2011 discharge: European Railway Agency (ERA)

2012/2198(DEC) - 01/02/2013

Having examined the revenue and expenditure accounts for the financial year 2011 and the balance sheet at 31 December 2011 of the European Railway Agency, as well as the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the Agency for the financial year 2011, accompanied by the Agency's replies to the Court's observations, the Council recommends the European Parliament to give a discharge to the Executive Director of the Agency in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2011.

The observations in the Court of Auditors' report in relation to the financial year 2011 call for some comments by the Council, which may be summarised as follows:

- the Council welcomes the Court's opinion that, in all material respects, the Agency's annual accounts present fairly its financial position as at 31 December 2011 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of the Agency's Financial Regulation, and that the underlying transactions for that financial year are legal and regular;
- it welcomes the improved rate of budget implementation and the low level of carry-overs. However, it notes with concern that the level of unused payment appropriations for operational expenditure is still high and requests the Agency to respect more rigorously the budgetary principle of annuality;
- the Council also invites the Agency to take appropriate measures to ensure full transparency and equal treatment of candidates during recruitment procedures and to take preventive steps in the management of its **short-term staff contracts** in order to avoid disruptions in the Agency's activities.