

2017 discharge: EU general budget, European Data Protection Supervisor

2018/2175(DEC) - 26/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 508 votes to 126, with 2 abstentions, to grant discharge to the European Data Protection Supervisor discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2017.

Members welcomed the conclusion of the Court of Auditors, according to which the payments as a whole for the year ended on 31 December 2017 for administrative and other expenditure of the European Data Protection Supervisor were free from material error and that the examined supervisory and control systems for administrative and other expenditure were effective.

Budgetary and financial management

Parliament regretted, however, that according to the EDPS annual activity report only a single payment was examined in 2017 by the Court. It stated that even if the EDPS is not a decentralised Union agency and its budget represents a very small percentage of the Union budget, the legality and regularity of EDPS transactions should nevertheless be properly examined by the Court, as from 2018, as transparency is vital for the appropriate functioning of this Union body.

The Court should therefore issue separate annual activity reports on the annual accounts of this important Union body.

In 2017, the EDPS had a total allocated budget of EUR 11 324 735, which represented a 21.93 % increase compared to the 2016 budget, and that the budget implementation in terms of commitment appropriations for 2017 amounted to EUR 10 075 534.

The implementation rate continued decreasing from 94.66 % in 2015 and 91.93 % in 2016 to 89 % of the available appropriations in 2017. The budget implementation in terms of payment appropriations amounted to EUR 9 368 686.15, corresponding to 77 % of the available appropriations. The EDPS should step up its efforts and to define the budget estimates prudently.

The EDPS's budget was strongly influenced by two major legislative changes (General Data Protection Regulation and the Directive for Data Protection in the Police and Justice Sectors). Most of the additional resources were allocated to the EDPS for the establishment of the secretariat of the newly created European Data Protection Board (EDPB).

Staff

Members welcomed the high proportion of women in management positions and the measures to ensure gender balance in the institution. Only 32 % of total staff were men. Measures to promote gender balance and equal opportunities should benefit all genders according to Members.

The 80 members of staff came from 16 different Member States in total. The EDPS is called on to strive for a proportionate representation of all Member States among the population of the staff. Parliament noted that the issue of 'revolving doors' has been dealt with in the Code of Conduct of the Members of the EDPS. It welcomed the fact that CVs and declarations of interests of the members of the EDPS are available on the institution's website.

Brexit

Lastly, Members noted that the United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union would not have any direct impact on the financial, human or structural organisation of the EDPS. They welcomed the decision of the EDPS to maintain all of its four British members of staff.