

**MONDAY, 26 MARCH 2018**

15.00 - 18.30

**TUESDAY, 27 MARCH 2018**

09.00 - 12.30

## 1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The draft agenda was e-mailed to Members on 21 March 2018 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, EL, ES, FI, CS, ET, HU, LT, PL, SL, BG, RO, SK, and PT.

### 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.

**MONDAY, 26 MARCH 2018**

**15.00 - 17.05**

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**\*\*\* ELECTRONIC VOTING \*\*\***

**3. 2016 DISCHARGE: GENERAL BUDGET OF THE EU - EUROPEAN COMMISSION** CONT/8/10601

**4. 2016 DISCHARGE: SPECIAL REPORTS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF AUDITORS** CONT/8/10883

### Adoption of draft reports



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

Administrators: Christian Ehlers and Philippe Godts

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

The rapporteur insists that the EU Budget, as a consequence of the budget-focused-on-results initiative, be presented according to the political objectives of the Multiannual Financial Framework.

He calls on the Commission to commit to fundamentally review the young farmers' greening schemes in light of the findings of the European Court of Auditors before the next financing period. Mr Zeller also calls on the Commission to speed up the delivery of cohesion policy programmes and the related payments with the objective of bringing down the implementation period -initially- to n+2.

The original versions of the 450 amendments tabled to part I, and the 28 amendments tabled to part II of the Commission discharge report were circulated to CONT Members respectively on 6 and 2 March. The English version of the amendments became available on 9 March.

The draft voting list, including the rapporteur's position, was sent out on 20 March 2018.

The draft reports, the amendments and the opinions are available in all languages on the [CONT website](#).

### CONT Timetable:

Event	Body	Date
Adoption in Plenary	Plenary	April 2018

### 5. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE CONTROL OF THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE EIB FOR 2016

CONT/8/10965

#### Adoption of drafts report



Rapporteur: [Marco Valli](#) (EFDD)  
Administrator: Olivier Sautière

Shadow Rapporteurs: Andrey Novakov (EPP), Georgi Pirinski (S&D), Nedzhmi Ali (ALDE), Luke Ming Flangan (GUE/NGL), Indrek Tarand (Greens/EFA), Barabara Kappel (ENF)

The Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT) held an exchange of views on the draft report on the 2016 EIB annual report right after the presentation and exchange of views in the presence of the Vice-President of the EIB, Mr Stubb, on 18 January 2018.

The draft report focuses, inter alia, on the promotion of financially sustainable activities providing long-term impact from EIB investments, the deepening of the monitoring of added value/additionality and the mapping of the levers for change in the implementation of Union's public policy goals, the achievements of EFSI, and the enhancing of EIB's corporate governance.

The deadline for tabling amendments was 6 February 2018, 72 amendments were tabled.

The Committee on International Trade (INTA) delivered an opinion on this CONT report on 20 February 2018 for which Mr Sander Loones was appointed Rapporteur.

The draft report and the amendments are available in all languages on the [CONT website](#).

#### CONT Timetable:

Event	Body	Date
Adoption in Plenary	Plenary	May I 2018 (Brussels)

### 6. ANNUAL REPORT 2016 ON THE PROTECTION OF THE EU'S FINANCIAL INTERESTS - FIGHT AGAINST FRAUD

CONT/8/11242

#### Adoption of draft report



Rapporteur: [Gilles Pargneaux](#) (S&D)  
Administrator: Michal Czaplicki

Shadow Rapporteurs: Marian-Jean Marinescu (EPP), Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR), Dennis de Jong (GUE/NGL), Benedek Javor (Greens/EFA), Marco Valli (EFDD), Jean-François Jalkh (ENF)

## Committee on Budgetary Control

On the basis of the CONT report, OLAF presented its annual report on 22 June 2017, this was followed up by a set of written questions, to which OLAF replied on 19 July 2017. On 28 September 2017, Commissioner Oettinger presented the EC report "Protection of the European Union's financial interests - Fight Against Fraud - Annual Report 2016 (COM (2017)383)".

In his report, Mr Pargneaux notes with satisfaction that the total number of fraudulent and non-fraudulent irregularities reported in 2016 (19 080 cases) was 15% lower than in 2015 (22 349 cases) and their value had decreased by 8% (from EUR 3.21 billion in 2015 to EUR 2.97 billion in 2016). He noted the slight decrease of 3.5% in the number of irregularities reported as fraudulent, which continued the downward trend observed since 2014. Mr Pargneaux welcomes the adoption of the Directive on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (the PIF Directive) and the decision of 20 Member States to proceed with the establishment of an European Public Prosecutor's Office through enhanced cooperation. He expresses his concern about losses due to the VAT gap and fraud relating to EU VAT, which amounted to EUR 159.5 billion in 2015. He noted with concern that tobacco smuggling to the EU has intensified in recent years and, according to estimates, represents an annual loss of EUR 10 billion in public revenue to the EU and Member States' budgets, while at the same time represents a major source of organised crime, including terrorism. He also regrets that this is the fourth year in which the irregularities reported as fraudulent in direct management increased in number (16 cases in 2015 and 49 cases in 2016) and value (EUR 0.78 million in 2015 and EUR 6.25 million in 2016)

There were 77 amendments received by the deadline of 10 January 2018. The draft report and the amendment are available in all languages on the [CONT website](#).

The final voting list will be sent to the Members after the shadow meeting of 23 March 2018.

### CONT Timetable:

Event	Body	Date
Adoption in Plenary	Plenary	May I 2018 (Brussels)

**\*\*\* END OF ELECTRONIC VOTING \*\*\***

### 7. CONT MISSION TO LATVIA AND LITHUANIA (3-6 APRIL 2018)

CONT/8/12535



#### Exchange of views in preparation for the Committee mission

Rapporteur: Ingeborg Gräßble (EPP)  
Administrator: Christian Ehlers

The committee decided to send a delegation to Latvia and Lithuania. The mission will take place from 3 to 6 April 2018. The objective of the mission is to get a first-hand impression of the use Latvia and Lithuania made of structural funds' assistance, and also to evaluate the progress made in decommissioning the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant.

The exchange of views will take place in the presence of representatives from the Commission services involved.

Members will find the latest version of the programme on the [CONT website](#).

**TUESDAY, 26 MARCH 2018**

APPROX. 17.05 - 17.45

**IN CAMERA**

### 8. THE VOLKSWAGEN LOAN CASE

CONT/8/12536

#### Exchange of views representatives of the European Investment Bank

Last year, OLAF completed an investigation into a EUR 400 million loan from the EIB to the Volkswagen Group. At the time, the President of the EIB, Werner Hoyer, stated: *"We still cannot exclude that one of our loans, the 400m EUR loan 'Volkswagen Antrieb RDI', was linked to emission control technologies developed at the time the defeat software was designed and used. We will now review OLAF's conclusions and consider all available and appropriate action. [...] We are very disappointed at what is asserted by the OLAF investigation, namely that the EIB was misled, by VW about the use of the defeat device."*

CONT will hold an exchange of views with representatives of the European Investment Bank.

**TUESDAY, 26 MARCH 2018**

**17.45 - 18.30**

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**JOINT ITEM WITH THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS (LIBE)**

## **9. CONT-LIBE MISSION TO SLOVAKIA (7-9 MARCH 2018)**

CONT/8/12537

### **Exchange of views to follow-up the fact-finding mission**

On the morning of 26 February at 8.41 am, the Slovak daily newspaper Denník published the news that Ján Kuciak, together with his fiancée, was killed. He worked for [www.aktuality.sk](http://www.aktuality.sk), a news portal belonging to the media group Ringier Axel Springer Media AG. Mr Kuciak was one of the few journalists researching and investigating a number of politically sensitive cases, such as the Panama papers, economic crime, potential fraud in distributing EU funds at the national level, VAT fraud, carousel schemes, etc.

An ad-hoc EP delegation consisting of LIBE and CONT Members was prepared at short notice with the help of the EP Liaison Office Bratislava and the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The meetings were taking place in an overall very constructive and positive atmosphere and allowed for enriching exchanges and the pursuit of the fact-finding objective.

After the mission to Slovakia, the Members approved a [mission report](#) which served as the basis of the Parliamentary debate on the situation in Slovakia on Wednesday 14 March 2018. A parliamentary resolution on this issue will be voted on the next parliamentary session.

**TUESDAY, 27 MARCH 2018**

09.30 - 10.30

**IN CAMERA**

## **10. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES IN HUNGARY AND POLAND WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON PROCEDURES HAVING A SINGLE BIDDER**

CONT/8/12538

### **Exchange of view with DG REGIO representatives**

Administrator: Christian Ehlers

Concerns have been voiced against the backdrop that public procurement procedures on occasions only trigger the interest of a single bidder in Hungary and Poland.

CONT has invited DG REGIO to explain how to improve the situation.

**TUESDAY, 27 MARCH 2018**

10.30 - 12.30

**PUBLIC MEETING**

## **11. THE SITUATION IN HUNGARY (PURSUANT TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION OF 17 MAY 2017)**

CONT/8/11653

### **Consideration of draft opinion**



Rapporteur: [Ingeborg Gräßle](#) (EPP)

Administrator: Michal Czaplicki

Main Committee: LIBE

The LIBE Committee is drafting a resolution on the situation in Hungary. As CONT has organised a delegation to Hungary in September 2017, which was followed by discussions on various EU funded projects based on the investigations of OLAF and problems highlighted by the European Commission, it decided to draft an opinion to this resolution and nominated Ms Gräßle as the rapporteur.

In her opinion, the Rapporteur highlights the number of investigations carried out by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) on 2013-2016 in relation to Hungary (41 cases), is the second highest in the Union. Additionally, 85 % of the investigations were concluded with judicial and financial recommendations. Ms Gräßle believes that the current level of corruption, and the lack of transparency and accountability on public finances, affects Union funds in Hungary. She considers that this might represent a breach of values referred to in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and warrants the launch of the procedure under Article 7(1) TEU. Ms Gräßle notes with concern that the share of contracts

awarded after public procurement procedures that received only a single bid remains very high (36%), this is the second highest number in the Union.

The draft opinion is available on the [CONT website](#).

### CONT Timetable:

Event	Body	Date
Deadline for amendments	CONT	5 April 2018
Adoption in CONT	CONT	25 April 2018
Adoption in LIBE	LIBE	June 2018 (TBC)
Adoption in Plenary	Plenary	September 2018 (TBC)

## 12. EVALUATION OF COHESION POLICY IN HUNGARY, POLAND, SLOVAKIA AND CZECH REPUBLIC SINCE THEIR ACCESSION TO THE EU

CONT/8/12539

### Exchange of view with the Director General of DG REGIO, Marc Lemaître

Administrator: Christian Ehlers

In light of several CONT fact-finding mission, but also in light of reports from the European Court of Auditors and Annual Activity Reports of the respective Directorates General of the Commission, CONT decided to have a closer look at the implementation of cohesion policy in a number of Central and East European countries.

Therefore, CONT invited the Director General of DG REGIO to evaluate the current state-of-play and explain what measures were taken to implement cohesion policy during the 2014-2020 financial period in a timely and effective manner.

## 13. FOLLOW-UP TO “STORK NEST PROJECT”

CONT/8/12540

### Exchange of view with DG REGIO representatives

Administrator: Christian Ehlers

In December 2017 Czech media published an OLAF case file about an investigation into the “stork nest” project in the Czech Republic. OLAF recommended financial and judicial follow-up measures.

CONT has invited DG REGIO to explain what measures the Directorate General has taken.



**TUESDAY, 27 MARCH 2018**

**14.30 - 17.00**

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**14. HEARING OF COMMISSIONER OETTINGER ON THE INTEGRITY POLICY OF THE COMMISSION, IN PARTICULAR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
**15. INTEGRITY POLICY OF THE COMMISSION, IN PARTICULAR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

CONT/8/12541

- **Hearing of Günter Oettinger, Commissioner responsible for Budget and Human Resources**
- **Consideration of motion for a resolution (Rule 123)**

Following the debate in plenary on 12 March 2018 on the integrity policy of the Commission, in particular, the appointment of the Secretary-General of the European Commission, the Conference of Presidents decided, at its meeting of 15 March 2018, to task the Committee on Budgetary Control to consider the case and table a motion for a resolution on the subject for the part session during which the Commission discharge report will be voted.

There were 134 written questions drafted by CONT and transmitted to the Commission on 20 March. These are published on [CONT website](#). The replies from the Commission will be circulated as soon as possible.

CONT Members will have the opportunity to exchange views with Commissioner Oettinger in this regard. After the hearing with Commissioner Oettinger, Members will consider a draft motion of resolution, which will be transmitted to CONT Members as soon as possible.

Event	Body	Date
Deadline for amendments	CONT	4 April 2018 12.00
Adoption in CONT	CONT	16 April 2018
Adoption in Plenary	Plenary	18 April 2018

**16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**17. NEXT MEETINGS**

- 25 April 2018, 9.00 – 12.30 and 15.00 – 18.30 (Brussels)
- 26 April 2018, 9.00 – 12.30 (Brussels)

**WATCH LIVE**

Watch the CONT committee meeting live on the [EP website](#) or on [Europarl TV](#)

**PAPERLESS PROGRAMME (INTERNAL USERS ONLY)**

Access CONT committee meeting documents on [eMeeting](#) or any CONT committee information on [eCommittee](#)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Contact the [CONT Secretariat](#) or visit the [website](#) of the CONT committee

## NEWS FROM POLICY DEPARTMENT - BUDGETARY AFFAIRS

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**BUDG** Hearing "The EU budget and the Paris climate agreement" - **23/24 April 2018 - Room TBC**

**CONT** Workshop on "Efficient use of EU funding in the Baltic Sea: State of play in the combat against eutrophication" - **15 May 2018 - Room TBC**

Joint Hearing **BUDG/CONT/LIBE** - Assessing the flow of EU Migration funding within the Union - **16 May 2018 - Room TBC**

**CONT** Workshop on "How to better combat the fraud? Follow up of the Commission's anti-corruption sharing programme" - **20 June 2018 am - Room TBC**

### POLICY DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS

#### *Recent publications*

#### **CONT**

Study - Transitional Allowances for former EU office holders - too few conditions?

Study "10 years cooperation and verification Mechanism (Bulgaria and Romania) - Analyse of the Reports: evaluation and achievements"

#### *Forthcoming publications:*

#### **CONT/BUDG**

Study "Oversight and Management of the EU Trust Funds" - **Study Presentation 20 March 2018 in CONT, 21 March in BUDG**

#### **BUDG**

- Study "Potential revenue from the extension of charging fees by EU Agencies" - **April 2018 - TBC**

### CONTACTS

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