



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council

On: 25 July 2023

To: Delegations

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Subject: Special Report No 06/2023 from the European Court of Auditors entitled:
“Conflict of interest in EU cohesion and agricultural spending – Framework
in place but gaps in transparency and detection measures”
- *Council conclusions*

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on:

European Court of Auditors special report 06/2023 entitled: “*Conflict of interest in EU cohesion and agricultural spending: Framework in place but gaps in transparency and detection measures*”,

approved by the Council at its 3966th meeting held on 25 July 2023.

Council conclusions

European Court of Auditors on its Special Report 6/2023 entitled:

“Conflict of interest in EU cohesion and agricultural spending: Framework in place but gaps in transparency and detection measures”

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. NOTES the Court's Special Report No 6/2023 entitled “Conflict of interest in EU cohesion and agricultural spending: Framework in place but gaps in transparency and detection measures”, which examined whether the Commission and the Member States put in place effective policies and procedures to address the conflict of interest issues in Common Agricultural Policy and Cohesion payments;
2. TAKES NOTE of the Court's recommendations to the Commission to improve the capacity to prevent, detect and report conflicts of interest and to promote transparency, which the Commission accepts;
3. EMPHASIZES that effective policies and clear rules on avoiding and managing conflicts of interest are an essential part of good governance and sound financial management;
4. UNDELINES that the fight against conflicts of interest is an element of the general management and protection system of EU funds and must be seen in the context of a broader framework along with the fight against fraud and corruption, public procurement procedures, support for whistle-blowers and transparency procedures;
5. WELCOMES the Commission’s efforts since the last amendment of the Financial Regulation to promote a uniform interpretation and application of the rules, and to raise awareness among Member States, external partners, and any other relevant factors, in particular the guidance encompassing practical examples, suggestions and recommendations.

6. ACKNOWLEDGES the potential of data-mining tools and the need to seek modern technological solutions bringing added value to the systems in place in Member States; TAKES NOTE of the limitations in data collection; EMPHASISES the need to ensure proportionality to the expected results and to reduce administrative burden; and STRESSES that the protection of privacy must be assured;
 7. NOTES that, since the completion of this Special Report, there has been further work and improvements in the internal control systems and procedures of the Commission and Member States in line with the recommendations of the Court.
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