2019 discharge: European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)

2020/2153(DEC) - 28/04/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 636 votes to 53, with 9 abstentions, to give discharge to the Director of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) for the financial year 2019 and to approve the closure of the accounts for that year.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the Centre's annual accounts for the financial year 2019 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Parliament adopted, by 628 votes to 58 with 5 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations which form an integral part of the discharge decision and which complement the general recommendations contained in the resolution on the performance, financial management and control of EU agencies.

Centre's financial statements

The EMCDDA's final budget for the financial year 2019 was EUR 18 178 352.57, which is an increase of 12.39% compared to 2018. The increase in the budget is mainly due to the launch of the new Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance 7 (IPA 7).

Budgetary and financial management

Parliament welcomed the budget monitoring efforts made during the 2019 financial year, which resulted in a budget implementation rate of 100%, identical to that recorded in 2018. The implementation rate of payment appropriations was 98.29%, an increase of 0.28% compared to the previous year.

Other observations

Members also made a series of observations concerning performance, staff, procurement, conflict of interest management and internal controls.

In particular, they noted that:

- the 2019 work programme is largely implemented and the Centre has introduced a new performance measurement model in 2019;

- the Centre plays an important role in providing policy makers and practitioners with a range of analysis and information on drugs and drug addiction and trends, with a view to effectively combating drug abuse and trafficking;

- the Centre partially met its objective in terms of training days per staff member, in terms of public service costs and in terms of its contribution to 14 major scientific and practice drug events;

- on 31 December 2019, 94.74% of the establishment plan was executed with 9 officials and 63 temporary agents appointed out of the 10 officials and 66 temporary agents authorised under the Union's budget;

- the Centre recorded a close gender balance within the Management Board in 2019 (16 men and 14 women) but the geographical balance of staff needs to be improved;

- the issue of dependence on external recruitment needs to be addressed and applicable labour law respected;

- in 85 out of 92 procedures, representing 60% of the total value of the contracts, the Centre attributed direct contracts in procedures with single tenders. Members recommended the use of procedures involving multi candidates, even for low-value contracts;

- the Centre has taken steps to ensure transparency, prevent and manage conflicts of interest and protect whistleblowers; Members called for the creation of a common ethical framework for all EU institutions and agencies;

- the final version of the repository for the new internal control framework was approved by the Centre’s Director in March 2019 but the anti-fraud strategy should be updated.