European Parliament
2019-2024

TEXTS ADOPTED

P9_TA(2024)0241

Discharge 2022: European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

1. European Parliament decision of 11 April 2024 on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for the financial year 2022 (2023/2157(DEC))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for the financial year 2022,

– having regard to the Court of Auditors' annual report on EU agencies for the financial year 2022, together with the agencies' replies[1],

– having regard to the statement of assurance[2] as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions provided by the Court of Auditors for the financial year 2022, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

– having regard to the Council's recommendation of 22 February 2024 on discharge to be given to the Centre in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2022 (06180/2024 – C9-0095/2024),

– having regard to Article 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

– having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No

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1 OJ C, C/2023/594, 27.10.2023.
2 OJ C, C/2023/112, 12.10.2023.

541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012[1], and in particular Article 70 thereof,

– having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1920/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction[2], and in particular Article 15 thereof,

– having regard to Regulation (EU) 2023/1322 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2023 on the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1920/2006[3], and in particular Article 41 thereof,

– having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/715 of 18 December 2018 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies set up under the TFEU and Euratom Treaty and referred to in Article 70 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council[4], and in particular Article 105 thereof,

– having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0104/2024),

1. Grants the Director of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction discharge in respect of the implementation of the Centre’s budget for the financial year 2022;

2. Sets out its observations in the resolution below;

3. Instructs its President to forward this decision, and the resolution forming an integral part of it, to the Director of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors, and to arrange for their publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L series).

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[1] OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.
[2] OJ L 376, 27.12.2006, p. 1.
[3] OJ L 166, 30.6.2023, p. 6.
[4] OJ L 122, 10.5.2019, p. 1.

2. European Parliament decision of 11 April 2024 on the closure of the accounts of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for the financial year 2022 (2023/2157(DEC))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for the financial year 2022,

– having regard to the Court of Auditors’ annual report on EU agencies for the financial year 2022, together with the agencies’ replies[1],

– having regard to the statement of assurance[2] as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions provided by the Court of Auditors for the financial year 2022, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

– having regard to the Council’s recommendation of 22 February 2024 on discharge to be given to the Centre in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2022 (06180/2024 – C9-0095/2024),

– having regard to Article 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

– having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012[3], and in particular Article 70 thereof,

– having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1920/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction[4], and in particular Article 15 thereof,

– having regard to Regulation (EU) 2023/1322 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2023 on the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA) and repealing Regulation (EC) No

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[1] OJ C, C/2023/594, 27.10.2023.
[2] OJ C, C/2023/112, 12.10.2023.
[3] OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.
[4] OJ L 376, 27.12.2006, p. 1.

1920/2006[1], and in particular Article 41 thereof,

– having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/715 of 18 December 2018 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies set up under the TFEU and Euratom Treaty and referred to in Article 70 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council[2], and in particular Article 105 thereof,

– having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0104/2024),

1. Approves the closure of the accounts of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for the financial year 2022;

2. Instructs its President to forward this decision to the Director of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors, and to arrange for its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L series).

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[1] OJ L 166, 30.6.2023, p. 6.
[2] OJ L 122, 10.5.2019, p. 1.

3. European Parliament resolution of 11 April 2024 with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for the financial year 2022 (2023/2157(DEC))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to its decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for the financial year 2022,

– having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0104/2024),

A. whereas, according to its statement of revenue and expenditure[1], the final budget of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (the ‘Centre’) for the financial year 2022 was EUR 18 893 136, representing a decrease of 0,71 % compared to 2021; whereas the Centre’s budget derives mainly (94 %) from the Union budget;

B. whereas the Court of Auditors (the ‘Court’), in its report on the Centre’s annual accounts for the financial year 2022 (the ‘Court's report’), states that it has obtained reasonable assurance that the Centre's annual accounts are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular;

Budget and financial management

1. Notes with satisfaction that the budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2022 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 98,78 % (a decrease of 1,22 % compared to 2021); notes that the payment appropriations execution rate was 96,65 %, representing a slight increase of 0,30 % compared to 2021; further notes that the implementation rate of payment appropriations carried over from 2021 to 2022 was 88,98 %;

2. Notes from the Court’s report that the Centre, although it paid interest for only one late payment, had a significant number of payments that were wrongly flagged as late (107 out of 1 595) by the Centre’s financial and accounting management (Accrual Based Accounting (ABAC)) because of the incorrect parametrisations or

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1 OJ C 141/06, 29.3.2022, p. 33.

incorrect data inputs, or both, regarding the due date of payment or the reception of the documents entailing a payment obligation; notes from the Centre’s reply that the inconsistent flagging of late payments did not affect the regularity of the operations involved; notes further that the Centre has adopted some measures to minimise the referred risk for ‘false positives’ and to further ensure that its ABAC system may provide for a clear and accurate picture of the actual late payments; calls on the Agency to continue to monitor this issue and mitigate possible future reputational risks associated with this issue;

Performance

3. Notes that the Centre’s new performance measurement model identifies a limited number (10) of composite key performance indicators (KPIs), which are used to measure the effectiveness of delivering the desired outputs and the efficiency of using resources allocated, and which are complemented by higher level KPIs that focus on outcomes and impacts; notes that for the assessment of the KPIs, the Centre has defined 65 annual targets, of which 57 targets (87 %) were achieved in 2022;

4. Notes that for the 2022 work programme, the Centre achieved 152 out of 188 of the outputs/results (81 %), partially achieved 12 % of them (i.e. 23 outputs/results, which were delayed and were in progress at the end of 2022), while 12 results (6 %) were not implemented and two results were not applicable; observes that the Centre’s view is that most of the delays or cancellations of activities in 2022 were caused by a lack of resources; notes further that for the implementation of its new mandate (expected to apply from 2024), in 2022 the Centre started preparations which involved key resources and required some adjustments in some of its previously planned activities;

5. Recognises the Centre’s efforts and progress made in its three areas of work (health, security and business drivers); notes in particular the release in 2022 of the new European Drug Report (EDR), which delivers the latest overview of the drug situation in Europe up to 2022, the launch of the e-learning platform PLATO that hosts the European Prevention Curriculum, which is designed to train professionals involved in shaping prevention decisions, opinions and policies in Europe, the release of seven miniguides that cover responses to drugs in recreational settings, local communities, schools and prisons, as well as respond to the needs of families and homeless populations, and the publication of three spotlights on drug consumption rooms, drug checking and e-health intervention;

6. Notes with appreciation that in 2022 the Centre released a new rapid mixed-method trend spotter study to assess the initial service response to the needs of displaced Ukrainians in neighbouring

countries within the Union; commends the Centre for collaborating with Europol on preparing the fourth edition of the joint ‘EU Drug Markets: In-depth analysis’, the findings of which are presented in a series of modules, each focusing on the market for a particular drug and covering trends along the supply chain from production and trafficking to distribution and use; commends in this context the launch in 2022 of the first two modules on cocaine and methamphetamine;

7. Notes that, in 2022, the Centre continued to implement the Early Warning System of the European Union (EWS) in collaboration with its partners; notes, in the same context, that in 2022, EWS was formally notified for the first time of 41 new psychoactive substances (NPS); further notes that two NPS that had been risk assessed by the Centre in 2021 (3-chloromethcathinone (3-CMC) and 3-methylmethcathinone (3-MMC)) were included in the definition of ‘drug’ by a Commission delegated directive in 2022;

8. Welcomes the Centre’s participation in drug related training events and capacity building, managing to transfer its knowledge to almost 950 professionals working in the drug field, including law enforcement officers and policymakers; notes, in addition, that around 1 200 professionals working in the drugs field all over the world attended the seven webinars that were organised by the Centre in 2022; commends the Centre for organising, along with its partners, the fourth European Conference on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies: Lisbon Addictions 2022 which, under the overarching theme of ‘Global Addictions’, brought together a record number of 1 757 participants from 84 countries;

9. Welcomes the Centre’s unremitting efforts to highlight the social aspects and societal impact of drugs, promote social re-integration policies for drug users, and approach the topic of drugs with a multi-disciplinary outlook; considers it essential to continue raising awareness of the importance of prevention and innovative mental-health-based approach to drugs policies;

10. Welcomes the progress made by the Centre on the joint ‘EU Drug Markets: In-depth analysis’, in collaboration with Europol, with modules on specific drugs released throughout 2022 and with planned releases in 2023; welcomes the work in 2022 on improving the quality and availability of core supply data in collaboration with the Reitox National Focus Points and Europol; welcomes the implementation of all of the Centre’s tasks under the Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats operational action plans on cannabis, cocaine and heroin; recalls that drug trafficking has been identified as a main source of profit and a channel of recruitment of organised crime and terrorism, and highlights the contribution of the Centre to a more secure Europe;

11. Welcomes the ongoing cooperation between the Centre and European Neighbourhood Policy partner countries at regional level, through the EU4MD technical assistance project, as well as the ongoing implementation of the bilateral project with Georgia (EMCDDA4GE); welcomes the establishment of an official partnership in the Cooperation Programme between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union on Drugs Policies;

Efficiency and gains

12. Commends the Centre for the commitment to constantly improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities and maximise the use of its resources, expertise and know-how in order to ultimately contribute to a more secure and healthier Europe, in particular through cooperation arrangements with agencies in the justice and home affairs and health areas; notes the measures that the Centre has taken in order to reduce the running costs of its premises, such as the use of solar shading on glass areas and climate-control switches on windows; further notes the agreement with the European Maritime Safety Agency to share the use of common areas (canteen, underground parking area and conference facilities) in the compound where their headquarters are located and the cooperation between the two agencies concerning the joint procurement of shared services (e.g. security, cleaning, catering, among other) and the joint organisation of training activities of common interest for the staff of both agencies;

13. Notes with satisfaction that the Centre has a strategic plan (‘Environmental Strategy 2021-2025’) to become carbon-neutral and that it has included in its annual activity report metrics regarding the Centre’s environmental performance and CO_2 footprint, with ever improving yearly results since 2014; welcomes the decision of the Centre’s Director taken in 2022 to obtain the EMAS certification, the process of which was expected to be concluded in 2023;

14. Notes that in 2022, the Centre implemented several projects designed to enhance the environmental performance, by improving the electricity consumption, installing solar power cells on the roof of the building, as well as installing electric car-sharing stations with a view to replacing the Centre’s vehicle fleet with electric or hybrid vehicles;

Staff policy

15. Notes that, on 31 December 2022, the establishment plan was 97 % implemented, with six officials and 68 temporary agents appointed out of seven officials and 69 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (76 authorised posts in 2022, same as in 2021); notes that, in addition, 27 contract agents worked for the Centre in 2022; welcomes the Centre’s 2022 staff screening exercise and the

effective and efficient allocation of its resources with 72,44 % of the Centre’s staff allocated to operational activities, 18,20 % to administrative support and coordination, and 9,35 % to neutral operations; commends the Centre for its low staff turnover rate (2,9 %) in 2022;

16. Notes that the Centre reported to have two women (22 %) and seven men (78 %) in its senior management, while it has 20 women (37 %) and 34 men (63 %) in its management board (MB); notes that the staff overall is composed of 36 men (38 %) and 58 women (62 %); recalls the importance of ensuring staff gender balance and calls on the Centre to take this aspect into consideration with regard to future recruitment of staff and of appointments within its senior management; asks the Commission and the Member States to take into account the importance of ensuring gender balance when nominating their members to the Centre's management board;

17. Takes note of the Centre’s report with regard to the follow-up measures taken in light of the discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Centre for the financial year 2021 (the ‘Centre's report’) to improve gender balance within the Centre; observes that such measures were taken in the context of the Centre’s recruitment procedures and the dissemination in Members States of information on the Centre’s selection process; commends the Chair of the Centre’s management board for addressing the relevant authorities of the Member States, Norway and Turkey with regard to ensuring gender balance in the nomination of their members of the Centre’s management board; further notes from the Centre’s report, regarding the observation on the non-use of SYSPER, that the Centre has developed and put in place its own information and communications technology tools for digitalised human resources management;

18. Recalls from the Court’s annual report on Union agencies for 2018 the observation regarding the hiring of interim workers through a framework contract without respecting the requirements of Directive 2008/104/EC[1] and Portuguese labour law; notes from the Court’s report that that observation is closed, whereas the framework contract in question expired in March 2022, and the last payment regarding interim workers took place in January 2022;

Procurement

19. Notes from the Court’s report that the amount (EUR 75 000) corresponding to a contract concluded in 2022 was not fully covered by a corresponding budgetary commitment, leading to a deficit amounting to EUR 8 000; notes that a similar situation was incurred

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[1] Directive 2008/104/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on temporary agency work (OJ L 327, 5.12.2008, p. 9).

in 2021 for the same type of contract and in both cases the Centre, according to the Court's report, was not in line with the requirements laid down in Articles 10(3) and 73(2) of the Centre's Financial Regulation; acknowledges however from the Centre's reply that the cost for the contract was shared according to the agreements made with two other entities that use the Centre's premises in Lisbon; observes in this context that the Centre had to bear just a part of the total cost/expenditure for the contract which relied on corresponding budgetary commitments, whilst the remaining costs relied on offsetting/clearing accounting operations as those costs were borne by the two other entities;

Prevention and management of conflicts of interest and transparency

20. Acknowledges the Centre's existing measures and ongoing efforts to secure transparency, prevent and manage conflicts of interest, and provide whistleblower protection; notes that no cases of conflict of interest and whistleblowing were reported, investigated or concluded in 2022; welcomes that the Centre published on its website the declarations of interest and CVs of its senior management staff, management board members and the external experts who are members of the Centre's scientific committee; recalls that in the case of the members of the management board, a summary of only their current professional activities is available on the Centre's website; notes the Centre's commitment to address by the end of 2023 the feasibility of also including in the published CVs the past professional activity of those members;

21. Notes that the Centre did not meet lobbyists in 2022; further notes that, on the basis of the guidelines and recommendations developed by the Commission and by the European Ombudsman on this matter, the Centre has in place a code of conduct and practical recommendations/guidelines for the possible interaction of its staff with interest representatives; notes further that in case that such meetings take place, those guidelines recommend the meeting to be registered and made public; calls on the Centre to follow those guidelines and publish such meetings without delay;

Internal control

22. Notes that in 2022, the Internal Audit Service (IAS) carried out two audits for the Centre, namely on international cooperation and on the adequacy of coordination and working arrangements of partner directorate-generals and other stakeholders, as well as of the Union's decentralised agencies' governance framework; notes that the audit results for both audit projects were still not available at the end of 2022, at which point there were no outstanding critical risks or recommendations from the IAS, except for one outstanding recommendation, on internal communication, from an audit on

human resources management and ethics carried out in 2021;

23. Welcomes the result of the 2022 assessment of the effectiveness of the Centre’s internal control systems which is that all components are present and functioning; notes that the assessment identified five internal control framework principles where some improvements may be needed, in relation to control environment, control activities and information and communication; further notes that a comprehensive risk identification and assessment exercise aimed at improving risk management at the Centre was carried out in 2022, with identified risks related to the new mandate of the Centre and its new business model; calls on the Centre to address all the shortcomings identified on the occasion of the various assessments carried out in 2022;

24. Notes, that the Centre adopted a revised anti-fraud strategy in 2021, with three strategic objectives and an action plan for implementation in 2022, which, by the year-end, was widely implemented, with only one out of 12 actions still open;

Other comments

25. Commends the Centre for the communication efforts that were focused on ensuring the production of high-quality publications, with 66 scientific and institutional publications produced in 2022, and 16 scientific articles and book chapters authored or co-authored by the Centre and published in prestigious journals;

26. Welcomes the significant increase in the Centre’s audience reached in 2022 across all channels; notes, in that context, that the Centre had around 2, 6 million unique visitors on the website, a record number (an increase by almost 50 % from 2021), 1, 6 million views on its videos (a 15 % increase compared to 2021), and an increase in followers on two key social media channels, LinkedIn (+57 %) and Instagram (+37 %);

27. Calls on the Centre to focus on disseminating the results of its research to the general public, and to reach out to public via social media and other media outlets; welcomes in this regard the user-accessibility of the reports created by the Centre;

28. Welcomes the resource page, EMCDDA 4 Ukraine, created for professionals working in the drugs field in Europe supporting people displaced from Ukraine;

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29. Refers, for other observations of a cross-cutting nature accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution of 11 April

2024[1] on the performance, financial management and control of the agencies.

[1] Texts adopted, P9_TA(2024)0280.