2005 discharge: European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia

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The committee adopted the report by Edit HERCZOG (PES, HU) granting discharge to the European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia 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 EMCRX the committee called on the Centre to improve its expenditure planning and the way it monitors the implementation of this expenditure. It also noted that no activity-based management had been brought in, despite the Centre's financial regulation making provision for its introduction, on the lines of that applied to the general budget, with a view to improving the monitoring of performance. The Centre was urged to present a work programme "which expresses its contributions in operational and measurable terms". Lastly, the report highlighted shortcomings in the Centre's internal control system and called for strict compliance with the rules for tenders.