



2018/2195(DEC)

23.1.2019

OPINION

of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) for the financial year 2017 (2018/2195(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Romeo Franz

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that in response to the migration and asylum situation in 2015 faced by the Union, the mandate of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) (“The Agency”) was considerably extended in 2016 for the Agency to be able to better address the needs and challenges being faced at the EU's external borders; points out that the Agency's budget increased by 21% in 2017, with related staff increases of 43 % in 2017; stresses that in 2017 systems and procedures were still in the process of being adapted to cope with the new mandate of the Agency which was updated in 2016 with Regulation (EU) 2016/1624¹; welcomes, the Court of Auditors' conclusions that the annual accounts of the Agency present fairly its financial position on 31 December 2017 and that its transactions are legal and regular; reminds that the mandate of the Agency is currently under revision;
2. Notes that for the second year in a row, significant cancellations (17%) of budget appropriations were carried over from the previous year; stresses that this indicates a significant overestimation of the Agency's budgetary needs, notably on the part of public administrations of the Member States and other cooperating countries; requests therefore the Agency to work with its partners to improve its budgetary forecasts; encourages the Agency to make use of simplified cost options and other funding mechanisms in addition to grants where appropriate to increase the cost-effectiveness;
3. Notes that since 2014 the Court of Auditors has been reporting that proof of expenditure claimed by cooperating countries is often insufficient; regrets that this was again the case in 2017 with the financing of the deployment of an Airplane in Greece to support Iceland's Coast Guard, and with the co-financing of another airplane used by the Spanish Guardia Civil; welcomes the Agency's decision to explore the use of a simplified cost reimbursement model to address those recurring issues;
4. Regrets the irregular recruitment of temporary AST staff at higher grades than the ones allowed by the Staff Regulations (AST 4); understands the difficulties that the Agency is facing in recruiting qualified staff which led the Agency to return EUR 4 million; reminds the Agency of the importance of adhering to the Staff Regulations at all times;
5. Regrets that vacancy notices are published only on the Agency's website and in a limited number of languages only; calls on the Agency to be more proactive with regard to the visibility and general awareness of its vacancies; acknowledges the concerns of

¹ Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2016 on the European Border and Coast Guard and amending Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EC) No 863/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 and Council Decision 2005/267/EC (OJ L 251, 16.9.2016, p. 1).

additional costs relating to the translation of vacancy notes in all Union languages but requests the Agency to systematically publish all its vacancies on the website of the European Personnel Selection Office in all Union languages in order to increase transparency for Union citizens; invites the Commission to consider measures aimed at reducing the financial burden for the translation of vacancy notices upon the Agencies, including by establishing an ad hoc framework agreement with the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union;

6. Notes the Agency still has no comprehensive Business Continuity Plan approved by the Management Board since it moved in 2014; requests the Management Board of the Agency to adopt clear service level agreements for the continuity of its activities in case of a site disaster, as well as corresponding IT recovery objectives and maximum allowable data loss for its most critical systems and applications; requests the Agency to develop the supporting plans, to exercise them adequately and have test results responsibly endorsed by its Management Board;
7. Recalls that the provisions on information and communication as part of the accountability of the Agency towards the public were considerably modified in the revised Regulation, requiring the Agency to be more transparent about its activities; regrets that the Agency still does not fully live up to those new rules and calls upon it to implement them without delay;
8. Regrets that the majority of the Agency's operational programmes lack quantitative objectives and specific target values for the joint operations; notes with concern that this, together with insufficient documentation from cooperating countries, might hamper the ex post evaluation of the effectiveness of joint operations in the long term; calls on the Agency to set relevant strategic objectives for its activities and to establish an effective result-oriented monitoring and reporting system with relevant and measurable key performance indicators;
9. Notes again with concern the gender imbalance in the Agency's Management Board; reminds that Member States are the ones responsible to nominate Members to the Board; calls on Member States to ensure gender balance when nominating their members for the Agency's Management Board; calls on the Agency to pro-actively remind Member States of the importance of gender balance; points out that measures aimed at achieving a better geographical balance in the Agency's staff composition would be desirable;
10. Deeply deplores that despite repeated calls of Parliament and a significant overall staff increase for the Agency, the Fundamental Rights Officer still lacks adequate human resources and is therefore clearly hampered to properly conduct the tasks entrusted to her by the revised Regulation; urges the Agency to provide its Fundamental Rights Officer with adequate resources and staff, in particular for setting up a complaint mechanism and for further developing and implementing the Agency's strategy to monitor and ensure the protection of fundamental rights.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	10.1.2019
Result of final vote	+: 42 -: 2 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Asim Ademov, Martina Anderson, Heinz K. Becker, Monika Beňová, Michał Boni, Caterina Chinnici, Rachida Dati, Frank Engel, Laura Ferrara, Romeo Franz, Kinga Gál, Ana Gomes, Nathalie Griesbeck, Sylvie Guillaume, Monika Hohlmeier, Sophia in 't Veld, Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Monica Macovei, Roberta Metsola, Claude Moraes, Ivari Padar, Judith Sargentini, Birgit Sippel, Csaba Sógor, Helga Stevens, Traian Ungureanu, Bodil Valero, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Udo Voigt, Josef Weidenholzer, Cecilia Wikström, Kristina Winberg, Tomáš Zdechovský, Auke Zijlstra
Substitutes present for the final vote	Dennis de Jong, Anna Hedh, Lívia Járóka, Marek Jurek, Jean Lambert, Jeroen Lenaers, Andrejs Mamikins, Angelika Mlinar, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Norbert Erdős, Fernando Ruas, Adam Szejnfeld

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

42	+
ALDE	Nathalie Griesbeck, Sophia in 't Veld, Angelika Mlinar, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Cecilia Wikström
ECR	Marek Jurek, Monica Macovei, Helga Stevens
EFDD	Laura Ferrara
GUE/NGL	Dennis de Jong
PPE	Asim Ademov, Heinz K. Becker, Michał Boni, Rachida Dati, Frank Engel, Norbert Erdős, Kinga Gál, Monika Hohlmeier, Lívia Járóka, Jeroen Lenaers, Roberta Metsola, Fernando Ruas, Csaba Sógor, Adam Szejnfeld, Traian Ungureanu, Tomáš Zdechovský
S&D	Monika Beňová, Caterina Chinnici, Ana Gomes, Sylvie Guillaume, Anna Hedh, Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Andrejs Mamikins, Claude Moraes, Ivari Padar, Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy, Birgit Sippel, Josef Weidenholzer
VERTS/ALE	Romeo Franz, Jean Lambert, Judith Sargentini, Bodil Valero

2	-
ENF	Auke Zijlstra
NI	Udo Voigt

3	0
ECR	Kristina Winberg
GUE/NGL	Martina Anderson, Marie-Christine Vergiat

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention