2017 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Auditors

2018/2171(DEC) - 26/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 519 votes to 94, with 24 abstentions, to grant discharge to the Secretary-General of the Court of Auditors of the European Union with regard to the implementation of the Court's budget for the 2017 financial year, Section V – Court of Auditors.

It took note of the opinion of the external auditor that the financial statements of the Court give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Court.

Budgetary and financial management

In 2017, the Court's final appropriations amounted to a total of EUR 141 240 000 (compared to EUR 137 557 000 in 2016) and that the overall rate of implementation for the budget was 97.73 % (compared to 99 % in 2016). Parliament stressed that the Court's budget is purely administrative, with a large amount being used for expenditure in relation to persons working within the institution and in relation to buildings, movable property, equipment and miscellaneous operating expenditure.

The Court is called on to continue improving payment execution rates.

Staff

Members noted that the reduction of 5 % in staff numbers over the period 2013-2017 has been achieved. However, they are concerned by the increase in sick leave taken by staff from 8 636 days in total (for 687 members of staff) in 2015 to 10 327 days (for 677 members of staff) in 2017. They welcomed the transparency of the Court regarding the number of cases of staff burnout which occurred in 2017. The Court is called on to acknowledge this worrying trend and to prepare an action plan on improving the well-being of the staff, thus strengthening its efforts to improve staff well-being and work-life balance.

Brexit

The resolution noted that the United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union will not have a major impact on the structure and human resources of the Court. Members welcomed the fact that the Court has decided to follow a case-by-case approach to deciding on the extension of contracts for British temporary and contract agents and not to dismiss them on the sole ground that they are no longer nationals of a Member State.

Moreover, they noted that the member of the Court from the United Kingdom will not be in service as of 1 April 2019 and that the budgetary impact of his departure, eight months earlier than the termination of the mandate, will amount to about EUR 108 000.