



2017/2136(DEC)

31.1.2018

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2016, Section III - Commission and executive agencies
(2017/2136(DEC))

Rapporteur: Cristian Dan Preda

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Takes positive note of the decrease in rate of material error in Heading 4 in the 2016 financial year compared to 2015 (from 2.8% to 2.1%), as estimated by the European Court of Auditors (ECA) in its annual report; fully supports all recommendations formulated by the ECA and urges the Commission to swiftly implement them;
2. Underlines that, when excluding the budget support operations and the projects financed by several donors, the estimated level of error is significantly higher; stresses that the Commission could have reduced the estimated level of error by a further 0.7% if all information at their disposal would have been used; urges that budget support operations be accompanied by active measures to combat corruption;
3. Emphasises that most of the errors (37%) are due to the absence of essential supporting documents; recalls the importance of improving grant supervision and the technical assistance provided for this purpose; calls on the Commission to take the necessary measures to that end;
4. Underlines that overall reporting on spending on migration and the refugee crisis needs to be more coherent and comprehensive; in this context is concerned that the use of other financial mechanisms alongside the EU budget to deliver EU policies, such as trust funds and the Turkey Refugee Facility, risks to undermine accountability and transparency;
5. Notes with concern the weaknesses of audit authorities working in indirect management in some beneficiary countries of the second Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA II); calls on DG NEAR to closely assist national authorities concerned in overcoming the shortcomings and, more specifically, in improving the audit methodology, planning and supervision, as well as, recruitment and training of their staff; recalls that the allocation of pre-accession funds must be linked to the commitment to reforms and the progress in implementing those reforms in receiving countries;
6. Takes note of the Final Report on the External Evaluation of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights issued in June 2017; welcomes indications that election observation is contributing to the overall and specific objectives of the EIDHR; underscores the importance of ensuring continued support among local populations for EOMs; to this effect draws attention to the need to ensure cost effectiveness and introduce proportionality between the resources spent on EOMs and the follow up of its recommendations; calls on the Commission to consider proposals made in the Final Report on the External Evaluation of the EIDHR to further strengthen the follow up of recommendations that result from election monitoring;
7. While welcoming the progress achieved, notes that 4 out of 10 civilian missions under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) have not yet been recognised by the Commission as compliant with Article 60 of the Financial Regulation; urges the

Commission to step up work in order to accredit all civilian CSDP missions, in line with the ECA's recommendation, allowing them to be entrusted with budget implementation tasks under indirect management;

8. Welcomes the ECA's special report on the "EU Assistance to Tunisia" and takes positive note that, through its funding, the EU made a significant and timely contribution to the democratic transition and to the economic development of the country in a challenging environment; welcomes the recommendations made by the ECA and calls on the Commission to implement them, including regarding the "more for more" approach and the need of reducing the number of priorities in order to increase the impact of the EU assistance; calls on the Commission to explore options for accelerating approval procedures of Macro-Financial Assistance, particularly for emergency funding;
9. Takes note of the ECA special report 11/2017 on the Bêkou EU trust fund for the Central African Republic; welcomes all the recommendations made by the ECA and calls on the Commission to implement them; in this light particularly underscores the importance of addressing concerns regarding coordination amongst stakeholders, attraction of additional donors, transparency and cost-effectiveness as well as the need to fully develop monitoring and evaluation mechanisms;
10. Welcomes equally the ECA's special report on the "EU support to fight human trafficking in South/South-East Asia"; encourages the Commission, in coordination with the EEAS, to pursue the development of the human trafficking strategic framework, that would also concern South and South-East Asia, in order to optimise the impact of the projects implemented in this area and to ensure the sustainability of their results;
11. In view of the significant bilateral support given to Libya across a number of sectors including civil society, governance, health, education, migration and protection, support to the political process, and security and mediation, calls on the ECA to issue a Special Report on EU Assistance to Libya.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	23.1.2018
Result of final vote	+: 50 -: 3 0: 5
Members present for the final vote	Lars Adaktusson, Michèle Alliot-Marie, Nikos Androulakis, Francisco Assis, Petras Auštrevičius, Amjad Bashir, Bas Belder, Goffredo Maria Bettini, Victor Bontinaru, Elmar Brok, Klaus Buchner, James Carver, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Lorenzo Cesa, Javier Couso Permuy, Arnaud Danjean, Georgios Epitideios, Eugen Freund, Michael Gahler, Iveta Grigule-Petere, Sandra Kalniete, Tunne Kelam, Janusz Korwin-Mikke, Andrey Kovatchev, Eduard Kukan, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Sabine Lösing, Andrejs Mamikins, Alex Mayer, David McAllister, Tamás Meszerics, Francisco José Millán Mon, Clare Moody, Javier Nart, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Alojz Peterle, Tonino Picula, Jozo Radoš, Sofia Sakorafa, Alyn Smith, Jaromír Štátník, Dubravka Šuica, László Tőkés, Miguel Urbán Crespo, Ivo Vajgl
Substitutes present for the final vote	Brando Benifei, Rebecca Harms, Marek Jurek, Jo Leinen, Miroslav Poche, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Traian Ungureanu, Bodil Valero, Marie-Christine Vergiat
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Tiemo Wölken

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

50	+
ALDE	Petras Auštrevičius, Iveta Grigule-Pēterse, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Javier Nart, Jozo Radoš, Ivo Vajgl
ECR	Amjad Bashir, Bas Belder, Marek Jurek, Ryszard Antoni Legutko
EFDD	Fabio Massimo Castaldo
PPE	Lars Adaktusson, Michèle Alliot-Marie, Elmar Brok, Lorenzo Cesa, Arnaud Danjean, Michael Gahler, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Sandra Kalniete, Tunne Kelam, Andrey Kovatchev, Eduard Kukan, David McAllister, Francisco José Millán Mon, Alojz Peterle, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jaromír Štátník, Dubravka Šuica, László Tőkés, Traian Ungureanu
S&D	Nikos Androulakis, Francisco Assis, Brando Benifei, Goffredo Maria Bettini, Victor Bontinaru, Eugen Freund, Jo Leinen, Andrejs Mamikins, Alex Mayer, Clare Moody, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Tonino Picula, Miroslav Poche, Tiemo Wölken
VERTS/ALE	Klaus Buchner, Rebecca Harms, Tamás Meszerics, Alyn Smith, Bodil Valero

3	-
EFDD	James Carver
NI	Georgios Epitideios, Janusz Korwin-Mikke

5	0
GUE/NGL	Javier Couso Permuy, Sabine Lösing, Sofia Sakorafa, Miguel Urbán Crespo, Marie-Christine Vergiat

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention