Basic information

2005/2107(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2004 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions **Subject** 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	GUIDONI Umberto (GUE/NGL)	20/04/2005

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2716	2006-03-14

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
28/03/2005	Non-legislative basic document published	N6-0002/2005	Summary
19/01/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/03/2006	Vote in committee		Summary
27/03/2006	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0093/2006	
26/04/2006	Debate in Parliament		
27/04/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0168/2006	Summary
27/04/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		

27/04/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		
06/12/2006	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2005/2107(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 102
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/6/28436

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE367.981	03/02/2006	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE370.228	28/02/2006	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0093/2006	27/03/2006	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0168/2006	27/04/2006	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	05972/2006	06/02/2006	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
OS	Non-legislative basic document	N6-0002/2005 OJ C 269 28.10.2005, p. 0040	28/03/2005	Summary
CofA	Court of Auditors: opinion, report	N6-0012/2006 OJ C 332 28.12.2005, p. 0082-0088	05/10/2005	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Budget 2006/0822
OJ L 340 06.12.2006, p. 0069-0069 Summary

2004 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

2005/2107(DEC) - 27/04/2006 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year 2004.

LEGISLATIVE ACTS: Decision 2006/822/EC and 2006/823/EC of the European Parliament on the discharge for the implementation of the budget of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year 2004 and closure of the accounts for the year in question.

CONTENT: with the present decisions, the European Parliament grants discharge to the Director of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year 2004 and approves the closure of its accounts.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 27 April 2006 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 27/04/2006).

2004 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

2005/2107(DEC) - 06/02/2006

Having examined the Foundation's revenue and expenditure account for the financial year 2004 and the observations made by the Court of Auditors, the Council recommends the European Parliament to give a discharge to the Director of the Foundation in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2004.

In doing so, the Council confirms that EUR 3.115 million (98.9 %) of the EUR 3.149 million in appropriations carried forward from the financial year 2003 to the financial year 2004 have been used. In addition, EUR 3.143 million in appropriations have been carried forward from the financial year 2004 to the financial year 2005 and EUR 0.042 million have been cancelled.

In parallel, the Court makes accompanying comments on the discharge which should be followed up. In particular, it:

- notes that 37% of the commitments carried over to the financial year 2005, mainly relating to contracts for studies to be carried out in 2005, were entered into only in December 2004. It urges the Foundation to improve consistency between the Foundation's annual work programme and the budget estimates;
- notes that the negative budget outturn for the financial year 2003 has not been included in an amending budget for the financial year 2004, the Council expects this to be done in the future in order to respect the principles of unity and of budget accuracy.

2004 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

2005/2107(DEC) - 27/04/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Umberto **GUIDONI** (GUE/NGL, IT) and granted discharge to the Director of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the implementation of the Foundation's budget for the financial year 2004. In its accompanying comments, Parliament noted the Court of Auditors' finding that 37% of appropriations carried over into 2005 related to commitments entered into in December 2004 and that the majority of these related to contracts for studies to be carried out in 2005. Parliament reminded the Foundation of the principle of budget annuality and urged it to respect this principle in order to allow correct and transparent implementation of the budgets set by the budgetary authority.

Parliament also made a series of general remarks on the agencies. As well as spending money properly, agencies should also strive to spend money as efficiently and effectively as possible. The Court of Auditors was asked to consider the possibility of extending its specific annual reports on the agencies to include an examination of performance and achievement of objectives. The following aspects should be taken into account: duplication of work among the agencies must be avoided as much as possible and measures designed to improve transparency and communication with the public must be clarified, along with Community affirmative action measures at all levels of recruitment, training and the assignment of responsibilities.

Parliament noted that Community agencies did not always have a good image or good press and that many of them did not deserve such a negative image. EU citizens should be made aware of this, and Parliament called on the Commission to act accordingly, using whatever means it considers necessary.

Furthermore, the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 had affected the structures and operating arrangements of the Community agencies in many ways, and several of the agencies draw attention to these effects in their activity reports, focusing in particular on the increase in the number of administrators. The Commission needed to assess the problems encountered and recommend the regulatory changes required.

The Commission had made a commitment to harmonising the way in which activity reports concerning its directorates-general were presented. Parliament called for a similar approach to be taken in respect of the activity reports of the Communities" agencies, which differed significantly in terms of content. The Commission should point out to the agencies the information and activity indicators that they must provide.

Finally, Parliament asked the Commission to improve synergies between agencies by making cooperation more effective, avoiding duplication of work and addressing shortcomings, in particular as regards common areas such as training, the implementation of Community policies across the board, the use of the latest management systems and solving problems relating to sound management of the budget.

2004 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

2005/2107(DEC) - 14/03/2006

The Council approved, without discussion, recommendations to the European Parliament on the discharge to be given to the directors of the following Community bodies for execution of the 2004 budget:

- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work
- European Environment Agency
- European Training Foundation
- European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
- European Maritime Safety Agency
- Eurojust
- European Food Safety Authority
- European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
- Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union
- European Medicines Agency
- European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia
- European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drugs Addiction
- European Aviation Safety Authority
- European Agency for Reconstruction

(for details of the Council recommendations, please refer to the respective summaries of 6 February 2006).

2004 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

2005/2107(DEC) - 05/10/2005 - Court of Auditors: opinion, report

This report from the Court of Auditors concerns the results of the audit carried out by the Court on the annual accounts of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year ended 31 December 2004. The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions was set up by Council Regulation 1365/75/EEC of 26 May 1975.

The Court states that its audit was planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance that the accounts are reliable and the underlying transactions are legal and regular. The Foundation’s accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2004 are, in all material respects, reliable. The transactions underlying the Foundation’s annual accounts, taken as a whole, are legal and regular. The observations which follow do not call the Court’ s opinion into question.

The report shows that the appropriations entered in the final budget amount to EUR 18 080 000 with EUR 18 072 000 committed and EUR 14 929 000 paid. EUR 3 143 000 was carried over to 2005, and EUR 8 000 cancelled. The outstanding commitments carried over from the previous financial year were EUR 3 149 000.

The Court makes the following observations:

-analysis of the appropriations carried over to the 2005 financial year shows that 37 % of the commitments carried over were entered into in December 2004. The majority relate to contracts for studies to be carried out in 2005. This practice demonstrates a lack of consistency between the Foundation’s annual work programme, on the one hand, and the budget estimates, on the other;

-the physical inventory was not exhaustive as no inventory was made of IT equipment. No organisation manual and no annual verification programme have yet been established;

-the revenue and expenditure account for the financial year 2003 shows a loss of EUR 1.3 million. This amount should have been recorded in an amending budget for the financial year 2004.

The Foundation responds point by point to the Court’s observations:

-due to unforeseen circumstances, a significant surplus became available in some budget lines and was utilised in December to commence work on research activities relevant for 2004 and 2005. Moreover in order to increase the synergy between Foundation activities, it was decided to use a single tender in 2005 for all services for observatories. As a consequence some of the relevant existing contracts had to be extended in December to bridge the time between the conclusion of those contracts and that foreseen for commencement of a new 2005 contract;

-procedures have now changed to provide for registration in the inventory on the basis of Delivery Dockets. The updating of the financial procedures manual is scheduled for completion in September 2005 and will incorporate an annual programme for verification of inventory items;

-the EUR 1.3 million represents sums due for payment by the Commission to the Foundation. The Commission was contacted during 2004 with regard to establishing an amending budget and has indicated it will examine the issue in 2005.

2004 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

2005/2107(DEC) - 28/03/2005 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : presentation of the final accounts of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

CONTENT : this document published in the Official Journal of the EU sets out a detailed account of the implementation of the 2004 budget, including the revenue and expenditure and the balance sheet for the year concerned.

According to this document, the final budget amounted to EUR 18,1 million (against EUR 16,8 million in 2003) including a 99,6% Community subsidy.

As regards the staffing policy, the Foundation, whose headquarters are based in Dublin (Ireland), officially set out 91 posts in its establishment plan. 74 are currently occupied with 16 other staff (Seconded National Experts and employment agency) totalling 90 posts assigned to operational, administrative and mixed duties.

Staff expenditure amounted to EUR 8 606 000.

The Foundation’s main aim is to contribute to the planning and establishment of better living and working conditions in the European Union by increasing and disseminating knowledge which is relevant to this subject. During 2004, the Foundation published the following :

- on living conditions : ‘Perception of living conditions in an enlarged Europe’, ‘Quality of life in Europe’, ‘Employment and disabilities: back to work strategies’, analysis and dissemination of statistical data, study relating to time management over the course of life;

- on working conditions : European Working Conditions Observatory; reports on ageing and employment, various reports (part-time working, harassment), preparation for the 2005 survey;

- on industrial relations : European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO); circulation of reports and articles about EIRonline; bi-monthly publication of EIRobserver; various reports; European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC); various case files; sector future series: seven industry sectors have been covered. Moreover, the Foundation also produced various general and country reports, organised 41 conferences and taken part in 95 conferences and seminars. Excluding translations, the Foundation has produced 162 publications and circulated 10 newsletters.

Operating expenditure represented EUR 5 056 000 with EUR 2 522 000 carried over. The total expenditure amounted to EUR 18 072 000 with an outturn of EUR 14 000. However, the balance for the financial year was reported at EUR – 1 224 000.

The complete version of the final accounts may be found at the following address:

http://www.eurofound.eu.int/about/publicaccess/categories/finance/2005.htm