



## Press Release

Luxembourg, 15 December 2021

# COVID-19 response and climate policies at the heart of EU auditors' work programme

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) today published its work programme for 2022 and beyond, listing its strategic areas and audit priorities. These will cover a broad range of issues, reflecting the EU's main challenges and key concerns. Foremost among them will be the EU's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its ambitions to fight climate change. The auditors will scrutinise these areas, and others, to establish whether the EU is using taxpayers' money effectively to deliver on its mandate and commitments.

The global COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a heavy impact on the lives of European citizens, and will continue to do so for some time. In the meantime, the EU is also putting into practice its aspirations to fight climate change and to move towards a more modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy. Consequently, post-COVID recovery programmes and measures to fight climate change will receive EU financial assistance on an unprecedented scale.

The ECA's 2022+ work programme has been drawn up with these particular challenges in mind. It contains a list of 79 special reports and reviews that EU auditors intend to publish in the coming years. These are linked to strategic priority areas. For example, 16 reports are envisaged for the "EU response to COVID-19 and post-crisis recovery" spending and policy area, on issues such as the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines and the right to free movement during the pandemic. The ECA will also publish a series of audit findings on the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility, which accounts for € 672.5 billion in grants and loans to be used to support investment and reforms, with a focus on the ecological and digital transition. Under the heading "climate change, environment and natural resources", the ECA will deliver 17 reports, including on biofuels, energy taxation, illegal fishing and animal transport.

Many other areas of EU spending and policy will also be covered. For instance, in the "Security and European values" priority area, the auditors will scrutinise EU's external action – for example, by assessing how the EU addresses the root causes of migration in Africa and by analysing the EU's financial support for refugee care in Turkey – but also internal issues, including fraud in payments under the common agricultural policy and the rule of law in the EU.

*The purpose of this press release is to give the main messages of the 2022+ work programme by the European Court of Auditors. The full work programme is on [www.eca.europa.eu](http://www.eca.europa.eu).*

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The auditors will also examine key issues for the competitiveness of the EU economy, such as the security of 5G cellular networks, the production of batteries, and the development of a microchip industry in the EU. On fiscal policies, they will look in particular at the EU's banking supervision and the single market for investment funds.

With such a comprehensive range of topics, the ECA will continue to provide EU citizens and policymakers with independent reports on key issues for the future of the EU, highlighting what works well and drawing attention to what does not. Over 2021, the ECA issued 32 audit reports and reviews, on topics ranging from the environment to taxation, from mobility to money laundering, and from migration to consumers' rights.

### **Background information**

Through independent, professional, high-impact audit work, the ECA assesses the economy, effectiveness, efficiency, legality and regularity of EU action. Its audit reports and opinions are an essential element of the EU accountability chain – they hold to account those responsible for implementing EU policies and programmes: the European Commission, other EU bodies and administrations in Member States. They also help EU citizens to understand more clearly how the EU and its Member States are meeting current and future challenges

The 2022+ work programme is available on the ECA website [eca.europa.eu](https://eca.europa.eu) in 23 EU languages.

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