



CONT\_PV(2024)1101\_1

# MINUTES

Meeting of 4 November 2024, 15:00-18:45,

and 5 November 2024, 15:00-18:30

BRUSSELS

The meeting opened on Monday 4 November 2024 at 15:04, with Niclas Herbst (Chair) presiding.

**4 November 2024, 15.00 – 17.00**

**1. Adoption of agenda**

The draft agenda was adopted in the form shown in these minutes.

**2. Chair's announcements**

The Chair drew the attention of Members to the information in the CONT News.

**3. 2023 discharge: General budget of the EU - Commission**

CONT/10/00520

2024/2019(DEC) COM(2024)0272[01] – C10-0067/2024

Rapporteur:

Niclas Herbst (PPE)

Responsible:

CONT

- Hearing on MFF Heading 1 and Heading 5 with Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission, responsible for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age and Iliana Ivanova, Commissioner responsible for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, in the presence of ECA reporting Members Mihails

Kozlovs (MFF Heading 1) and Marek Opiola (MFF Heading 5)

**The following spoke:** Niclas Herbst, Mihails Kozlovs (ECA Member), Marek Opiola (ECA Member), Margrethe Vestager (Executive Vice-President of the Commission, responsible for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age), Iliana Ivanova (Commissioner responsible for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth), Carla Tavares, Tamás Deutsch, Bert-Jan Ruissen, Eero Heinäluoma.

The meeting adjourned at 16.48 and resumed at 17.04.

#### **4 November 2024, 17.00 – 18.45**

#### **4. 2023 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Parliament** CONT/10/00539 2024/2020(DEC) COM(2024)0272[02] – C10-0068/2024

Rapporteur:

Monika Hohlmeier (PPE)

Responsible:

CONT

- Exchange of views with the following Directors-General:
  - Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM)
  - Directorate-General for Personnel (DG PERS)
  - Directorate-General for Infrastructure and Logistics (DG INLO)
  - Directorate-General for Innovation and Technological Support (DG ITEC)

**The following spoke:** Niclas Herbst, Monika Hohlmeier, Christian Mangold (European Parliament, DG COMM), Ellen Robson (European Parliament, DG PERS), Leena Maria Linnus (European Parliament, DG INLO), Lorenzo Mannelli (European Parliament, DG ITEC), Carla Tavares, Tamás Deutsch, Dick Erixon.

The meeting adjourned at 18.52.

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The meeting resumed on 5 November at 15:04 with Niclas Herbst (Chair) presiding.

#### **5 November 2024, 15.00 – 16.00**

\*\*\* *In camera* \*\*\*

#### **5. Coordinators' meeting**

\*\*\* *End of in camera* \*\*\*

\* \* \*

The meeting adjourned at 15.57 and resumed at 16.04.

## **5 November 2024, 16.00 – 17.30**

### **6. 2023 discharge: General budget of the EU - Commission**

CONT/10/00520

2024/2019(DEC) COM(2024)0272[01] – C10-0067/2024

Rapporteur:

Niclas Herbst (PPE)

Responsible:

CONT

- Exchange of views with Ilze Juhansone, Secretary-General of the European Commission, in the presence of ECA reporting Member Jan Gregor

**The following spoke:** Niclas Herbst, Jan Gregor (ECA Member), Ilze Juhansone (Secretary-General of the European Commission), José Cepeda, Dick Erixon, Julien Sanchez, Daniel Freund, Monika Hohlmeier.

The meeting adjourned at 17.15 and resumed at 17.31.

## **5 November 2024, 17.30 – 18.30**

### **7. Protection of the European Union's financial interests – combating fraud – annual report 2023**

CONT/10/01294

2024/2083(INI)

Rapporteur:

Gilles Boyer (Renew)

Responsible:

CONT

- Presentation by Johannes Hahn, Commissioner responsible for Budget and Administration

**The following spoke:** Niclas Herbst, Johannes Hahn (Commissioner responsible for Budget and Administration), Gilles Boyer, Caterina Chinnici, Eero Heinäluoma, Virginie Joron, Bert-Jan Ruissen.

### **8. Any other business**

### **9. Date of next meeting**

11-12 November 2024 (Brussels)

21 November 2024 (Brussels)

The meeting closed at 18.13.

**ПРИСЪСТВЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/  
ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALLOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/KATAΣΤΑΣΗ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/  
LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/POPIS NAZOČNIH/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRŠ/DALYVIŲ SAŖAŠAS/  
JELENLÉTI ÍV/REGISTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŠCI/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/  
LISTĂ DE PREZENȚĂ/PREZENČNÁ LISTINA/SEZNAM NAVZOČIH/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/NÄRVAROLISTA**

Бюро/Mesa/Předsednictvo/Formandskabet/Vorstand/Juhatus/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Predsjedništvo/Ufficio di presidenza/Prezidijs/ Biuras/Elnökség/Prezidium/Birou/Predsednictvo/Predsedstvo/Puheenjohtajisto/Presidiet (*)
Niclas Herbst (P), Caterina Chinnici (VP)
Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Βουλευτές/Members/Députés/Zastupnici/Deputati/Deputāti/ Nariai/Képviselők/Membri/Leden/Posłowie/Deputados/Deputați/Jäsenet/Ledamöter
Georgios Aftias, José Cepeda (1), Olivier Chastel, Tamás Deutsch, Dick Erixon, Daniel Freund (2) , Monika Hohlmeier, Virginie Joron (2), Alexander Jungbluth, Kinga Kollár (1), Marit Majj (1), Jacek Protas, Julien Sanchez (2), Jonas Sjöstedt, Carla Tavares, Tomáš Zdechovský.
Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Zamjenici/ Supplenti/Aizstājēji/Pavaduojantysnariai/Pötagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membros suplentes/Supleanți/Náhradníci/ Namestniki/Varajäsenet/Suppleanter
Dirk Gotink, Eero Heinäluoma, Bert-Jan Ruissen (2), Șerban-Dimitrie Sturdza (1), Adrián Vázquez Lázara (1).

216 (7)
222 (3)
Stefan Köhler
57 (8) (Точка от дневния ред/Punto del orden del día/Bod pořadu jednání (OJ)/Punkt på dagsordenen/Tagesordnungspunkt/ Päevakorra punkt/Σημείο της ημερήσιας διάταξης/Agenda item/Point OJ/Τοčka dnevnoĝ reda/Punto all'ordine del giorno/Darba kārtības punkts/Darbotvarkēs punktas/Napirendi pont/Punt Agenda/Agendapunt/Punkt porządku dziennego/Ponto OD/Punct de pe ordinea de zi/Bod programu schôdze/Τοčka UL/Esityslistan kohta/Punkt på föredragningslistan)

Присъствал на/Presente el/Přítomný dne/Til stede den/Anwesend am/Viibis(id) kohal/Παρόν στις/Present on/Présent le/Nazočni  
dana/Presente il/Piedalījās/ Dalyvauja/Jelen volt/Prezenti fi/Aanwezig op/Obecny dnia/Presente em/Prezent/Prítomný dňa/Navzoči  
dne/Läsnä/Närvarande den:

- (1) 4.11.2024  
(2) 5.11.2024

По покана на председателя/Por invitación del presidente/Na pozvání předsedy/Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung des Vorsitzenden/Esimehe kutsel/Με πρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chair/Sur l'invitation du président/ Na poziv predsednika/Su invito del presidente/Pēc priekšsēdētāja uzaicinājuma/Pirmininkui pakvietus/Az elnök meghívására/ Fuq stedina tač-'Chairman'/Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/Na zaproszenie Przewodniczącego/A convite do Presidente/La invitația președintelui/ Na pozvanie predsedu/Na povabilo predsednika/Puheenjohtajan kutsusta/På ordförandens inbjudan

Съвет/Consejo/Rada/Rådet/Rat/Nðukogu/Συμβούλιο/Council/Conseil/Vijeće/Consiglio/Padome/Taryba/Tanács/Kunsill/Raad/ Conselho/Consiliu/Svet/Neuvosto/Rådet (\*)

Комисия/Comisión/Komise/Kommissionen/Kommission/Komisjon/Επιτροπή/Commission/Komisija/Commissione/Bizottság/ Kummissjoni/Commissie/Komisja/Comissão/Comisie/Komisia/Komissio/Kommissionen (\*)

Johannes Hann, Iliana Ivanova, Ilze Juhansone, Margrethe Vestager

Други институции и органи/Otras instituciones y organismos/Ostatní orgány a instituce/Andre institutioner og organer/Andere Organe und Einrichtungen/Muud institutsioonid ja organid/Λοιπά θεσμικά όργανα και οργανισμοί/Other institutions and bodies/Autres institutions et organes/Druge institucije i tijela/Altre istituzioni e altri organi/Citas iestādes un struktūras/Kitos institucijos ir įstaigos/ Más intézmények és szervek/Istituzjonijiet u korpi oħra/Andere instellingen en organen/Inne instytucje i organy/Outras instituições e outros órgãos/Alte instituții și organe/Iné inštitúcie a orgány/Muut toimielimet ja elimet/Andra institutioner och organ

ECA

Jan Gregor, Mihails Kozlovs, Marek Opiola.

Секретариат на политическите групи/Secretaría de los Grupos políticos/Sekretariát politických skupin/Gruppenes sekretariat/ Sekretariat der Fraktionen/Fraktsioonide sekretariaat/Γραμματεία των Πολιτικών Ομάδων/Sekretariats of political groups/Secrétariat des groupes politiques/Tajništva klubova zastupnika/Segreteria gruppi politici/Politisko grupu sekretariāts/Frakciju sekretoriai/ Képviseletcsoportok titkársága/Segretarjat gruppi politiçi/Fractiesekretariaten/Sekretariat Grup Politycznych/Sekretariado dos grupos políticos/Secretariate grupuri politice/Sekretariát politických skupin/Sekretariat političnih skupin/Poliitisten ryhmien sihteeristö/ De politiska gruppernas sekretariat	
PPE	H. Cercel, I. Mateos Buendia
S&D	R. Breederveld
PfE	
ECR	E. Frolova, K. Wrzesinska
Renew	S. Antoine-Jacquemard
Verts/ALE	A. Podsadowska, R. Godina
The Left	E. Reschini
ESN	
NI	M. Dymowska

Кабинет на председателя/Gabinete del Presidente/Kancelář předsedy/Formandens Kabinet/Kabinet des Präsidenten/Presidenci kantseleri/Γραφείο του Προέδρου/President's Office/Cabinet du Président/Ured predsednika/Gabinetto del Presidente/Priekšsēdētāja kabinets/Pirmininko kabinetas/Elnöki hivatal/Kabinett tal-President/Kabinet van de Voorzitter/Gabinet Przewodniczącego/Gabinete do Presidente/Cabinet Președinte/Kancelária predsedu/Urad predsednika/Puhemiehen kabinetti/Talmannens kansli	
Кабинет на генералния секретар/Gabinete del Secretario General/Kancelář generálního tajemníka/Generalsekretærens Kabinet/ Kabinett des Generalsekretärs/Peasekretäri büroo/Γραφείο του Γενικού Γραμματέα/Secretary-General's Office/Cabinet du secrétaire général/Ured glavnog tajnika/Gabinetto del Segretario generale/Generalsekretära kabinets/Generalinio sekretoriaus kabinetas/ Főtitkári hivatal/Kabinett tas-Segretarju Ġenerali/Kabinet van de secretaris-generaal/Gabinet Sekretarza Generalnego/Gabinete do Secretário-Geral/Cabinet Secretar General/Kancelária generálneho tajomníka/Urad generalnega sekretarja/Pääsihteerin kabinetti/ Generalsekreterarens kansli	
Генерална дирекция/Dirección General/Generální ředitelství/Generaldirektorat/Generaldirektion/Peadirektoraat/Γενική Διεύθυνση/ Directorate-General/Direction générale/Glavna uprava/Direzione generale/Generāldirektorāts/Generalinis direktoratas/Főigazgatóság/ Direktorat Ġenerali/Direktoraten-generaal/Dyrekcja Generalna/Direcção-Geral/Direcții Generale/Generálne riaditeľstvo/Generalni direktorat/Pääosasto/Generaldirektorat	
DG PRES DG IPOL DG EXPO DG EPRS DG COMM DG PART DG PERS DG INLO DG TRAD DG LINC DG FINS DG ITEC DG SAFE Legal Service	M. Strasser (Director for Budgetary Affairs)

- \* (P) = Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Formand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chair/Président/Predsjednik/Priekšsēdētājs/  
Pirmininkas/Elnök/Chairman/Voorzitter/Przewodniczący/Preşedinte/Predseda/Predsednik/Puheenjohtaja/Ordförande
- (VP) = Заместник-председател/Vicepresidente/Místopředseda/Næstformand/Stellvertretender Vorsitzender/Aseesimees/Αντιπρόεδρος/  
Vice-Chair/Potpredsjednik/Vice-Président/Potpredsjednik/Priekšsēdētāja vietnieks/Pirmininko pavaduotojas/Alelnök/ Viči  
'Chairman'/Ondervoorzitter/Wiceprzewodniczący/Vice-Presidente/Vicepreşedinte/Podpredseda/Podpredsednik/  
Varapuheenjohtaja/Vice ordförande
- (M) = Член/Miembro/Člen/Medlem/Mitglied/Parlamendiliige/Βουλευτής/Member/Membre/Član/Membro/Deputāts/Narys/Képviselő/  
Membru/Lid/Członek/Membro/Membru/Člen/Poslanec/Jäsen/Ledamot
- (F) = Длъжностно лице/Funcionario/Úředník/Tjenestemand/Beamter/Ametnik/Υπάλληλος/Official/Fonctionnaire/Dužnosnik/  
Funzionario/Ierēdnis/Pareigūnas/Tisztviselő/Ufficjal/Ambtenaar/UrządNIK/Funcionário/Funcionar/Úradník/Úradnik/Virkamies/  
Tjänsteman

**ISSUE N° 11 - 4-5 NOVEMBER 2024**

# **NEWSLETTER**



**COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**MONDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2024**

15:00 – 18:45

**TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2024**  
15:00 - 16:00 (Coordinators' meeting) and  
16:00 – 18:30

**BRUSSELS, SPAAK (1A002)**

*Monday, 4 November 2024, 15:00 – 19:00*

**1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**2. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair draws attention to the following points:

Interpretation was requested in the following languages:

DE EN FR IT NL EL ES PT SV CS HU PL and RO.

The meeting will be webstreamed and can be followed live via the [CONT webpage](#).

Monday, 4 November 2023, 15:00 – 17:00

### 3. 2023 DISCHARGE: GENERAL BUDGET OF THE EU - EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

*Hearing on MFF Heading 1 & MFF Heading 5 with Commissioners [Margrethe Vestager](#), Executive Vice-President of the Commission, responsible for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age, and [Iliana Ivanova](#), Commissioner responsible for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, in the presence of ECA reporting Members [Mihails Kozlovs](#) (MFF Heading 1) and [Marek Opiola](#) (MFF Heading 5)*

CONT/10/00520

[2024/2019\(DEC\)](#)



**Rapporteur:** [Niclas Herbst](#) (EPP)

**Shadow Rapporteurs:** [José Cepeda](#) (S&D), [Tamás Deutsch](#) (Pfe), [Joachim Stanisław Brudziński](#) (ECR), [Olivier Chastel](#) (Renew), [Daniel Freund](#) (Greens), [Pasquale Tridico](#) (The Left)

**Administrators:** Kaare Barslev, Benoît Lefort, Hans Stander, Anna Zsoldos

The CONT Committee will hold a hearing with Commissioner Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission, and Commissioner Ivanova in the context of the discharge procedure for the Commission for the financial year 2023. For this hearing, Mihails Kozlovs, Dean of Chamber IV of the European Court of Auditors (ECA), will present the ECA's findings regarding MFF Heading 1 – 'Single Market, Innovation and Digital', and Marek Opiola, Member of ECA's Chamber III, will present the audit

findings concerning MFF Heading 5 – 'Security and defence'.

Under Heading 1, payments in 2023 amounted to EUR 25.3 billion, equivalent to 13.2 % of total budget expenditure for the year. The largest share (60.5 %) of this expenditure went to Research (EUR 15.3 billion), followed by Transport, Energy and Digital (EUR 4.1 billion, 16.1 %), InvestEU (EUR 2.3 billion, 9.1 %) and Space (EUR 2.2 billion, 8.7 %).

The ECA found an estimated error rate of 3.3 % in its sample of expenditure under Heading 1, compared to 2.7 % for the financial year 2022. Most errors relate to research and innovation expenditure, with personnel costs most affected by error. The ECA found several errors related to the incorrect application of hourly and daily rates for research projects, and recommended that the Commission clarify these.

The ECA also found issues in relation to procurement for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), which contributed 28 % to the error rate of Heading 1. The ECA reviewed the ex ante control system for CEF grants in the transport and energy sectors of the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) and found that while the strategies for both CEF1 (2014-2020) and CEF2 (2021-2027) are based on sound analysis of risks and past irregularities, the guidelines for ex ante checks on procurement were not detailed enough and recommended that the Commission further develop them.

Under MFF Heading 5 – 'Security and defence', payments in 2023 amounted to EUR 1.4 billion, equivalent to 0.7 % of total budget expenditure for the year. The largest share (38.4 %) of this expenditure went to the European Defence Fund and programmes related to defence industries (EUR 0.5 billion), followed by military mobility (EUR 0.3 billion, 19 %), decentralised agencies (EUR 0.2 billion, 17.1 %) and the Internal Security Fund (EUR 0.2 billion, 13.1 %). The ECA did not audit sufficient transactions to estimate the level of error for Heading 5, but given the number of transactions under Heading 4 and 5 affected by errors (7 out of 23 transactions), the ECA considers that expenditure under Heading 5 (as well as Heading 4) is high risk.

In preparation for the hearing, the Members of the CONT Committee submitted to the Commission 45 written questions concerning MFF Heading 1 and 10 questions concerning MFF Heading 5, answers to which were received and shared with CONT Members on 25 October 2024.

All relevant documents, including the Commission's replies to the written questions, can be found on the

[CONT website.](#)

It is proposed that the hearing of Commissioners Vestager and Ivanova proceed as follows:

- Presentations by the reporting Members of the European Court of Auditors, Mihails Kozlovs (MFF Heading 1) and Marek Opiola (MFF Heading 5), who will present the findings of the respective chapters of the ECA Annual Report 2023;
- Commissioners Vestager and Ivanova will provide replies to this introduction;
- CONT Rapporteur and shadow rapporteurs will put questions to the Commission and the ECA, followed by answers (ping-pong system);
- Other Members will put questions to the Commissioners and/or the ECA;
- Closing remarks by the European Commission and the CONT Rapporteur.

CONT Timetable

Event	Body	Date
Deadline for Opinion-giving Committees	FEMM, DEVE, CULT, AFET, PECH, AGRI, ENVI, EMPL, ITRE, JURI, LIBE, TRAN, REGI	28 February 2025
Consideration in Committee	CONT	17-18 February 2025
Deadline for Amendments	CONT	21 February 2025, 12:00
Vote in Committee	CONT	7-8 April 2025
Vote	Plenary	May 2025

**Monday, 4 November 2024, 17:00 – 18:45**

#### **4. 2023 DISCHARGE: GENERAL BUDGET OF THE EU - EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

CONT/10/00539

[2024/2020\(DEC\)](#)

##### **Exchange of views with the following Directors-General:**

Director-General for Communication (DG COMM)

Director-General for Personnel (DG PERS)

Director-General for Infrastructure and Logistics (DG INLO)

Director-General for Innovation and Technological Support (DG ITEC)



**Rapporteur:** [Monika Hohlmeier](#) (EPP)

**Shadow Rapporteurs:** **Giuseppe Lupo** (S&D), **Tamás Deutsch** (Pfe), **Dick Erixon** (ECR), **Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy** (Renew), **Damian Boeselager** (Greens), **Jonas Sjöstedt** (The Left)

**Administrator:** Fernando Gallego Osuna

In the context of the European Parliament's discharge for the financial year 2023, a written questionnaire was sent to Parliament's administration, after having received proposals from the CONT Coordinators, focusing on strategic and priority discharge issues related to 2023 and issues of direct budgetary relevance, in line with the working arrangements. Written replies are expected by Monday, 28 November. In parallel, it was decided to organise

this exchange of views with the Directors-General of several key Directorates-General, to discuss their subject areas. These exchange of views are expected to focus on major topics or concerns having a clear budgetary relevance and regarding the concrete year in question (or related to that year), or, possibly, on a selection of key priority topics, avoiding repetition of old cases/questions over several years. A second exchange of views with the Directors-General of the Directorates-General for the Presidency and for Finance is planned for 21 November.

Members will find the relevant documents for the European Parliament discharge, such as the Report on Budgetary and Financial Management, the annual accounts, the report on contracts awarded, the Annual Activity Reports of the Directorates-General and the replies and follow-up to last year's discharge resolution, on the [CONT Discharge 2023 website](#).

#### CONT Timetable

Event	Body	Date
Consideration in Committee	CONT	27-28 January 2025
Deadline for Amendments	CONT	4 February 2025, 14:00
Vote in Committee	CONT	17-18 March 2025
Vote	Plenary	May 2025

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**Tuesday, 5 November 2024, 15:00 – 16:00**

\*\*\* *In camera* \*\*\*

## 5. COORDINATORS' MEETING

\*\*\**End of in camera*\*\*\*

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**Tuesday, 5 November 2024, 16:00 – 17:30**

## 6. 2023 DISCHARGE: GENERAL BUDGET OF THE EU - EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CONT/10/00520

[2024/2019\(DEC\)](#)

**Exchange of views with [Ilze Juhansone](#), Secretary-General of the European Commission, in the presence of ECA reporting Member [Jan Gregor](#)**



**Rapporteur:** [Niclas Herbst](#) (EPP)

**Shadow Rapporteurs:** [José Cepeda](#) (S&D), [Tamás Deutsch](#) (Pfe), [Joachim Stanisław Brudziński](#) (ECR), [Olivier Chastel](#) (Renew), [Daniel Freund](#) (Greens), [Pasquale Tridico](#) (The Left)

**Administrators:** Kaare Barslev, Benoît Lefort, Hans Stander, Anna Zsoldos

Under the authority of the President of the European Commission, the Secretariat-General serves the College of Commissioners and oversees the implementation of the Commission's political priorities.

To this end, the Secretariat-General steers and coordinates the work of the Commission services across all policy areas to ensure the consistency,

quality and timely delivery of policy, legislation and operations. It does this from the early stages of policy development, through the internal decision-making process, to interinstitutional negotiations to agree the policy, and finally to putting the policy into practice.

The Secretariat-General is at the heart of the Commission’s corporate governance structure, chairing and organising meetings of the Corporate Management Board. It supports the Executive Vice-Presidents and Vice-Presidents in their coordination tasks, including through the management of groups of Commissioners and project teams. The Secretariat-General also coordinates and steers the relations between the Commission and the other EU institutions, national parliaments, and international and non-governmental organisations.



The discharge hearing will be based on information provided in public documents, such as:

- the Court of Auditors' 2023 Annual Report;
- the Commission's Integrated Financial and Reporting package; and
- the 2023 Annual Activity Report of the Secretariat-General of the Commission.

In preparation for the hearing, the CONT Committee submitted to the Commission 26 written questions concerning the work of the Secretary-General, answers to which were received and shared with CONT Members on 25 October 2024.

All relevant documents, including the Commission’s replies to the written questions, can be found on the [CONT website](#).

It is proposed that the hearing with Commission Secretary-General Ilze Juhansone proceed as follows:

- Introduction by the reporting Member of the European Court of Auditors, Jan Gregor, who will present the relevant findings of the Annual Report 2023;
- The Commission Secretary-General will reply to this introduction;
- The CONT Rapporteur and shadow rapporteurs will put questions to the Secretary-General and the ECA, which will be followed by answers (ping-pong system);
- Other Members will put questions to the Secretary-General and/or the ECA;
- Closing remarks by the ECA Member and the CONT Rapporteur.

#### CONT Timetable

Event	Body	Date
Deadline for Opinion-giving Committees	FEMM, DEVE, CULT, AFET, PECH, AGRI, ENVI, EMPL, ITRE, JURI, LIBE, TRAN, REGI	28 February 2025
Consideration in Committee	CONT	17-18 February 2025
Deadline for Amendments	CONT	21 February 2025, 12:00
Vote in Committee	CONT	7-8 April 2025
Vote	Plenary	May 2025

**Tuesday, 5 November 2024, 17:30 – 18:30**

## **7. PROTECTION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION’S FINANCIAL INTERESTS – COMBATING FRAUD – ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

CONT/10/01294



**Rapporteur:** [Gilles Boyer](#) (Renew)

**Shadow Rapporteurs:** **Caterina Chinnici** (EPP), **Eero Heinäluoma** (S&D), **Virginie Joron** (PfE), **Rudi Kennes** (The Left), **Alexander Jungbluth** (ESN)

**Administrators:** Diego Rasetti, Lucas Maton

On 25 July 2024, the European Commission adopted its [35<sup>th</sup> Annual Report](#) on the Protection of the European Union's financial interests and the Fight against fraud, dedicated to the year 2023.

This report, commonly referred to as the “PIF Report”, is published in line with Article 325(5) of the TFEU, in cooperation with Member States, to report to the European Parliament and the Council on the measures taken pursuant to this article. This report constitutes a material contribution to the annual discharge procedure, and it also forms one of the terms of reference for the adoption by the European Parliament of its resolution on the protection of the European Union’s financial interests, based on the Committee on Budgetary Control’s annual draft report, for which MEP Gilles Boyer (Renew) is the Rapporteur this year.

Given that Member States manage a significant part of EU funds themselves and are also in charge of collecting traditional own resources, they work with the European Commission on this reporting. The PIF Report is for that reason based mainly on information provided by the Member States, including data on detected irregularities and fraud. Analysis of this information allows for an assessment of which areas are most at risk, thereby making it possible to better target action at both EU and national level.

The PIF Report will be presented by the Commissioner for Budget and Administration, Johannes Hahn. It provides data and analysis on the cases of fraud and irregularities reported by the competent EU and national authorities and includes some information on cooperation amongst components of the Anti-Fraud Architecture. Following Parliament’s calls for a more holistic approach to reporting on the fight against fraud and on the protection of the Union’s financial interests, this edition also refers to other existing reports on related matters and from linked entities, such as OLAF’s annual report and EPPO’s annual report.

The 2023 PIF Report mentions a total of 13 563 fraudulent and non-fraudulent irregularities reported in 2023, amounting to EUR 1.90 billion. As regards the fraudulent irregularities, their number has remained relatively stable over the last 5 years and amounted to 1 030 in 2023 (-9.5 % compared to 2022), while their financial impact increased to EUR 585.8 million in 2023 (+103 % compared to 2022). As regards the non-fraudulent irregularities, their number and financial impact peaked in 2023 following a growing trend over the last 5 years, with 12 533 irregularities (+3.5% compared to 2022), but involving a lower financial amount: EUR 1.31 billion (-14% compared to 2022).

The working documents accompanying the PIF Report provide additional and detailed information on the several topics addressed in the report itself; all available information, also from other reports and documents, will be used as the basis for the Rapporteur’s analysis for the preparation of the INI report on the protection of the financial interests of the Union.

## 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

## 10. NEXT MEETINGS

- 11-12 November 2024 (Brussels)
- 21 November 2024 (Brussels)

**PAPERLESS PROGRAMME (INTERNAL USERS ONLY)**

Access CONT Committee meeting documents on [eMeeting](#) or any CONT Committee information on [eCommittee](#).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Contact the [CONT Secretariat](#) or visit the [website](#) of the CONT Committee.

## NEWS FROM POLICY DEPARTMENT – BUDGETARY AFFAIRS

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

#### [Publications Catalogue 2019 - 2024](#)

##### CONT

Study [“EU anti-fraud architecture - the role of EU-level players, how they cooperate and the challenges they face”](#)

Briefing [“Cohesion Policy Calendar \(2021-2027 and 2014-2020 Programming Periods\)”](#)  
[July 2024 update](#)

Briefing [“Analysis of the 100 largest recipients of RRF funds per Member State”](#)

Briefing [“EU assistance to Ukraine and scrutiny of the EU financing provided”](#)

Study [“Lessons learned from the implementation of crisis response tools at EU level”](#) (Part 1)

Study [“The future of digitalisation of budgetary control”](#)

At a Glance [“Nomination for a Member of the European Court of Auditors: Italy”](#)

Workshop Proceedings [“Preventing EU funds from reaching sanctioned individuals or entities”](#)

Study [“Due Diligence in EU Institutions' Own-Account Procurement: Rules and Practices”](#)

Workshop Proceedings [“Sponsorships of EU Presidencies: Stocktaking and Perspectives”](#)

Briefing [“Nominations for Members of the European Court of Auditors: Sweden and Portugal”](#)

Briefing [“EU assistance to Ukraine and scrutiny of the EU financing provided”](#)

Briefing [“Preventing EU funds from ending up with individuals or companies tied to the EU-Russia sanctions list”](#)

In-Depth Analysis [“The EU Emissions Trading System: Method and Effects of Free Allowance Allocation”](#)

Briefing [“Nominations for Members of the European Court of Auditors: Belgium and Finland”](#)

At a Glance [“Transparency and accountability of EU funding for NGOs active in EU policy areas within EU territory”](#)

Briefing [“Nominations for Members of the European Court of Auditors: Denmark, Spain and Ireland”](#)

Study [“Transparency and accountability of EU funding for NGOs active in EU policy areas within EU territory”](#)

##### BUDG

Study [“The history of the EU budget”](#) (Update)     [Other language versions](#)

Briefing [“The European Parliament and the CFSP Budget - The case of the Rapid Deployment Capacity”](#)

Study [“Performance framework for the EU budget - Concepts and practices”](#) (Part 1)

Study [“The impacts of recent inflation developments on the EU finances”](#) (Part 1)

Briefing [“ITER financing by the EU budget - state-of-play”](#)

Briefing [“An estimate of the European Union’s long-term borrowing cost bill”](#)

Briefing [“Gender budgeting in the Member States”](#)

At a Glance [“Options for a stronger and more agile EU budget”](#)

Study [“Options for a stronger and more agile EU budget”](#)

Briefing [“Ukraine: Financing of reconstruction and the role of the EU budget”](#)

Briefing [“Budgetary aspects of EU defence policy”](#)

In-Depth Analysis [“Recovery and Resilience Dialogue with the European Commission”](#)



Briefing [“EU Financial assistance to Africa and Latin America 2021-2027”](#)  
Briefing [“Human and Financial Resources in Decentralised EU Agencies”](#)  
In-Depth Analysis [“The rising cost of European Union borrowing and what to do about it”](#)  
Briefing [“Statistical own resources: Examples of the gender pay gap and food waste”](#)  
At a Glance [“The tools for protecting the EU budget from breaches of the rule of law: the Conditionality Regulation in context”](#)  
Briefing [“Financial impact of the war in Ukraine: current and future challenges for the EU budget”](#)

## FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

### BUDG

Briefings “6 briefing papers on various aspects of the post-2027 MFF”  
Study “The impacts of recent inflation developments on the EU finances” (Part 2)  
Study “Performance framework for the EU budget” (Part 2)  
Study “Mapping the current structure and discovering the potential of ‘other revenue’ ”  
Study “Adapting the EU budget to make it fit for purpose for future enlargements”  
Study “Contingent liabilities for the EU budget: an updated appraisal”

### CONT

Study “The Financial Transparency System - How to improve its functioning and reliability”  
Study “Lessons learned from the implementation of crisis response tools at EU level” (Part 2)  
Study “Performance based Instruments: possible improvements in their design”  
Study “Methods in the European Court of Auditors and the Commission: the estimated level of error vs estimated risk at payment/risk at closure”

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### BUDG

Workshop “Some key themes for the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework” (7 November 2024)

### CONT

Workshop “EU anti-fraud architecture - the role of EU-level players, how they cooperate and the challenges they face” (date tbc)

Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs - [poldep-budg@ep.europa.eu](mailto:poldep-budg@ep.europa.eu)

Policy Department Webpage: <https://poldepnet.in.ep.europa.eu/home/budgetary-affairs/presentation-of-poldep-d.html>

**Disclaimer**

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# CONT COORDINATORS' MEETING

Tuesday, 5 November 2024

15.00 - 16.00

Room: SPAAK 1A2

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## Coordinators present:

<b>EPP:</b>	Tomáš Zdechovský
<b>S&amp;D:</b>	Carla Tavares
<b>PfE:</b>	Tamás Deutsch
<b>ECR:</b>	Dick Erixon, replacing Joachim Stanislaw Brudzinski
<b>Renew:</b>	Olivier Chastel
<b>Verts/ALE:</b>	Daniel Freund
<b>The Left:</b>	Jonas Sjöstedt
<b>ESN:</b>	Absent

## Items for decision

### 1. *New referrals and opinions to INI reports*

#### **1.1. *European Defence Industry Programme and a framework of measures to ensure the timely availability and supply of defence products ('EDIP') - 2024/0061(COD) [BSR]***

This proposal establishes a budget and lays down a set of measures aimed at supporting defence industry readiness of the Union and its Member States through the strengthening of the competitiveness, responsiveness and ability of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) to ensure the timely availability and supply of defence products and at contributing to the recovery, reconstruction and modernisation of the Ukraine Defence Technological and Industrial Base (Ukrainian DTIB).

#### **Decision:**

Coordinators decided to provide an opinion. The S&D group got the rapporteurship for 1 point.

#### **1.2. *Establishing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Republic of Moldova***

The Commission has published a proposal for the establishment of the Reform and Growth Facility for the Republic of Moldova COM(2024)0469.

The Moldova Growth Plan is based on three pillars, aimed at:

1. Increasing financial assistance over the next three years
2. Enhancing access to the European Union's single market.
3. Supporting Moldova's socio-economic and fundamental reforms.

#### **Decision:**

Coordinators decided to provide an opinion. The Left group got it for 1.5 points.

#### **1.3. *Distribution of opinions to INI reports from other Committees***

##### **1.3.1. *Opinion to the BUDG-ECON implementation report on the Recovery and Resilience Facility***

Coordinators decided on 7 October to request that CONT will do an opinion to this INI report. This has been accepted by BUDG-ECON committees.

### *1.3.2. Opinion to REGI own-INI report on possibilities for simplification of cohesion funds*

Coordinators decided on 15 October to request that CONT will do an opinion to this INI report. This has been accepted by the REGI committee.

**Decision:**

The Chair proposed that the opinion on the BUDG-ECON implementation report on the Recovery and Resilience Facility should be seen in connection with the appointment of standing rapporteurs (point 2) because the title of the report is identical to the title for one of the standing rapporteurships. After distribution of the standing rapporteurships a majority of coordinators approved to give this opinion to the S&D for no cost.

As a follow up, a point on working methods concerning standing rapporteurs will be put on the agenda for Coordinators on 4/5 December 2024.

The opinion to the REGI INI report on possibilities for simplification of cohesion funds was given to the EPP for 0.5 points.

### *2. Appointing standing rapporteurs for scrutiny related files*

**Decision:**

A majority of coordinators supported a negotiated distribution of files for standing rapporteurs in the following way:

- The monitoring of the application of the Rule of Law conditionality Regulation (EPP)
- The anti-fraud architecture: OLAF and Europol/Eurojust (ECR)
- The anti-fraud architecture: EPPO (Renew)
- The implementation of the RRF (S&D)
- The monitoring of the financial assistance to Ukraine and relations with the budget committee of the Verkhovna Rada (Greens)
- Financial assistance to The Werstern Balkan (The Left)

### *3. Appointment of a Member of the Gender mainstreaming network*

On 26 July, the Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality wrote to the Chairs of the other EP committees asking them to appoint Members responsible for gender mainstreaming.

In accordance with the EP Resolution of 13 March 2003 on gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament, each parliamentary committee appoints one of its Members (and a substitute Member) as responsible for Gender Mainstreaming, as part of the Network of Members in charge of Gender Mainstreaming (GMN) led by the FEMM committee. The network also meets at staff level.

**Decision:**

Coordinators had a long discussion with many elements. As part of that discussion a majority of Coordinators approved that:

- Ms Terry Reintke (Greens) is appointed as Member of the gender mainstreaming network.

Coordinators representing 15 Members further supported that:

- Ms Virgine Joron (Pfe) is appointed as substitute Member of the gender mainstreaming network.

Coordinators (S&D, Renew, Greens, The Left) representing 13 Members were opposed to this candidate and supported Daniel Freund (Greens) as substitute Member of the gender mainstreaming network.

It was requested that the decision on the substitute Member needs to be confirmed by the full Committee. Since more candidates will most likely be proposed for such a vote, which can lead to a complicated process, unsuited for being handled in the full Committee, Coordinators will instead come back to the point on their meeting on 4/5 December.

***4. Appointment of Member of the Petitions network***

On 5 September 2024, the Chair of the Committee on Petitions wrote to the Chairs of the other EP committees asking them to appoint at least one full Member and one substitute Member responsible for petitions.

The Petitions' network was created in 2016 with the aim of raising awareness and strengthening cooperation between the committees of the European Parliament on issues raised by petitioners in petitions submitted to the Committee on Petitions and forwarded to other committees for opinion or for information.

**Decision:**

Coordinators had a long discussion with many elements. As part of that discussion a majority of Coordinators approved that:

- Mr Daniel Freund (Greens) is appointed as Member of the Petitions' network.

Coordinators representing 15 Members further supported that:

- Mr Julien Sanchez (Pfe) is appointed as substitute Member of the Petitions' network.

Coordinators (S&D, Renew, Greens, The Left) representing 13 Members were opposed to this candidate and supported Olivier Chastel (Renew) as substitute Member of the Petitions' network.

It was requested that the decision on the substitute Member needs to be confirmed by the full committee. Since more candidates will most likely be proposed for such a vote, which can lead to a complicated process unsuited for being handled in the full Committee, Coordinators will instead come back to the point on their meeting on 4/5 December.

## 5. *Possible appointment of a CONT Member responsible for monitoring EU-UK developments*

### **Decision:**

Coordinators decided that CONT did not need to have a standing rapporteur for EU-UK relations.

## 6. *Forward selection of ECA Special reports*

Coordinators decided to select ECA Special Reports and Reviews for presentation in the CONT Committee (possible as joint meetings or with invitations to other Committees) based on a screening of the indicative timetable from ECA.

Based on the latest timetable the Secretariat proposed that the following reports and Reviews are presented in CONT (screened including 1 quarter 2025).

- ECA's SR 22/2024 – Double funding from the EU budget (published on 21 October)
- SR on EU Civil Service (expected date of publication 7 November)
- Review of the Annual Management and Performance Report (AMPR) (expected date of publication 14 November)
- SR on Cohesions Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE) (expected 1 quarter 2025)
- SR on military mobility (expected 1 quarter 2025)
- SR on RRF reforms 1 (expected 1 quarter 2025)
- Review on RRF SR on European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) (expected 1 quarter 2025)
- SR on Digital transformation (expected 1 quarter 2025)
- SR on VAT fraud on imports (expected 1 quarter 2025)
- SR on MS RRF control systems (expected 1 quarter 2025)

### **Decision:**

Coordinators endorsed the suggestions made by Secretariat.

## 7. *Gender Equality Week*

At the Bureau meeting of July 2023, the President proposed to turn the Gender Equality Week initiative into a standing annual event of the European Parliament. The 2024 edition of the Gender Equality Week will take place from 9 to 13 December 2024. On this occasion, all committees are invited to join the Week by organising events in their area of competences.

In this context, it would be interesting to inform CONT Members about the state of play of the European Commission's work to mainstream gender equality in the EU budget, and in particular the EU Gender Tracking Methodology, which is the methodological approach for measuring public expenditures supporting gender equality across EU spending programmes.

### **Decision:**

Coordinators endorsed the organisation of an exchange of views on gender mainstreaming in the EU budget, with the European Commission's DG Budget, during the CONT meeting of 9 December.

## **8. Discharge Calendar 2023**

### **Decision:**

Coordinators approved the updated discharge calendar for 2023.

## **Items for information**

### **9. Provision and planning of expertise by the Policy Department D**

The committees on Budgetary Control and on Budget are supported by a dedicated research unit (Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs). The unit provides in-House briefings and external studies, organises workshops on new topics with external experts. By principle, it works for the committee on the request of the Coordinators (and not upon request of individual MEP's). The unit gave an overview on how to make use of this service. It also raised some changes stemming from the 2024 parliamentary reform, in which now priority is given to "accompanying" expertise which can help fostering the EP in its legislative, budgetary and scrutiny functions.

The secretariat will launch the procedure for identification of new proposals for expertise in autumn.

### **10. CCC decision on the applicable modalities of cooperation for unfinished files under new rule 57**

At their meeting of 23 January 2024, CONT Coordinators decided to provide an opinion to IMCO under ex-Rule 56 for the "Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing harmonised requirements in the internal market on transparency of interest representation carried out on behalf of third countries and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 (COM(2023)0637); 2023/0463 COD". Rapporteurship for this opinion was granted to EPP

On 10 October 2024, the CCC Chair issued a recommendation on the applicable modalities of cooperation among committees concerning files falling under the unfinished business procedure, in accordance with the new Rules of Procedure. According to this recommendation, CONT is not listed as an opinion-giving committee for this file under new rule 57.

### **11. Outcome of written procedures**

- 4 October - rejection of LIBE committee's request to draw up opinion to the Protection of the European Union's financial interests - combating fraud - annual report 2023
- 7 October - CONT opinion to BUDG-ECON INI report on the RRF
- 9 October letter about press reports concerning Commission's plans for change of the EU budget.
- 15 October 2024 - approval of CONT request to draw up an opinion to REGI own



initiative report on Possibilities for simplification of cohesion fund

12. *State of play of appointments on CONT files*

- [Work in progress document](#)
- [Overview of the points](#)

13. *Any other business*

14. *Date of next Coordinators' meeting*

- 4 December, 2024