

# 2009 discharge: European Food Safety Authority EFSA

2010/2178(DEC) - 10/05/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 510 votes to 82, with 32 abstentions a decision to grant discharge to the Executive Director of the European Food Safety Authority for implementation of the Authority's budget for the financial year 2009.

Noting that the Authority's annual accounts for the financial year 2009 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament approves the closure of the Authority's accounts. However, it makes 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 resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies - see [DEC/2010/2271](#)):

- **performance:** Parliament notes that the Authority's 2009 budget amounted to EUR 71.4 million compared to EUR 66.4 million in 2008. It recalls that an overall reserve of EUR 4.546 million was introduced by the budgetary authority to the Authority's budget and that EUR 2 million of the reserve was released in November 2009 to implement the IT development and infrastructure projects of the Authority once it had clarified some issues relating to the budget reserve. It notes that the other part of the reserve has been allocated to the same policy area in order to contribute to effective response measures against the H1N1 pandemic. It stresses the need for the Authority to ensure its **advice is of a high quality and is independent**, in order to guarantee compliance with Union safety standards, scientific excellence and independence on all matters with a direct or indirect impact on food and feed safety, and plant protection. It recommends, particularly in the interests of transparency, measures to further foster and monitor internal rules on declarations of interest of staff of the Authority;
- **budgetary and financial management:** Parliament calls on the Authority to strengthen the budget processes related to its differentiated appropriations and the planning and monitoring of its multiannual implementation. It notes that EUR 6 million (75 %) of the differentiated appropriations for science grants and scientific cooperation projects had to be cancelled, of which EUR 3.1 million were funds allocated in excess of the needs identified by the Authority. It, therefore, urges the Authority to improve its budget management in order to reduce its high carryover amounts. It stresses that, for the fourth successive year, the Court of Auditors has flagged up carryovers of appropriations to the following year and that this situation demonstrates weaknesses in the Authority's contract management. They also regret that certain commitments for operational activities carried over from the previous year had to be cancelled and urge the Authority to remedy this recurring problem;
- **internal audit:** Parliament calls on the Authority to be more transparent and to take appropriate measures in case of conflicts of interest (between scientists, board and panel members), so that possible omissions in the declarations of interest can be detected and followed by action in a timely manner.