Basic information

2018/2201(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2017 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) **Subject** 8.70.03.02 2017 discharge	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	SARVAMAA Petri (PPE)	26/07/2018
	Shadow rapporteur KADENBACH Karin (S&D) CZARNECKI Ryszard (ECR) ALI Nedzhmi (ALDE) DE JONG Dennis (GUE/NGL) STAES Bart (Verts/ALE) KAPPEL Barbara (ENF)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	BJÖRK Malin (GUE/NGL)	28/09/2018

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	OETTINGER Günther

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
28/06/2018	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2018)0521	Summary
11/09/2018	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
20/02/2019	Vote in committee		

04/03/2019	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0150/2019	Summary
26/03/2019	Decision by Parliament	T8-0268/2019	Summary
26/03/2019	Results of vote in Parliament		
26/03/2019	Debate in Parliament		
26/03/2019	End of procedure in Parliament		
27/09/2019	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2018/2201(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/8/14321

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE626.796	11/12/2018	
Committee opinion	FEMM	PE630.380	24/01/2019	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE634.473	31/01/2019	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0150/2019	04/03/2019	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0268/2019	26/03/2019	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	05825/2019	31/01/2019	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2018)0521	28/06/2018	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofA	Court of Auditors: opinion, report	N8-0012/2019 OJ C 434 30.11.2018, p. 0001	18/09/2018	Summary

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

Final act
Budget 2019/1476 OJ L 249 27.09.2019, p. 0218

2017 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2018/2201(DEC) - 28/06/2018 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: presentation by the Commission of the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2017, as part of the 2017 discharge procedure.

Analysis of the accounts of the **European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)**.

CONTENT: the organisational governance of the EU consists of institutions, agencies and other EU bodies whose expenditure is included in the general budget of the Union.

This Commission document concerns the **EU's consolidated accounts for the year 2017** and details how spending by the EU institutions and bodies was carried out. The consolidated annual accounts of the EU provide financial information on the activities of the institutions, agencies and other bodies of the EU from an accrual accounting and budgetary perspective.

It is the responsibility of the Commission's Accounting Officer to prepare the EU's consolidated annual accounts and ensure that they present fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position, the result of the operations and the cash flows of the EU institutions and bodies with a view to granting discharge.

Discharge procedure: **the final step of a budget lifecycle is the discharge**. It is the decision by which the European Parliament '**releases**' the Commission from its responsibility for management of a given budget by marking the end of that budget's existence. It is granted by the European Parliament on the recommendation of the Council.

The decision is based in particular on the European Court of Auditors reports, in particular its annual report, in which the Court provides a Statement of Assurance (DAS) on the legality and regularity of transactions (payments and commitments).

The procedure results in the granting, postponement or refusal of discharge.

The final discharge report including specific recommendations to the Commission for action is adopted in plenary by the European Parliament and are subject to an annual follow up report in which the Commission outlines the concrete actions it has taken to implement the recommendations made.

All EU institutions and other agencies, bodies and joint undertakings are subject to their own discharge procedures.

EIGE: the Institute, which is located in Vilnius (LT), was established by Regulation (EC) No 1922/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council. It works to provide evidence, facts and recommendations to address gender inequalities and strengthen the inclusion of a gendered perspective in EU policy making.

As regards the accounts, the Management Board noted a reasonably high execution of the budget with commitment appropriations up to 98.92 % in 2017 (compared to 88 % in 2011 but slightly better than 98.42 % in 2016), while payment appropriations in 2017 reached 80.95 % (rather significant improvement compared with 72.83 % in 2016).

Commitment appropriations:

- available: EUR 8 million;
- made: EUR 8 million.

Payment appropriations:

- available: EUR 10 million;
- paid: EUR 8 million.

For further details on expenditure, please refer to EIGE's consolidated annual activity report.

2017 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2018/2201(DEC) - 26/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to grant discharge to the Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) for the financial year 2017 and to approve the closure of the accounts for the financial year in question.

Noting that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the Institute's annual accounts for the financial year 2017 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 491 votes to 130 with 7 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations, which form an integral part of the decision on discharge and which add to the general recommendations set out in the draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

Institute's financial statements

The final budget of the Institute for the financial year 2017 was EUR 7 722 898, representing an increase of 1.24 % compared to 2016.

Budget and financial management

Budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2017 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 98.92 %, representing a slight increase of 0.5 % compared to 2016. Payment appropriations execution rate was 80.95 %, representing a notable increase of 8.12 % compared to the previous year. After analysing the advantages and disadvantages of differentiated appropriations, the Institute decided not to adopt them as a measure to address the multiannual nature of its operations. The cancellations of carry-overs from 2016 to 2017 amounted to EUR 34 865, representing 1.79 % of the total amount carried forward, showing a decrease of 0.07 % in comparison to 2016.

Members also made a series of observations regarding performance, staff policy, procurement and internal controls.

In particular, they noted that:

- the Institute implemented its work programme effectively and fulfilled 98.75 % of the single programming document activities in 2017;

- the Institute proactively initiated a joint activity with other agencies in 2017 consisting of training and experience-sharing workshops on preventing harassment;

- on 31 December 2017, the establishment plan was 96.30 % executed, with 26 temporary agents appointed out of 27 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget;

- there have been a follow up by the Institute on the reports related to sexual harassments of female workers and trainees in the agency. The Agency must be a role model in combating sexual harassment and ensuring safety and dignity for all its members of staff;

- the Institute was brought to court by unsuccessful tenders, claiming a total of EUR 700 000 in damages (amounting to up to 9 % of the Institute's annual budget) and the annulment of the award decision. The Institute is already preparing to financially address the potential losses. Members noted from the Institute's reply that it will adjust the procurement procedures regardless of the final judicial decision.

2017 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2018/2201(DEC) - 31/01/2019 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

Having examined the revenue and expenditure accounts for the financial year 2017 and the balance sheet as at 31 December 2017 of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), as well as the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the Institute for the financial year 2017, accompanied by the Institute's replies to the Court's observations, the Council recommended the European Parliament to give a discharge to the Director of the Institute in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2017.

The Council welcomed the Court's opinion that, in all material respects, the Institute's annual accounts present fairly its financial position as at 31 December 2017 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of the Institute's Financial Regulation, and that the underlying transactions for 2017 are legal and regular in all material respects.

Nevertheless, the following observations were made:

- ***budgetary management***: the Council noted the potential budgetary risk resulting from the ongoing Court proceedings related to procurement procedures conducted by the Institute. It called on the Institute to carefully monitor the situation, in particular as regards the sufficiency of provisions;

- ***procurement***: the Council also regretted that the Court found, as last year, weaknesses in the Institute's procurement procedures and called on the Institute to take appropriate actions in order to ensure the effectiveness of the process, appropriate tender specifications, as well as the full implementation without unjustified delay of electronic public procurement;

- ***staff***: the Institute is encouraged to ensure proper transparency and publicity of its vacancy notices, while avoiding unjustified costs.

2017 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2018/2201(DEC) - 04/03/2019 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Petri SARVAMAA (EPP, FI) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the financial year 2017.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant the Director of the Institute discharge in respect of the implementation of the agency's budget for the financial year 2017.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the annual accounts of the Institute for the financial year 2017 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Members called on Parliament to approve the closure of the Institute's accounts.

They made, however, a number of recommendations that needed to be taken into account when the discharge is granted, in addition to the general recommendations that appear in the draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

Institute's financial statements

Members noted that the final budget of the Institute for the financial year 2017 was EUR 7 722 898, representing an increase of 1.24 % compared to 2016.

Budget and financial management

Budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2017 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 98.92 %, representing a slight increase of 0.5 % compared to 2016. Payment appropriations execution rate was 80.95 %, representing a notable increase of 8.12 % compared to the previous year. After analysing the advantages and disadvantages of differentiated appropriations, the Institute decided not to adopt them as a measure to address the multiannual nature of its operations.

The cancellations of carry-overs from 2016 to 2017 amounted to EUR 34 865, representing 1.79 % of the total amount carried forward, showing a decrease of 0.07 % in comparison to 2016.

Members also made a series of observations regarding performance, staff policy, procurement and internal controls.

In particular, they noted that:

- the Institute implemented its work programme effectively and fulfilled 98.75 % of the single programming document activities in 2017;

- the Institute proactively initiated a joint activity with other agencies in 2017 consisting of training and experience-sharing workshops on preventing harassment;

- on 31 December 2017, the establishment plan was 96.30 % executed, with 26 temporary agents appointed out of 27 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget;

- there have been a follow up by the Institute on the reports related to sexual harassments of female workers and trainees in the agency. The Agency must be a role model in combating sexual harassment and ensuring safety and dignity for all its members of staff;

- the Institute was brought to court by unsuccessful tenders, claiming a total of EUR 700 000 in damages (amounting to up to 9 % of the Institute's annual budget) and the annulment of the award decision. The Institute is already preparing to financially address the potential losses. Members noted from the Institute's reply that it will adjust the procurement procedures regardless of the final judicial decision.

2017 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2018/2201(DEC) - 18/09/2018

PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality for the year 2017, together with the Institute's reply.

CONTENT: the Court of Auditors carried out the audit on the annual accounts of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

In brief, the Institute's task is to collect, analyse and disseminate information as regards gender equality and to develop, analyse, evaluate and disseminate methodological tools in order to support the integration of gender equality into all Union policies and the resulting national policies.

Statement of assurance and reliability of the accounts

The Court considered that:

- the Institute’s annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2017 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation and the accounting rules adopted by the Commission’s accounting officer;

- the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017 are legal and regular in all material respects.

The report also makes a series of observations on the budgetary and financial management of the Institute, accompanied by the latter’s response. The main observations may be summarised as follows:

The Court's observations

Procurement

At the end of financial year 2017, the Institute was a defendant in four cases related to three procurement procedures which were brought to the General Court by unsuccessful tenderers. In each of these cases, the applicant requested the annulment of the award decision and the award of damages. Total damages claimed in those four cases amount to EUR 700 000 or 9 % of the Institute’s yearly budget. The rulings of the General Court in each of these cases will decide on the legality and regularity of the procurement procedures for these contracts and the future payments.

Performance

Agencies should introduce a single solution for the electronic exchange and storage of information with third parties participating in public procurement procedures (e-procurement). As the same requirement exists for all EU Institutions, the Commission is developing a comprehensive IT solution covering all phases of public procurement procedures. The Commission launched tools for electronic invoicing (e-invoicing), for the electronic publication of documents related to contract notices (e-tendering) and for the electronic submission of tenders (e-submission). By the end of 2017, the Institute had introduced e-invoicing for certain procedures, but not e-tendering and e-submission.

The Institute's replies

Procurement

The EIGE examined the weaknesses and, irrespective of the General Court’s decisions in these cases, will adjust the procurement procedures to minimise the risk of future legal cases and potential dissatisfaction among unsuccessful tenderers.

Performance

E-submission and e-invoicing modules are planned to be fully implemented in 2018.

Lastly, the Court of Auditors’ report also contained a summary of the Institute’s key figures in 2017:

Budget

EUR million.

Staff

45 including officials, temporary and contract staff and seconded national experts.