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REPORT

on the nomination of Carlo Alberto Manfredi Selvaggi as a Member of the
Court of Auditors
(C9-0008/2024 – 2024/0801(NLE))

Committee on Budgetary Control

Rapporteur: Matteo Adinolfi

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PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

on the nomination of Carlo Alberto Manfredi Selvaggi as a Member of the Court of Auditors

(C9-0008/2024 – 2024/0801(NLE))

(Consultation)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 286(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, pursuant to which the Council consulted Parliament (C9-0008/2024),
 - having regard to Rule 129 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0061/2024),
- A. whereas, by letter of 17 January 2024, the Council consulted Parliament on the nomination of Carlo Alberto Manfredi Selvaggi as a Member of the Court of Auditors;
- B. whereas Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control then proceeded to evaluate Carlo Alberto Manfredi Selvaggi's credentials, in particular in view of the requirements laid down in Article 286(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union; whereas in carrying out that evaluation, the committee received a curriculum vitae from Carlo Alberto Manfredi Selvaggi, as well as the replies to the written questionnaire that he had been sent;
- C. whereas the committee subsequently held a hearing with Carlo Alberto Manfredi Selvaggi on 22 February 2024, at which he made an opening statement and then answered questions put by the members of the committee;
1. Delivers a favourable opinion on the Council's nomination of Carlo Alberto Manfredi Selvaggi as a Member of the Court of Auditors;
 2. Instructs its President to forward this decision to the Council and, for information, to the Court of Auditors, the other institutions of the European Union and the audit institutions of the Member States.

**ANNEX: ENTITIES OR PERSONS
FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

The rapporteur declares under his exclusive responsibility that he did not receive input from any entity or person to be mentioned in this Annex pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure.

ANNEX 1: CURRICULUM VITÆ OF CARLO ALBERTO MANFREDI SELVAGGI

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Magistrate of the Italian Court of Auditors since 1997, entered by competition, serving as Substitute Prosecutor General until 2005 and Deputy Prosecutor General from 2005 to 2021. Since 2021, President of a Chamber of the Court of Auditors.
- From 2013 to 2023, Regional Prosecutor of the Court of Auditors: until 2016 Regional Prosecutor for Molise, from 2016 to 2021 Regional Prosecutor for Emilia-Romagna and from 2021 to 2023 Regional Prosecutor for Apulia (with interim Regional Prosecutor for Molise from February 2023). In this capacity, contact person for the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) in the field of combating fraud against the European Union, following prior experience as member of the Committee for Combating Fraud against the European Union, the Italian point of contact for the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).
- Served at the Court of Auditors Section for Control of Public Entities (from May 2011 to July 2013 under main assignment and then in an additional assignment until December 2021), also acting as coordinator of the Group of Economic Services Producers and Regulators (including ENI S.p.A and ENEL S.p.A).
- From January 2021 to May 2023, Controller delegated by the Court of Auditors to 'Cassa Depositi e Prestiti' S.p.A, a body classified as 'highly complex'.
- From January 2017 to December 2020, Controller delegated by the Court of Auditors to 'ENEL' S.p.A, a body classified as 'highly complex'.
- Since May 2023, serving as Coordinator of the NRRP mission structure at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. In this capacity, responsible for ongoing relations with the European Commission, and especially the Recovery and Resilience Facility Task Force, for the implementation and reporting of the measures provided for in the NRRP.
- Since February 2023, Chairman of the Board of Auditors of the Transport Regulatory Authority.
- Since March 2023, Member of the Technical Commission for budgetary thresholds at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance.
- In 2023, Legal Counsel to the Minister for European Affairs, the South, Cohesion Policies and the NRRP.
- Since December 2012 Tax Judge and since September 2017 President of the Chamber, serving at the Regional Tax Court (now the Second instance Tax Court) for Molise.
- Since July 2021, Deputy Federal Prosecutor at the Italian Football Federation (FIGC), after being a judge from 2007 to June 2021, first at the Federal Court of Justice and then by the Federal Court of Appeal.
- In 2022, Member of the working group for the study and analysis of issues related to local public services, linked to the objectives set out in the NRRP, which was set up at the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.
- In 2022, Member of the technical operational group, set up at the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, with the task of preparing a regulatory framework for the reform of tax justice.

- Since September 2021, Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee, responsible for resolving disputes in connection with the contract relating to the extension of the Sassari hospital complex.
- Since September 2021, Chairman of the Supervisory Committee for the extraordinary administration procedure of 'Conbipel' S.p.A.
- From January 2018 to October 2020, Magistrate Attaché to the President of the Court of Auditors.
- From October 2016 to November 2020, Member of the Board of Auditors of the Administrative Justice Council, on the appointment of the President of the Court of Auditors.
- From July 2014 to October 2020, Member of the Board of Auditors of the Fiscal Justice Council, on the appointment of the President of the Court of Auditors.
- From October 2013 to September 2018, Member of the Council of Presidency of the Court of Auditors.
- From May 2004 to May 2009, President of the National Association of Magistrates of the Court of Auditors; Vice-President from June 2001 to May 2004.
- From June 2013 to March 2018, Member of the Committee for Legislation at the Region of Lazio.
- From March 2013 to December 2016, Controller delegated by the Court of Auditors to the 'Società Italiana per le Imprese all'Estero' S.p.A., a body classified as 'major'.
- From May 2011 to March 2013, Deputy Controller delegated by the Court of Auditors 'Ente Nazionale Assistenza Volo' S.p.A., a body classified as 'highly complex'. From 2006 to 2008, Deputy Controller delegated by the Court of Auditors to the 'Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato' S.p.A., after having worked in a similar way in the five-year period 2001-2006 at the Italian National Tourism Authority.
- From October 2013 to January 2015, President of the Board of Auditors of the University of Salento.
- From June 2012 to September 2013, President of the Board of Auditors of the University of Molise.
- From February to August 2013, Member of the Committee for the Evaluation of Investments and Support for Planning and Management of Environmental Interventions at the Ministry of the Environment and the Protection of Natural Resources and the Sea. From December 2013 to May 2014, Member of the Technical and Scientific Committee set up at AGEA, repeatedly addressing matters and projects of European funding.
- From December 2011 to April 2013, Head of the Legislative Office of the Minister for Regional Affairs, Tourism and Sport.
- From May 2008 to December 2011, Head of Department for Regional Affairs of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.
- Head of the Italian Delegation to the Swedish Presidency of the European Union at the High-Level Meeting on Governance and EU held in Solna, Stockholm (Sweden) in October 2009 and Head of the Italian Delegation to the Council of Europe for the 16th Conference of European Ministers held in Utrecht (Holland) in November 2009. Head

of the Italian Delegation to the Spanish Presidency of the European Union at the Conference of Regional Affairs Ministers held in Malaga (Spain) in March 2010.

- From 2009 to 2011, Effective Member of the Superior Council of Public Works.
- From March 2009 to March 2012, Member of the Parity Commission for Implementing Rules for the Statute of Friuli Venezia Giulia.
- From 2009 to 2010, President of the Board of Auditors of the Italian Mountain Authority.
- From February 2007 to May 2008, Deputy Head of Cabinet of the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Activities. From November 2006 to May 2008, provided legal advice to the Minister for International Trade in matters relating to the financial sector and relations with the European Union.
- From July 2001 to February 2007, Legal Counsel at the Legislative Office of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, engaged, inter alia, in EU matters and in participation, representing the Ministry, in preparatory meetings of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.
- From April 2002 to April 2006, Legal Counsel at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, National Department for the coordination of anti-drugs policies. In the latter capacity, from 11 to 23 November 2003, at the invitation of the US Government, participation in the U.S. International Visitor Program, organised by the United States Department of State.

HONORS

- Grand Officer of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Master's Degree in law from the University of Rome - La Sapienza, summa cum laude.
- Master's Degree in administrative science from the University of Molise, summa cum laude.
- Three-year specialisation in administrative law and administrative science at the University of Naples - Federico II, summa cum laude.
- Entitlement to practise as a lawyer.
- Qualification to teach legal and economic disciplines in state secondary schools.
- Entry in the Register of Journalists, list of publicists.

TEACHING ACTIVITY

- Since 2023, member of the scientific committee and lecturer at the second level master's degree in 'Legislation and Litigation of Public Works' at the e-Campus University.
- In 2011, 2014, 2019 and 2022, lecturer in the Court of Auditors' course for newly appointed magistrates.
- Since 2005, lecturer in administrative law and state accounting, public bodies and enterprises at the School of Specialization for Legal Professions at the Faculty of Law of the University of Molise.

- Participated, also as rapporteur, in the Conference organized by the Council of Presidency on 2 and 3 July 2014 on: “*Anti-corruption policies: the role of the Court of Auditors between prevention and repression*”.
- Rapporteur at numerous seminars and study meetings organized by the Academy of the Court of Auditors.
- In 2013, lecturer in the monographic course ‘*Transforming and rationalizing the public administration in recent financial maneuvers. From the Spending Review to the laws for the growth and stability of the country*’ of the School of Specialization in Studies on Public Administration – SP.I.S.A. at the University of Bologna.
- In 2013, lecturer in the ‘*Single Manager of the Public Works Procurement Procedure*’ course at the University of Molise.
- In 2013, as well as from 2002 to 2007, lecturer in public accounting at the Lazio Regional Institute of Legal Studies ‘Arturo Carlo Jemolo’.
- From 2010 to November 2011, continuous lecturer at the School of Public Administration.
- From 2009 to 2011, lecturer in the ‘*Local Government and European Union*’ course at the University of Rome 3, Department of Public Institutions, Economics and Society.
- In 2010, lecturer at the seminar on economic maneuver at the University of La Sapienza in Rome, organized by the Inter-University Consortium on Training.
- From 2005 to 2008, lecturer at the School of Economic Affairs and Finance and at the School of Public Administration in training and refresher courses for public officials. Also, lecturer in Master’s and Seminars at the School of Public Administration and Local Authorities.
- Rapporteur at various conferences on administrative law, local authority law, financial and tax law, accounting for the state and public bodies, and on the reform of the judiciary. In particular: rapporteur in the “*2th Review of Public Law of the Economy*” (Varese, from 24 to 26 May 2018), the report “*The Court of Auditors, Guarantees of Self-Government in the Unitary States*” (Trento, 26 July 2019, at the conference ‘The Republic of Autonomies: liability, guarantees, controls and jurisdiction’ for the 20th anniversary of the implementing rules of the Statute concerning the Court of Auditors), the report “*Innovation in public-private partnership and cooperation between public administrations*” (conference ‘Ethics and Public Finance: implementation of the NRRP and well-being for citizens’ organized by the Court of Auditors and the ‘Alma Mater Studiorum’ University of Bologna on 19-20 November 202), and the report “*Prosecutors of the Public Prosecutor’s Office at the Court of Auditors to identify administrative liability in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan*” (9 November 2022, in the context of the Study Meeting on “Responsibility for financial damage between the protection of public assets and acceleration of investment” organized by the Presidency of the Court of Auditors).
- In 2004 and 2005, rapporteur at the study meetings organized by the Superior Council of the Judiciary, also training ordinary judges at the Campobasso Court of Appeals.

PUBLICATIONS

- Author of several publications and collaborated with various legal journals, including the “Review of the Court of Auditors”, as well as: “Il Foro Amministrativo”, “Nuova Rassegna”, “Guida agli Enti Locali – Il Sole 24 Ore”, “Nuove Autonomie”, “Rivista

Trimestrale della Scuola di Perfezionamento per le Forze di Polizia”, “Giust.it”, “Newsletter UPI” e “Controllo e Giurisdizione”.

- Throughout the last years in particular, the following articles have been published:
 - ‘*The investigative activities of the Public Prosecutor’s Office in the Code of Accounting Justice and its Corrective*’, in the Triennial Review of the Training School for Police Forces, No. 1 of 2020, pp. 7-20;
 - ‘*Innovation in public-private partnership and collaboration between public administrations*’, in Review of the Court of Auditors, No. 3 of 2021, pp. 39-41;
 - ‘*Entrusting the public administration with external tasks in the light of the most recent constitutional case-law*’, in Review of the Court of Auditors, No. 2 of 2022, pp. 37-52;
 - ‘*Expenditure on regional fixed-term staff and staff costs of Council groups: double constraint laid down by the Constitutional Court*’, in Review of the Court of Auditors, No 3 of 2022, pp. 12-18;
 - ‘*The (in)reviewability of regional council decisions in the light of the most recent constitutional case-law*’, in Review of the Court of Auditors, No 4 of 2022, pp. 28-36;
 - ‘*Invalidity of the pensions of regional councilors: passing a taboo*’, in Review of the Court of Auditors, No. 5 of 2022, pp. 55-76;
 - ‘*The crystallization of credit attachments in the course of the bankruptcy proceedings of local authorities in the light of the most recent constitutional case-law*’, in Review of the Court of Auditors, No. 6 of 2022, pp. 1-14;
 - ‘*The role of the third party in administrative liability proceedings: a matter reopened by the Constitutional Court?*’, in Review of the Court of Auditors, No. 1 of 2023, pp. 44-60;
 - ‘*The precarious financial situation of the provinces and the unorderly nature of the relevant legislation in the light of the most recent constitutional case-law*’, in Review of the Court of Auditors, No. 3 of 2023, pp. 1-24.
- In July 1995, published the volume entitled ‘*Loyalty and obedience in the civil service*’ (pages 156). In May 2009, coordinated the publication of the volume entitled ‘*Constitutional case-law in State-Region’s relations following State appeals*’ (page 429).

FURTHER INFORMATION

- In 1997 arrived 2nd in the ranking of the public competition, based on written and oral exams, for 28 posts of the role of Counsellors to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.
- Before entering the judiciary of the Court of Auditors, from 1990 to 1997 he was a member of the State Police and held various managerial positions within the Department of Public Security of the Ministry of the Interior, including those of Head of Division, Head of Mobile Squad and Head of Cabinet of the Questor at the Regional Headquarters.

ANNEX 2: ANSWERS BY CARLO ALBERTO MANFREDI SELVAGGI TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Professional experience

1. Please list your professional experience in public finance be it in budgetary planning, budget implementation or management or budget control or auditing.

Answer:

My professional experience covers all such areas. More in details:

I have **27 years of experience in budget control and in auditing:**

Since 1997, I am a magistrate of the Italian Court of Auditors, selected through a national merit-based highly selective competition.

I reached the senior leadership level of President of the Chamber and Regional Head Public Prosecutor. I headed the Regional Public Prosecutor Offices for the region of Molise (from 2013 to 2016 and in 2023), for the region of Emilia-Romagna (from 2016 to 2021) and for the region of Apulia (from 2021 to 2023).

In its constitutionally enshrined role of public sector budget controller and rapporteur to the Parliament, the Italian Court of Auditors entrusted me, as a delegated controller, with the budget control of the most complex bodies and entities, including:

- “Cassa Depositi e Prestiti S.p.A.”, from 2021 to 2023, the holding company of Italy’s largest equity investment group with a consolidated balance sheet of 478 bn EUR;
- “ENEL S.p.A.”, from 2017 to 2020, the largest Italian energy company and a global market player, listed on the Milan Stock Exchange, with 32.000+ employees and a consolidated balance sheet of 206 bn EUR;
- The “Società Italiana per le Imprese all’Estero S.p.A. - SIMEST”, from 2013 to 2016, a state-owned company providing services to promote and support Italian firms based abroad.

From 2011 to 2013, I was the Court’s Coordinator for the budget control report to the Parliament concerning the National Group of Economic Services Producers and Regulators, which included “ENI S.p.A.”, the largest Italian oil company and a global market player, listed on the Milan Stock Exchange, with close to 32.000 employees and a consolidated balance sheet of 137 bn EUR.

I served as Chairman of the Board of Auditors for:

- The Regulatory Authority for Transport, since 2023;
- The University of Salento, 2013-2015;
- The University of Molise, 2012-2013;
- The National Authority for Mountain Municipalities, 2009-2010

I served as Member of the Board of Auditors for:

- The Administrative Justice Council, 2016-2020, appointed by the President of the Court of Auditors;
- The Fiscal Justice Council, 2014-2020, appointed by the President of the Court of Auditors.

As for my **experience in budgetary planning**:

Since 2023, I serve as Member of the Technical Commission for budgetary thresholds at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, in charge of analysing and evaluating the activities, methodologies and processes relating to the determination of the standard budgetary needs of local authorities.

In 2013, I served as Member of the Committee for Investments Evaluation and Planning and Management of Environmental Interventions at the Ministry of the Environment.

From 2009 to 2011, I was a Member of the Superior Council of Public Works, in charge of the budgetary planning concerning the construction of major national infrastructures.

Regarding my **experience in budget implementation or management**:

Since 2021, I am the Chairman of the Supervisory Committee for the temporary early intervention and management recovery procedure regarding “Conbipel S.p.A.”, in charge of supervising the manufacturing company’s 87 m EUR budget implementation and management, carried out by the tribunal appointed temporary administrator.

In 2013, I served as Member of the Technical and Scientific Committee of the national governmental Agency for Agriculture ‘AGEA’, in charge of supporting the Agency’s executive management in ensuring regularity and efficiency in the use and allocation of funds, including European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

2. What have been your most significant achievements in your professional career?

Answer:

In 1997, I became the youngest magistrate of Italy’s Court of Auditors, selected through a national merit-based highly selective competition.

In 2013 I was promoted, through a rigorous merit-based competition among Court’s magistrates, to the senior leadership level of Regional Head Public Prosecutor and then, in 2021, to that of President of the Chamber (becoming the youngest President of the Chamber of Italy’s Court of Auditors). Such promotions were decided by the Council of Presidency of the Court of Auditors, its governing body, entrusted by law with the competence to decide on magistrates’ promotions and assignments, to guarantee them being merit-based and shielded from any government interference.

Since May 2023, I am the Coordinator of the Mission Structure of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, in charge of coordinating and overseeing the implementation

of the 194 bn EUR Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP). In this capacity, I am also responsible for the relations with the European Commission, including those with the Task Force RECOVER and DG ECFIN, concerning the implementation of the measures set out by the NRRP, as well for the inherent reporting to the EU Commission. In this respect, I am proud to say that under my mandate the fulfilment of the ambitious milestones and targets set out by the plan was positively assessed and acknowledged twice by the European Commission and subsequently the disbursement of the related EU funds was approved.

3. What has been your professional experience of international multicultural and multilingual organisations or institutions based outside your home country?

Answer:

Over the course of my career at the Italian Court of Auditors I have always engaged in the international and multicultural dimension of our work and represented the institution internationally. I have been working closely with our European and international partners, such as serving as the contact person for the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) as well as member of the committee serving as national point of contact for the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). In 2020 and 2021, I took part in the C.A.T.O.N.E. (Cooperation Agreements and Training on Objectives and New Experiences) project, created by OLAF and aimed at an information exchange between the national anti-fraud coordination offices and the magistrates of the Court of Auditors of Italy, Portugal, Spain, France, and Greece.

Most recently, since 2023, I have been working closely with the European Commission, especially the Task Force RECOVER and DG ECFIN, on the implementation of the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan in my role as coordinator for the government office overseeing its implementation.

From 2017 to 2020, as delegated controller of ENEL, I had relationship with and controlled on site its foreign subsidiaries, such as Enel America or Endesa in Spain.

In 2013 and 2014, I served as Member of the Committee for the Evaluation of Investments and Support for Planning within the Ministry of Environment and Member of the Technical and Scientific Committee of the national governmental Agency for Agriculture, where I addressed matters of EU funded projects for environmental protection.

In 2009 I served as the Head of the Italian Delegation to the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union at the High-Level Meeting on Governance and EU held in Solna, Stockholm (Sweden), as well as the Head of the Italian Delegation to the Council of Europe for the 16th Conference of European Ministers held in Utrecht (The Netherlands). The following year I served as the Head of the Italian Delegation to the Spanish Presidency of the EU at the Regional Affairs Ministers conference held in Malaga (Spain).

4. Have you been granted discharge for the management duties you carried out previously, if such a procedure applies?

Answer:

No such discharge procedure has ever been applicable to any management duty I have carried out as a civil servant, and I have never received any objection or complaint again my performance.

5. Which of your previous professional positions were a result of a political nomination?

Answer:

None. Following my academic studies, I entered the civil service in 1990 working for the State police. After winning a national, merit-based, highly selective competition, I joined the Italian Court of Auditors in 1997 as a magistrate. I am a civil servant in this institution ever since, and I have reached the senior leadership level position of President of the Chamber and Regional Head Public Prosecutor, solely through merit-based promotions. As a magistrate of the Court of Auditors, and thereby as part of the judiciary branch, my independence from the executive government is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Italian Republic.

During my track record of 27 years of service at the Italian Court of Auditors, being a high- ranking magistrate of the Court of Auditors, a lecturer and author of several scientific publications in EU and national law regarding budget control and public accounting and administration, as detailed in my CV, I have been requested on different occasions by governments and ministries to temporarily provide my expertise and experience. These temporary assignments were decided upon by the Presidency of the Italian Court of Auditors and sometimes subject to a detachment while maintaining my role as magistrate in the institution.

Such temporary assignments include, e.g., since May 2023 the role of coordinator for the government office in charge of the oversight of the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan, following my participation in the working group on the impact assessment on the public administration of the NRRP in 2022 with the Secretariat General of the preceding government.

6. What are the three most important decisions to which you have been party in your professional life?

Answer:

I would like to recall and provide the following three instances of challenging and important decisions that I have encountered and taken part of in my professional life:

Firstly, while I was a member of the Council of the Presidency of the Court of Auditors, the utmost painful and difficult decision to dismiss a magistrate guilty of corruption.

Secondly, equally difficult, and complex in nature, while I was Regional Head Public Prosecutor of the Court of Auditors, the ruling of sequestration measures of private assets totalling over 15 m EUR against the “Parmacotto S.p.A.” company, one of the largest Italian food suppliers active on the global market, and its directors, as they were held responsible for fraud.

Lastly, I have contributed to a ground-breaking decision of the Italian Constitutional

Court: While I was Regional Head Public Prosecutor of the Court of Auditors, politically exposed persons of interest in the Emilia-Romagna Region have been accused of treasury damage and have invoked constitutional immunity to evade prosecution. In its decision no. 43 of 2019, the Constitutional Court has ruled in my favour as prosecutor, that, for the first time, a magistrate of the Court of Auditors (in this case myself), has the right to attend and intervene in a Constitutional Court hearing to present his case and prosecute his accusation.

Independence

7. The Treaty stipulates that the Members of the Court of Auditors must be ‘completely independent’ in the performance of their duties. How would you act on this obligation in the discharge of your prospective duties?

Answer:

The complete independence is a principle that is not only enshrined by the Treaty to Members of the Court of Auditors but is a universal professional standard applicable to the auditor. As, e.g., one professional standard (PCAOB AS 1005) states: “To be independent, the auditor must be intellectually honest; to be recognized as independent, he must be free from any obligation to or interest in the client, its management, or its owners.” I wish to underline the importance of the distinction between “being” and “being recognized” as independent.

It is crucial for the public, including stakeholders such as the Members of this Committee, to maintain confidence in this complete independence. Public confidence can be impaired not only by actual evidence that independence was lacking, but it might already be tainted by the existence of circumstances which people could believe to influence this independence.

Being completely independent in the performance of my duties has been my professional core value throughout my professional life. I have been an auditor at the Italian supreme audit institution for over a quarter century. As magistrate of the Court of Auditors, I am bound to independence by Article 108 of the Constitution of the Italian Republic, and I have always acted in compliance with such constitutional duty. At no point in my career have I ever let any circumstance cast even the slightest doubt on my professional integrity and independence. I most rigorously uphold and ensure that my independence as an auditor is not only free from any influence, but free from any circumstance that could be perceived as an influence.

As a Member of the European Court of Auditors I would naturally continue to uphold the same highest standards of professional ethics and integrity as I have done over my career as auditor. This dedication to professional integrity and independency is based on 27 years of relevant professional experience performed under a constitutionally guaranteed independence, and in full compliance with the duty of independence set out by the EU Treaty.

8. Do you or your close relatives (parents, brothers and sisters, legal partner and children) have any business or financial holdings or any other commitments, which might conflict with your prospective duties?

Answer:

No. Neither myself nor my close relatives have any business or financial holdings or any commitments that might conflict with my envisaged duties.

9. Are you prepared to disclose all your financial interests and other commitments to the President of the Court and to make them public?

Answer:

Yes. I am prepared to disclose all relevant information in this regard and provide a declaration of interest to be published, in full compliance with the ECA's Code of Conduct for its members and its ethical guidelines.

10. Are you involved in any current legal proceedings? If so, please provide us with details.

Answer:

No. I am not involved, nor have I ever been involved, in any legal proceedings.

11. Do you have any active or executive role in politics, if so at what level? Have you held any political position during the last 18 months? If so, please provide us with details.

Answer:

No. Throughout my professional life, I have abstained from engaging in any political activity. I am not a member of any political party; nor do I seek to engage in such activity in the future.

All public service that I have performed during my professional career has been based solely on my expertise as a high-ranking and experienced magistrate of the Italian Court of Auditors.

12. Will you step down from any elected office or give up any active function with responsibilities in a political party if you are appointed as a Member of the Court?

Answer:

I have never held or currently hold an elected office or party-political position. In the spirit of complete independence in my duties, I will continue in my path of abstaining from any political activity.

13. How would you deal with a major irregularity or even fraud and/or corruption case involving persons in your Member State of origin?

Answer:

I would like to preface this answer by recalling from my curriculum, that over the last preceding years I have been the contact person for the European Public Prosecutor's

Office (EPPO) in the field of combating fraud against the European Union, following prior experience as member of the Committee for Combating Fraud against the European Union, the Italian point of contact for the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). Based on these experiences I have developed a keen sense of the matters in question here.

Should I, in the course of my prospected duties, encounter a situation of serious allegation, such as major irregularity, fraud or corruption, I will deal with it in the same way that I have dealt with such situations over 27 years as magistrate of the Italian Court of Auditors: With indisputable professionalism, in full compliance with all applicable rules and legislation, and absolutely regardless of the origin or background of the person(s) involved.

Performance of duties

14. What should be the main features of a sound financial management culture in any public service? How could the ECA help to enforce it?

Answer:

It is of foremost importance to understand what we can define as sound financial management. For the sake of my answer here, I would like to recall Article 33 of the Financial Regulation of the EU: “Performance and principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. These three guiding principles, generally referred to as the 3E of financial management, must guide public service in all its action and all spending of citizens money. Every government expenditure, every financial action must withstand the litmus test against these three overarching principles. In a strong culture of sound financial management, budget action must constantly ask itself: Are we doing the right things (effectiveness)? And: Are we doing the things right (efficiency and economy)?

The Court of Auditors, as well as the national counterparts in the supreme audit institutions, contribute to this culture of 3E by formulating audit questions that are based on these principles. While the performance audit could be seen as the most holistic, in addressing all three principles, financial and compliance audit cover more individual aspects of sound financial management, such as Legality and Regularity.

The Court of Auditors does and should continue to enforce and strengthen sound financial management in the EU institutions and, more broadly, wherever EU funds are spent. It can achieve this by continuously asking strong audit questions based on the 3E to remind all levels of public budget and expenditure of their obligation to adhere to these principles.

With a view on performance audit, and to be impactful in promoting sound financial management, it is fundamental for the ECA to translate such strong audit questions, through collecting relevant and reliable audit evidence, into actionable recommendations. To add real value, these recommendations shall address truly relevant issues and be viable in terms of cost-benefit ratio.

15. Under the Treaty, the Court is required to assist Parliament in exercising its powers of control over the implementation of the budget. How would you further improve the cooperation between the Court and the European Parliament (in

particular, its Committee on Budgetary Control) to enhance both the public oversight of the general spending and its value for money?

Answer:

Currently I do not possess a sufficient operational insight into the cooperation between this Committee and the European Court of Auditors and I therefore believe it would be presumptuous to allow myself to suggest improvements thereto. As the experienced magistrate that I am, however, I seek and draw answers from the law, and would therefore like to recall Art 287 of the TFEU here, the legal basis and mandate of the Court.

The Committee of Budget Controls' sharpest blade is the annual discharge procedure, and it is linked to the annual report and the obligation of ECA to provide the Parliament with a statement of assurance. Therefore, when thinking of 'public oversight of the general spending', in my view it is clearly linked to the very core duty of the ECA as auditor of the EU budget, i.e., to provide assurance to its stakeholders and the public on the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions. Based on such information, this Committee will be able to form its discharge procedure and opinion, hence the quality of ECA's annual report must be impeccable and must provide the Parliament, and notably this Committee, with the information it needs to exercise its power by relying on appropriate, i.e., relevant, and reliable, audit evidence, and independent, factual audit conclusions.

Controlling the aspect of 'value for money' in my view is linked to special reports based on performance audit that the ECA may additionally provide. Here it will be key for the ECA to enhance and facilitate the communication and exchange with this Committee. In its audit planning, the Court should regularly seek the exchange with the Parliament to establish, e.g., an agreed upon working program, overarching objective themes of interest, and a continuous flow of information that allows the Committee to continuously monitor the impact and value that is created through the EU budget and call for corrective action where needed.

A powerful parliamentary oversight over the EU budget implementation must be based on the ECA providing the Parliament with the best possible audit work and, should I be appointed as member of ECA, I will fully commit myself to supporting, facilitating, and improving, where necessary, the cooperation between the ECA and the Committee of Budgetary Control. Where appropriate, I would welcome the opportunity to engage with, listen to and learn from members of the CONT Committee to improve cooperation between the ECA and the EP to strengthen the oversight on EU spending and deliver the best possible value for money for EU citizens.

16. What added value do you think performance auditing brings and how should the findings be incorporated in management procedures?

Answer:

During my professional career, I had the opportunity to look at the European Court of Auditors' final reports that result from the performance audits and I am convinced that the audit recommendations formulated by the Court provide the biggest, tangible added value of the performance audit approach.

The ECA has a strong competence in developing recommendations based on relevant and reliable audit evidence, as I have experienced many times myself. When this audit evidence is translated in conclusions and actionable recommendations, they can significantly contribute to improving the sound financial management of the EU.

But to be incorporated by the auditee into the management procedures and for implementing the auditors' recommendations, they need to be impactful in order to add value. From my national and European experience, as auditors we must always seek to make truly relevant and practical recommendations that are understood and shared by our auditee. Recommendations should be addressed to the right management level with the competence to implement them and should be viable in terms of time, cost, and resources. Here I would like to refer to my answer to question 14 and recall article 33 of the Financial Regulation on sound financial management. Art 33 (3) calls for objectives to be "specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound". The same should apply to the recommendations we provide as auditors to the management as objectives to achieve.

If we understand performance audit as a process to identify potential shortcomings and to formulate valuable and viable recommendations to the relevant level of management, the ECA can help ensure spending programs that create and add value to the EU and its citizens.

17. How could cooperation between the Court of Auditors, the national audit institutions and the European Parliament (Committee on Budgetary Control) on auditing of the EU budget be improved?

Answer:

Over the course of my professional career at the Italian Court of Auditors, at various occasions I had the pleasure of engaging with Members of the European Court of Auditors in the organizational framework of the INTOSAI (International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions) and the EUROSAI (European Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions).

The role of ECA in these forums is of the highest value to the work of the national supreme audit institutions and I believe that the ECA serves as a crucial linchpin in the exchange of best practices on the audit of the EU budget. The regular exchange of information, the creation of working groups and shared knowledge and resulting publications and compendia significantly enhance the quality of our daily work. It also contributes to a harmonization of knowledge and practices when it comes to the SAI's role in safeguarding the financial interests of the EU and protection of the EU budget.

I can see how the ECA, in the role of a linchpin between the European audit institutions will also be beneficial to the European Parliament and this Committee. Enhancing the dialogue with the main stakeholder at the Parliament would further elevate the quality of our work. The Parliament could contribute by expressing their view and, e.g., indicate preferences on future audit areas of particular interest, whereas the audit institutions could share their views and experiences to create a better understanding for the stakeholders. Such better understanding of stakeholder's expectation matched against auditors' performance and methodology will add value to a resource efficient, performance oriented, system of public accountability and oversight

in the EU.

18. How would you further develop the reporting of the ECA to give the European Parliament all the necessary information on the accuracy of the data provided by the Member States to the European Commission?

Answer:

This question is of utmost importance and its relevance has significantly increased since the launch of the “Next Generation EU”. Data quality and availability is fundamental for the auditor to perform his duties, just as much as it is to the discharge authority to execute its budgetary oversight.

It is my understanding, that thanks to the outstanding and well-established cooperation between the European Court of Auditors, the European Commission and the Member States in financial and compliance audit, the availability and quality of data should be of satisfactory quality. During the Statement of Assurance work of the Court, communication, and flow of information, appears adequate and the different methods of budgetary implementation (direct, indirect, shared) appear to have harmonized reporting processes. Accuracy needs to be constantly controlled and upheld, e.g. ECA could provide a recurring assessment in the annual report on the accuracy of data based on sampling methods and could cooperate or even create a common knowledge node with EUROSTAT on data quality and analysis.

What I have experienced, however, while working on the supervision of the new budgetary approach of performance-based instruments such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility, is that there appear to be shortcomings in the accuracy of the data between the Member States, the Commission and the Parliament or at least diverging views on the interpretation of the data. I have experienced first-hand how challenging the discussion can be between the European Commission and Member States on providing and interpreting available data, especially when it comes to assessing satisfactory achievement of performance, targets, and milestones. Consequently, it might be even more challenging for the Committee to exercise its oversight over potentially disputed data interpretation.

Learning from this experience and with a view on the future of performance-based budget, it is crucial that progress is achieved, and best practices established on the flow and exchange of information between Member States, the European Commission, the ECA and the European Parliament, to make sure that the interpretation of the data is held in a transparent matter. Due public accountability expects and requires nothing short of that, and should I be appointed as a Member of ECA, I will contribute my experience to the continuous improvement and harmonization of reporting structures and channels, to create value for the EU taxpayers and assure accountability.

Other questions

19. Will you withdraw your candidacy if Parliament’s opinion on your appointment as Member of the Court is unfavourable?

Answer:

The trust of the European Parliament and the Members of this Committee is the crucial cornerstone for the work of the European Court of Auditors. I am embarking here on a mission to obtain this trust, expressed through a favourable opinion, in the strong believe that trust is the most valuable currency of professional interaction.

Should I not be able to obtain the trust of the European Parliament, I will fully respect its opinion on my appointment as Member of the Court of Auditors and will withdraw my candidacy in case of a Parliament's unfavourable opinion.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Date adopted	22.2.2024
Result of final vote	+: 19 -: 8 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Matteo Adinolfi, Gilles Boyer, Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Olivier Chastel, Caterina Chinnici, Carlos Coelho, Beatrice Covassi, Luke Ming Flanagan, Daniel Freund, Isabel García Muñoz, Maria Grapini, Monika Hohlmeier, Joachim Kuhs, Eleni Stavrou, Angelika Winzig, Lara Wolters
Substitutes present for the final vote	Niclas Herbst, Jozef Mihál, Andrey Novakov, Mikuláš Peksa, Sabrina Pignedoli, Michal Wiezik
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Marie Dauchy, Andżelika Anna Mozdzanowska, Ernő Schaller-Baross, Christine Schneider, Mick Wallace, Kosma Złotowski