



**2019/2055(DEC)**

22.1.2020

# OPINION

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2018, Section III – Commission and executive agencies  
(2019/2055(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar

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## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Transport and Tourism 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 finding of the Court of Auditors ('the Court') that the consolidated accounts of the European Union for the year 2018 are reliable and that the transactions underlying the accounts of the Union for the 2018 financial year are generally legal and regular in all material aspects, except for high-risk expenditure (mainly spending on a reimbursement basis, which is subject to complex rules), which has an estimated error level of 4,5%; notes that the overall estimated level of error of 2,6% is still above the ECA's materiality threshold (2%);
2. Notes that in 2018 EUR 4 248 million in commitment appropriations and EUR 2 454 million in payment appropriations was available for transport policies, including the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), transport security and passengers rights transport agencies and research and innovation related to transport (Horizon 2020); further notes that EUR 3 708,4 million in commitment appropriations and EUR 1 950,5 million in payment appropriations authorised for CEF transport (Chapter 06 02) and Horizon 2020 (research and innovation related to transport - Chapter 06 03) were managed by the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA);
3. Welcomes the completion of the 2017 CEF Transport blending call in 2018 with an innovative approach making available a total indicative budget of EUR 1,35 billion of EU grants to be combined with funding from the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the European Investment Bank, national promotional banks or private investors; believes that an ex-post evaluation of those projects must be carried out in order to assess the effectiveness of this innovative approach; notes that the second deadline for submission of proposals in April 2018, focusing on innovation and new technologies projects, notably in the field of alternative fuels, in support of the Commission's Clean Mobility policy, resulted in 35 projects being selected with a total of EUR 404,8 million in CEF funding; notes the need to improve the level of awareness of the CEF eligibility rules among the beneficiaries, in particular by drawing a clear distinction between implementation contracts and subcontracts; recalls that the amount of money spent under a financial instrument is not its only performance criteria and invites the Commission to deepen its assessment of the achievements completed under EU funded transport projects and to measure their added-value aspect and result-oriented spending;
4. Invites the European TEN-T Coordinators to conduct a thorough assessment of the projects completed and the improvements achieved along the TEN-T corridors under the current programming period, and to present it to Parliament and the Commission; furthermore asks the Commission to propose a new result-oriented mechanism including short, mid and long-term planning and technical assistance, to increase the added value of European Funds and to ensure that Member States will meet the 2030 and 2050 completion targets, respectively for the core and comprehensive networks;
5. Welcomes the adoption of an amendment to the CEF Multi-annual Work Programme on 19 April 2018, making available a total indicative amount of EUR 450 million for the 2018 call for proposals under the General envelope of CEF Transport to support projects

of common interest related to the cross-cutting objectives of transport digitalisation, road safety and multimodality; reminds the importance of coordination of work programmes, in order to exploit synergies between the sectors of transport, energy and telecom; welcomes the adoption of a financing decision establishing the CEF Annual Work Programme, allowing INEA to launch the 2019 CEF Transport call concerning financial assistance through grants for projects of common interest regarding cross-border sections, connections to and the development of maritime ports and mitigation of the impact of rail freight noise and vibrations, with the indicative amount of EUR 100 million made available; recalls that in order to achieve concrete benefits in the transport sector the budget needs to be managed soundly and spent on relevant and suitable investment projects which are then implemented on a timely basis;

6. Notes that by the fifth year of the current programming period 2014-2020 only around 23% of the funds initially awarded had resulted in payments by January 2019, putting into question the full implementation of CEF; reiterates that in order to avoid payment delays, decommitments and reflows will build up significantly by the end of the programming period and leaving insufficient time to reroute funds to other projects, it is essential for INEA to monitor the technical and financial implementation of projects closely, so that effective corrective measures can be taken in time; reiterates the recommendations of the Court to the Commission and INEA to ensure greater coherence and transparency of the project selection procedures, to set better conditions for timely programme implementation and to redesign the performance framework to better monitor project results;
7. Welcomes the Special report 30/2018 of the Court, which concludes that the main modes of public transport are covered by EU regulations, making the EU framework for passenger rights unique globally; however, regrets the conclusion by the Court that many passengers were not sufficiently aware of their rights and frequently could not benefit from them, due to problems with enforcement; therefore, reiterates the request of the Court to improve coherence, clarity and effectiveness of the EU passenger rights framework, take action to promote more effective and transparent awareness campaigns and provide national enforcement bodies with further tools for enforcing passenger rights;
8. Notes that in 2018 the Court assessed payments linked to mobility and transport as part of the “Competitiveness for Growth and Jobs” chapter in the context of statement of assurance exercise for 2017; welcomes the finding that the residual error rate of CEF-Transport and of its predecessor TEN-T programme, the key components of mobility and transport payments, is under 1%; notes that the testing of transactions of the whole “Competitiveness for Growth and Jobs” chapter produced an estimated overall level of error of 4,2%, which is above the materiality threshold;
9. Reiterates its request that the Commission, in view of the multiple sources of funding, provides an easy access to projects, in form of a one-stop-shop to allow citizens to clearly follow the developments and funding of infrastructures co-financed by Union funds and by the EFSI; these one-stop-shops shall have extensive coordinating powers, with EU rules prevailing, with a multilingual dimension, facilitating the management of all environmental impact assessments; notes that in the fifth year of the 2014-2020 multi-annual financial framework the absorption of EFSI funds has continued to be slower than planned; stresses that the errors detected are at the level of the beneficiary, so more

guidance is needed as regards cost eligibility;

10. Notes that the number of financial instruments has increased considerably which allows for new blending opportunities in the transport sector, while at the same time creating a complex web of arrangements around the Union budget; is concerned that these instruments alongside the Union budget could risk undermining the level of accountability and transparency, as reporting, audit and public scrutiny are not aligned; calls upon the Commission to find how the Union budgetary system could be reformed, in particular as how best to ensure that overall funding arrangements are not more complex than necessary to meet Union policy objectives and guarantee accountability, transparency and auditability;
11. Welcomes the implementation of the Internal Audit Service recommendations to DG MOVE regarding the supervision of Shift2Rail and the system of monitoring of the aviation and maritime security policies;
12. Stresses the importance of recruiting highly specialised staff in order to ensure technical expertise in DG MOVE and in INEA which is needed to cope with their demanding roles;
13. Highlights that the transport infrastructure policy offers a clear opportunity to increase synergies between defence and civil needs and TEN-T; Welcomes the addition of a pillar of military mobility to TEN-T policy with the adoption of the Action Plan in March 2018 and the proposal by the Commission to include a new envelope dedicated to military mobility needs of EUR 6,5 billion under the CEF budget for 2021-2027; stresses the importance of analysis of gaps between the military and the TEN-T requirements for generating the pipeline for dual-use infrastructure projects that could be supported under the CEF 2021-2027 and strengthen TEN-T; reiterates that this development reflects the strategic role played by the TEN-T in integrating the Union's infrastructure in order to achieve rapid and seamless mobility across the continent, as well as strengthening our capacity to respond to emergency situations such as humanitarian crises, natural disasters or civil emergencies, thus further developing the internal market;
14. Welcomes the start of new projects focusing on urban mobility, efficient logistics and infrastructure, including the port of the future, worth around EUR 105 million from the 2017 call of the Horizon 2020 programme; welcomes the adoption of the 3-year Horizon 2020 Transport Work Programme for 2018-2020; reiterates the recommendation by the Court to set out an EU-wide port development plan for core ports and to revise the number of core ports;
15. Believes that the tourism sector is extremely related to the transport sector; therefore, reiterates its request to add a budget line in future budgets of the Union dedicated to tourism in order to support actions for the development of a sustainable tourism sector;
16. Encourages the Commission to publish, in cooperation with the Member States, an annual overview of transport and tourism projects that have been co-financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion fund, as it is practised for CEF;
17. Proposes that in relation to the sectors for which the Committee on Transport and Tourism is responsible, the Parliament grants to the Commission discharge in respect of the

implementation of the Union general budget for the financial year 2018.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

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|---|---|
| <b>Date adopted</b>   | 21.1.2020   |
| <b>Result of final vote</b>                                     | +: 40<br>-: 8<br>0: 1   |
| <b>Members present for the final vote</b>                       | Scott Ainslie, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, David Bull, Marco Campomenosi, Ciarán Cuffe, Johan Danielsson, Andor Deli, Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg, Ismail Ertug, Gheorghe Falc , Giuseppe Ferrandino, Søren Gade, Isabel García Muñoz, Jens Gieseke, Kate ina Kone ná, Elena Kountoura, Julie Lechanteux, Bogusław Liberadzki, Peter Lundgren, Benoît Lutgen, El bieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Tilly Metz, Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar, June Alison Mummery, Caroline Nagtegaal, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Philippe Olivier, Dominique Riquet, Vera Tax, Barbara Thaler, Petar Vitanov, Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi, Lucia Vuolo, Roberts Z le, Kosma Złotowski |
| <b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>                   | Clotilde Armand, Leila Chaibi, Angel Dzhambazki, Markus Ferber, Maria Grapini, Pierre Karleskind, Andrey Novakov, Catherine Rowett, Henna Virkkunen   |
| <b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b> | Tiziana Beghin, Elena Lizzi, Juozas Olekas, Tsvetelina Penkova  |

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

| 40        | +   |
|-----------|---|
| ECR       | Angel Dzhambazki, Roberts Zīle, Kosma Złotowski   |
| GUE/NGL   | Leila Chaïbi, Kateřina Konečná, Elena Kountoura   |
| PPE       | Andor Deli, Gheorghe Falgout, Markus Ferber, Jens Gieseke, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Benoît Lutgen, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar, Andrey Novakov, Barbara Thaler, Henna Virkkunen, Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi |
| RENEW     | Clotilde Armand, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Søren Gade, Pierre Karleskind, Caroline Nagtegaal, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Dominique Riquet  |
| S&D       | Johan Danielsson, İsmail Ertuğ, Giuseppe Ferrandino, Isabel García Muñoz, Maria Grapini, Bogusław Liberadzki, Juozas Olekas, Tsvetelina Penkova, Vera Tax, Petar Vitanov  |
| VERTS/ALE | Scott Ainslie, Ciarán Cuffe, Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg, Tilly Metz, Catherine Rowett   |

| 8   | -   |
|-----|---|
| ECR | Peter Lundgren  |
| ID  | Marco Campomenosi, Julie Lechanteux, Elena Lizzi, Philippe Olivier, Lucia Vuolo |
| NI  | David Bull, June Alison Mummery   |

| 1  | 0              |
|----|----------------|
| NI | Tiziana Beghin |

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention