2015 discharge: European Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA)

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The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Inés AYALA SENDER (S&D, ES) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (eu-LISA) for the financial year 2015.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant the Agency's Executive Director discharge in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2015.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the annual accounts of the Agency for the financial year 2015 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Members called on Parliament to approve the closure of the Agency'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:

- **Agency's financial statements**: Members noted that the final budget of the Agency for the financial year 2015 was EUR 67 559 100, representing an increase of 13.77 % compared to the year 2014, entirely derived from the Union budget.
- **Comments on the legality and regularity of transactions**: Members stated that the Court's report highlighted problems regarding procurement, in particular the use of a negotiated procedure with an estimated value of EUR 20 million without a delegation by the authorising officer. Overall, Members noted that the Agency entered into contractual agreements or engaged in negotiations with a single contractor without precisely defining the services requested. They expressed deep concern as regards the cost-effectiveness of such procurements.
- **Budget and financial management**: Members noted that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2015 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.68 % and that the payment appropriations execution rate was high at 99.4 %. They also noted that the Agency had not resolved the issue of financial contributions from Schengen Associated Countries to the Agency's budget.
- **Commitments and carry-overs**: Members noted that the committed appropriations for administrative expenditure carried over amounted to EUR 9 million (50 % of committed appropriations), compared to EUR 15 million (87 %) in 2014. These were mainly due to a large contract for the extension of the Agency's Strasbourg building and services provided under multi-annual contracts. They acknowledged that the Agency deployed a considerable effort in planning and coordination of activities.

Members also made a series of observations regarding internal controls and audits and the prevention and management of conflicts of interests.

Lastly, welcomed that, at the end of 2014, the Agency concluded the negotiations and signed the headquarters agreement with Estonia for its seat in Tallinn and with France for its operational site in Strasbourg.