



MINISTRY
OF FINANCE

Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy 2024–2027

BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM



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Introduction

Central government is made up of about one hundred agencies and public bodies, which employ over 80,000 people.

The following organisations provide joint services to government agencies and public bodies relating to financial and human resources administration, development of ICT competence, procurement and premises:

- Hansel – procurement
- HAUS – education and learning
- Government Shared Services Centre for Finance and HR
- Senate Properties – real estate and facilities services
- Treasury – finance and insurance, financial administration and knowledge management services
- Government ICT Centre Valtori
- Erillisverkot Group – ICT services for critical communications, mission control and securing critical infrastructure
- Digital and Population Data Services Agency – strong electronic identification services, e-services and digitalisation of services

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the State's property and premises management, the general guidance and development of procurement services, and the provision of direction and guidance for the organisations that produce shared corporate services for government and for the development of these organisations' activities. The Ministry of Finance directs and guides the national

financial administration, the central government human resources administration and policy, and government ICT by means of statutes, guidelines and strategies and through the development of services and information systems in cooperation with group-level organisations.

Guidelines for specific areas of responsibility are laid down in separate strategies:

- A development plan for national financial administration, will be completed in spring 2024
- [Central Government Human Resources Strategy](#)
- [Government Real Estate Strategy \(pdf\)](#)
- [Government Premises Strategy \(pdf\)](#)
- [National Public Procurement Strategy 2020](#)
- ICT: [Shared government information and communications technology services](#), [Government Security Network](#) and [digitalisation of public administration](#)

The goal is to provide all of central government with shared practices and services that are modern, effective and operate smoothly. Service providers in different areas of responsibility play a key role in achieving this goal. The goal of providing shared services is to ensure that government agencies and public bodies can benefit from high-quality, continually developing and cost-effective support services and focus on their own core activities.

From a wider perspective, the Finnish IT Centre for Science (CSC) and National Archives of Finland, for example, also provide shared services for government. The work on the Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy has focused only on the Ministry of Finance's branch of government and on setting goals for the coming years for services that fall under the Ministry's guidance.

Providers of shared government services

Providers of shared services are organisations within central government. Agencies and public bodies can buy services from these organisations without the need for competitive tendering.

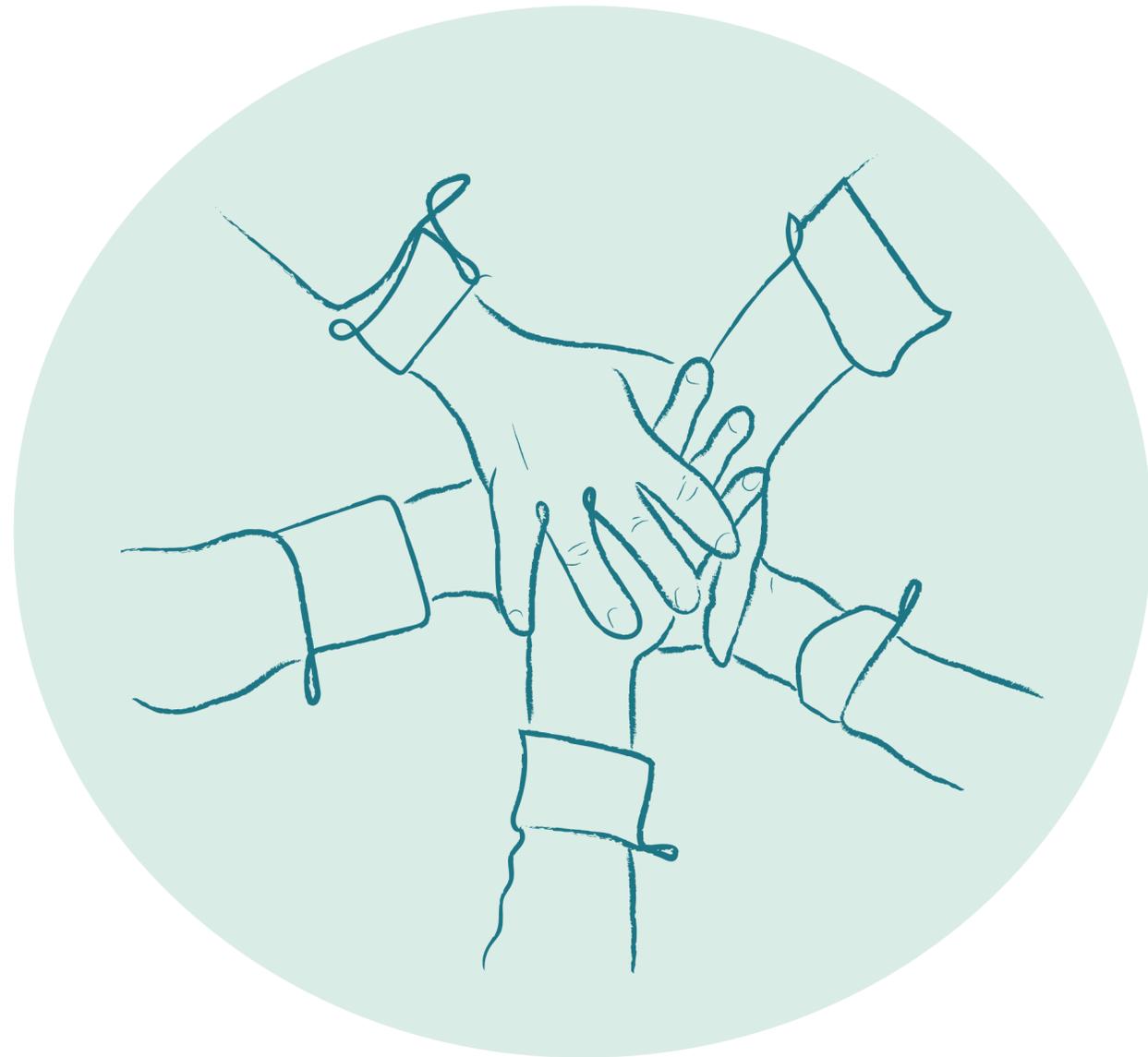
Providers of shared services are organisations within central government. Agencies and public bodies can buy services from these organisations without the need for competitive tendering. How these service providers are organised and funded varies, but they are all state-owned and provide services mainly only for central government or for organisations that are otherwise controlled by the state.

The basic idea of shared government services is to safeguard the overall interests of the state with respect to costs, quality, competence and joint knowledge-based management. Maintaining organisations that provide shared systems and services requires clarity on the size and the needs of the customer base. Obligations to use shared services often arise from situations in which assets or services have been procured for the state as a whole.

The service providers operate within central government and they primarily provide services to central government. If shared services were not provided, group-level government organisations would have to be outsourced to the market, which would lead to a loss of expertise, for example, in procurement, working environments and other fields.

Key benefits that shared services provide to central government include the concentration of expertise, the interoperability of systems, the reduction of overlapping work (e.g. competitive tendering) and the overall cost-effectiveness of services. Shared services lead to better productivity than decentralised services.

Objectives of the Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy



The Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy aim to set a common direction for providers of corporate services and for parties responsible for guiding, directing and developing shared services. A key objective is also to improve cooperation and interfaces between group-level government organisations.

The guidelines are part of the management system and are used in performance guidance, ownership steering and in the revision and implementation of sectoral and organisational strategies.

The Ministry of Finance guides government service centres in helping agencies and public bodies to achieve the savings set out the productivity programme, to focus on the efficiency of overall processes and to improve productivity, particularly through automation and artificial intelligence.

The new Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy were prepared in cooperation with providers of shared services during 2023. In the Ministry of Finance, the directors general and people responsible for performance guidance of the Public Governance Department and Public Sector ICT Department participated in the work.

Evaluations of the implementation of the previous Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy

The first Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy was drawn up in 2019. Four strategic key areas were identified at the time: satisfied customers, bold transformation, overall efficiency and competence fit for purpose.

Each key area was set key operational promises, means to implement them and indicators to monitor their implementation.

Providers of shares services have generally been satisfied with the Corporate Services Policy 2019–2023 and found it to have the right type of content. Service providers have found promoting the themes of the policy to be a natural part of their strategies and the development of their activities. Cooperation with other organisations has been based on need rather than on a systematic joint implementation of the Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy. The implementation of the detailed action plan based on the guidelines received little weight. Some of the actions identified when drafting the guidelines, such as a joint service solution or a joint service map, were later considered to be unfeasible in relation to the resources they would require.

Some of the services provided by group-level organisations make up a service chain for customers. More effort has been put into developing these chains over the past policy period. It has been natural for organisations forming a service chain

to work together to promote the ‘satisfied customers’ theme in particular. One group-level organisation summed up the situation as follows: *“The guidelines were implemented in cooperation with other group-level organisations when providing added value to customers.”*

Cooperation is for the most part seen to be smooth between all organisations. Group-level organisations know one another’s services and roles well, which facilitates cooperation and also prevents competition from developing between them. Regular meetings between group-level organisations have provided opportunities to learn from other organisations and to exchange views on current topics. On the other hand, some issues relating to the division of tasks and roles need to be clarified, not just between group-level organisations, but more extensively between group-level organisations and other state-owned companies. The need to clarify roles applies particularly to organisations offering digital solutions.

Evaluations of the implementation of the previous Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy

The following section provides a summary of how group-level organisations have implemented the Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy in their activities.

1. Satisfied customers

This theme has been integrated into the strategies of all group-level organisations and has been promoted actively. Customer satisfaction has been measured more systematically, and organisations that did not previously use an NPS indicator have begun doing so. The NPS figures of many organisations have also gone up significantly. In addition, several organisations have redesigned their approach to customer relationship management and engaged in more co-creation with customers.

2. Bold transformation

Group-level organisations have promoted this theme primarily by developing digital and scalable services. Organisations have also taken on new responsibilities and participated in speeding up national development in their areas of responsibility. One organisation described how they have raised their level of ambition: *“We have aimed to be pioneers in the field and often succeeded.”*

3. Overall efficiency

The use of the services provided by several group-level organisations increased significantly last year, but the organisations succeeded in moderating the growth of their costs. Digitalisation and automation has also improved overall efficiency. The Digital and Population Data Services Agency, Government Shared Services Centre for Finance and HR, Senate Properties and Valtori carried out external evaluations, which helped improve efficiency. Group-level organisations have for the most part reached their service and quality targets.

4. Competence fit for purpose

Group-level organisations have developed new solutions and services based on the needs of their customers. Organisations have also invested in the internal development of competence and induction and the rotation of staff has been increased. Surveys of wellbeing at work have also shown positive development. Some organisations have faced challenges in the form of staff turnover and prolonged security clearance processes.

Evaluations of the implementation of the previous Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy

As its name implies, Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy provide general guidelines for cooperation between group-level organisations and provide priorities for development. This can be seen in the implementation of the Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy over the past few years.

The Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy have been integrated well into the strategies of group-level organisations. This continues to be the goal of these updated Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy. Another goal is to strengthen the link between performance guidance ownership steering.

The monitoring and evaluation of the first guidelines were not systematic. This will be a focus with respect to the updated guidelines. In the previous guidelines, the high level guidelines and the detailed action plan were felt to be too far removed from one another. The updated Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy outlines key themes and key operational promises

The key objective of the Guidelines for Corporate Service Policy is to strengthen partnership and cooperation between group-level organisations in the overall interests of the state. In this cooperation, it is important to identify

with whom it makes the most sense to promote the themes of the guidelines and deepen, for example, cooperation based on service chains. The challenge of the previous guidelines, and particularly of the implementation plan, was that the interfaces between different organisations had not been sufficiently identified.

All state organisations must be economically, socially and ecologically responsible and rise to local and global challenges in these fields. The new Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy seeks to make this objective concrete.

Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy 2024–2027

Shared government services – we help you succeed

The objective of shared government services is to create shared practices and services for all of central government that are modern, smoothly operating and effective.

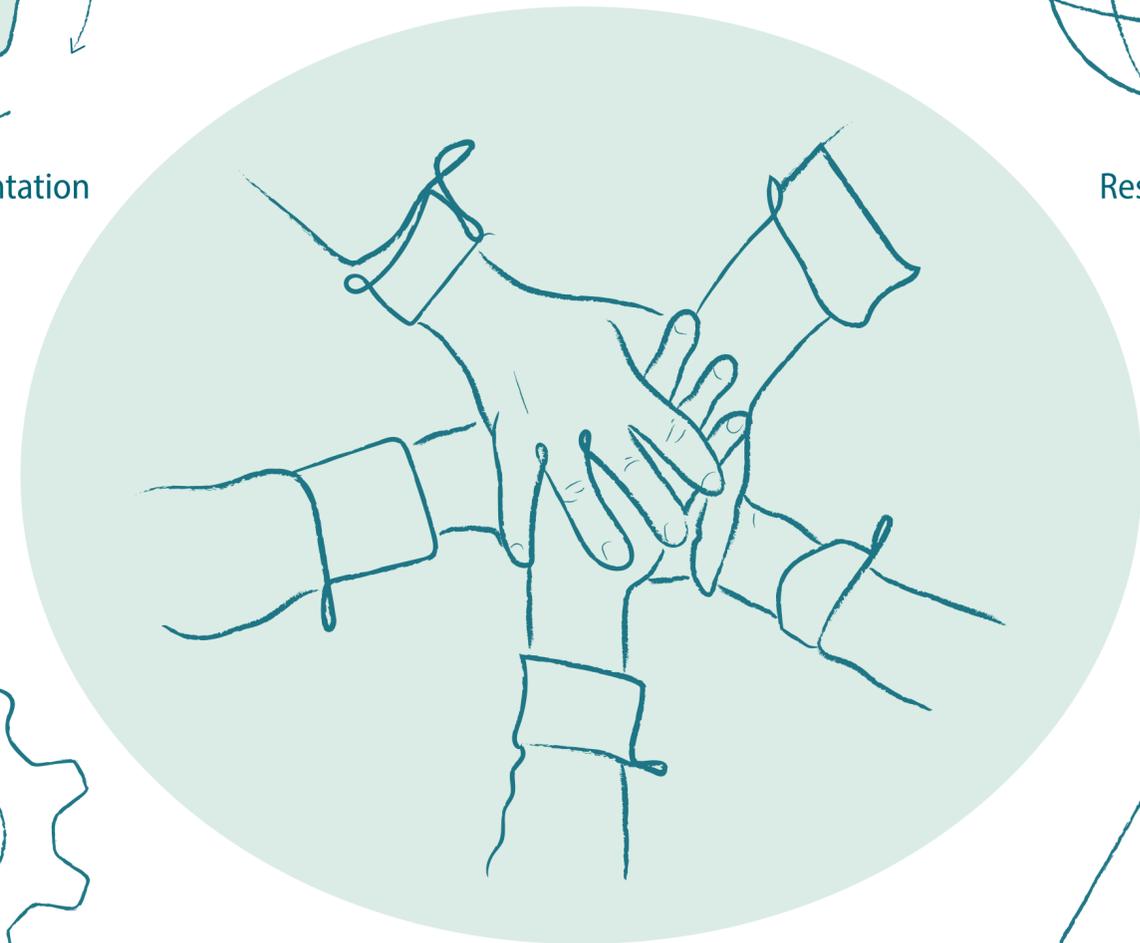
Shared services are provided by the Digital and Population Data Services Agency, Erillisverkot Group, Hansel Ltd, HAUS Finnish Institute of Public Management Ltd, the Government Shared Services Centre for Finance and HR, Senate Group, the State Treasury and the Government ICT Centre Valtori.



Customer orientation



Responsibility

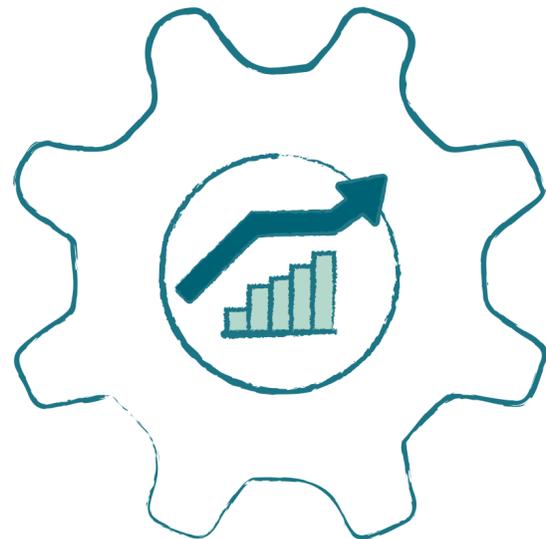


Overall efficiency



Preparedness

Overall efficiency



Overall efficiency is an indicator of the efficiency of production processes that helps to identify the bottlenecks and inefficiencies. A 100% overall efficiency would mean that a production process is working at the designed capacity without disruption and producing only high-quality products. From the perspective of corporate services, the aim of overall efficiency is for the production costs of shared services to be lower than decentralised services and for customers to see the benefits of using service centres. All inputs and outputs of the process from end to end have been identified.

Operational promise 1: We provide centralised services efficiently

- The pricing of the services and guidance of investments of service providers is implemented in a way that improves productivity and the reduction of service prices.
- Group-level organisations propose three measures or targets to be included in their service or performance targets to develop overall efficiency.
- On-going evaluation of corporate services.

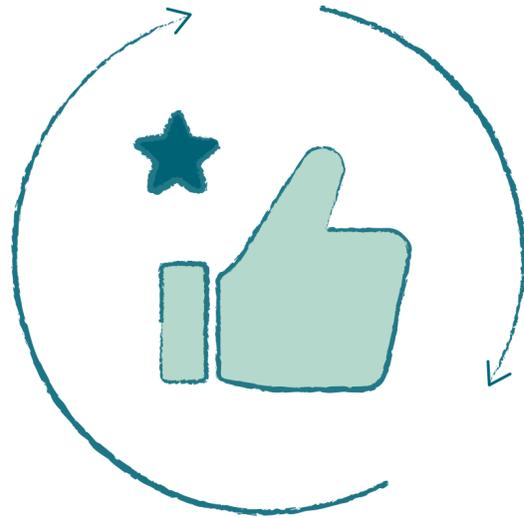
Operational promise 2: We safeguard reliability of service through strategic partnerships

- Establishing strategic partnerships primarily between internal partners (shared work environments, cloud, 5G, artificial intelligence, etc.). The goal is to use all of the resources and capacities of the contracting parties.

Indicators:

- Transparent cost structure for the provision of services throughout the entire service provision chain.
- Cost-correlation of pricing in proportion to the actual costs of providing the services.
- Increasing the use of shared services.
- The labour units committed to providing shared services in agencies and public bodies and service centres.
- Savings achieved in euros.
- External evaluations were carried out during the implementation period of the guidelines. These evaluations also covered strategic partnerships and market comparisons.

Customer orientation



Customer orientation is an approach that focuses on creating positive experiences and benefits for customers through the entire selection of products and services provided by the organisation. Organisations that take a customer-oriented approach seek to provide holistic solutions that are designed with an understanding of customer needs. This leads to a better financial outcome, increased employee engagement and happier customers. In corporate services, customer orientation is a way to create ready-to-use and uniform service packages that are built in cooperation with group-level organisations. Smooth service chains guarantee a good customer experience.

Operational promise 3: We will create integrated service packages

- We provide complete and integrated service packages that are created through strategic partnerships in cooperation with group-level organisations. We create new innovations.
- We will shift from customer-tailored services towards conceptualised service packages.

Operational promise 4: We improve customer experience

- We will clarify the roles, responsibilities and routines of customers and service providers in the service chain.
- We will intensify cooperation when it comes to listening to customer needs and customer inclusion by harmonising processes and cooperating on selected themes.
- We will increase cooperation to develop customer relationship management models and will recognise each other as customers.

Indicators:

- Monitoring of customer satisfaction
- Monitoring of smooth customer experience, e.g. complaints and NPS
- Services meet customer needs

Responsibility



Responsibility: As an owner, the State expects companies to lead the way in corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility is becoming more and more important for the competitiveness and shareholder value of companies. Responsibility means that the organisation takes into account the climate, the environment, social responsibility and good governance. The strategic objective that guides the Ministry of Finance's activities is to safeguard the freedom of choice of future generations and to build an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable Finland and European Union. Corporate services seek to realise responsibility in our own actions and to support our customers in their efforts to improve responsibility. Centralised corporate services can also contribute to achieving Finland's national responsibility targets, such as making Finland carbon neutral by 2035.

Operational promise 5: We promote responsibility in a centralised manner

- We audit our suppliers and require that our suppliers have responsibility certificates on behalf of our customers.
- Group-level organisations propose three measures/targets to be included in their service or performance targets to develop responsibility.

Operational promise 6: We provide our customers services that support responsibility

- We provide collated information and reporting on shared systems.
- We develop new products based on customer need.

Operational promise 7: We act responsibly

- We know the carbon footprint of our production processes and procurements and take measures to minimise that footprint. The measures are agreed in our performance or service targets.
- We take into account human rights and measures to combat corruption, bribery and the shadow economy in our activities.
- With respect to social responsibility, we implement the Central Government Human Resources Strategy and pay particular attention to diversity and hiring people with partial work ability.

Indicators:

- A joint responsibility report will be produced concerning 2024.
- Each organisation's annual milestones during the policy period will contribute to achieving the target of Finland being carbon neutral by 2035.

Preparedness



Preparedness: An incident under normal conditions is a situation in which an unusual, unexpected or sudden change occurs in the security situation under otherwise normal conditions and poses a threat to the functioning of society or the security of the population. Dealing with the situation often requires enhanced management, reallocation of resources and crisis communications. An incident could also concern just a single organisation. In contrast, emergency conditions are a security situation involving circumstances referred to in the Emergency Powers Act (1552/2011, section 3) that have been declared in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Emergency Powers Act.

Preparedness measures include contingency planning, continuity management, preparations, training and preparedness exercises. The Security Strategy for Society sets a common course in this respect (government decision 2 November 2027). The need to prepare for incidents under normal conditions and for emergency conditions has become increasingly important in public sector planning. The continuity of corporate services is vital to many core functions of central government. From the perspective of corporate services, the aim is to achieve sufficient preparedness in our own activities and to support customers in a centralised manner in their work on preparedness.

Operational promise 8: We know what to prepare for

- The Ministry of Finance and group-level organisations will jointly draw up a list of the key threats and serious incidents relating to the corporate services offered to customers.

- The Ministry of Finance and group-level organisations will work together to define the minimum levels of preparedness for corporate services and the priorities for service provision in case of emergencies and incidents. These will be communicated to the customers.
- Foresight work relating to preparedness and different threat scenarios is carried out regularly.

Operational promise 9: We coordinate our preparedness measures

- Group-level organisations work together to define the vital functions in their areas of responsibility that concern their own activities. They also share and analyse threats to these functions and information relating to preparedness, including dependencies on private-sector organisations.
- Group-level organisations work together to assess the risks to shared functions, particularly in shared interfaces. The organisations share best risk management practices and make sure that these tools and methods are used actively.

Indicators:

- Readiness and preparedness plans include a section on shared strategic partners.
- Annual exercises with strategic partners.

Monitoring and evaluation of the Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy



The aim of monitoring and evaluation is to ensure that the objectives set for the policy are met as planned. Monitoring seeks to boost and support the implementation of objectives set for group-level organisations, the choices made and the available resources.

Group-level organisations need one another to reach their objectives. This is why strengthening partnerships produces added value. The progress of the Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy will be monitored by the Ministry of Finance, and implemented measures will be discussed at quarterly meetings of the management of group-level organisations. If necessary, monitoring ensures that corrective measures are launched in an orderly manner.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Guidelines for Corporate Services Policy will look at changes to practices and will evaluate the realisation of objectives comprehensively, including from the perspective of their effectiveness. The implementation of the guidelines will be evaluated by reviewing the implementation of the measures linked to the operational promises and the development of the agreed indicators. External evaluations of group-level organisations will also be carried out.

Monitoring and evaluation will also be carried out in connection with performance guidance and ownership steering, the updating and implementation of sectoral and organisational strategies, and the monitoring of the productivity programme. The implementation of operational promises will be evaluated in connection with budget planning.



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