2011 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2012/2206(DEC) - 11/09/2012 - Court of Auditors: opinion, report

PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2011, together with the Institute'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 Joint Undertaking for the European Institute for Gender Equality.

In the Court's opinion, the **Institute's Annual Accounts fairly present, in all material respects, its financial position as of 31 December 2011** 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 Institute for the financial year ended 31 December 2011 are, in all material respects, **legal and regular**.

The report confirms that the Institute's 2011 budget amounted to EUR 7.5 million and that the number of staff employed by the Institute at the end of the year was 35.

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

Court's comments:

- budget appropriations: the Court states that appropriations carried over to 2012 amount to EUR 3.3 million, 50 % of total commitments. This high level of carryover is at odds with the budgetary principle of annuality;
- internal audit: the European Commission's Internal Audit Service carried out a "Limited review of the implementation of Internal Control Standards" at the Institute in December 2011. The Court notes that the Institute accepted the recommendations to finalise the procedure for the implementation of the Internal Control Standards and management adopted an action plan to be implemented in 2012.

Institute's replies:

- as of 2011 EIGE has introduced adequate budget implementation reporting and monitoring. From 2013 (start-up phase) onwards EIGE will operate within the ceilings;
- the EIGE will develop and implement "EIGE's Inventory Procedure" in order to assure proper management of its assets. An action plan was adopted and is under implementation. The Court will be informed on the progress prior to their next mission to Vilnius.

Lastly, the Court of Auditors' report contains a summary of the **Institute's activities in 2011**. This is focused on the following:

- focal areas: comparable and reliable data and indicators on Gender equality; collecting and processing methods and practices for Gender equality work;
- resource and documentation centre;
- awareness-raising, networking and communication;
- studies launched and contributions to Presidency countries;
- expert meetings;
- international Conference;
- research reports, annual reports.