



2021/2115(DEC)

7.12.2021

AMENDMENTS

1 - 31

Draft opinion

Michael Gahler

(PE699.319v01-00)

2020 discharge: General budget of the EU - European External Action Service
(2021/2115(DEC))

Amendment 1
Jérôme Rivière, Thierry Mariani

Draft opinion
Paragraph 1

Draft opinion

1. Notes growing instability and the rise of unprecedented challenges in the international environment, which increased demands on the Union to act ***as a global player***;

Amendment

1. Notes growing instability and the rise of unprecedented challenges in the international environment, which increased demands on the Union to act ***together with the Member States, which must remain sovereign in matters of foreign policy***;

Or. fr

Amendment 2
Vladimír Bilčík

Draft opinion
Paragraph 1

Draft opinion

1. Notes growing instability and ***the*** rise of unprecedented challenges in the international environment, which increased demands on the Union to act as a global player;

Amendment

1. Notes growing instability, ***deteriorating security environment, geopolitical impact of COVID-19 pandemic*** and rise of unprecedented challenges in the international environment, which increased demands on the Union to act as a global player;

Or. en

Amendment 3
Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion
Paragraph 1

Draft opinion

1. Notes growing instability and the rise of unprecedented challenges in the international environment, ***which***

Amendment

1. Notes growing instability and the rise of unprecedented challenges in the

increased demands on the Union to act as a global player;

international environment;

Or. en

Amendment 4
Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion
Paragraph 1 a (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

1 a. Notes with grave concern that the total financial impact of all reservations by Directors-General to declarations of assurance amounted to EUR 1219 million for 2020, 16% higher than in 2019^{1a};

^{1a} Annual Management and Performance Report 2020

Or. en

Amendment 5
Vladimír Bilčík

Draft opinion
Paragraph 1 a (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

1 a. Emphasises that the EU needs a robust and resilient external service with clear political leadership in order to tackle the current challenges;

Or. en

Amendment 6
Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion

Paragraph 1 b (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

1 b. Notes with grave concern that the financial impact of the reservations for the policy area 'External relations' increased from EUR 16 million in 2019 to EUR 21 million in 2020; calls for immediate action to be taken by the Commission to address this issue;

Or. en

Amendment 7

Fabio Massimo Castaldo

Draft opinion

Paragraph 2

Draft opinion

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; notes, ***however***, that enhanced EEAS performance has to be underpinned by a corresponding staff increase; calls for sufficient human resources to be made available in order to deliver on the Union's external policy priorities;

Amendment

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; ***underlines the importance of the EEAS in ensuring the coherence of the Union's foreign policy and*** notes that enhanced EEAS performance has to be underpinned by a corresponding staff increase; ***highlights the need to provide necessary resources for a successful implementation of our Common Foreign and Security Policy and Common Security and Defence Policy and*** calls for sufficient human resources to be made available in order to deliver on the Union's external policy priorities;

Or. en

Amendment 8

Jérôme Rivière, Thierry Mariani

Draft opinion
Paragraph 2

Draft opinion

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; notes, however, that enhanced EEAS performance has to be underpinned by a corresponding staff increase; calls for sufficient human resources to be made available in order to deliver on the Union's external policy priorities;***

Amendment

2. ***Wants the European External Action Service (EEAS) to focus primarily on analysis and research; opposes any programmed increase in its staff; calls, in particular, for the EEAS not to recruit independently but to do so on the basis of diplomats being made available from the respective diplomatic corps of the Member States;***

Or. fr

Amendment 9
Ernest Urtasun

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Draft opinion
Paragraph 2

Draft opinion

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; notes, however, that enhanced EEAS performance has to be underpinned by a corresponding staff increase; calls for sufficient human resources to be made available in order to deliver on the Union's external policy priorities;

Amendment

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; notes, however, that enhanced EEAS performance has to be underpinned by a corresponding staff increase ***and a stronger EU 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;

Or. en

Amendment 10
Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion
Paragraph 2

Draft opinion

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; notes, however, that enhanced EEAS performance has to be underpinned by a corresponding staff increase; calls for sufficient human resources to be made available in order to deliver on the Union's external policy priorities;***

Amendment

2. ***Notes that the European External Action Service (EEAS) has existed for 10 years; stresses that Member States are facing an economic downturn in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, which originated in Wuhan, China, therefore calls for enhanced EEAS performance to be achieved solely through increased cost-efficiency and optimisation; calls for surplus resources to be returned to net paying Member States;***

Or. en

Amendment 11
Urmas Paet

Draft opinion
Paragraph 2 a (new)

Draft opinion

2 a. Emphasises the need to ensure the coherence of EU's foreign policy, there is also a need to provide necessary resources for a successful implementation of an efficient EU Security and Defence Policy;

Amendment

Or. en

Amendment 12
Ernest Urtasun
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Draft opinion
Paragraph 3

Draft opinion

Amendment

3. Notes the remaining gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of ensuring a balanced distribution *of staff* in terms of *gender and* geographical origin within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; 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;

3. Notes the *lack of diversity and* remaining gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of ensuring *greater diversity, gender equality and* a balanced distribution in terms of geographical origin *among staff* within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; *calls on the EEAS to lead by example, as set out in the Gender Action Plan III, and significantly improve the representation of women and marginalised groups across all levels, with the goal to establish gender parity in leadership and management positions, gender-responsive leadership and gender-sensitive recruitment processes as soon as possible; 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;

Or. en

Amendment 13
Fabio Massimo Castaldo

Draft opinion
Paragraph 3

Draft opinion

3. Notes the remaining gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of ensuring a balanced distribution of staff in terms of gender and geographical origin within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; points also to a remaining overrepresentation of some Member States' diplomats among the

Amendment

3. Notes the remaining gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of ensuring a balanced distribution of staff in terms of gender and geographical origin within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; 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;

Heads of Delegation and calls for further efforts to address those imbalances;
encourages EEAS to create and share guidelines on best practices on the conducting of recruitment procedures in order to ensure diversity, openness, fairness and transparency;

Or. en

Amendment 14
Evin Incir

Draft opinion
Paragraph 3

Draft opinion

3. Notes the remaining gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of ensuring ***a balanced*** distribution of staff in terms of gender ***and geographical origin*** within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; 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;

Amendment

3. Notes the remaining gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of ensuring ***an intersectional*** distribution of staff in terms of ***race, ethnicity, religion or belief, health, status, age, class, caste and sexual orientation and gender identity*** within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; 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;

Or. en

Amendment 15
Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion
Paragraph 3

Draft opinion

3. Notes the remaining ***gender and*** geographical imbalances within the EEAS

Amendment

3. Notes the remaining geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff;

staff, *despite slightly positive trends in previous years*; reiterates the importance of ensuring a balanced distribution of staff in terms of *gender and* geographical origin within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; 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;

reiterates the importance of ensuring a balanced distribution of staff in terms of geographical origin within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; 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;

Or. en

Amendment 16
David Lega

Draft opinion
Paragraph 3

Draft opinion

3. Notes the remaining gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of *ensuring* a balanced distribution of staff in terms of gender and geographical origin within different categories and grades, particularly at middle and senior management levels; 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;

Amendment

3. Notes the remaining gender and geographical imbalances within the EEAS staff, despite slightly positive trends in previous years; reiterates the importance of *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; 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;

Or. en

Amendment 17
Ernest Urtasun
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Draft opinion
Paragraph 3 a (new)

3 a. Urges the EEAS to follow-up without further delay 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 EU as a whole;

Or. en

Amendment 18
David Lega

Draft opinion
Paragraph 4

4. 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; stresses the continuous need to fight foreign propaganda and expose disinformation and malicious foreign influence; underlines the importance of the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force and calls for providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources;

4. 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; 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 **the broadening of its mandate, including in relation to state sponsored disinformation originating in China and the Middle East, particularly Iran, and calls for** providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources;

Or. en

Amendment 19
Vladimír Bilčík

Draft opinion
Paragraph 4

Draft opinion

4. 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; stresses the continuous need to **fight foreign propaganda and** expose disinformation and malicious foreign influence; underlines the importance of the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force and calls for providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources;

Amendment

4. ***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 EU is founded; notes the increase of 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; stresses the continuous need to expose disinformation and malicious foreign influence; underlines the importance of the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force and calls for providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources;

Or. en

Amendment 20
Ernest Urtasun
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Draft opinion
Paragraph 4

Draft opinion

4. 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; stresses the continuous need to fight foreign

Amendment

4. 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***

propaganda and expose disinformation and malicious foreign influence; underlines the importance of the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force and calls for providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources;

improvements to the coordination and accountability of EU 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 and malicious foreign influence; underlines the importance of the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force and calls for providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources;

Or. en

Amendment 21

Jérôme Rivière, Thierry Mariani

Draft opinion

Paragraph 4

Draft opinion

4. ***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; stresses the continuous need to fight foreign propaganda and expose disinformation and malicious foreign influence; underlines the importance of the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force and calls for providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources;***

Amendment

4. ***Considers that the desire on the part of the Union, and in particular the EEAS, to tackle issues relating to 'disinformation' is about taking subjective positions vis-à-vis third countries; calls for an end to the activities of the Task Force on Disinformation within the EEAS;***

Or. fr

Amendment 22

Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion

Paragraph 4

Draft opinion

4. **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**; stresses the continuous need to **fight** foreign propaganda and **expose** disinformation and malicious foreign influence; **underlines the importance of the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force and calls for providing it with the necessary financial and personnel resources**;

Amendment

4. **Takes note of** the ECA's Special Report on Disinformation affecting the Union **which concluded that "it has not delivered all its intended results" and that "there is no monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework accompanying the EU action plan and the European democracy action plan, which undermines accountability" and that "the plans include generic objectives that cannot be measured, several actions that are not time-bound and no provisions for evaluation"**; stresses the continuous need to **efficiently expose** foreign propaganda and disinformation and malicious foreign influence, **especially with regard to the Chinese origins of Covid-19**;

Or. en

Amendment 23 Vladimír Bilčík

Draft opinion Paragraph 5

Draft opinion

5. 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.

Amendment

5. 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; **reiterates the importance of promoting rule of law, fundamental freedoms and values that the EU is based on.**

Or. en

Amendment 24
Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion
Paragraph 5

Draft opinion

5. 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*.

Amendment

5. Underlines the importance of *Member States coordinating* public diplomacy and strategic communication as an integral aspect of *their international cooperation* and an instrument to communicate *their shared* values and interests; calls on the EEAS to continue its efforts to modernise its approaches, *increase cost-efficiency and cut costs*.

Or. en

Amendment 25
Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion
Paragraph 5 a (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

5 a. *Welcomes the findings of the Court of Auditors in their Special report no 07/2016 that EEAS owns buildings that it does not use, considers that EU delegations and EEAS buildings would be a natural place to start cutting costs and requests a detailed review to be carried out to identify delegations that could be closed or merged to enable further cost reductions.*

Or. en

Amendment 26
Fabio Massimo Castaldo

Draft opinion
Paragraph 5 a (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

5 a. *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.*

Or. en

Amendment 27
Vladimír Bilčík

Draft opinion
Paragraph 5 a (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

5 a. *Recalls the leading role of EU delegations in third countries with respect to the conduct of EU's foreign policy goals; calls on EU delegations to continue their coordinated efforts to increase the visibility of EU-funded projects.*

Or. en

Amendment 28
Urmas Paet

Draft opinion
Paragraph 5 a (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

5 a. *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.*

Amendment 29
Vladimír Bilčík

Draft opinion
Paragraph 5 b (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

5 b. 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; in light of the ongoing disinformation campaigns, calls for support to more active and effective communication policy on the European perspective for candidate and potential candidate countries and on EU values and democracy more general, aimed at both local and EU citizens.

Or. en

Amendment 30
Fabio Massimo Castaldo

Draft opinion
Paragraph 5 b (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

5 b. Calls on the EEAS to strengthen the Union Delegations engagement in our neighbourhood and particularly in the Western Balkan countries in order to provide a best possible assistance to the countries engaged in pro-democratic and pro-European reforms.

Or. en

Amendment 31
Charlie Weimers

Draft opinion
Paragraph 5 b (new)

Draft opinion

Amendment

5 b. Deplores that the EU continues to reward blackmail by giving EUR 700 000 to the unrecognised Lukashenko regime in connection to the migration crisis at the EU's external borders; calls for an immediate reversal of policy as there are reasonable indications to suspect that Lukashenko will use EU money for further hybrid warfare activities against Poland, Lithuania and Latvia.

Or. en