2009 discharge: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights FRA

2010/2168(DEC) - 05/10/2010 - Court of Auditors: opinion, report

PURPOSE: presentation by the Court of Auditors of its report on the annual accounts of the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) for the financial year 2009, together with the Agency's replies.

CONTENT: in accordance with the tasks and objectives conferred on it by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Court of Auditors, in the context of the discharge procedure, addresses to the European Parliament and the Council a Statement of Assurance on the reliability of the annual accounts, as well as of the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying them of each EU institution, body or agency, on the basis of an external, independent audit.

This audit also covered the annual accounts of the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA).

In the Court's opinion, **the Agency's annual accounts presented "fairly, in all material respects", its financial position as of 31 December 2009** and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation.

The Court also stated that the **transactions underlying the annual accounts** of the Agency for the financial year ended 31 December 2009 were, "in all material respects, **legal and regular**".

The report again confirmed that the Agency's 2009 final budget amounted to EUR 17 million and that it employed 64 agents during the financial year.

The report also included comments on the Agency's budgetary and financial management, together with the Agency's replies. The main comments are as follows:

The Court's comments:

- there is significant room for the Agency to improve its budgetary and recruitment planning;
- for the award of certain framework contracts, the evaluation of financial offers were based on scenarios insufficiently representative of the requested services or abnormally low;
- unsatisfactory planning and follow-up of procurement.

The Agency's replies:

- measures are being taken to reduce the rate of the carry forward of the Agency's appropriations;
- measures to ensure that the scenarios used to assess bids are realistic (particular attention paid to the clarity and the documentation of the evaluation methods applied by the Evaluation Committee);
- measures taken to improve the programming and monitoring of the Agency's contracts.

Lastly, the Court of Auditor's report contained a summary of the **Agency's activities in 2009** in the following areas:

- cooperation in the framework of the Agency's RAXEN network (European Network on racism, xenophobia and related intolerances);
- publication of reports and studies;
- conference on fundamental rights and other awareness events;

- cooperation with the Member States and other European and international institutions.