



Plenary sitting

A8-0108/2018

26.3.2018

REPORT

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European
Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) for the financial year 2016
(2017/2164(DEC))

Committee on Budgetary Control

Rapporteur: Bart Staes

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1. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) for the financial year 2016 (2017/2164(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (the Agency) for the financial year 2016,
- having regard to the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency for the financial year 2016, together with the Agency's reply¹,
- having regard to the statement of assurance² as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions provided by the Court of Auditors for the financial year 2016, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the Council's recommendation of 20 February 2018 on discharge to be given to the Agency in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2016 (05941/2018 – C8-0074/2018),
- having regard to Article 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002³, and in particular Article 208 thereof,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 of 26 October 2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union⁴, and in particular Article 30 thereof,
- having regard to 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/EC⁵, in particular Article 76 thereof,
- having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1271/2013 of 30 September 2013 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies referred to in

¹ OJ C 417, 6.12.2017, p. 233.

² OJ C 417, 6.12.2017, p. 233.

³ OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 349, 25.11.2004, p. 1.

⁵ OJ L 251, 16.09.2016, p. 1.

Article 208 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹, and in particular Article 108 thereof,

- having regard to Rule 94 of and Annex IV to its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control and the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (A8-0108/2018),
1. Grants the executive director of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency discharge in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2016;
 2. Sets out its observations in the resolution below;
 3. Instructs its President to forward this decision, and the resolution forming an integral part of it, to the executive director of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors, and to arrange for their publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L series).

¹ OJ L 328, 7.12.2013, p. 42.

2. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

on the closure of the accounts of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) for the financial year 2016 (2017/2164(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (the Agency) for the financial year 2016,
- having regard to the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency for the financial year 2016, together with the Agency's reply¹,
- having regard to the statement of assurance² as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions provided by the Court of Auditors for the financial year 2016, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the Council's recommendation of 20 February 2018 on discharge to be given to the Agency in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2016 (05941/2018 – C8-0074/2018),
- having regard to Article 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002³, and in particular Article 208 thereof,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 of 26 October 2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union⁴, and in particular Article 30 thereof,
- having regard to 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/EC⁵, in particular Article 76 thereof,
- having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1271/2013 of 30 September 2013 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies referred to in

¹ OJ C 417, 6.12.2017, p. 233.

² OJ C 417, 6.12.2017, p. 233.

³ OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 349, 25.11.2004, p. 1.

⁵ OJ L 251, 16.09. 2016, p. 1.

Article 208 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹, and in particular Article 108 thereof,

- having regard to Rule 94 of and Annex IV to its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control and the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (A8-0108/2018),
1. Approves the closure of the accounts of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency for the financial year 2016;
 2. Instructs its President to forward this decision to the executive director of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors, and to arrange for its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L series).

¹ OJ L 328, 7.12.2013, p. 42.

3. MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) for the financial year 2016 (2017/2164(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency for the financial year 2016,
 - having regard to Rule 94 of and Annex IV to its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control and the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (A8-0108/2018),
- A. whereas in the context of the discharge procedure, the discharge authority wishes to stress the particular importance of further strengthening the democratic legitimacy of the Union institutions by improving transparency and accountability, and implementing the concept of performance-based budgeting and good governance of human resources;
- B. whereas, according to its statement of revenue and expenditure¹, the final budget of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (“the Agency”) for the financial year 2016 was EUR 232 757 000, representing an increase of 62,43 % compared to 2015; whereas, in response to the migration crisis faced by the Union, the mandate of the Agency was considerably extended in 2016;
- C. whereas, according to its financial statements, the overall contribution of the Union to the Agency's budget for 2016 amounted to EUR 218 686 000; representing an increase of 63,78 % compared to 2015;
- D. whereas the Court of Auditors ("the Court"), in its report on the annual accounts of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency for the financial year 2016 ("the Court's report"), has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the transactions underlying the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2016 are legal and regular; whereas the comments from the Court are to be read in the context of the challenges the Agency had to face in 2016;

Follow up to the 2013, 2014 and 2015 discharges

1. Notes with concern the number of outstanding issues and corrective measures in response to the Court's comments in 2013, 2014 and 2015 related to suppliers' statements at year-end, the headquarters agreement, ex-ante and ex-post verifications of expenditure claimed by cooperating countries under grant agreements, the increasing number of grant agreements, the need to refine the calculation of contributions from Schengen-associated countries, the recovery of irregular payments from the Icelandic coast guard and the risk of double funding by the Internal Security Fund; calls on the

¹ OJ C 12, 13.01.2017, p.27

Agency to complete corrective actions as soon as possible in 2018 and report on their implementation to the discharge authority;

Comments on the legality and regularity of transactions

2. Notes from the Court's report that the Agency's previous founding Regulation which was in force until 5 October 2016 provided for the funding of joint return operations carried out with participating countries; notes that national return operations only became eligible under the new founding Regulation; notes however that, in the period January to October 2016, the Agency funded national return operations for an amount of EUR 3 600 000; notes that these payments are irregular;
3. Notes from the Agency's reply that in 2016, given the disproportionate migratory pressure towards Member States and following the Union's Action Plan for return from October 2015, the European Council conclusions from 15 June 2015 and 16/17 March 2016, the executive director of the Agency adopted the Decision 2016/36, which provided a broader interpretation of (co)-financing modalities of a joint return operation to the extent that also a national return operation carried out by just one single Member State facing a disproportionate migratory pressure would be (co)-financed from the Agency's budget; acknowledges the fact furthermore that the budgetary authority had amended the budget for 2016 specifically to implement the Action Plan on these return operations;

Budget and financial management

4. Notes with satisfaction that the budget-monitoring efforts during the financial year 2016 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 97,90 %; notes that the payment appropriations execution rate was 66,07%, representing a decrease 3,40% compared to 2015;
5. Notes from the Court's report that under the Agency's extended mandate, high importance is attached to return operations and EUR 63 000 000 had been assigned to that in its 2016 budget; notes however that EUR 23 000 000, i.e. 37,5 % was repaid to the Union budget since fewer return operations were carried out than envisaged; observes that the significant delay of the procurement procedure for a EUR 50 000 000 framework contract to charter aircraft and related services for the Agency return operations contributed to this situation and continues to affect the number of return operations arranged by the Agency; regrets that, while the launch of this procurement procedure was planned for March 2016, it had not been started by the year end; notes from the Agency's reply that it has drastically increased the number of joint return flights (232 in 2016 compared to 66 in 2015); notes however that the EUR 23 000 000 could not be used mainly because the framework contract for chartering aircrafts and related services for return operations faced delays generated by the deprioritisation of the project in favour of the efforts taken for ensuring the logistical support (ferries and busses) for the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement; notes that a tender procedure for establishing a four-year framework contract has in the meantime been published, however with a lower estimated budget (EUR 20 000 000);
6. Notes from the Court's report that on 22 December 2015 the Commission and the Agency, co-beneficiary and coordinator of three other co-beneficiaries - the European

Asylum Support Office (EASO), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - signed a grant agreement amounting to EUR 5 500 000 on regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey for a three year period starting on 1 January 2016; notes, however, that cooperation agreements with those three partners which amounted to EUR 3 400 000 were only signed between August and November 2016; notes that, in two of those agreements, the budgetary commitments, which should have released the funds before entering in the legal commitments, were only signed in October and in December 2016; notes moreover that the budget commitments amounted to EUR 1 200 000, covering only the pre-financing payments; stresses that such a procedure is in breach of the Financial Regulation's rules on budgetary management and the late signature of the agreements caused uncertainty for the operational cooperation between partners; notes from the Agency's reply that in order to document the fact that the legal commitment for all three project partners was made prior to the budgetary commitment, the Agency duly documented this as an exception;

7. Acknowledges the fact that the Agency is revising in 2017 its entire financial scheme aiming at simplifications, switching from grants to service contracts and introducing flat rates; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority on the implementation of the new scheme and the results achieved;

Commitments and carry-overs

8. Notes that the level of carry-overs for committed appropriations for Title II (administrative expenditure) was at EUR 6 400 000 (43 % of committed appropriations), compared to EUR 3 200 000 (38 %) in 2015, and therefore high; notes moreover that the carry-overs for Title III (operational expenditure) were also high at EUR 67 300 000 (37 %), compared to EUR 40 200 000 (35 %) in 2015; notes that the main reason is because contracts and operations extended beyond the year-end; calls on the Agency to consider introducing differentiated budget appropriations to better reflect inevitable delays between legal commitments, contract implementation and operations and the related payments;
9. Notes from the Court's report that the level of cancelled carry-overs from 2015 was high for Title III (operational expenditure) at EUR 6 400 000, i.e. 16 %, due to an overestimation of 2015 costs that still had to be reimbursed to participating countries in 2016; considers that there is a need to obtain more precise cost estimations and more timely cost reporting from cooperating countries;
10. Points out that carry-overs may often be partly or fully justified by the multiannual nature of the agencies' operational programmes, do not necessarily indicate weaknesses in budget planning and implementation and are not always at odds with the budgetary principle of annuality, in particular if they are planned in advance and communicated to the Court;

Staff policy

11. Observes from the establishment plan that 197 temporary posts (out of 275 posts authorised under the Union budget), compared to 149 in 2015 were occupied on 31

December 2016; notes that in addition the Agency was employing (in full-time equivalent) 77 seconded national experts, 83 contractual staff and 15 interim staff;

12. Notes with appreciation that, by the number of all posts occupied, gender balance has been met since the ratio is 50 % women to 50 % men; regrets, on the other hand, that for senior posts it is only 15 % women to 85 % men; calls on the Agency, in cooperation with the Member States, to improve the gender balance in the management board and among the senior management;
13. Notes from the Agency that in order to start with the implementation of its new and enhanced mandate additional staff needed to be recruited already during the last quarter of 2016; notes that a needs assessment has identified 50 posts but that not all recruitment procedures could be completed by year-end; notes that at the end of 2016 the Agency had reached a total of 365 members of staff;
14. Notes from the Court's report that, following the extension of its mandate, the Agency's staff will more than double from 365 in 2016 to 1 000 in 2020; notes moreover that the planned increase in staff will require additional office space; notes from the Agency's reply that at the beginning of 2017 it had asked the budgetary authority and received green light to expand in its current premises in order to accommodate the additional staff numbers; notes that the headquarters' agreement has entered into force on 1 November 2017;
15. Notes from the Court's report that the Agency traditionally experiences difficulties in finding staff with the required profile, partly because of the salary correction coefficient (66,7 %); calls on the Agency to reflect on possible mitigating measures and that it reports on its reflections to the discharge authority;
16. Notes from the Court's report that the Staff Regulations provide that in the case of an external selection procedure, temporary staff can only be recruited at grades SC 1 to SC 2, AST 1 to AST 4 or AD 5 to AD 8; notes that in 2016 the Agency recruited 14 staff at higher AST grades; stresses that the recruitments at these grades are irregular; notes from the Agency's reply that the motivation for upgrading of 5 AST4 posts to 5 AST5 posts was due to the business needs to run the 24/7 duty officers' service; acknowledges the fact that, given the level of responsibilities in the context of the migratory flows and security challenge at the Union's external borders, the Agency had to attract qualified and experienced candidates with relevant prior working experience;
17. Notes the fact that the fundamental rights officer has received five new posts since 2016, three of them being vacant; deeply deplores, however, that despite repeated calls of Parliament and a significant overall staff increase for Frontex, the fundamental rights officer still lacks adequate human resources and is therefore clearly hampered from properly conducting the tasks entrusted to her by Regulation (EU) 2016/1624; urges, therefore, 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;
18. Notes that the Agency has not received any complaint, law-suits or otherwise reported cases of non-transparent hiring or dismissal of staff in 2016;

19. Observes that in 2016 the average sick leave of the Agency's staff was 11,4 days, although the Agency in its calculation did not include the staff who did not take any day off due to sick leave; calls on the Agency to consult with the medical service on how to lower the absence from work due to sick leave;
20. Notes from the Agency's replies that members of staff spent one day on well-being activities in 2016; notes that the Agency has an internal policy on health and safety at work and contributes to the well-being of the staff in three ways:
 - a) rental of sport fields for team sports and partial contribution to participation of staff in interagency sport tournaments;
 - b) as part of preventive measures in health and safety the Agency reimburses a portion of costs of sport activities undertaken by the staff (up to a ceiling of 45 EUR per month per member of staff);
 - c) every year the Agency organises seasonal flu vaccinations for volunteering members of staff;
21. Observes that the Agency used Articles 12 and 12a of the Staff Regulations and the specific provisions of 'Code of Conduct for all persons participating in Frontex activities' and of 'Frontex Staff Code of Conduct'; observes that there was no harassment case reported or taken to court in 2016;
22. Notes that the Office of the Agency has two official vehicles for which only official use is allowed and that these vehicles are not used for personal purposes;

Prevention and management of conflicts of interests, transparency and democracy

23. Observes that the Agency adopted an anti-fraud strategy and action plan on 17 December 2015, which identifies four strategic objectives with 22 actions to be implemented during the period 2015-2018; notes with appreciation that more than 50 % of the actions identified were implemented in 2016;
24. Notes that the Agency prepared draft internal rules on whistleblowing and communicated them to the European Data Protection Supervisor in March 2017; notes that the issue is whether to implement the internal rules or take a decision to implement the Commission model rules once they have been notified to the agencies; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority on the decision taken;
25. Observes that the Agency has replied that they do not make the approved minutes of its management board meetings available to the public and that those minutes are not available even after three months of the date of the meeting; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority on the reasons for such a decision in view of the Union's policy on greater transparency of its operations;
26. Observes that the Agency did not reply if their meetings with lobbyists (i.e. persons not officially representing the Agency's stakeholders but having any pecuniary or economic interest in relation to its operational remit), in the event that such meetings were held, had been registered and made public; calls on the Agency to provide the discharge

authority with an answer;

27. Notes that in 2016 the Agency received 67 requests for access to documents to which the Agency granted a full access to 15 requests, while for 38 requests access was only partially granted and further 10 requests were refused mostly due to “Protection of public security” and “Protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual”;
28. Notes that four of the refusals were subject to a confirmatory application resulting in two confirmations of previously refused access, one request was given partial access and one full access to documents; notes also that one of the refusals was transmitted to the European Ombudsman; calls on the Agency to inform the discharge authority of the Ombudsman’s decision and the subsequent procedure;

Main achievements

29. Welcomes the three main achievements identified by the Agency in 2016, namely:
 - the adoption of the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 which defines its expanded mandate;
 - the assistance to 232 Return Operations (+251% comparing with the operation assisted in 2015) returning in total 10 698 people;
 - the launch in January 2017 of the first step of the common vulnerability assessment methodology;
30. Acknowledges the fact that the Regulation on the European Border and Coast Guard Agency opened up new possibilities for cooperation with other Agencies in relation to the coastguard function, resulting in a trilateral working arrangement between Frontex, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA); notes furthermore that close cooperation with the nine justice and home affairs (JHA) agencies continued, the cooperation with European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (eu-LISA) was strengthened, regular exchange with European Asylum Support Office (EASO) was facilitated and a cooperation agreement with Europol was tested throughout 2016;
31. Notes that the Agency shares offices with Europol and EASO in the framework of the European Regional Task Forces in Italy and Greece;

Internal control

32. Notes that the 2016 annual review of the internal control system provided reasonable assurance to the Agency management as to the level of compliance with all internal controls; acknowledges that it identified space for improvements in eight Internal Control Standards (ICS) and developed a strategy to address the weaknesses; it assessed the efficiency of its internal control system at the end of 2015; notes moreover that, according to the assessment, the ICS were implemented and functioning; notes however that, since the substantive increase in the Agency’s budget allocation (financial and human resources) and the expansion of the tasks and responsibilities that are assigned to

the Agency, the internal control system requires further improvements in 2017; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority on the measures taken to improve the internal control system;

Internal audit

33. Notes that in 2016 the Internal Audit Service (IAS) conducted an audit on “Data Validation and Quality Assurance for the Risk Analysis”, which resulted in four recommendations rated as “important”; acknowledges from the Agency that it prepared an action plan to address these recommendations; calls on the agency to report to the discharge authority on the implementation of that action plan;
34. Notes the IAS’ conclusions that no recommendations rated as “critical” were issued in 2016;
35. Notes with satisfaction that to ensure a cost-effective and environment-friendly working place and to further reduce or offset CO2 emissions the Agency has a new policy on printer and printing solutions that has reduced the consumption of paper, has implemented video conferences, and is aiming at improving water and energy efficiency as well as increasing recycling; the canteen uses biodegradable cleaning and disinfection products as well as provides eco-friendly take-away packaging methods and recyclable cups, plates and cutlery; meals served in the canteen are prepared using locally produced and seasonal products as well as ingredients sourced from ecological farmers;
36. Notes with satisfaction that the Agency is committed to promoting the use of public and eco-friendly transportation as the Agency helps covering the costs of public transportation costs for its staff;
37. Further notes that the Agency’s premises has been designed and constructed according to the eco-requirements of the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) certification and is now described as one of the most sustainable buildings in Poland;
38. Notes that the Agency sees no financial risks influencing its operations caused by the Brexit;
39. Highlights the contribution of Frontex to saving more than 250 000 people at sea in 2015; welcomes the increase in the Agency’s search and rescue capacity; notes, however, that considerable efforts still have to be made in that direction;
40. Notes the existence of specific objectives and performance indicators for internal use for joint operations; regrets that these are not public and that the majority of Frontex operational programmes therefore 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; regrets that the actual impact of joint operations is therefore difficult to assess; calls on the Agency to further 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;

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41. Refers, for other observations of a cross-cutting nature accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution of ...2018¹ on the performance, financial management and control of the agencies.

¹ Texts adopted of that date, P8_TA-PROV(2018)0000.

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 Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) for the financial year 2016
(2017/2164(DEC))

Rapporteur: Kostas Chrysogonos

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. Notes the Court of Auditors' conclusions that the annual accounts of the Agency present fairly its financial position on 31 December 2016 and that its transactions are legal and regular; highlights that in 2016 Frontex's role and activities were significantly expanded, with a budget increase of 75 % and a staff increase of 18 % following the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹;
2. Notes that, following the increased levels of the migration into the Union in 2015 and 2016, Frontex faced problems absorbing additional Union funds granted throughout 2016, leading to considerable difficulties in complying with budgetary and financial rules; stresses the high level of cancelled carry-overs from 2015 for Title III (16 %); notes in this regard the overall budget utilisation rate of 95,3% for the 2015 appropriations; underlines that it originally allocated EUR 20 million from its 2016 budget for expenditure dedicated to 'hotspots' but has in the meantime already committed almost EUR 35 million for that purpose and the linked joint operational activities; points out that the Agency funded national returns operations until October

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).**

2016, and that the Court considers that these were irregular payments; requests the Agency to significantly improve its financial planning, control and budget management capabilities;

3. Notes that the Agency experienced difficulties in finding suitable candidates with the required profile and the Agency's efforts to balance the geographical distribution of its recruitment of qualified candidates; criticises, nevertheless, the irregular recruitment of 14 temporary staff at high AST grades; requests the Agency to strictly adhere to the Staff Regulations at all times; notes in this regard that the Staff Regulations offer the necessary flexibility for labour market conditions prevailing in the Union to be taken into account when recruiting officials and other servants in order to address the specific needs of the Union institutions; stresses that the Agency's staff will more than double from 2016 to 2020; regrets, however, that the increase was not based on a thorough analysis; requests the Agency to better justify its needs in the future, based on accurate and verifiable information and data;
4. Highlights the contribution of Frontex to saving more than 250 000 people at sea in 2015; welcomes the increase in the Agency's search and rescue capacity; notes, however, that considerable efforts still have to be made in that direction;
5. Notes the existence of specific objectives and performance indicators for internal use for joint operations; regrets that these are not public and that the majority of Frontex operational programmes therefore 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; regrets that the actual impact of joint operations is therefore difficult to assess; calls on the Agency to further 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; recalls that the provisions on information and communication as part of the accountability of Frontex towards the public were considerably modified by Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 requiring Frontex to be more transparent about its activities; regrets that Frontex still does not fully live up to these new rules and calls upon Frontex to implement them without delay;
6. Notes with concern a significant gender imbalance of 93% / 7% in the Agency's management board; urges the future correction of this indicator; calls on Member States to ensure gender balance when nominating their members for the Agency's management board; calls on the Agency to proactively remind Member States of the importance of gender balance;
7. Notes the fact that the fundamental rights officer has received 5 new posts since 2016, three of them being vacant; deeply deplores, however, that despite repeated calls of Parliament and a significant overall staff increase for Frontex, the fundamental rights officer still lacks adequate human resources and is therefore clearly hampered from properly conducting the tasks entrusted to her by Regulation (EU) 2016/1624; urges, therefore, 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	1.2.2018
Result of final vote	+: 42 -: 7 0: 3
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, Kinga Gál, 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, Maria Grapini, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Marek Jurek, Andrejs Mamikins, Angelika Mlinar, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Jaromír Št tina
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

42	+
ALDE	Nathalie Griesbeck, Filiz Hyusmenova, Sophia in 't Veld, Angelika Mlinar, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz
GUE/NGL	Kostas Chrysogonos, Cornelia Ernst, Marie-Christine Vergiat
PPE	Asim Ademov, Georges Bach, Heinz K. Becker, Michał Boni, Carlos Coelho, Frank Engel, Kinga Gál, 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

7	-
EFDD	Jonathan Bullock, Raymond Finch, Kristina Winberg
ENF	Lorenzo Fontana, Auke Zijlstra
GUE/NGL	Malin Björk
NI	Udo Voigt

3	0
ECR	Marek Jurek, Branislav Škripek, Helga Stevens

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Date adopted	20.3.2018						
Result of final vote	<table><tr><td>+: </td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>–: </td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>0: </td><td>1</td></tr></table>	+:	19	–:	4	0:	1
+:	19						
–:	4						
0:	1						
Members present for the final vote	Nedzhmi Ali, Inés Ayala Sender, Zigmantas Bal ūytis, Dennis de Jong, Tamás Deutsch, Martina Dlabajová, Raffaele Fitto, Ingeborg Gräßle, C t ť lin Sorin Ivan, Jean-François Jalkh, Arndt Kohn, Notis Marias, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Petri Sarvamaa, Claudia Schmidt, Bart Staes, Indrek Tarand, Marco Valli, Derek Vaughan, Tomáš Zdechovský, Joachim Zeller						
Substitutes present for the final vote	Karin Kadenbach, Julia Pitera, Miroslav Poche						

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

19	+
ALDE	Nedzhmi Ali, Martina Dlabajová
PPE	Tamás Deutsch, Ingeborg Gräßle, Julia Pitera, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Petri Sarvamaa, Claudia Schmidt, Tomáš Zdechovský, Joachim Zeller
S&D	Inés Ayala Sender, Zigmantas Balutis, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Karin Kadenbach, Arndt Kohn, Miroslav Poche, Derek Vaughan
VERTS/ALE	Bart Staes, Indrek Tarand

4	-
ECR	Raffaele Fitto, Notis Marias
EFDD	Marco Valli
GUE/NGL	Dennis de Jong

1	0
ENF	Jean-François Jalkh

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention