

2015 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

2016/2162(DEC) - 29/03/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

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 Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) for the financial year 2015.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant the Director of the Foundation discharge in respect of the implementation of the Foundation'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 Foundation 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 Foundation'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](#):

- **Foundation's financial statements:** Members note the final budget of the Foundation for the financial year 2015 was EUR 20 860 000 representing an increase of 0.42 % compared to 2014.
- **Commitments and carry-overs:** Members stated that the level of committed appropriations carried forward to 2016 was at EUR 2 135 164 (31.2 %) for operational expenditure, compared to EUR 3 814 156 (53.7 %) in 2014. They noted that carry-overs may often be partly or fully justified by the multiannual nature of the agencies' operational programmes, do not necessarily indicate weaknesses in budget planning and implementation and are not always at odds with the budgetary principle of annuality.

Members also made a series of observations regarding the budget and financial management, the prevention and management of conflicts of interests, procurement and recruitment procedures and internal controls and audits.

On performance, Members noted that the Foundation's target of 80 % regarding the number of planned outputs in its work programme was not achieved, even though the Foundation improved its performance in comparison to 2014. They acknowledged the fact that the reasons why the Foundation missed the target are principally related to delays by contractors and the scarcity of staff resources. They expressed concern that, with the current resources outlook, the **Foundation's pan-European surveys are not secured in the long term** as well as that the Foundation cannot commit to embark on further work, such as on migrants and refugees or undeclared work, despite strongly worded requests by its governing board.

They also expressed concern at the overall 10 % reduction of staff which has had an impact on the delay of some of the Foundation's projects and contributed to difficult discussions in relation to negative priorities with the governing board's bureau. They called on the Commission to ensure that potential further cost-saving measures do not hinder the Foundation's ability to fulfil its mandate.

Lastly, Members noted the high-level impact of the Foundation, particularly in supporting the Union institutions, as reflected in the performance indicators presented in the consolidated annual activity report.