



2018/2188(DEC)

22.1.2019

OPINION

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Maritime Safety Agency for the financial year 2017
(2018/2188(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Innocenzo Leontini

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Transport and Tourism 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 finding of the Court of Auditors that the transactions underlying the accounts of the European Maritime Safety Agency ('the Agency') for the 2017 financial year are legal and regular in all material respects;
2. Notes that the Agency executed EUR 63,4 million in commitment appropriations, representing 98,04 % of the total budget of the year, and EUR 55,1 million in payment appropriations, amounting to 97,32 % of the total budget, taking into account the appropriations voted for the 2017 budget (C1) and automatic carry-over (C8);
3. Notes that 2017 was the first full year of operations following the extension of the Agency's mandate at the end of 2016; welcomes the tripartite working arrangement between the Agency, Frontex (European Border and Coast Guard Agency) and EFCA (European Fisheries Control Agency), which entered into force in 2017, with the aim of improving efficiency and cost-effectiveness;
4. Welcomes the fact that the Agency is looking for synergies of actions with other Union agencies in order to gain in effectiveness and efficiency and to reduce costs; welcomes and encourages in this framework the Agency's collaboration with other Union Agencies in support of the EU Migration Agenda, such as the provision, by the Agency, of an increasing number of services to FRONTEX; encourages the Agency to cooperate with other Union Agencies in addressing the refugee crisis, including in the performance of critically important activities outside its original mandate, such as by contributing know-how, operational support and staff to help to tackle the refugee crisis;
5. Highlights that the Agency's know-how and in-house capabilities provide the opportunity to expand its action and service provision to a more global scale, thereby contributing to increasing the reach of Union regulatory frameworks and safety and environmental standards;
6. Welcomes the very positive outcome of the independent external evaluation of the Agency's achievements, its effectiveness and working practices, i.e. that the Agency is providing added-value in all its areas and for all its stakeholders; acknowledges also the positive outcome in terms of high value for money compared to alternative models of provision at national or regional level; appreciates the fact that none of the Agency's activities is redundant to that of Member States;
7. Notes that the high quality of information systems and databases developed by the Agency have resulted in an increasing interest expressed by third countries in exploring the potential for exporting the Agency's knowledge and, by extension, Union standards and solutions beyond the geographical dimension while safeguarding Agency resources and Union interests;
8. Regrets that delays in the Remote Piloted Aircraft Services (RPAS) operations resulted in

a budget amendment which included a reduction of Union subsidy corresponding to the amount not used in 2017 and that related to the European cooperation on coast guard functions; welcomes however the Agency's efforts, through these projects, to deliver operational services, analysis, expertise, and technical support to the Commission, the Member States and users in the maritime sector; encourages therefore the Agency to intensify its efforts to overcome organisational, technical, legal and contractual problems linked to the deployment RPAS operations;

9. Calls on the Agency to take maximum advantage of the potential uses of the RPAS; highlights that the RPAS is multi-purpose in nature and can be used for a range of activities which include vessels and people in distress, the monitoring and detection of marine pollution including oil spills and litter, as well as the general identification and tracking of vessels of all sizes and their activities including identifying potentially illegal activities (e.g. illegal fishing, drug trafficking, illegal migration, etc.);
10. Notes that no cases of conflict of interest were reported in 2017; welcomes the strong internal controls aiming to make all staff aware of the obligations related to the declarations of absence of conflict of interest;
11. Welcomes the fact that all recommendations and observations stemming from various audits from years before 2017 were addressed and that there were no pending actions that could have a negative influence on the risks linked to the Agency's activities in 2017;
12. Welcomes the fact that the Internal Service Audit of the Commission and the European Court of Auditors did not issue any critical audit recommendations or observations in 2017 that could lead to a reservation in the annual declaration of assurance; regrets, however, that an audit on project-financed actions (FPAs) at the Agency highlighted that it faces specific challenges as regards the agreement concluded with several Directorate-General of the European Commission, which are not harmonised and could be interpreted differently, as well as regards the absence of agreement on common principles regarding the calculation of overhead costs; regrets also that there is no agreed methodology for project-financed actions concerning full-cost reimbursements; invites the Commission to develop, in cooperation with all agencies, such methodology;
13. Notes that, in accordance with the Risk management Policy, the risk register was updated in 2017, and that this update did not result in any critical risks that could lead to a formal reservation to the Authorising Officer's annual declaration of assurance; notes further that none of the risks previously identified materialised in 2017;
14. Takes note of the results of the fourth benchmarking exercise on the Agency's administrative expenditures, with special focus on the ratio of jobs, with 20,42 % (21,80 % in 2016) of the jobs dedicated to administrative support and coordination, 72,08 % to operational tasks and 7,50 % to neutral tasks;
15. Notes that the Agency publishes vacancy notices on its own website and on social media, but not on the website of the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO), due to high translation costs; calls for a solution which, whilst ensuring transparency, also accords with the principle of sound financial management;
16. Proposes that Parliament grants the Executive Director of the Agency discharge in respect

of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2017.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	22.1.2019
Result of final vote	+: 38 -: 1 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Daniela Aiuto, Lucy Anderson, Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Deirdre Clune, Michael Cramer, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Andor Deli, Isabella De Monte, Ismail Ertug, Jacqueline Foster, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Innocenzo Leontini, Bogusław Liberadzki, Peter Lundgren, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Georg Mayer, Gesine Meissner, Gabriele Preuß, Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy, Dominique Riquet, Massimiliano Salini, Claudia Ţapardel, Keith Taylor, Pavel Telička, Marita Ulvskog, Wim van de Camp, Marie-Pierre Vieu, Janusz Zemke, Roberts Ziļe, Kosma Złotowski
Substitutes present for the final vote	Jakop Dalunde, Markus Ferber, Maria Grapini, Karoline Graswander-Hainz, Peter Kouroumbashev, João Pimenta Lopes
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Christelle Lechevalier, Francisco José Millán Mon, Julie Ward

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

38	+
ALDE	Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Gesine Meissner, Dominique Riquet, Pavel Telička
ECR	Jacqueline Foster, Innocenzo Leontini, Peter Lundgren, Roberts Zile, Kosma Złotowski
ENF	Georg Mayer
GUE/NGL	Marie-Pierre Vieu
PPE	Georges Bach, Wim van de Camp, Deirdre Clune, Andor Deli, Markus Ferber, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Francisco José Millán Mon, Massimiliano Salini
S&D	Lucy Anderson, Isabella De Monte, Ismail Ertug, Maria Grapini, Karoline Graswander-Hainz, Peter Kouroumbashev, Bogusław Liberadzki, Gabriele Preuß, Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy, Claudia Țapardel, Marita Ulvskog, Julie Ward, Janusz Zemke
VERTS/ALE	Michael Cramer, Jakop Dalunde, Keith Taylor

1	-
ENF	Christelle Lechevalier

2	0
EFDD	Daniela Aiuto
GUE/NGL	João Pimenta Lopes

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention