











Procedure file

Basic information		
DEC - Discharge procedure	2023/2182(DEC)	Procedure completed, awaiting publication in Official Journal
2022 discharge: General Budget of the European Union Agencies		
Subject 8.70.03.12 2022 discharge		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	CONT Budgetary Control		Appointed 14/06/2023
			 SARVAMAA Petri
			Shadow rapporteur
			 RÓNAI Sándor
			 CHASTEL Olivier
			 EICKHOUT Bas
			 KUHS Joachim
			 CZARNECKI Ryszard
			 OMARJEE Younous
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion
	AFET Foreign Affairs		Appointed
	DEVE Development		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	INTA International Trade		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	BUDG Budgets		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		18/07/2023
			 TOMC Romana
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy		The committee decided not to give an opinion.

European Commission	IMCO	Internal Market and Consumer Protection	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	TRAN	Transport and Tourism	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	REGI	Regional Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	AGRI	Agriculture and Rural Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	PECH	Fisheries	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	CULT	Culture and Education	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	JURI	Legal Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	LIBE	Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	13/11/2023
		 ZDECHOVSKÝ Tomáš	
	AFCO	Constitutional Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	FEMM	Women's Rights and Gender Equality	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Budget	HAHN Johannes	

Key events			
28/06/2023	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2023)0391	
12/09/2023	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
04/03/2024	Vote in committee		
13/03/2024	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0118/2024	Summary
10/04/2024	Debate in Parliament		
11/04/2024	Decision by Parliament	T9-0280/2024	Summary

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2023/2182(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed, awaiting publication in Official Journal
Committee dossier	CONT/9/12985

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2023)0391	28/06/2023	EC	
Committee opinion	LIBE	PE756.205	24/01/2024	EP	

Committee draft report		PE753.545	29/01/2024	EP	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE752.899	05/02/2024	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE757.250	09/02/2024	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0118/2024	13/03/2024	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0280/2024	11/04/2024	EP	Summary

2022 discharge: General Budget of the European Union Agencies

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Petri SARVAMAA (EPP, FI) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union agencies for the financial year 2022: performance, financial management and control.

The report contains, for each body, cross-cutting observations accompanying the discharge decisions.

Budget

The main findings are as follows:

- the cumulative total for the 2022 budget for the 33 decentralised Union agencies amounted to around EUR 3 471 million in commitment appropriations, representing an increase of 8.2 % compared to 2021, and amounted to EUR 3 035 million in payment appropriations, a decrease of 1.78 % compared to 2021;
- of the EUR 3 035 million in payment appropriations, approximately EUR 2 781 million were financed from the general budget of the Union, representing 74.85 % of the agencies total financing in 2022 (compared to 77.27 % in 2021);
- approximately EUR 935 million were financed by fees and charges and by direct contributions from participating countries (an increase of 28.23 % compared to 2021).

The total final budget for 2022 (after amending budgets) of all decentralised Union agencies was approximately 16 % higher than that for 2021, while the inflation rate in the Union reached up to 11.5 % in October 2022. Members noted, in this context, that the increase in the budget of some agencies from 2021 to 2022 has been significant, representing more than + 60 % (for ENISA, eu-LISA, EFCA), approximately 30 % or more (for ELA, EEA, Frontex) and more than +20 % (for EUSPA, EUAA).

Main risks identified by the Court

According to the Courts report, the overall risk to the reliability of agencies accounts is low. The overall risk to the legality and regularity of revenue underlying the agencies accounts to be low for most agencies, and to be medium for the partly self-financed agencies.

Members noted with concern that, for a fifth year in a row, the Court considers the risk to sound financial management to be medium, primarily associated with public procurement procedures.

Moreover, the Courts audit considers the risk to budget management to be low, with the Courts audit showing high carryovers of committed appropriations, which were, however, justified according to the Court by the multiannual nature of operations or for reasons beyond the agencies control. The report called on the Agencies to strengthen their budget management and financial planning by setting ambitious financial key performance indicators (KPIs) and actively monitoring the financial and budgetary performance throughout the year in order to keep the carryovers in an acceptable percentage. It also called on all the agencies concerned to identify the proper corrective actions and to continue their efforts to follow up on the Court's observations that are ongoing or outstanding.

Budget and financial management

Members stated that the Court issued an unqualified opinion on the legality and regularity of the revenue underlying the accounts for all agencies; except four: the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CdT), the Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA). The qualified opinions were issued by the Court due to non-compliant expenditures of EUR 1.3 million (for CdT), EUR 4.26 million (for CEPOL), EUR 0.6 million (for ECDC) which led the Court to estimate a total amount of non-compliance expenditure representing 2.8 % of the total payment appropriations available in 2022 and EUR 17.8 million (for eu-LISA).

The report noted the Courts recurrent observation related to the contributions from Schengen associated countries (SAC), that different methods in the agreements for calculating contributions entail a risk of erroneous implementation of those contribution agreements. It noted with concern the Courts observation regarding weaknesses related to various aspects of budgetary management such as excessive levels of carry-over of appropriations, high rates of late payments and fee/revenue related issues in the case of 16 agencies.

Performance

Members noted that all agencies use various systems of key performance indicators (KPIs), planned outputs or strategic targets set as part of their performance measurement. They noted the achievements and successes of all agencies in 2022, the first year of the unprovoked and unjustified Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

The report stressed the valuable role played by Union agencies in helping Union institutions design and implement Union policies as well as the important role of the EU Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) agencies. It welcomed the high-quality work performed by the agencies working in the area of employment, social affairs and inclusion (CEDEFOP, Eurofound, EU-OSHA, ETF and ELA). Members stressed the need for agencies to co-operate with each other in order to allocate resources correctly.

Efficiency and gains

Member called on the agencies to continue developing synergies (in areas such as human resources, procurement, digitalisation, building management, IT services and cyber-security), as well as cooperation and exchange of good practices with other Union agencies with a view to improving efficiency, in particular given the impact of the war in Ukraine and inflationary strains.

Staff policy

The report noted that, in 2022, the 33 decentralised agencies reported that they employ a total of 10 146 members of staff compared to 9 631 in 2021, representing an increase of 5.34 % compared to 2021. It recalled that the Agencies need to take concrete measures for geographical balance to be improved.

Members noted that the gender balance reported for staff overall deteriorated, with 54.26 % men and 46.74 % women (50.3 % and 49.7 %, respectively in 2021). The Agencies are called on to work on improving further the gender balance in senior management.

17 agencies have already adopted the Charter on Diversity and Inclusion that had been endorsed by the Working Group dedicated to issues in the area of diversity and inclusion. The remaining agencies are invited to adopt that Charter without delay.

Conflicts of interest

The report noted that, with the exception of one agency, all the agencies have a policy for preventing and managing conflicts of interest. In this context, it pointed out that rules on transparency, incompatibilities, conflicts of interest and "revolving door" situations, illegal lobbying and strategies to combat fraud must be regularly updated.

Public procurement

Members noted with great concern that the Court observed 48 weaknesses in public procurement in 2022 (compared to 34 in 2021 and 18 in 2020) and that the number of agencies concerned is increasing with 24 agencies concerned in 2022 (compared to 22 agencies in 2021 and 14 agencies in 2020). They are concerned that such weaknesses remain the largest source of irregular payments, stemming from irregular procurement procedures reported either in 2022 or in previous years.

They recalled the importance for all procurement procedures, to ensure fair competition between tenderers and to procure goods and services at the best price, respecting the principles of transparency, proportionality, equal treatment and non-discrimination. They invited all agencies to implement all the e-procurement IT tools developed by the Commission.

2022 discharge: General Budget of the European Union Agencies

The European Parliament adopted by 520 votes to 69, with 4 abstentions, a resolution on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union agencies for the financial year 2022: performance, financial management and control.

The resolution contains, for each body, cross-cutting observations accompanying the discharge decisions.

Budget

The main findings are as follows:

- the cumulative total for the 2022 budget for the 33 decentralised Union agencies amounted to around EUR 3 471 million in commitment appropriations, representing an increase of 8.2 % compared to 2021, and amounted to EUR 3 035 million in payment appropriations, a decrease of 1.78 % compared to 2021;
- of the EUR 3 035 million in payment appropriations, approximately EUR 2 781 million were financed from the general budget of the Union, representing 74.85 % of the agencies total financing in 2022 (compared to 77.27 % in 2021);
- approximately EUR 935 million were financed by fees and charges and by direct contributions from participating countries (an increase of 28.23 % compared to 2021).

The total final budget for 2022 (after amending budgets) of all decentralised Union agencies was approximatively 16 % higher than that for 2021, while the inflation rate in the Union reached up to 11.5 % in October 2022. Members noted, in this context, that the increase in the budget of some agencies from 2021 to 2022 has been significant, representing more than + 60 % (for ENISA, eu-LISA, EFCA), approximatively 30 % or more (for ELA, EEA, Frontex) and more than +20 % (for EUSPA, EUAA).

Main risks identified by the Court

According to the Courts report, the overall risk to the reliability of agencies accounts is low. The overall risk to the legality and regularity of revenue underlying the agencies accounts to be low for most agencies, and to be medium for the partly self-financed agencies.

Members noted with concern that, for a fifth year in a row, the Court considers the risk to sound financial management to be medium, primarily associated with public procurement procedures.

The resolution stated that the Court considered the risk to budget management to be low, with the Courts audit showing high carryovers of committed appropriations, which were, however, justified according to the Court by the multiannual nature of operations or for reasons beyond the agencies control. The Agencies are called on to strengthen their budget management and financial planning.

Budget and financial management

Members stated that the Court issued an unqualified opinion on the legality and regularity of the revenue underlying the accounts for all agencies; except four: the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CdT), the Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA). The qualified opinions were issued by the Court due to non-compliant expenditures of EUR 1.3 million (for CdT), EUR 4.26 million (for CEPOL), EUR 0.6 million (for ECDC) which led the Court to estimate a total amount of non-compliance expenditure representing 2.8 % of the total payment appropriations available in 2022 and EUR 17.8 million (for eu-LISA).

As regards the reliability of accounts, the Court issued an emphasis of matter paragraph for the European Medicines Agency (EMA), the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA), the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust), eu-LISA, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).

Members noted with concern the Courts observation regarding weaknesses related to various aspects of budgetary management such as excessive levels of carry-over of appropriations, high rates of late payments and fee/revenue related issues in the case of 16 agencies.

Performance

Members noted that all agencies use various systems of key performance indicators (KPIs), planned outputs or strategic targets set as part of their performance measurement. They noted the achievements and successes of all agencies in 2022, the first year of the unprovoked and unjustified Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, welcoming, in this context, the rapid measures taken by the agencies in various areas such as justice and home affairs (such as the EUA, Frontex, Europol or the FRA), the supervision of financial systems (such as ESMA), security and defence (such as EASA) or employment, social affairs and inclusion (such as Eurofound).

The resolution emphasised the importance of the role played by the Union's agencies responsible for justice and home affairs (JHA), insisting that the agencies be given sufficient financial and human resources.

Efficiency and gains

Member called on the agencies to continue developing synergies (in areas such as human resources, procurement, digitalisation, building management, IT services and cyber-security), as well as cooperation and exchange of good practices with other Union agencies with a view to improving efficiency, in particular given the impact of the war in Ukraine and inflationary strains. Parliament welcomed that 19 out of 33 decentralised Agencies have implemented corporate plans to improve energy efficiency and climate neutrality. The level of digitalisation of agencies needs to be improved.

Staff policy

In 2022, the 33 decentralised agencies reported that they employ a total of 10 146 members of staff compared to 9 631 in 2021, representing an increase of 5.34 % compared to 2021. Concrete measures for geographical balance to be improved.

Despite a slight improvement, the gender balance reported for staff overall deteriorated, with 54.26 % men and 46.74 % women (50.3 % and 49.7 %, respectively in 2021). The Agencies are called on to work on improving further the gender balance in senior management. 17 agencies have already adopted the Charter on Diversity and Inclusion that had been endorsed by the Working Group dedicated to issues in the area of diversity and inclusion. The remaining agencies are invited to adopt that Charter without delay.

Conflicts of interest

The resolution noted that, with the exception of one agency, all the agencies have a policy for preventing and managing conflicts of interest. In this context, it pointed out that rules on transparency, incompatibilities, conflicts of interest and "revolving door" situations, illegal lobbying and strategies to combat fraud must be regularly updated. All the agencies request declarations of interest for their management board members and senior management and that they publish them on their website.

Public procurement

Members noted with great concern that the Court observed 48 weaknesses in public procurement in 2022 (compared to 34 in 2021 and 18 in 2020) and that the number of agencies concerned is increasing with 24 agencies concerned in 2022 (compared to 22 agencies in 2021 and 14 agencies in 2020). They are concerned that such weaknesses remain the largest source of irregular payments, stemming from irregular procurement procedures reported either in 2022 or in previous years.

They recalled the importance for all procurement procedures, to ensure fair competition between tenderers and to procure goods and services at the best price, respecting the principles of transparency, proportionality, equal treatment and non-discrimination. They invited all agencies to implement all the e-procurement IT tools developed by the Commission.

Transparency				
SARVAMAA Petri	Rapporteur	CONT	30/11/2023	The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)
SARVAMAA Petri	Rapporteur	CONT	09/11/2023	eu-LISA
SARVAMAA Petri	Rapporteur	CONT	08/11/2023	European Court of Auditors