2012 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2013/2236(DEC) - 10/09/2013 - 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 year 2012, 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 Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

In the Court's opinion, the European Institute for Gender Equality's **Annual Accounts fairly present, in all material respects, its financial position as of 31 December 2012** and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation and the accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer.

The Court also considers that the **transactions underlying the annual accounts** of the Institute for the financial year ended 31 December 2012 are, in all material respects, **legal and regular.**

The report confirms that EIGE's 2012 budget amounted to EUR 7.7 million.

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

The Court's observations:

- carryovers: the Institute has reduced the overall level of carry-overs of committed appropriations from 50 % in 2011 to 32 % in 2012. The Institute does not have a formalised procurement planning and monitoring procedure. In particular, its Annual Work Programme does not include a procurement schedule linked to the planned activities that would define the optimal scope and timing of procurements;

- recruitment: the Court identified shortcomings in the documentation of recruitment procedures. There is no evidence that questions for written tests and interviews, as well as their respective weightings were prepared before the examination of the applications.

EIGE's reply:

- carry-overs: the majority of the operational projects were finalised by the end of 2012. This led to carry-forward of appropriations up to 60 % under the procurement of Title III (around EUR 2.1 million). In order to improve the procurement planning and monitoring EIGE is creating a monitoring tool which follows the expected dates of each step of the annual procurement proceedings;

- recruitment : EIGE's recruitment guidelines have been updated so that (i) an indicative maximum number of candidates to be placed on the reserve list appears in the vacancy announcement of posts for temporary and contract staff and (ii) both the interview and test questions are to be completed by the appointed selection committee before the review of any candidates takes place.

Lastly, the Court of Auditors' report contains **a summary of the Institute's activities in 2012**. This is focused on the following:

- comparable and reliable data and indicators on gender equality;

- collecting and processing methods and good practices for gender equality work;

resource and documentation centre;

- awareness-raising, networking and communication ;
- studies, experts' and working group meetings, organisation of international conference, and research reports.