2005 discharge: European Environment Agency

2006/2158(DEC) - 26/03/2007

The committee adopted the report by Edit HERCZOG (PES, HU) granting discharge to the European Environment 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 concerning the European Environment Agency, the report noted that the carry-over rate for commitments for its operating activities remained high, at 30%, and called for this to be reduced given the difficulties it created for the management of the following year's appropriations. The committee also called for improved information in the authorising officer's annual activity report and for full compliance with EU recruitment procedures. Lastly, the Agency was encouraged to develop its communication methods in order to attract more media coverage for its findings "and thus feed public debate on important environmental issues".