



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on Foreign Affairs

2014/2075(DEC)

10.2.2015

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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 2013, Section III – Commission and executive agencies
(2014/2075(DEC))

Rapporteur: Anneli Jäätteenmäki

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign 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 considerable drop in the rate of material errors in Heading 4 for the 2013 financial year; supports all recommendations on Heading 4 made by the European Court of Auditors (ECA) in its annual report; remains concerned that accepted expenditure remains affected by a material level of error; notes, however, that despite increases in the spending most prone to error, the overall rate of material errors has decreased across the whole of the Union budget;
2. Calls for the effective use of all available measures in agreements with third countries to deal with fraud and damage to the Union's financial interests, and for the establishment of more effective measures where necessary;
3. Calls for the creation of effective mechanisms for the ex post and ex ante impact assessment of agreements between the Union and third countries;
4. Is concerned about the ECA's finding that the Commission validated substantial IPA expenditures in the absence of supporting documentation; agrees with the recommendation of the Court of Auditors, that, in order to avoid such errors in the future, Commission and DG ELARG must ensure that a new system for clearing of expenditure is put in place, whereby clearing would be done on the basis of incurred expenditure, as is already general practice in the other institutions;
5. Notes the ECA's audit of EuropeAid's systems and its assessment of them as only partially effective; urges EuropeAid to improve the quality of its systems in line with the recommendations by the ECA; notes, however, that the rate of material error for EuropeAid is lower than in 2012;
6. Welcomes the Commission's progress in accrediting all CFSP missions in accordance with the 'six-pillar assessment' and its prediction that the four largest missions will soon be compliant; underscores the need for the Commission to accredit all missions in line with the ECA's recommendation;
7. Is deeply concerned about the serious allegations of corruption against EULEX Kosovo which, if confirmed, will call into question the integrity of the European Union's reputation and the assistance it provides to countries implementing reforms in the field of the rule of law, and is also especially concerned at the way the allegations of corruption were dealt with and at the slow response on the part of the European External Action Service; takes note of the investigation launched to examine EULEX; expects to be informed about its results as soon as possible and stresses that there must be a zero tolerance policy on issues of corruption and that lessons learnt will have to be applied;
8. Regrets the significant delays in procuring essential equipment and services for missions under the CSDP and the resulting negative effect on the missions' functioning; recalls that

the Court of Auditors in its 2012 Special Report on the EU support for Kosovo denounced this inefficiency and concluded that the procurement rules laid down in the financial regulation "are not designed for CSDP missions where fast and flexible responses are sometimes necessary"; urges the Commission to consider a revision of the relevant rules;

9. Takes the opinion that the Commission should introduce, by delegated acts in accordance with Article 210 of the Financial Regulation, specific procurement rules to the crisis management measures under the CSDP in order to facilitate the rapid and flexible conduct of operations; recalls that Article 190(4) of the Financial Regulation already provides for derogation from the external action procurement rules for humanitarian aid.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	9.2.2015
Result of final vote	+: 47 -: 4 0: 8
Members present for the final vote	Francisco Assis, Petras Auštrevičius, Amjad Bashir, Goffredo Maria Bettini, Mario Borghesio, Elmar Brok, Klaus Buchner, James Carver, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Lorenzo Cesa, Aymeric Chauprade, Javier Couso Permuy, Andi Cristea, Arnaud Danjean, Marcel de Graaff, Georgios Epiritideios, Knut Fleckenstein, Eugen Freund, Michael Gahler, Richard Howitt, Sandra Kalniete, Manolis Kefalogiannis, Tunne Kelam, Janusz Korwin-Mikke, Andrey Kovatchev, Eduard Kukan, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Arne Lietz, Barbara Lochbihler, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, David McAllister, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, Tamás Meszlerics, Francisco José Millán Mon, Javier Nart, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Demetris Papadakis, Alojz Peterle, Tonino Picula, Kati Piri, Andrej Plenković, Cristian Dan Preda, Jozo Radoš, Alyn Smith, Charles Tannock, Eleni Theoharous, László Tőkés, Ivo Vajgl, Elena Valenciano, Hilde Vautmans
Substitutes present for the final vote	Angel Dzhambazki, Mariya Gabriel, Antonio López-Istúriz White, David Martin, Igor Šoltés
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Viorica Dăncilă, Doru-Claudian Frunzulić, Christine Revault D'Allonnes Bonnefoy, Beatrix von Storch