2004 discharge: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

2005/2106(DEC) - 27/04/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Umberto **GUIDONI** (GUE/NGL, IT) and granted discharge to the Director of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training for the implementation of the Centre's budget for the financial year 2004. In its accompanying comments, Parliament was pleased to note the significant reduction in carryovers achieved by the Centre in 2004 compared to previous years, allowing the budget implemented by the Centre to reflect more closely the budget approved by the budgetary authority. It was concerned by the irregularities noted by the Court of Auditors in the contract award procedure, and noted the steps taken by the Centre to ensure that such irregularities would not be repeated. Parliament also noted the Court of Auditors' comments on inconsistencies in recruitment procedure, and welcomed the Centre's intention to prepare a guide on recruitment procedures in 2005.

Parliament went on to note the Centre's observation in the comments accompanying the 2004 annual accounts that "not all stages of the modernisation process have been completed". It expected a fuller report accompanying the 2005 accounts. It noted the recommendation of the Governing Board in its opinion on the 2004 accounts that the Centre should ensure full implementation of the internal control standards. It asked the Centre to report on progress in this regard in its report on the 2005 accounts, as well as on progress in establishing a specific internal audit function and in recruiting its own internal auditor.

Parliament also made a series of general remarks on the agencies. As well as spending money properly, agencies should also strive to spend money as efficiently and effectively as possible. The Court of Auditors was asked to consider the possibility of extending its specific annual reports on the agencies to include an examination of performance and achievement of objectives. The following aspects should be taken into account: duplication of work among the agencies must be avoided as much as possible and measures designed to improve transparency and communication with the public must be clarified, along with Community affirmative action measures at all levels of recruitment, training and the assignment of responsibilities.

It noted that Community agencies did not always have a good image or good press and that many of them did not deserve such a negative image. EU citizens should be made aware of this, and Parliament called on the Commission to act accordingly, using whatever means it considers necessary.

Furthermore, the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 had affected the structures and operating arrangements of the Community agencies in many ways, and several of the agencies draw attention to these effects in their activity reports, focusing in particular on the increase in the number of administrators. The Commission needed to assess the problems encountered and recommend the regulatory changes required.

The Commission had made a commitment to harmonising the way in which activity reports concerning its directorates-general were presented. Parliament called for a similar approach to be taken in respect of the activity reports of the Communities" agencies, which differed significantly in terms of content. The Commission should point out to the agencies the information and activity indicators that they must provide.

Finally, Parliament asked the Commission to improve synergies between agencies by making cooperation more effective, avoiding duplication of work and addressing shortcomings, in particular as regards common areas such as training, the implementation of Community policies across the board, the use of the latest management systems and solving problems relating to sound management of the budget.