;

If compared to the overall budget available at the Agency for payments in 2023 (e.g. mil EUR 9) the expenditure for the independent auditor will be 0,1% of the available appropriations for payment .

With the internalisation of the internal control coordinator function, all the expenses for performing these tasks are considered as an economy, thus no more reported as an outsourced expense.

2.2.2. Internal:

During the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal control systems, including an overall assessment of the costs and benefits of controls, was performed detailed calculation regarding the costs of controls of:

- (a) **Transactions.** 9,234 transactions were made (including both operational and financial) at the BEREC Office in 2023, which included ex-ante controls by each of staff member involved. Total costs of controls of transaction constitutes kEUR 46 or on average EUR 5,02 per transaction.
- (b) **Procurement.** 23 procurements were relevant for the calculation as being performed⁶⁰ at the BEREC Office in 2023. Total costs of controls of procurement constitutes kEUR 11 or on average EUR 462,31 per procurement.

Overall assessment of the management is that **cost of controls of procurement and transactions is sufficient to limit potential errors, material deviations and data accuracy, and performed control activities are effective.**

The limit point or benchmark of benefits of the controls is set in the amount of 2% of the BEREC Office annual budget (equals EUR 153'945). Exceeding this point would mean that the control measures are not beneficial due to the identified risk of non-compliance. Based on the

⁵⁹ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1–222 (BG, ES, CS, DA, DE, ET, EL, EN, FR, GA, HR, IT, LV, LT, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SL, FI, SV)

⁶⁰ One procurement procedure was cancelled due to purely technical error in choosing the correct type of procedure, 2 procurement procedures were cancelled at the level of AO, 3 procurement procedures have started in 2023 but are to be finalized in 2024 and 2 procurement procedures have started to be prepared in 2023, but most of the work is to be finalized in 2024. For all these 5 pending procurement procedures, actors involved have reported performing different types of checks 2023.

assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal control systems, including an overall assessment of the costs and benefits of controls, **none of the deviations or other identified issues exceeded the benchmark and BEREC Office benefits from the internal control environment.**

The general benefits of the controls set by the BEREC Office are:

- (a) Limited risk of fraud;
- (b) Limited risk of corruption;
- (c) Assurance of compliance with Financial Regulations;
- (d) Reliability of reporting;
- (e) Transparency;
- (f) Safeguarding assets and information;
- (g) Prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of irregularities.

3. Independent auditor's report on the provisional annual accounts as at 31 December 2023

The BEREC Office requested an independent auditor to audit the provisional annual accounts of the Agency for 2023, consisting of the financial statements and the reports on the implementation of the budget for the financial year that ended on 31 December 2023. The financial statements comprise the balance sheet as at 31 December 2023, the statement of financial performance, the cash flow statement, the statement of changes in net assets/liabilities for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing and the International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions, as issued by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions.

In the opinion of the independent auditor, the provisional annual accounts of the Agency present fairly, in all material aspects, its financial position as at 31 December 2023, and the results of its operations and its cash flow, for the year then ended, and are prepared in accordance with its Financial Regulation, and, in accordance with the accounting rules adopted by the EC accounting officer, and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, as issued by the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board.

The report of the independent auditor and the related audit documentation have been made available to the EC and ECA.

4. Validation of local accounting systems by the Commission's accounting officer

In 2023, the Directorate-General for Budget carried out an annual review for the validation of local accounting systems for the operations authorised by the BEREC Office during the financial year 2022. The assessment was carried out to provide assurance that the internal control systems in place are effective.

The results of the exercise concluded that no significant points (with material impact) for improvement have been detected during the review.

Based on this evidence and on the conclusions of the ECA and the IAS, the BEREC Office management has concluded that the internal control systems in place are efficient and effective and are fit for purpose.

5. Statement of the Manager in charge of risk management and internal control

I, the undersigned, Iskra STOILOVA-TSONEVA,

Manager in charge of risk management and internal control within the Agency for Support for BEREC (BEREC Office),

In my capacity as Manager in charge of risk management and internal control, I declare that in accordance with Agency's Internal Control Framework, a report with recommendations on the overall state of internal control in the Agency has been presented to the attention of the 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, reliable and complete.

Riga, 20 June 2024.

(e-signed)

Iskra STOILOVA-TSONEVA

Head of Administration and Finance

Part IV: Management assurance

1. Review of the elements supporting assurance

The information reported in Parts I and II stems from the results of management and auditor monitoring conducted in 2023. It is based on a systematic analysis of the evidence available, as stated below.

i. Ex ante controls of transactions

In 2023, all transactions (operational and financial) at the BEREC Office have been subject to ex ante controls. The staff entrusted with the ex-ante controls has the necessary professional knowledge to perform these controls. Their knowledge has been acquired during previous experience and the specific trainings offered by the BEREC Office.

ii. Assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal control system

In 2023, the BEREC Office assessed the implementation of the [BEREC Office Internal Control Framework](#) as defined by the Management Board in document MC (18) 69⁶¹.

The assessment was conducted in accordance with the requirement of Internal Control Principle No 16 and was done against the objectives and key performance indicators included in the BEREC Office Work Programme 2023 as part of the Agency Single Programming Document for 2023-2025⁶² by taking into account the standards at the EC services.

The outcome of the assessment demonstrated that the BEREC Office has overall a well performing internal control framework in place with the key criteria specified by the European Commission (EC) Directorate-General for Budget (DG BUDG), the BEREC Office own regulations, the BEREC Office key policies and procedures, and with good practices.

iii. Validation of the accounting system carried out by the EC Accounting Officer

In 2023, the staff of DG BUDG carried out its annual evaluation of the local financial systems set up in BEREC Office, as provided for in Article 50(e) of the BEREC Office Financial Regulation.

The evaluation has not identified any control weakness which would have a material impact on the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of the information required to draft the annual accounts and produce reliable reporting. On the basis of the available evidence, DG BUDG concluded that the internal control systems are working as intended.

⁶¹ See, <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec-office/others/berec-office-internal-control-framework>

⁶² See, MB (22) 81, BEREC Office Single Programming Document for the period 2023-2025, 14.12.2022, published: <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec-office/berec-office-work-programmes/single-programming-document-of-the-berec-office-for-the-period-2023-2025> <https://berec.europa.eu/en/document-categories/berec-office/berec-office-work-programmes/single-programming-document-of-the-activities-of-the-agency-for-support-for-berec-berec-office-for-the-period-2022-2024>

iv. Lessons learned from the reports of the European Court of Auditors (ECA)

The management has taken into account the lessons learned from the ECA reports and has introduced the necessary improvements in those areas in which there were comments by the auditors.

v. Audit based on internationally accepted audit standards conducted by an independent auditor on the financial statements and reports setting out the use of a Union contribution

Under a framework contract of the DG BUDG the BEREC Office tasked an independent auditor on the bases of internationally accepted audit standards to audit the BEREC Office financial accounts (provisional and final) and to report setting out the use of a Union contribution. Following the audit of the provisional and final accounts and the documents containing information about the use of a Union contribution, the independent auditor issued a clean opinion according to which the provisional annual accounts of the Agency presented fairly, in all material aspects, its financial position as at 31 December 2023.

vi. Declarations of Assurance by the Authoring Officers by Delegation

In their capacity as Authorising Officers by Delegation, each Head of Unit has provided a Declaration of Assurance on the appropriate allocation of resources and their use for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, as well as on the adequacy of the control procedures in place.

vii. Declaration of the manager in charge of risk management and internal controls

The Manager in charge of risk management and internal control has signed a declaration taking responsibility for the completeness and reliability of management reporting. This declaration covers both the state of internal control in the BEREC Office and the robustness of reporting on operational performance. However, responsibility for achieving operational objectives remains with the relevant unit.

This approach provides sufficient guarantees of the completeness and reliability of the information reported, and the results achieved by the BEREC Office in 2023.

In conclusion, the management has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable control systems are in place and working as intended, risks are being appropriately monitored and mitigated, and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented.

2. Reservations and overall conclusions on assurance

Taking the above into consideration, no weaknesses were identified related to the financial management of appropriations inside the Agency; therefore, no reservations are made in this context in the declaration.

Part V: Declaration of Assurance

I, the undersigned, **Panagiotis, Panos Karaminas**, Director ad interim of the Agency for Support for BEREC (the BEREC Office), in my capacity as authorising officer, declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view, and state that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement and on the information at my disposal, such as the ex-ante controls of all transactions (operational and financial) carried out by the BEREC Office staff, the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal control system carried out by the internal control coordinator, the validation of the accounting system carried out by the Commission Accounting Officer, who was the BEREC Office Accounting Officer at the time, the lessons learnt from the reports of the European Court of Auditors, the outcome of the audit based on internationally accepted audit standards conducted by an independent auditor on the financial statements and reports setting out the use of a Union contribution and the declarations of assurance of the authorising officers by delegation.

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

Riga, 20 June 2024.

(e-signed)

Panagiotis, Panos Karaminas

*BEREC Office Director ad interim and
Authorising Officer*

Annexes

Annex I: Core business information and statistics

Table 1: List of BEREC Working Groups (WGs) supported by the BEREC Office in 2023

WGs established by a decision of the BEREC BoR/2022/05 ⁶³	
1.	Regulatory Framework WG (RF)
2.	Open Internet WG (OI)
3.	Planning and Future Trends WG (PFT)
4.	Market and Economic Analysis WG (MEA)
5.	Digital Markets WG (DM)
6.	End Users WG (EU)
7.	Roaming WG (IR)
8.	Fixed Network Evolution WG (FNE)
9.	Wireless Network Evolution WG (WNE)
10.	Remedies and Market Monitoring WG (RAMM)
11.	Cybersecurity WG (CS)
12.	Sustainability WG (SUS)

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<https://bereg.europa.eu/en/document-categories/bereg/bereg-decisions/decision-no-bor202205-of-the-board-of-regulators-on-the-bereg-working-groups-and-their-co-chairs>

Table 2: List of BEREC public consultations managed by the BEREC Office in 2023

PC No	Start	End	Topic	Documents subject to consultation	No of contributions
PC 01/2023	13 December 2022	27 January 2023	Public consultation on the Draft BEREC Report on competition amongst multiple operators of NGA networks in the same geographical region	Draft BEREC Report on competition amongst multiple operators of NGA networks in the same geographical region	7
PC 02/2023	13 December 2022	3 February 2023	Public consultation on the Draft BEREC Report on the regulatory treatment of business services	Draft BEREC Report on the regulatory treatment of business services	8
PC 03/2023	13 December 2022	3 February 2023	Public consultation on the Draft BEREC Report on interoperability of Number-Independent Interpersonal Communications Services (NI-ICS)	Draft BEREC Report on interoperability of Number-Independent Interpersonal Communications Services (NI-ICS)	7
PC 04/2023	13 December 2022	3 February 2023	Public consultation on the Draft BEREC Report on challenges and benefits of impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions in the telecommunications sector (including cases)	Draft BEREC report on challenges and benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions in the telecommunications sector (including use cases)	3
PC 05/2023	15 March 2023	28 April 2023	Public consultation on the Draft BEREC guidelines on VHCN	Draft BEREC guidelines on VHCN	6
PC 06/2023	15 March 2023	12 April 2023	Public consultation on the Draft BEREC Report on Sustainability Indicators for Electronic Communications Networks and Services	Draft BEREC Report on Sustainability Indicators for Electronic Communications Networks and Services	8
PC 07/2023	15 March 2023	14 April 2023	Call for input on the Outline of the BEREC Work Programme (WP) 2024	Outline of the BEREC Work Programme 2024	7

PC No	Start	End	Topic	Documents subject to consultation	No of contributions
PC 08/2023	24 May 2023	9 June 2023	Call for contributions of interested stakeholders on the project BEREC Report on Member States' best practices to support the defining of adequate broadband internet access services (IAS) within the framework of the universal services	Project BEREC Report on MS's best practices to support the defining of broadband IAS	3
PC 09/2023	24 May 2023	9 June 2023	Call for contributions of interested stakeholders on the first review of BEREC Guidelines detailing Quality of Service (QoS) parameters	First review of BEREC Guidelines detailing Quality of Services (QoS) parameters	1
PC 10/2023	14 June 2023	15 August 2023	Public consultation on the draft BEREC Report on practices and challenges of the phasing out of 2G and 3G	Draft BEREC Report on practices and challenges of the phasing out of 2G and 3G	13
PC 11/2023	6 October 2023	3 November 2023	Public consultation on the draft BEREC WP 2024	Draft BEREC Work Programme 2024	13
PC 12/2023	9 October 2023	10 November 2023	Public consultation on the draft BEREC Report on Member States' best practices to support the defining of adequate broadband IAS	Draft BEREC Report on Member States' best practices to support the defining of adequate broadband internet access services	6
PC 13/2023	9 October 2023	10 November 2023	Public consultation on the draft BEREC Guidelines detailing QoS parameters	Draft BEREC Guidelines detailing quality of service parameters	5
PC 14/2023	27 November 2023	26 January 2024	Call for input on Machine-to-Machine communications and permanent roaming	Machine-to-Machine communications and permanent roaming	29

Table 3: Data collection exercises organised by the BEREC Office for the BEREC Working Groups (WGs) in 2023

WG	Data collection subject	Addressees
Open Internet WG	Questionnaire on obtaining detailed information on existing IP interconnections between the actors in the internet ecosystem	BEREC member and observer NRAs
Regulatory Framework WG	BEREC Report on the authorisation and related framework for international connectivity infrastructures (Part I)	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	BEREC Report on the authorisation and related framework for international connectivity infrastructures (Part II)	BEREC member and observer NRAs, and other competent authorities
	BEREC Report on the authorisation and related framework for international connectivity infrastructures (Part I, second questionnaire)	BEREC member and observer NRAs
Roaming WG	Questionnaire for Intra-EU Communications BEREC benchmark data report	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	BEREC Analysis - Monitoring of measures in relation to the war in Ukraine	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Questionnaire for the BEREC Transparency and Comparability report	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Questionnaire for BEREC Call for Input: M2M and (permanent) roaming	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Questionnaire for the BEREC report on the evolution of roaming prices and volumes for the Western Balkan region (published as annex to BMK)	BEREC member and observer NRAs
Digital Markets WG	Questionnaire in the context of “BEREC Report on the entry of large content and application providers into the markets for electronic communications networks and services”	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Complementary (second) survey on the large content and application providers (CAPs) Questionnaire	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Gathering of data on the evolution of call minutes (fixed and mobile) to support the CAPs report	BEREC member and observer NRAs

WG	Data collection subject	Addressees
End Users WG	EC future of the connectivity survey	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Survey on BEREC Guidelines detailing Quality of Service (QoS) parameters, for Draft Scoping Document and Draft Questionnaire.	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Survey on BEREC Questionnaire to NRAs on adequate Broadband IAS.	BEREC member and observer NRAs, operators
Market and Economic Analysis WG	Gathering of data on WACC used for main pricing decisions on market 1	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Gathering of structural data	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	Data collection on Regulatory Accounting in Practice	BEREC member and observer NRAs
Cybersecurity 5GN WG	BEREC survey on Resilience of European electronic communication networks and services	BEREC member and observer NRAs
Wireless Network Evolution WG	The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) with whom BEREC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding, approached our organization to seek experience sharing in the field of data communication services between aircraft and ground stations using spectrum in Very High Frequency (VHF) spectrum band.	BEREC member and observer NRAs
	2G and 3G phase out questionnaire circulated among the NRAs to inform the BEREC phase out 2g and 3g report	BEREC member and observer NRAs
Planning and Future Trends WG	Survey for BEREC Report on Cloud and edge computing service	BEREC member and observer NRAs

Table 4: BEREC events by type supported by the BEREC Office in 2023 under activities 2.2 and 2.5 of the BEREC Office WP 2023

Type of event	Number of events supported	Number of experts reimbursed	Number of late payments	Additional comments
1. Plenary meetings of the BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR) and high level workshops	5	124	1	Including the organisation of one extraordinary BoR meeting
2. Contact Network (CN) meetings	6	116	0	Including the organisation of two extraordinary BEREC CN meetings
3. Meetings with the EP or presentations at meetings organised by the Parliamentary committees	3	4	0	
4. Meetings and workshops with other EU bodies	12	7	0	
5. Public debriefings and engagement with BEREC stakeholders	5	47	0	Including the 11 th BEREC Stakeholder Forum
6. International events	7	12	0	
7. Events attended by the BEREC Chair and/or Vice-Chairs on behalf of BEREC and meetings between the Chair and Vice-Chairs	45	26	0	
Total	83	336	1	

Table 5: Overview of the 2023 ordinary and extraordinary plenary meetings of the BEREC Board of Regulators (BoR) and the BEREC Office Management Board (MB), BEREC Contact Network (CN) meetings, meetings of the BEREC Office Advisory Group (BAG), high-level events with stakeholders and public debriefings

Date and place	Event	Agenda (if applicable)	Conclusions (if applicable)
9 February 2023, virtual meeting	1 st BAG meeting in 2023	n/a	n/a
16-17 February 2023, virtual meeting	1 st CN meeting in 2023	BEREC CN (23) 01	BEREC CN (23) 41
9-10 March 2023, virtual meeting	54 th BoR ordinary plenary meeting	BoR (23) 21	BoR (23) 55
9-10 March 2023, virtual meeting	54 th MB ordinary plenary meeting	MB (23) 13	MB (23) 34
15 March 2023, virtual meeting	Public debriefing on the outcomes of the 54 th BEREC plenary meetings	n/a	n/a
30 March 2023, Brussels, Belgium	BEREC Stakeholder Forum	n/a	n/a
20 April 2023, virtual meeting	Extraordinary CN meeting 2023	BEREC CN (23) 42	BEREC CN (23) 93
27 April 2023, virtual meeting	Extraordinary CN meeting 2023	BEREC CN (23) 44	BEREC (23) 95
8 May 2023, virtual meeting	2 nd BAG meeting in 2023	n/a	n/a
9 May 2023, virtual meeting	Extraordinary BoR plenary meeting 2023	BoR (23) 72	BoR (23) 129
11-12 May 2022, hybrid meeting in Paris, France	2 nd CN meeting in 2023	BEREC CN (23) 48	BEREC CN (23) 97
8-9 June 2023, hybrid meeting in Budva, Montenegro	55 th BoR ordinary plenary meeting	BoR (23) 85	BoR (23) 139

Date and place	Event	Agenda (if applicable)	Conclusions (if applicable)
8-9 June 2023, hybrid meeting in Budva, Montenegro	55 th MB ordinary plenary meeting	MB (23) 38	MB (23) 63
14 June 2023, Brussels, Belgium	Public debriefing on the outcomes of the 55 th BEREC plenary meetings	n/a	n/a
7 September 2023, virtual meeting	3 rd BAG meeting in 2023	n/a	n/a
14-15 September 2023, hybrid meeting in Barcelona, Spain	3 rd CN meeting in 2023	BEREC CN (23) 98	BEREC CN (23) 129
4 October 2023, hybrid meeting in Madeira, Portugal	Four-lateral BEREC, EaPeReg, REGULATEL and EMERG Summit	n/a	n/a
5-6 October 2023, hybrid meeting in Madeira, Portugal	56 th BoR ordinary plenary meeting	BoR (23) 160	BoR (23) 182
5-6 October 2023, hybrid meeting in Madeira, Portugal	56 th MB ordinary plenary meeting	MB (23) 76	MB (23) 87
11 October 2023, Brussels, Belgium	Public debriefing on the outcomes of the 55 th BEREC plenary meetings	n/a	n/a
10 November 2023, virtual meeting	4 th BAG meeting in 2023	n/a	n/a
16-17 November, hybrid meeting in Cluj-Napoca, Romania	4 th CN meeting in 2023	BEREC CN (23) 169	BEREC CN (23) 172
7-8 December 2023, hybrid meeting in Warsaw, Poland	57 th BoR ordinary plenary meeting	BoR (23) 194	BoR (23) 217

Date and place	Event	Agenda (if applicable)	Conclusions (if applicable)
7-8 December 2023, hybrid meeting in Warsaw, Poland	57 th MB ordinary plenary meeting	MB (23) 91	MB (23) 105
13 December 2023, Brussels, Belgium	Public debriefing on the outcomes of the 57 th BEREC plenary meetings	n/a	n/a

Table 6: Overview of data uploaded on the Information Sharing Portal

By the end of 2023, 32 national regulatory authorities (NRAs) uploaded 905 links to documents. The materials, most frequently uploaded by the NRAs, were statistics and publications (42.2%), followed by consultation (21%).

#	Category	Active
1	Decision	172
2	Consultation	190
3	News/other	136
4	Analysis	23
5	Statistics/statistical reports/publications	382
6	CIRCA	1
7	EFIS	1
	TOTAL ACTIVE:	905

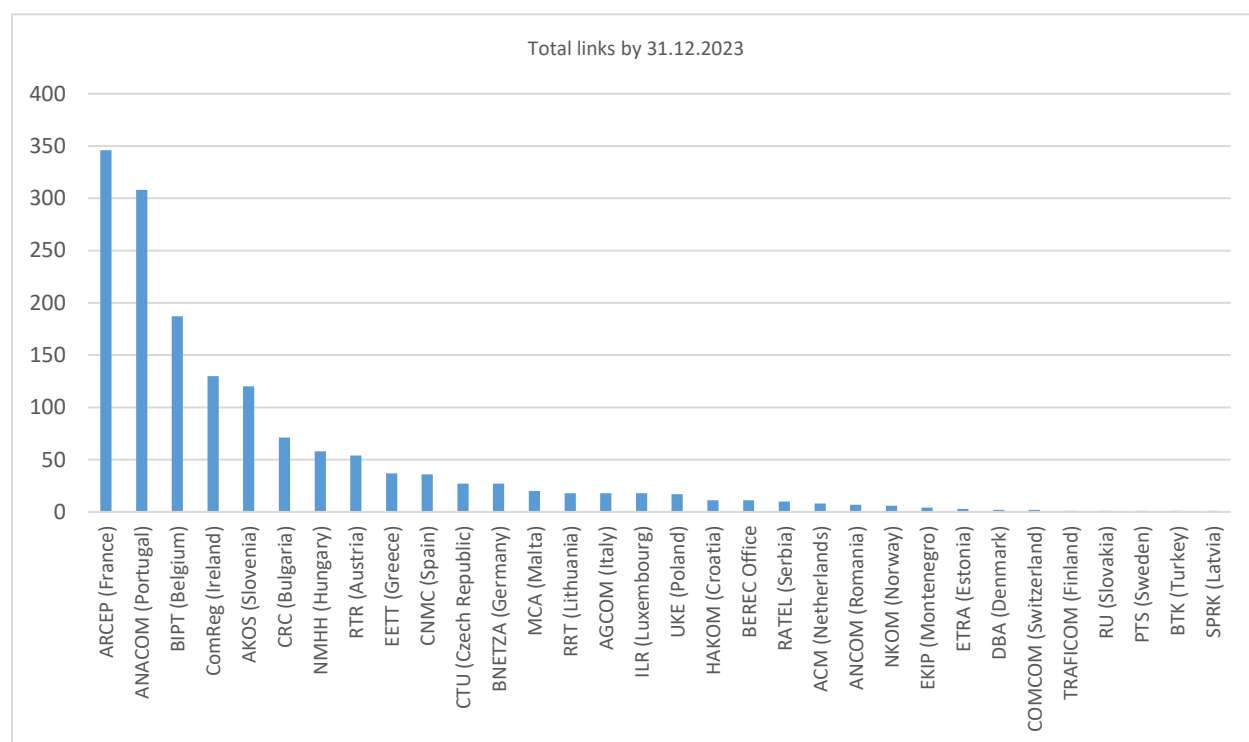
Table 6: Number of uploaded links per section of the ISP in 2023**Figure 4: Links uploaded on ISP by NRAs, 2023**

Figure 5 below shows the map of the IS Portal total visitors per visitors location and the action duration. The biggest interest of visitors derives from the United States (from the world wide perspective) and the United Kingdom (from Europa's perspective).

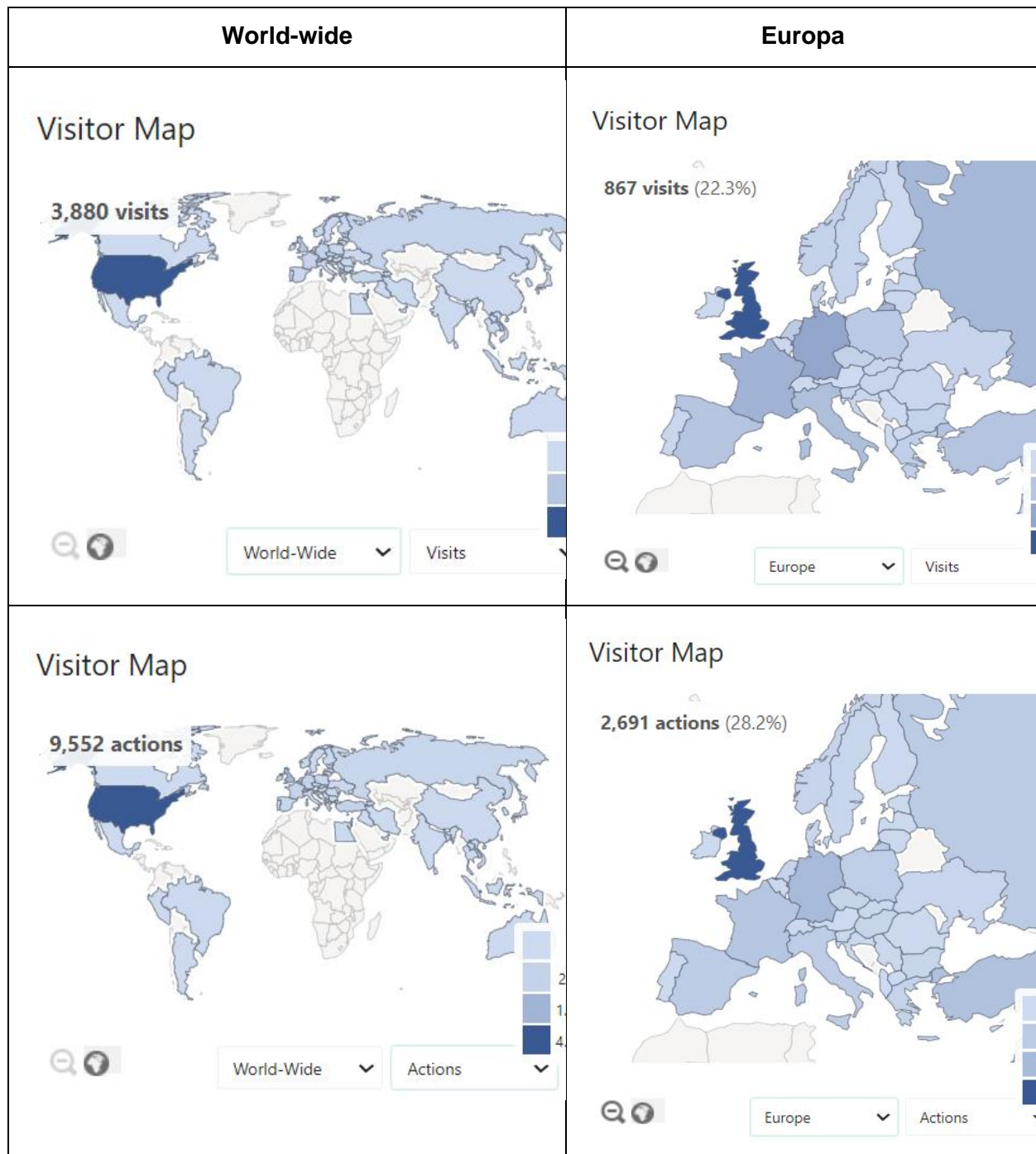


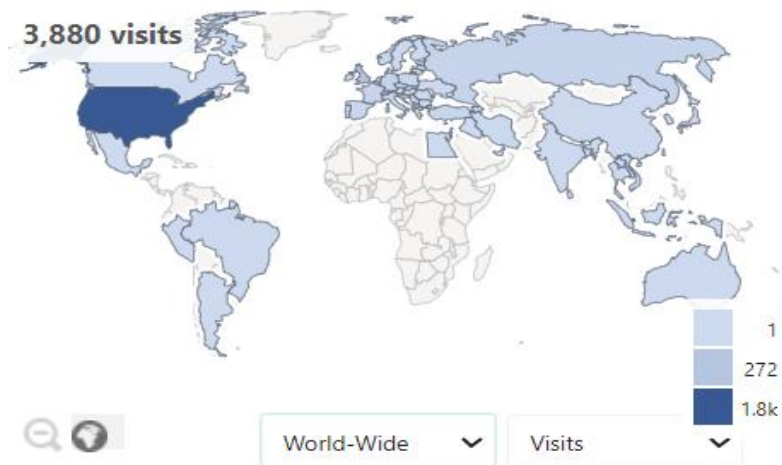
Figure 5: IS Portal Visitors maps (World-wide&Europa) in 2023

Table 7: Top 10 most viewed documents on the Information sharing portal (ISP)

No	PAGE URL	NRA (Country) /launch date	Unique Page views
	- view-doc		2158
1	/pricing-of-wholesale-services-in-the-wholesale-local-access-wla-market-and-in-the-wholesale-central-	ComReg (IE)/ 2017	57
2	/the-national-telephone-numbering-plan	RRT (LT)/ 2005	44
3	/review-of-universal-service-obligations-on-electronic-communication-services-consultation-and-propos	MCA (MT)/ 2020	42
4	/circa	n/a	37
5	/Consultation paper on the current regulatory framework	NMHH (HU)/ 2015	34
6	/monitoring-of-digital-communications-platforms-and-gatekeepers-of-the-open-internet	RTR (AT)/ 2020	34
7	/extension-of-the-time-limit-to-respond-to-the-public-consultation-on-the-analysis-of-the-markets-for	ANACOM (PT)/ 2016	33
8	/numbering-plan	HAKOM (HR)/ 2022	29
9	/SMP decisions	TRAFICOM (FI)/ 2015	25
10	/broadband-as-a-universal-service-ensuring-the-availability-of-an-adequate-broadband-internet-access-	MCA (MT)/ 2020	25

Figure 6 below indicates the numbers of visits per Top 20 countries. It is evident that the IS Portal attracts visitors from different world locations who read the links uploaded to the IS Portal.

Visitor Map



Label	Visits
United States	1845
Unknown	970
United Kingdom	272
Germany	105
France	77
Russia	67
Italy	53
Turkey	43
Spain	41
Poland	31
Netherlands	29
South Korea	29
Greece	22
Czechia	19
China	16
Brazil	15
Japan	15
Norway	15
Bulgaria	13
Slovenia	12

Figure 6: Visits to ISP by country (top 20)

Table 8: BEREC working group deliverables, prepared with the support of the BEREC Office in 2023

No	Document No	Documents on BEREC website
1	BoR (23) 22	BEREC Report on Comparison Tools and Accreditation
2	BoR (23) 23	BEREC Report on the outcome of the public consultation on the BEREC Report on Comparison Tools and Accreditation
3	BoR (23) 24	Revision of Procedures for the BEREC databases of numbering ranges for value-added services and means of access to emergency services for roaming users
4	BoR (23) 25	Summary Report on the BEREC – BEUC Joint Workshop on the application of rights of end-users in the EECC
5	BoR (23) 41	Study on wholesale mobile connectivity, trends and issues for emerging mobile technologies and deployments
6	BoR (23) 42	Draft BEREC Guidelines on Very High Capacity Networks
7	BoR (23) 44	BEREC Opinion on the Review of the Intra-EU Communications Regulation
8	BoR (23) 48	BEREC Action Plan for 2030
9	BoR (23) 49	BEREC Opinion on Phase II investigation pursuant to Article 32 of Directive (EU) 2018/1972 - Case CZ/2022/2421 Wholesale access and call origination on public mobile telephone networks in the Czech Republic
10	BoR (23) 50	BEREC's feedback to the European Commission's draft implementing decision setting out key performance indicators for the Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030
11	BoR (23) 61	29th BEREC International Roaming Benchmark Data and Monitoring Report
12	BoR (23) 63	BEREC Opinion on the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/2286 on Fair Use Policy and the Sustainability mechanism
13	BoR (23) 83	BEREC Opinion on the draft Gigabit Recommendation

No	Document No	Documents on BEREC website
14	BoR (23) 86	BEREC Report on the outcome of the public consultation on the draft BEREC Report on competition amongst multiple operators of NGA networks in the same geographical region
15	BoR (23) 87	BEREC Report on competition amongst multiple operators of NGA-networks in the same geographical region
16	BoR (23) 88	BoR (23) 88 BEREC Report on the PC outcome on business services_1.pdf
17	BoR (23) 89	BoR (23) 89 BEREC Report on the regulatory treatment of business services_0.pdf
18	BoR (23) 90	BEREC Report on WACC parameter calculations according to the European Commission's WACC Notice of 6th November 2019 (WACC parameters Report 2023)
19	BoR (23) 91	BEREC Report on the outcome of the Public consultation on the Draft BEREC report on interoperability of NI-ICS
20	BoR (23) 92	BEREC report on interoperability of Number-Independent Interpersonal Communication Services (NI-ICS)
21	BoR (23) 93	BEREC Report on the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions in the telecommunications sector on regulation
22	BoR (23) 94	BEREC Report on the outcome of the Public consultation on the draft BEREC Report on challenges and benefits of impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions in the telecommunications sector (including use cases)
23	BoR (23) 109	BEREC Annual Report 2022
24	BoR (23) 111	Draft BEREC Report on practices and challenges of the phasing out of 2G and 3G
25	BoR (23) 112	Summary report: BEREC workshop on secure and reliable connectivity from LEO satellite fleets, 13 April 2023
26	BoR (23) 114	BEREC input to the European Commission on the functioning of BEREC and the BEREC Office in view of the evaluation under Article 48 of the BEREC Regulation
27	BoR (23) 117	BEREC Report on the Data Act Workshop (Workshop on Switching and Interoperability of Data Processing Services

No	Document No	Documents on BEREC website
28	BoR (23) 119	BEREC Analysis Monitoring of the Joint Statement agreed between Ukraine and EU Operators
29	BoR (23) 120	BEREC Analysis of the European Commission legislative proposal for a Gigabit Infrastructure Act
30	BoR (23) 131	BEREC input to the EC's exploratory consultation on the future of the electronics communications sector and its infrastructure
31	BoR (23) 161	Press release - BEREC facilitates agreement on retail price caps among operators to reduce roaming charges when travelling between the European Union and Moldova
32	BoR (23) 162	BEREC Report on the implementation of the Open Internet Regulation
33	BoR (23) 163	BEREC Report on the outcome of the public consultation regarding the draft BEREC Guidelines on Very High Capacity Networks
34	BoR (23) 164	BEREC Guidelines on Very High Capacity Networks (2023)
35	BoR (23) 165	BEREC Report on the outcome of the public consultation on the Draft BEREC Report on Sustainability Indicators for Electronic Communications Networks and Services
36	BoR (23) 166	BEREC Report on Sustainability Indicators for Electronic Communications Networks and Services
37	BoR (23) 167	4th Intra-EU communications BEREC Benchmark Report (April 2022 – March 2023)
38	BoR (23) 177	Workshop Report - Study on the evolution of the competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies not directly providing retail services Draft BEREC Workshop summary report on study on evaluation of infrastructure companies
39	BoR (23) 178	Draft BEREC Report on Member States' best practices to support the defining of adequate broadband internet access service
40	BoR (23) 179	Draft BEREC Guidelines detailing Quality of Service Parameters
41	BoR (23) 180	BEREC Report Secure 5G networks

No	Document No	Documents on BEREC website
42	BoR (23) 196	BEREC Report Regulatory Accounting in Practice 2023
43	BoR (23) 203	Summary report on the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Report on practices and challenges of the phasing out of 2G and 3G
44	BoR (23) 204	BEREC report on 2G/3G phaseout practices and challenges
45	BoR (23) 205	Summary report on the outcome of a BEREC internal workshop on the migration to very high capacity networks and copper switch-off with a focus on the needs of the end-users
46	BoR (23) 206	External study on the evolution of the competition dynamics of tower and access infrastructure companies not directly providing retail services
47	BoR (23) 207	Draft BEREC Report on empowering end-users through environmental transparency on digital products
48	BoR (23) 208	External study on the trends and cloudification, virtualization, and softwarization in telecommunications
49	BoR (23) 209	Summary report on the outcomes of the public consultation on the draft BEREC Work Programme 2024
50	BoR (23) 209	Summary report on the outcomes of the public consultation on the draft BEREC Work Programme 2024
51	BoR (23) 213	BEREC Report on the Current Cybersecurity Challenges and Dependencies in Electronic Communication Networks
52	BoR (23) 214	Draft BEREC Report on the general authorization and related frameworks for international submarine connectivity

Table 9: Register of applications for access to BEREC/BEREC Office documents, 2023

No	Receipt of the initial application (date)	Type of document		Receipt of the confirmatory application, if applicable (date)	Decision taken (full disclosure, partial disclosure, refusal)	Reason(s) for refusal, if applicable
		BEREC document	BEREC Office document			
1	19/01/2023		x	n/a	Partial access	Article 4(1) point (b) of Regulation (EC) 1049/2001, Article 4(2), first indent of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001
2	18/04/2023	x		n/a	Full access	n/a
3	03/08/2023		x	n/a	Devoid of purpose	n/a
4	27/11/2023	x		n/a	Partial access	Article 4(1)b of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001

Annex II: Statistics on financial management

Table 1: Revenue — appropriations

Revenues in EUR	Budget 2023	Corrigendum	New Appropriations 2023
1. Revenue from fees and charges		N/A – No correction to initial budget in the course of the year	N/A – No correction to the appropriations in the course of the year
2. EU Subsidy	7,697,264.87		
2.a. of which “fresh” contributions in year 2021			
2.b. of which assigned revenues deriving from previous year 2020 surplus			
3. Third countries contribution (incl. EFTA and candidate countries)	134,666.00		
4. Other contributions ⁶⁴	0		
5. Administrative operations	15,664.59		
Of which interest generated by funds paid by the Commission by way of the EU contribution (FFR Art. 58)	0		
6. Revenues from services rendered against payment	0		
7. Correction of budgetary imbalances	0		
Total revenues	7,847,595.46		

⁶⁴ Estimated voluntary contributions from Member States or from their NRAs. These contributions shall be used to finance specific items of operational expenditure as defined in an agreement to be concluded between the Office and the Member States of their NRAs.

Table 2: Budgetary transfer 2023

BL No	Budget Line (BL) Description	VOTED BUDGET	Transfer No. 1 - July 2023	Transfer No. 2 - November 2023	Transfer No. 3 - December 2023	BUDGET WITH TRANSFERS
1	STAFF EXPENDITURE	4,604,573.00	67,042.00	-35,117.71	-77,940.42	4,558,556.87
1100	Temporary agents' salaries	2,168,678.00	-44,332.00	-68,366.38	-52,532.19	2,003,447.43
1111	Contract staff and SNEs	1,844,304.00	-71,832.00	-10,000.00	-13,051.92	1,749,420.08
1200	Recruitment expenses	10,000.00	0.00	1,790.46	-920.92	10,869.54
1300	Mission expenses, duty travel and other ancillary expenditure	100,500.00	0.00	0.00	-10,050.00	90,450.00
1400	Medical service	17,000.00	-10,000.00	-1,498.00	0.00	5,502.00
1500	Training	45,000.00		-4,634.00	-6,499.03	33,866.97
1600	External services	417,091.00	193,206.00	47,590.21	0.00	657,887.21
1700	Representation, receptions and events, and miscellaneous staff expenses	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,113.64	7,113.64
2	BUILDINGS, EQUIPMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS OPERATING EXPENDITURE	1,698,345.95	-11,000.00	35,117.71	-38,825.98	1,683,637.68
2000	Rental of buildings	244,923.00	0.00	0.00	-2,538.20	242,384.80
2100	Data processing and telecommunications	1,129,832.95	-6,500.00	0.00	-32,266.67	1,091,066.28
2200	Movable property and associated costs	38,800.00	0.00	-11,000.00	-2,730.35	25,069.65
2300	Legal and other operational expenditure	236,790.00	0.00	77,972.71	-990.76	313,771.95
2400	Non-operational media and public relations	45,000.00	-4,500.00	-31,855.00	0.00	8,645.00
2500	Non-operational meetings	3,000.00	0.00	0.00	-300.00	2,700.00
3	OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE IN SUPPORT OF BEREK	1,394,345.92	-56,042.00	0	116,766.40	1,455,070.32
3001	BEREC programme management support	418,600.00	-25,811.32	0.00	-30,189.95	362,598.73
3101	Operation and strategic support to BEREK and NRAs	975,745.92	-30,230.68	0.00	146,956.35	1,092,471.59
	TOTAL BUDGET	7,697,264.87				7,697,264.87

Table 3: Expenditure C1**A. TITLE 1 – STAFF EXPENDITURE**

Official Budget Item	Budget Item Description	Sources Available	Commitment Accepted, EUR	% Committed	Payment Accepted, EUR	% Payment
A-1100	Temporary agents` salaries and allowances	2,003,447.43	2,003,447.43	100.00%	2,003,447.43	100.00%
A-1111	Contract staff and seconded national experts	1,749,420.08	1,749,420.08	100.00%	1,749,420.08	100.00%
A-1200	Recruitment expenses	10,869.54	10,869.54	100.00%	4,219.54	38.82%
A-1300	Mission expenses, duty travel and other ancillary expenses	90,450.00	90,450.00	100.00%	68,485.83	75.72%
A-1400	Medical service	5,502.00	5,502.00	100.00%	5,502.00	100.00%
A-1500	Training	33,866.97	33,801.97	99.81%	20,102.62	59.36%
A-1600	External services	657,887.21	657,785.21	99.98%	548,820.02	83.42%
A-1700	Representation and miscellaneous staff costs	7,113.64	7,092.72	99.71%	7,092.72	99.71%
TOTAL TITLE 1		4,558,556.87	4,558,368.95	100.00%	4,407,090.24	96.68%

B. TITLE 2 - BUILDINGS, EQUIPMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS OPERATING EXPENDITURE

Official Budget Item	Budget Item Description	Sources Available	Commitment Accepted, EUR	% Committed	Payment Accepted, EUR	% Payment
A-2000	Rental of buildings	242,384.80	242,384.80	100.00%	218,374.83	90.09%
A-2100	Information and Communication Technology and Security	1,091,066.28	1,090,698.59	99.97%	929,906.48	85.23%
A-2200	Movable property and logistic services	25,069.65	25,069.53	100.00%	24,981.84	99.65%
A-2300	Legal and other operational expenditure	313,771.95	313,771.95	100.00%	219,925.71	70.09%
A-2400	Non-operational media and public relations	8,645.00	8,598.33	99.46%	8,395.00	97.11%
A-2500	Non-operational meetings	2,700.00	292.30	10.83%	292.30	10.83%
TOTAL TITLE 2		1,683,637.68	1,680,815.50	99.83%	1,401,876.16	83.26%

C. TITLE 3 - OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE IN SUPPORT OF BEREC

Official Budget Item	Budget Item Description	Sources Available	Commitment Accepted, EUR	% Committed	Payment Accepted, EUR	% Payment
B 3001	Support to the BEREC WGs	362,598.73	362,598.73	100.00%	236,611.64	65.25%
B 3101	Other support activities to BEREC and NRAs	1,092,471.59	1,092,263.49	99.98%	743,131.61	68.02%
TOTAL TITLE 3		1,455,070.32	1,454,862.22	99.99%	979,743.25	67.33%

D. TOTAL BUDGET EXECUTION

TOTAL TITLE 1-3		7,697,264.87	7,694,046.67	99.96%	6,788,709.65	88.20%
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Table 4: Expenditure C8 credits (C8/2023)

TITLE	Budget line	User reference	Carried over, EUR	Consumed, EUR	Cancelled, EUR	% Consumed
TITLE 1	A-1300	Mission expenses, duty travel expenses and other ancillary expenditure	24,085.42	20,983.37	3102.05	87.12%
	A-1500	Training	2,167.58	2,167.58	0.00	100.00%
	A-1600	External services	181,173.60	179,197.60	1976	98.91%
	TOTAL		207,426.60	202,348.55	5,078.05	97.55%
TITLE 2	A-2000	Rent of building and associated costs	70,114.56	70,114.56	0	100.00%
	A-2100	Information and communication technology and security	129,921.07	129,274.41	646.66	99.50%
	A-2200	Movable property and logistic services	4,983.11	4,954.51	28.6	99.43%
	A-2300	Legal and other operating services	16,185.00	16,185.00	0	100.00%
	A-2400	Non-operational media and public relations	12,006.78	11,998.57	8.21	99.93%
	TOTAL		233,210.52	232,527.05	683.47	99.71%
TITLE 3	B-3001	BEREC Programme Management Support	180,977.55	180,159.23	818.32	99.55%
	B-3101	Operation and strategic support to BEREC	660,634.05	653,396.21	7,237.84	98.90%
	TOTAL		841,611.60	833,555.44	8,056.16	99.04%
TOTAL C8:			1,282,248.72	1,268,431.04	13,817.68	98.92%

Table 5: Expenditure C4 and C5 credits (C4; C5; R0/2023)

Fund source	Budget line	User reference	Appropriations Available	Committed	% Committed	Payment Accepted, EUR	% Payment	Amounts carried over to 2024
C4	A-1300	Mission expenses, duty travel expenses and other ancillary expenditure	249.00	0.00	N/A	0	N/A	249.00 ⁶⁵
C4	A-1600	External services	8,243.11	4,386.00	53.21%	4,386.00	53.21%	3,857.11
C4	A-2200	Movable property and logistic services	721.41	0.00	N/A	0	N/A	721.41
C4	A-2300	Legal and other operating services	6,700.07	6,700.07	100.00%	6,700.07	100.00%	0.00
C5	A-1600	External services	51,324.12	51,324.12	100.00%	51,324.12	100.00%	0.00
R0	A-1600	External services	134,666.00	63,780.46	47.36%	63,780.46	47.36%	70,885.54
TOTAL C4,C5, R0			201,903.71	126,190.65	62.50%	126,190.65	62.50%	75,713.06

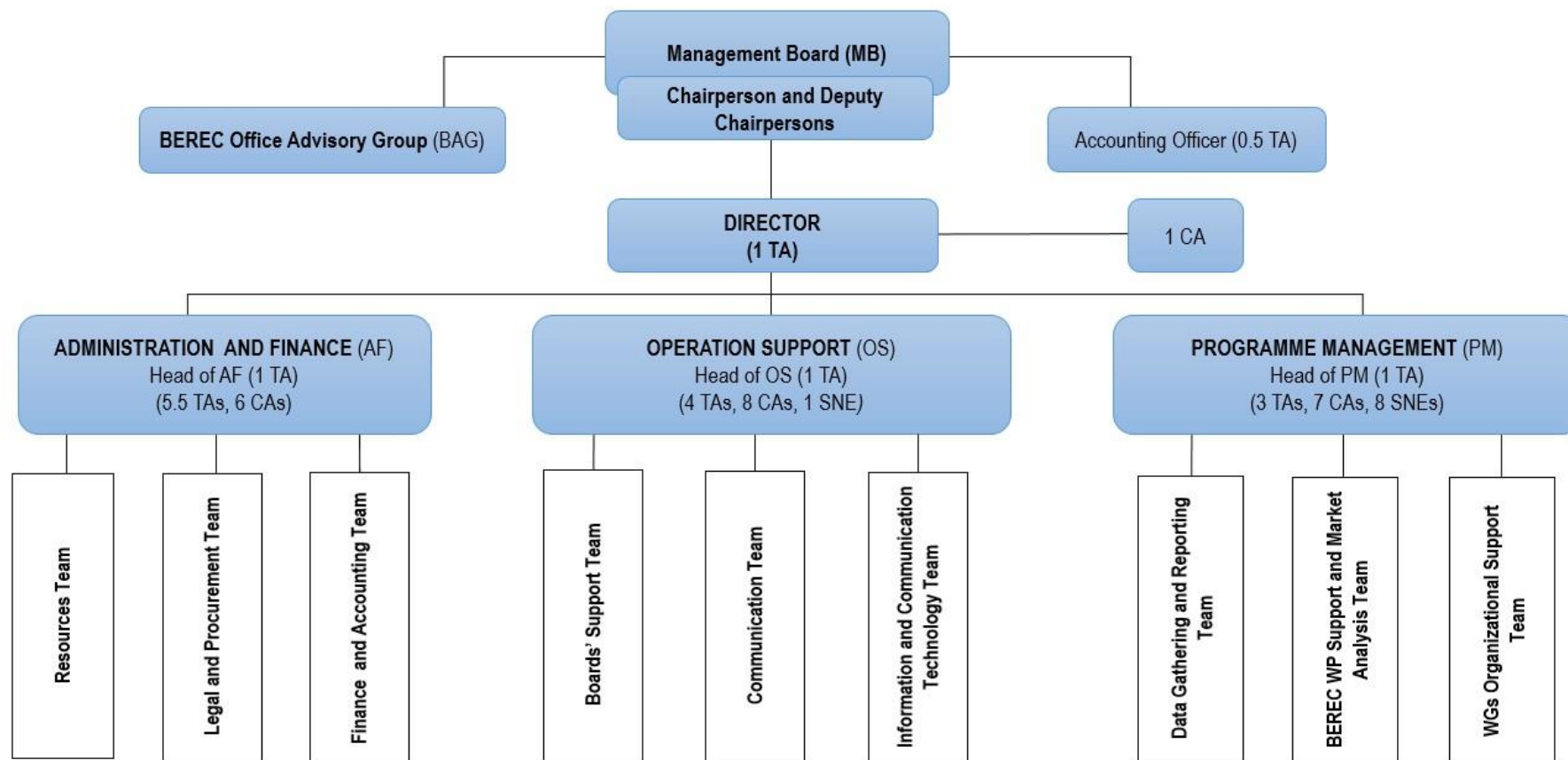
⁶⁵ 249.00 EUR is C4 credits, which shall be regularised/cleared against non-budgetary account in 2024.

Table 6: Payment times 2023

Legal Times									
Maximum Payment Time (Days)	Total Nbr of Payments	Nbr of Payments within Time Limit	Percentage	Average Payment Times (Days)	Nbr of Late Payments	Percentage	Average Payment Times (Days)	Late Payments Amount	Percentage
12	1				1	100.00 %	14	2,000	100.00. %
29	2	2	100 %	15				0	
30	926	912	98 %	12	14	1.51 %	34	60,753	1.51. %
35	4	4	100 %	14				0	
42	2	2	100 %	10				0	
44	1	1	100 %	11				0	
45	12	12	100 %	14				0	
46	1	1	100 %	21				0	
60	7	7	100 %	14				0	
Total Number of Payments	956	941	98.43 %		15	1.57 %		62,753	
Average Net Payment Time	13			12			33		
Average Gross Payment Time	13			13			38		

No late interest was paid by the BEREK Office in 2023

Annex III: Organisational chart of the BEREC Office



Abbreviations:

TA – temporary agent

CA – contract agent

SNE – seconded national expert

Annex IV: Establishment plan

Table 1: Information about authorised and filled posts in 2021-2023

Temporary agents						
Function group and grade	2021		2022		2023	
	Authorised under the EU budget	Filled as of 31.12.2021	Authorised under the EU budget	Filled as of 31.12.2022	Authorised under the EU budget	Filled as of 31.12.2023
AD 16						
AD 15						
AD 14	1	1	1	1	1	1
AD 13						
AD 12					1	
AD 11	1	1	1	1	1	2
AD 10	2	1	2	1	2	1
AD 9	2	3	3	3	3	2
AD 8	2		2		2	
AD 7	2		1	3	3	5
AD 6	2	5	2	3	1	2
AD 5	1	1	1	1		1
Total grade AD	13	12	13	13	14	14
AST 11						
AST 10						
AST 9						
AST 8						
AST 7			1		1	
AST 6	2		1	1	1	1
AST 5	1	1	1	1	1	
AST 4		2				

Temporary agents						
Function group and grade	2021		2022		2023	
	Authorised under the EU budget	Filled as of 31.12.2021	Authorised under the EU budget	Filled as of 31.12.2022	Authorised under the EU budget	Filled as of 31.12.2023
AST 3				1		2 ⁶⁶
AST 2						
AST 1						
Total grade AST	3	3	3	3	3	3
AST/SC6						
AST/SC 5						
AST/SC 4						
AST/SC 3						
AST/SC 2						
AST/SC 1						
Total grade AST/SC						
GRAND TOTAL	16	15	16	16	17	17

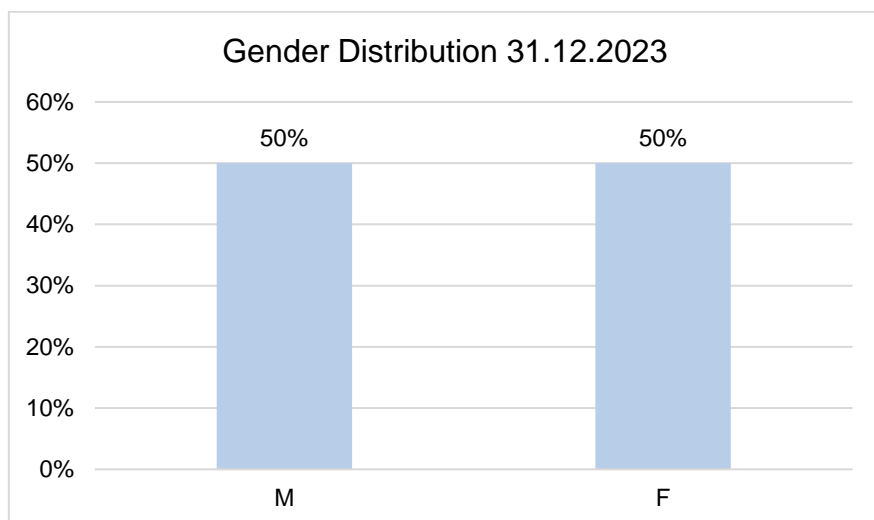
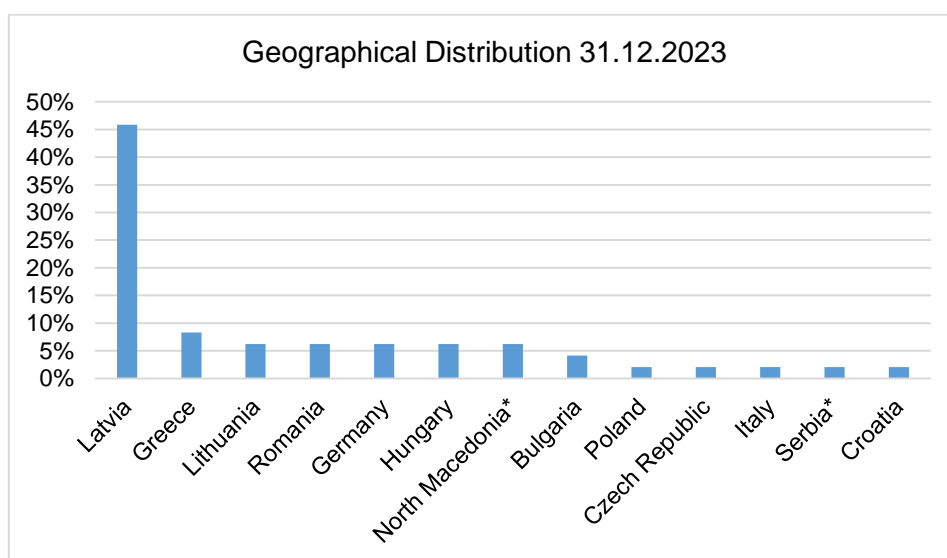
⁶⁶ Incl. 1 job offer sent and accepted

Table 2: Information on the entry level for each type of post: indicative table:

Key functions	Type of contract (official, TA or CA)	Function group, grade of recruitment ⁶⁷	Indication whether the function is dedicated to administration support or operations
CORE FUNCTIONS			
Director (Level 1)	TA	AD 14	TOP COORD — FIN/CONT
Head of Unit — Administration and Finance (Level 2)	TA	AD 9	RES DIR/HoA — FIN/CONT
Head of Unit — Programme Management (Level 2)	TA	AD 9	TOP COORD
Head of Unit — Operation Support (Level 2)	TA	AD 9	TOP COORD
Senior Officer — Senior Programme Manager, Team Leader (Level 3)	TA	AD 7	GEN OPER
Senior Officer — Accounting Officer, Team Leader (Level 3)	TA	AD7	FIN/CONT
Senior Officer — Legal and Data Protection Officer (Level 3)	TA	AD 7	LEGAL — GEN OPER
Administrator — Team Leader Resources (Level 3)	TA	AD 6	HR
Administrator — Team Leader, Legal and Procurement (Level 3)	TA	AD 6	FIN/CONT — PGM M/IMPL
Administrator — Team Leader, ICT (Level 3)	TA	AD 6	PGM M/IMPL
Administrator — Team Leader, Boards' Support, Document Management Officer (Level 3)	TA	AD 6	GEN OPER — TOP COORD
Administrator — Team Leader Communications (Level 3)	TA	AD6	PGM M/IMPL
Officer — Local Security Officer (Level 3)	TA	AD 5	LOG - ICT
SNE — Programme Manager (Level 3)	SNE	SNE	PGM M/IMPL
SNE — Boards' Support Officer (Level 3)	SNE	SNE	GEN OPER

⁶⁷ Entry level for external selection

Officer — Advisor/Assistant to Director (Level 2 - reporting directly to level 1)	CA	FGIV	GEN OPER- T/OP COORD
Officer — Data Analyst (Level 3)	CA	FGIV	PGM M/IMPL
Officer — Communication Officer (Level 3)	CA	FG IV	PGM M/IMPL
Officer — ICT Officer (Level 3)	CA	FGIV	ICT — PGM M/IMPL
Officer — Support Officer in Programme Management Unit (Level 3)	CA	FG IV	PGM M/IMPL
Officer — Administrative Support Officer in Programme Management Unit (Level 3)	CA	FG IV	PGM M/IMPL
Officer — Finance and Procurement Officer (Level 3)	CA	FG IV	FIN/CONT — PGM
Officer — HR Officer (Level 3)	CA	FG IV	HR - FIN/CONT
Officer — Budget and Reporting Officer (level 3)	CA	FG IV	FIN/CONT
Assistant — Programme Management Assistant (Level 3)	TA	AST 3	PGM M/IMPL
Assistant — Budget and Finance Assistant, Mission Officer (Level 3)	TA	AST 3	FIN/CONT
Assistant — Finance and Accounting Assistant (Level 3)	TA	AST 3	FIN/CONT
Assistant — Communications Assistant (Level 3)	CA	FGIII	PGM M/IMPL
Assistant — ICT Assistant (Level 3)	CA	FG III	ICT — PGM M/IMP
Assistant — ICT infrastructure specialist (Level 3)	CA	FG III	ICT — PGM M/IMP
Assistant — HR Assistant (Level 3)	CA	FG III	HR
Assistant — Facilities Assistant (Level 3)	CA	FG III	LOG - FIN/CONT
Assistant — Financial Assistant (Level 3)	CA	FG II	– FIN/CONT
Assistant — Boards' Support Assistant (Level 3)	CA	FG II	GEN OPER
Assistant — Event Management and Administrative Assistant (Level 3)	CA	FG II	PGM M/IMPL
Assistant — ICT Support Agent (Level 3)	CA	FG II	ICT — PGM M/IMPL

Table 3: Information on the gender distribution of staff**Table 4: Information on the geographical distribution of staff**

* Western Balkan country, whose NRA has signed working arrangement with the BEREC Office pursuant to Article 35 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1971

Table 5: Benchmarking against previous year's results

Job type (sub)category	2021 (%)	2022 (%) ⁶⁸	2023 ⁶⁹ (%)
Administrative support and coordination	10.63	10.63	10.42
Administrative support	9.57	9.57	9.38
Coordination	1.06	1.06	1.04
Operational	73.41	73.41	71.87
Top-level operational coordination	7.45	7.45	7.29
Programme management and implementation	48.94	48.94	46.88
Evaluation and impact assessment	0	0	0
General operational	17.02	17.02	17.71
Neutral	15.96	15.96	17.71
Finance/control	15.96	15.96	17.71
Linguistics	0	0	0

⁶⁸ The data take into account the redistribution of tasks and the reorganisation of work implemented in 2020

⁶⁹ The data takes into account the new Organizational Chart which entered into force on 1 September 2023 as well as the new job profile as Data Analyst.

Table 7: Flexitime recuperation days taken per grade

Function Group and grade	Flexitime recuperation (days)
Contract Agents	73,5
FG IV	50,5
FG III	17
FG II	6
Temporary Agents	50,5
AD 9	3,5
AD 7	22,5
AD 6	17,5
AD 5	1,5
AST 6	1,5
AST 5	1,5
AST 3	2,5
Total (CAs & TAs)	124

Table 8: Implementation of the Multiannual plan for access to measures of social nature in 2023

No	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACTORS	Budget forecast EUR ⁷⁰	Budget Spent in 2023 EUR	Report for 2023 (short overview of the implementation)
1	Use best practices for social measures implemented by the European Commission (EC) (including by analogy, where feasible) or by other EU bodies	Administration and Finance Unit, in close cooperation with the Staff Committee	40,000	0 ⁷¹	The BEREC Office applies the best practices implemented by the EC or by other EU bodies. As a result, the BEREC Office staff members currently have the following entitlements: maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, financing kindergarten and nursery tuition for the dependent children of staff, assistance with the cost of home care and care for sick children, flexi-time work arrangements as well as legal services for staff on private matters.
2	Provide legal advice to statutory staff and SNE on private matters in areas governed by Latvian laws such as Civil law, Consumer law, Tax law, Real estate law, Administrative law, Labour law	Administration and Finance Unit	20,000	1,000.00	In 2023 the Agency's expenditure amounts to 1000 EUR for the provision of legal services to staff private matters in areas governed by Latvian laws such as Civil law, Consumer law, Tax law, Real estate law, Administrative law, Labour law. 11 out of 48 BEREC Office staff members benefited from the provision of legal advice on private matters in 2023.
3	Facilitate the application of more favourable conditions for commercial services in the market for the staff, including private health service providers	Liaison Office in cooperation with Administration and Finance Unit and the Staff Committee	No budgetary implication	N/A	The BEREC Office has received special offers from: - 5 medical centres, where the staff can undergo medical check-ups and receive other medical services; - 2 commercial banks, which facilitate bank account opening for staff and their family members; - 1 telecommunications company with discount for their services to the family members of the staff; - 1 catering company offering discount for lunch next door the office and couple of restaurants offering discounts from their regular menu, subject to availability.
4	Continue to support access to kindergartens and nurseries by undertaking the following steps:				

⁷⁰ Preliminary calculation for the whole period 2023-2027 on the basis of the current practices at the Commission

⁷¹ No requests for assistance with the costs of home care and care for dependent children were submitted during the course of 2023 and therefore no budget was used for this purpose

No	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACTORS	Budget forecast EUR ⁷⁰	Budget Spent in 2023 EUR	Report for 2023 (short overview of the implementation)
	a. support in registration with the Latvian authorities as per the requirements of the local legislation;	a. Liaison Office	No budgetary implication	N/A	<p>In relation to IAI/2023/02 BEREC Office schooling, the Liaison Office prepared and presented information on how to declare their place of residence in their municipalities and afterwards disseminated further guidelines to achieve the aim. In case of necessity, the guidelines were shared afterwards upon request. As declaration of residence is possible only after registration with Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA), during 2023, Liaison Office assisted five staff members and their children (10 children in total) with the sole purpose to declare their place of residence and consequently, to receive financial contributions to schooling from their municipalities. Three of the five staff member cases resulted successfully, the other two are still considered ongoing due to difficulties of registration for non-EU citizens in the local legislation. As regards registration with OCMA as a whole, the Liaison Office provided guidance in total of 14 cases within 2023. In addition, the Liaison Office facilitated the receipt of long-term stay visa from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 3 BEREC Office staff members and 5 members of their families (8 persons in total) for the year 2023.</p> <p>As in regards to children of kindergarten age, there was 1 staff member who requested assistance in registration at OCMA, and it resulted with 2 children being registered at OCMA and later at the Municipality.</p>
	b. support in obtaining the municipality grant;	b. Liaison Office	No budgetary implication	N/A	<p>During the course of 2023, all the staff members whose children have been enrolled in the kindergarten received the municipality grant, and no other help was requested other than registering at the OCMA.</p>

No	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACTORS	Budget forecast EUR ⁷⁰	Budget Spent in 2023 EUR	Report for 2023 (short overview of the implementation)
	c. to ensure equal treatment of all staff, provision of financial support by the BEREC Office for kindergartens and nurseries in the event of justified refusal of the Latvian authorities to pay the municipal grant for the children of BEREC Office staff; the amount of the financial contribution shall be corresponding to the amount to be paid for Latvian local authorities.	c. Administration and Finance Unit	7 500 ⁷²	0	In 2023, all the staff members whose children were enrolled in the kindergarten received the municipality grant/co-financing and therefore there were no requests from staff for contribution from the BEREC Office budget.
5	<p>Implement measures aimed at creating and maintaining a supportive and healthy work environment that enables staff members to have balance between work and personal responsibilities.</p> <p>The following work-private life balance possibilities will be therefore enhanced on the basis of the applicable rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hybrid working which includes teleworking from the place of employment and working from the office under flexi time arrangement as well as – teleworking from outside the place of employment - unpaid leave, maternity and paternity leave - special working arrangement for breastfeeding 	Administration and Finance Unit, in close cooperation with the line managers of staff and the Staff Committee, if and where needed	To be financed from the respective budget line for the specific type of expenditure within the available appropriations authorised by the MB.	6,185.06 ⁷³	<p>Following the adoption by analogy of the Commission Decision of 24.03.2022 on working time and hybrid working, the flexible working time arrangements have become the default working time arrangements at the BEREC Office.</p> <p>In 2023 the staff members used 3,513 days of telework from the place of employment (e.g. on average a staff member made use of 66 days of telework from the place of employment).</p> <p>The above-mentioned Decision allows also telework from outside the place of employment, an entitlement that did not exist previously. In 2023, 216 days of telework outside the place of employment have been granted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 173 days – telework outside place of employment; - 74 days – exceptional telework outside place of employment. <p>During the same period, the Agency's staff were granted a total of 124 days of flexitime recuperation.</p> <p>In 2023, none of the staff used unpaid leave and one staff member was granted paternity leave amounting to 4.5 days. 1 SNE benefited from maternity leave with no financial impact (no allowances were paid). In 2023 3 staff members benefited from parental leave, amounting to 5,145.06 EUR and 99</p>

⁷² Applicable only to point c

⁷³ Out of which EUR 1040 paid to the Medical service for consultation and occupational medicine

No	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACTORS	Budget forecast EUR ⁷⁰	Budget Spent in 2023 EUR	Report for 2023 (short overview of the implementation)
					working days. In 2023 no special working arrangements were made for breastfeeding. However, respective staff is entitled up to 2 hours a day which is considered as a working time and it has to be agreed in advance with the line manager.
	- encourage staff to make use of the preventive medical measures via appropriate information and communication campaigns, such as annual medical check-up and health screening programme of the JSIS	Administration and Finance Unit, in close cooperation with the line managers of staff and the Staff Committee, if and where needed	To be financed from the respective budget line for the specific type of expenditure within the available appropriations authorised by the MB.	2,670.00	In line with the provisions of the Staff Regulations (SR) and Conditions of Employment of Other Servants (CEOS) the Agency encourages staff members to undergo the mandatory annual check-up. To this end, the agency concluded four service level agreements with private health care providers based in Riga Latvia, which among others offers the possibility of undergoing the annual medical check-up in accordance with the requirements of the PMO in terms of the medical tests to be carried out. Unfortunately as of 2023, the handling of the reimbursement of the annual check's costs has changed in comparison with previous practice. The PMO reimburses only 85% of the costs incurred by the staff members in regards to the required analyses included in the annual check and a flat rate of the appointment with the occupational doctor, which is less than the 85% if the medical check is carried out outside Brussels Medical Office. From the Agency point of view, conducting the medical check in Brussels Medical office in order for the staff members to be fully reimbursed is not an option, as this would entail additional significant costs (travel, accommodation and per-diems allowance). Consequently, the Agency approached the PMO and also raised the issue to the EU Network of Agencies. For the time being, the issue is still pending.

No	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACTORS	Budget forecast EUR ⁷⁰	Budget Spent in 2023 EUR	Report for 2023 (short overview of the implementation)
	- ensure the possibility to practice physical activities at work (incl. by making use of the measures under point 1 and 2 above);	Administration and Finance Unit, in close cooperation with the line managers of staff and the Staff Committee, if and where needed	To be financed from the respective budget line for the specific type of expenditure within the available appropriations authorised by the MB.	EUR 1,096.90	<p>In November 2023, the BEREK Office administration and the Liaison Office organised a Health Day event for all staff. Its purpose was to inform about services available for the BEREK Office staff and their family members offered by a number of Latvian health service providers; to raise awareness about the impact of static work on the body and the possible ways to decrease this impact; as well as to provide practical exercises on what can be done to proactively care for well-being both at work and personal life. Representatives from the Medical centres in Riga gave presentations about their services, and a physiotherapist provided theory and interactive workshop on body awareness and habits for better well-being. The Health Day Agenda was appreciated by the staff and positively evaluated as useful, informative and engaging.</p> <p>During 2023 additional wellness items were purchased for more than EUR 696,90 to encourage the staff to do physical activities at work. These items include yoga mats, gymnastic and fitness balls, and other equipment needed for various physical exercises. This initiative was implemented to improve employees' physical and mental well-being, promote a healthy lifestyle, and create a more favourable work environment.</p>
6	Until the establishment of accredited European School in Riga in line with the provisions of the Headquarters agreement concluded between BEREK Office and Latvian Government, pay jointly with the Latvian Government (as per the conditions of the SLA) the tuition fees for the children of statutory staff and SNEs who wish to	Administration and Finance Unit in cooperation with the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science and the Liaison Office	1,760,000 / 960,000 ⁷⁴	332,791.00 / 195,555.00 ⁷⁵	<p>As a temporary measure until the establishment of accredited European school in Latvia, the BEREK Office concluded 6 agreements for provision of schooling to the children of the BEREK Office staff in English, French and German.</p> <p>In the calendar year 2023, 23 children of BEREK Office statutory staff and SNEs were enrolled in 4 international schools (International School of Latvia (12), Exupery</p>

⁷⁴ Indicative amount (based on 2023 prices). The higher amount includes the full cost of the measure, incl. the voluntary contribution from the Latvian Government, whereas the lower amount indicates the cost to be covered by the BEREK Office budget, excluding the contribution of the Latvian Government. The statutory staff using the measure will not be entitled to education allowance, which will lead to savings in the salary expenditure.

⁷⁵ Idem

No	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACTORS	Budget forecast EUR ⁷⁰	Budget Spent in 2023 EUR	Report for 2023 (short overview of the implementation)
	enrol their children in the international schools with which the BEREC Office has concluded agreements.				<p>International school (1), International School of Riga (9), King's College (1)) under the agreements concluded by the BEREC Office. The total schooling costs for 2023 amounted to EUR 332,791.00. Out of this amount, the Latvian Government contributed to the BEREC Office budget with EUR 134,666.00 and EUR 2,570.00 were received as municipality grant/co-financing.</p> <p>The final expense for schooling under the agreements with the international schools in Latvia for the BEREC Office budget, therefore, amounted to EUR 195,555.00.</p> <p>Additionally, the Liaison Office gathered information in order to help obtaining the municipality grant from Sigulda Municipality for a staff member whose child studies in Riga. With the help of Liaison Office was signed a contract between Sigulda Municipality and one of the international schools in Riga. In addition, the Liaison Office was regularly checking-in with the schools to inquire whether after staff members had finalised the declaration processes, the school was able to see them in the 'system' and obtain the municipality grants for the children.</p>
Total expenditure for the BEREC Office budget for 2023				206,506.96	<p>The direct expenditure covered by the BEREC Office budget for social welfare measures in 2023 amount to EUR 206,506.96.</p> <p>This amount does not include any indirect expenditure, such as salaries of staff involved in those activities or rent / utility costs for premises used for social welfare activities.</p>

Annex V: Human and financial resources by BEREC Office activity

BEREC Office activity in 2023	Financial resources used ⁷⁶	FTEs used
Operational	€ 4,066,653.24	28.44
1.1. Support to BEREC WGs including Phase 2 cases	€ 1,825,417.35	17.28 ⁷⁷
1.2. High level meetings Board's secretariat	€ 729,739.39	3.13 ⁷⁸
1.3. ICT support to BEREC	€ 561,876.05	4.29 ⁷⁹
1.4. Information gathering and distribution	€ 329,796.97	0.40
1.5. BEREC Communications activities	€ 619,823.48	3.34 ⁸⁰
Horizontal	€ 3,627,393.43	19.95
2.1. Coordination activities	€ 772,409.56	4.81 ⁸¹
2.2. Legal advice, data protection and procurement	€ 733,860.76	6.46 ⁸²
2.3. Human Resources Management	€ 296,351.17	3.38 ⁸³

⁷⁶ Amounts committed on 31/12/2023

⁷⁷ Including 0.58 FTE interim worker for replacement of a vacant CA FG IV post at Programme Management Unit

⁷⁸ Including 1 FTE interim worker for replacement of SNE post on long term leave

⁷⁹ Including 0.46 FTE interim worker for specific project in the area of ICT

⁸⁰ Including 0.46 FTE interim worker for specific project in the area of Communication Activities

⁸¹ Including 0.24 FTE interim workers for BEREC Office Communication and for General coordination activities

⁸² Including 0.42 FTE interim worker in the areas of finance and accounting replacing vacant post of TA AST3

⁸³ Including 0.78 FTE interim worker for replacement of 1 vacant post and 1 staff member on long term leave

BEREC Office activity in 2023	Financial resources used ⁷⁶	FTEs used
2.4. ICT, security, logistics and document management	€ 1,824,771.94	5.31 ⁸⁴
Total Activities	€ 7,694,046.67	48.39

⁸⁴ Including 0.20 FTE interim worker for specific project in the area of ICT

Annex VI: Specific annexes related to Part II

Table 1: 2023 electronic voting procedures of the Management Board (MB) of the Agency for Support for BEREC (BEREC Office)

№	Subject	Comments Round		Voting Round	
		Start (link to launch)	End	Start (link to launch)	End (link to report)
1.	Draft Single Programming Document (SPD) of the BEREC Office for the period 2024-2026	20 January 2023	25 January 2023	27 January 2023	30 January 2023
2.	Draft MB Decision on the appointment of the Co-Chair of the Communications Expert Networking Group (ENG)	16 January 2023	23 January 2023	23 January 2023	31 January 2023
3.	Draft MB Decision on the establishment of the Selection Panel for the appointment of the new BEREC Office Director	24 February 2023	2 March 2023	3 March 2023	7 March 2023
4.	Draft Vacancy for the function of BEREC Office Director	18 May 2023	23 May 2023	23 May 2023	26 May 2023
5.	Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2022, MB Opinion of the Final Accounts 2022 and MB Decision on the Amendment No 1 of the SPD 2023-2025 and the BEREC Office Budget and Establishment Plan for 2023	15 June 2023	21 June 2023	22 June 2023	29 June 2023
6.	Appointment of the new ENG Co-chair of the Communications ENG	25 August 2023	29 August 2023	30 August 2023	31 August 2023

Table 2: Overview of public documents adopted in 2023 by the Management Board (MB) of the Agency for Support for BEREC (BEREC Office)

Decisions

Document number	Document date	Document title/hyperlink to document
MB/2023/01	30/01/2023	Decision of the MB of the BEREC Office on the adoption of the draft Single Programming Document of the BEREC Office for the period 2024-2026
MB/2023/02	31/01/2023	Decision of the MB of the BEREC Office on the appointment of the Co-chair of the Communications Expert Networking Group
MB/2023/03	07/03/2023	Decision of the MB of the BEREC Office for the Establishment of the Selection Panel for the Selection of Director
MB/2023/04	10/03/2023	Decision of the MB of the BEREC Office on the Anti-fraud Strategy 2023-2025
MB/2023/05	10/03/2023	Decision of the MB of the BEREC Office on the implementation of measures of a social nature at the BEREC Office
MB/2023/06	10/03/2023	Decision of the MB of the BEREC Office on the approval of application of Multi-factor Authentication (MFA) for accessing BERECNet+
MB/2023/07	09/06/2023	Decision No MB/2023/07 of the MB of the BEREC Office to establish Working Arrangements between the NRAs of Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC)
MB/2023/08	29/06/2023	Decision MB/2023/08 of the MB of the BEREC Office on the adoption of the Amendment No 1 of the Single Programming Document of the BEREC Office for the period 2023-2025 and Amendment No 1 to the BEREC Office Budget and Establishment Plan for 2023
MB/2023/09	31/08/2023	Decision No MB/2023/09 of the MB of the BEREC Office on the appointment of the Co-chair of the Communications Expert Networking Group
MB/2023/10	05/10/2023	Decision of the BEREC Office MB on the termination of the appointment of the Commission Accounting Officer as the BEREC Office Accounting Officer and on the appointment of new BEREC Office Accounting Officer

Document number	Document date	Document title/hyperlink to document
MB/2023/11	15/11/2023	Decision of the Management Board of the Agency for Support for BEREC to approve the short-list of candidates for the post of Director and to identify the next steps in the selection procedure
MB/2023/12	08/12/2023	Decision of the MB of the BEREC Office on the designation of the Reporting Officers to appraise the BEREC Office Director for the period 01.01.-31.12.2023
MB/2023/13	08/12/2023	Decision of the MB of the BEREC Office on the adoption of the final Single Programming Document of the BEREC Office for the period 2024-2026

BEREC Office MB opinion

Document number	Document date	Document title/hyperlink to document
MB (23) 64	29 June 2023	Opinion of the MB of the BEREC Office on the Final accounts for 2022

BEREC Office single programming documents

Document number	Document date	Document title/hyperlink to document
MB (23) 04	31 January 2023	Draft Single Programming Document of the BEREC Office for 2024-2026
MB (23) 54	29 June 2023	Amendment No 1 to The Single Programming Document of the Agency for Support for BEREC ('BEREC Office') for the period 2023-2025
MB (23) 102	7 December 2023	Single Programming Document of the BEREC Office for 2024-2026

BEREC Office Budget

Document number	Document date	Document title/hyperlink to document
MB (23) 53	29 June 2023	Amendment No 1 to 2023 Budget and Establishment Plan of the Agency for Support for BEREC ('BEREC Office')
MB (23) 103	7 December 2023	BEREC Office Budget and Establishment Plan for 2024

BEREC Office Consolidated Activity Report

Document number	Document date	Document title/hyperlink to document
MB (23) 50	29 June 2023	2022 Consolidated Annual Activity Report of the BEREC Office

Agendas for the 2023 ordinary meetings of the BEREC Office MB

Document number	Document date	Document title/hyperlink to document
MB (23) 13	24 February 2023	Draft Agenda for 54th Management Board (MB) virtual meeting in 2023
MB (23) 38	15 May 2023	Draft Agenda for 55th Management Board (MB) hybrid meeting in 2023
MB (23) 76	29 September 2023	Draft Agenda for 56th Management Board (MB) hybrid meeting in 2023
MB (23) 91	24 November 2023	Draft agenda for 57th Management Board (MB) hybrid meeting in 2023

Conclusions of the 2023 ordinary meetings of the BEREC Office MB

Document number	Document date	Document title/hyperlink to document
MB (23) 34	18 April 2023	Conclusions of the 54th Ordinary Plenary Meeting of the BEREC Office MB
MB (23) 63	9 June 2023	Conclusions of the 55th Ordinary Plenary Meeting of the BEREC Office MB
MB (23) 87	5 October 2023	Conclusions of the 56th Ordinary Plenary Meeting of the BEREC Office MB
MB (23) 105	8 December 2023	Conclusions of the 57th Ordinary Plenary Meeting of the BEREC Office MB

Annex VII: Final annual accounts

Presented in a separate file.

Annex VIII: Environment management

The BEREC Office is duly taking into consideration the impact of its operations on the environment and is constantly enhancing measures to reduce this impact. By doing so, the BEREC Office and BEREC are meeting their responsibility, like all EU Institutions and bodies, to lead by example in tackling climate and environmental-related challenges as highlighted in the EU Green Deal.

One important aspect of BO's environmental management is systematically measuring its impact on the environment, most notably the GHG emissions from BO/BEREC operations⁸⁵. As is obvious from the chart below, the COVID pandemic has dramatically changed the mode of operation for the BEREC Office introducing online participation and teleworking as the main activities in everyday work activities.

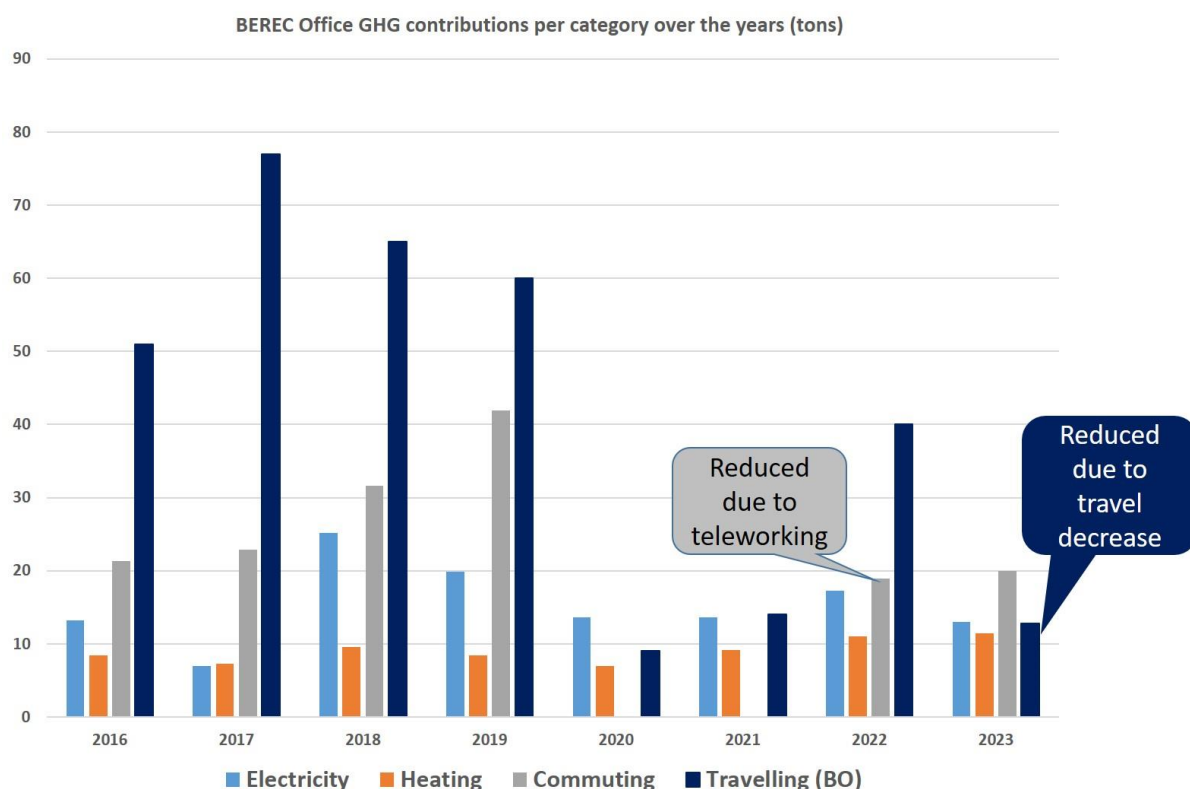


Figure 7 BEREC Office GHG contributions (in tons CO₂e) per category over the years 2016-2023

An important factor for this trend has been the stark reduction of physical meetings of the BEREC WGs in Brussels from ~100 by 75% to ~25 meetings per year. This change, initially the result of the COVID pandemic now reflects the preference of a majority of WG members to meet mostly remotely leading to more than 500 online meetings using the videoconference facility that BEREC Office has available (see figure below).

⁸⁵ N.b.: Even though the BO staff has carefully calculated the GHG emissions for BEREC and the BO, these are still preliminary and could still be subject to modifications in the course of the EMAS registrations' environmental review.

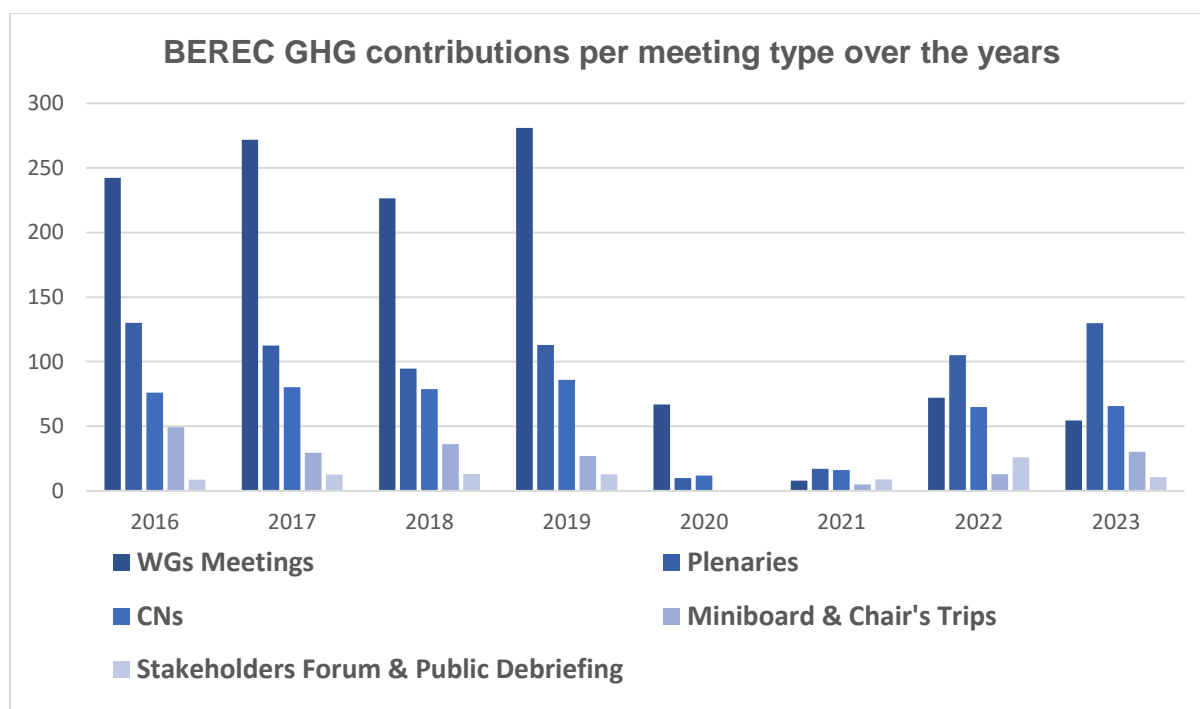


Figure 8 BEREC GHG contributions (in tons CO₂e) per meeting type over the years 2016-2023

In total 490 virtual WG meetings took place in 2023, gathering more than 9 000 participants. This saved a significant amount of CO₂ emissions in 2023 even if only a part of the virtual meetings might have substituted physical meetings.

Another factor contributing to reduced CO₂ emissions is the location of the BEREC Office premises in the centre of the city. There are good connections by public transport and most staff members come to work by using public transport or bicycles, and only a minority uses cars. Additionally, the BO staff is well making use of the changed teleworking rules that has led to a reduction in commuting, which continues to keep the related emissions significantly below pre-pandemic.

Although the BEREC Office does not own its premises and despite the historical constraints of the building, it has taken action to improve the thermal insulation of its premises and reduce energy use, such as installing insulated glazing to reduce energy costs. To optimise electricity consumption, low energy use solutions were chosen to comply with the European Directive on the energy performance of buildings. Additionally, at the end of 2023, the total office space occupied by the BO in the building was reduced by giving up one of the 3 floors, equalling 80 m² and about 5% of the total office space. This will further contribute to a lower total heating and electricity consumption.

The BEREC Office has significantly reduced its paper consumption in the last years and continues on its path of becoming a paperless administration. The adoption of the EC electronic document management system HAN (Hermes-Ares-NomCom) and of other electronic management systems such as the EC mission processing system (MiPS) or the electronic procurement portal e-Submission have effectively eliminated the demand for paper files in internal processes.

Furthermore, the BEREC Office continues its waste collection of 100% for glass, paper and

plastics. The BEREC Office is also purchasing eco-friendly supplies in order to continue actively reducing its environmental impact as part of the greening of its procurement.

BEREC/BEREC Office are also cooperating closely on the subject of responsible environmental management with the EU Agencies Network's Greening Network (EUAN GN), the European Commission and other international organisations. In particular, the EUAN GN is an important forum for best-practice sharing and advice from which the BEREC Office has benefited in 2023. By taking part in the GN's twinning exercise with EU agencies that are already EMAS registered, the BO has benefited from existing institutional experience while avoiding spending scarce financial resources on external consultants. Furthermore, the BO has participated in drafting the EU Agencies Network Charter on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and responsible environmental management, an important milestone in the work of the EUAN GN in 2023.

Annex IX: Overview of the results of the key performance indicators (KPIs) identified in the Single Programming Document (SPD) for 2023-2025

WP 2023 section reference	BEREC OFFICE SPD 2023 KPIs			
2.1 Support to BEREC WGs and phase II cases	Objective: Provision of administrative and professional support to Working Groups (WGs)			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Provision of virtual WG meetings (in total)	505	≤500	490 ⁸⁶
	2. Provision of support to physical WG meetings	27	≤30 ⁸⁷	21 ⁸⁸
	3. Provision of support to workshops with external experts (physical & virtual)	5	≤9	5
	4. Provision of support to participation in 3rd party meetings (physical & virtual)	3	≤5	8
	5. Provision of ad hoc meeting under Article 32/33 procedures (former Art 7/7A)	18	≤5	9
	6. Level of satisfaction of WG meeting organisation (measure the level of satisfaction of the WG co-chairs on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	91.1%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	91.7%
	7. Level of satisfaction of responses and communication (measure the level of satisfaction of the WG co-chairs on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	89.5%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	85.4%

⁸⁶ Number of physical meetings were switched to the AVC due to few number of experts who were willing to travel; as all the WG meetings were also organised through the AVC, it allowed experts to choose the most appropriate way of participation, i.e. physical or remote.

⁸⁷ Estimated based on the experience

⁸⁸ Number of physical meetings were switched to the AVC due to few number of experts who were willing to travel; as all the WG meetings were also organised through the AVC, it allowed experts to choose the most appropriate way of participation, i.e. physical or remote.

WP 2023 section reference	BEREC OFFICE SPD 2023 KPIs			
	8. Level of satisfaction of provided support to WGs (measure the level of satisfaction of the WG co-chairs on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	87.8%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	92.7%
	9. Level of satisfaction of data collection exercises (measure the level of satisfaction of the WG co-chairs on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	90%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	80.0% ⁸⁹
	10. Level of satisfaction of pre-draft documents (measure the level of satisfaction of the WG co-chairs on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	86.1%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	93.8%
	11. Carbon footprint of WG meetings ⁹⁰	72 t	n/a ⁶⁴	54.54
2.2 High level meetings and support to the Boards	Objective: To provide efficient professional and administrative supporting services to the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the BoR, Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons of the MB of the BEREC Office, Miniboard, the BoR and MB, the CN and BAG in execution of their tasks and responsibilities, including cooperation and liaison with the EC, EP, the Council, other Union bodies, offices, agencies, advisory groups, regulatory authorities of third countries, international organisations, and other stakeholders.			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Level of satisfaction with high-level meetings (measure the level of satisfaction of the CN members, WG Co-Chairs and the Miniboard on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	93%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	94%
	2. Carbon footprint of high-level meetings	n/a	n/a ⁹¹	189.2 t

⁸⁹ Some of the WG Co-Chairs referred to introducing automatic processes to increase efficiency and accuracy, and avoid mistakes. They were dissatisfied with the data collection performed during respective period.

⁹⁰ This indicator was measured for the first time in 2022, therefore no target value was set.

⁹¹ This indicator was measured for the first time, therefore it was not possible to set targeted value without having a reference point.

WP 2023 section reference	BEREC OFFICE SPD 2023 KPIs			
2.3. ICT support to BEREC	Objective: Enable operations by maintaining high availability of IT services (dedicated applications, databases, and websites) in regard to IT infrastructure and services (on prem. and cloud). Provision of necessary licenses and IT support. Provision of expertise on ICT matters in support to BEREC (knowledge exchange).			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. System Availability: - BERECNet+ - Website	99,9% 99,9%	>99,8% >99,8%	99,9% 99,9%
	2. Ratio of tickets require more than 1.5 days resolution time	2.23%	<10%	2.71%
	Objective: Development and maintenance of ICT systems according to BEREC regulation. Maintenance and availability of the existing products for ensuring their reliability, their need to meet evolving business needs and the need to be kept interoperable with other systems overtime.			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	Support man days of external service provider	748	750	630 ⁹²
2.4 Information gathering and distribution	Objective: Provision of information and knowledge dissemination			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Provision of training courses per academic year for NRA experts	2 ⁹³	1	1
	2. Satisfaction in organisation of trainings (measure the level of satisfaction on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	97%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	78%

⁹² In order to save budgetary resources the number of external IT specialists was reduced from 3 to 2 during the course of 2023 and some IT tasks were redistributed to the staff of ICT team.

⁹³ The course on Regulatory Framework and the course on Communication issues took place in 2022; the course on Sustainability issues was carried over from 2021 and finalised in Q1 2023, thus no need arose for the experts to have the same course within the same year; the course for the WG/ENG co-Chairs was postponed to the next year due to end of mandate of the co-Chairs by the end of 2022 and election of the new co-Chairs.

WP 2023 section reference	BEREC OFFICE SPD 2023 KPIs			
	3. Satisfaction on the content/delivery of the trainings (measure the level of satisfaction on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	91%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	94.4%
	Objective: Ensure visibility and further improved quality of BEREC deliverables			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Satisfaction on studies & projects (measure the level of satisfaction on a 5 grade scale on the basis of multiple questions)	94%	≥85% of responses are in the top 2 scores	94.4%
	2. Number of documents sent for language service	2	≥5	3
	Objective: Improvement of reimbursement process through the AGM tool			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	Reimbursement of the expenses of the meeting participants invited to the BEREC and BEREC Office events in compliance with the applicable BEREC Office rules and within the deadlines envisaged in the BEREC Office Financial Regulation	169	>600 experts ⁶⁶	511

WP 2023 section reference	BEREC OFFICE SPD 2023 KPIs			
2.5. Expert Networking Groups	Objective: Provision of expertise in the ICT domain in support to BEREC			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Provision of virtual WG meetings (ICT ENG)	11	15	8
	2. Provision of support of physical WG meetings (ICT ENG)	167	1	1
	Objective: Provision of expertise on communications matters in support to BEREC			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Provision of virtual WG meetings (Communications ENG)	35	up to 7	2
	2. Provision of support of physical WG meetings (Communications ENG)	2	1	3
2.6 BEREC Communications activities	Objective: To provide efficient professional and administrative support services to BEREC in the implementation of the BEREC External Communications Strategy and the BEREC Communications Plan 2023			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Number of live connections at all BEREC public events with the livestream	1071	Up to 800	1064
	2. Number of mentions of BEREC on social media (Twitter LinkedIn)	1080	900	6914
	3. Target satisfaction (BEREC Chair) on BEREC public events regarding the logistics	94.7%	>90%	94%
2.7 Coordination	Objective: Delivery of BEREC Office planning and reporting documents within the set deadlines and smooth running of activities linked to audit management, budgetary discharge, internal controls and risk management			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Compliance with legal deadlines or deadlines for submission of documents to MB ordinary meetings	100%	100 % of FR deadlines are met	100%
	2. Number of IAS audit recommendations	3	<3	2

WP 2023 section reference	BEREC OFFICE SPD 2023 KPIs			
	Objective: To provide professional and administrative support to the BEREC Management Board in implementing the BEREC Office communications activities			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Number of events organized	4	up to 4	4
	2. Number of info items and promotional activities produced (social media posts, newsletters, news, press releases, etc.)	60	60	112
	3. Number of internal info items (newsletters to staff and to the MB)	53	50	34
	Objective: Timely processing of applications for access to documents			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	Applications processed within 15 working days	100%	100%	100%
	Objective: Effective and efficient protection of personal data			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Number of data protection policies (or DPO notification) in place compared to the number of processing operations identified	90%	90%	90%
	2. Number of personal data breaches notified to the EDPS	0	≤ 3	0
	3. Negative references to the BEREC Office in the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) annual report	0	≤ 2	0
	4. Number of internal trainings organised for newcomers	4	Training is provided to each group of newcomers	2

WP 2023 section reference	BEREC OFFICE SPD 2023 KPIs			
2.8 Centralised finance and procurement	Objective: Timely provision of state-of-the-art supplies and services in support to BEREC and for the needs of the BEREC Office and smooth running of activities linked to finance and budget management and accounting			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Number of launched procurement procedures per type (NP1, NP3, NP5, OT, RoC and other).	28 ⁶⁸	30	20 ⁹⁴
	2. Commitment appropriations' rate	99.99%	≥95 %	99.96%
	3. Cancellation rate of commitment and payment appropriations carried over	1.37%	≤5 %	1.08%
	4. Payments of contractual obligations within the limits set by the Financial Regulation	97.42%	≥95 %	98.43%
2.9 Human Resources (HR) management	Objective: To maintain the appropriate HR capacity in line with the Agency's updated multiannual staff policy plan approved by the MB and to develop the skills required to offer the necessary support to BEREC and its members			
	Indicators	Results2022	Target 2023	Results2023
	1. Fully staffed indicator (Nr of TAs, CAs, SNEs and interim staff / max. number of a fully staffed BEREC Office)	102% ⁶⁹	100%	102%
	2. Gender balance (TA, CA, SNE and trainees)	49% Female 51% Male	50% Female 50% Male	50% Female 50% Male
	3. Geographical balance (TA; CA; SNE and trainees nationalities)	Representatives of 14 EU Member States (MSs) and 2 Western Balkan states	Representatives of 15 EU MSs and 2 Western Balkan states	Representatives of 11 EU MSs and 2 Western Balkan states
	4. Staff turnover (Ratio of total number of leavers divided by average number of staff at the beginning period and end period) per category of staff and total; a) establishment plan posts (TAs); external staff: b) CAs; c) SNEs; d) total (all staff: TAs + CAs +SNEs)	a) 13.33 %; b) 20.51 %; c) 11.76 %; d) 16.28 %	Maintain	a) 0 %; b) 5.00 %; c) 37.50 %; d) 9.09 %

⁹⁴ Target not reached since due to budgetary constraints, it was decided not to proceed with certain procedures; and since the BEREC Office benefited from inter-institutional procurements and Latvian electronic procurement system (EIS) for administrative needs and therefor did not have to launch procedures on its own.

WP 2023 section reference	BEREC OFFICE SPD 2023 KPIs			
2.10 ICT, security logistics	Objective: Provide ICT systems, services and infrastructure Ensure ICT security, confidentiality, integrity and availability of BEREC Office data and ICT systems			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Timely response to user requests provided	3.14%	less than 10% of user requests require more than 2.5 days to resolve	2.96%
	Objective: Ensure proper functioning of the access card and video-surveillance systems of the Agency			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	1. Operational CCTV system	99%	Minimum: 98%	99%
	2. Operational access control system	99%	Minimum: 98%	9%
	Objective: Deployment and use of proper off-site back-up services for the Agency data and development of a reliable disaster recovery plan			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	Usage of BaaS services	100%	100%	100%
2.11 Facility management and logistics	Objective: Ensure proper functioning of the physical infrastructure, while taking into account the growing needs of the Agency in cooperation with the property management company and the Latvian authorities, where applicable			
	Indicators	Results 2022	Target 2023	Results 2023
	Occupancy rates of the offices according to EC building manual	103.6%	100% ⁷⁰	100%