2016 discharge: Eurojust, European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit

2017/2155(DEC) - 12/09/2017 - Court of Auditors: opinion, report

PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of Eurojust for the financial year 2016, together with the Eurojust's replies.

CONTENT: in accordance with the tasks conferred on the Court of Auditors by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Court presents to the European Parliament and to the Council, in the context of the discharge procedure, a Statement of Assurance as to the reliability of the annual accounts of each institution, body or agency of the EU, and the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying them, on the basis of an independent external audit.

This audit concerned, amongst others, the annual accounts of **Eurojust**. In brief, Eurojust's objective is to improve the coordination of cross-border investigations and prosecutions between the Member States of the European Union, and between Member States and non-Member States.

Statement of assurance: pursuant to the provisions of Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Court has audited:

- the annual accounts of Eurojust, which comprise the financial statements and the reports on the implementation of the budget for the financial year ended 31 December 2016, and
- the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying those accounts.

Opinion on the reliability of the accounts: in the Court's opinion, Eurojust's annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2016 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation and the accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer.

Opinion on the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts: in the Court's opinion, the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2016 are legal and regular in all material respects.

The report also makes a series of observations on Eurojust's budgetary and financial management, accompanied by the latter's response. The main observations may be summarised as follows:

The Court's observations:

- **budgetary management**: the Court stated carrry-overs of committed appropriations were high for expenditure for support activities at EUR 6 446 530, i.e. 40 % (2015: EUR 1.6 million or 22 %). They mainly relate to works beyond year-end and purchases ordered in preparation of Eurojust's move to new premises in 2017 (EUR 4 867 482).

Eurojust's replies:

- **budgetary management**: Eurojust accepts the fact that carry-overs to 2017 are relatively high and stated that it shall remain vigilant to avoid any unjustified carry-overs, which are not the direct result of the ongoing security requirements and operational expenses.

Lastly, the Court of Auditors' report contains a summary of the **Eurojust's key figures in 2016**:

- **Budget**: EUR 43.5 million.
- **Staff**: 245 including officials, temporary and contract staff and seconded national experts.