Basic information

2009/2111(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2008 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions EUROFOUND **Subject** 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	MATHIEU HOUILLON Véronique (PPE)	01/10/2009
	Shadow rapporteur STAVRAKAKIS Georgios (S&D) GERBRANDY Gerben-Jan (ALDE) STAES Bart (Verts/ALE)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	GRÄSSLE Ingeborg (PPE)	26/11/2009

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2994	2010-02-16

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	ŠEMETA Algirdas

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
23/07/2009	Non-legislative basic document published	SEC(2009)1089	Summary

07/10/2009	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/03/2010	Vote in committee		Summary
26/03/2010	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0088/2010	
21/04/2010	Debate in Parliament		
05/05/2010	Decision by Parliament	T7-0115/2010	Summary
05/05/2010	Results of vote in Parliament		
05/05/2010	End of procedure in Parliament		
25/09/2010	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2009/2111(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/7/01097

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE430.472	02/02/2010	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE430.901	25/02/2010	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE439.356	03/03/2010	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0088/2010	26/03/2010	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0115/2010	05/05/2010	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	05827/2010	01/02/2010	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	SEC(2009)1089	23/07/2009	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofA	Court of Auditors: opinion, report	N7-0012/2010 OJ C 304 15.12.2009, p. 0001	08/10/2009	Summary
CofA	Document attached to the procedure	N7-0036/2009 OJ C 269 10.11.2009, p. 0001	10/11/2009	

Additional information		
Source	**Document**	**Date**
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Decision 2010/0542 OJ L 252 25.09.2010, p. 0196	Summary

2008 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions EUROFOUND

2009/2111(DEC) - 01/02/2010

Based on the observations contained in the revenue and expenditure account and the balance sheet of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year 2008, as well as on the Court of Auditor's report and the Foundation's replies to the Court's observations, the Council recommends that the Parliament grant the Director of the Foundation discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2008.

The Council welcomes the Court's opinion that, on the one hand, the Foundation's annual accounts present fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position as at 31 December 2008 and the results of operations and cash-flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of the Foundation's Financial Regulation, and that, on the other hand, the underlying transactions for the financial year ended on 31 December 2008 are, in all material respects, legal and regular.

However, the Council considers that observations made in the Court of Auditor's report call for a certain number of observations to be taken into account when granting discharge, particularly on the following points:

- **operational programming**: the Council encourages the Foundation to further improve its operational programming, addressing the weaknesses;
- **budgetary transfers**: the Council takes note of the Foundation's commitment to correct its procedures related to budgetary transfers, which should be justified on the basis of an accurate estimation of the actual needs;
- **procurement procedures**: the Council insists also on the importance of thoroughly monitoring contracts as well as timely programming procurement procedures;
- **closure of accounts**: the Council, regretting the shortcomings identified by the Court with respect to the closure of the 2008 accounts, takes note that the problems arising from the hand-over between accounting officers have been corrected.

2008 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions EUROFOUND

2009/2111(DEC) - 05/05/2010 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year 2008.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision 2010/542/EU of the European Parliament on the discharge for implementation of the budget of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year 2008.

CONTENT: with the present decision, the European Parliament grants discharge to the Director of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year 2008.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 5 May 2010 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 5 May 2010).

A parallel Decision, adopted on the same day, approves the closure of the accounts of this EU agency.

2008 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions EUROFOUND

2009/2111(DEC) - 08/10/2009

PURPOSE: to present the Court of Auditors report on the annual accounts of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND) for the financial year 2008.

CONTENT: in the Court's opinion, the Foundation's Annual Accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as of 31 December 2008 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended. The transactions underlying the annual accounts of the Foundation for the financial year ended are, in all material respects, legal and regular.

The Court of Auditors report includes a detailed section on the expenditure of the European Foundation as well as an analysis of the expenditure in the accounts and the Foundation's replies.

- **The Court's analysis of the accounts**: the Court states that for operational expenditure, the amount carried forward was more than 55 % of the appropriations. This situation was at odds with the principle of annuality. It indicates weaknesses in the programming of the operational activities of the Foundation. Comments were also made as regards the accounting principles and budget transfers. It notes that the closure of the 2008 accounts was handled by a short-term employee recruited through an employment agency. The hand-over report submitted by the previous Accounting Officer was unsatisfactory and incomplete and a proper transition between the previous Accounting Officer and the new one was not ensured. As a result, the quality of the financial statements in several areas (e.g. fixed assets, accrued expenses, assigned revenue, VAT, etc.) was unsatisfactory, showed inconsistencies with the 2007 accounts and therefore required important adjustments during the audit. With regard to procurement procedures, in one case the use of a negotiated procedure was not justified. In two other cases, the Foundation irregularly extended contracts beyond the maximum duration permitted. The Foundation should aim to improve the monitoring of its contracts and the programming of its procurement procedures, launching new tenders well before the corresponding contracts come to an end.

- **The Foundation's replies**: the Foundation state that the already in its annual programming an amount of 45% was planned to be carried forward due to the duration of study contracts and our payment schedule. The weakness to be improved exists but is much smaller than indicated. As regards the Accounting Officer, a certified accountant was therefore recruited on a temporary basis to ensure a proper closure of the Annual accounts. All problems in the accounts arising from the hand-over between the old and new Accounting Officer have now been corrected. As regards procurement, the Foundation states a new tender procedure is currently in progress to set up a multiannual framework contract for legal services. In addition, it has set up a project management system which includes a separate template for the planning of procurement and for the management of contracts to assist the timely programming of procurement procedures.

2008 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions EUROFOUND

2009/2111(DEC) - 23/07/2009 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to present the final accounts of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for the financial year 2008.

CONTENT: this document sets out a detailed account of the implementation of the Foundation's budget for 2008. It indicates that the Foundation's final budget amounted to EUR 21 million in 2008 (compared with EUR 20.2 million in 2007).

With regard to staff, the Foundation - with headquarters in Dublin (Ireland) - has 101 posts available of which 74 are occupied, and 10 other members of staff (Seconded National Experts, employment agency staff and Contract Agents), which is equivalent to a total staff of 87 undertaking operating activities, administrative tasks and mixed duties.

In 2008, the work undertaken by the Foundation included:

Monitoring and surveys

- European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO): 572 information updates added, European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO): 159 information updates added and European Restructuring Monitor (ERM): 1 532 restructuring fact sheets added.

- 4th European Working Conditions Survey: secondary analysis (published: ageing workforce, work organisation, use of technology).

- 2nd European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS); completion of field work (31 countries; 35 000 interviewed), analysis of data; first results published (Resume).

- European Company Survey; preparation of field work.

Employment and restructuring

- European Restructuring Monitor case studies.
- Impact of globalisation on selected sectors (Transport; Textiles; Energy).
- Undeclared work (measures from five countries).
- Changes in employment structure (Report 'More and better jobs').
- Links between innovation, productivity and employment.

Work-life balance and working conditions

- Working conditions and social dialogue.
- Flexibility and security over the life course.
- Global comparison of working conditions.
- Older women workers in Europe.

Industrial relations and partnership

- Codes of conduct and international framework agreements.
- Dynamics of European sectoral social dialogue.
- Working time and industrial relations; pay and industrial relations.
- Stakeholder enquiry service: Liability in subcontracting processes in the European construction sector.
- Employability and flexicurity.
- Continuing vocational training and industrial relations.

Social cohesion and quality of life

- Role of local authorities in the integration of migrants.
- Demographic change and employment in social services.

Communication and sharing ideas and experience

- 437 publications, 1.59 million users sessions (average of 4370/day); 35 press activities; 2149 article cuttings with advertising value equivalent (AVE) of EUR 4.08 million, reaching 112 156 300 people, up from 58 765 900 in 2006; 242 journalist enquiries.
- Promotion campaigns: four resource packs (Ageing, Globalisation, Flexicurity, Migration).
- 4 Roadshows (F, NL, CZ, GR).
- Company Network Seminar: 'Flexibility policies at the company level: a common interest?' Foundation Seminar Series: 'Developing workers' skills - actors and actions' - National Outreach Centres covering AU, BE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IT, LUX, SP, UK.
- 57 exhibitions and 52 visits to the Foundation.

The Foundation's full 2008 accounts may be found at the following address: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu

2008 discharge: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions EUROFOUND

2009/2111(DEC) - 05/05/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 550 votes to 35, with 50 abstentions, a decision on discharge to be granted to the Director of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2008. The decision to grant discharge is also an approval of the closure of the accounts of this EU agency. Furthermore, Parliament adopted a resolution with observations which are an integral part of the decision to grant discharge to this Agency.

The main points are as follows:

- **performance:** Parliament notes the positive progress as regards the ex-post assessment of its 2001-2004 work programme in order to determine its impact, added value and effectiveness. It congratulates the Foundation on launching another ex-post assessment exercise, in this case of its 2005-2008 work programme. It calls on the Foundation, therefore, to keep it informed of the results of that assessment and to present a comparison of operations carried out during the year for which discharge is to be granted and in the previous financial year so as to enable the discharge authority to assess more effectively its performance from one year to the next;
- **operating appropriations carried over:** noting that the amount carried over represented more than 55% of appropriations (EUR 4.9 million) for the financial year 2008, Parliament stresses that this state of affairs indicates shortcomings in the planning and programming of the Foundation's operational activities and is at odds with the principle of annuality. It calls on the Foundation, therefore, to take action to prevent this situation recurring in future and then inform the discharge authority of what it has done;
- **procurement procedures:** Parliament calls on the Foundation to take steps to improve the monitoring of its contracts and the programming of its procurement procedures, by issuing new invitations to tender well before the corresponding contracts come to an end;
- **human resources:** it calls on the Foundation’s management to take steps, as part of its human resources management policy and in keeping with its obligations concerning implementation of the budget, to make better provision in advance for the departure of key staff members. Parliament congratulates the Foundation for having improved recruitment procedures consistent with the recommendations made by the Court of Auditors in the last two years;
- **internal audit:** Parliament expresses concern at the fact that the Foundation’s financial statements for 2008 were inadequate and inconsistent with the 2007 accounts and consequently required substantial correction in the course of the audit. It calls on the Foundation to take steps to ensure that such a situation does not recur in the future. Lastly, it calls on the Foundation to comply with the recommendations from the Internal Audit Service (IAS), in particular as regards internal control standards (i.e. effective coordination of the internal control system and compliance of procurement procedures with the Financial Regulation and its implementing rules), and to introduce an effective planning and monitoring system.

Noting that the Agency’s annual accounts for the financial year 2008 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament approves the closure of its accounts and refers to the general recommendations that appear in the draft resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies (see 2010/2007(INI) adopted in parallel).