

THURSDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2017

09.00 - 12.30

Room: Altiero Spinelli (5E-2)

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The draft agenda was emailed to Members on 12 October 2017 and is in the [file for the meeting](#).

2. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair draws attention to the following points:

Languages available

FR, DE, IT, NL, EN, ES, FI, CS, ET, HU, PL, and RO.

Webstreaming

The CONT meeting is webstreamed on the [Europarl web-site](#).

Please be aware that each time a speaker activates the microphone to make an intervention, the camera will be automatically directed to the speaker.

Voting cards

The electronic voting system will be used for the votes and Members are reminded to bring their electronic voting card.

Adoption of Coordinators' recommendations

The summary of coordinators' recommendations from the last CONT coordinators' meeting that took place on 28 September 2017 was circulated to the Members on 11 October.

If no objections are received before the end of the meeting, these recommendations will be deemed approved.

CONT opinion in form of amendments to AFCO report on "Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and political foundations"

Coordinators decided to present CONT opinion to AFCO report on the EC proposal COM(2017) 481 amending "Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and political foundations" in the form of amendments to be tabled directly in AFCO according to rule 53, paragraph 4 of RoP.

The deadline for tabling amendments is **20 October noon**.

The vote will take place at the CONT meeting of 26 October in Strasbourg.

The Chair will then table the adopted amendments on behalf of the committee.

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PUBLIC MEETING

3. DISCHARGE 2016: EU GENERAL BUDGET - EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CONT/8/10601



Exchange of views with Commissioner *Carlos Moedas* in the presence of the Member of the European Court of Auditors responsible, *Alex Brenninkmeijer*

Rapporteur: [Joachim Zeller](#) (EPP)

Administrators: Philippe Godts and Christian Ehlers

Shadow Rapporteurs: Inés Ayala Sender (S&D), Martina Dlabajova (ALDE), Luke Ming Flanagan (GUE/NGL), Indrek Tarand (Greens/EFA), Marco Valli (EFDD), Jean-François Jalkh (ENF)

On 28 September 2017, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) presented its Annual Report 2016. In chapter 5 (competitiveness for growth and jobs), the ECA examined 150 transactions. The ECA estimates the most likely error rate in the area in question to be 4,1%. The most common errors relate to the reimbursement of ineligible costs declared by beneficiaries.

In 19 cases where quantifiable errors were made by beneficiaries, the Commission or independent auditors had sufficient information to prevent, or to detect and correct the error before accepting the expenditure. Had the Commission or independent auditors made proper use of all the information at their disposal, the estimated level of error for this chapter would have been 1,2 percentage points lower.

The documents of particular relevance for the exchange of views as regards the 2016 Commission discharge are:

- the ECA's 2015 Annual Report - Chapters 1-3 and 5;
- the Commission's follow-up report COM(2017) 379 final and ARES(2017)4964748;
- the 2016 Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget;
- the Annual Activity Reports of the respective Directors General.

These documents are available on the [CONT website](#).

Members submitted 69 written questions, which -in accordance with the timetable for the discharge procedure - were sent to the Commission on 9 October 2017 and e-mailed to Members on the same day.

The answers from the Commission were emailed to Members on 17 October.

CONT Timetable:

Event	Body	Date
Consideration of draft report	CONT	19 February 2018
Deadline for amendments	CONT	1 March 2018
Adoption in CONT	CONT	19 March 2018
Adoption in Plenary	Plenary	April 2018

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10.30 - 12.15

PUBLIC MEETING

4. PARTIAL RENEWAL OF MEMBERS OF THE COURT OF AUDITORS

CONT/8/



Hearing of candidates

Rapporteur: [Indrek Tarand](#) (Greens/EFA)
 Administrator: Olivier Sautière

Shadow Rapporteurs: Inés Ayala Sender (S&D), Luke Ming Flanagan (GUE/NGL)

The Chair reminds the Members to bring their electronic voting card, as there will be an electronic vote at the end of this session.

10h30-11h15
 Hearing of Hannu Takkula
 Candidate nominated by Finland (first mandate)

11h15 - 11h45
 Hearing of Karel Pinxten
 Candidate nominated by Belgium (renewal of mandate)

11h45-12h15
 Hearing of Pietro Russo
 Candidate nominated by Italy (renewal of mandate)

Background

The Members of the European Court of Auditors shall be appointed for a term of six years. In accordance with Article 286(2) of the TFEU the Council, after consulting the European Parliament, shall adopt the list of Members drawn up in accordance with the proposals made by each Member State.

Committee on Budgetary Control

The following candidates have been proposed by the Member States:

- **Hannu Takkula**, candidate nominated by Finland
- **Karel Pinxten**, Candidate nominated by Belgium
- **Pietro Russo**, Candidate nominated by Italy

Appointments to the ECA are submitted to Parliament's plenary on the basis of a report from CONT, which takes into account the primary law requirement of Article 286(1) of the TFEU: "*the Members of the Court of Auditors shall be chosen from among persons who belong or have belonged in their respective States to external audit bodies or who are especially qualified for this office. Their independence must be beyond doubt.*", as well as other considerations.

A. Procedure

According to Rule 121 (1) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, "candidates nominated as Members of the Court of Auditors shall be invited to make a statement before the committee responsible and answer questions put by members. The committee shall vote on each nomination separately by secret ballot."

I. Questionnaires and statements

In preparation for the hearing, the **candidate** has been asked to answer the **questionnaire** prepared by CONT (first appointment) or to provide a summary (renewal).

II. The hearing

The hearing will take place according to the timetable set out in the draft agenda. The candidate will be invited to make an opening statement (5 minutes) and the remainder of his hearing will be devoted to replies to questions from Members 40 minutes in case of a first mandate, and 30 minutes in case of renewal.

III. Evaluation, votes and adoption of draft report

Once the hearing has been completed, the committee will hold an evaluation of the candidate and then proceed to vote on the appointment of the candidate in question. Evaluation, votes and adoption of draft report **will be in camera**.

According to Rule 121, the committee shall vote by secret ballot. The vote may be carried out by means of the electronic voting system. (In accordance with Rule 181) Members should indicate for each candidate whether they give a favourable opinion, a negative opinion or abstain.

B. The report

The format of opinions on candidates for membership of the Court of Auditors is defined as follows¹:

- a) each recommendation on each nomination shall be submitted in the form of a report, to be adopted on the basis of a majority of the votes cast, with the report merely indicating the nomination;
- b) the report shall consist of:
 - i. citations summarising the circumstances of the referral to Parliament;
 - ii. recitals outlining the procedure to the competent committee;
 - iii. operative text which may only consist of a favourable opinion or an unfavourable opinion;
- c) citations and recitals shall not be put to the vote;"

¹ Parliament's resolution of 4 February 2014

Committee on Budgetary Control

These strict rules on procedures, before the Committee on Budgetary Control and in plenary sitting, adopted by Parliament **do not allow any amendments** to be tabled to the draft report.

The draft report will be finalised, according to the outcome of the evaluation and the vote in committee. The candidate's curriculum vitæ and the answers to CONT questionnaire or summary shall be annexed to the report.

The report for plenary will state that Parliament delivers either a favourable or a negative opinion on the appointment of the candidate.

The draft reports were circulated to Members on 4 October and are available on the [CONT website](#).

CONT Timetable:

Event	Body	Date
Adoption in Plenary	Plenary	NOVEMBER I

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12.15 - 12.30

PUBLIC MEETING

5. EVALUATION, VOTES AND ADOPTION OF DRAFT REPORTS (*IN CAMERA*)

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7. NEXT MEETINGS

- 26 October 2017, 08.45 - 11.45 (Strasbourg)

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PAPERLESS PROGRAMME (INTERNAL USERS ONLY)

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact the CONT Secretariat or visit the website of the CONT committee

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