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REPORT

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the
European Union for the financial year 2020, Section X – European External
Action Service
(2021/2115(DEC))

Committee on Budgetary Control

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1. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2020, Section X – European External Action Service (2021/2115(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2020¹,
 - having regard to the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2020 (COM(2021)0381 – C9-0259/2021)²,
 - having regard to the Commission's annual report to the discharge authority on internal audits carried out in 2020 (COM(2021)0292)),
 - having regard to the Court of Auditors' annual report on the implementation of the budget concerning the financial year 2020, together with the institutions' replies³,
 - having regard to the statement of assurance⁴ 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 2020, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to Article 314(10) and Articles 317, 318 and 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - 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 966/2012⁵, and in particular Articles 59, 118 and 260 to 263 thereof,
 - having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Foreign Affairs,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0065/2022),
1. Grants the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2020;

¹ OJ L 57, 27.2.2020.

² OJ C 436, 28.10.2021, p. 1.

³ OJ C 430, 25.10.2021, p. 7

⁴ OJ C 436, 28.10.2021, p. 207.

⁵ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

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 European External Action Service, the European Council, the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors, the European Ombudsman and the European Data Protection Supervisor and to arrange for their publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L series).

2. MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2020, Section X – European External Action Service (2021/2115(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2020, Section X – European External Action Service,
 - having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Foreign Affairs,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0065/2022),
- A. whereas the European External Action Service (EEAS) is responsible for the management of the administrative expenditure of its Headquarters (HQ) in Brussels and for the network of the 144 Union delegations and offices;
- B. whereas the EEAS' responsibility has been extended to cover the administrative management of the Commission staff in the delegations through a series of Service Level Arrangements (SLAs);
- C. whereas the role of the delegations is to represent the Union and its citizens around the world by building networks and partnerships, and to promote the values and interests of the Union;
- D. whereas the peculiarity of the EEAS remains in its nature and origin, as it was when it was formed by the merging of staff belonging to the former external relation departments of the Council and of the European Commission, into which diplomats from the Member States have been integrated;
- E. whereas under the EEAS Internal Rules, the Secretary-General of the EEAS acts as authorising officer by delegation for the institution and the director-general for resource management has the role of principal sub-delegated authorising officer;
- F. whereas the implementation of the budget is governed by the Financial Regulation and by the Internal Rules of implementation of the Budget of the EEAS;
1. Notes with satisfaction that the Court of Auditors (the 'Court') identified no significant weaknesses in respect of the audited topics relating to human resources and procurement for the EEAS;
2. 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;

3. Emphasises the fact that on the basis of its audit work, the Court concluded that the payments as a whole for administrative expenditure of the institutions, including of the EEAS for the financial year 2020 were free from material error;
4. Welcomes the fact that no specific issue was detected by the Court on the regularity of the transactions;
5. Is aware that Chapter 9 ‘Administration’ of the Annual Report of the Court is focused on expenditure on human resources, buildings, equipment, energy, communication and information technology and that the Court indicates that such spending is low-risk;

BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

6. Notes that the budget of the EEAS for 2020 was EUR 731 000 000 (an increase of 5.2 % compared to the 2019 budget of EUR 694 800 000), which was distributed as follows: EUR 276 300 000 for HQ and 454 700 000 for the delegations; observes that, in addition to its own budget, the EEAS also disposed of an amount of EUR 212 400 000 (including assigned revenues and carried over amounts) from the Commission to cover the administrative costs of its staff working in the delegations;
7. Notes that globally during 2020 the EEAS committed EUR 934 400 000 (90 % of the available budget of the year) and the total execution in payments was EUR 919 200 000 (79 % of the available payment appropriations);
8. Notes that the approved additional amounts are earmarked for financing the Action Plan against disinformation, the reinforcement of security in delegations and HQ, investments in cyber-security, the replacement of a number of cost-free national experts with officials, an increase to the stipend amount for trainees in Delegations, strengthening the structures of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and some reinforcements of the geographical departments in high-priority key areas;
9. Notes that, overall, the EEAS final budget for 2020 has been executed, with 95.0 % in commitments and 82.3 % in payments, down from 99.94 % in commitments and 87.9 % in payments in 2019;
10. Notes that the payments made by the EEAS in HQ and delegations in 2020 show a global figure of 200 913 payments executed (10 851 by the HQ and 190 062 by the delegations), down from the figure of 252 508 payments in 2019; understands that the reduction (-20 %) is due to the suspension of several activities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular travels and representational events; notes that the EEAS’ payments in 2020 represented 8.9 % of the Union budget;
11. Notes the need expressed by the EEAS for a more flexible approach with regard to the agents authorised to intervene in the financial workflows of the institutions in delegations, in order to ensure full business continuity and to maximise the efficient use of the human resources available in delegations; is aware that amendments in this sense have been adopted in the revision of the Financial Regulation (in particular the new dispositions in Article 60, paragraphs (2) and (3)); observes that a higher level of flexibility is needed, without weakening the requirements of control on the financial

circuit; reiterates that any flexibility arrangement, namely the possibility for deputy heads of delegation to act as sub-delegated authorising officers should be closely monitored by HQ;

12. Notes that each delegation receives and implements its own budget intended to cover its administrative operations and the staff of the EEAS and Commission; is aware that the payments can be made at central or local level, respectively under the responsibility of the Directorate-General for Budget of the Commission (DG BUDG) or the delegation;
13. Understands that the number of budget lines used to finance the operations related to Commission staff in the delegations, i.e. 32 different lines originating under various headings of the Commission budget and the Trust Funds, increases the complexity of the EEAS' budget management; welcomes that the EEAS has simplified and regrouped these funds in its own budget as from 2021; points out in this regard the need for the EEAS to continue its efforts and supports the EEAS and the Commission in their ongoing discussions on how to progress further;
14. Welcomes that following the 'Innovative 2019' exercise, aiming to foster simplification and modernisation of working procedures and processes, several actions were launched in 2020, in particular the centralisation of high-value calls for tenders, the treasury functions and the payment of individual entitlements; notes that in 2020 some operations, in particular pre-award matters for all procurement procedures, have been increasingly centralised at HQ level to improve the quality of the procurement procedures and to alleviate the workload of the delegations; notes with satisfaction that the full centralisation is expected during the year 2022; supports the planned workload assessment on delegations in 2022 as an appropriate review mechanism to help prioritise resources and organisational aspects of the delegation network;
15. Notes that the largest savings in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic were made on the budget lines for (i) salaries and allowances in HQ and delegations (due to the fact that all recruitment procedures were slowed down), (ii) missions, meetings and events (due to travel restrictions and confinement), (iii) and many infrastructure-related items; notes that those savings can be estimated at EUR 17 500 000;
16. Notes that part of those savings were reallocated to reinforce IT and telecommunications to cover the significantly increased communication costs (software, hardware and connectivity) and to upgrade the outdated videoconferencing system in the delegation network; highlights that additional expenditure caused by the pandemic included costs resulting from the medical evacuation of colleagues with COVID-19 or vulnerable staff, and the reimbursement of internet costs in certain delegations where the cost of internet connections are excessive; points out that most of the remaining savings were used for investments in infrastructure in delegations;
17. Understands that, during the year 2020 and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the changing intensity in the EEAS' activities were handled by making transfers, in particular from the human resources' and mission budget lines to the budget lines for IT, which have been effective and result-oriented; notes that, in absolute terms, the value of all transfers made within the EEAS administrative budget amounted to EUR 52 700 000;
18. Understands that the current provisions on procurement set down in the Financial

Regulation for application by delegations in third countries have proved to be inefficient; agrees with the EEAS' call for a revision of the relevant procurement provisions, either by the integration of a separate chapter for delegations in third countries or by adjusting the value threshold, in both cases aiming to adapt the rules in force to the capacities and the local context of the delegations concerned;

19. Notes that in 2020, the EEAS published 40 high-value procurement procedures (with a value above the Directive setting out thresholds for services and supplies and above EUR 500 000 for works); notes that the Court examined fifteen procurement procedures for personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies organised in 2020 by some institutions, including EEAS; observes that the Court detected some problems in the procedures used by the audited institutions when procuring urgently required protective masks; observes that these institutions had set strict minimum requirements in the tender specifications (including European reference quality standards for medical face masks and delivery dates);
20. Welcomes the agreement to provide almost EUR 80 billion to the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and EUR 5 billion to the European Peace Facility (EPF) to provide the Union's external action with adequate resources to respond to emerging priorities and challenges in key policy areas;
21. Notes that the- Delegation of the European Union to Syria was the only delegation to express a reservation (since 2017) on the management of administrative expenditure due to the current security climate; notes with appreciation that the EEAS succeeded in resolving two pending issues in 2020, regarding income tax of local agents and access to the delegation's Syrian bank account;

INTERNAL MANAGEMENT, PERFORMANCE, INTERNAL CONTROL

22. Notes that in 2020 the Internal Audit Service (IAS) of the Commission carried out a limited review on the implementation of the EEAS internal control framework (ICF); observes that the recommendations issued are being implemented in 2021; approves the establishment of the EEAS Internal Control Committee (ICC) and the adoption of a new methodology for the identification and classification of weaknesses in respect of each of the internal control principles;
23. Welcomes that the nomenclature of errors regarding procurement procedures, used for ex post controls at the EEAS, has been aligned with the one used by the Court, allowing for a better comparison of the results; appreciates that, following the Court's assessment of the EEAS Annual Activity Report for 2019, the EEAS internal audit strategy was amended to provide more accurate information on the error rates used for the annual statement of assurance, making a clear distinction between the detected errors and the residual errors and thus, providing more accurate information regarding the action taken to correct the errors detected during the ex post control exercise;
24. Welcomes the implementation of the Multi-Annual Strategic Audit Plan developed by the IAS; calls on the EEAS to inform the discharge authority about the results and lessons learnt from this strategy;

HUMAN RESOURCES, EQUALITY AND STAFF WELL-BEING

25. Notes that, overall, the EEAS working force in 2020 was made up of 4 643 people (compared to 4 474 in 2019) and that the budgetary authority granted 178 new full-time equivalents in consideration of its additional tasks; notes that at the end of 2020, the workforce of the EEAS was made up of 1 277 officials, 1 091 local agents, 539 contract agents, 472 seconded national experts (SNEs) and 370 temporary agents, along with other support personnel (i.e. external staff, trainees and junior professionals);
26. Notes that, overall, a total of 2 286 staff worked in HQ and 2 357 in delegations, together with 3 757 staff members from the Commission posted in delegations; highlights the high occupation rate of posts, in particular in the delegations (94.3 % for AD posts and 93.7 % for AST-AST/SC posts), and highlights a slightly lower level in HQ (91.2 % for both AD and AST-AST/AC posts);
27. Observes that the transfer of 546 Commission staff in the administrative sections in delegations to the EEAS was implemented at the end of 2020 and will facilitate the management of administrative staff and ensure equal rights and obligations in delegations;
28. Highlights that the Union is confronted with a volatile international environment and an increasing number of crises, which has led to increasing demands on the Union to play an important role at an international level; notes that the enhanced role of the EEAS in dealing with new challenges such as disinformation is to be supported by a corresponding staff increase; supports the EEAS' call on the budgetary authority for sufficient human resources in order to ensure that the Union is effective in delivering as a global actor; underlines, in particular, the urgent need to use flexibly available resources such as a higher number of SNEs from Member States to be in a position to cater to new requests;
29. Notes the efforts of the EEAS to address Parliament's concern regarding the equilibrium between AD-level staff from Member States and Union officials and approves the conversions of SNE posts into administrator posts to further reduce their overall number; welcomes the publication of all vacant SNE posts for transparency and fairness reasons and the invitation to candidates in all Member States to show their interest in any position; welcomes that at the end of 2020 the population of Member State diplomats at AD level amounted to 35.8 %, in line with the Council Decision 2010/427/EU providing that members of staff from Member States should represent at least one third of all EEAS staff at AD level;
30. Welcomes that, at the end of 2020, the overall gender representation in the EEAS was close to equal, with women making up 48.65 % of members of staff; notes in particular that women represented 37.3 % of AD staff (compared to 34.8 % in 2019) with some internal disparities, i.e. 49.64 % women in the lower grades (AD5 to AD8) but 35 % in the higher grades (AD9 to AD13), which represents an improvement compared to 32.9 % at the end of 2019; notes that the share of women in the highest AD grades (AD14 to AD16) has increased compared to 2019 but is still low (23 % in 2020 compared to 20.4 % in 2019);
31. Notes that in the AST and AST/SC categories the percentage of women decreased to 65.35 % compared to 66.3 % in 2019; regrets that imbalances remained among the different grades, with women representing 66.2 % of staff in the lower grades (AST2 to

AST9) but only 33.3 % in the higher grades (AST10 to AST11); points out the gender balance reached with regard to contract agents (59.4 %) and local agents (54.5 %), while the majority of seconded national experts were men (75.2 %, mostly due to the limited female presence in the Member States' military);

32. Welcomes the many actions launched by the EEAS to reach gender balance, as well as to create an open and inclusive working environment, to integrate result-oriented and flexible working conditions incorporating work-life balance; welcomes specific actions such as the active encouragement of female applicants for all managerial positions, mandatory presence of both genders together with training on unconscious bias for members of recruitment panels, enhanced coordination with Member States to encourage more female candidates to apply for posts and support spouses seeking to find employment in third countries; applauds that, to further improve gender mainstreaming, a gender auditing of internal policies is ongoing, and asks the EEAS to report to Parliament about the recommendations and follow up of that audit, in order to promote a strong gender-responsive leadership;
33. Welcomes that the upward trend of women in management posts continued in 2020 with women representing 27.3 % of senior and 33.2 % of middle managers, compared to 26 % and 31.3 % respectively in 2019; regrets that only 27.4 % of posts as heads of delegations in 2020 were occupied by women, and that figure is unchanged in comparison to 2019;
34. Is concerned by the lack of gender balance across the applications for management posts, where only 27 % of applicants were women; observes that women made up 53 % of the applicants for heads of administration, 82 % of applicants for assistant to head of delegation and 100 % of applicants for assistant to deputy head of delegation; welcomes networking for women in pre-management posts and tailored programmes for women in middle-management posts as a talent-base for future senior management posts and reiterates the call for the EEAS to continue its efforts to achieve gender balance at all hierarchical levels; calls on the EEAS to explore strategies to encourage and facilitate female candidates to apply for management posts; insists on encouraging Member States to put forward qualified women for management posts, including senior management posts; encourages the EEAS to better promote its career opportunities and vacancies among national diplomats, international studies professionals, academia and civil society;
35. Supports the adoption, in June 2020, of the EEAS roadmap for action on disability prepared in collaboration with the Staff Committee, relevant EEAS services, other Union institutions and Member States in order to collect best practices and policies; understands that following its internal publication, the roadmap was updated and improved at the end of 2020; welcomes the publication of the EEAS disability policy in July 2020; appreciates concrete initiatives like the interinstitutional guide for newcomers with a disability, the EEAS' guide on inclusive communication when referring to persons with disabilities at work and setting a dedicated contact point for practical information on disability or possible adjustments in the workplace;
36. Appreciates the work of the task forces 'Career development' and 'Gender and equal opportunities' entrusted with the mission of improving transparency, predictability, equality and fairness in the working culture of the EEAS; supports the setting up, on 25

June 2020, of a joint committee on equal opportunities (COPEC), with members from both administration and staff representatives, entrusted with a mandate to contribute to policies relating to gender, equal opportunities, respect for diversity and non-discrimination, anti-harassment, organisation of flexible work arrangements and a fair, flexible and respectful working environment;

37. Is aware of the EEAS efforts to achieve a meaningful geographical representation while respecting the competences and merits of candidates; reiterates its concern about the geographical representation in the EEAS staff, especially concerning the positions of heads of delegations, middle and senior management and stresses, in this regard, the necessary provision of additional SNEs to face the EEAS' increasing workload; observes that at the end of 2020 EEAS staff included nationals from all Member States and welcomes the efforts made by the EEAS to keep the Human Resources Network of Member States informed about the composition of staff, to publish vacancies and to promote national efforts to increase the number of candidates;
38. Considers it important to ensure a balanced representation of countries that joined the Union after 2004 or later (EU13) and thus, observes that the number of staff from these Member States at the end of 2020 had increased by 6 % compared to 2019; points out that the share of EU13 in the EEAS staff is 23 % at the end of 2020, while its share within the Union population is 20 %; underlines, however, the discrepancies between the representation at management level of countries with a comparable population size (30 management posts out of 267 are held by EU13 nationals, compared to 33 in 2019); calls on the EEAS to make significant progress towards a balanced representation of Member States, reflecting their diversity, as indicated in Article 27 of the Staff Regulations;
39. Welcomes that on 1 June 2020 the EEAS reform on the employment conditions and social security schemes for local agents in delegations entered into force; stresses that the reform introduced a stronger legal basis for the complementary medical insurance and the complementary provident savings, as well as better conditions of employment; believes that the new package will allow delegations to attract and retain highly qualified staff;
40. Welcomes that the EEAS promotes work-life balance and fosters family-friendly policies, involving the use of flexible working arrangements, including, on a case-by-case basis teleworking outside the place of employment and personalised follow-up by the EEAS social policy team for staff who have children with a disability;
41. Notes that in March 2020, the EEAS authorised teleworking for the majority of staff in HQ and delegations; welcomes that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the EEAS authorised non-essential members of staff from 78 delegations in countries with poor health systems to telework from Brussels or their place of origin on a voluntary basis; observes that in May 2020, about 41 % of the delegations' members of staff had opted for this working arrangement allowing families to reunite, improving well-being and increased productivity at work; notes, furthermore, that staff in HQ with a medical condition were also authorised to telework from outside Belgium;
42. Notes that the EEAS provides guidance and accompanying measures to mitigate the risks of burnout, including psychological support, advice on appropriate local

assistance, training on stress management and a helpline; welcomes that the EEAS adopted a set of rules to maintain the right to disconnect for all members of staff with specific rules on the use of email and telephone outside working hours;

43. Commends the attention given by the EEAS to social dialogue and underlines the positive impact of the direct participation of members of staff having first-hand experience of the measures submitted for discussion; welcomes in particular the broad consultation on the future of the EEAS where more than 500 colleagues from both HQ and delegations took part and seven focus groups channelled all reflections into concrete working proposals, a project known as #EEAS@20; encourages the EEAS to maintain this approach in order to respond to the expectation of members of staff while addressing the needs of the service;
44. Expresses its concern regarding the number of cases reported to the EEAS Mediation Service (176 requests in 2020, 183 in 2019); points out that the work of the Mediation Service is complemented by a network of 12 voluntary and specifically trained confidential counsellors both in HQ and in delegations; notes that out of the cases reported in 2020, 64 % concerned interpersonal conflicts (including allegations of moral harassment), 30 % concerned conflicts related to rights and obligations, other cases referred to issues such as a stressful work environment and one case concerned allegations of sexual harassment; stresses that the mandate of the Mediation Service was revised at the beginning of 2020 to emphasise its independency and availability for all members of staff, and to ensure that the EEAS administration is informed about serious or repeated allegations/incidents so that it can take appropriate actions; encourages the EEAS to continue to foster a constructive and preventive work culture, free of harassment, through awareness raising, coaching and training;
45. Notes that the EEAS administration handled four formal requests for assistance which concerned allegations of harassment, out of which three cases have been closed without any sanction, while the opinion of the disciplinary board has been requested in the last case; asks the EEAS to report on this case in due time; commends that in 2020 the EEAS launched its first-ever mandatory training for managers on how to create a harassment-free work environment; encourages the EEAS to continue to organise systematic training and awareness sessions in the area of proper conduct of its staff; believes that such sessions should be part of compulsory training for newly recruited staff;
46. Notes that in 2020 the EEAS recruited 57 remunerated Blue Book Trainees for a 5-month traineeship in its HQ; notes that a total of 385 trainees were employed in 101 delegations, for traineeships with an average length of 5 months; regrets that 39 traineeships were unpaid; notes that all the Blue Book trainees received a personal computer to telework; calls on the EEAS to take the appropriate steps to ensure that all its trainees receive a decent remuneration;

ETHICAL FRAMEWORK AND TRANSPARENCY

47. Notes with appreciation the adoption of the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime in December 2020 and the adoption of the new EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2020-2024), setting out priority areas for action and taking into account new challenges; commends the central role of human rights in the Union's

foreign policy and the Union's determination to address serious human rights violations and abuses world-wide;

48. Calls on the EEAS to monitor the positions of former heads of delegations, given their sensitive political role and functions in host countries; invites the EEAS to systematically review potentially problematic transitions to the private sector or to third country organisations and to continue monitoring the occupation of former senior officials until the end of the mandatory cooling-off period, as unaddressed conflicts of interest situations may compromise the enforcement of high ethical standards throughout the Union administration;
49. Notes that in 2020 the EEAS examined only 25 notifications of intention to engage in an occupational activity after leaving the service, out of which six notifications came from former senior members of staff; asks the EEAS to automatically request information on the intended occupation of senior members of staff leaving their positions; underlines that the geopolitical sensitive information senior members of staff have access to cannot be compromised; welcomes the retroactive publication of its decisions on occupational activities of former senior officials in compliance with Article 16(3) of the Staff Regulations; is aware of the automatic application of a lobbying and advocacy ban to every official having left the service;
50. Notes that in 2020 there were two declarations of the existence of potential conflicts of interest, both related to the gainful employment of spouses, one has been dismissed, the other resulted in the decision to relieve the member of staff from the management of a call for tender;
51. Considers that the highest ethical standards should be applied to avoid potential conflicts of interest, taking into account the specificities of work in delegations to mitigate reputational risk for the Union and the EEAS, particularly for heads of delegation;
52. Notes that the EEAS has no direct role in Union legislation and thus, does not hold meetings with organisations and self-employed individuals qualified as lobbyists in line with Article 11 TEU; encourages the EEAS to join the Union's transparency register on the basis of a service level agreement in order to improve transparency by disclosing all meetings with all lobby organisations that try to influence the law-making and policy implementation processes of the Union institutions;
53. Observes that the EEAS has received 20 requests for information from OLAF related to possible cases of fraud, involving Union staff or external actors and in the case of five of them OLAF decided to open an investigation; calls on the EEAS to timely inform the discharge authority about the outcome of those investigations; observes that the Ombudsman has handled 14 cases concerning the EEAS without issuing any recommendation; welcomes that cooperation with the EPPO is being explored on the advice and with the support of OLAF; welcomes the EEAS willingness to cooperate with EPPO and the contacts with the Commission's Legal Service on the issue, and invites the EEAS to integrate such cooperation as a component of its general anti-fraud strategy;
54. Emphasises the necessity for the EEAS to keep complying with the Commission's Guidelines on Whistleblowing, in particular to protect whistleblowers in good faith

against any form of prejudice; welcomes that the EEAS applies the Commission's Guidelines on Whistleblowing to EEAS and Commission staff posted in EU delegations and makes them available on the EEAS intranet;

DIGITALISATION, CYBERSECURITY, DATA PROTECTION

55. Asks the EEAS to report to the budgetary authority about its general shortage of administrative staff, in particular with regard to its shortage of IT staff which is among the lowest of the institutions, and to elaborate on possible causes of the shortages, such as recruitment problems or structural deficiencies in the administration;
56. Underlines that, compared to 2019, investment in IT projects and equipment increased by 38.14 % for the HQ and by 22.48 % for security; observes that in 2020 the HQ budget line for IT was reinforced by more than EUR 8 million from transfers from other lines, up from the EUR 16 000 000 originally on the line, as needs increased significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
57. Acknowledges the sensitivity of the data-transfer to third countries; is aware that the Data Protection Officer (DPO) issued guidance on how to ensure contractors comply with data protection rules and how data-transfers to third countries can be lawful in the light of the Schrems-II judgment of the European Court of Justice; observes that the EEAS responded to the EDPS requirement for an inventory of personal data transfers to commercial organisations in third countries, including service providers for the Union;
58. Notes with satisfaction that the EDPS conducted a remote audit of the data processing registers of the Union institutions and the EEAS was deemed to be fully compliant; welcomes the continuous update of the COVID-19 privacy statement that the EEAS data controllers have carried out in close cooperation with the DPO, to address new privacy concerns in relation to the control of office presence and remote working, with a view to achieving proportionality between the needs of preserving health and mitigating contamination risks and the protection of personal data; notes that in 2020 the EEAS data controllers completed two data protection impact assessments (DPIA) on IT security monitoring and on the use of KITRY, an application to manage health and safety in the workplace for the Medical Service (to be completed in 2021);

BUILDINGS AND SECURITY

59. Acknowledges the complexity and the challenge for the EEAS in managing its buildings, which include offices, official residences and staff accommodation in Brussels and in the delegations; notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major effect on the EEAS real estate policy and it accelerated the transition towards collaborative office spaces; observes that, due to the pandemic crisis, several building projects suffered delays in 2020, mainly because of supply chain ruptures, building work restrictions and travel limitations, particularly in third countries;
60. Observes that all the office fitting-out projects carried out by the EEAS in 2020 were designed in consultation with both the management and the staff of the divisions and delegations concerned, and mostly introduce collaborative spaces in compliance with the social distancing guidelines introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; welcomes that the EEAS has not introduced a generalised policy of hot-desking;

61. Notes that the EEAS manages 178 office buildings in delegations, representing a total surface of 275 000 m² (80 % of which is rented and 20 % owned); observes that the annual cost of the real estate rented for delegations is EUR 61 800 000; notes that, at the end of 2020, the EEAS managed 148 residences for the heads of delegation with a total construction area of 84,000 m² (21 % owned); welcomes the qualitative assessment performed in 2020 by the EEAS on delegations' buildings to allow for the identification of medium to long-term priorities and in order to elaborate on the first multi-annual plan for EEAS real estate projects in delegations in 2021;
62. Supports the EEAS in its efforts to increase the use of colocations in its delegations, which has more than quadrupled over the past 5 years (from 20 in 2011 to 116 in 2020) and represents 7 % of the total office surface; appreciates that the management of colocations via the Framework Agreement with each colocation partner has facilitated the recovery of EUR 12 million in costs in 2020;
63. Underlines that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Union institutions observed a 600 % increase in cyber-attacks; welcomes that several initiatives have been launched by the EEAS to raise security awareness and promote a security culture across the institution, such security campaigns, training of members of staff to detect security threats and providing guidance on how to mitigate threats or reduce their impact; supports the EEAS in increasing its safety measures protecting both members of staff and the EEAS's digital infrastructure from external threats and attacks; stresses that the EEAS needs adequate personnel, procedures, infrastructure and tools in order to reduce those security risks, especially those related to cybersecurity;
64. Points out that the EEAS has managed a total budget of EUR 65 600 000 for 2020 covering security services; notes that the total amount spent on security installations & maintenance for delegations was EUR 12 942 311; observes that the total budget for secure communications amounted to EUR 18 163 000; takes notes of the expected challenges for the protection of EU delegations identified by the EEAS and, in particular, the lack of autonomous action to mobilise any defence capabilities in case of crises and evacuations; notes that the EEAS has reached agreements with some Member States to support, in some countries, the evacuation of expatriate staff and dependants, which unfortunately limits the autonomy of the EEAS and EU Delegations to stay in host countries during crises; reiterates its call for fully using the potential of the Lisbon Treaty provisions to work towards a European defence union and its support for more cooperation, increased investment and pooling resources to create synergies at EU level in order to better protect Europeans;
65. Welcomes the strengthening of the Regional Security Officers' (RSO) network in 2020 with the creation of 10 new posts and the investments made in the deployment of a corporate classified system supporting all EEAS roles;

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

66. Supports the efforts of the EEAS in ensuring the consistency of the Union's external action by linking internal and external aspects of the Green Deal and the digital transformation, among other policy areas; approves the appointment of the first European Climate Pact Ambassador, entrusted with the establishment of high-level political contacts in Member States and globally, as part of the EEAS strategic approach

which aims to connect politics, economics and climate action;

67. Welcomes the EEAS intention to introduce the Union Eco Management Audit Scheme (EMAS) for its HQ in order to develop a programme built on concrete green initiatives and measures, and the fact that the EEAS adheres to the interinstitutional helpdesk for green public procurements; calls on the EEAS to explicitly engage in a “zero paper campaign” to further enhance the initiatives already adopted on the matter;
68. Notes with appreciation the support given to all delegations in reducing their carbon footprint and consumption, in particular the collection of information from delegations on energy and material consumption;
69. Encourages the EEAS to adopt a structured approach on the sustainable mobility of staff and to raise awareness on relevant initiatives carried out in this area, like the installation of recharging slots for electric cars and electric bikes and bike racks;

COMMUNICATION AND MULTILINGUALISM

70. Underlines the development in 2020 of the EEAS Communications Principles and Priorities 2020-2021, outlining regional communication priorities and the three overarching strategic key priorities: the Green Deal and climate change diplomacy, multilateralism and partnerships and strategic autonomy and resilience;
71. Notes the success of many EEAS media campaigns on key issues, such as ‘We Take You Home’ on the repatriation of Union citizens due to COVID-19, ‘United in Distance’ to showcase stories of solidarity across the world in times of crisis, ‘EU in Action’ on the work on the ground of the Union as a security provider, and ‘BeTheWave’ on climate issues; points out that EEAS channels have also contributed to enhance the visibility of ‘Team Europe’ worldwide; highlights that that EEAS social media account is one of the global leaders amongst diplomatic services with over 700 000 followers and evident growth in terms of audience interactions, while its website received 21 million page views and 13 million unique page views in 2020;
72. Reiterates the importance, already emphasised in last year’s resolution, of communicating strategically in order to fight malicious interference including foreign propaganda and disinformation, exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic; supports the EEAS actions in detecting, analysing and exposing foreign disinformation by devoting experience and capabilities to upgrade media monitoring and big data analysis;
73. Acknowledges that the EEAS responded to the COVID-19 ‘infodemic’ by monitoring and analysing cases of information manipulation and interference, and by being at the forefront of close cooperation between the Union institutions, the Member States and international partners in that regard; notes the positive impact of the EEAS contribution to the implementation of the Joint Communication on the Global EU response to the COVID-19 pandemic that was adopted in April 2020;
74. Expresses its concern about the revelations of attempts from China to influence the EEAS’ critical report assessing narratives and disinformation with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic; notes the declarations of the High Representative to the Parliament’s Foreign Affairs committee providing information that Chinese officials had expressed concern over the leak of the draft publication and denied any Chinese

influence on the report; stresses that EEAS is the main Union institution responsible for countering foreign interference; asks the EEAS to take action to protect its staff from foreign interference, to counter any future foreign interference attempts and to keep the discharge authority informed about its subsequent response; supports the EEAS in the deployment of adequate capabilities, expertise and language capacity with regard to strategically important regions;

75. Welcomes that the EEAS published five special reports on COVID-19 disinformation and conducted campaigns to raise awareness of persistent actors' activity, such as Russia, and highlight the emergence of new actors; notes that several country-specific campaigns were implemented in order to mitigate the effect of disinformation and protect the Union's reputation; underlines that in 2020, the EU vs Disinfo portal had over 1.25 million visitors (an increase of 200 % compared to 2019), with 2.4 million page views; asks the EEAS to provide more information to Parliament on the methodology used by EU vs Disinfo and its compliance with Union law and international standards, especially regarding the right to be heard in a remedy procedure; calls for a further substantial increase of the East StratCom Task Force budget in order to successfully counter-attack disinformation campaigns and to promote Union policies in the Eastern Partnership countries;
76. Recalls the leading role of EU delegations in third countries with respect to fulfilment of the Union's foreign policy goals; calls on the EEAS to strengthen the role of the EU delegations in third countries in order to reinforce their ability to debunk disinformation campaigns threatening democratic values orchestrated by foreign state actors; calls, furthermore, on the EEAS to strengthen the EU delegations' engagement in our neighbourhood and the Western Balkan countries in order to support communication policy on the European perspective that is more active and effective and provide the best possible assistance to the countries engaged in pro-democratic and pro-European reforms; calls on EU delegations to continue their coordinated efforts to increase the visibility of EU-funded projects;
77. Emphasises the growing need for a coherent updated EU-Arctic policy; notes that the new NDICI instrument opens up opportunities to finance the Arctic region.

INTERINSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

78. Underlines the constant coordination between EEAS HQ divisions and the Commission's DG BUDG to set financial arrangements aimed at ensuring business continuity and sound financial management of the operations in HQ and Delegations during this particular phase; points out the effective liaison between EEAS and the Commission's Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels to ensure that appropriate measures were in place for members of staff physically present to carry out essential functions for business continuity;
79. Notes with appreciation that the EEAS coordinates its efforts in fraud prevention and fraud countering activities with all the RELEX directorates-general and through the dedicated format indicated by the Commission anti-fraud strategy under OLAF in a leading role; understands that the EEAS anti-fraud strategy was still in the process of drafting in 2020;
80. Welcomes that following the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union on 31

January 2020, the EEAS finally established an EU delegation in London and a UK division within its HQ structure; regrets however the delay in the granting of diplomatic status to Parliament staff working at the Liaison Office in London, and the initial refusal of the EEAS to bring this issue to a satisfactory conclusion; understands that the Establishment Agreement replaces any temporary provisions and ensures that the delegation in London, its members of staff and property, enjoy privileges and immunities equivalent to those referred to in the Vienna Convention in a similar way as the other 144 delegations and offices; regrets that the EEAS negotiated the draft establishment agreement with the UK authorities without consulting Parliament; stresses that sending regular updates to Parliament rather than properly consulting Parliament does not meet the EEAS' obligation of 'appropriate support and cooperation' as laid down in Article 3(4) of the Council Decision establishing the EEAS; notes that by the end of 2020, almost 40 posts (including expatriate and local staff) were filled out of the 43 posts available in total; is aware that the delegation is located in the building, property of the Union, used in the past by the Representation of the Commission and the European Parliament Liaison Office (EPLO);

81. Welcomes the cooperation in 2020 between the EEAS and the Parliament to successfully update the 2015 'Practical arrangement for sharing specific political reports from EU Delegations with designated Members of the European Parliament', which will allow the electronic transmission of documents;
82. Regrets past situations of leakage to the press of confidential reports on election observation missions and welcomes the solutions found between Parliament and the EEAS with regard to the transmission of files; expresses confidence that the EEAS will keep facilitating the regular exchange of views between the Chief Observers and Deputy Chief Observers and the MEPs, before, during and after an election observation mission;
83. Welcomes that in 2020 the EEAS concluded a service level agreement (SLA) with the European Investment Bank for the colocation of its members of staff within the premises of delegations worldwide; is aware that further SLAs were negotiated in 2020 with both the European Central Bank and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) to share office space and related services;
84. Commends the intense coordination and exchanges held throughout the COVID-19 pandemic with the human resource departments of the Member States' Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of the United Nations, in order to share views and best practices on special working arrangements, and also commends the EEAS' participation in weekly interinstitutional meetings where all Union institutions and agencies regularly updated their measures and shared the practices implemented as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

85. Understands that the COVID-19 pandemic led to a special situation for the entire EEAS and impacted heavily on the operations of its HQ and delegations; stresses that the EEAS was able to ensure business continuity and sound financial management of its operations without experiencing any significant issues during that particular period; welcomes that in early March 2020, the EEAS established a Core Crisis Team (CCT) in

charge of assessing the latest developments, coordinating communication and actions, and supporting delegations; highlights that the CCT were essential to effectively managing the crisis;

86. Notes that, for the adoption of COVID-19 measures, the EEAS mainly aligned with the official guidance from Belgium for its HQ, whilst the delegations were instructed to follow the applicable rules of the host countries, but also followed HQ's practice of generalised teleworking in the place of employment, combined with a reduced physical presence on premises;
87. Supports the additional measures that were implemented in a number of countries to reduce the medical risks posed to members of staff because the health care systems were deemed fragile; highlights that the EEAS shipped vaccines to the 72 delegations asking for support, which were provided to around 4,000 people, including expatriate staff in delegations, their family members and to local agents; points out that all members of staff in HQ were provided with a corporate laptop and that over 5 000 were dispatched to the delegations, together with PPE and medical supplies for those who were most exposed, despite the challenging delivery in countries with quarantine or lockdown measures; acknowledges that the IT infrastructure was ramped up rapidly to meet the requirements of full-scale teleworking, including increasing the internet capacity and the capacity for video conferencing;
88. Notes that the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak also exposed the Union's strategic and systemic vulnerabilities, such as supply chains of pharmaceutical products, and drew attention to the need for the Union to strengthen its own resilience and autonomy, while at the same time to pursue more assertively international partnerships; acknowledges the pandemic also brought further impetus to on-going processes, not only towards the twin digital and green transitions, but also at global level, such as moving the EU-Africa Partnership to the next level, re-invigorating the European Union-United States relationship, paying additional attention to Latin America, and putting the strategic outlook on China in practice;
89. Congratulates the EEAS on its crucial role in the major emergency action to repatriate more than 600 000 Union citizens stranded around the world, while also helping to set up the large-scale humanitarian and assistance operation 'Team Europe' to help partners around the world who were fighting the pandemic with far fewer resources than the Union; welcomes that the initiative 'Team Europe' has mobilised over EUR 38 billion in support to partner countries, with over 50 % of the funds disbursed in 2020, by calling on all existing cooperation programmes and redirecting existing financial resources; emphasises that it has contributed to addressing the urgent needs arising from the crisis through an emergency humanitarian response, supporting the strengthening of health systems and research capacities, and addressing the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic;
90. Applauds that 'Team Europe' contributed EUR 850 000 000 to COVAX, the global vaccine initiative; stresses that the Union used its convening power to secure funding and commitment across the world for universal access to prevention, diagnosis tests and treatment against COVID-19, including through the Coronavirus Global Response Pledging Conference, and it pledged EUR 1.4 billion to this COVID-19 response pillar in the form of grants and guarantees;

91. Supports the EEAS' approach to calling for an assertive and comprehensive response as a main tool to aid recovery from a deep geopolitical crisis and to "build back better" at home and globally; encourages the EEAS to fully integrate in the internal management strategy the lessons drawn from the pandemic outbreak, in terms of business continuity and crisis management approaches, IT responsiveness, resilience of the organisation, duty of care towards its staff, effectiveness of internal communication and flexibility of working processes.

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 2020, Section X - European External Action Service (2021/2115(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Michael Gahler

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. Notes growing instability, the deteriorating security environment, the geopolitical impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of unprecedented challenges in the international environment, which increased demands on the Union to act as a global player;
2. Highlights the central role played by the European External Action Service (EEAS) in conducting the Union's external policy and welcomes that it lived up to the many challenges over the 10 years of its existence; emphasises that the Union needs to continue developing a robust and resilient external service with clear political leadership in order to tackle the current challenges and ensure the coherence of the Union's foreign policy; notes that enhanced EEAS performance has to be underpinned by a corresponding staff increase and a stronger Union esprit de corps within the EEAS; calls for sufficient human resources to be made available in order to deliver on the Union's external policy priorities and for the necessary resources for a successful implementation of an efficient EU Security and Defence Policy;
3. Notes the remaining lack of diversity, gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of ensuring an intersectional distribution, greater diversity, and gender equality, as well as promoting a balanced distribution of staff in terms of gender and geographical origin within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; calls on the EEAS to significantly improve the representation of women and marginalised groups across all levels and calls on all Member States to nominate more women and candidates from marginalised groups to seconded positions in the EEAS; points also to a remaining overrepresentation of some Member States' diplomats among the Heads of Delegation and calls for further efforts to address those imbalances; encourages the EEAS to create and share guidelines on best practices on the conducting of recruitment procedures in order to ensure diversity, openness, fairness and

transparency;

4. Urges the EEAS to follow-up on their announcement provided in their written answers to the Committee on Budgetary Control in the context of the 2019 discharge, to adopt and implement its self-standing implementation provisions on outside activities and assignments, which create a sui generis legal basis for heads of delegations to better protect the image and reputation of the Union as a whole;
5. Calls for increased efforts to fight foreign interference and manipulative disinformation, which negatively influence the Union's ability to implement effectively its foreign policies and undermines the values on which the Union is founded; notes the increase in disinformation campaigns linked to the COVID-19 pandemic and the negative role certain state and non-state actors played in the dissemination of these campaigns; welcomes the ECA's Special Report on Disinformation affecting the Union and calls for implementing the ECA recommendations in the Union's action plan against disinformation based on a published timeline; believes that improvements to the coordination and accountability of Union actions against disinformation and to the operational arrangements of the StratCom division and its task forces should be treated as a priority, including enhancing engagement with Council and Parliament and reaching recruitment targets; stresses the continuous need to fight foreign propaganda and expose disinformation, espionage and malicious foreign influence, which are increasingly used to undermine the democratic order in the Union and in countries in the Union's vicinity; underlines the importance of the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force and calls for providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources;
6. Underlines the importance of public diplomacy and strategic communication as an integral aspect of the Union's external relations and an instrument to communicate its values and interests and to enhance the Union's visibility; calls on the EEAS to continue its efforts to modernise its approaches and invest in new skills and capabilities while increasing cost-efficiency; reiterates the importance of promoting rule of law, fundamental freedoms and values that the Union is based on;
7. Recalls the leading role of EU delegations in third countries with respect to the fulfilment of the Union's foreign policy goals; calls on the EEAS to strengthen the role of the EU delegations in third countries in order to reinforce their ability to debunk disinformation campaigns threatening democratic values orchestrated by foreign state actors; calls furthermore on the EEAS to strengthen the EU delegations' engagement in our neighbourhood and the Western Balkan countries in order to support to more active and effective communication policy on the European perspective and provide best possible assistance to the countries engaged in pro-democratic and pro-European reforms; calls on EU delegations to continue their coordinated efforts to increase the visibility of EU-funded projects;
8. Repeats its call for a more dedicated review of the administrative expenditure and support activities of the EEAS and specifically on topics that are becoming of higher or even critical relevance for the EEAS; calls on the Court of Auditors to explore ways of providing more information on the administrative expenditure of other Union institutions in the context of the discharge;

9. Emphasises the growing need for a coherent updated EU-Arctic policy; notes that the new NDICI instrument opens up opportunities to finance the Arctic region.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Members present for the final vote	Alviina Alametsä, Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, François Alfonsi, Maria Arena, Petras Auštrevičius, Traian Băsescu, Anna Bonfrisco, Reinhard Bütikofer, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Susanna Ceccardi, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Katalin Cseh, Tanja Fajon, Anna Fotyga, Michael Gahler, Kinga Gál, Sunčana Glavak, Raphaël Glucksmann, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Márton Gyöngyösi, Balázs Hidvéghi, Sandra Kalniete, Peter Kofod, Stelios Kouloglou, Andrius Kubilius, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Nathalie Loiseau, Leopoldo López Gil, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Jaak Madison, Claudiu Manda, Lukas Mandl, Thierry Mariani, Pedro Marques, David McAllister, Vangelis Meimarakis, Jörg Meuthen, Sven Mikser, Francisco José Millán Mon, Javier Nart, Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor, Urmas Paet, Demetris Papadakis, Kostas Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Manu Pineda, Giuliano Pisapia, Thijs Reuten, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Andreas Schieder, Radosław Sikorski, Jordi Solé, Sergei Stanishev, Tineke Strik, Hermann Tertsch, Dragoș Tudorache, Harald Vilimsky, Idoia Villanueva Ruiz, Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel, Thomas Waitz, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Charlie Weimers, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Salima Yenbou, Željana Zovko
Substitutes present for the final vote	Özlem Demirel, Assita Kanko, Karsten Lucke, Bert-Jan Ruissen, Mick Wallace
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Karin Karlsbro, Ivan Štefanec

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

57	+
ECR	Assita Kanko
NI	Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Márton Gyöngyösi
PPE	Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, Traian Băsescu, Michael Gahler, Sunčana Glavak, Sandra Kalniete, Andrius Kubilius, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Leopoldo López Gil, Antonio López-Istúriz White, David McAllister, Lukas Mandl, Vangelis Meimarakis, Francisco José Millán Mon, Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor, Radosław Sikorski, Ivan Štefanec, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Željana Zovko
Renew	Petras Auštrevičius, Katalin Cseh, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Karin Karlsbro, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Nathalie Loiseau, Javier Nart, Urmas Paet, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Dragoș Tudorache
S&D	Maria Arena, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Tanja Fajon, Raphaël Glucksmann, Karsten Lucke, Claudiu Manda, Pedro Marques, Sven Mikser, Demetris Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Giuliano Pisapia, Thijs Reuten, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Andreas Schieder, Sergei Stanishev
Verts/ALE	Alviina Alametsä, François Alfonsi, Reinhard Bütikofer, Jordi Solé, Tineke Strik, Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel, Thomas Waitz, Salima Yenbou

13	-
ECR	Hermann Tertsch, Charlie Weimers
ID	Peter Kofod, Jaak Madison, Thierry Mariani, Jörg Meuthen, Harald Vilimsky
NI	Kostas Papadakis
The Left	Özlem Demirel, Stelios Kouloglou, Manu Pineda, Idoia Villanueva Ruiz, Mick Wallace

8	0
ECR	Anna Fotyga, Bert-Jan Ruissen, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Witold Jan Waszczykowski
ID	Anna Bonfrisco, Susanna Ceccardi
NI	Kinga Gál, Balázs Hidvéghi

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Date adopted	28.2.2022
Result of final vote	+ : 25 - : 3 0 : 1
Members present for the final vote	Matteo Adinolfi, Gilles Boyer, Olivier Chastel, Caterina Chinnici, Lefteris Christoforou, Corina Crețu, Ryszard Czarnecki, José Manuel Fernandes, Luke Ming Flanagan, Daniel Freund, Isabel García Muñoz, Monika Hohlmeier, Jean-François Jalkh, Pierre Karleskind, Mislav Kolakušić, Joachim Kuhs, Claudiu Manda, Alin Mituța, Markus Pieper, Michèle Rivasi, Sándor Rónai, Petri Sarvamaa, Simone Schmiedtbauer, Angelika Winzig, Lara Wolters, Tomáš Zdechovský
Substitutes present for the final vote	Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Mikuláš Peksa, Elżbieta Rafalska

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

25	+
ECR	Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Ryszard Czarnecki, Elżbieta Rafalska
PPE	Lefteris Christoforou, José Manuel Fernandes, Monika Hohlmeier, Markus Pieper, Petri Sarvamaa, Simone Schmiedtbauer, Angelika Winzig, Tomáš Zdechovský
Renew	Gilles Boyer, Olivier Chastel, Pierre Karleskind, Alin Mituța
S&D	Caterina Chinnici, Corina Crețu, Isabel García Muñoz, Claudiu Manda, Sándor Rónai, Lara Wolters
The Left	Luke Ming Flanagan
Verts/ALE	Daniel Freund, Mikuláš Peksa, Michèle Rivasi

3	-
ID	Matteo Adinolfi, Jean-François Jalkh, Joachim Kuhs

1	0
NI	Mislav Kolakušić

Key to symbols:

+ : grants discharge

- : postpones discharge

0 : abstention