2008 discharge: European Training Foundation ETF

2009/2120(DEC) - 23/03/2010

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Véronique MATHIEU (EPP, FR) calling on the European Parliament to grant the Director of the European Training Foundation discharge in respect of the implementation of the Foundation's budget for the financial year 2008.

Noting that the Foundation's annual accounts for the financial year 2008 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, MEPs approve the closure of its accounts. However, they make a number of recommendations that need to be taken into account when the discharge is granted, in addition to the general recommendations that appear in the draft resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies (see 2010/2007(INI)):

- **performance**: noting that the impact of its activities on its direct beneficiaries was in general considered positive, Members note nevertheless that the impact on government institutions cannot easily be proved because of the difficulty of establishing a direct link between the results of the Foundation's projects and the institutions' activities. They congratulate the Foundation which, in supporting the Commission in 2008, obtained a 97% satisfaction rate from the Commission and call on it to present, in the future, a comparison of operations carried out during the year for which discharge is to be granted and in the previous financial year so as to enable the discharge authority to assess its performance more effectively from one year to the next;
- **cooperation with the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)**: Members call, in view of the fact that some areas of interest are shared, for close cooperation and synergies between the Foundation and Cedefop and call for information to be provided regularly in the activity reports by the Directors of both agencies;
- **human resources**: Members are concerned about the findings of the Court of Auditors as regards the lack of transparency in recruitment procedures and the intervention of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), which has opened an inquiry (OF/2009/0370). They call on the Foundation to set an example by implementing fair, transparent and comprehensive recruitment procedures in the future. They urge the Foundation to report on the allocation of its human resources. They also note the Court of Auditors' observation that there are various weaknesses in the recruitment procedures. Members note, nevertheless, that the Foundation now says it has undertaken a thorough review of its recruitment procedures in response to the Court of Auditors' findings and in the light of an internal audit carried out by the IAS in 2008. They call on the Foundation, therefore, to inform the discharge authority of action taken and the subsequent results. They also note the Foundation's reply admitting the validity of the Court of Auditors' opinion concerning the expatriation allowance denied to certain members of staff because of an incorrect interpretation of the rules. It congratulates the Foundation for promising to review the cases concerned and then make the appropriate changes;
- **internal audit**: Members call for the rigorous implementation of recommendations made by the Internal Audit Service (IAS).