2017 discharge: Office of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC Office)

2018/2206(DEC) - 28/02/2019 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Petri SARVAMAA (EPP, FI) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Office of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) for the financial year 2017.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant the Management Committee of the Office of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications discharge in respect of the implementation of the Body's budget for the financial year 2017.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the annual accounts of the Office for the financial year 2017 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Members called on Parliament to approve the closure of the Office'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:

Office's financial statements

The final budget of the Office for the financial year 2017 was EUR 4 246 000, the same amount as in 2016.

Budget and financial management

Budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2017 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.94 %, representing an increase of 3.74 % compared to 2016. Payment appropriations execution rate was at 86.92 %, representing a notable increase of 9.73 % compared to 2016.

The cancellations of carryovers from 2016 to 2017 amounted to EUR 20 412, representing 2.53 % of the total amount carried forward, showing a decrease of 4.76 % in comparison to 2016.

Members also made a series of observations regarding performance, staff policy, procurement, conflicts of interest and internal controls.

In particular, they noted that:

- on 31 December 2017, the establishment plan was 100 % fulfilled, with 14 temporary agents appointed out of 14 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget;

- the Office was negatively affected with the highest possible rate of cut of 12.5%, according to the ECA report on the implementation of the 5% reduction of staff posts, published on 21 December 2017;

- in 2017 the average employment period in the Office was only 2.7 years which is reflected in a high staff turnover. This is due to the low salary correction coefficient of the host country (74.9 %);

- the Office did not have internal rules on whistleblowing in place on 31 December 2017. However, the Office plans to adopt these by the end of 2018;

- unlike most other Agencies, the Office did not carry out a comprehensive analysis of the likely impact of the United Kingdom’s decision to withdraw from the European Union on its organisation, operations and accounts. Such an analysis should be undertaken.