

Procedure file

Basic information		
DEC - Discharge procedure	2015/2194(DEC)	Procedure completed
2014 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)		
Subject 8.70.03.04 2014 discharge		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	CONT Budgetary Control	 VAUGHAN Derek Shadow rapporteur  DEUTSCH Tamás  VISTISEN Anders  ALI Nedzhmi  JÁVOR Benedek  VALLI Marco  KAPPEL Barbara	20/08/2015
European Commission	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	 MACOVEI Monica	19/11/2015
	Commission DG Budget	Commissioner GEORGIEVA Kristalina	

Key events			
23/07/2015	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2015)0377	Summary
05/10/2015	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
04/04/2016	Vote in committee		

12/04/2016	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0133/2016	Summary
27/04/2016	Debate in Parliament		
28/04/2016	Results of vote in Parliament		
28/04/2016	Decision by Parliament	T8-0166/2016	Summary
28/04/2016	End of procedure in Parliament		
14/09/2016	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2015/2194(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/8/04227

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2015)0377	23/07/2015	EC	Summary
Court of Auditors: opinion, report		N8-0127/2015 OJ C 409 09.12.2015, p. 0102	08/09/2015	CofA	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document		05584/2016	27/01/2016	CSL	Summary
Committee draft report		PE569.744	02/02/2016	EP	
Committee opinion	LIBE	PE575.094	24/02/2016	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE576.925	04/03/2016	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0133/2016	12/04/2016	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0166/2016	28/04/2016	EP	Summary

Final act

Budget 2016/1504
[OJ L 246 14.09.2016, p. 0209](#) Summary

2014 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

PURPOSE: presentation by the Commission of the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2014, as part of the 2014 discharge procedure.

Analysis of the accounts of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

CONTENT: this Commission document sets out the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2014 as prepared on the basis of the information presented by the institutions, organisations and bodies of the EU, in accordance with Article 148 (2) of the Financial Regulation applicable to the EU's General Budget, including the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

The document contains the figures on which the discharge procedure is based.

On this basis, the Financial Controller of the European Commission ensures the certification of the consolidated accounts as declared by the institutions, agencies and bodies of the European Union.

Discharge procedure of the EU agencies: the EU Budget finances a wide range of policies and programmes throughout the EU. In accordance with the priorities set by the European Parliament and the Council in the multi-annual financial framework (MFF), the European Commission

carries out specific programmes, activities and projects in the field with the technical support of some specialised agencies.

The consolidated annual accounts of the EU provide information on the activities of the institutions, agencies and other bodies of the EU from a budgetary and accrual accounting perspective.

The consolidated reports on the implementation of the general budget of the EU include the budget implementation of all Institutions. Agencies do not have a separate budget inside the EU budget; and they are partially financed by a Commission budget subsidy.

This document sets out how the Agencies spent and implemented their budget in 2014. Each agency is subject to its own discharge procedure.

EASO: in 2014, the tasks and budget of the Office were as follows:

- description of the tasks of the Office: the Office was set up under [Regulation 439/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council](#). Its main aim is to help to improve the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (the CEAS);
- EASOs budget for 2014: the accounts of the Office for the year 2014 as presented by the Commission in its document on the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union are as follows:

Commitment appropriations :

- committed : EUR 16 million;
- paid : EUR 13 million;
- carried-over : 0.

Payment appropriations :

- committed : EUR 16 million;
- paid : EUR 11 million;
- carried-over : EUR 2 million.

Please refer also to the [Final Accounts of the European Asylum Support Office](#).

2014 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors report on the annual accounts of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) for the year 2014, together with the Offices reply.

CONTENT: in accordance with the tasks conferred on the Court of Auditors by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Court presents to the European Parliament and to the Council, in the context of the discharge procedure, a Statement of Assurance as to the reliability of the annual accounts of each institution, body or agency of the EU, and the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying them, on the basis of an independent external audit.

This audit concerned, amongst others, the annual accounts of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

Statement of Assurance: pursuant to the provisions of Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Court has audited:

- the annual accounts of the Foundation, which comprise the financial statements and the reports on the implementation of the budget for the financial year ended 31 December 2014;
- the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying those accounts.

Opinion on the reliability of the accounts: in the Courts opinion, the Offices annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2014 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation and the accounting rules adopted by the Commissions accounting officer.

Opinion on the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts: the Court considers that the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2014 are legal and regular in all material respects. However, it stresses that the Office, in its budget management system (ABAC) for the year 2014, carried over budgetary commitments amounting to some EUR 1.3 million which were not covered by legal commitments. This is in contradiction to the Financial Regulation. Following the Courts audit, the Office decided to correct the irregular carry-overs. However, the 2014 financial period was already closed, and correction in the system was no longer possible. The Court specifies that needs to be done in the 2015 financial period.

The report also makes a series of observations on the budgetary and financial management of the Office, accompanied by the latters response. The main observations may be summarised as follows:

The Courts observations:

- internal control: the Court notes that the Office made 1 062 (28.6 %) payments after the time limits set in the Financial Regulation. The average delay for late payments was 24 days.
- budgetary management: the Court notes the large sums of committed appropriations cancelled in 2014, which indicates weaknesses in the Agencys budget planning and is at odds with the budgetary principle of annuality. It also notes the high level of carry-overs for administrative expenditure to 2015.
- recruitment: the Court notes that the Office has a high staff turnover, which causes a considerable risk to the achievement of the objectives set in the annual and multiannual work programmes.

The Offices replies:

- budgetary management: the EASO recognises that the percentage of late payments is too large and is addressing the root causes of

this situation. In the second half of 2015, specific measures shall be put in place for substantially reducing the current rate of late payments by the closing of the financial year. EASO will review its annual budget at least twice a year, starting in the second quarter of 2015, in order to improve its budget planning and implementation process and reduce any disproportionate carry-overs at the end of the financial year. Through these combined measures, EASO expects to achieve much improved results for its budget implementation in 2015;

- recruitment: the Office indicates that it has recruited replacements for the staff that left last year and all posts are occupied or recruitment procedures are currently being done. Staff is recognised to be the most valued asset of the Office and human resources activities to support this approach will be put in place.

Lastly, the Court of Auditors report contains a summary of the Offices activities in 2014. This is focused on the following:

Budget: EUR 15.664 million.

Activities: the Offices activities cover five main areas: (i) permanent support; (ii) special support; (iii) emergency support; (iv) information and analysis support; (v) third-country support.

- Permanent support: organisation of train-the trainer sessions; work on quality of asylum processes and decisions (thematic mapping of access to procedure, identification of persons with special needs); practical cooperation conference on unaccompanied minors; country of origin information (COI), with four new COI specific networks on Iran, Iraq, Russia and Afghanistan and two COI reports (on Somalia and on Chechnya) and a publication on Tools and tips for online COI research.
- Special support: special support was provided to Italy, completing the implementation of the special support plan, which started in 2013, and, as from June 2014, to Cyprus. EASO, in collaboration with other stakeholders, implemented eight actions within the framework of the Task Force Mediterranean.
- Emergency support: EASO provided emergency support to Greece and to Bulgaria
- Information and analysis support: EASO published its Annual Report on the state of asylum in the EU in 2013 as well as other technical reports.
- Third country support: EASO started the implementation of its EASO external dimension strategy, particularly through the implementation of a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) project with Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco.

With regard to organisation and cooperation with stakeholders, EASO organised three Management Board meetings, signed a working arrangement with eu-LISA, and consulted civil society on various topics.

2014 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

Having examined the revenue and expenditure accounts for the financial year 2014 and the balance sheet as at 31 December 2014 of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), as well as the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the Office for the financial year 2014, accompanied by the Office's replies to the Court's observations, the Council recommended the European Parliament to give a discharge to the Executive Director of the Office in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2014.

The Council welcomed the Court's opinion that, in all material respects, the Office's annual accounts present fairly its financial position as at 31 December 2014 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of the Office's Financial Regulation, and that the underlying transactions for 2014 are legal and regular in all material respects. Nevertheless, the Council made the following observations:

- financial programming: the Council reiterated its request to the Office to improve its financial programming and monitoring of the budget implementation in order to improve budget execution, to avoid the cancellation of appropriations and to reduce the amounts carried over to the next financial year to the strict minimum, in line with the budgetary principle of annuality;
- payment deadlines: the Council called on the Office to respect the deadlines of payments as set out in the Financial Regulation;
- controls on expenses: the Council invited the Office to improve its internal procedures in relation to the reimbursement of travel and daily subsistence costs and to pursue its efforts to implement its policies on human resources to reduce the turn-over of staff.

2014 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Derek VAUGHAN (S&D, UK) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) for the financial year 2014.

The parliamentary committee calls on the European Parliament to grant the Executive Director of the Office discharge in respect of the implementation of the agency's budget for the financial year 2014.

Noting that the Court of Auditors issued a statement of assurance as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions for the financial year 2014, Members call on Parliament to approve the closure of the Offices accounts. They made, however, a number of recommendations that needed to be taken into account when the discharge is granted, in addition to the general recommendations that appear in the [draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies](#):

- EASOs financial statements: Members note the final budget of the European Asylum Support Office for the financial year 2014 was EUR 15 663 975 and that 94 % of the budget of the Office derives from the Union budget.
- Legality and regularity of transactions: Members notes with concern that the Office carried over budget commitments of EUR 1 300 000 which were not covered by legal commitments. They remind the Office that this is in contradiction with the Financial Regulation and acknowledge the decision of the Office to correct these irregular carry-overs in the budget management system in 2015, due to the financial period having already been closed for the financial year of 2014.
- Budget and financial management: Members draw attention to the fact that 1 062 payments, were made after the time limit set in the Financial Regulation, representing an increase of 10.6 % compared to 2013. They note with concern the late payments situation and call on the Office to report to the discharge authority on measures taken in order to tackle this issue.

Members also made a series of observations regarding commitments and carryovers, the prevention and management of conflicts of interest, as well as on contract award, recruitment and internal audit and control procedures.

Lastly, Members acknowledge the difficulties in managing the current refugee crisis. They acknowledge, in addition, that the tasks of the Agency are likely to increase further and its budget and staffing levels will need to increase correspondingly. They request the Agency, therefore, to increase its efforts and to improve its budgetary management and to present an action plan to perform optimally in the coming years.

2014 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) for the financial year 2014.

NON LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision (EU) 2016/1504 of the European Parliament on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Asylum Support Office for the financial year 2014.

CONTENT: with the present decision, the European Parliament grants the Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office discharge in respect of the implementation of the Office's budget for the financial year 2014.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 28 April 2016 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 28 April 2016).

Amongst Parliaments main observations in the resolution accompanying the discharge decision, the latter noted concerns regarding the legality and regularity of transactions. It also noted with concern that the Office carried over budget commitments of EUR 1.3 million which were not covered by legal commitments. It reminded the Office that this is in contradiction with the Financial Regulation.

2014 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

The European Parliament decided to grant the Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) discharge in respect of the implementation of Authority's budget for the financial year 2014. The vote on the decision on discharge covers the closure of the accounts (in accordance with Annex 5, Article 5 (1) (a) to Parliaments Rules of Procedure.

Noting that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the Offices annual accounts for the financial year 2014 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 515 votes to 120 with 6 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations, which form an integral part of the decision on discharge and which add to the general recommendations set out in the [resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies](#):

- **EASOs financial statements:** Parliament noted the final budget of the European Asylum Support Office for the financial year 2014 was EUR 15 663 975 and that 94 % of the budget of the Office derives from the Union budget.
- **Legality and regularity of transactions:** Parliament noted with concern that the Office carried over budget commitments of EUR 1 300 000 which were not covered by legal commitments. It remind the Office that this is in contradiction with the Financial Regulation and acknowledge the decision of the Office to correct these irregular carry-overs in the budget management system in 2015, due to the financial period having already been closed for the financial year of 2014.
- **Budget and financial management:** Parliament draw attention to the fact that 1 062 payments, were made after the time limit set in the Financial Regulation, representing an increase of 10.6 % compared to 2013. It noted with concern the late payments situation and called on the Office to report to the discharge authority on measures taken in order to tackle this issue. It also noted from the Office that it would review its annual budget at least twice a year with the aim of improving budget planning and the implementation process, as well as reducing the disproportionate amount of carry-overs.

Parliament also made a series of observations regarding commitments and carryovers, the prevention and management of conflicts of interest, as well as on contract award, recruitment and internal audit and control procedures.

Lastly, Parliament acknowledged the difficulties in managing the current refugee crisis. It acknowledged, in addition, that the tasks of the Agency are likely to increase further and its budget and staffing levels will need to increase correspondingly. It requested the Agency, therefore, to increase its efforts and to improve its budgetary management and to present an action plan to perform optimally in the coming years.