

2012 discharge: European Training Foundation (ETF)

2013/2217(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 Training Foundation (ETF) for the financial year 2012, together with the Foundation'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 Training Foundation (ETF).

In the Court's opinion, the **Foundation'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 rules and the accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer.

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

The report confirms that the Foundation's 2012 budget amounted to EUR 20.1 million.

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

The Court's observations:

- budgetary management: in 2012 the overall level of committed appropriations was 99,9 %, indicating that commitments were made in a timely manner. The level of committed appropriations carried over to 2013 however was high for title II (administrative expenditure) at EUR 600 000 (36,8 %). The main reasons were the late receipt of invoices for building-related services delivered in 2012 and a number of IT hardware and software purchases ordered as planned during the last months of 2012 but not delivered until 2013.

The Foundation's replies:

- budgetary management: the Foundation states that of the EUR 590 000 in commitments carried forward for administrative expenses, some EUR 300 000 related to activities completed in 2012 but paid only in 2013 owing to invoicing and payment processing times. ETF will continue to pay great attention to the principle of annuality of the budget while ensuring sound management of the financial resources entrusted to it.

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

- improvement of human capital development in 30 partner countries;
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- regional policy learning conferences that enabled stakeholders to share cross- countries experience on policy developments. Two Corporate conferences were organised in 2012 – one in May on the topic of Multi-level Governance in the field of Vocational Education and Training and another one in November on the topic of Entrepreneurship;
- supporting the EU policies and project cycle of external relations instruments for the partner countries;
- capacity building of partner countries;
- policy analysis;
- dissemination and networking;
- responses to the Commission on the management of training in third countries.