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Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

2014/2075(DEC)

8.12.2014

DRAFT 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 European Union general budget for the financial year 2013, Section III – Commission (2014/2075(DEC))

Rapporteur: Sylvie Guillaume

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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 in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes the Court of Auditors' conclusion that the consolidated accounts of the European Union present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Union as at 31 December 2013 but that the supervisory and control systems examined were only partially effective in ensuring the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts; notes the Court's conclusion that all policy groups covering operational expenditure were materially affected by error, with an estimated error rate of 4.7% for expensed payments underlying the accounts in 2013 (as against 4.8% previously);
2. Notes the Court of Auditors' conclusion that the payments for research and other internal policies were affected by material error; calls for the Court of Auditors to provide detailed information on expenditure in connection with the area of freedom, security and justice in its annual report;
3. Welcomes the fact that the Court of Auditors calculated a residual error rate at year end of less than 2% in the area of justice and home affairs;
4. Welcomes Court of Auditors' Recommendation 2 to the effect that the Commission should make its control activities more risk-driven, focusing checks on high-risk beneficiaries (for example entities with less experience of European funding) and reducing the burden of checks on less risky beneficiaries;
5. Notes the conclusions set out in Court of Auditors Special Report No 3/2014, entitled 'Lessons from the European Commission's development of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II)', in which the Court looks at the reasons why the Commission delivered SIS II more than six years later than initially planned and at a cost far higher than was initially estimated;
6. Welcomes the fact that the External Borders Fund has helped to foster financial solidarity; criticises, despite this, the fact that further EU added value was limited and the overall result could not be measured due to weaknesses in the responsible authorities' monitoring and serious deficiencies in the ex post evaluations conducted by the Commission and the Member States.