2015 discharge: EU general budget, European Data Protection Supervisor

2016/2159(DEC) - 31/03/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Bart STAES (Greens/EFA, BE) calling on the European Parliament to **grant discharge** to the European Data Protection Supervisor discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2015.

Members welcomed the conclusion of the Court of Auditors, according to which the payments as a whole for the year ended on 31 December 2015 for administrative and other expenditure of the European Data Protection Supervisor were **free from material error** and that the examined supervisory and control systems for administrative and other expenditure were effective. This is the fourth consecutive year in which **no serious weaknesses** were identified by the Court.

Financial and budgetary management: Members welcomed the improved result: in 2015, the Supervisor had a total allocated budget of EUR 8 760 417 (compared to EUR 8 012 953 in 2014) and that the implementation rate was 96 % (compared to 92 % in 2014).

Supervisor's actions: the report welcomed the advisory role played by the Supervisor during the development of legislation in the data protection package and its involvement in the setting-up of the European Data Protection Board.

It also welcomed the inter-institutional cooperation of the Supervisor with the Union institutions and other Union bodies, mainly in administrative, procurement, financial, accounting and budgetary matters.

Members made a series of observations and recommendations to the Supervisor:

- extend the scope of the concept of performance-based budgeting (PBB) in its daily activities: this concept should not apply only to the Supervisor's budget as a whole but should also include the setting of specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-based (SMART) targets to individual departments, units and staffs' annual plans;
- pursue its efforts to ensure that its recruitment and promotions policy is as gender balanced as possible;
- submit to the discharge authority a track record of cases of conflicts of interests identified;
- join the Inter-Institutional Agreement on a Mandatory Transparency Register, when it is set up;
- lay down clear binding rules regarding "revolving doors";
- improve its communications policy in relation with Union citizens.

Members called on the Supervisor to include in its annual activity report:

- detailed information on missions undertaken by its members and staff in its annual activity report since the information provided was not sufficiently detailed in terms of transparency and cost-effectiveness guarantees;
- the findings of the small task force set up in July 2015 which assessed the legal, operational and budgetary means for the creation of the European Data Protection Board;
- detailed information on all service-level agreements and the results obtained from this cooperation;
- exhaustive information on all the human resources at the Supervisor's disposal, broken down according to grade, sex and nationality.

Members took note of the Supervisor’s plan to comply with the inter-institutional agreement to reduce staff by 5 % over a period of five years. The Commission is called on the Commission to **exempt** agencies in the justice and home affairs area, as well as the Supervisor, from the general 5 % staffing cut, since in the current political climate these bodies are being requested to take on ever-increasing workloads.