2005 discharge: European Aviation Safety Agency

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The committee adopted the report by Edit HERCZOG (PES, HU) granting discharge to the European Aviation Safety Agency 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 on the EASA, the committee called on the Agency, in view of the low implementation rates and high cancellation rate for 2005, to improve and step up the monitoring of its planning so as to ensure that resources are not mobilised unnecessarily. It also noted the failure to introduce activity-based management, even though the Agency's financial regulation provides for it, so as to allow better monitoring of performance. Lastly, the Agency was urged to introduce a system for ensuring that the fees it charges its clients for the services it provides are sufficient to cover the cost of those services.