



Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

2015/2154(DEC)

25.1.2016

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

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 2014, Section III – Commission and executive agencies
(2015/2154(DEC))

Rapporteur: Giovanni La Via

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Would like to reiterate that, in accordance with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the European Parliament gives discharge to the Commission in respect of the implementation of the budget after examination of the accounts, the financial statement, the evaluation report referred to in Article 318 TFEU, the annual report by the European Court of Auditors (ECA) together with the replies of the institutions under audit, the statement of assurance and any relevant special reports by the ECA;
2. Recalls that 2014 is scheduled to be the first year of implementation of the new multi-annual financial framework (MFF) - intended to determine the size and distribution of Union expenditure for the period from 2014 to 2020 - and that, as a result, the level of implementation is lower than in previous years;
3. Takes note of the presentation of the environment and health policy areas within the ECA's Annual Report concerning the financial year 2014; is concerned that the environment and climate policy area appear again in the chapter also devoted to rural development and fisheries; reiterates its criticism towards the illogical composition of policy areas in this specific chapter; is not of the opinion that the ECA should take the political decision of grouping policy areas; urges the ECA to revise its approach in the next annual report;
4. Considers it noteworthy, in this context, that the chapter encompassing rural development, environment, fisheries and health appears with the highest error rate in the ECA's report for 2014, with 6,2% against 4,4% on average; notes furthermore that with regard to the main weaknesses found by the ECA, many were very similar to those already reported in the previous three years;
5. Notices that there are different views between the ECA and the Commission with respect to the way in which errors should be calculated; notes that the Commission considers that the ECA's annual representative error rate should be seen in the context of the multiannual character of net financial corrections and recoveries;
6. Notices that the ECA did not make any comment on the management of the "Public Health", "Food safety", "Environment and Climate action" policies;
7. With respect to the overall implementation of the budgetary headings for environment, climate action, public health and food safety in 2014, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety is satisfied; recalls again that only less than 0.5 % of the Union budget is dedicated to these policy instruments, while bearing in mind the clear Union added value in these fields, and the support of European citizens for Union environmental and climate policies, as well as for public health and food safety;
8. Is satisfied with the work carried out by the five decentralised agencies which are under

the competence of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and which carry out technical, scientific or managerial tasks that help the Union institutions make and implement policies in the area of environment, climate, public health and food safety, as well as with the way their budgets are implemented;

Environment and Climate Action

9. Underlines that EUR 352 041 708 have been available to DG ENV in commitment appropriations, of which 99,7 % has been implemented; notes that, with respect to payment appropriations, it is satisfactory that 95,03% of the EUR 290 769 321 available has been used; notes, moreover, that the LIFE+ administrative expenditure is executed over two budgetary exercises (through automatic carryovers), and that if this administrative expenditure is not taken into account, the rate of payment implementation reaches 99,89%;
10. Takes note that DG CLIMA has raised its implementation to 99,7% of EUR 102 694 032 in commitment appropriations and 93,1% of 32 837 296 in payment appropriations, and that if the administrative expenditure is not taken into account, the rate of payment implementation reaches 98,5%.;
11. Is satisfied with the overall implementation of the LIFE+ operational budget, which was 99,9% in commitment appropriations and 97,4% in payment appropriations in 2014; notes that in 2014, EUR 283 121 194 were dedicated to calls for proposals for projects in Member States, EUR 40 000 000 were used for financing operations in the framework of the financial instruments Natural Capital Financing Facility (NCFF) and Private Financing for Energy Efficiency (PF4EE), EUR 8 952 827 supported operational activities of non-governmental organisations that are active in protecting and enhancing the environment at Union level and which are involved in the development and implementation of Union policy and legislation, and EUR 49 502 621 were used for measures intended to support the Commission's role of initiating and monitoring the development of policies and legislation; notes that an amount of EUR 20 914 622 was used for administrative support to LIFE and for operating support to the Agency EASME;
12. Is aware that the payment rate of LIFE+ actions is always slightly lower compared to commitment appropriations, but with a high rate of implementation;
13. Acknowledges that an amount of EUR 4 350 000 has been allocated as contributions to international conventions, protocols and agreements to which the Union is a party, or in relation to which the Union is involved in preparatory work;
14. Considers the progress in the implementation of twelve Pilot Projects (PPs) and six Preparatory Actions (PAs) amounting all together to EUR 2 950 000 as satisfactory; is aware that the execution of those actions can be burdensome for the Commission due to the small amounts available in relation to the necessary procedures for execution (e.g. action plans, calls for proposals); encourages the budgetary authority to focus on PPs and PAs with true added value for the Union in the future;

Public Health

15. Recalls that 2014 is the first year of the implementation of the new programmes: the Health Programme was adopted on 11 March 2014 (Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 of the

European Parliament and of the Council¹), while the feed and food common financial framework was adopted on 27 June 2014 (Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council²);

16. Notes that DG SANTE was responsible, in 2014, for implementing EUR 244 221 762 on public health budget lines, of which 96,6% have been committed satisfactorily; is aware that roughly 75% of that budget is directly transferred to three decentralised agencies (the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, the European Food Safety Authority and the European Medicines Agency); also takes note that the level of execution of commitment appropriation is above 98,9% for all lines except for the European Medicines Agency, for which the under-execution of commitment appropriations corresponds to the outturn of 2013 which was reused in the year 2015;
17. Also takes note that the level of execution of payment appropriations is at 98,8%, which reflects a very good implementation rate;
18. Notes that the level of implementation in the Public Health programme 2008 – 2014 is also very good (99,7% in both commitment and payment appropriations), and that the remaining non-used credits principally relate to assigned revenue which can still be used in 2015;
19. Is satisfied that the implementation of all ten PPs and five PAs under the responsibility of DG SANTE in the area of public health is well advanced, and all corresponding commitment appropriations (EUR 6 780 000) were consumed;

Food Safety, animal health and welfare and plant health

20. Acknowledges that the implementation rate for food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health is at 96,8%; notes, however, that if the non-automatic carry-over of EUR 6 800 000 is taken into consideration, the implementation rate reaches 100% of the available credits;
21. Notes that, as in the previous year, the Union contribution towards tuberculosis programmes was the most important and that, on the other hand, the Union contribution towards bluetongue programmes remained low;
22. Acknowledges that the main factors underlying the under-implementation of EUR 8 100 000 in the chapter "Food and feed safety, animal health and welfare and plant health" can mainly be explained as follows: EUR 500 000 relates to assigned revenue for the different programmes that can be used in 2015 (i.e. no under-implementation), EUR 800 000 in assigned revenue that technically cannot be reused in 2015 (relating to C5 credits of the

¹ Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on the establishment of a third Programme for the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020) and repealing Decision No 1350/2007/EC (OJ L 86, 21.3.2014, p. 1).

² Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 laying down provisions for the management of expenditure relating to the food chain, animal health and animal welfare, and relating to plant health and plant reproductive material, amending Council Directives 98/56/EC, 2000/29/EC and 2008/90/EC, Regulations (EC) No 178/2002, (EC) No 882/2004 and (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Decisions 66/399/EEC, 76/894/EEC and 2009/470/EC (OJ L 189, 27.6.2014, p. 1).

old programmes) and EUR 6 800 000 which relates to the Emergency Fund; takes note that the latter amount was carried forward to 2015 (for measures to combat African swine fever in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in 2014);

23. Recognises that, regarding the 2014 payment appropriations, the implementation rates for the budget chapter on feed and food safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health is 99,0%, which represents a slight decrease compared to 2013 (99,9%); understands that during the global transfer exercise, additional payments credits were requested but not received, and that, by the end of the year, only one payment could not be fully made, but that with the agreement of the Member States the balance due was paid in early January 2015;
24. Is satisfied that the implementation of all three PPs and one PAs under the responsibility of the DG SANTE in the area of food safety is well advanced, and that all corresponding commitment appropriations (EUR 1 250 000) were consumed;
25. Is of the opinion, on the basis of the data available and the implementation report, that discharge can be granted to the Commission with respect to expenditure in the areas of environmental and climate policy, public health and food safety for the financial year 2014.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	21.1.2016
Result of final vote	+: 53 -: 12 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Marco Affronte, Pilar Ayuso, Zoltán Balczó, Catherine Bearder, Ivo Belet, Simona Bonafè, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nessa Childers, Birgit Collin-Langen, Mireille D'Ornano, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Angélique Delahaye, Jörn Dohrmann, Ian Duncan, Stefan Eck, Bas Eickhout, Eleonora Evi, José Inácio Faria, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Sylvie Goddyn, Matthias Groote, Françoise Grossetête, Jytte Guteland, György Hölvényi, Jean-François Jalkh, Benedek Jávor, Karin Kadenbach, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Valentinas Mazuronis, Susanne Melior, Miroslav Mikolášik, Piernicola Pedicini, Bolesław G. Piecha, Marcus Pretzell, Frédérique Ries, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Davor Škrlec, Renate Sommer, Tibor Szanyi, Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu, Estefanía Torres Martínez, Nils Torvalds, Glenis Willmott, Damiano Zoffoli
Substitutes present for the final vote	Paul Brannen, Herbert Dorfmann, Christofer Fjellner, Luke Ming Flanagan, Elena Gentile, Martin Häusling, Karol Karski, Andrey Kovatchev, Merja Kyllönen, Marijana Petir, Christel Schaldemose, Jasenko Selimovic, Bart Staes, Mihai Surcanu, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Carlos Zorrinho
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Daniel Dalton