

2021 discharge: European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX)

2022/2124(DEC) - 10/05/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 388 votes to 238, with 4 abstentions, to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in regard to the implementation of the agency'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 agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2021 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 498 votes to 82 with 44 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.

Agency's financial statements

The Agency's final budget for the financial year 2020 was EUR 535 245 042, representing an increase of 46.87% compared to 2020.

Budget and financial management

Budget-monitoring efforts during the financial year 2021 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 94.70%, representing a decrease of 4.27% compared to 2020. According to Parliament, the Agency should pay more attention in order to avoid lower levels of commitments and to reach a rate closer to the target of 100%.

In spite of the Agency's financial unit having put in place certain mechanisms to improve budget execution, in 2021 the payment appropriations execution rate was only 50.42%, representing a decrease of 4.90% compared to 2020.

Parliament noted the second amendment of the Agency's budget in 2021 in connection with a return to the Union budget of EUR 14.5 million. The Agency's justification for having adopted this amendment is insufficient and it should, in its future reporting, provide the discharge authority with more elaborate justifications as to why budgetary amendments, returning money to the Union, are adopted.

The level of carry-over from 2020 to 2021 was EUR 159 400 000, while from 2021 to 2022 it was EUR 237 000 000. This level is particularly high.

Other observations

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

In particular, it noted that:

- in 2021, the Agency implemented a new organisational structure, a major endeavour for effectively addressing its extended mandate;

- the level of the perceived quality of the Agency's delivered products and services has improved, as in 2021 it reached a mark of 94.34% of assessments from average, high to very high;
- the Agency successfully deployed to the host Member States and to four Union airports the first officers of the European Border and Coast Guard standing;
- operational activities conducted on land borders in 2021 resulted in 3 546 incidents reported, involving 16 304 apprehended irregular migrants, 6 461 irregular migrants and 368 arrested smugglers;
- the Agency's efforts led to the return by air of 18 301 non-EU nationals, of which 10 193 were persons on 337 operations by charter flights to 33 countries of return and 8 108 persons by scheduled flights to 107 countries of return;
- on 31 December 2021, the establishment plan was 82% executed, with 861 temporary agents appointed out of 1050 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget;
- on procurement, the Agency secured strategically important contracts in areas such as surveillance aircraft support, the provision of personal protective equipment and sanitary supplies, the supply of four-wheel drive off-road vehicles, the supply of service weapons, satellite imagery provisioning, the delivery of map production services, the provision of meteorological and oceanographic information services or the purchase of drones and payloads;
- the Agency is urged to ensure greater transparency and public accountability by better-utilising media and social media channels.