2016 discharge: European Union Agency for Railways

2017/2162(DEC) - 03/10/2018 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Railway Agency (ERA) for the financial year 2016.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision (EU) 2018/1400 of the European Parliament on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Railway Agency (now European Union Agency for Railways) for the financial year 2016.

CONTENT: the European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of the European Railway Agency for the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2016.

This decision is accompanied by a resolution of the European Parliament containing the observations which form an integral part of the discharge decision in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2016 (*please refer to the summary dated 18.4.2018*).

In this resolution, Parliament acknowledged that it is not in the Agency's power to decide to centralise all the Agency's operations into **one location**. The Agency's double seat was decided by the Council. Parliament pointed out that the reduction of costs might be facilitated by a comprehensive seat agreement with the host Member State — which would also have the effect of clarifying the conditions under which the Agency and its staff operate — ending a situation in which the costs of operations are likely to be higher than necessary. The Council is called on to reconsider its previous decision and opt instead for centralising all the Agency's operations into one location.

Parliament welcomed the adoption of the Agency Regulation, which entered into force on 15 June 2016. By the end of the transitional period (16 June 2019), this expected strategic change will transform the Agency from a mere policy preparation and dissemination role into an authority working directly for the industry as regards authorisations for safety certifications and rolling stock. This transition is expected to deliver huge benefits in terms of reduced costs.

Lastly, Parliament noted that the 2016 risk assessment exercise highlighted new risks, as compared to 2015, related to the late and inconsistent transposition of the 4the Railway Package legislation, to the obsolescence of ERTMS change management tools, to railway noise reduction, to delays in the reduction of national rules and to data management.