2005 discharge: European Food Safety Authority

2006/2166(DEC) - 26/03/2007

The committee adopted the report by Edit HERCZOG (PES, HU) granting discharge to the European Food Safety Authority for 2005. In its accompanying resolution, it made a number of general points concerning the majority of the EU agencies:

- the ever-growing number of Community Agencies and the activities of some of them do not seem to form part of an overall policy framework, and "the remits of some Agencies do not always reflect the real needs of the Union or the expectations of its citizens";

- the Commission should therefore define an overall policy framework and should present a cost-benefit study before the setting up of any new Agency, and the Court of Auditors should give its opinion on this study before Parliament takes its decision;

- every 5 years, the Commission should present a study on the added value of every existing Agency; where the evaluation is negative in the case of a particular Agency the latter’s mandate should be reformulated or the Agency should be closed;

- the Commission should improve administrative and technical support to the Agencies, given the growing complexity of the Community’s administrative rules and technical problems;

- the Agencies should improve their cooperation and benchmarking with actors in the field;

- the Commission should harmonise the format of the annual reporting by the Agencies to develop performance indicators which would allow a comparison of their efficiency.

In its specific remarks concerning the EFSA, the committee called for the Authority to make a "serious effort" to improve its implementation of the budget. It was critical of the Authority's failure to implement the changes which Parliament had made to the establishment plan and to introduce activity-based management although this is laid down by the Authority's financial regulation. On recruitment, the report insisted on the strict application of the relevant selection criteria and proper checking of candidates' application documents. Lastly, the Authority was urged to tighten up its internal control systems with regard to contracts.