# RESOLUTION (EU) 2022/1723 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

## of 4 May 2022

## with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CdT) for the financial year 2020

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,

— having regard to its decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union for the financial year 2020,

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

— having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Culture and Education,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0095/2022),

A. whereas, according to its statement of revenue and expenditure ([1]), the final budget of the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (the 'Centre') for the financial year 2020 was EUR 46 804 684, representing an increase of 2,30 % compared to 2019; whereas 88,74 % of the Centre's budget derives from direct contributions from institutions, other agencies and bodies;

B. whereas the Court of Auditors (the 'Court'), in its report on the annual accounts of the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union for the financial year 2020 (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 that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2020 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 89,99 %, representing a decrease of 3,05 % compared to 2019; notes that the payment appropriations execution rate was 83,36 %, representing a decrease of 1,75 % compared to 2019; notes that the COVID-19 crisis resulted in significant uncertainty for the Centre's revenue because clients' budgetary forecasts followed a nonlinear pattern; notes with appreciation that the Centre, despite that uncertainty, was able to balance its 2020 budget;

2. Welcomes the report of the Centre that there has been a near-complete implementation (98 %) of its 2019-2020 Transformation Plan, which was developed on the basis of recommendations following an external study entitled 'Study on the Translation Centre as the Shared Linguistic Service Provider for the EU Agencies and Bodies';

### Performance

3. Underlines that the Centre, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2020, makes a crucial contribution to upholding the key principle of multilingualism in the Union, thus not only enabling the smooth functioning of Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies but also empowering Union citizens and organisations to access information and take full advantage of the social, cultural, economic and educational opportunities open to them; congratulates the Centre on the improvements in achieving its mission and calls on it to maintain its contribution to multilingualism in the Union;

4. Notes the Centre's focus on direct outcome associated with its activities; notes the financial key performance indicators that provide a good indication of the Centre's operational performance; acknowledges that the strategic key performance indicators provide a multi-directional perspective on the Centre's performance, beyond output; encourages the Centre to continue monitoring its performance on both levels, direct output of activities and strategic performance;

([1]) OJ C 114, 31.3.2021, p. 54.

5. Welcomes the Centre's continued efforts in 2020 to assure the quality of translations produced by its external language service providers, as well as the stringent measures taken against several contractors whose documents were judged to be repeatedly unsatisfactory; welcomes, in that regard, the launch, at the end of August 2020, of a fully revised client feedback system, shifting the focus from measuring client satisfaction via satisfaction forms to the provision of updated versions; calls on the Centre to continuously update and adjust that system based on feedback received;

6. Notes that with 635 269 pages, the number of pages of documents translated, modified, edited and revised was relatively stable compared to 2019 (639 525 pages), mainly as a result of a decrease in the number of pages of EU trade marks translated for the European Union Intellectual Property Office (down by 47 928 pages, or 13,8 %, compared to 2019) and of an increase in the number of pages of documents other than EU trade marks (up by 43 672 pages, or 15 %, compared to 2019);

7. Commends the Centre for expanding its client portfolio, which the European Public Prosecutor's Office joined in November 2020;

8. Welcomes the fact that the Centre developed new linguistic services and working methods for its clients, such as automatic translation, custom machine translation, transcription with and without human intervention and optimised subtitling;

9. Notes with satisfaction that in 2020 the Centre began using the e-recruitment tool 'Systal' and that the Centre participated in two joint selection procedures with the European Medicines Agency, which allowed for the sharing of resources and efforts invested in establishing reserve lists for horizontal administrative profiles;

**Staff policy**

10. Notes that, on 31 December 2020, the establishment plan was 95,85 % implemented, with 47 officials and 138 temporary agents appointed out of 52 officials and 141 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (compared to 193 authorised posts in 2019); notes that, in addition, 22 contract agents worked for the Centre in 2020 (with 28 authorised posts);

11. Notes the successful implementation of the Centre's 2019-2020 Transformation Plan and the Programme Initiation Document, which was undertaken to bring about changes in the structure of the Centre; encourages the Centre to strengthen its investment in staff training;

12. Notes, as regards gender balance, that in 2020 100 % of senior management positions were occupied by men, with only one staff member reported as being in a senior management position, and the management board was made up of 53 % men and 47 % women; notes that there is an underrepresentation of men in the Centre's overall staff (37 % men and 63 % women); asks the Centre to work towards gender balance at the staff level;

13. Stresses the need for the Centre to continue with its ambitious transformation related to digitalisation and artificial intelligence to respond to the multilingual communication needs of Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, which are faced with a high volume of varied and specialised content to be translated with limited budgetary resources; at the same time, points out that in general there is a risk that the COVID-19 pandemic will have a negative impact on, in particular, contract staff and asks that ways be found to cushion and prevent precarious situations in that respect;

14. Encourages the Centre to pursue the development of a long term human resources policy framework which addresses work-life balance, lifelong guidance and career development, gender balance, teleworking, geographical balance and recruitment and integration of people with disabilities;

**Procurement**

15. Notes that the implementation of e-tendering and e-submission, to complement the introduction of e-invoicing, has been postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis; calls on the Centre to implement e-tendering and e-submission; welcomes the fact that the Centre, in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, requested its language service providers to send all their invoices in electronic format; welcomes the fact that in 2021 the Centre fully adopted e-procurement procedures and adopted e-submission for the first time;

**Prevention and management of conflicts of interest and transparency**

16. Notes with concern that the Centre only publishes declarations of interests on its website and that it does not publish the CVs of its management board on its website due to the size of the management board (approximately 130 members and alternate members); stresses the fact that other agencies publish the CVs of the members of their respective management boards, even where those management boards have more members than that of the Centre; reiterates its call on the Centre to publish the CVs of all the members of the management board and to report to the discharge authority on the measures taken in that regard; notes that the director's CV and declaration of interests have been published on the Centre's website;

**Internal control**

17. Notes the assessment of the Centre's internal control system and the Centre's management's consideration that the monitoring reviews showed no instances of inadequate or ineffective controls that would expose the Centre to key risks and welcomes the fact that the reviews were carried out on the basis of the 17 principles pertaining to the five components of the Centre's new internal control framework; welcomes the conclusion of the Centre that its control systems are fully effective overall, with some improvements needed to further increase the Centre's resilience;

18. Notes that the Centre's anti-fraud strategy dates back to 2016 and that the 2019-2020 anti-fraud action plan has been fully implemented, with monitoring of the implementation of the anti-fraud actions taking place by means of their inclusion in the annual work programme of the Centre; welcomes, in particular, the development of the list with red flags for IT and calls on the Centre to share its experience in that regard with other Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies that have a comparable IT environment; calls on the Centre to consider updating its anti-fraud strategy on the basis of a fraud risk assessment in order to ensure that the Centre's anti-fraud efforts are still geared towards the most pertinent fraud risks;

**COVID-19 response and business continuity**

19. Notes that the Centre, in response to COVID-19 restrictions, made almost all administrative procedures paperless in the first two weeks of the crisis and that the introduction of various communication tools and videoconferencing systems was greatly accelerated, with a teleworking environment set up for all staff within the first few days, making 98 % of the Centre's functions possible;

**Other comments**

20. Welcomes the signature of an interinstitutional framework contract by the Centre for the purchase of electricity from a green source;

21. Regrets that some of the founding regulations of other Union bodies, offices and agencies do not require them to use the services of the Centre; recalls that the Centre, based on its founding regulations, responds to the language service needs of the Union bodies, offices and agencies;

22. Deplores the high number of members on the board, which does not facilitate decision-making and simplified management;

23. Calls on the Centre to continue to develop synergies and to increase cooperation and the exchange of good practices with other Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies with a view to improving efficiency as regards, for instance, human resources, building management, IT services and security;

24. Recalls the importance of increasing the digitalisation of the Centre in terms of internal operation and management and the importance of speeding up the digitalisation of procedures; stresses the need for the Centre to continue to be proactive in that regard in order to avoid a digital gap between Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies at all costs; draws attention, however, to the need to take all the necessary security measures to avoid any risk to the online security of information processed;

25. Welcomes the fact that the Centre is currently studying the possibility of starting the procedure for obtaining an ISO 14001 or EMAS certificate in the near future in order to enhance its environmental performance; in that spirit, welcomes the preparation by the Centre of its initial environmental review in 2020;

26. Refers, for other observations of a cross-cutting nature accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution of 4 May 2022 ([2]) on the performance, financial management and control of the agencies.

([2]) Texts adopted, P9 TA(2022)0196.