

Basic information	
<b>2008/2267(DEC)</b> DEC - Discharge procedure 2007 discharge: European Food Safety Authority EFSA <b>Subject</b> 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges	Procedure completed

Key players				
European Parliament	<b>Committee responsible</b>		<b>Rapporteur</b>	<b>Appointed</b>
	<b>CONT</b> Budgetary Control		FJELLNER Christofer (PPE-DE)	26/03/2008
	<b>Committee for opinion</b>		<b>Rapporteur for opinion</b>	<b>Appointed</b>
	<b>ENVI</b> Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		OLAJOS Péter (PPE-DE)	29/01/2008
Council of the European Union	<b>Council configuration</b>		<b>Meetings</b>	<b>Date</b>
	Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN		2922	2009-02-10
European Commission	<b>Commission DG</b>		<b>Commissioner</b>	
	Budget		KALLAS Siim	

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
23/07/2008	Non-legislative basic document published	SEC(2008)2359 	Summary
20/11/2008	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
16/03/2009	Vote in committee		Summary
23/03/2009	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0172/2009	
21/04/2009	Debate in Parliament		
23/04/2009	Decision by Parliament	T6-0301/2009	Summary
23/04/2009	Results of vote in Parliament		

23/04/2009	End of procedure in Parliament		
26/09/2009	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2008/2267(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 102
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/6/67283

Documentation gateway				
<b>European Parliament</b>				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		<a href="#">PE416.336</a>	29/01/2009	
Committee opinion	<a href="#">ENVI</a>	<a href="#">PE416.686</a>	12/02/2009	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		<a href="#">A6-0172/2009</a>	23/03/2009	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		<a href="#">T6-0301/2009</a>	23/04/2009	<a href="#">Summary</a>
<b>Council of the EU</b>				
Document type		Reference	Date	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		<a href="#">05588/2009</a>	23/01/2009	<a href="#">Summary</a>
<b>European Commission</b>				
Document type		Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document		<a href="#">SEC(2008)2359</a> 	23/07/2008	<a href="#">Summary</a>
<b>Other institutions and bodies</b>				
Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofA	Court of Auditors: opinion, report	<a href="#">N6-0004/2009</a> <a href="#">OJ C 311 05.12.2008, p. 0001</a>	05/12/2008	<a href="#">Summary</a>

Additional information		
Source	Document	Date
European Commission	<a href="#">EUR-Lex</a>	

## 2007 discharge: European Food Safety Authority EFSA

2008/2267(DEC) - 23/01/2009

Based on the observations contained in the revenue and expenditure account and the balance sheet of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for the financial year 2007, as well as on the Court of Auditor's report and the Authority's replies to the Court's observations, the Council recommends that the Parliament grant the Director of the Authority discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2007.

In doing so, the Council confirms that EUR 6.4 million (81.1%) of the appropriations carried over from 2006 to 2007 (EUR 7.9 million) were used, that the appropriations carried over from 2007 to 2008 amount to EUR 8.6 million and that a total of EUR 4.8 million was cancelled.

Recalling that the Court of Auditors was able to obtain reasonable assurance that the Authority's annual accounts were, in all material aspects, reliable, the Council believes that there are a certain number of observations that must be taken into consideration when granting discharge in respect of the implementation of the 2007 budget, particularly regarding the following points:

- **Carry-overs:** the Council notes with concern that the carry-over and cancellation rates remain high, which is an indication of weaknesses in the programming, budgeting and implementation of the Authority's activities and urges the Authority to intensify its efforts in addressing these issues;
- **Recruitment:** the Council calls on the Authority to remedy the remaining deficiencies in its recruitment procedures as detected by the Court;
- **Procurement:** the Council regrets the number of irregularities in the Authority's procurement procedures, as identified again by the Court. While noting the measures taken by the Authority to address this issue, the Council emphasises that every effort must be made by the Authority to strengthen its public procurement system in order to prevent, to the largest extent possible, the occurrence of any irregularity.

## 2007 discharge: European Food Safety Authority EFSA

2008/2267(DEC) - 23/04/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Food Safety Authority for the financial year 2007. The decision to grant discharge is also an approval of the closure of the accounts of this EU agency.

Furthermore, the Parliament adopted by 406 votes to 12, with 19 abstentions, a resolution with observations which form an integral part of the decision to grant discharge.

The Parliament notes that:

- EUR 8.6 million were carried over to 2008 and EUR 4.8 million were cancelled, which indicate serious weaknesses in the Authority's programming and budgeting;
- the rate of carry-over (17-18%) decreased in comparison to 2006 (22%); according to the Authority, the actual amount of carry-over increased from EUR 7.9 million in 2006 to EUR 8.6 million in 2007.

In this context, the Parliament calls on the Authority to speed up budget implementation and to specify the follow-up measures taken in the Authority's annual activity report for 2008.

Moreover, the Parliament notes that: (i) the Authority treated a contribution received from the Commission in order to prepare for the accession of Croatia and Turkey as a normal subsidy, although it should have been treated as assigned revenue; (ii) number of missions was very high.

As regards the **follow-up to previous discharge exercises**, the Parliament congratulates the Authority on having succeeded in filling 273 of the 300 posts provided for in its establishment plan after having had difficulties in recruiting highly-skilled scientific staff in Parma for several years. It requests that the Authority align its recruitment procedures to the rules as a matter of urgency.

The Parliament also notes weaknesses in terms of procurement and calls on the Authority to pay particular attention to compliance with procurement rules.

Lastly, noting that the Authority's annual accounts for the financial year 2007 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, the Parliament approves the closure of the Authority's accounts and refers, for other observations accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies - see [2008/2207\(INI\)](#) - adopted in parallel.

## 2007 discharge: European Food Safety Authority EFSA

2008/2267(DEC) - 23/07/2008 - Non-legislative basic document

**PURPOSE:** to present the final accounts of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for the financial year 2007.

**CONTENT:** this document sets out a detailed account of the implementation of the European Food Safety Authority's budget for the financial year 2007. It notes that the final budget amounted to EUR 52.2 million (compared to EUR 40 million in 2006), representing a 100% Community contribution.

As regards the staffing policy, the Authority, whose head office is based in Parma (Italy), officially set out 300 posts in its establishment plan. 273 are currently occupied with 37 other staff (auxiliary staff, contract staff and seconded national experts) totalling 310 posts assigned to administrative and operational duties.

In 2007, the Authority's main activities can be summarised as follows:

**Scientific opinions:** EFSA, as Europe's risk assessment body, provides the scientific advice on which risk managers in the European Union can base their decisions to protect consumers in the EU. In this regard, following the 205 requests for scientific opinions made to EFSA in 2007, 203 opinions and 80 reports were adopted and published. An example of the impact of the EFSA's scientific work is the opinion issued in July 2007, concluding that the colouring Red 2G raised safety concerns. This led to the immediate suspension of its use in food;

**Communication:** the overall objective of EFSA's communication efforts is to provide its target audiences, and ultimately European consumers, with clear, consistent, coherent and timely messages about food-related issues. The communication main tools used and the results obtained in 2007 were: (i) the new website with 1.5 million visits, over 17 500 subscribers to the EFSA's electronic newsletter and 1 500 viewing sessions per event regarding the webstreaming of management Boards meetings; (ii) the EFSA's press office with 7 press conferences organised, 24 press releases and statements, 39 web news stories and 37 news alerts were published; (iii) the celebration of EFSA's Five-year Anniversary and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome provided EFSA with the opportunity to use new communication platforms resulting in scientific forums, food safety summit and joint events with Member States;

**Cooperation:** the Advisory Forum connects EFSA with the national food safety authorities in all Member States. The Advisory Forum met quarterly in 2007. As a part of the cooperation strategy, a network of national 'Focal Points' serves as a relay contact between EFSA and national authorities. At the end of 2007, 18 Member States had already signed a national Focal Point agreement with EFSA;

**Management of food crises:** to make sure that EFSA is prepared to react and support the European Community, in particular the EC, during emergencies or other urgent situations, a crisis exercise programme was started in October 2007 and the first Crisis Exercise was performed in January 2008 (with the Advisory Forum) in order to finalise the crisis manual.

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

[http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/AboutEfsa/HowWeWork/Funding/efsa\\_locale-1178620753816\\_Accounts.htm](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/AboutEfsa/HowWeWork/Funding/efsa_locale-1178620753816_Accounts.htm)

## 2007 discharge: European Food Safety Authority EFSA

2008/2267(DEC) - 23/04/2009 - Final act

**PURPOSE:** to grant discharge to the European Food Safety Authority for the financial year 2007.

**LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Decision 2009/675/EC of the European Parliament on the discharge for the implementation of the budget of the European Food Safety Authority for the financial year 2007.

**CONTENT:** with the present decision, the European Parliament grants discharge to the Executive Director of the European Food Safety Authority for the implementation of the Authority's budget for the financial year 2007.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 23 April 2009 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 23/04/2009). The decision to grant discharge is also an approval of the closure of the accounts of this EU agency.

## 2007 discharge: European Food Safety Authority EFSA

2008/2267(DEC) - 05/12/2008

**PURPOSE:** to present the report by the Court of Auditors on the 2007 annual accounts of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

**CONTENT:** the Court of Auditor's report includes a detailed section on the European Food Safety Authority's expenditure and an analysis of the expenditure, as well as the Authority's replies.

- **Analysis of the accounts by the Court:** in its report, the Court makes a number of observations, particularly with regard to the presentation of the budget. The budget included contributions from the Commission to prepare the accession of Croatia and Turkey. These contributions should have been treated as assigned revenue in the budget but were instead treated as if they were part of the normal Community subsidy.

The Court considers that this situation was in contradiction of the Financial Regulation. The Court regrets the fact that appropriations amounting to EUR 8.6 million were carried over to 2008 and EUR 4.8 million were cancelled. Moreover, Over 25% of the appropriations for operating activities carried over from last year had to be cancelled by the year end, at odds with the principle of annuality. In addition, in terms of recruitment, the Court showed that, in general, the Authority did not set clear and transparent selection criteria for selecting candidates. Lastly, the Court notes discrepancies in the payment of mission costs of national experts as well as in terms of rules applicable to procurement (irregularities in the financial evaluation procedure for framework contracts, purchase orders for services not covered by the relevant framework contracts, and technical evaluations based on quality criteria and weightings not clearly explained in the tender documents);

- **The Agency's replies:** the Authority notes that, since 2008, all new projects for which the Authority receives specific contributions from the Commission, are registered and monitored on assigned revenue budget lines. Several measures were also taken in 2008, such as the planning of the call for tender and grant calls. The Authority notes that, with the new procedures relating to the processing of carry-forward and in compliance with the principle of annuality, the 2007 carry-forward rate (17% of final budget) decreased in comparison to the 2006 rate (22 %). With regard to the issue of selection criteria for recruitment, the Authority notes that a selection board now sets the criteria for reserve lists. The Authority also notes that the evaluation of financial offers for fixed price contracts will be based on a comparable basis. It states that, for future framework contracts, efforts will be made to have a complete description of possible services, in order to limit the risk of error and to better set quality criteria for offers to be kept.