2012 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

2013/2245(DEC) - 03/04/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a decision concerning the discharge to be granted to the Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office discharge in respect of the implementation of the Office's budget for the financial year 2012. The vote on the discharge decision approved the closure of the accounts (in accordance with Annex VI, Article 5(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the annual accounts of the Agency for the financial year 2012 are reliable, and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 509 votes to 72, with 16 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations that form an integral part of the discharge decision and as well as the general recommendations that appear in the draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies.

These recommendations are summarised as follows:

- **Financing, budget and financial management**: Parliament noted that the Office was granted financial autonomy on 20 September 2012, its budget having been implemented by the Commission until that date. Furthermore, the Office's budget for the financial year 2012 was EUR 10 million, and budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2012 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 69%.
- **Carryovers**: Parliament noted that the budgetary needs for 2012 were considerably overestimated as only EUR 4.8 million out of EUR 7 million transferred upon receiving financial autonomy were committed. It expressed concern that the committed appropriations of EUR 3.2 had been carried over, representing 65.13 % of the total committed appropriations for the period of financial autonomy. Parliament reminded the Office that a **high level of carry-overs was at odds with the budgetary principle of annuality** and invited the Office to improve its performance in this regard. It acknowledged, however, that the carry-overs were mostly related to invoices not yet received or paid at the end of the year and to pending reimbursements for costs relating to experts. It also acknowledged that approximately EUR 800 000 concerned refurbishment work carried out at the Office’s premises in 2012. Parliament went onto note with concern that a carry-over of EUR 2 000 00 was not covered by a legal commitment (contract) and was therefore irregular. It called on the Office to inform the discharge authority on the steps taken to prevent similar situations in the future.
- **Performance**: Parliament requested that the Office communicate the results and impact its work has on European citizens in an accessible way, mainly through its website. It took the view that at the very minimum, the Office’s annual activity report should be published in all official languages of the Union, and not only in English as it is at present.

Parliament also made a series of observations on transfers, procurement and recruitment procedures as well as comments on internal controls.

Lastly, it acknowledged from the Office that it had adopted a policy on the prevention and management of conflicts of interest, which aimed at setting out a number of principles, procedures and tools intended to prevent, identify and manage situations of conflicts of interest. However, they called on the Office to make publicly available the Declarations of Interests of certain members.