2021 discharge: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

2022/2095(DEC) - 10/05/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) in regard to the implementation of the Centre's budget for the 2021 financial year 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 Centre's annual accounts for the financial year 2021 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 553 votes to 78 with 6 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:

Centre's financial statements

The final budget of CEDEFOP for the financial year 2020 was EUR 18 488 800, representing an increase of 1.15 % compared to 2020.

Budget and financial management

The budget monitoring efforts during 2021 resulted in a budget implementation rate of current year commitment appropriations of 100 %, remaining equal compared to 2020. Payment appropriation rate was 80.02 %, representing an increase of 10.56 % compared to 2020. Parliament noted that an adaptation to the calculation of associated countries' contribution during 2021 fostered a slight increase in the contributions received from Norway and Island. As an effect of such an increase, the amending budget No 1/2021 added EUR 13 100 to Title 2 of the budget, bringing the final budget from 18 488 800 to 18 501 900.

Other observations

Parliament also made a series of observations regarding performance, staff policy, internal control, digitalisation and Covid-19.

In particular, it noted that:

- the Centre fully implemented its work programme in 2021 and launched a new green observatory to explore trends towards a greener and more sustainable economy as well as its implications for vocational education and training (VET);

- on 31 December 2021, the establishment plan was 97 % implemented (as in 2020), with 78 temporary agents appointed out of 82 temporary posts and nine officials out of nine authorised under the Union budget;

- weaknesses were identified in the Centre's recruitment procedures;

- 23 procurement procedures were processed in 2021;

- the Centre should put in place more systematic rules on transparency, incompatibilities, conflicts of interest, illegal lobbying and revolving doors;

- the Centre should also strengthen its internal control mechanisms, including the setting up of an internal anticorruption mechanism;

- the Centre is pursuing the effort to improve the Centre’s cybersecurity and protection of personal data, especially through new multifactor authentication systems and training activities organised for staff;

- the digital divide between the Union agencies should be avoided by speeding up the digitalisation of procedures;

- in 2021, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the Centre reported a reduction of 78 % of the expenses related to missions and meetings, and that it has planned to reduce its staff travels by 70 % (compared to pre-COVID-19 crisis levels) in the programming period 2023-2025;

- the Centre is urged to ensure greater transparency and public accountability by better utilising media and social media channels.