



The European Commission's key messages on the EU budget 2020 discharge

October 2021

The European Commission ensures a high level of **transparency and accountability** to its stakeholders, by reporting annually on the implementation of the EU budget in the Integrated Financial and Accountability Reporting package, including the Annual Management and Performance Report.

In 2020, the EU budget played a key role in the Union's response to the Covid-19 pandemic (*Chart 1*).

Implement EU vaccine strategy

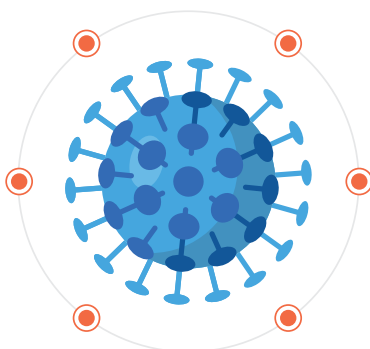
Use Emergency Support Instrument to ramp up manufacturing capacity and procure access to vaccines.

Express European solidarity

European Union Solidarity Fund; Emergency Support Instrument; rescEU common medical stockpile.

Organise global response

Organise Team Europe to provide financing to partner countries and support Covid-19 Vaccines Global Access.



Support research

Redirect Horizon 2020 to finance research into vaccines, diagnostics and treatment.

Stand by citizens and companies

Coronavirus response investment initiatives; support to mitigate unemployment risks in an emergency (SURE).

Drive the economic recovery

Establish next long-term budget with NextGenerationEU recovery plan.

Chart 1: The objectives of the European Commission's comprehensive response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the same time, the EU budget continued to deliver on the EU's long-standing policy objectives (Chart 2). In particular, the EU spent EUR 216 billion during 2014-2020 to fight climate change (20.1% of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework, thus meeting its 20% goal) (Chart 3).



Chart 2: Programmes by share of performance indicators on track to reach their respective targets.

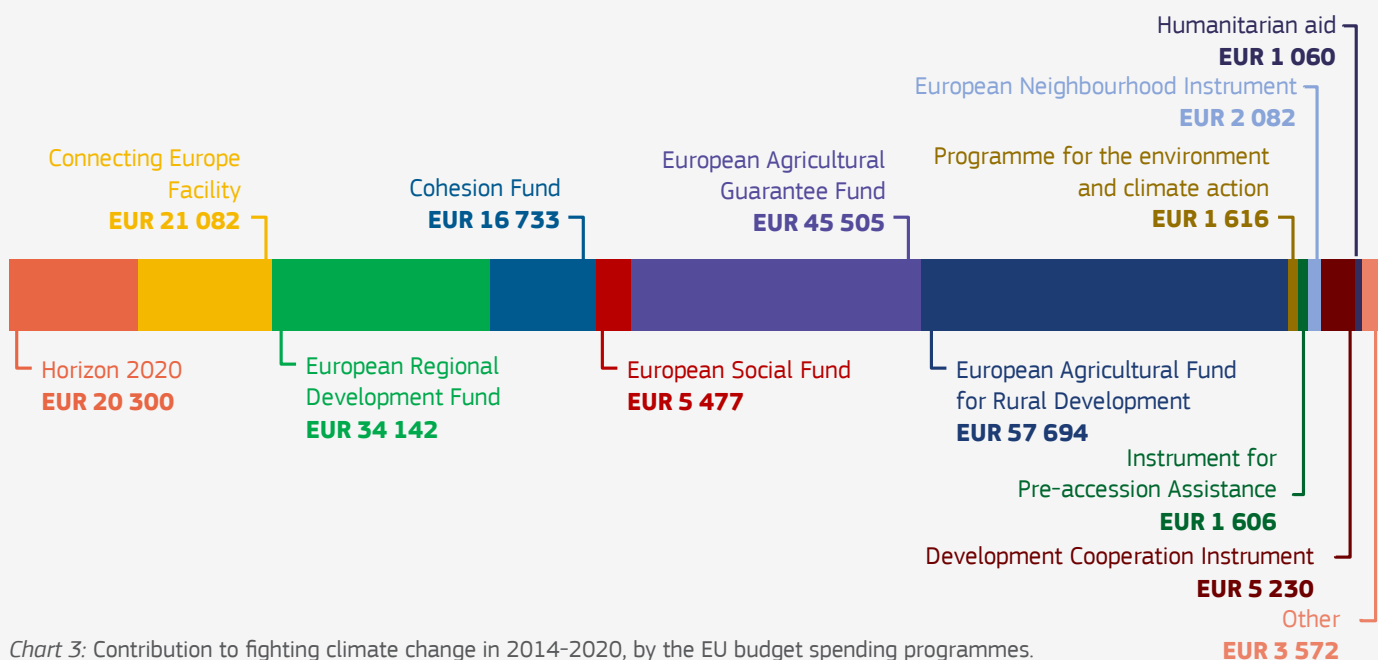


Chart 3: Contribution to fighting climate change in 2014-2020, by the EU budget spending programmes.

Despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic, the EU budget remained well-protected, thanks to the Commission's robust and comprehensive safeguards. The Commission has also proactively assessed the risks brought by the pandemic in terms of budget implementation and control and taken the necessary steps to mitigate them at an early stage. Overall, the level of risk at payment—an estimate of the errors not prevented at the time of payments by the controls carried out at the level of the Commission, Member States, and other partners—is below the materiality threshold of 2%. The risk at closure, which is an estimate of the errors that will remain at the end of the programmes' life cycle, once all ex post controls and corrections have been made, remains stable at 0.9%, in line with the Commission's objective (Chart 4).

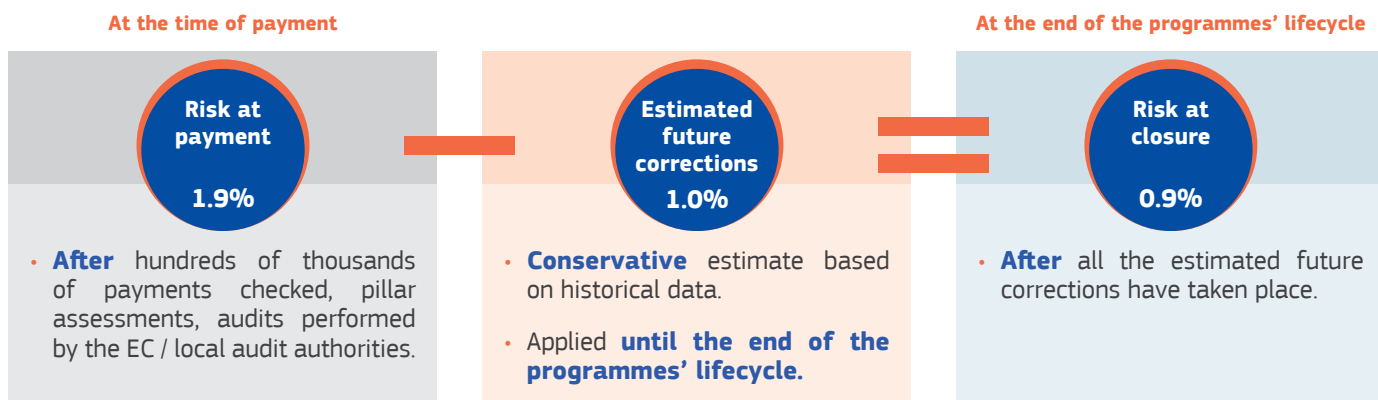


Chart 4: Risks at payment and closure for the European Commission for 2014-2020.

From 2014 to 2020, preventive and corrective measures totalled an annual average of EUR 2.7 billion – or 1.8% of the average amount of payments made from the EU budget.

The implementation of the EU budget is not homogenous across countries, regions, programmes or types of measures. In this complex environment, the multiannual risk differentiated control strategies put in place allow the Commission to identify potentially higher risk programmes, make reservations accordingly, and thus to focus its action (e.g targeted remedial measures, corrections) where it matters most to further reduce error rates.

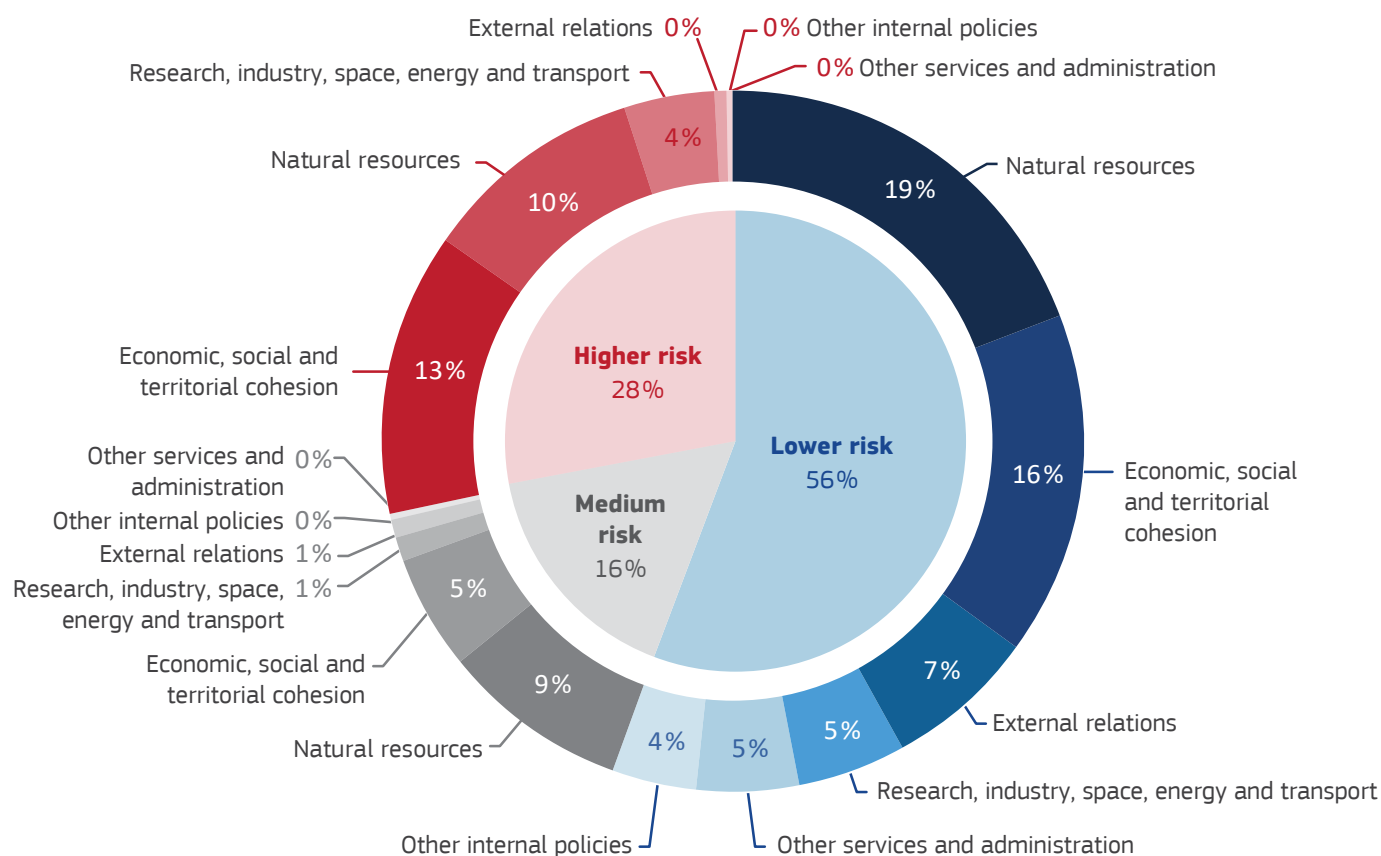


Chart 5: The Commission's categorisation of expenditure into risk segments (in % of the total amount of relevant expenditure for 2020).

In 2021, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) has given a clean opinion on the reliability of the EU consolidated accounts again, as it has done since 2007. The Commission also welcomes the ECA's conclusion that the revenue side of the EU Budget as well as administrative expenditure continue to be free of material error.

For more information, please see the [2020 Annual Management and Performance Report \(AMPR\)](#).

All graphs source: European Commission.

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