2009 discharge: EU general budget, European Ombudsman

2010/2149(DEC) - 10/05/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 477 votes to 55, with 11 abstentions a decision on discharge to be granted to the European Ombudsman in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2009.

Furthermore, Parliament adopted a resolution with observations which are an integral part of the decision to grant discharge. The resolution recalls that, in 2009, the European Ombudsman had commitment appropriations available amounting to a total of EUR 9 million (as in 2008), with a utilisation rate of 91.98%, lower than the average of the other institutions (97.69%).

Parliament notes that the Court of Auditors performed an in-depth assessment of supervisory and control systems in the Court of Justice, the Ombudsman and the European Data Protection Supervisor which included the examination of an additional sample of transactions involving payments relating to human resources and to other administrative expenditure. As far as the European Ombudsman is concerned, it would appear that it had not adopted general provisions on the procedures for recruitment of temporary staff, although the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union requires that each institution shall have done so. This omission may affect a majority of the Ombudsman's staff, as 47 out of 63 posts granted under the 2009 budget were temporary posts. Members welcome the fact that the Ombudsman has instructed his services to draft provisions on the procedures for recruitment of temporary staff to be adopted in accordance with the observation of the Court of Auditors.

Parliament welcomes the fact that the Court did not make any other significant observations concerning the Ombudsman and is pleased to note that the Ombudsman was able to help with almost 77% of all complaints, and that he dealt with 70% of inquiries in less than one year,

Lastly, Parliament notes the audits carried out by the Internal Audit Service (IAS) and stresses that the audit of the processing of the payment requests identified several issues to be addressed by the Ombudsman. It looks forward to reading of the follow-up to this in the Ombudsman’s next annual activity report.