



2021/2143(DEC)

15.2.2022

OPINION

of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) for the financial year 2020
(2021/2143(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Ramona Strugariu

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the fact that the Court of Auditors (the 'Court') has declared the transactions underlying the annual accounts of the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) for the financial year 2020 to be legal and regular in all material respects and that its financial position at 31 December 2020 is fairly presented;
2. Stresses the essential role that Eurojust plays in supporting and coordinating the work of national judicial authorities in investigating and prosecuting serious organised cross-border crime; expresses its satisfaction that Eurojust maintained full operational continuity during the COVID-19 crisis; highlights the coordinating role that Eurojust has played in compiling and disseminating information on the main practical and legal issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic in the field of judicial cooperation in criminal matters, as well as providing information about the impact of national measures taken in this context;
3. Welcomes the increase in its budget in 2020 from EUR 44 million to EUR 51 million (+15.9%) and in its staff from 239 to 242 (+1.3%) while noting the 13% increase of Eurojust's casework and that in 2020, 8 799 cross-border criminal investigations were handled, 4 200 of them were newly opened; welcomes the fact that Eurojust provided legal, financial or operational support to 268 joint investigation teams in 2020 and facilitated the execution of 1284 European Arrest Warrants; notes that Joint Investigation Team expenditure amounts to less than three percent of Eurojust's budget;
4. Notes the weaknesses observed by the Court in Eurojust's audited public procurement procedures and the weaknesses in internal control, which caused EUR 3 600 of irregular payments in 2020; notes the assessment of the internal control system made by Eurojust which concluded that all principles are implemented effectively; calls on Eurojust to step up efforts to remedy those weaknesses in accordance with Court's observations, especially regarding the absence of ex-ante checks on agreed prices in contracts and the invoiced rates that potentially concern a systemic issue; welcomes Eurojust's reply that it will follow the Court's guidance for future public procurement procedures, ensuring the preparation of more robust ex-ante documentation; further welcomes the fact that observations from previous years are completed;
5. Highlights the continuous increase in total number of cases supported by Eurojust in the past five years and stresses the recent trend of cases referred to Eurojust becoming more and more complex, requiring support over longer periods;
6. Welcomes the fact that Eurojust has completed the one outstanding recommendation of the Court from 2018 concerning the use of a negotiated procurement procedure deemed as not justified;
7. Welcomes the close cooperation with Union and international partners, including the Commission and OLAF and other Justice and Home Affairs agencies; highlights the

progress in the collaboration between Eurojust and the EPPO and welcomes the negotiation of the working agreement to govern their future relations; welcomes the participation of Eurojust in the EU Victims' Rights Platform;

8. Appreciates the efforts of Eurojust in the area of the digitalisation of criminal and judicial cooperation, especially its participation in the Digital Criminal Justice initiative and seeking a leading role in the programme for the digitalisation and judicial operational cooperation across the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and Member States;
9. Calls on Eurojust to take measures to ensure full compliance with Union transparency rules as well as with fundamental rights and data protection standards;
10. Notes with appreciation that Eurojust strengthened its external communication capabilities by launching a new website, establishing its presence on social media video platforms and organising a virtual open day event;
11. Welcomes the fact that Eurojust launched a Focus Group of Prosecutors and Investigative Judges Fighting Migrant Smuggling, bringing together practitioners specialised in the field and all actors in the security and criminal justice chain to further strengthen the fight against migrant smuggling;
12. Welcomes the further operational cooperation with Frontex; expresses its satisfaction over the negotiation of a working agreement governing the future relation between Frontex and Eurojust;
13. Welcomes the cooperation between Eurojust and eu-LISA in the context of the Regulation (EU) 2019/816¹;
14. Welcomes the role played by Eurojust in enhancing the cooperation between the Union and its Southern partner countries, by becoming the host of the new phase of the EuroMed Justice Programme;
15. Notes that the gender distribution reported for 2020 in senior and middle management is five women (50%) and five men (50%); notes that gender distribution in management board members, is nine women (34,6%) and 17 men (65,4%); notes that the staff overall is composed of 152 women (68%) and 71 men (32%); reminds the Member States to take into account gender balance when nominating members to management board;

¹ Regulation (EU) 2019/816 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 establishing a centralised system for the identification of Member States holding conviction information on third-country nationals and stateless persons (ECRIS-TCN) to supplement the European Criminal Records Information System and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1726 (OJ L 135, 22.5.2019, p. 1).

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	15.2.2022
Result of final vote	+: 62 -: 6 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Magdalena Adamowicz, Abir Al-Sahlani, Konstantinos Arvanitis, Malik Azmani, Katarina Barley, Pietro Bartolo, Nicolas Bay, Vladimír Bilčík, Vasile Blaga, Ioan-Rareș Bogdan, Patrick Breyer, Saskia Bricmont, Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Jorge Buxadé Villalba, Damien Carême, Caterina Chinnici, Clare Daly, Marcel de Graaff, Anna Júlia Donáth, Lena Düpont, Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová, Cornelia Ernst, Laura Ferrara, Nicolaus Fest, Jean-Paul Garraud, Maria Grapini, Sylvie Guillaume, Andrzej Halicki, Evin Incir, Sophia in 't Veld, Patryk Jaki, Marina Kaljurand, Assita Kanko, Fabienne Keller, Peter Kofod, Łukasz Kohut, Moritz Körner, Alice Kuhnke, Jeroen Lenaers, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Lukas Mandl, Nuno Melo, Nadine Morano, Javier Moreno Sánchez, Maite Pagazaurtundúa, Emil Radev, Paulo Rangel, Karlo Ressler, Diana Riba i Giner, Ralf Seekatz, Birgit Sippel, Sara Skytvedal, Vincenzo Sofo, Martin Sonneborn, Tineke Strik, Ramona Strugariu, Annalisa Tardino, Tomas Tobé, Yana Toom, Milan Uhrík, Tom Vandendriessche, Bettina Vollath, Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Elena Yoncheva, Javier Zarzalejos
Substitutes present for the final vote	Malin Björk, Tanja Fajon, Daniel Freund

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

62	+
ECR	Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Jorge Buxadé Villalba, Patryk Jaki, Assita Kanko, Vincenzo Sofo, Jadwiga Wiśniewska
ID	Nicolas Bay, Jean-Paul Garraud, Peter Kofod, Annalisa Tardino, Tom Vandendriessche
NI	Laura Ferrara, Martin Sonneborn
PPE	Magdalena Adamowicz, Vladimír Bilčík, Vasile Blaga, Ioan-Rareş Bogdan, Lena Düpont, Andrzej Halicki, Jeroen Lenaers, Lukas Mandl, Nuno Melo, Nadine Morano, Emil Radev, Paulo Rangel, Karlo Ressler, Ralf Seekatz, Sara Skyttedal, Tomas Tobé, Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi, Javier Zarzalejos
Renew	Abir Al-Sahlani, Malik Azmani, Anna Júlia Donáth, Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová, Sophia in 't Veld, Fabienne Keller, Moritz Körner, Maite Pagazaurtundúa, Ramona Strugariu, Yana Toom
S&D	Katarina Barley, Pietro Bartolo, Caterina Chinnici, Tanja Fajon, Maria Grapini, Sylvie Guillaume, Evin Incir, Marina Kaljurand, Łukasz Kohut, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Javier Moreno Sánchez, Birgit Sippel, Bettina Vollath, Elena Yoncheva
Verts/ALE	Patrick Breyer, Saskia Bricmont, Damien Carême, Daniel Freund, Alice Kuhnke, Diana Riba i Giner, Tineke Strik

6	-
ID	Nicolaus Fest, Marcel de Graaff
NI	Milan Uhrík
The Left	Malin Björk, Clare Daly, Cornelia Ernst

1	0
The Left	Konstantinos Arvanitis

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention