



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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from: Working Party on Structural Measures
to: Permanent Representatives Committee (part II) / Council

No. prev. doc.: 9431/12 FIN 313 FSTR 37 FC 24 REGIO 52 MAR 50

Subject: Council conclusions on Special report No 4/2012 by the European Court of Auditors: Using Structural and Cohesion Funds to co-finance transport infrastructures in seaports: An effective investment?

1. On 27 April 2012, the Council received the Special Report No 4/2012 "Using Structural and Cohesion Funds to co-finance transport infrastructures in seaports: an effective investment?"¹, adopted by the Court of Auditors at its meeting on 15 February 2012.
2. Pursuant to the rules laid down in the Council conclusions on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors², the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part II) at its meeting on 10 May 2012 instructed the Working Party on Structural Measures to examine this report according to the rules laid down in the abovementioned conclusions.

¹ Doc. 9431/12 FIN 313 FSTR 37 FC 24 REGIO 52 MAR 50.

² Doc. 7515/00 FIN 127 + COR 1.

3. The Working Party on Structural Measures has examined the Special Report and reached an agreement on draft Council conclusions at its meeting on 19 June 2012.
 4. The Permanent Representatives Committee is therefore invited to recommend to the Council to adopt, as an "A" item, these draft Council conclusions as set out in the Annex.
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**Draft Council conclusions on Special Report No 4/2012 by the European Court of Auditors:
Using structural and cohesion funds to co-finance transport infrastructures in seaports:
An effective investment?**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

- (1) STRESSES the importance of maritime transport;
- (2) WELCOMES Special Report No. 4/2012 of the European Court of Auditors (hereinafter referred to as "the Court") on the use of Structural and Cohesion Funds to co-finance transport infrastructures in seaports, and TAKES NOTE of its recommendations as well as the reply from the European Commission (hereinafter "the Commission");
- (3) RECALLS the Commission's aim to strengthen the focus on results and the effectiveness of cohesion spending by tying Cohesion Policy more systematically to the Europe 2020 objectives¹;
- (4) NOTES that since 2000 the EU has made available around EUR 6,2 billion through the Structural and Cohesion Funds to co-finance seaport investments;
- (5) RECALLS that seaport investments remain eligible under the Structural and Cohesion Funds in the current programming period;
- (6) NOTES the Court's assessment of transport infrastructures in seaports co-financed by the Structural and Cohesion Funds in the 2000-06 programming period;

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A Budget for Europe 2020, COM (2011) 500 final of 29 June 2011.

- (7) NOTES, however, that the Report reflects the situation in 2000-06, and CONSIDERS that the Court's main recommendations have already been taken into account by the Commission and Member States in preparation for similar actions during the current programming period;
 - (8) ENCOURAGES the Commission and Member States to continue to improve monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of transport infrastructure projects in seaports in the current programming period with a view to optimising the implementation in the next programming period, starting in 2014;
 - (9) ENCOURAGES the Court to continue its thorough examination of programmes and projects financed under the cohesion policy, including the implementation of transport infrastructure projects, and to contribute with its recommendations to designing this policy to become even more efficient and result-oriented in the next programming period, starting in 2014.
 - (10) RECOGNISES the importance of ensuring the effectiveness of co-financed projects and the achievements of planned results.
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