



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Foreign Affairs

2011/2192(INI)

8.2.2012

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Development

on the impact of devolution of the Commission's management of external assistance from its headquarters to its delegations on aid delivery
(2011/2192(INI))

Rapporteur: Kyriakos Mavronikolas

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Welcomes the conclusion of the Special Report of the Court of Auditors 1/2011¹, according to which devolution has contributed to improving aid delivery and to making more robust the financial management procedures;
2. Notes that, according to the Court's report, further efforts are necessary on the part of the Commission in order to improve the manner in which it evaluates the quality and the results of its interventions; takes the view that this will result in better accountability for the EU's financial interventions and will ensure increased visibility for its actions;
3. Shares with the Court the opinion that the main benefit of budget support is that it offers opportunities for dialogue with local beneficiaries on policy objectives; notes that this opportunity has to be fully exploited; stresses the need for delegations to have the resources and expertise required to carry out this dialogue in an effective way; calls for additional steps to be taken to further strengthen the political analysis and political reporting capacity of delegations;
4. Believes that the reduction of the number of sectors of intervention at country level for each EU donor would be an important contribution to making aid delivery more effective and more efficient for all stakeholders, and supports the Commission's efforts to play a stronger role in leading the process at country level and to achieve joint programming with EU Member States;
5. Regrets that, in the run-up to the establishment of the EEAS, there has been no thorough assessment to determine the appropriate balance between political/trade/development aid posts in delegations; such evaluations should take into account the specific context of the countries concerned and aim to ensure the coherence of EU external action;
6. Considers the high turnover rate of staff in delegations to be unacceptable (40 % of Commission staff are contract agents), as this weakens the institutional memory and negatively affects the efficiency of operations;
7. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to address specifically the areas identified by the audit, in particular the workload within delegations, the adequacy of staffing levels among delegations and the balance of delegations' staffing between aid management and other functions;
8. Emphasises, in line with the decision establishing the European External Action Service, that the entirety of the personnel working in a delegation is under the authority of the Head of Delegation, since this is the only way to ensure, in line with the Lisbon Treaty, the coherence of EU external action in a given country;

¹ OJ C 101, 1.4.2011, p. 27.

9. Underlines the importance of devoting more attention to cooperation between the Union's delegations and the embassies of its Member States; stresses that coordination and complementarity between these two levels of representation are indispensable ingredients of effective external action and a truly coherent foreign policy;
10. Believes that, in the interests of smooth implementation of the EU budget, Heads of Delegation should be able to delegate the management of operational tasks and of a delegation's administrative expenditure to their deputies, and that the financial regulation should if necessary be revised accordingly;
11. Welcomes the Court of Auditors' remark that the role of the EEAS in the area of consular protection should be further explored.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	6.2.2012
Result of final vote	+: 45 -: 4 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Bastiaan Belder, Frieda Brepoels, Elmar Brok, Jerzy Buzek, Arnaud Danjean, Michael Gahler, Marietta Giannakou, Anna Ibrisagic, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Ioannis Kasoulides, Tunne Kelam, Nicole Kiil-Nielsen, Evgeni Kirilov, Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler, Eduard Kukan, Vytautas Landsbergis, Krzysztof Lisek, Ulrike Lunacek, Barry Madlener, Mario Mauro, Kyriakos Mavronikolas, Francisco José Millán Mon, Alexander Mirsky, María Muñoz De Urquiza, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Alojz Peterle, Cristian Dan Preda, Libor Rouček, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Nikolaos Salavrakos, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Marek Siwiec, Charles Tannock, Sir Graham Watson, Boris Zala
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Elena Băsescu, Véronique De Keyser, Tanja Fajon, Elisabeth Jeggle, Doris Pack, Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl, Marietje Schaake, Indrek Tarand, Traian Ungureanu, Ivo Vajgl
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Marije Cornelissen, Rui Tavares