

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Foreign Affairs

2007/2037(DEC)

28.2.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the European Union general budget for the financial year 2006

(SEC(2007)1056 - C6-0390/2007 - 2007/2037(DEC))

(SEC(2007)1055 - C6-0362/2007 - 2007/2037(DEC))

Section III - Commission

Draftswoman: Véronique De Keyser

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

Pre-accession assistance

1. Appreciates the results of the audit of implementation of the Phare and ISPA instruments in Bulgaria and Romania and the assistance programme for Turkey, which identified an insignificant level of error; takes note of the errors and weaknesses found in relation to the implementation of the SAPARD instrument in Bulgaria and Romania; calls on the Commission to continue working with the authorities of both countries to ensure that all requirements for public tendering and sound financial management are met and that adequate assurance of the correctness, regularity and eligibility of claims on Community assistance is provided;
2. Notes the Court's assessment that the national supervisory systems linked to the Decentralised Implementation Systems (DIS) of Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey remained weak;
3. Reiterates its concern about the delays in the accreditation of the Extended Decentralised Implementation System (EDIS) in Bulgaria, and urges the Commission and the Bulgarian authorities to step up their cooperation and efforts in order to ensure that adequate management and control structures as well as the administrative capacities are in place to allow efficient functioning of EDIS;
4. Supports the recommendations of the Court to the Commission that the latter monitor closely the effective functioning of national supervisory and control systems, notably the preparation and management of tenders in Turkey, procurement under EDIS in Bulgaria and Romania and the timely delivery of national co-financing; underlines the need to strengthen the administrative capacity of those countries that have recently acceded and those which are in the course of accession;
5. Welcomes the significant increase in the implementation rate of commitment and payment appropriations for pre-accession strategy in 2006 as compared to 2005;
6. Welcomes the excellent contribution made by the European Agency for Reconstruction to the development and consolidation of stability in the region; reiterates its support for the decision to wind down the Agency by 2008 in order that assistance to eligible countries may be managed by Commission delegations in those countries;

Twinning

7. Is pleased with the Court's assessment that several remedial measures were introduced by the Commission in the follow-up to the Court's special report on twinning from 2003; invites the Commission to motivate the beneficiary governments more strongly to make use of the outputs of projects realised in the context of their reform efforts; supports the Court's recommendation to the Commission that the latter reduce the level of detail of the

twinning contracts in order to allow greater flexibility for project management;

External actions

8. Notes the Court's findings on the legality and regularity of transactions in the external actions field and of related supervisory and control systems; invites the Commission to undertake all necessary system improvements so as to ensure that problems identified at the level of project-implementing organisations in third countries are removed;
9. Looks forward to an increase in the visibility of actions financed by the EU via international trust funds, in particular in the context of the sums totalling more than EUR 1 billion which have been transferred from the EU budget to the UN and World Bank funds; urges the Commission to ensure that political guidance, EU visibility and the control of the funds used are enhanced;
10. Invites the Commission regularly to present to Parliament specific measures to further increase EU ownership of its external actions in their geographical contexts (in accordance with the principles of efficiency, accountability and visibility);
11. Invites the Commission to present to Parliament a report on what exactly has been done to alleviate the situation of Iraqi refugees and displaced persons;
12. Stresses its interest regarding the EU assistance provided to Afghanistan, and invites the Commission to present to Parliament a report on the state of play as regards implementation of EU funds for Afghanistan and to comment on the expulsion from that country of the acting EU representative on the charge of having communicated with the Afghan Taliban;
13. Calls on the Commission to inform Parliament efficiently and rapidly about the use of EU funds via international trust funds for Iraq; invites the Commission to update and give concrete substance to this information and to propose a system which enables Parliament to see in a clear and readable way what exactly has been co-financed by EU funds via international trust funds anywhere in the world.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	27.2.2008
Result of final vote	+: 63 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Monika Beňová, Elmar Brok, Colm Burke, Philip Claeys, Véronique De Keyser, Giorgos Dimitrakopoulos, Michael Gahler, Georgios Georgiou, Bronisław Geremek, Maciej Marian Giertych, Ana Maria Gomes, Alfred Gomolka, Klaus Hänsch, Richard Howitt, Jana Hybášková, Anna Ibrisagic, Metin Kazak, Maria Eleni Koppa, Helmut Kuhne, Joost Lagendijk, Vytautas Landsbergis, Johannes Lebech, Emilio Menéndez del Valle, Francisco José Millán Mon, Philippe Morillon, Pasqualina Napoletano, Raimon Obiols i Germà, Vural Öger, Cem Özdemir, Justas Vincas Paleckis, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Alojz Peterle, Hubert Pirker, Samuli Pohjamo, Bernd Posselt, Michel Rocard, Raúl Romeva i Rueda, Libor Rouček, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, György Schöpflin, Hannes Swoboda, Charles Tannock, Geoffrey Van Orden, Ari Vatanen, Kristian Vigenin, Zbigniew Zaleski, Josef Zieleniec
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Mariela Velichkova Baeva, Cristian Silviu Bușoi, Giulietto Chiesa, Andrew Duff, Árpád Duka-Zólyomi, David Hammerstein, Evgeni Kirilov, Jaromír Kohlíček, Ģirts Valdis Kristovskis, Erik Meijer, Borut Pahor, Józef Pinior, Antolín Sánchez Presedo, Inger Segelström
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Renate Weber