2015 discharge: European Medicines Agency (EMA)

2016/2169(DEC) - 27/04/2017 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Medicines Agency (EMA) for the financial year 2015.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision (EU) 2017/1681 of the European Parliament on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Medicines Agency for the financial year 2015.

CONTENT: with this Decision, the European Parliament gives discharge to the Executive Director of the European Medicines Agency for the implementation of the Agency’s budget for 2015.

The Decision is consistent with the European Parliament’s resolution adopted on 27 April 2017 and includes a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (refer to the summary of the opinion of 27 April 2017).

Amongst Parliament’s main observations in the resolution accompanying the discharge decision, it noted that 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the Agency and the 50th anniversary of pharmaceutical legislation in the Union. Parliament observed that following the outcome of the UK referendum on 23 June 2016, the Agency established a dedicated task force to focus on relocation preparedness, operational and financial preparedness, HR-related matters and communication (internal and external) aspects.

While welcoming the information provided by the Agency to the discharge authority on its current contractual commitments and liabilities linked to its physical presence in the UK, Parliament noted with concern that the Agency's rental contract until 2039 **does not include an early termination clause** to release the Agency from the liabilities of rent and associated costs, and that the payable rent for the remaining period from 2017 to 2039 is estimated at EUR 347.6 million. The Agency is asked to report to the discharge authority on any developments on this matter.

The resolution also highlighted that although there had been **delays** in the collection of fees as noted by the discharge authority, these had **no impact** on the Agency's and Member States' ability to perform their public health tasks, including pharmacovigilance activities.

Parliament acknowledged from the Agency that the revised policy on the handling of declarations of interests of scientific committees' members and experts entered into force in 2015. The revised policy on handling of declared interests of members of staff of the Agency and candidates before recruitment was finalised in October 2016.

Moreover, an anti-fraud office was established as part of its anti-fraud strategy.

Lastly, Parliament encouraged the Agency to further raise awareness of its conflict-of-interest policy among its staff, alongside ongoing awareness-raising activities and the inclusion of integrity and transparency as obligatory items to be discussed during recruitment procedures and performance reviews.