2016 discharge: European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)

2017/2166(DEC) - 26/03/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Bart STAES (Greens/EFA, BE) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) for the financial year 2016.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant the Executive Director of the Agency discharge in respect of the implementation of the agency's budget for the financial year 2016.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the annual accounts of the Agency for the financial year 2016 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Members called on Parliament to approve the closure of the Agency'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:

- **Agency's financial statements**: Members noted the final budget of the Agency for the financial year 2016 was EUR 9 967 000, representing an increase of 8.14 % compared to 2015. The increase was mainly due to additional ad hoc grants related to the European Coastguard Pilot Projects. The entire budget of the Agency derives from the budget of the Union.
- **Budget and financial management**: budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2016 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.6 %. Members noted that the additional funds that were received from the Commission during the year for Pilot Projects in relation to the European Coastguard functions have significantly influenced the budget, notably two ad hoc grants, EUR 750 000 in total, were received in the budget as assigned revenue to be spent in the budget years 2016 and 2017 (i.e. multi-annual).
- **Performance**: Members noted the adoption of the Agency's amended founding Regulation in 2016, which **extended the mission of the Agency** to cooperate with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) to support national authorities carrying out coastguard functions; observes that those three Agencies have been working together with their three "partner" Commission Directorates-General ((Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MARE), Migration and Home Affairs (HOME) and Mobility and Transport (MOVE)) in the preparation and implementation of the pilot project "Creation of a European coastguard function", established by Parliament in preparation for the implementation of the "border package".

Members also made a series of observations regarding commitments, carry-overs, transfers, procurement, recruitment and staff policy, the prevention and management of conflicts of interests, internal audits and controls.

Lastly, Members recalled the importance of expanding the Agency's mandate with a view to developing joint operational activities with other Union agencies in the maritime sector, in order to prevent disasters at sea and to coordinate the work of European coastguards. They also stressed the need to increase the allocation of resources in order to boost the Agency's operational capacity to cope with the uncertainties linked to Brexit and the resulting additional checks.

They proposed including a Member of the European Parliament on the Administrative Board of the Agency in order to strengthen its institutional transparency, particularly during the approval of the budget by the Board. That Member should be chosen from within Parliament’s Committee on Fisheries.