

# 2016 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2017/2170(DEC) - 18/04/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2016, and to approve the closure of the accounts for the financial year in question.

Noting that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2016 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are **legal and regular**, Parliament adopted by 560 votes to 128 with 10 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](#):

- **Institute's financial statements:** Members noted that the final budget of the Institute for the financial year 2016 was EUR 7 628 000, representing a decrease of 3.15 % compared to 2015.
- **Budget and financial management:** budget monitoring efforts in the financial year 2016 resulted in a high budget implementation rate of 98.42 %, indicating that commitments were made in a timely manner and representing a slight decrease of 0.13 % compared to 2015.
- **Commitment and carry-overs:** the level of committed appropriations carried over remained high for operational expenditure at EUR 1.7 million, i.e. 51 % (compared to EUR 2.2 million in 2015, i.e. 60 %), mainly in relation to studies going beyond the year end. The Institute will carry out a feasibility analysis as to whether it will take a future decision on introducing differentiated appropriations. Carry-overs are often justified and do not necessarily indicate weaknesses in budget planning and implementation.

Parliament also made a series of observations regarding the prevention and management of conflicts of interests, procurement and staff policy and internal audits and controls.

It regretted that, having regard to the number of all posts occupied on 31 December 2016, the gender balance ratio was 72 % female to 28 % male. They noted furthermore the gender imbalance in the management board, with a ratio of 80 % to 20 % and called on the Institute to aim for a **more gender-balanced staff composition**.

Parliament noted with concern that in 2016 the Institute registered six exceptions with financial and procedural deviation, compared to three in the previous year. It stressed the need to establish an independent body with sufficient budgetary resources to help **whistle-blowers** to disclose information about possible irregularities affecting the Union's financial interests, while protecting their confidentiality.

Members noted with satisfaction that the Institute worked closely in 2016 with its sister agencies, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA). Parliament discussed **synergies** and presented its work to other agencies such as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). Members highlighted, as an example of synergies, the Institute's participation in the Fundamental Rights Forum organised by the FRA, which provided an opportunity to reach out to other important policy stakeholders.

Following an external evaluation in 2016, several recommendations were made to improve the Institute's operations, for instance by setting clearer priorities, better targeting its outputs, developing synergies with relevant external actors and also by strengthening the role of its management board and clarifying the role of the Experts' Forum.

Parliament called for **further interaction** between the legislative and non-legislative priorities of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and the Institute's research.