2017 discharge: European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

2018/2188(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 Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) 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 Agency for the financial year 2017 was EUR 86 276 654.33 representing an increase of 22.87 % compared to 2016. This increase was mainly related to the enhanced mandate of the Agency.

Budget and financial management

Members noted that the budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2017 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 98.04 %, representing a slight decrease of 0.03 % compared to 2016 and a payment appropriations execution rate of 96.25 %, representing a decrease of 1.55 %.

They deeply regretted the high level of cancellations of carryovers from 2016 to 2017 amounting to EUR 792 182 and representing 23.30 % of the total amount carried over, showing a considerable increase of 12.12 % in comparison to 2016.

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

In particular, they noted that:

- the Agency succeeded in the operations related to the extension of its mandate and that its quality system for visits and inspections were consolidated;

- the high quality of information systems and databases developed by the Agency have resulted in an increasing interest expressed by third countries in exploring the potential for exporting the Agency's knowledge;

- delays in the Remote Piloted Aircraft Services (RPAS) operations resulted in a budget amendment which included a reduction of Union subsidy corresponding to the amount not used in 2017 and that related to the European cooperation on coast guard functions;

- on 31 December 2017, the establishment plan was 98.58 % executed, with 205 temporary agents appointed out of 212 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget;

- the gender imbalance within the Agency's Administrative board members should be addressed;

- the Agency did not systematically check prices with the suppliers' quotes and invoices issued to the framework contractor for the acquisition of software licences.