2010 discharge: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

2011/2215(DEC) - 06/09/2011 - Court of Auditors: opinion, report

PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Fundamental Rights Agency, together with the Agency's reply.

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

This audit concerned, amongst others, the annual accounts of the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA).

In the Court's opinion, the **Agency's Annual Accounts fairly present, in all material respects, its financial position as of 31 December 2010** 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 considers that the **transactions underlying the annual accounts** of the Agency for the financial year ended 31 December 2010 are, in all material respects, **legal and regular.**

The report confirms that the Agency's 2010 budget amounted to EUR 20.2 million and that the number of staff employed by the Agency at the end of the year was 90.

The report also makes a series of observations on the budgetary and financial management of the Agency, accompanied by the latter's response. The main observations may be summarised as follows:

The Court's observations:

- budgetary planning : in December 2010, the Agency committed 48 % (EUR 4.6 million) of its annual operational expenditure. Such a concentration of spending in the final weeks of the year indicates the need for an improvement in budgetary implementation planning, as it contributed significantly to a high level of carry-forwards — EUR 6.9 million.

The Agency's response:

- the Agency has taken appropriate measures (e.g. planning two years in advance) in order to better spread budget implementation along the year, avoiding concentration during the last month.

Lastly, the Court of Auditors' report contains a **summary of the Agency's activities** in 2010. This is focused on the following:

- various activities in the framework of the RAXEN network (European Information Network on Racism and Xenophobia and FRALEX (legal experts network);
- publication of reports and research;
- meetings with Member States and European and international institutions.