

**WEDNESDAY, 11 JULY 2018**

09.00 - 12.30 and 14.30 - 18.30

**THURSDAY, 12 JULY 2018**

09.00 - 12.30

Room: Jozsef Antall (JAN) 6Q2

## 1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The draft agenda was e-mailed to Members on 3 July 2018 and is in the [file for the meeting](#).

## 2. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair draws attention to the following points:

### Languages available

11 July

AM: FR,DE,IT,NL,EN,EL,ES,FI,CS,ET,HU,LT,PL,SL,BG and RO

PM: FR,DE,IT,NL,EN,EL,ES,FI,CS,ET,HU,LT,PL,SL,BG, RO, SK, CR, MK, SR and SQ

12 July

AM: FR,DE,IT,NL,EN,EL,ES,FI,CS,ET,HU,LT,PL,SL,BG, RO, MK, SR and SQ

*Please note that the interpreters are on **notice of strike**. Work stoppages of one to two hours are possible in all parliamentary meetings. In concrete terms, if a meeting is affected by a walkout, an interpreter will contact the committee secretariat before the start of the meeting to inform the time and duration of the strike. The interpreters will stop and resume the works exactly at the scheduled time. No overshoot beyond the scheduled end time for the meeting will be granted. CONT Chair will announce at the beginning of each session if the meeting is affected.*

### Webstreaming

The CONT meeting is webstreamed on the [Europarl website](#).

Please be aware that each time a speaker activates the microphone to make an intervention, the camera will be automatically directed to the speaker.

### Adoption of Coordinators' recommendations

The summary of coordinators' recommendations from the last CONT coordinators' meeting that took place on 21 June 2018 was circulated to the Members on 26 June 2018.

If no objections are received before the end of the meeting, these recommendations will be deemed approved.

**WEDNESDAY, 11 JULY 2018**

09.00 - 12.30

**PUBLIC MEETING**

### 3. 2016 DISCHARGE: EU GENERAL BUDGET - COUNCIL AND EUROPEAN COUNCIL

CONT/8/13571



#### Consideration of second draft report

Rapporteur: [Marco Valli](#) (EFDD)  
 Administrator: Tereza Pinto de Rezende

Shadow Rapporteurs: José Ignacio Salafranca (EPP), Arndt Kohn (S&D), Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Dennis de Jong (GUE/NGL), Benedek Javor (Verts/ALE), Jean-François Jalkh (ENF)

For the eighth year, and by a large majority, on 18 April 2018, the Plenary postponed the 2016 European Council and Council discharge, maintaining the decision and reconfirming the content of the report, as voted in CONT.

After the vote in Plenary, the CONT Chair received from the Council Secretariat General a counter proposal to the Parliaments' proposal for a procedure of cooperation between the two institutions during the discharge procedure. The coordinators decided to mandate the Chair and the Rapporteur for last year's discharge to establish exploratory contacts with the Secretary General of the Council. The meeting is still to take place before the summer break.

In his second report, the Rapporteur leaves open the decision to grant or postpone discharge to the Council. Notwithstanding, Mr Valli recalls the outstanding issues and Parliaments' responsibilities in the discharge process. He points out those requests made by the Parliament in previous discharge exercises that continue to be unanswered, such as the lack of information on the cost of buildings and the separation of the European Council and Council budgets. At the same time, the Rapporteur welcomes ongoing inter-institutional negotiations on a joint EU Transparency Register. The Rapporteur continues to regret that no replies were provided in the meantime by the Council to the questions and to the requests made in this and in previous discharge exercises.

The second draft report is available in all languages on the [CONT website](#).

#### CONT Timetable:

Event	Body	Date
Deadline for amendments	CONT	10 September at 14:00
Vote	CONT	27 September
Adoption in Plenary	Plenary	October II

## 4. GENERAL BUDGET OF THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2019 - ALL SECTIONS

CONT/8/12648



### Consideration of draft opinion

Rapporteur: [Joachim Zeller](#) (EPP)

Administrator: Philippe Godts

Shadow Rapporteurs: Derek Vaughan (S&D), Martina Dlabajová (ALDE), Indrek Tarand (Verts/ALE)

In his draft report Joachim Zeller welcomes the programme statements of operational expenditures accompanying the budget 2019 that, according to Article 38 of the Financial Regulation, provide information for each of the spending programmes. Mr Zeller notes with concern that the Commission uses two sets of objectives and indicators to measure the performance of the financial management with hardly any cross-references; this circumstance hampers comparability between different types of performance documents.

Mr Zeller calls on the Committee on Budgets, in coordination with the sectorial committees of the European Parliament, to promote a real culture of "result orientation" aiming at optimizing the use of funds and consider reallocating funds from programmes showing low performance.

He stresses the unsustainable structure of CAP expenditure and calls on the Commission to carefully analyse the causes of the overall decline in farmer income since 2013 and to define a new key performance objective accompanied by outcome and impact indicators, aiming at mitigating the income inequalities between farmers. The Rapporteur calls on the Commission to speed up the delivery of cohesion policy programmes and related payments with a view to reducing the length of the implementation period, initially, to year n+2.

Mr Zeller calls on the Commission and the Member States to build stronger coordination between cohesion, economic governance and the European semester. He calls on DG HOME to consider defining, in cooperation with DG DEVCO and DG NEAR, a key performance indicator related to the elimination of the underlying root causes of irregular migration.

The Rapporteur regrets that in 2016, 6, 7 % of total payments to the financial engineering instruments (EUR 900 million) went, into management costs and fees. He stresses that trust funds should be established only when their use is justified and the required action is not possible through other, existing financing channels; he calls furthermore on the Commission to consider putting an end to trust funds that are unable to attract a significant contribution from other donors or that do not provide an added value as compared to 'traditional' Union external instruments; he considers unacceptable that the involvement of the EDF in trust funds further limits the possibility for the Parliament to scrutinise Union spending. Finally, he insists that the European Public Prosecutor Office (EPPO) must be adequately financed and staffed and disapproves that, for 2019, only 35 staff posts are foreseen which implies that after deduction of the posts of 23 Deputy Prosecutors, only 12 posts are foreseen for administrative tasks.

### CONT Timetable:

Event	Body	Date
Consideration of draft opinion	CONT	11 July 2018
Deadline amendments	CONT	6 September 2018 at 14:00
Vote	CONT	27 September 2018

The draft opinion is available on the [CONT website](#).

## 5. CHERNOBYL: NUCLEAR SAFETY AND EU FUNDS

CONT/8/13938

**Exchange of views with Vince Novak, Director at EBRD Nuclear Safety Department**



CONT Administrator: Christian Ehlers

Chernobyl in Ukraine is the site of the world's worst ever nuclear accident. The 1986 explosion of unit 4 of its nuclear power plant destroyed the reactor hall and caused the release of radioactive material. The incident caused huge damage in the immediate vicinity and had severe impact beyond. The emergency services' response took place in extremely perilous conditions under extraordinary time pressure.

Over the past 30 years, thanks to the initiative of the international community and together with Ukraine and the active help of the EBRD, Chernobyl has been transformed. The construction of a giant new structure is complete. The so-called New Safe Confinement now encloses the shelter which was built in the aftermath of the accident as a temporary measure. The New Safe Confinement makes the site safe and allows for the dismantling of the aging shelter and management of the radioactive waste within the Shelter. Work on this unique undertaking is expected to be completed in 2018.

The EBRD was tasked by the international community with managing the Fund finances which work to secure Chernobyl, including the construction of the enormous arch which will protect damaged Reactor 4.

A CONT delegation met with representatives of the EBRD in the context of the decommissioning and dismantling of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant (Lithuania), a process in which the EBRD also played an important and constructive role.

## 6. ECA SPECIAL REPORT 8/2018 (DISCHARGE 2017): EU SUPPORT FOR PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS IN BUSINESSES - GREATER FOCUS ON DURABILITY NEEDED

CONT/8/13005

**Full presentation of the Special Report by the ECA member responsible, Ladislav Balko - consideration of working document**



Rapporteur: [Georgi Pirinski](#) (S&D)

Administrator: Christian Ehlers

Shadow Rapporteurs: Tomáš Zdechovský (EPP); Martina Dlabajová (ALDE); Younous Omarjee (GUE/NGL)

Generating durable results through EU funds beyond the end of the projects is important to enable positive impacts for the beneficiaries and the regions concerned. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) helps finance investment in capital or assets to create and safeguard sustainable jobs through measures which also encourage local and regional development. Over €75 billion was earmarked for this purpose between 2000 and 2013, and more than €68 billion is planned for 2014 to 2020.

The overall conclusion of the Court is that a majority of the projects audited had durable results. However, in many of the projects audited the results were not (or only partially) durable which is mainly due to a lack of emphasis on durability in the management of the ERDF support to productive investments between 2000 and 2013.

The auditors recommend that the Member States should:

- promote durable results through more focus on identifying and mitigating risks and better analysis of the needs of different types of businesses;
- improve selection procedures and criteria, as well as monitoring and reporting arrangements;
- establish clear corrective measures linked to the achievement of targets at project level (where they exist) and apply them consistently.

The Commission should:

- pay particular attention to how Member States address durability of project results during the approval process for operational programmes;
- ensure that Member States consistently apply clear corrective measures, including recovery arrangements, where projects fail to comply with EU legal durability requirements.

Moreover, the Commission and the Member States should ensure that evaluations look more systematically into durability of project results, in order to better prepare future EU business support schemes.

The ECA Special Report is available on the [CONT website](#).

As a follow-up, a succinct working document with the recommendations of the rapporteur will be sent to CONT Members. The rapporteur's conclusion will form part of the Commission's discharge report.

### *Short presentations of recently published ECA Special Report and Briefing Papers*

## 7. ECA SPECIAL REPORT 16/2018 (DISCHARGE 2017): EX-POST REVIEW OF EU LEGISLATION: A WELL-ESTABLISHED SYSTEM, BUT INCOMPLETE

CONT/8/13682



### **Presentation of the Special Report by Marc Hostert, Head of Cabinet to Henri Grethen, ECA Member responsible**

Rapporteur: [Brian Hayes](#) (EPP)  
Administrator: Tereza Pinto de Rezende

Shadow Rapporteurs: Inés Ayala Sender (S&D); Martina Dlabajová (ALDE);  
Dennis de Jong (GUE/NGL)

The European Commission's system of reviewing laws compares well overall with its equivalents in the Member States, according to a new report by the European Court of Auditors. High-quality ex-post reviews are critical to the quality of legislation, say the auditors. However, they identify a number of weaknesses, mostly relating to the lack of common interinstitutional definitions regarding review clauses, the unclear treatment of certain kinds of review and the lack of clarity of the Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme.

Reviewing legislation after it has come into effect is a key part of the European Commission's 'Better Regulation' policy. Better Regulation means designing policies and laws so that they achieve their main objectives, allowing evidence-based public choices. It is a way of working which should ensure that political decisions are prepared in an open and transparent manner, informed by the best available evidence and backed by the comprehensive involvement of stakeholders. It covers the whole policy cycle from policy design and preparation, through adoption, implementation and application (including enforcement), to evaluation and revision.

The auditors made several recommendations to the Commission, some of which could potentially further develop and enhance the EU's system of common interinstitutional cooperation between the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council and the Member States.

The ECA Special report is available on the [CONT website](#).

As a follow-up, a succinct working document with the recommendations of the rapporteur will be sent to CONT Members. The rapporteur's conclusion will form part of the Commission's discharge report.

## 8. ECA BRIEFING PAPER ON SIMPLIFICATION IN POST-2020 DELIVERY OF COHESION POLICY

CONT/8/13801

### Presentation of the Briefing Paper by *Ladislav Balko*, ECA Member responsible



Rapporteur: [Arndt Kohn](#) (S&D)

Administrator: Christian Ehlers

Shadow Rapporteurs: Andrey Novakov (EPP); Martina Dlabajová (ALDE); Younous Omarjee (GUE/NGL)

Cohesion policy is the EU's main investment tool implemented jointly by the Commission and the Member States. Over the years, the delivery of the policy has become very complex. In response, the Commission proposed a number of simplification measures for the 2014-2020 period. Implementation of these measures has had mixed results. There is a consensus among the European Parliament, Member States and the Commission that the delivery of Cohesion Policy needs further simplification in the post-2020 period.

The Court found that there was no consensus regarding the objectives of simplification, i.e. on why, to whom and how to simplify. Based on international experience, such as Commission, the OECD and RegWatchEurope, the Court identified four guiding principles for effective simplification that they consider to be necessary to drive the simplification process of the post 2020-Cohesion Policy:

- A well-defined strategy for administrative simplification is needed;
- An evidence-based and structured approach is vital for understanding complexity and proposing simplification;
- Ensuring effective simplification requires a firm commitment by the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council and the Member States;
- Accountability and performance: simplification is not a goal in itself and should not jeopardise achievements in strengthened internal control.

The Court also identified five areas key for simplification of Cohesion Policy. These should be the focus of particular attention by the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council and Member States:

- EU legislation and guidance;
- Operational Programmes' (OPs) management structure;
- Administrative inefficiencies in the selection and implementation of projects in Cohesion (including gold-plating);
- Use of Simplified Cost Options (SCOs) and other types of measures based on conditions;
- More efficient and effective controls.

The ECA Briefing Paper is available on the [CONT website](#).



## 9. BRIEFING PAPER: ECA POSITION ON THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL FOR THE FUTURE MFF POST-2020

CONT/8/12201



### Presentation by *Jan Gregor*, ECA Member responsible

Rapporteur: [Petri Sarvamaa](#) (EPP)

Administrator: Philippe Godts

Shadow Rapporteurs: Inés Ayala Sender (S&D); Nedzhmi Ali (ALDE)

Jan Gregor, ECA Member responsible for the file, will present the position of the Court on the Commission proposal for the future MFF Post 2020. CONT Members will have the opportunity to exchange views in this regard and to consider if the opinion adopted by CONT in November 2017 has been taken in consideration.

In his opinion on preparing Parliament's position on the MFF post 2020, the Rapporteur insisted, in particular, on the need to align budgetary and strategic cycles, and to examine the feasibility of introducing a real budget flexibility in terms of political objectives. Mr Sarvamaa recalled Parliament's concern that the financial complexity resulting from the interactions of more than a thousand financial engineering instruments and trust funds and from numerous financial mechanisms supporting Union policies are not recorded in the Union balance sheet. He reiterated Parliament's call to integrate the European Development Fund into the EU Budget. The Rapporteur pointed out that a new balance is needed between, on one hand, CAP and cohesion policies, and on the other hand, the other EU internal policies and a reinforced external capacity of the Union including the elements of the security and defence. He asked the Commission and the Member States to significantly modernise and redesign the EU budget along the principles of performance-based budgeting (with the social impact of such budgeting also assessed and always taken into account) in order to fit the new priorities that have been agreed at EU-27 level.

The ECA Briefing Paper will be available on the [CONT website](#) after publication on July 10, 2018 (midnight).

**WEDNESDAY, 11 JULY 2018**

14.30 - 18.30

**PUBLIC MEETING**

## 10. INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON "SOUND MANAGEMENT OF EU FUNDS: THE EP BUDGETARY CONTROL POWERS"

CONT/8/13933



Rapporteur: [Ingeborg Gräßle](#) (EPP)

Administrator: Michal Czaplicki

The European Parliament is organising regularly meetings with the national parliaments of the Western Balkans with the aim of exchange of experience and knowledge-sharing.

This time the interparliamentary meeting will be focusing on the EP budgetary control powers. This meeting is an occasion for in-depth exchange of views on the impact and

practical implications of the implementation of the European Union budget by the Member States. The exchange is intended to create a platform for enhanced cooperation between CONT Members, their counterparts in the Members States' parliaments and their peers in the national parliaments of the Western Balkans countries.

Members of the CONT Committee will present the discharge procedure of the various EU institutions and their specificities. Cooperation with other bodies like ECA and OLAF are also on the agenda.

The draft programme is available on the [CONT website](#). Presentations will be uploaded after the conference.

## 11. PUBLIC HEARING ON “PERFORMANCE AND VISIBILITY OF EU FUNDED PROJECTS IN THE EU’S NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION BETWEEN WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES”

CONT/8/13934



Rapporteurs: [Petri Sarvamaa](#) (EPP) and [Wolf Klinz](#) (ALDE)

Administrator: Michal Czaplicki

CONT has decided to organise a public hearing on performance and visibility of EU funded projects in the Western Balkans and on the cross-border cooperation between the Western Balkan countries.

This point will be attended not only by the national parliamentarians of the Western Balkan countries but also by national parliamentarians (list of participants available on the [CONT website](#)) of the EU Member

States bordering with the region, namely: Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Croatia. This should allow a thorough debate as all the many key actors involved in this region will be present.

The debate will start with a presentation by Mr Roderick Ackermann who will look at the issues from an academic point of view which will be followed by two presentations from the Commission and then a parliamentary debate will follow.

The draft programme is available on the [CONT website](#). Presentations will be uploaded after the hearing.





THURSDAY, 12 JULY 2018

09.00 - 12.00

PUBLIC MEETING

## 12. INVESTIGATIONS CONDUCTED BY THE EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE (OLAF) AS REGARDS COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OLAF INVESTIGATIONS

CONT/8/13248

**Presentation by Günther H. Oettinger, Commissioner responsible for Budget and Human Resources**



Rapporteur: [Ingeborg Gräble](#) (EPP)  
Administrator: Christian Ehlers

Shadow rapporteurs: Arndt Kohn (S&D); Wolf Klinz (ALDE)

On this occasion the Commissioner will present the Commission's proposal for a regulation amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) as regards cooperation with the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the effectiveness of OLAF investigations (COM (2108) 0338 / 2018/0170 (COD)).

The Commission presented the draft legislative act in view of providing for a more effective cooperation between OLAF and the EPPO. In this context, the attention of Members is also drawn to the Chair's [working document](#) on this issue which was discussed in June.

## 13. THE OLAF ANNUAL REPORT 2017

CONT/8/13935



**Exchange of views with OLAF Deputy Director General Nicolas Ilett**

Rapporteur: [Ingeborg Gräble](#) (EPP)  
Administrator: Christian Ehlers

In 2017, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) closed large-scale investigations, showing its capacity to detect and investigate complex fraud schemes across Europe and beyond. OLAF investigations ranged from major undervaluation fraud cases where fraudsters profited from declaring falsely low values for goods at import in the European Union (EU), to cases where OLAF tackled organised crime groups defrauding funds intended for agriculture, or cases where investigators uncovered fraud in large infrastructure projects.

OLAF's investigation performance in 2017:

- OLAF concluded 197 investigations, issuing 309 recommendations to the relevant national and EU authorities.
- OLAF recommended the recovery of over EUR 3 billion to the EU budget. This exceptionally high figure stems from major undervaluation fraud cases concluded by OLAF during the year.

## Committee on Budgetary Control

- OLAF opened 215 new investigations, following 1111 preliminary analyses carried out by OLAF experts.
- In the absence of any staff increase and despite the complexity of the cases it dealt with, OLAF succeeded in further reducing the duration of its investigations to 17,6 months overall.

The transnational dimension of its work allows OLAF to form a unique view of the changing nature of fraud across Europe. For the second consecutive year, OLAF presents in this Report an analysis of some of the most striking trends revealed by OLAF investigations:

- Corruption, conflict of interest and the manipulation of tender procedures continue to be encountered in fraud cases affecting EU structural funds, with some instances where organised crime groups try to gain profit.
- Fraudsters have increasingly attempted to defraud funds destined for research or the refugee crisis.
- The evasion of customs duties is orchestrated through transnational criminal schemes.

The OLAF Annual Report 2017 is available on the [CONT website](#).

## 14. THE OLAF SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2017

CONT/8/13936



### Exchange of views with the Chairman of the Supervisory Committee, Jan Mulder and Members of the Supervisory Committee

Rapporteur: [Ingeborg Gräßle](#) (EPP)

Administrator: Christian Ehlers

The Supervisory Committee's Annual Activity Report deals with the following issues:

- The access to information for its supervisory function;
- The reinforcement of OLAF's independence;
- The monitoring of developments concerning the application of procedural guarantees in OLAF investigations;
- The duration of OLAF investigations;
- The assessment of OLAF's investigation policy priorities and of the investigation guidelines;
- The monitoring of cases in which OLAF's recommendations have not been followed;
- The European Anti-Fraud Office and the European Public Prosecutor's Office; and
- The Supervisory Committee's governance.

The OLAF Supervisory Committee Annual Activity Report 2017 is available on the [CONT website](#)

## 15. FOLLOW-UP OF THE 2016 DISCHARGE TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ON VOLUNTARY PENSION FUNDS

CONT/8/13940

### Exchange of views with European Parliament Secretary General, Klaus Welle

**\*\*\* ITEM POSTPONED \*\*\***

## 16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

## 17. NEXT MEETINGS

- 03 September 2018, 15.00 – 18.30 (Brussels)
- 27 September 2018, 09.00-12.30 and 15.00 – 18.30 (Brussels)

**TUESDAY, 15 MAY 2018**

12.00 - 12.30

**IN CAMERA**

## 18. COORDINATORS MEETING



**Meeting held in camera**

### **WATCH LIVE**

Watch the CONT committee meeting live on the [EP website](#) or on [Europarl TV](#)

### **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

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**CONT** Workshop on “How can we better communicate the results of the EU budgetary control process to citizens? Addressing the challenges of populist discourse on EU spending” - **10 October 2018 – TBC**

### POLICY DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS:

#### Recent publications

##### CONT

In-Depth Analysis “[State Aid and EU funding: are they compatible?](#)”

Study “[Ensuring high quality job creation from EU funding programmes: how can the best practice of Horizon 2020 be better integrated into other programmes \(ESF, Youth Guarantee, Globalisation Fund\)?](#)”

##### CONT/BUDG

Study “[Oversight and Management of the EU Trust Funds](#)”

##### BUDG

In-Depth Analysis “[The EU spending on fight against climate change](#)”

Study “[EU funds for migration, asylum and integration policies](#)”

Study “Potential revenue from the extension of charging fees by EU Agencies” - not yet available online

#### Forthcoming publications

##### BUDG

- Study “Financial Implementation of European Structural and Investment Funds” - **10 July 2018 am - ASP5G3**

- Study “Potential revenue from the extension of charging fees by EU Agencies” - **TBC**

##### CONT

- Study “Public procurement in EU: few winners for main large-scale infrastructure projects; Overview on the criteria selection, the monitoring and the control system” - **11 October 2018, TBC**

### CONTACTS

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

Policy Department Webpage:

[http://www.poldepnet.ep.parl.union.eu/poldept/cms/cache/offonce/poldepnet/poldep\\_d/poldepd\\_presentation](http://www.poldepnet.ep.parl.union.eu/poldept/cms/cache/offonce/poldepnet/poldep_d/poldepd_presentation)

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