Basic information

2002/2186(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2001 discharge: European Center for the Development of Vocational Training ECDVT, Thessalonica **Subject** 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	BLAK Freddy (GUE/NGL)	10/09/2002

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	JÖNS Karin (PSE)	12/11/2002

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2493	2003-03-07

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
27/08/2002	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
10/10/2002	Non-legislative basic document published	N5-601/2002	Summary
19/03/2003	Vote in committee		
19/03/2003	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0079/2003	
08/04/2003	Decision by Parliament	T5-0158/2003	Summary
08/04/2003	Debate in Parliament		
08/04/2003	End of procedure in Parliament		
12/03/2004	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2002/2186(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 102
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0079/2003	19/03/2003	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0158/2003 OJ C 064 12.03.2004, p. 0028-0251 E	08/04/2003	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	06000/2003	07/03/2003	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofA	Non-legislative basic document	N5-601/2002 OJ C 326 27.12.2002, p. 0042-0049	10/10/2002	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Budget 2003/0417
OJ L 148 16.06.2003, p. 0082-0082 Summary

2001 discharge: European Center for the Development of Vocational Training ECDVT, Thessalonica

2002/2186(DEC) - 08/04/2003 - Final act

PURPOSE : to grant discharge on the implementation of the ECDVT budget for the financial year 2001. COMMUNITY MEASURE : European Parliament Decision 2003/417/EC concerning discharge to the Management Board of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2001. CONTENT : with the present decision, the European Parliament grants discharge to the Management Board of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2001. This decision is accompanied by a series of comments which complete the discharge decision. These comments are included in the Parliament's opinion (please refer to the summary of the European Parliament's resolution dated 8 April 2003).

2001 discharge: European Center for the Development of Vocational Training ECDVT, Thessalonica

2002/2186(DEC) - 08/04/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report by Freddy BLAK (EUL/NGL, DK) granting discharge to the Management Board of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) for the financial year 2001. The Parliament also presented a series of comments in a resolution accompanying the discharge decision which aims to request the improvement of the financial management of the Centre. Firstly, concerning the budgetary implementation, the Parliament regrets that the Centre did not depreciate its fixed assets in order for the book values to reflect the real value of the goods which form part of the Centre's assets. It expects the Centre to comply with the Court's observation. It equally regrets that the Centre, despite the criticism of the Court, has kept an imprest account with too high a ceiling. The Centre is expected to be more receptive to observations made by the Court in order to avoid such criticism in the future. Parliament deplores the fact that, despite repeated criticism by the Court, the Centre has not fully respected the tendering procedures for the awarding of contracts. Parliament recalls that this is not only a violation of the principle of equal treatment but could also result in legal action against the Centre by disadvantaged tenderers. It will continue to monitor such cases and expects the Centre to proceed with its efforts towards better programming of its work in order to avoid urgencies, which have in the past resulted in non-observance of the rules for public tender procedures. Parliament notes that the Court of Auditors takes the view that the carry-over rate for operating appropriations remains too high (2,8 million) and that the Centre should pursue its efforts to increase the quality and monitoring of the planning of its activities; notes that the new Financial Regulation will provide an improved legal base for carry-overs. It welcomes however the assurance by the Centre to try and improve the quality, and to follow up the programming of its activities. As regards the follow-up to external evaluation, Parliament takes the view that the Centre should follow to a greater degree the recommendations contained in the 2001 external evaluation report in order to ensure the consistency required between the tasks assigned to it and the organisation of its financial and human resources. It expects, therefore, the Centre to respond positively to the Court of Auditors criticism in order for it to achieve a better balance between its administrative expenditure and its operating expenditure arising from its activity programme so as to remedy the inconsistencies between its tasks and the distribution of its financial and human resources. Concerning the cooperation with the European Training Foundation (ETF), Parliament notes in this respect the joint efforts undertaken by the Centre and the ETF, as they appear in the Joint Progress Report of September 2002, in implementing the framework cooperation between the two bodies during the enlargement process and the preparation of the candidate countries. It considers that in the light of the conclusions of the Copenhagen European Council a detailed analysis of the impact of the transfer of competence in respect of the accession countries from the ETF to Cedefop is needed. Parliament calls on the Commission, therefore,together with the agencies concerned, to carry out such an assessment and, if necessary, to submit proposals relating to the transfer of expertise and of human and financial resources. Parliament suggests that its committees responsible monitor the results of this cooperation in order to evaluate the possibility of further enhancing such cooperation without prejudice to solutions entailing the merger of activities where appropriate. The resolution also includes general points concerning the bodies referred to in Article 185 of the Financial Regulation. These Agencies should have more operational tasks and they could for example be entrusted with executing Community programmes in the field of education or health thereby avoiding the creation of further executive agencies by the Commission. The Commission is asked to make proposals in this respect by 30 June 2003 at the latest and before creating any further executive agencies. Parliament recalls that independent ex-ante control of the Agencies by the Financial Controller of the Commission has ceased to exist and is worried that the absence of outside ex-ante verifications of financial operations might increase the risk of irregularities and mismanagement. It invites the Court of Auditors to increase the number of checks carried out by its auditors and the Agencies to review and modify thoroughly their procedures for implementing their budget in order to counter this risk. Equally, the Agencies are asked to bring their procedures for implementing the budget in line with the requirements of the new Framework Financial Regulation as soon as possible and by 1 July 2003 at the latest. It recalls that the Agencies shall adopt their own financial rules, which may not depart from the Framework Financial Regulation except where their specific operating needs so require and with the Commission's prior consent. The Court of Auditors is asked to give an opinion on all financial provisions adopted by the Agencies which depart from the Framework Financial Regulation. Parliament also states that non-respect of public procurement rules is not only potentially detrimental to the financial interests of the Agencies but can also be a criminal offence under the law of Member States. The Court of Auditors is asked to report at the next opportunity on whether the Community bodies duly cooperate with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and apply the Interinstitutional Agreement of 25 May 1999 concerning internal investigations by the OLAF unreservedly. The Commission is invited, with a view to accelerating the efforts towards preparing integration of the future Member States, to make proposals to foster better functioning of these Community bodies, ensuring better value for money through a cost/ benefit analysis, and avoiding any unnecessary proliferation of agencies; such proposals may provide, for bodies entrusted with similar tasks, for the setting-up of common boards.

2001 discharge: European Center for the Development of Vocational Training ECDVT, Thessalonica

2002/2186(DEC) - 07/03/2003 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present the Council Recommendation on the discharge to be given to the Management Board of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2001. CONTENT : having regard

to the observations made in the report by the Court of Auditors on the accounts of the Centre for the financial year 2001, the Council recommends the European Parliament to give a discharge to the Management Board of the Centre in respect of the implementation of the statement of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2001. Recalling that EUR 2,3 million (92%) of the EUR 2,5 million in appropriations carried forward from the financial year 2000 to the financial year 2001 have been used and that EUR 2,8 million in appropriations have been carried forward from the financial year 2001 to the financial year 2002 and that EUR 0,1 million in appropriations have been cancelled, the Council believes that the implementation of the budget calls for a series of comments to be made and which should be taken into consideration. The Council shares the Court's view on the need to improve the programming and the follow-up of work so as to achieve a more regular implementation of the operating appropriations. It invites the Centre to ensure that its imprest account, the ceiling of which is still too high, is used. The Council calls upon the Centre to apply without delay the implementing and depreciation rules in force when writing down its assets on the balance sheet. The Council notes with satisfaction the efforts made by the Centre to improve its procurement procedures and encourages it to continue along that path. Lastly, like the Court, the Council invites the Centre to ensure greater consistency between the tasks assigned to it in order to achieve its objectives and the way the latter are reflected in the activity report on the one hand, and the distribution of the financial and human resources allocated to it on the other hand.

2001 discharge: European Center for the Development of Vocational Training ECDVT, Thessalonica

2002/2186(DEC) - 10/10/2002 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present the report from the Court of Auditors on the financial statements of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (ECDVT) for the financial year 2001. CONTENT : this report concerns the results of the audit performed by the Court of the financial statements of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training for the financial year ended 31 December 2001. This examination has enabled the Court to obtain reasonable assurance that the annual accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2001 are reliable and that the underlying transactions, taken as a whole, are legal and regular. The report shows final appropriations for the financial year totalled 13,5 million euro, almost all of which were committed. Payments in respect of the appropriations of the financial year amounted to 10,6 million euro; 2,8 million euro were carried over to the following financial year. The appropriations carried over to 2002 concerned mainly operating appropriations (Title III), amounting to 2,2 million euro, i.e. over 40 % of the appropriations committed. The Centre should pursue its efforts to increase the quality and monitoring of the planning of its activities. The report also states that the accounting system's possibilities regarding electronic signatures should be fully exploited (electronic signatures should be an option open not only to the Accounting Officer and administrative staff but also to the Authorising Officers) in order to uphold the principle of the separation of duties. Concerning the application of the financial provisions, the report states that the Centre has an imprest of account with a ceiling of 2 000 000 euro. This figure is still too high. Moreover, there is no limit to the amount of individual payments that may be made. The Centre should continue its efforts to apply purchasing procedures more strictly as has already been pointed out on several occasions in previous reports. Thus two contracts were concluded directly with the suppliers of the services without observing the relevant rules. In order to carry out its tasks, the Centre receives a subsidy from the Commission which forms the bulk of its budgetary revenue. This revenue is intended to cover its administrative expenditure and operating expenditure arising from its programme of activities. The headings over the budgetary items relating to operating expenditure do not, however, correspond to those of the tasks assigned to the Centre. Moreover, the activity report does not clearly indicate the link between the operating activities described and the Centre's tasks. This absence of link with the tasks may also be seen in the organisation chart of staff assigned to operating activities. These inconsistencies between, on the one hand, the tasks laid down by the Centre's Regulation and, on the other hand, the distribution of its financial resources, the organisation of its activities and the allocation of its human resources result in the FIBUS system not being able to establish a link between the Centre's tasks and the implementation of its programme of activities as the latter is reflected in the implementation of its budget. The report specifically states that the Centre should take care to ensure greater consistency between the tasks assigned to itby the basic legislation and the distribution of the financial and human resources granted to it. The practical organisation of its activities should also reflect the Centre's objectives more closely. In order to make its activity more transparent and to be able to audit the effectiveness of its management, a recognisable link between the Centre's objectives and the organisation and the implementation of its activities should be established. The ECDVT replies point by point on all of the criticisms made by the Court. It states in particualr that: - as regards electronic signatures, the Centre's IT section is currently undertaking the relevant training to the staff concerned; - concerning the separation of tasks, this is currently ensured as, at present, the hard copy 'paper' document has ultimate validity. Whilst it was the case, in 2001, that not all authorising officers signed in FIBUS, this is now the practice; - the Centre will table a new draft decision on the creation of an imprest account and limiting its ceiling to EUR 100 000, which corresponds to expenditure in the year 2001; - the Centre has also set up a working group on activity-based budgeting which will refine its activity-based-budget approach for 2003; - the2003 work programme will be the first one with in the framework of the new 2003 to 2006 medium-term priorities. That work programme will give clear indications of activities and outputs for the working areas based on the Centre's basic tasks. Also in 2003, the Centre will, via an acti-track system, ensure maximum transparency of the time spent on specific activities.