

2014 discharge: European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit (Eurojust)

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The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Derek VAUGHAN (S&D, UK) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit (Eurojust) for the financial year 2014.

The parliamentary committee calls on the European Parliament to grant the Administrative Director of Eurojust discharge in respect of the implementation of Eurojust's budget for the financial year 2014.

Noting that the Court of Auditors issued a statement of assurance as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions for the financial year 2014, Members call on Parliament to approve the closure of Eurojust's accounts. They made, however, a number of recommendations that needed to be taken into account when the discharge is granted, in addition to the general recommendations that appear in the [draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies](#):

- **Eurojust's financial statements:** Members noted the final budget of Eurojust for the financial year 2014 was EUR 33 667 239, representing an increase of 4.04 % compared to 2013. The entire budget of Eurojust derives from the Union budget.
- **Budget and financial management:** Members note that the budget monitoring efforts during the financial year of 2014 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.82 %, representing an increase of 0.21 % from 2013. They also note that **Eurojust provides grants from its own budget** to support the joint investigation teams (JIT). They note, furthermore, that only 32.8 % was paid by the end of the year mainly due to the budget implementation depending on beneficiaries and their submitted claims for reimbursement, putting the budget execution at risk. They call on Eurojust to report to the discharge authority on the measures taken to address this issue and to provide better guidance to its beneficiaries.

Members also made a series of observations regarding commitments and carryovers, the prevention of conflicts of interest, as well as on contract award, recruitment and internal audit and control procedures.

Members acknowledge Eurojust's statement that the ongoing issue identified by the Court in 2011 regarding the overlap of responsibilities between the administrative director and the college of Eurojust can only be resolved by the legislative authorities in the ongoing legislative proposal for a new Eurojust regulation. They believe that this proposal should be adopted in line with the proposed regulation to create a European Public Prosecutor. They urge the Council to proceed with the necessary reforms in these proposals.

They welcome the annual learning plan established in 2014 to cover the professional needs of staff, as well as the establishment of a competency framework with the purpose of reflecting the core and leadership needs of Eurojust.

Lastly, Members are of the opinion that further steps need to be taken both to **tackle ethical issues relating to the political role of lobbies**, their practices and their influence and to promote safeguards for

integrity, in order to raise the level of transparency of lobbying activities. They propose that **common rules governing the pursuit of lobbying activities within the Union institutions and agencies** should be introduced.