

REPORT

on the annual accounts of the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority for the financial year 2016, together with the Authority's reply

(2017/C 417/20)

INTRODUCTION

1. The European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (hereinafter 'the Authority', aka 'EIOPA'), which is located in Frankfurt, was established by Regulation (EU) No 1094/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾. The Authority's task is to contribute to the establishment of high-quality common regulatory and supervisory standards and practices, to contribute to the consistent application of legally binding Union acts, to stimulate and facilitate the delegation of tasks and responsibilities among competent authorities, to monitor and assess market developments in the area of its competence and to foster the protection of policyholders, pension scheme members and beneficiaries.

2. The *table* presents key figures for the Authority ⁽²⁾.

Table

Key figures for the Authority

	2015	2016
Budget (million euro)	20,2	21,8
Total staff as at 31 December ⁽¹⁾	133	139

⁽¹⁾ Staff includes officials, temporary and contract staff and seconded national experts.

Source: data provided by the Authority.

INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF THE STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

3. The audit approach taken by the Court comprises analytical audit procedures, direct testing of transactions and an assessment of key controls of the Authority's supervisory and control systems. This is supplemented by evidence provided by the work of other auditors and an analysis of management representations.

OPINION

4. We have audited:

(a) the accounts of the Authority which comprise the financial statements ⁽¹⁾ and the reports on the implementation of the budget ⁽³⁾ for the financial year ended 31 December 2016; and

(b) the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying those accounts;

as required by Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 331, 15.12.2010, p. 48.

⁽²⁾ More information on the Authority's competences and activities is available on its website: www.eiopa.europa.eu

⁽¹⁾ The financial statements comprise the balance sheet, the statement of financial performance, the cash flow statement, the statement of changes in net assets and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

⁽³⁾ The reports on implementation of the budget comprise the reports which aggregate all budgetary operations and the explanatory notes.

Reliability of the accounts*Opinion on the reliability of the accounts*

5. In our opinion, the accounts of the Authority for the year ended 31 December 2016 present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Authority at 31 December 2016, the results of its operations, its cash flows, and the changes in net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with its Financial Regulation and with accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer. These are based on internationally accepted accounting standards for the public sector.

Legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts**Revenue***Opinion on the legality and regularity of revenue underlying the accounts*

6. In our opinion, revenue underlying the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2016 is legal and regular in all material respects.

Payments*Opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts*

7. In our opinion, payments underlying the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2016 are legal and regular in all material respects.

Responsibilities of management and those charged with governance

8. In accordance with Articles 310 to 325 of the TFEU and the Authority's Financial Regulation, management is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the accounts on the basis of internationally accepted accounting standards for the public sector and for the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying them. This responsibility includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to the preparation and presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. Management is also responsible for ensuring that the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance with the authorities which govern them. The Authority's management bears the ultimate responsibility for the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts.

9. In preparing the accounts, management is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

10. Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts and underlying transactions

11. Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts of the Authority are free from material misstatement and the transactions underlying them are legal and regular and to provide, on the basis of our audit, the European Parliament and the Council or other respective discharge authorities with a statement of assurance as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying them. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit will always detect a material misstatement or non-compliance when it exists. These can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

12. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the accounts and the legality and the regularity of the transactions underlying them. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including an assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the accounts and of material non-compliance of the underlying transactions with the requirements of the legal framework of the European Union, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the accounts and legality and regularity of underlying transactions, is considered in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal controls. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the accounts.

13. For revenue, we verify the subsidy received from the Commission and assess the Authority's procedures for collecting fees and other income, if any.

14. For expenditure, we examine payment transactions when expenditure has been incurred, recorded and accepted. Advance payments are examined when the recipient of funds provides justification for their proper use and the Authority accepts the justification by clearing the advance payment, whether in the same year or later.

15. In preparing this report and Statement of Assurance, we considered the audit work of the independent external auditor performed on the Authority's accounts as stipulated in Article 208(4) of the EU Financial Regulation ⁽¹⁾.

Other matter

16. Without calling into question its opinion, the Court draws attention to the fact that the United Kingdom (UK) notified the European Council on 29 March 2017 of its decision to withdraw from the European Union. An agreement setting out the arrangements for its withdrawal will be negotiated. EIOPA's budget is financed by 40 % from European Union funds and by 60 % through direct contributions from EU Member States. A future decrease of the Authority's revenue resulting from the UK's decision to leave the EU is possible.

17. An overview of the corrective action taken in response to the Court's comments from previous years is provided in the Annex.

This Report was adopted by Chamber IV, headed by Mr Baudilio TOMÉ MUGURUZA, Member of the Court of Auditors, in Luxembourg at its meeting of 12 September 2017.

For the Court of Auditors

Klaus-Heiner LEHNE

President

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1).

ANNEX

Follow-up of previous years' comments

Year	Court's comments	Status of corrective action (Completed/Ongoing/Outstanding/N/A)
2014	The overall level of committed appropriations was high at 95 %. The level of committed appropriations carried over also remained high at 5,6 million euro, i.e. 26 % (2013: 5,2 million euro, i.e. 28 %), particularly for the operational budget (Title III) at 4,7 million euro, i.e. 66 % (2013: 3,7 million euro or 85 %). Carry-overs are mainly related to specific contracts with a cumulative value of 2,4 million euro signed late in the year, particularly for the ongoing development and maintenance of a database (1,8 million euro) and other IT services to be provided in 2015. Part of the committed appropriations carried over are related to budget transfers made in November and December 2014, when the Authority increased the operational budget (Title III) by 1,1 million euro (19 %) ⁽¹⁾ through transfers from the staff budget (Title I) of 858 828 euro ⁽²⁾ and from administrative expenditure (Title II) of 266 360 euro ⁽³⁾ . The transfers were intended to compensate for shortfalls in the Authority's 2015 budget following substantial budget cuts decided by the discharge authorities. These shortfalls would not have allowed the Authority to continue implementing its multiannual IT strategy, which was one of its core operational activities.	N/A
2014	Although budget transfers, carry-overs and related commitments are in line with the specific provisions of the EU Financial Regulation and were executed following Management Board decisions, the extent to which 2015 activities will be covered by 2014 appropriations is at odds with the budgetary principle of annuality. There is a need to better align the funds made available in the agency's annual budgets with the financial needs for the implementation of its multiannual IT strategy.	Completed

⁽¹⁾ 2015: 0,6 million euro (16 %).

⁽²⁾ 2015: 317 737 euro.

⁽³⁾ 2015: 322 737 euro.

THE AUTHORITY'S REPLY

The Authority has taken note of the Court's report.
