2020 discharge: European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA)

2021/2135(DEC) - 04/05/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of ENISA (European Union Agency for Cyber Security) in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2020 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 Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2020 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Parliament adopted, by 560 votes to 47, with 34 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.

Agency's financial statements

ENISA's final budget for the year 2020 was EUR 21 682 883, representing an increase of 28.05 % compared to 2019. The Court provided the basis for a qualified opinion on the legality and regularity of the payments underlying the accounts. Parliament deplored the Court's observation that forms the basis for a qualified opinion. The Court found that a temporary delegation granted by the previous executive director to a staff member expired on 31 December 2019 and that that staff member was granted a new delegation by the new executive director on 12 February 2020. In the intervening time, that member of staff authorised, in the pursuance of the Agency's objectives, budgetary commitments amounting to EUR 529 120 and payments amounting to EUR 914 100 without a valid delegation (3.5 % of the total payment appropriations

available in 2020).Parliament welcomed the observation of the Court that following its audit, the Agency has taken steps to mitigate the identified risks in the future.

Budgetary and financial management

The budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2020 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 97.35 %, representing an increase of 0.55 % compared to 2019. The payment appropriations execution rate was 68.62 %, representing a decrease of 1.49 % compared to 2019.

Other observations

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

In particular, it noted that:

- the revision of the Agency's key performance indicators (KPIs) in 2020 with the purpose of better reflecting the new challenges and mandate conferred to the Agency by the Cybersecurity Act was welcomed;

- on 31 December 2020 the establishment plan was 89.86 % implemented, with 62 temporary agents appointed out of 69 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (compared to 59 authorised posts

in 2019). The increased establishment plan is due to the new Agency's mandate that conferred greater competencies and resources following the adoption of the Cybersecurity Act. The gender imbalance reported for 2020 in senior management is however of concern;

- due to unfilled vacant posts and the heavy workload the Agency relies on interim staff to perform some of its tasks of its annual work programme. Interim workers should have the same working conditions as directly employed workers according to Parliament;

- the Agency´s internal control assessment concluded that the structures supporting internal controls and compliance appear to be spread out and weak;

- the restrictions imposed from March 2020 and for the best part of that year, such as imposed teleworking and heavily restricted travel for work related missions, led to a number of environmental benefits, in particular a significant reduction of the carbon footprint and a reduction of the use of paper due to increased digitalised processes.