2017 discharge: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)

2018/2178(DEC) - 18/09/2018

PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training for the financial year 2017, together with the Centre's replies.

CONTENT: the Court of Auditors carried out the audit on the annual accounts of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP).

In brief, the Centre's main task is to compile and disseminate documentation on vocational training systems.

Statement of assurance and reliability of the accounts

The Court considered that:

- the Centre's annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2017 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;

- the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017 are legal and regular in all material respects.

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

The Court's observations

Procurement

The Court observed that the management of two recruitment procedures for management positions was weak and the procedures are considered irregular. There was insufficient proof of the requested managerial experience and confidentiality requirements were not met, calling into question the equal treatment of candidates.

Financial management

In order to increase transparency, the Centre is called on to publish vacancy notices on the website of the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) instead of its own website and on social media.

The Court recalled that agencies should introduce a single solution for the electronic exchange and storage of information with third parties participating in public procurement procedures (e-procurement). As the same requirement exists for all EU Institutions, the Commission developed comprehensive IT solutions covering all phases of public procurement procedures however by the end of 2017 the Centre had not introduced any of these tools.

The Centre's replies

Procurement

Cedefop is carrying out an in-depth assessment of both procedures and is considering remedial measures both concerning the two procedures at stake and recruitment procedures in general to address the weaknesses identified by the Court.

Financial management

Cedefop uses the EPSO platform in some cases. It argued that it publishes its vacancy notices on its own homepage as well as on the Inter-Agencies online platform which is accessible to all EU citizens and uses various channels to share vacancies. It publishes the vacancies of the Director and Deputy Director in EPSO and uses its social media for key positions.

The Centre is in the process of introducing the IT tools for procurement procedures and the first open tendering procedure with e-tools will be launched in October 2018.

The report contains a summary of the Centre's key figures in 2017:

Budget

EUR 18 million (in payment appropriations).

Staff

117 including officials, temporary and contract staff and seconded national experts.