



2017/2177(DEC)

7.2.2018

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
Asylum Support Office for the financial year 2016
(2017/2177(DEC))

Rapporteur: Kostas Chrysogonos

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. Welcomes the Court of Auditors' conclusions that the annual accounts of the European Asylum Support Office ('the Office') present fairly its financial position on 31 December 2016; notes, however, the qualifying remarks on two procurement procedures;
2. Highlights that in order to cover significant additional tasks since the start of 2015 including its support to Member States of first entry, in particular for the registration and interviewing of asylum applicants and for the relocation scheme, the budget of the Office increased by 273 %; underlines the fact that the Office's staff increased by only 34 % and that far fewer experts from Member States have been deployed to Member States of first entry than actually needed;
3. Notes that due to the migration crisis the Office had its budget amended at four different occasions in 2016 to respond to calls from the European Commission and Member States for an operational expansion in light of an increase of asylum-seekers arrivals in 2015-2016; this has resulted in difficulties for the Office absorbing those funds which, in turn, led to certain cancellations and carry-overs as well as difficulties in complying with budgetary and financial rules; stresses that this situation should be solved for the future;
4. Notes that the level of committed appropriations for Title II (administrative expenditure) carried over was high at EUR 2,5 million (43,9 %) and corresponds to contracts signed towards the end of 2016, in part due to additional budget payments towards the end of that year or for which invoices were received only in 2017; requests therefore that the Office improves its budgetary management;
5. Regrets the fact that for the payments underlying EASO's accounts, two of the five procurement procedures audited were irregular and had corresponding irregular payments representing 2.9% of the total expenditures; notes also the signature of an irregular additional framework contract for which no payments were made; notes the fact that the Office has already taken remedial action in 2017 replacing the contracts resulting from these procedures with new contracts; asks the Office to ensure such irregularities will not be repeated;
6. Requests the Office to improve its internal control processes; welcomes the remedial actions that have already been put in place in terms of the adoption of new internal control standards; stresses the lack of proper planning for public procurement procedures and reminds of its importance even in a crisis environment; notes that the Office did not insure 65 containers (EUR 852 136) located in a risky location where other containers have previously been destroyed by riots; notes that the Office considered such insurance not to be cost effective; notes that the Office had not recovered all its VAT reimbursement in a timely fashion for the years 2014 and 2015; and welcomes that this recovery has since been concluded;

7. Welcomes the fact that the late payment ratio decreased from 65 % in January 2016 to 9 % in October 2016, while the total number of transactions increased from 483 in January 2016 to 806 in October 2016; calls on the Office to complete the necessary corrective actions, such as those relating to late payments, reimbursement of costs; welcomes measures already undertaken regarding a new recruitment policy and the decrease in staff turnover; calls on the Office to submit to the discharge authority its plans to reform its budgetary planning and management performance parameters;
8. Urges the Office to build on its policies of 2013 concerning prevention of conflicts of interest, in line with good practice and Commission guidelines; calls on the Office to ensure the implementation of the policies adopted in 2017 concerning the effective protection of whistleblowers, while awaiting full Commission proposals.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	1.2.2018
Result of final vote	+: 45 -: 6 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Asim Ademov, Heinz K. Becker, Malin Björk, Michał Boni, Caterina Chinnici, Frank Engel, Cornelia Ernst, Raymond Finch, Lorenzo Fontana, Ana Gomes, Nathalie Griesbeck, Sylvie Guillaume, Monika Hohlmeier, Brice Hortefeux, Filiz Hyusmenova, Sophia in 't Veld, Dietmar Köster, Barbara Kudrycka, Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Roberta Metsola, Claude Moraes, Péter Niedermüller, Ivari Padar, Soraya Post, Judith Sargentini, Birgit Sippel, Branislav Škripek, Csaba Sógor, Sergei Stanishev, Helga Stevens, Traian Ungureanu, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Udo Voigt, Josef Weidenholzer, Kristina Winberg, Tomáš Zdechovský, Auke Zijlstra
Substitutes present for the final vote	Kostas Chrysogonos, Carlos Coelho, Gérard Deprez, Maria Grapini, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Marek Jurek, Andrejs Mamikins, Angelika Mlinar, Jaromír Štětina
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Georges Bach, Jonathan Bullock, Julia Reda, Francis Zammit Dimech

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

45	+
ALDE	Gérard Deprez, Nathalie Griesbeck, Filiz Hysmenova, Sophia in 't Veld, Angelika Mlinar
ECR	Marek Jurek, Branislav Škripek, Helga Stevens
GUE/NGL	Malin Björk, Kostas Chrysogonos, Cornelia Ernst, Marie-Christine Vergiat
PPE	Asim Ademov, Georges Bach, Heinz K. Becker, Michał Boni, Carlos Coelho, Frank Engel, Monika Hohlmeier, Brice Hortefeux, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Barbara Kudrycka, Roberta Metsola, Csaba Sógor, Jaromír Štětina, Traian Ungureanu, Francis Zammit Dimech, Tomáš Zdechovský
S&D	Caterina Chinnici, Ana Gomes, Maria Grapini, Sylvie Guillaume, Dietmar Köster, Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Andrejs Mamikins, Claude Moraes, Péter Niedermüller, Ivari Padar, Soraya Post, Birgit Sippel, Sergei Stanishev, Josef Weidenholzer
VERTS/ALE	Julia Reda, Judith Sargentini

6	-
EFDD	Jonathan Bullock, Raymond Finch, Kristina Winberg
ENF	Lorenzo Fontana, Auke Zijlstra
NI	Udo Voigt

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention