2021 discharge: European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust)

2022/2120(DEC) - 10/05/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Administrative Director of the European Union Agency for Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters (Eurojust) for the financial year 2021 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 2021 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Parliament adopted, by 610 votes to 13 with 14 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.

Eurojust's financial statements

Eurojust's final budget for the financial year 2021 was EUR 53 297 699, representing an increase of 27.81% compared to 2020.

Budgetary and financial management

Budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2021 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.97%, representing a slight decrease of 0.02% compared to 2020. The execution rate of payment appropriations was 84.58%, representing a decrease of 0.49% compared to 2020.

Other observations

Parliament also made a number of observations concerning performance, staff policy, procurement, internal controls and digitalisation.

In particular, it noted that:

- the Agency continued to strengthen operational cooperation and the referral of cases by the liaison prosecutors, resulting in 290 new cases in 2021. The Agency facilitated the execution of European Arrest Warrants related to 480 new cases and 713 ongoing cases and enabled the use of 4 262 European Investigation Orders;

- strategic cooperation was enhanced with partners in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, such as Frontex, Europol and eu-LISA;

- on 31 December 2021, the establishment plan was 100% executed, with 207 temporary agents appointed out of 207 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (compared to 204 appointed out of 207 authorised posts in 2020);

- the Agency and the Commission should engage in an active dialogue in order to address the issue of understaffing in its future establishment plans;

- the Agency offered refresher training on psychological and sexual harassment to all staff and additional training on conflict management and resolution to the confidential counsellors and managers;

- a contact point for whistleblowing matters has been appointed, providing staff with confidential and impartial guidance on whistleblowing rules for staff;

- 51 procurement procedures were concluded in 2021 for a total value of EUR 42 249 672;

- the Agency also adopted and implemented e-tendering and e-submission in the digitalisation of procurement procedures;

- in 2021, 83% of coordination meetings took place online and 7% took place through hybrid modalities;

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