2020 discharge: European Training Foundation (ETF)

2021/2139(DEC) - 04/05/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Interim Director of the European Training Foundation (ETF) for the financial year 2020 and to approve the closure of the accounts for that year.

Noting that the Court of Auditors had stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2020 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Parliament adopted, by 550 votes to 54 with 33 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations which form an integral part of the discharge decision and which complement the general recommendations set out in the resolution on the performance, financial management and control of EU agencies.

Foundation's financial statements

The Foundation's final budget for the year 2020 was EUR 20 957 000, an increase of 2% compared to 2019.

Budgetary and financial management

Parliament noted that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2020 resulted in a high budget implementation rate of 99.88 %, representing a slight decrease of 0.08 % compared to 2019. The payment appropriations execution rate was 95.65%, representing a decrease of 0.25% compared to the previous year.

The particular importance of further strengthening the democratic legitimacy of the Union institutions by improving transparency and accountability and implementing the concept of performance-based budgeting and good governance of human resources was stressed.

Other observations

Parliament also made a series of observations concerning performance, staff policy, public procurement, internal controls and Covid-19.

In particular, it noted that:

- the Foundation achieved an 86,84 % activity completion rate, a slight decrease compared to 2019, with a timely completion rate of 75,94 %;

- on 31 December 2020, the establishment plan was 98.8 % implemented, with 85 temporary agents appointed out of 86 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (compared to 86 authorised posts in 2019). The Foundation should ensure better gender enhance and geographical balance of its staff;

- the Foundation should avoid digital overloading and ensure that staff should work only within working hours;

- e-procurement progressed with the receipt of electronic invoices (54 % of incoming invoices were received electronically in 2020 versus 42 % in 2019) and the receipt of electronic tenders for all open tenders (e-tendering and e-submission);

- various measures were set up in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, such as permitting telework and limiting the access to the Foundation building for the majority of 2020, providing means and tools to support coping with change and disruptive social and working environments, and reprioritising the activities in the work programme 2020;

- the implementation rate of the work programme was at 87 %, according to the Foundation due to the fact that many actions were postponed from the second to the last quarter of the year which put a strain on the implementation capacity of the Foundation and on partner countries with some actions carried forward into 2021.