

Petition 0712-21

Petitioner Information

Petitioner
Nationality



Petition Details

Petition Date 25/06/2021

Public YES

Information Public YES

Title

Publishing the Commission's audit reports

Document

The petition aims to ensure that the EU Commission regularly publishes its audit reports on the use of EU funds in the Member States. So far, this only happens in exceptional cases. This restrictive practice is not in line with the standards of the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), which the EU Commission is committed to applying. According to these standards, audit results must be summarised in a report and always made available to the public as soon as the final version of the report is completed.

On 23 April 2021, the EU Commission published its audit report on the subsidies granted from the EU budget to the AGROFERT Group in the Czech Republic. The report dealt with the conflicts of interest of the Czech Prime Minister, who controls the AGROFERT Group.

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/reports/2021/final-report-on-the-audit-of-the-functioning-of-the-management-and-control-systems-in-place-to-avoid-conflict-of-interest-in-czechia

This publication is to be welcomed, but unfortunately, according to the Commission, it should only be an exception. In the text accompanying the publication, the Commission's website states:

"Disclaimer: The Commission usually does not publish its audit reports or audit related information save for exceptional situations such as those in which there is an important public interest in transparency of the information(...)".

This approach is not in line with the "Fundamental Principles of Government Auditing" adopted by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI).

<https://www.issai.org/pronouncements/issai-100-fundamental-principles-of-public-sector-auditing/>

Paragraph 51 of the Principles states:

"The audit process involves preparing a report to communicate the results of the audit to stakeholders, others responsible for governance and the general public. The purpose is also to facilitate follow-up and corrective action. (...)"

It is clear from paragraph 7 of the Principles that this obligation to publish reports on the audits carried out applies to all public-sector audit engagements, irrespective of their form or context. The timing of publication is also specified. The reports are to be published as soon as the audited entities' responses have been considered. Publication should then also help to ensure that the recommended corrective and follow-up actions are implemented by the audited entities.