



2022/2097(DEC)

31.1.2023

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 Union
Aviation Safety Agency for the financial year 2021
(2022/2097(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Gheorghe Falcă

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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 accounts of the European Aviation Safety Agency ('the Agency') for the 2021 financial year are legal and regular in all material respects;
2. Stresses that financial regulation and high management standards have to be respected by all the EU's institutions;
3. Welcomes that budget implementation rate for final available current year appropriations of EUR 125.2 million remained very high at 96.3%;
4. Notes that the rate of cancelled appropriations relating to commitments carried over to 2021 decreased to 1.55% (5.46 % in 2020), below the 5 % ceiling set by the Commission;
5. Regrets that the Agency's total revenues for 2021 decreased to EUR 167.5 million compared to 2020, of which EUR 112.8 million came from fees and charges, EUR 38,9 million from EU subsidy and EUR 12 million from delegation agreements and grants;
6. Notes that the Agency ended the year with a fees and charges surplus of EUR 11.2 million; notes that the 'fees and charges' surplus is added to the accumulated surplus, increasing it from EUR 60.9 million to EUR 72.1 million;
7. Welcomes the fact that, despite the COVID 19 crisis, the Agency was able to achieve 84% of its Annual working programme objectives (of which 71 % was fully achieved);
8. Commends the work of the Agency in supporting the aviation sector deal with the safety consequences of the COVID 19 crisis and prepare for the "Return to Normal Operations"; however suggests the Agency to continuously monitor aviation safety, including cabin crew fatigue as foreseen in the EASA regulation (EU) 2018/1139;
9. Salutes the approval of several European Partnerships to accelerate the green and digital transition, including on Single European Sky ATM Research 3 with the aim to accelerate the digital transformation of ATM in line with the European ATM Master Plan; recalls in this regards the importance of Single European Sky 2+ to achieve harmonization, improved interoperability and efficiency;
10. Welcomes the continuation, in cooperation with global partners and industry, of the EASA Sustainable Aviation Programme (2020 - 2024) focusing efforts towards achieving a cleaner, quieter and more sustainable aviation system; salutes in particular, in 2021 the developments towards the uptake of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF); welcomes also the Agency's efforts to accelerate work towards the electrification of aviation and the use of hydrogen; calls on providing sufficient funding and incentives for further research and development of SAF to make them more efficient and affordable and to enhance and open their market;
11. Salutes the efforts of the Agency in supporting the integration of new technologies, operations and business models into the European aviation system through its research and innovation programme;

12. Commends the implementation of the EASA Sustainable Aviation Programme which aims to coordinate actions and address policy changes, support research and development, increase transparency and strengthen international cooperation, as well as to support the EU lead on standards, to improve knowledge between stakeholders and to embed sustainability in EASA's core tasks to ensure the timely certification and oversight of new technologies; notes that entering its second year, 2021 saw developments towards the uptake of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF), including preparations for EASA's growing role under the upcoming ReFuelEU Aviation legislation, establishment of a competency roadmap on hydrogen technologies in support of introduction as electric, hydrogen and hybrid powered Aviation and completion of Environment Label Programme pilot phase;
13. Salutes the intense cooperation with the European Member States, the aviation industry and international partners; welcomes the fact that EASA continued in 2021 to produce guidance material and safety information including an update of the COVID-19 Safety Risk Portfolio in April 2021 and publication of an updated version of the Aviation Health Safety Protocol on 17th June 2021 (together with European Centre of Disease Control ECDC and the European Commission);
14. Encourages the agency to get involved, employing both its expertise and adequate resources, into the Pilot Project on a "European body for jet fuel standards and safety certification" under the 2023 Union budget;
15. Commends the continued work on programme establishing a risk based, operation centric EU regulatory framework for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) forming the basis for a common and safe European drones market and enable UAS integration in urban airspace (U-Space);
16. Welcomes the progress of the Military Programme (2020 - open end) and highlights the role of the Agency within the European military mobility; calls for a rapid and substantial increase of on increasing the EU budget line for military mobility to be able to respond to the challenges in the sector;
17. Calls for more synergy between civilian and military needs under the Action Plan on Military Mobility by simplifying processes and aligning rules; stresses that this could provide scope for EASA to further support states and industry competitiveness, for example through common rulemaking and the certification of state aircraft;
18. Notes the observation made by the Court of Auditors regarding non-compliance with Article 16 of the Staff Regulations concerning potential conflict of interest; calls on the Agency to complete corrective action and to cover the risk of conflict of interest; notes EASA's reply stating that there was been a thorough evaluation;
19. Welcomes that following the Parliament's request an EU-wide breakdown of gender by staff category in the Agency's entry in the Consolidated Staff Figures has been provided for 2021; encourages the Agency to maintain this for coming publications;
20. Takes note of the ongoing EPPO investigation of EASA budget 2021;
21. Commends the continuous efforts of the Agency to increase its efficiency through its digitalisation and transformation programme incorporating the ongoing digitalisation initiative, which is predicted to deliver overall efficiency gains of 20 to 25 % by 2025;

22. 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 2021.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

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| Date adopted | 31.1.2023 |
| Result of final vote | +: 40 -: 0 0: 0 |
| Members present for the final vote | Andris Ameriks, José Ramón Bauzá Díaz, Erik Bergkvist, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Ciarán Cuffe, Karima Delli, Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg, Ismail Ertug, Gheorghe Falcă, Isabel García Muñoz, Jens Gieseke, Elsi Katainen, Elena Kountoura, Bogusław Liberadzki, Peter Lundgren, Benoît Lutgen, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Tilly Metz, Caroline Nagtegaal, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Philippe Olivier, Dominique Riquet, Vera Tax, Achille Variati, Henna Virkkunen, Petar Vitanov, Lucia Vuolo, Roberts Zīle, Kosma Złotowski |
| Substitutes present for the final vote | Sara Cerdas, Ignazio Corrao, Clare Daly, Nicola Danti, Markus Ferber, Maria Grapini, Colm Markey, Beata Mazurek, Ljudmila Novak, Jörgen Warborn |

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

| 40 | + |
|-----------|---|
| ECR | Peter Lundgren, Beata Mazurek, Roberts Zīle, Kosma Złotowski |
| ID | Philippe Olivier |
| PPE | Gheorghe Falcă, Markus Ferber, Jens Gieseke, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Benoît Lutgen, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Colm Markey, Ljudmila Novak, Henna Virkkunen, Lucia Vuolo, Jörgen Warborn |
| Renew | José Ramón Bauzá Díaz, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Nicola Danti, Elsi Katainen, Caroline Nagtegaal, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Dominique Riquet |
| S&D | Andris Ameriks, Erik Bergkvist, Sara Cerdas, Ismail Ertug, Isabel García Muñoz, Maria Grapini, Bogusław Liberadzki, Vera Tax, Achille Variati, Petar Vitanov |
| The Left | Clare Daly, Elena Kountoura |
| Verts/ALE | Ignazio Corrao, Ciarán Cuffe, Karima Delli, Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg, Tilly Metz |

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Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention