2016 discharge: European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)

2017/2152(DEC) - 18/04/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Director of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) in regard to the implementation of the agency's budget for the 2016 financial year 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 564 votes to 126 with 7 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:

- **Agency's financial statements:** the final budget of the agency for the financial year 2016 was EUR 16 673 153.98, representing a decrease of 1.06 % compared to 2015.
- **Budget and financial management:** budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2016 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 96.31 %, representing a decrease of 1.22 % compared to the previous year (97.53 %). The agency rapidly heeded to the Court's advice regarding ICT and consultancy framework contracts as an area to improve in the discharge for 2016.
- **Commitments and carryovers:** the level of committed appropriations carried over to 2017 was high for administrative expenditure at EUR 417 279, i.e. 30 % (2015: EUR 364 740, i.e. 26 %). Those carry-overs mainly concern IT services which had not been fully delivered or invoiced by the end of the year. Members proposed that the agency should consider introducing **differentiated budget appropriations** to better reflect the multi-annual nature of operations and unavoidable delays between the signature of contracts, deliveries and payments.

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

They noted with satisfaction that a **procurement team** has been established to ensure harmonisation across the agency concerning all procurement procedures carried out at the agency – from conception to conclusion - which are subject to supervisory measures and mitigating controls.

Members regretted that among the number of posts occupied on 31 December 2016 **gender balance** has not been achieved, with a ratio of 72 % female to 28 % male.

With regard to preventing conflicts of interest, Members emphasised the need to establish an independent body with sufficient budgetary resources to support **whistleblowers** wishing to disclose information on possible irregularities negatively impacting on the Union's financial interests, while ensuring their confidentiality is protected.

Lastly, Parliament recalled the on-going work packages on supporting **medium, small and micro enterprises (MSEs),** with MSE-specific tools and guidelines to address knowledge gaps and facilitate better occupational safety and health compliance.