2012 discharge: European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)

2013/2213(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 Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) for the financial year 2012, together with the Agency' 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 Agency for Safety and Health at Work.

In the Court's opinion, the **Agency'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 Agency for the financial year ended 31 December 2012 are, in all material respects, **legal and regular**.

The report confirms that the resources available to the Agency in 2012 amounted to EUR 16.4 million.

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

The Court's observations:

- carry-overs: the Court noted that the Agency's 2012 budget amounted to EUR 15.3 million, out of which EUR 3.2 million (22 %) were carried over to 2013. The level of committed appropriations carried over is high for title II (infrastructure) at 36 % and for title III (operational expenditure) at 33 %. The delays mainly result from a decentralised organisation of procurement procedures which prevents effective monitoring of the implementation of the procurement plan. It states that in 2012, the cancellation rate was high at 9.5% which mainly resulted from frozen recruitment procedures and an anticipated salary increase which had not yet been paid out.

The Agency's replies:

- carry-overs: the Agency stated that cancellations were mainly related to ongoing recruitment procedures and posts being frozen as a precautionary measure until Management will be in a position to assess the impact of budget uncertainties and constraints over the upcoming period and upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework. As regards the non-paid out salary increases, the appropriations which could only be carried over for one year had to be cancelled in the absence of a decision by the Court of Justice.

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

- European Risk Observatory: implementation and monitoring 6 specific objectives on research on risks related to OSH;
- dissemination of working environment information, exchange of good practice at workplace level;
- networking and coordination: further development of focal point network, the Governance of the Agency and liaison with European and International organisations, institutional capacity building in candidate and potential candidate countries.