Framework Financial Regulation for the Community bodies referred to in Article 185 Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002

2007/0151(CNS) - 10/04/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted, by 586 votes to 15 with 14 abstentions, a legislative resolution amending the draft Commission regulation amending Regulation No 2343/2002 on the framework Financial Regulation for the bodies referred to in Article 185 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities. The report was tabled for consideration in plenary by Ingeborg GRÄSSLE (EPP-ED, DE) on behalf of the Committee on Budgets.

The main amendments – adopted in the framework of the consultation procedure - are as follows:

-in consideration of the difference in deadlines between the European Parliament's discharge decision in respect of the general budget, which is 15 May of year n+2, and its discharge decision in respect of the agencies, which is 30 April of year n+2, all actors involved should try to avoid difficulties in practice and strive for a harmonisation of the legal bases in the future;

-'Community body' shall mean any body referred to in Article 185(1) of the general Financial Regulation. The Committee stated that the general budgetary and financial rules should apply to all bodies which generate costs charged to the budget, be it through direct grants, through the use of EU staff, through pensions of agencies' staff charged to the budget or other costs;

-the appropriations available at 31 December arising from the assigned revenue referred to in Article 19 shall be carried over automatically. The appropriations available corresponding to assigned revenue carried over must be used first. By 1 June of the following year at the latest, the Community body shall inform the Commission on the implementation of the assigned revenue carried over. The Commission shall send a summary report on the usage of the assigned revenue of all Community bodies to the budgetary authority by 15 July of the following year at the latest;

- following a recommendation of the European Court of Auditors (Opinion 4/2007), the text now specifies the content of the summary of the budget and amending budgets and clarifies the duty of publication, so as to enable the budgetary authority to gain a genuine overview of the development of the agency’s budget;

-it specifies also the information which the establishment plan is to contain, so as to enable the budgetary authority to gain a genuine overview of the development of the agency’s staff budget;

-the Community body shall make available on its Internet site information on the beneficiaries of funds deriving from its budget. The published information shall be easily accessible to third parties, transparent and comprehensive (publication in full). Where the information is not published in full, data on beneficiaries shall be made available in an appropriate manner to the European Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control. Information on funds received shall be published in anonymous form, stating the reasons for confidentiality and the unit responsible for the decision on confidentiality, in accordance with the first two sentences of this paragraph;

-the Community body shall also send to the Commission and the budgetary authority by 31 March each year at the latest: (a) its draft work programme ;(b) its updated multi-annual staff policy plan, established

in line with the guidelines set by the Commission ;(c) information on the number of officials, temporary and contract staff and national experts for the year n-1 and n as well as an estimate for the year n+1, (d) information on contributions in kind granted by the host Member State to the Community body ;

-the budgetary authority shall adopt the establishment plan of the Community body and any subsequent amendment in accordance with Article 32(1). The approved establishment plan shall be published in an annex to Section III - Commission - of the general budget of the EU together with an estimate of the number of contract staff planned and provisionally budgeted for the financial year concerned;

-the provisions regarding the accountability of the authorising officer are improved;

-the text now aims to help very small agencies in giving them the possibility to share an internal audit function with one or several other agencies;

-the budgetary authority should be enabled to monitor the use of external experts by the agencies;

-Parliament aligns responsibility for approval of the final accounts with the general Financial Regulation where they are approved by "the Commission", and the Financial Regulation for executive agencies, where they are approved by "the management board";

-the management board should be aware of Parliament observations;

-two years before the expiry of a financial perspective or multi-annual financial framework, the Commission shall provide the European Parliament and the Council

with an opinion concerning the functioning and the necessity of each agency.