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*Plenary sitting*

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**A8-0150/2019**

4.3.2019

# REPORT

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European  
Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) for the financial year 2017  
(2018/2201(DEC))

Committee on Budgetary Control

Rapporteur: Petri Sarvamaa

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## 1. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

### **on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017 (2018/2201(DEC))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017,
- having regard to the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017, together with the Institute's reply<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the statement of assurance<sup>2</sup> 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 2017, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the Council's recommendation of 12 February 2019 on discharge to be given to the Institute in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2017 (05825/2019 – C8-0091/2019),
- 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 1605/2002<sup>3</sup>, and in particular Article 208 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012<sup>4</sup>, and in particular Article 70 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1922/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing a European Institute for Gender Equality<sup>5</sup>, and in particular Article 15 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

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 434, 30.11.2018, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 434, 30.11.2018, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 403, 30.12.2006, p. 9.

Article 208 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>1</sup>, 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 Women's Rights and Gender Equality (A8-0150/2019),
1. Grants the Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality discharge in respect of the implementation of the Institute's budget for the financial year 2017;
  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 Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality, 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).

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 328 Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, 7.12.2013, p. 42.

## 2. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

### **on the closure of the accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017 (2018/2201(DEC))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017,
- having regard to the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017, together with the Institute's reply<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the statement of assurance<sup>2</sup> 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 2017, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the Council's recommendation of 12 February 2019 on discharge to be given to the Institute in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2017 (05825/2019 – C8-0091/2019),
- 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 1605/2002<sup>3</sup>, and in particular Article 208 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012<sup>4</sup>, and in particular Article 70 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1922/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing a European Institute for Gender Equality<sup>5</sup>, and in particular Article 15 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

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 434, 30.11.2018, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 434, 30.11.2018, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 403, 30.12.2006, p. 9.

Article 208 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>1</sup>, 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 Women's Rights and Gender Equality (A8-0150/2019),
1. Approves the closure of the accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017;
  2. Instructs its President to forward this decision to the Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality, 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).

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 328, Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, 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 Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017  
(2018/2201(DEC))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017,
  - 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 Women's Rights and Gender Equality (A8-0150/2019),
- A. whereas, according to its statement of revenue and expenditure<sup>1</sup>, the final budget of the European Institute for Gender Equality (“the Institute”) for the financial year 2017 was EUR 7 722 898, representing an increase of 1,24 % compared to 2016; whereas the entire budget of the Institute derives from the Union budget;
- B. whereas the Court of Auditors (“the Court”), in its report on the annual accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017 (“the Court's report”), states that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the Institute’s annual accounts are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular;

#### ***Budget and financial management***

1. Acknowledges that the budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2017 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 98,92 %, representing a slight increase of 0,5 % compared to 2016; notes that the payment appropriations execution rate was 80,95 %, representing a notable increase of 8,12 % compared to the previous year; observes that, after analysing the advantages and disadvantages of differentiated appropriations, the Institute decided not to adopt them as a measure to address the multiannual nature of its operations; calls on the Institute to remain aware of the situation at hand, and to report to the discharge authority on any developments in that regard;

#### ***Cancellation of carry-overs***

2. Welcomes the fact that the cancellations of carry-overs from 2016 to 2017 amounted to EUR 34 865, representing 1,79 % of the total amount carried forward, showing a decrease of 0,07 % in comparison to 2016;

#### ***Performance***

3. Recalls that the Institute was established in order to contribute and to strengthen the promotion of gender equality in the Union, including gender mainstreaming in all

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<sup>1</sup> O.J. C 84/31, 17.03.2017, p.151

relevant Union policies and the resulting national policies, the fight against discrimination based on sex, and raising Union citizens' awareness of gender equality, and welcomes the prioritising of the work on several areas with outputs of high quality and high visibility, without losing focus on gender mainstreaming;

4. Welcomes the fact that the Institute uses certain Key Performance Indicators in relation to operational objectives and management of financial and human resources to assess the added value provided by its activities and to improve its budget management;
5. Notes with satisfaction that the Institute implemented its work programme effectively and fulfilled 98,75 % of the single programming document activities in 2017; notes furthermore that the Institute has released the third edition of the Gender Equality Index to monitor the progress of gender equality in the Union;
6. Welcomes that the outreach of the Institute's communication activities grew significantly in 2017 and its publications have received positive feedback from users, which contributed to spreading the messages of gender equality and raising the citizen's awareness in the Union;
7. Appreciates the work of the Institute on the topic of digitalisation and welcomes its project focusing on work-life balance, the gender pay and pension gap, and the development of a gender-sensitive parliament tool;
8. Welcomes the ongoing cooperation between the Institute and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and welcomes the Institute's contribution to the ongoing efforts of the Committee including on the study and promotion of gender budgeting and on gender aspects of Trafficking in Human Beings; welcomes in this respect in particular EIGE's contribution to integrate to the Anti-Trafficking Directive and the Victims' Rights Directive a gender perspective;
9. Supports the work of the Institute, which, by means of studies and research, enables the FEMM Committee to obtain data that is indispensable in order for it to do its work properly by providing official, high-quality data free from any ideological influence;
10. Welcomes the Institute's participation and its valuable contributions of gender aspects in the European Justice and Home Affairs Agencies' network;
11. Notes with satisfaction that the Institute proactively initiated a joint activity with other agencies in 2017 consisting of training and experience-sharing workshops on preventing harassment; notes furthermore that the Institute supported the European Institute of Innovation and Technology in mainstreaming a gender perspective in its operations and contributed to a joint publication with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions;
12. Notes that the Institute has advanced on some recommendations of the External Evaluation(2015); welcomes the Institute's effort to shift toward a project-led organisation which will increase internal synergies and promote knowledge sharing across the units; appreciates that the Institute has started to implement an action plan addressing the recommendations and calls on the Institute to further continue this process to improve governance and efficiency;



### ***Staff policy***

13. Notes that, on 31 December 2017, the establishment plan was 96,30 % executed, with 26 temporary agents appointed out of 27 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (compared with 28 authorised posts in 2016); notes that, in addition, 15 contract agents and 4 seconded national experts were working for the Institute in 2017;
14. Regrets the gender imbalance within the Institute's management board members, with 26 out of 32 members being female, 6 being male; asks in this regard the Commission and the Member States and other concerned parties to take into account the importance of ensuring gender balance when presenting their nominations for members of the Board;
15. Notes that the Institute has in place a policy on protecting the dignity of the person and preventing harassment; notes that the Institute organised training sessions and enabled confidential counselling;
16. Notes that there have been a follow up by the Institute on the reports related to sexual harassments of female workers and trainees in the agency; underlines that the agency must be a role model in combating sexual harassment and ensuring safety and dignity for all its members of staff; supports the Institute in implementing its zero tolerance policy on sexual harassment;
17. Welcomes the suggestion of the Court to also publish vacancy notices on the website of the European Personnel Selection Office in order to increase publicity; understands the high translation costs triggered by such publication; notes from the Institute's reply that, in addition to the financial constraints, it is of the opinion that the channels it currently uses ensure proper transparency and publicity;

### ***Procurement***

18. Notes with concern that, according to the Court's report, the Institute was brought to court by unsuccessful tenders, claiming a total of EUR 700 000 in damages (amounting to up to 9 % of the Institute's annual budget) and the annulment of the award decision; observes that the Institute is already preparing to financially address the potential losses; notes from the Institute's reply that it will adjust the procurement procedures regardless of the final judicial decision; calls on the Institute to report to the discharge authority on developments in that regard;
19. Notes with concern that, according to the Court's report, the Institute issued and finalised a tender process to obtain a supplier for travel services without guaranteeing the best value-for-money; notes from the Institute's reply that it has internal controls in place to check and control the prices of services provided by the selected supplier; notes furthermore that the Institute is intending not to renew this contract but to participate in a joint procurement procedure organised by the Commission; calls on the Institute to report to the discharge authority on the progress made in that regard;
20. Notes that, according to the Court's report, the Institute had not yet, by the end of 2017, introduced the tools launched by the Commission aimed at introducing a single solution for the electronic exchange of information with third parties participating in public

procurement procedures (e-procurement); notes from the Institute's reply that the Institute is implementing e-submission and e-invoicing in compliance with the timelines set by the Commission by the end of 2018; calls on the Institute to report to the discharge authority on the progress made in that regard;

### ***Prevention and management of conflicts of interests and transparency***

21. Notes the Institute's existing measures and ongoing efforts to secure transparency, prevention and management of conflicts of interests, and whistleblower protection; points out with concern, however, that the Institute publishes only the CV of its director but not the CVs of its senior management on its website; calls on the Institute to report to the discharge authority on the measures taken in this regard;

### ***Internal audit***

22. Notes that in 2017, the Commission's Internal Audit Service (IAS) carried out an audit on stakeholder management and external communication, concluding that the internal controls of the Institute are adequate; notes that in order to address the three recommendations of the IAS graded as "important", an action plan has been set up and is to be completed by the end of 2018; calls on the Institute to report to the discharge authority on the implementation of the three recommendations;
23. Notes the Institute's efforts to ensure a cost-effective and environmentally-friendly working place; observes that the Institute does not have any specific measures in place to reduce or offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but notes that it encourages its staff to use public transport or bicycles for commuting;

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24. Refers, for other observations of a cross-cutting nature accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution of ... 2019<sup>1</sup> on the performance, financial management and control of the agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA-PROV(2019)0000.

24.1.2019

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY**

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017  
(2018/2201(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Malin Björk

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas gender equality is one of the values on which the Union is founded and the Union is committed to promote gender mainstreaming in all of its actions as enshrined in Article 8 TFEU;
- B. whereas gender budgeting is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process and means a gender based assessment of budgets, incorporating the gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality<sup>1</sup>;
  - 1. Recalls that the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) was established in order to contribute and to strengthen the promotion of gender equality in the Union, including gender mainstreaming in all relevant Union policies and the resulting national policies, the fight against discrimination based on sex, and raising Union citizens' awareness of gender equality, and welcomes the prioritising of the work on several areas with outputs of high quality and high visibility, without losing focus on gender mainstreaming;
  - 2. Welcomes that the outreach of EIGE's communication activities grew significantly in 2017 and its publications have received positive feedback from users, which contributed

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<sup>1</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/1680596143>

to spreading the messages of gender equality and raising the citizen's awareness in the Union;

3. Welcomes EIGE's participation and its valuable contributions of gender aspects in the European Justice and Home Affairs Agencies' network;
4. Takes note that the EIGE has advanced on some recommendations of the External Evaluation(2015); welcomes EIGE's effort to shift toward a project-led organisation which will increase internal synergies and promote knowledge sharing across the units; appreciates that EIGE has started to implement an action plan addressing the recommendations and calls on the Institute to further continue this process to improve governance and efficiency;
5. Welcomes the ongoing cooperation between the EIGE and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and welcomes the EIGE's contribution to the ongoing efforts of the Committee including on the study and promotion of gender budgeting and on gender aspects of Trafficking in Human Beings; welcomes in this respect in particular EIGE's contribution to integrate to the Anti-Trafficking Directive and the Victims' Rights Directive a gender perspective;
6. Points out the need of EIGE's close cooperation not only with the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, but also with other parliamentary Committees in order to better realise gender mainstreaming in policies and actions; calls for additional funding to be allocated to EIGE to increase the number of staffs, which will allow EIGE to provide assistance to its key stakeholders, for example, in implementing gender budgeting and other gender mainstreaming tools;
7. Supports the work of the EIGE, which, by means of studies and research, enables the FEMM Committee to obtain data that is indispensable in order for it to do its work properly by providing official, high-quality data free from any ideological influence;
8. Welcomes the EIGE's achievements in 2017, in particular its release of the Gender Equality Index 2017 (the Index), the development of harmonised definitions and indicators on gender-based violence, and its expanded gender mainstreaming platform and tools; appreciates the new feature of the Index which focuses on gaps among different groups of women and men and the fact that the Index will be updated on an annual basis since 2019; calls upon more methodological tools to be developed to better ensure gender mainstreaming in all policies and actions;
9. Takes note that there have been a follow up by EIGE on the reports related to sexual harassments of female workers and trainees in the agency; underlines that the agency must be a role model in combating sexual harassment and ensuring safety and dignity for all its staff; supports EIGE in implementing its zero tolerance policy on sexual harassment;
10. Strongly recommends that EIGE, as the European Union expertise centre on gender equality, to be assigned to monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention;
11. Deplores the circumstances of constant risk of budgetary cuts and lack of human resources under which EIGE must work;

12. Appreciates the work of EIGE on the topic of digitalisation and welcomes its project focusing on work-life balance, the gender pay and pension gap, and the development of a gender-sensitive parliament tool;
13. Takes note of the Court of Auditors' opinion that the EIGE's annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2017 and the results of its operations, its cash flows and the changes in net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation and the accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer;
14. Notes the Court of Auditors' opinion that the revenue and payments underlying the EIGE's annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017 are legal and regular in all material respects;
15. Welcomes the completion of the 2016 Court of Auditors' observation on the level of carry-overs for committed appropriations for title III (operational expenditure); calls on the EIGE to consider the observation made by the Court on publishing its vacancy notices on the website of the European Personnel Selection Office in order to increase transparency and publicity allowing citizens to reach vacancies published by the different European Institutions and agencies collectively;
16. Is of the opinion, on the basis of the data available now, that discharge can be granted to the Director of the EIGE in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2017.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	23.1.2019
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 22 -: 6 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Heinz K. Becker, Malin Björk, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Iratxe García Pérez, Arne Gericke, Anna Hedh, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Angelika Niebler, Maria Noichl, Marijana Petir, Pina Picierno, João Pimenta Lopes, Terry Reintke, Liliana Rodrigues, Michaela Šojdrová, Ernest Urtasun, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Anna Záborská
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Eleonora Forenza, Julie Girling, Lívia Járóka, Dubravka Šuica, Mylène Troszczynski, Julie Ward
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Jean Lambert

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

22	+
ALDE	Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea
GUE/NGL	Malin Björk, Eleonora Forenza, João Pimenta Lopes
PPE	Heinz K. Becker, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Julie Girling, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Livia Járóka, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Angelika Niebler, Dubravka Šuica
S&D	Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Iratxe García Pérez, Anna Hedh, Maria Noichl, Pina Picierno, Liliana Rodrigues, Julie Ward
Verts/ALE	Jean Lambert, Terry Reintke, Ernest Urtasun

6	-
ECR	Arne Gericke, Jadwiga Wiśniewska
ENF	Mylène Troszczynski
PPE	Marijana Petir, Michaela Šojdrová, Anna Záborská

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	20.2.2019
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 20 -: 1 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Nedzhmi Ali, Inés Ayala Sender, Zigmantas Balčytis, Dennis de Jong, Tamás Deutsch, Martina Dlabajová, Ingeborg Gräßle, Jean-François Jalkh, Wolf Klinz, Monica Macovei, Georgi Pirinski, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Petri Sarvamaa, Claudia Schmidt, Bart Staes, Marco Valli, Derek Vaughan, Tomáš Zdechovský, Joachim Zeller
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Karin Kadenbach, Marian-Jean Marinescu
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Petra Kammerevert



## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

20	+
ALDE	Nedzhmi Ali, Martina Dlabajová, Wolf Klinz
ECR	Monica Macovei
GUE/NGL	Dennis de Jong
PPE	Tamás Deutsch, Ingeborg Gräßle, Marian-Jean Marinescu, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Petri Sarvamaa, Claudia Schmidt, Tomáš Zdechovský, Joachim Zeller
S&D	Inés Ayala Sender, Zigmantas Balčytis, Karin Kadenbach, Petra Kammerevert, Georgi Pirinski, Derek Vaughan
VERTS/ALE	Bart Staes

1	-
ENF	Jean-François Jalkh

1	0
EFDD	Marco Valli

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention