



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

2014/2075(DEC)

2.2.2015

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 2013, Section III – Commission and executive agencies
(2014/2075(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 in its motion for a resolution:

1. Would like to reiterate that in accordance with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), Parliament shall give discharge to the Commission in respect of the implementation of the budget after the examination of the accounts, the financial statement, the evaluation report referred to in Article 318 TFEU and the annual report by the Court of Auditors, together with the replies of the institutions under audit, the statement of assurance and any relevant special reports by the Court of Auditors;
2. Is satisfied with the overall implementation of the budgetary headings for environment, climate action, public health and food safety in 2013; recalls again that only less than 0,5 % of the Union budget is dedicated to those policy instruments while bearing in mind the clear Union added value in these fields and the support from Union citizens for Union environmental and climate policies as well as for public health and food safety; regrets that this percentage has fallen to 0,5 % from 0,8% in 2012;
3. Takes note of the presentation of the environment and health policy areas within the Court of Auditors Annual Report concerning the financial year 2013; is concerned that both policy areas appear again in the chapter also devoted to rural development and fisheries; reiterates its criticism towards this composition of policy areas, and urges the Court of Auditors to revise its approach with the next annual report; refers in this connection to the Court of Auditors' report on the European Regional Development Fund, which stresses the need for the Commission to maintain an accurate record of direct and indirect spending on biodiversity, including Natura 2000; urges the Member States to facilitate this process by providing accurate data;
4. Considers it noteworthy in this context, that the chapter on rural development, environment, fisheries and health appears with the second highest error rate in the report of the Court of Auditors for 2013 with 6,7 %, against 4,7 % on average; emphasises that this error rate accounts for all policy areas encompassed in the chapter; considers it noteworthy that most of the errors can be attributed to disregard for eligibility requirements, in particular with regard to agri-environment commitments; notes that there are different views between the Court of Auditors and the Commission with regard to the way in which errors should be calculated; notes that the Commission considers that the Court of Auditors' annual representative error rate should be seen in the context of the multiannual character of net financial corrections and recoveries;
5. Acknowledges that the Court of Auditors carries out random checks in the Member States very systematically and establishes the error rate on the basis thereof; notes that the Court of Auditors does not indicate in which Member States or in which areas the greatest problems arise; stresses therefore the need for a clear chain of accountability

and, in this context, attaches great importance to the quality of control systems in the Member States;

6. Notices that the Court of Auditors did not make any comment on the management of the "Public Health", "Food safety", "Environment and Climate action" policies;

Environment and Climate action

7. Underlines that EUR 422 788 882 has been available to DG ENV in commitment appropriations and 99,95 % have been implemented; notes that, with regard to payment appropriations, it is satisfactory that 95,24 % of EUR 330 403 116 available have been used; notes, moreover, that the LIFE + administrative expenditure is executed over two budgetary exercises (through automatic carry-overs), and that if this administrative expenditure is not taken into account, the rate of payment implementation reaches 99,62%;
8. Takes note that DG CLIMA has raised its implementation rate to 99,55% of EUR 35 994 690 in commitment appropriations and 92,04% of 29 636 914 in payment appropriations; is aware that a higher implementation rate was not achievable partly due to the non-submission of an invoice which was expected in 2013; notes, on the other hand 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 97,89%;
9. Is satisfied with the overall implementation of the LIFE+ operational budget, which was 99,96 % in commitment appropriations and 99,99% in payment appropriations in 2013; notes that in 2013 EUR 282 900 000 was dedicated to a call for proposals for projects in Member States, EUR 18 000 000 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 45 800 000 was used for measures intended to support the Commission's role of initiating and monitoring policy and legislation development; notes that an amount of EUR 20 300 000 was used for administrative support;
10. Acknowledges that an amount of EUR 2 700 000 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 for future international agreements;
11. Considers the progress in the implementation of 14 Pilot Projects (PPs) and six Preparatory Actions (PAs) amounting altogether to EUR 5 983 607 as satisfactory; encourages the Commission to continue implementing PPs and PAs as proposed by Parliament;

Public health

12. Notes that DG SANCO was responsible to implement EUR 233 928 461 on public health budget lines in 2013, of which 98,1 % have been committed satisfactorily; is aware that roughly 77 % of that budget is directly transferred to three decentralised agencies (the

European Center for Disease Prevention and Control, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Medicines Agency(EMA)) and that all credits were implemented at 100% except for EMA and EFSA, and that this under-execution of EMA and EFSA commitment appropriations corresponds to the outturn of 2012;

13. Takes also note that the level of execution of payment appropriation is at 98,0 %;
14. Notes that under the Health programme 2003 – 2007, the Commission has signed many grant agreements with a duration of 36 months and that, as for some of them extensions have been granted, last final payments were executed in 2013;
15. Notes that the level of implementation in the Public Health programme 2008 – 2013 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 2014;
16. Is satisfied that the implementation of all six PPs and three PAs under the responsibility of the DG SANCO is well advanced and all corresponding commitment appropriations were consumed;

Food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health

17. Acknowledges that the implementation rate for food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health is at 98,4 % and that this implementation rate has been constantly increasing over years; notes further that this increase takes into account a reduction of commitment appropriations of EUR 13 000 000 during the global transfer exercise, due to a favourable animal and plant health situation;
18. 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;
19. Acknowledges that the main factors underlying the under-implementation of EUR 4 300 000 in the chapter 17 04 – Food and feed safety, animal health and welfare and plant health are the EUR 900 000 relating to assigned revenue for the different programmes which can be used in 2014 and EUR 2 000 000 relating to the Emergency Fund; notes that, from the latter amount, 50% or EUR 1 000 000 were carried forward to 2014 (for addressing bluetongue disease in Germany) and implemented in that year;
20. Recognises, that as regards the 2013 payment appropriations, the implementation rates for the budget chapter on Food and feed safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health is 99,9 %, which represents a further increase compared to 2012 (97,7 %) and 2011 (98,1 %);
21. Notes that during the Global transfer exercise, EUR 7 500 000 in payments were returned in 2013 for the Emergency Fund (EUR 5 500 000) and other veterinary programmes (EUR 2 000000) due to a favourable animal and plant health situation;
22. Is of the opinion, on the basis of the data available and the implementation report, that discharge can be granted to the Commission in respect of expenditure in the areas of

environmental and climate policy, public health and food safety for the financial year 2013.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	29.1.2015
Result of final vote	+: 51 -: 10 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Marco Affronte, Margrete Auken, Pilar Ayuso, Zoltán Balczó, Catherine Bearder, Ivo Belet, Simona Bonafè, Biljana Borzan, Nessa Childers, Alberto Cirio, Birgit Collin-Langen, Mireille D'Ornano, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Angélique Delahaye, Jørn Dohrmann, Stefan Eck, Bas Eickhout, José Inácio Faria, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Enrico Gasbarra, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Sylvie Goddyn, Matthias Groote, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Jytte Guteland, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Benedek Jávor, Josu Juaristi Abaunz, Karin Kadenbach, Kateřina Konečná, Giovanni La Via, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Valentinas Mazuronis, Susanne Melior, Massimo Paolucci, Gilles Pargneaux, Bolesław G. Piecha, Pavel Poc, Marcus Pretzell, Frédérique Ries, Davor Škrlec, Tibor Szanyi, Nils Torvalds, Glenis Willmott, Jadwiga Wiśniewska
Substitutes present for the final vote	Nicola Caputo, Mark Demesmaeker, Jan Huitema, Peter Jahr, Merja Kyllönen, Nuno Melo, Marijana Petir, Julia Reid, Bart Staes, Kay Swinburne
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Clara Eugenia Aguilera García, Damian Drăghici