2007 discharge: European Union Fundamental Rights Agency FRA

2008/2257(DEC) - 23/04/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a decision concerning the discharge to be granted to the Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2007. The decision to grant discharge is also an approval of the closure of the accounts of this EU agency.

In parallel, the European Parliament adopted by 399 votes to 18, with 8 abstentions, a resolution with observations which are an integral part of the decision to grant discharge.

Parliament recalls that the Agency should strive for synergies and avoid overlaps with other institutions active in the field of human rights, in particular the Council of Europe.

Parliament notes that **OLAF has opened an investigation concerning the Agency**. In this context, it requests to be informed of the results of the investigation and possible follow-up measures as soon as possible.

In terms of w**eaknesses in budget implementation due to the transition from a Monitoring Centre to an Agency**, Parliament notes the Court's findings that EUR 7.5 million had to be carried over due to the extension of the Agency's mandate in 2007, which triggered a delay in the adoption of the new work programme. It encourages the Agency to minimise cancellations of appropriations carried over and to report on progress made in its report on budgetary and financial management 2008.

In terms of **weaknesses in procurement procedures**, Parliament notes the Court's finding hat there were weaknesses in the financial evaluation methods for the Agency's calls for tender. In this context, it welcomes the fact that the Agency will introduce a new evaluation method in order to obtain best value for money.

On the issue of **follow-up to previous discharge exercises**, Parliament recalls that, for the three previous financial years (2004-06), the ECA issued a qualified statement of assurance for the EUMC due to weaknesses in procurement procedures. It therefore calls on the Agency to pay particular attention to the legality of its procurement procedures for the following financial years.

Lastly, noting that the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2007 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, the Parliament approves the closure of its accounts and refers, for other observations accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies - see 2008/2207(INI) - adopted in parallel.