



2021/2124(DEC)

19.1.2022

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European
Centre for Disease Prevention and Control for the financial year 2020
(2021/2124(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Pascal Canfin

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Observes that the mission of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (the 'Centre') is to identify, assess and communicate current and emerging threats to human health from communicable diseases; stresses that the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 and the subsequent pandemic has been the most serious public health event that the Centre has had to respond to since it became operational in 2005; notes that supporting the Union's response to COVID-19 became the Centre's principal activity; recognises that the Centre activated its public health event operations plan on 9 January 2020 and, specifically, that teams working on public health emergencies contributed positively to the Union and national governance frameworks for the COVID-19 pandemic; notes, moreover, that the Centre started operating at Public Health Event (PHE) level 2, acute phase, on 31 January 2020 and continued to operate at this phase for the remainder of the year;
2. Notes that the Centre gave assistance to Member States and the Commission with laboratory-related support and expanded testing, strengthening Member States' preparedness through the establishment of operational indicators and provision of support in the assessment of health services' surge capacity;
3. Acknowledges the reasons for the cancellation or postponement of 35 % of the Centre's planned outputs in 2020, while highlighting the fact that the Centre achieved a 90 % success rate in meeting the work programme output plan adopted additionally in May 2020; thanks its staff for their dedicated work in difficult circumstances;
4. Highlights the 24 COVID-19 related risk assessments carried out by the Centre, the 159 COVID-19 formal scientific requests from the Commission and Members of the European Parliament, and the more than 100 formal scientific requests from Member States; furthermore notes that the number of downloads of rapid risk assessments increased by 1 086 % when compared with 2019 figures;
5. Highlights the significant volume of outputs produced in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in relation to which 24 risk assessments were carried out and 159 formal scientific requests from the Commission and Members of the European Parliament, as well as more than 100 formal scientific requests from Member States, were handled;
6. Notes that the Centre's budget for 2020 was EUR 62 490 000 and that 96,0 % of that budget derived from the Union budget;
7. Notes that, during the year 2020, the overall budget execution in terms of commitment appropriations was 96,77 % (representing a decrease of 2,46 percentage points compared to 2019), while, in terms of payments, budget execution decreased by 6,15 percentage points to 75,26 %;

8. Welcomes the fact that the Centre paid 96 % of invoices within the time limits of the Centre's financial regulation;
9. Notes that the Centre employed 271 staff as of 31 December 2020, with a vacancy rate of 3,9 %, including offers accepted;
10. Welcomes the proposal to extend the Centre's mandate but expresses concern that the addition of new tasks and its increasing workload has not been accompanied by sufficient corresponding increases in the Centre's staff and resources, and that such a shortage of staff puts the continuity of its operations under significant pressure and threatens the quality of the Centre's work;
11. Notes that, in June 2020, the Centre's management board approved the Centre's strategy for 2021-2027 and its recommendations on the third independent external evaluation of the Centre;
12. Welcomes the improvement in the percentage of management board members, advisory forum members and their alternates that submitted the required annual declarations of interest in 2020 compared to the figures for 2019; calls on the Centre to ensure that appropriate experts are engaged in the Centre's work and that a high level of compliance with conflict of interest rules is maintained;
13. Stresses that the Centre should continue promoting cooperation with other Union agencies and international organisations, and fostering dialogue with stakeholders and citizens; welcomes the way in which the Centre worked together with other decentralised Union agencies in 2020, in particular in close cooperation with the European Medicines Agency in developing the joint Union-level monitoring system for COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness and adverse effects, as well as in providing public health information for the technical guidance on COVID-19 infection control for air travel, trains and cruise ships;
14. Stresses the need for the Centre to ensure that there is full transparency when publishing scientific studies and by enhancing its external communications capacity towards the general public, and to ensure that all key information related to public health emergencies is available in all Union languages and easily accessible to Union citizens;
15. Expresses its belief that a rapid, effective, informed and coordinated response across Member States is essential, both to deal with the current situation and to address possible future health threats;
16. Highlights the fact that growing antimicrobial resistance still poses a threat to public health, despite the fact that overall Union consumption of antimicrobials has continued to decline; welcomes the Centre's continued activity in this area;
17. Is convinced that the Centre's work in providing timely, accurate, science-based information to legislators, health professionals and the general public is essential for dealing with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and other potential health threats; welcomes the Centre's sharing of information with various media in that regard;
18. Welcomes the fact that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable

assurance that the Centre's annual accounts for 2020 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular;

19. Recommends, based on the facts available, that discharge be granted to the Director of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control in respect of the implementation of the Centre's budget for the financial year 2020.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	13.1.2022
Result of final vote	+: 67 -: 7 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Bartosz Arłukowicz, Margrete Auken, Simona Baldassarre, Marek Paweł Balt, Traian Băsescu, Aurélia Beigneux, Monika Beňová, Sergio Berlato, Alexander Bernhuber, Malin Björk, Simona Bonafè, Delara Burkhardt, Pascal Canfin, Sara Cerdas, Mohammed Chahim, Tudor Ciuhodaru, Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé, Esther de Lange, Christian Doleschal, Bas Eickhout, Cyrus Engerer, Eleonora Evi, Agnès Evren, Pietro Fiocchi, Andreas Glück, Catherine Griset, Jytte Guteland, Teuvo Hakkarainen, Anja Hazekamp, Martin Hojsík, Pär Holmgren, Jan Huitema, Yannick Jadot, Adam Jarubas, Petros Kokkalis, Ewa Kopacz, Joanna Kopcińska, Peter Liese, Sylvia Limmer, Javi López, César Luena, Fulvio Martusciello, Liudas Mažylis, Joëlle Mélin, Tilly Metz, Giuseppe Milazzo, Silvia Modig, Dolors Montserrat, Alessandra Moretti, Dan-Ștefan Motreanu, Ville Niinistö, Ljudmila Novak, Grace O'Sullivan, Jutta Paulus, Stanislav Polčák, Jessica Polfjård, Luisa Regimenti, Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Sándor Rónai, Rob Rooken, Silvia Sardone, Christine Schneider, Günther Sidl, Ivan Vilibor Sinčić, Linea Søgaard-Lidell, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Nils Torvalds, Edina Tóth, Petar Vitanov, Alexandr Vondra, Mick Wallace, Pernille Weiss, Emma Wiesner, Tiemo Wölken, Anna Zalewska
Substitutes present for the final vote	Danilo Oscar Lancini

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

67	+
ECR	Sergio Berlato, Pietro Fiocchi, Joanna Kopcińska, Giuseppe Milazzo, Alexandr Vondra, Anna Zalewska
NI	Edina Tóth
PPE	Bartosz Arłukowicz, Traian Băsescu, Alexander Bernhuber, Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé, Christian Doleschal, Agnès Evren, Adam Jarubas, Ewa Kopacz, Esther de Lange, Peter Liese, Fulvio Martusciello, Liudas Mažylis, Dolors Montserrat, Dan-Ștefan Motreanu, Ljudmila Novak, Stanislav Polčák, Jessica Polfjård, Luisa Regimenti, Christine Schneider, Pernille Weiss
Renew	Pascal Canfin, Andreas Glück, Martin Hojsík, Jan Huitema, Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Linea Søgaard-Lidell, Nils Torvalds, Emma Wiesner
S&D	Marek Paweł Balt, Monika Beňová, Simona Bonafè, Delara Burkhardt, Sara Cerdas, Mohammed Chahim, Tudor Ciuhodaru, Cyrus Engerer, Jytte Guteland, Javi López, César Luena, Alessandra Moretti, Sándor Rónai, Günther Sidl, Petar Vitanov, Tiemo Wölken
The Left	Malin Björk, Anja Hazekamp, Petros Kokkalis, Silvia Modig, Mick Wallace
Verts/ALE	Margrete Auken, Bas Eickhout, Eleonora Evi, Pär Holmgren, Yannick Jadot, Tilly Metz, Ville Niinistö, Grace O'Sullivan, Jutta Paulus

7	-
ECR	Rob Rooker
ID	Aurélia Beigneux, Catherine Griset, Teuvo Hakkarainen, Sylvia Limmer, Joëlle Mélin,
NI	Ivan Vilibor Sinčić

3	0
ID	Simona Baldassarre, Danilo Oscar Lancini, Silvia Sardone

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention