2013 discharge: European GNSS Agency (GSA)

2014/2114(DEC) - 29/04/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 558 votes to 127, with 5 abstentions, a decision to grant discharge to the Executive Director of the European GNSS Agency for the financial year 2013. 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 Authority for the financial year 2013 are reliable, and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 567 votes to 99, with 11 abstentions, a resolution containing a number of recommendations that form an integral part of the discharge decision and as well as the general recommendations that appear in the resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

- **Agency's financial statements**: Parliament noted that the final budget of the Agency for the financial year 2013 was EUR 80 449 967, representing a decrease of 23.76% compared to 2012. The overall contribution of the Union to the budget of the Office for 2013 amounted to EUR 13 973 518, being an increase of 9.69% compared to 2012.
- **Commitments and carry-overs**: Parliament noted that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2013 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 100% and that the payment appropriations execution rate was 80.53%. It observed, however, that the level of committed appropriations carried over was high for administrative expenditure (amounting to 52%). It stressed, furthermore, that some EUR 400 000 related to services supplied but not invoiced in 2013. In general, Parliament expressed disappointment about the poor management that resulted in a very high rate of carry-over appropriations.

Parliament also made a series of observations on transfers, procurement procedures, recruitment and internal audit.

It went on to make certain comments regarding the **legality and regularity of the Agency's operations.** The latter was in charge of organising and managing the exploitation of the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS). On the basis of a delegation agreement with the Commission, the Agency signed in 2013 a contract for the exploitation of EGNOS for 2014-2021, and for EUR 588 000 000. In this respect, Parliament was concerned that although the competiveness of the procedure was not called into question by the Court, an **eligibility criterion excluding applications from consortia** applied in the first phase of the procurement procedure **was not in accordance with the rules on implementation of the Financial Regulation**.

Lastly, Parliament called upon the Agency to adopt a policy of **prevention and management of conflicts of interests** as a matter of urgency and to develop and implement comprehensive independence policies and procedures.