



**2017/2136(DEC)**

6.12.2017

# **AMENDMENTS**

## **1 - 19**

**Draft opinion**

**Claude Rolin**

(PE612.086v01-00)

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))



**Amendment 1**  
**Mara Bizzotto, Dominique Martin, Joëlle Mélin**

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

*Draft opinion*

1. Notes that there has been a sustained improvement in the overall estimated level of error in payments made from the EU budget in the past few years (4,4 % in 2014; 3,8 % in 2015; 3,1 % in 2016); **welcomes** that for the first time since 1994, the Court issued a qualified opinion on the regularity of the transactions underlying the 2016 accounts;

*Amendment*

1. Notes that there has been, **on average**, a sustained improvement in the overall estimated level of error in payments made from the EU budget in the past few years (4.4 % in 2014; 3.8 % in 2015; 3.1 % in 2016); **notes** that for the first time since 1994, the Court issued a qualified opinion on the regularity of the transactions underlying the 2016 accounts;

Or. it

**Amendment 2**  
**Jasenko Selimovic**

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

*Draft opinion*

1. Notes that there has been a sustained improvement in the overall estimated level of error in payments made from the EU budget in the past few years (4,4 % in 2014; 3,8 % in 2015; 3,1 % in 2016); **welcomes** that for the first time since 1994, the Court issued a qualified opinion on the regularity of the transactions underlying the 2016 accounts;

*Amendment*

1. Notes that there has been a sustained improvement in the overall estimated level of error in payments made from the EU budget in the past few years (4,4 % in 2014; 3,8 % in 2015; 3,1 % in 2016); **further notes that entitlement payments, a significant part of the audited expenditure accounting for about 49 % of Union spending, showed levels (1,3 %) below the 2 % threshold for material level of error**; **welcomes** that for the first time since 1994, the Court issued a qualified opinion on the regularity of the transactions underlying the 2016 accounts;

Or. en

**Amendment 3**  
**Mara Bizzotto, Dominique Martin, Joëlle Mélin**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 2**

*Draft opinion*

2. Acknowledges the overall positive impact of the corrective action by authorities in the Member States *and by the Commission*, which had *a positive* impact on the estimated level *or* error and without which the estimated level of error would have been 1,2 % higher;

*Amendment*

2. Acknowledges the overall positive impact of the corrective action by authorities in the Member States, which had *an* impact on the estimated level *of* error and without which the estimated level of error would have been 1.2 % higher;

Or. it

**Amendment 4**  
**Mara Bizzotto, Dominique Martin, Joëlle Mélin**

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

*Draft opinion*

3. *Notes with concern* the high estimated level of error in the policy area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ at 4,8 %, which is above the error level for the EU budget as a whole (3,1 %); *notes, however, that this represents a small decrease from the previous year (5,2 %); notes that the estimated error level in the area of ‘Competitiveness for growth and jobs’ is 4,1 %;*

*Amendment*

3. *Deplores* the high estimated level of error in the policy area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ at 4.8 %, which is above the error level for the EU budget as a whole (3.1 %);

Or. it

**Amendment 5**  
**Jasenko Selimovic**

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

*Draft opinion*

3. Notes with concern the high estimated level of error in the policy area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ at 4,8 %, which is above the error level for the EU budget as a whole (3,1 %); notes, however, that this represents a small decrease from the previous year (5,2 %); notes that *the estimated error level* in the area of ‘Competitiveness for growth and jobs’ is 4,1 %;

*Amendment*

3. Notes with concern the high estimated level of error in the policy area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ at 4,8 %, which is above the ***threshold for material error and the*** error level for the EU budget as a whole (3,1 %); notes, however, that this represents a small decrease from the previous year (5,2 %), ***but is still too high***; notes that ***errors*** in the area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion policy’ ***are mainly due to the inclusion of ineligible costs in beneficiaries’ declarations, the selection of ineligible projects, activities or beneficiaries and the infringement of public procurement legislation and notes that almost all of the expenditure in this area takes the form of cost reimbursement payments***;

Or. en

**Amendment 6**

**Siôn Simon, Jutta Steinruck, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Georgi Pirinski, Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu**

**Draft opinion**

**Paragraph 3**

*Draft opinion*

3. Notes with concern the high estimated level of error in the policy area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ at 4,8 %, which *is* above the error level for the EU budget as a whole (3,1 %); notes, however, that this represents a small decrease from the previous year (5,2 %); notes that the estimated error level in the area of ‘Competitiveness for growth and jobs’ is 4,1 %;

*Amendment*

3. Notes with concern the high estimated level of error in the policy area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ at 4,8 %, which ***remains*** above the error level for the EU budget as a whole (3,1 %); notes, however, that this represents a small decrease from the previous year (5,2 %); notes that the estimated error level in the area of ‘Competitiveness for growth and jobs’ is 4,1 %;

Or. en

**Amendment 7**  
**Paloma López Bermejo**

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

*Draft opinion*

3. Notes with concern the high estimated level of error in the policy area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ at 4,8 %, which is above the error level for the EU budget as a whole (3,1 %); notes, however, that this represents a small decrease from the previous year (5,2 %); notes that the estimated error level in the area of ‘Competitiveness for growth and jobs’ is 4,1 %;

*Amendment*

3. Notes with concern the high estimated level of error in the policy area of ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ at 4,8 %, which is above the error level for the EU budget as a whole (3,1 %); notes, however, that this represents a small decrease from the previous year (5,2 %); notes that the estimated error level in the area of ‘Competitiveness for growth and jobs’ is 4,1 %; ***notes the need to use more specific measures by which to evaluate the work and to avoid the errors while achieving a high performance;***

Or. en

**Amendment 8**  
**Jasenko Selimovic**

**Draft opinion**  
**Paragraph 3 a (new)**

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***3a. Notes with concern that the estimated error level in the area of ‘Competitiveness for growth and jobs’ is 4,1 % and that most of the errors were related to the reimbursement of ineligible personnel and direct or indirect costs declared by beneficiaries of research projects; stresses the need to take effective measures to reduce those sources of error;***

Or. en

**Amendment 9**  
**Mara Bizzotto, Dominique Martin, Joëlle Mélin**

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

*Draft opinion*

4. *Deplores that, as it was the case in previous years, Member States had sufficient information available to prevent, or to detect and correct, a significant number of errors; notes the Courts recommendation not to introduce additional control in EU spending but to make sure that the existing control mechanisms are enforced properly;*

*Amendment*

4. *Notes that the complexity of European red tape in relation to payments sparks a vicious circle of errors, waste and misuse for which only the Commission is responsible and to which it can put a stop by making greater efforts to make access to the ESI Funds more transparent;*

Or. it

**Amendment 10**  
**Jasenko Selimovic**

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

*Draft opinion*

4. Deplores that, as it was the case in previous years, Member States had sufficient information available to prevent, or to detect and correct, a significant number of errors; notes the *Courts* recommendation not to introduce additional control in EU spending but to make sure that the existing control mechanisms are enforced properly;

*Amendment*

4. Deplores that, as it was the case in previous years, Member States had sufficient information available to prevent, or to detect and correct, a significant number of errors; notes *that if that information had been used to correct errors, the estimated level of error for the overall spending on ‘Economic, social and territorial cohesion’ would have been 1,1 %, i.e. below the 2 % materiality threshold, and for the overall spending on ‘Competitiveness for growth and jobs’ would have been 2,9 %; notes the Court’s* recommendation not to introduce additional control in EU spending, but to make sure that the existing control mechanisms are enforced properly;

**Amendment 11**  
**Jasenko Selimovic**

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

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***4a. Is concerned that in the course of the Court's review of 168 completed projects under the 'Economic, social and territorial cohesion' spending area, only one-third had a performance measurement system with output and result indicators linked to the objectives of the operational programme and that 42 % had no result indicators or targets, making it impossible to assess the specific contribution of those projects to the overall objectives of the programme;***

Or. en

**Amendment 12**  
**Jasenko Selimovic**

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

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***4b. Notes with concern that three years after the start of the 2014 to 2020 period, Member States have designated only 77 % of the programme authorities responsible for implementing the ESI funds, and that delays in budget implementation as of mid-2017 are greater than at the same point in the 2007-2013 period;***

Or. en



**Amendment 13**  
**Jasenko Selimovic**

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

*Draft opinion*

5. *Notes* the Court's recommendation that when reconsidering the design and delivery mechanism for the ESI funds post-2020, the Commission should strengthen the programme focus on performance and simplify the mechanism for payments by encouraging, as appropriate, the introduction of further measures linking the level of payments to performance instead of simply reimbursing costs.

*Amendment*

5. *Endorses* the Court's recommendation that when reconsidering the design and delivery mechanism for the ESI funds post-2020, the Commission should strengthen the programme focus on performance and simplify the mechanism for payments by encouraging, as appropriate, the introduction of further measures linking the level of payments to performance instead of simply reimbursing costs.

Or. en

**Amendment 14**  
**Jasenko Selimovic**

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

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

*5a. Considers that the promotion of a broader use of simplified cost options (SCOs) can lead to the reduction of administrative burdens, to fewer errors than reimbursements of actual costs and a greater focus on performance and results; shares the Court's recommendation that the Commission should further streamline rules and procedures to reduce legal uncertainty and where appropriate by making increased use of SCOs (such as unit costs, lump sums, flat-rate financing and prices) in the revised Financial Regulation; acknowledges the Commission's good work in this area to*

*date;*

Or. en

**Amendment 15**  
**Mara Bizzotto, Dominique Martin, Joëlle Mélin**

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

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***5a. Calls for a complete revision of the role of the European agencies and for an assessment of whether their tasks and objectives could not be better accomplished by the existing Commission Directorates-General or by the Member States, in order to prevent duplication of roles, limit waste and cut costs by improving transparency and efficiency in the use of public funds;***

Or. it

**Amendment 16**  
**Georgi Pirinski, Siôn Simon, Agnes Jongerius**

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

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***5a. Welcomes the achievements of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) in 2016 and the fact that almost three times the number of people were supported by them in 2016 compared to the period 2014-2015 (7,8 million people in 2016 compared to 2,7 million people in 2014-2015); notes that, as a result of ESF and YEI support, 787 000 participants were in employment, 820 000 participants gained a qualification, and 276 000 participants followed education or training;***

**Amendment 17**  
**Georgi Pirinski, Siôn Simon, Agnes Jongerius**

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

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***5b. Is concerned about the delay in the implementation of ESF and YEI and at their low budgetary execution; notes that the Commission has drawn attention that the ex-ante conditionalities as one of the reasons for their delayed implementation and that the absorption is affected by the introduced annual accounts and by the risk of net financial corrections; calls on the Commission, in this regard, to seriously reconsider the continuation of ex-ante conditionalities and to make efforts to mitigate the side effects of the other novelties introduced for the current period when elaborating its legislative proposals for the post-2020 period;***

Or. en

**Amendment 18**  
**Georgi Pirinski, Siôn Simon, Agnes Jongerius**

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

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

***5c. Draws attention to the Court 's observations in its Annual report on the implementation of the budget concerning the financial year 2016 that over the last five years it did not quantify any errors relating to the use of simplified cost options (SCOs) for transactions under the policy area of 'Economic, social and***

*territorial cohesion'; asks the Commission to continue providing guidance and support to Member States on the implementation of SCOs given their increasing applicability, as envisaged in the ongoing amendments of the rules of the European Structural and Investment Funds, in order to facilitate widest possible utilisation of SCOs;*

Or. en

**Amendment 19**  
**Georgi Pirinski, Siôn Simon, Agnes Jongerius**

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

*Draft opinion*

*Amendment*

**5d. Welcomes the results achieved under the three axes of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) in 2016; draws attention to the importance of EaSI support, and, in particular, of its Progress and European Employment Services network (EURES) axes, for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights; notes with concern that the thematic section Social Entrepreneurship within EaSI Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis remains underperforming and calls on the Commission to insist that the European Investment Fund commits to full utilisation of the resources under Social Entrepreneurship thematic section;**

Or. en