



Press Release

Luxembourg, 21 December 2017

EU Institutions hit 5% staff cut target, say Auditors

The European Union institutions, bodies and agencies have succeeded in hitting their target of a 5% staff reduction, according to a rapid case review by the European Court of Auditors. At the same time, the auditors point to a number of factors contributing to upward pressure on staff numbers. As a result, there are currently around 46,000 staff posts.

A rapid case review is not an audit report; it establishes and presents the underlying facts on a particular subject, without making recommendations. The auditors reviewed how the EU Institutions, bodies and agencies had implemented the commitment to cut 5 % of their staff posts during the period 2013-2017, as required by the Council.

The 5% target was achieved by most EU institutions, bodies and agencies by 2017, say the auditors. The European External Action Service, the European Parliament and the EU agencies, for which slightly different timescales were agreed, expect to reach their respective targets between 2018 and 2020. The auditors found that the cuts had been achieved by eliminating vacant posts and not replacing staff that left.

However, the auditors also noted that, during the period 2013-2017, the European Parliament and the Council (the “budgetary authority”) granted a number of new staff posts. Overall, 2,886 posts were cut and 2,392 were added by 2017. These additions, together with the staff increases for political groups in the European Parliament, which were exempted from the cuts, largely offset the 5% reduction of posts agreed in December 2013, resulting in a net reduction of 494 posts (i.e. 1.1%) compared with the base year, 2012. During the same period, budgeted contract staff numbers increased by a third, from 6,583 to 8,781.

In particular, new posts were granted (or redeployed) to:

- the European Council, the Council, the European Court of Justice and the Commission for the accession of Croatia;
- the European Court of Justice, to keep up with the demands of the increase in cases and expansion of jurisdiction;
- decentralised agencies (such as Frontex, Europol, EASO, EASA and EUIPO), which had

The purpose of this press release is to give the main messages of the rapid case review by the European Court of Auditors. The full review is on www.eca.europa.eu.

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been given additional tasks;

- the executive agencies, for tasks delegated to them in 2014.

There are currently 46,373 staff posts in the establishment plans of the EU institutions, the decentralised agencies and the executive agencies.

Notes to Editors

In February 2013, the European Council concluded that there was a need to reduce the staff posts of all EU institutions, bodies, agencies and their administrations by 5% over the period 2013-2017. In December 2013, the reduction was agreed jointly between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission.

In February 2017, the Council noted that staff levels needed to be kept under continuous monitoring and proposed an independent evaluation by the European Court of Auditors, after which the Commission is to present “an appropriate follow-up proposal.”