

2007 discharge: European Food Safety Authority EFSA

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The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Christofer FJELLNER (EPP-ED, SE) on discharge to be granted to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) calling on the European Parliament to grant the Executive Director of the Authority discharge in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2007.

Noting that EFSA's annual accounts for the financial year 2007 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, MEPs approve the closure of EFSA's accounts.

However, they make a number of recommendations as part of the decision on discharge. In addition to the general recommendations appearing in the draft resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies (see [2008/2207\(INI\)](#)), MEPs make the following observations:

- the fact that EUR 8.6 million were carried over to 2008 and that EUR 4.8 million were cancelled, which indicate serious weaknesses in the Authority's programming and budgeting;
- that the rate of carry-over (17-18 %) decreased by comparison to 2006 (22%); according to the Authority, whereas the actual amount of carry-over increased from EUR 7.9 million in 2006 to EUR 8.6 million in 2007.

In this regard, MEPs call on the Authority to speed up budget implementation and to specify the follow-up measures taken in the Authority's annual activity report for 2008.

MEPs also note i) that the Authority treated a contribution received from the Commission in order to prepare for the accession of Croatia and Turkey as a normal subsidy, although it should have been treated as assigned revenue; ii) the high number of missions.

As regards **the follow-up to previous discharge exercises**, MEPs congratulate the Authority on having succeeded in filling 273 of the 300 posts provided for in its establishment plan after having had difficulties in recruiting highly-skilled scientific staff in Parma for several years; they request that the Authority aligns its recruitment procedures to the rules as a matter of urgency; they note that, as in previous discharge exercises, the Authority has been criticised by the Court of Auditors for not having complied with procurement rules in several cases and calls on the Authority to pay particular attention to compliance with procurement rules.

Lastly, they note that the Executive Director of the Authority took over the role of coordinator of the agencies network on 1 March 2009.