2015 discharge: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

2016/2163(DEC) - 27/04/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in respect of the implementation of the Agency' budget for the financial year 2015.

The vote on the decision on discharge covers the closure of the accounts (in accordance with Annex IV, 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 Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2015 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 501 votes to 114 with 6 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.

These recommendations may be summarised as follows:

- **Agency's financial statements**: Parliament noted that the final budget for the financial year 2015 was EUR 21 229 000 representing no change compared to 2014.
- **Budget and financial management**: Parliament noted with satisfaction that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2015 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 100 %, the same as the previous year, and that the payment appropriations execution rate was 71.62 %, representing an increase of 2.17 % compared to the previous year.

Parliament also made a series of observations regarding commitments and carry-overs, transfers, procurement and recruitment procedures and internal audits and controls.

On the **prevention and management of conflicts of interests**: Parliament noted that with regard to the legal proceedings brought against the Agency before the Civil Service Tribunal in 2015, the judgement was in **favour of the Agency** in Case T-107/13 P and that it is in the process of recovering the legal costs from the appellant, while in Case T-658/13 P.

It acknowledged that, in addition to the Staff Regulations, the Agency has introduced for its staff a practical guide on the management and prevention of conflicts of interest, which offers wide-ranging information and advice on a variety of issues. It noted moreover that the Agency regularly provides compulsory training for staff on ethics and integrity, as well as publishes the curricula vitae and declarations of interests of all active members of its management board, scientific committee and its management team.

Members noted that the Agency developed an anti-fraud strategy, evaluating the introduction of new controls, where necessary, after a dedicated risk assessment and took note of the fact that the Agency is planning to include a standard chapter on transparency, accountability and integrity in its **annual report**.

Performances: Parliament regretted that the Agency's mandate still **limits its role as regards the support for fundamental rights**. It stressed that the Agency should be able to offer opinions on legislative proposals on its own initiative and that its remit should extend to all areas of rights protected

under the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, including, for example, issues of police and judicial cooperation.

Lastly, it noted that the Agency organised 60 events bringing together its key partners and stakeholders to discuss fundamental rights issues in various thematic areas and that it published its research in 32 reports and papers.

In general, Members welcomed the pro-active approach towards Parliament.