2017 discharge: European Environment Agency (EEA)

2018/2182(DEC) - 01/03/2019 - 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 European Environment Agency for the financial year 2017.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant the Executive Director of the Agency discharge in respect of the implementation of the agency'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 Agency 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 Agency'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:

Agency's financial statements

The final budget of the European Environment Agency for the financial year 2017 was EUR 70 430 306, representing a significant increase of 39.44 % compared to 2017. The increase was related to the future role of the Agency and the new tasks allocated to it.

Budget and financial management

The budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2017 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.97 %, representing the same rate as in 2016. Payment appropriations execution rate was 89.04 %, representing a slight decrease of 0.78 % compared to the previous year.

Members regretted the high level of cancellations of carry-overs from 2016 to 2017, amounting to EUR 443 566 and representing 10.55 % of the total amount carried over, showing a considerable increase of 5.16 % in comparison to 2016.

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

In particular, they noted that:

- the Agency achieved satisfactory results with regard to the targets set out in the annual work programme for 2017. However, certain activities could not be fully delivered due to a number of circumstances such as limited staff resources or the late delivery of input data;

- on 31 December 2017, the establishment plan was 99.21 % filled, with 126 officials or temporary agents appointed out of 127 posts authorised under the Union budget;

- the gender imbalance within the Agency's senior management continues to be an issue;

- several weaknesses were pointed out in the recruitment and procurement procedures.