2018 discharge: European Banking Authority (EBA)

2019/2090(DEC) - 13/05/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of the European Banking Authority (EBA) for the financial year 2018 and to approve the closure of the accounts for the financial year in question.

Noting that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the Authority's annual accounts for the financial year 2018 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 607 votes to 81 with 5 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations, which form an integral part of the decision on discharge and which add to the general recommendations set out in the resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

Authority's financial statements

The final budget of the Authority for the financial year 2018 was EUR 42 584 409, representing an increase of 10.84 % compared to 2017. The increase was related to the relocation process of the Authority to Paris. The Authority is financed by a contribution from the Union (EUR 16 142 578, representing 37.91 %), and contributions from national supervisory authorities of the Member States and observers (EUR 26 441 831, representing 62.09 %).

Budget and financial management

The budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2018 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.85 %, representing an increase of 3.94 % compared to 2017. The rate of execution of payment appropriations was 88.23 %, representing a slight increase of 0.96 % compared to the previous year.

Other observations

Members also made a series of observations regarding performance, staff policy, procurement and conflicts of interest.

In particular, they noted that:

- the Authority will see its role, powers and resources enhanced in the field of anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT). It should take a leading role in the prevention of money laundering, taking advantage of the new competences and the creation of a new internal AML/CFT committee, and should therefore be provided with increased capacity in human and material resources to contribute effectively to the consistent and efficient prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering and the financing of terrorism;

- once again, the EBA should conduct an inquiry into dividend arbitrage trading schemes such as cum-ex in order to assess potential threats to the integrity of financial markets and to national budgets, to establish the nature and magnitude of actors in such schemes, to assess whether there were breaches of either Union or national law, to assess the actions taken by financial supervisors in Member States, and to make appropriate recommendations for reform and for action to the competent authorities concerned;

- the Authority now shares practices, initiatives and templates with the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) and the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority, with which the Authority holds regular meetings;

- on 31 December 2018, the establishment plan was 97.93 % executed, with 145 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (compared with 134 authorised posts in 2017);

- an uneven gender balance was reported for 2018 with regard to the senior managers (five men and one woman) and that there is no female member of the management board (five men);

- due to the United Kingdom`s decision to withdraw from the Union, the seat of the Authority has gradually been moved to Paris, France, as of March 2019. The notes that the Authority’s accounts include provisions for related costs amounting to EUR 4.7 million and disclose that EUR 10.4 million remains in future contractual payments for the offices in London.