



**2015/2154(DEC)**

15.12.2015

# **AMENDMENTS**

## **1 - 26**

**Draft opinion**

**David Casa**

(PE571.661v01-00)

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))



**Amendment 1**  
**Amjad Bashir**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 1**

*Draft opinion*

1. Notes that the estimated level of error in the policy area of employment and social affairs is 3,7 % in 2014, which is slightly higher than in the previous year (3,1 %);

*Amendment*

1. Notes ***with concern*** that the estimated level of error in the policy area of employment and social affairs is 3,7 % in 2014, which is slightly higher than in the previous year (3,1 %); ***highlights that this represents a step backwards in achieving an error rate that is below the target of 2%***;

Or. en

**Amendment 2**  
**Amjad Bashir**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 1 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***1a. Considers that the continued focus on compliance rather than results represents an inefficient use of public funds; calls on the Commission to further develop result indicators and monitoring systems with a view to increasing the efficiency of future operating programmes;***

Or. en

**Amendment 3**  
**Martina Dlabajová, Ivo Vajgl, Renate Weber**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 3**

*Draft opinion*

3. Welcomes furthermore the Court's recommendations that the Europe2020 strategy and the MFF need to be better aligned, the high-level political aims need to be translated into useful operational targets, and ***the focus on results should be reinforced***, particularly in the cases of the employment and social headline targets, where the Commission does not have the competence to create a legally binding framework;

*Amendment*

3. Welcomes furthermore the Court's recommendations that the Europe2020 strategy and the MFF need to be better aligned, the high-level political aims need to be translated into useful operational targets, and ***stresses the importance of focussing on performance and results as well as on added value***, particularly in the cases of the employment and social headline targets, where the Commission does not have the competence to create a legally binding framework;

Or. en

**Amendment 4**

**Tamás Meszerics**

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**Draft opinion**

**Paragraph 3**

*Draft opinion*

3. Welcomes furthermore the Court's recommendations that the Europe2020 strategy and the MFF need to be better aligned, the high-level political aims need to be translated into useful operational targets, and the focus on results should be reinforced, particularly in the cases of the employment and social headline targets, where the Commission ***does not have the*** competence to create a legally binding framework;

*Amendment*

3. Welcomes furthermore the Court's recommendations that the Europe2020 strategy and the MFF need to be better aligned, the high-level political aims need to be translated into useful operational targets, and the focus on results should be reinforced, particularly in the cases of the employment and social headline targets, where the Commission ***has limited*** competence to create a legally binding framework;

Or. en

**Amendment 5**

**Aldo Patriciello**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 3**

*Draft opinion*

3. Welcomes furthermore the Court's recommendations that the Europe2020 strategy and the MFF need to be better aligned, the high-level political aims need to be translated into useful operational targets, and the focus on results should be reinforced, particularly in the cases of the employment and social headline targets, where the Commission does not have the competence to create a legally binding framework;

*Amendment*

3. Welcomes furthermore the Court's recommendations that the Europe2020 strategy and the MFF need to be better aligned, the high-level political aims need to be translated into useful operational targets, and the focus on results should be reinforced, particularly in the cases of the employment and social headline targets, where the Commission does not have the competence to create a legally binding framework; ***considers that the above results should be monitored by means of an appropriate system for comparison of results with the predetermined objectives, in order to be able to establish subsequent objectives in a more informed manner;***

Or. it

**Amendment 6**  
**Tamás Meszerics**  
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 4**

*Draft opinion*

4. Notes the Court's observations about the increased risk of irregularities in cases of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) participating in Horizon 2020; supports the Commission's reply that SMEs' involvement in the programme is crucial for the creation of growth and jobs and **welcomes** that the administrative rules for SMEs have been simplified;

*Amendment*

4. Notes the Court's observations about the increased risk of irregularities in cases of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) participating in Horizon 2020; supports the Commission's reply that SMEs' involvement in the programme is crucial for the creation of growth and jobs and **notes** that the administrative rules for SMEs have been simplified;

Or. en

**Amendment 7**  
**Amjad Bashir**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 4**

*Draft opinion*

4. Notes the Court's observations about the increased risk of irregularities in cases of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) participating in Horizon 2020; supports the Commission's reply that SMEs' involvement in the programme is crucial for the creation of growth and jobs **and** welcomes that the administrative rules for SMEs have been simplified;

*Amendment*

4. Notes the Court's observations about the increased risk of irregularities in cases of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) participating in Horizon 2020; supports the Commission's reply that SMEs' involvement in the programme is crucial for the creation of growth and jobs; welcomes that the administrative rules for SMEs have been simplified **and stresses that further simplification would lead to a higher involvement of SMEs;**

Or. en

**Amendment 8**  
**Martina Dlabajová, Ivo Vajgl, Renate Weber**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 4**

*Draft opinion*

4. Notes the Court's observations about the increased risk of irregularities in cases of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) participating in Horizon 2020; supports the Commission's reply that SMEs' involvement in the programme is crucial for the creation of growth and jobs and welcomes that the administrative rules for SMEs have been simplified;

*Amendment*

4. Notes the Court's observations about the increased risk of irregularities in cases of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) participating in Horizon 2020; supports the Commission's reply that SMEs' involvement in the programme is crucial for the creation of growth and jobs and welcomes that the administrative rules for SMEs have been simplified, **stresses the importance of creation of sustainable jobs through SMEs;**

Or. en

**Amendment 9**  
**Amjad Bashir**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 4 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***4a. Notes that SMEs are Europe's biggest job creators and considers that more can be done to increase their participation across EU funding programmes; calls on the Commission to introduce further measures that encourage the active participation of SMEs including the application of the think-small-first principle;***

Or. en

**Amendment 10**  
**Tamás Meszerics**  
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 5**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***5. Expresses its regret*** that the intangible nature of investments in human capital, the diversity of the activities and the involvement of multiple, often small-scale partners in the implementation of projects ***continue to be the main risks to regularity*** of spending of European Social Fund (ESF) expenditure; calls on the Commission to continue with specific mitigating actions, including both preventative and corrective measures;

***5. Reminds*** that the intangible nature of investments in human capital, the diversity of the activities and the involvement of multiple, often small-scale partners in the implementation of projects ***require a proportionate approach with regard to the rules and control*** of spending of European Social Fund (ESF) expenditure; ***Highlights once again the importance of capacity building and*** calls on the Commission to continue with specific mitigating actions, including both preventative and corrective measures;

Or. en

**Amendment 11**  
**Martina Dlabajová, Ivo Vajgl, Renate Weber**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 5**

*Draft opinion*

5. ***Expresses its regret*** that the intangible nature of investments in human capital, the diversity of the activities and the involvement of multiple, often small-scale partners in the implementation of projects continue to be the main risks to regularity of spending of European Social Fund (ESF) expenditure; calls on the Commission to continue with specific mitigating actions, including both preventative and corrective measures;

*Amendment*

5. ***Notes*** that the intangible nature of investments in human capital, the diversity of the activities and the involvement of multiple, often small-scale partners in the implementation of projects continue to be the main risks to regularity of spending of European Social Fund (ESF) expenditure; calls on the Commission to continue with specific mitigating actions, including both preventative and corrective measures;

Or. en

**Amendment 12**  
**Amjad Bashir**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 5 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

***5a. Is alarmed by the findings of Court of Auditors' Special Report 17/2015 regarding the redirection of ESF funding during the period 2012 - 2014; notes with concern the shortcomings in the Commission's reporting on the impact of these funds and highlights the considerable gap in financial accountability that this represents; considers that further moves towards results-based policy making are vital to ensuring sound financial accountability and an efficient use of public funds;***

*Amendment*

Or. en

**Amendment 13**  
**Georgi Pirinski**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 5 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***5a. Is concerned that higher error rates followed by suspensions and interruptions may affect the successful closure of the 2007-2013 programmes;***

Or. en

**Amendment 14**  
**Georgi Pirinski**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 6**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

6. Considers that the promotion of broader use of simplified cost options can lead to the reduction of the administrative burden ***on the beneficiaries;***

6. Considers that the promotion of broader use of simplified cost options (***SCOs***) can lead to the reduction of the administrative burden; ***points out, however, that SCOs should be applied in an environment of legal certainty and trust, accompanied by an assessment of benefits and with the full involvement of stakeholders at all levels; stresses that SCOs should remain an option at the disposal of Member States;***

Or. en

**Amendment 15**  
**Martina Dlabajová, Ivo Vajgl, Renate Weber**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 6**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

6. Considers that the promotion of broader

6. Considers that the promotion of broader

use of simplified cost options can lead to the reduction of the administrative burden on the beneficiaries;

use of simplified cost options can lead to the reduction of the administrative burden on the beneficiaries, *to fewer errors and more orientation on performance and results*;

Or. en

**Amendment 16**  
**Amjad Bashir**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 6**

*Draft opinion*

6. Considers that the promotion of broader use of simplified cost options can lead to the reduction of the administrative burden on the beneficiaries;

*Amendment*

6. Considers that the promotion of broader use of simplified cost options can lead to the reduction of the administrative burden on the beneficiaries; *highlights that the introduction of Annual Burden Reduction Targets that include EU funding programmes would increase compliance and therefore contribute to a reduction in the error rate*;

Or. en

**Amendment 17**  
**Amjad Bashir**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 6 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

*6a. Calls upon the Commission to bring forward proposals for an Annual Burden Survey which also covers EU funding programmes with a view to reducing the administrative burden, increasing compliance and therefore reducing the error rate*;

Or. en

**Amendment 18**  
**Georgi Pirinski**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 6 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***6a. Insists that the Member States avoid further complications of the rules and requirements related to the implementation of the European Social Fund which impose additional burdens for beneficiaries and increase the risk of errors;***

Or. en

**Amendment 19**  
**Martina Dlabajová, Ivo Vajgl, Renate Weber**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 7**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

7. Expresses its concerns about the fact that out of **170** transactions examined by the Court in the employment and social affairs policy area **60 (35 %)** were affected by error; urges the Commission to implement corrective measures and apply strict procedures to reduce the risk of irregularities in this policy area as well as to follow up the cases of ineligible expenditure identified by the Court;

7. Expresses its concerns about the fact that out of **178** transactions examined by the Court in the employment and social affairs policy area **62 (34.8 %)** were affected by error, ***out of which 12 were quantifiable errors exceeding 20% (6.7%)***; urges the Commission to implement corrective measures and apply strict procedures to reduce the risk of irregularities in this policy area as well as to follow up the cases of ineligible expenditure identified by the Court;

Or. en

**Amendment 20**  
**Marian Harkin, Ivo Vajgl**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 7**

*Draft opinion*

7. Expresses its concerns about the fact that out of 170 transactions examined by the Court in the employment and social affairs policy area 60 (35 %) were affected by error; urges the Commission to implement corrective measures and apply strict procedures to reduce the risk of irregularities in this policy area as well as to follow up the cases of ineligible expenditure identified by the Court;

*Amendment*

7. Expresses its concerns about the fact that out of 170 transactions examined by the Court in the employment and social affairs policy area 60 (35 %) were affected by error; urges the Commission to implement corrective measures and apply strict procedures to reduce the risk of irregularities in this policy area as well as to follow up the cases of ineligible expenditure identified by the Court; ***notes in particular that if Member States or independent auditors had made use of all the information available to them, a significant proportion of the errors could have been prevented, detected or corrected;***

Or. en

**Amendment 21**  
**Georgi Pirinski**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 7 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***7a. Regrets that the number of European Social Fund (ESF) programmes with an error rate of over than 5 % has risen from 18,8 % in 2013 to 22,9 % in 2014 and that the volume of payments affected by these rates has increased dramatically from 11,2 % to 25,2 %;***

Or. en

**Amendment 22**  
**Georgi Pirinski**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 7 b (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***7b. Encourages Member States to use the risk assessment tool Arachne and encourages the Commission to continue providing Member States with relevant guidelines and technical assistance for the correct implementation of the management and control requirements in the 2014-2020 period; Insists that the Commission enhance the exchange of good practices between Member States;***

Or. en

**Amendment 23**  
**Georgi Pirinski**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 7 c (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***7c. Draws attention to the repeated observation of the Court of Auditors that the percentage of error would be lower if national authorities had made better use of available information before sending payment applications to the Commission; in this regard, insists that Member States and national authorities perform better control and avoid asking for reimbursement of incorrect expenditures;***

Or. en

**Amendment 24**  
**Martina Dlabajová, Ivo Vajgl, Renate Weber**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 8**

*Draft opinion*

8. Calls on the Commission to follow the Court's recommendations in order to ***ensure that the implementation*** of the Union budget ***contributes*** to the achievement of the employment and social headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy.

*Amendment*

8. Calls on the Commission to follow the Court's recommendations in order to ***further increase the contribution*** of the Union budget to the achievement of the employment and social headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy.

Or. en

**Amendment 25**  
**Georgi Pirinski**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 8**

*Draft opinion*

8. Calls on the Commission to follow the Court's recommendations in order to ensure that the implementation of the Union budget contributes to the achievement of the employment and social headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy.

*Amendment*

8. Calls on the Commission to follow the Court's recommendations in order to ensure that the implementation of the Union budget contributes to the achievement of the employment and social headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy; ***in this regard expects that the Commission and Member States make use of better performance indicators and improve reporting of the results achieved in 2014-2020 period;***

Or. en

**Amendment 26**  
**Georgi Pirinski**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 8 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***8a. Shares the Court of Auditors' recommendation asking Member States to ensure prompt reimbursement of***

*beneficiaries in strict compliance with  
time limits, envisaged in the regulations.*

Or. en