2004 discharge: European Food Safety Authority

2005/2119(DEC) - 21/03/2006

The committee adopted the report by Umberto GUIDONI (GUE/NGL, IT) recommending that Parliament should grant discharge for the implementation of the budget of the European Food Safety Authority for 2004.

In their accompanying comments, MEPs referred to the "express reservations" in respect of the 2004 financial year noted by the Court of Auditors concerning the Food Safety Authority, due to irregularities in staff recruitment and contract award procedures. The Authority was urged to improve the regularity and transparency of these procedures.

MEPs also made a number of general comments applicable to all the Community agencies:

- EU enlargement in 2004 had affected the structures and operating arrangements of the agencies in many ways, and the Commission should assess the real or supposed problems encountered and recommend the regulatory changes required;

- the agencies should spend the money available to them as efficiently and effectively as possible;

- the agencies should avoid duplication as far as possible and clarify measures for improving transparency and communication with the public, to overcome their often negative image which many of them did not deserve;

- the Commission should help harmonise the activity reports of the agencies - which differed significantly in terms of content - by informing them of the common indicators that they must provide;

- there was a need for improved cooperation between the agencies, particularly in such common areas as training, the use of the latest management systems and solving problems relating to sound management of the budget.