2021 discharge: European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

2022/2111(DEC) - 10/05/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) for the financial year 2021 and to approve the closure of the accounts for that year.

Noting that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurance that the Agency'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 55 with 24 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

The Agency's final budget for the financial year 2021 was EUR 105 774 716.82 representing an increase of 9.36 % compared to 2020.

Budgetary and financial management

Budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2021 resulted in a budget implementation of current year commitment appropriations rate of 99.67 %, representing a slight increase of 0.78 % compared to 2020 and a payment appropriations execution rate of 97.32 %, representing also an increase of 1.24 %.

Other observations

Parliament also made a number of observations concerning performance, staff policy, conflicts of interest and Covid-19.

In particular, it noted that:

- despite the persistent restrictions created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the objectives set out for 2021 were achieved overall through a high level of implementation of the annual work programme;

- on 31 December 2021, the establishment plan was 99.06 % implemented, with 210 officials and temporary agents appointed out of 212 authorised under the Union budget. Gender balance was achieved among the Agency's senior management members but should be improved as regards the Agency's management board members;

- 51 procurement procedures were initiated. The Agency has taken measures to amend future tender specifications and contract templates following deficiencies in this area;

- the Agency implemented internal rules on whistleblowing, including regular training and participates in the newly established interinstitutional agreement on a mandatory transparency register for interest representatives, signed by the Commission, the Council and Parliament;

- more systematic rules on transparency, incompatibilities, conflicts of interest, and illegal lobbying should be put in place and internal control mechanisms strengthened, including the setting up of an internal anticorruption mechanism;

- the pandemic fast-tracked the integration in the Agency of a series of tools and methods to enable work to continue remotely, from live broadcasting to virtual reality technology to remote auditing techniques.