

2017 discharge: European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

2018/2190(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 Food Safety Authority (ESFA) for the financial year 2017.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant the Executive Director of the Authority discharge in respect of the implementation of the Authority'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 Authority 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 Authority'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](#):

Authority's financial statements

The final budget of the European Food Safety Authority for the financial year 2017 was EUR 79 558 730.31, representing an increase of 0.08 % compared to 2016.

Budget and financial management

The budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2017 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.98 %, representing a slight decrease of 0.02 % compared to 2016. Payment appropriations execution rate was at 92.31 %, representing an increase of 2.65 % compared to 2016.

Members regretted the growing mismatch between increasing tasks and shrinking resources, which resulted in relevant delays in the delivery of some projects.

The cancellations of carry-overs from 2016 to 2017 amounted to EUR 291 011.86, representing 3.55 % of the total amount carried over, showing a decrease of 2.31 % in comparison to 2016.

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

In particular, they noted that:

- 2017 was the first year of the implementation of the Authority's Strategy 2020 plan and of the new policy set up to ensure the independence of professionals involved in the Authority;
- on 31 December 2017, the establishment plan was 96.28 % executed, with 311 officials and temporary agents appointed out of 323 posts authorised under the Union budget;
- the Parliament has repeatedly called on the Authority through its annual discharge reports to implement a two-year cooling off period which would prevent experts with financial interests linked to companies

whose substances are evaluated by the Authority from sitting in the Authority's scientific panels or working groups.