2011 discharge: European Police Office (EUROPOL)

2012/2205(DEC) - 21/03/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Gerben-Jan GERBRANDY (ADLE, NL) on discharge to be granted to the Director of the European Police Office (EUROPOL) in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2011.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the annual accounts of the Office for the financial year 2011 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Members approve the closure of EUROPOL's accounts. However, they make 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 draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

- **Financing, budget and financial management**: the Office's overall budget for 2011 was EUR 84.8 million, which represents a decrease of 7.69% compared to 2010. The contribution of the Union to the Office's budget of for 2011 was EUR 83.46 million.
- **Implementation rate of appropriations and carryovers**: noting the good rate of overall implementation on the one hand, Members deplore that more than EUR 1.9 million had to be cancelled. They call on the Office to inform the discharge authority of the actions taken to address those deficiencies, as the high carry-over and cancellation rates indicate difficulties in the planning and/or implementation of the Office's activities.

Lastly, Members made a series of observations as regards the Office's recruitment procedures, assets, validation system, financial regulation as well as its internal audit systems. They also believe that **common elements between the Office and the European Police College should be explored further**. They reiterate their call on the Commission to prepare a comprehensive impact assessment regarding a **potential merger of those two Agencies** setting out the cost and benefits, considering the complementarities between the Office and the European Police College and the potential synergies, and to evaluate whether the merger could lead to economies of scale and optimisation of the performance in cross-border cooperation in the fight against crime.