2014 discharge: Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER)

2015/2191(DEC) - 28/04/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to grant the Director of the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) discharge in respect of the implementation of Authority's budget for the financial year 2014. The vote on the decision on discharge covers the closure of the accounts (in accordance with Annex 5, Article 5 (1) (a) to Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Noting that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the Office's annual accounts for the financial year 2014 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 515 votes to 112 with 17 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations, which form an integral part of the decision on discharge and which add to the general recommendations set out 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 2014 was EUR 10 880 000, representing a decrease of 8.80 % compared to 2013. The entire budget of Agency derives from the Union budget.
- **Budget and financial management:** Parliament noted that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2014 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 95 %, reaching the Agency's planned target and representing a decrease of 2.53 % compared with 2013. It noted furthermore that the payment appropriations execution rate was at 69.84 %, representing an increase of 14.84 % compared with 2013. It found that the payment appropriations execution rate is below the Agency's target of 75 %, mainly due to the renewal or negotiation of the Agency's annual contracts towards the end of the year, as well as due to the multiannual nature of the REMIT project.

Parliament also made a series of observations regarding commitments and carryovers, contract awards, recruitment and audit procedures, and management and prevention of conflicts of interest.

It pointed out that, according to the Seat Agreement between the Agency and the host Member State, a **European School** is to be established in the host Member State. It regretted that more than four years after the entry into force of that agreement, no European School has been set up and called on the Agency to inform the discharge authority of state of play of the negotiations.

Parliament also underlined the need to enhance integrity and improve the ethical framework through better implementation of **codes of conduct and ethical principles,** so as to reinforce a common and effective culture of integrity.

Lastly, in respect to performance, Parliament recalled that the Agency reviewed its system of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), by which it introduced a distinction between performance indicators and KPIs intended to give management a clearer indication of whether the Agency's overall objectives were being met.