Basic information

2020/2165(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2019 discharge: European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) **Subject** 8.70.03.09 2019 discharge	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	CZARNECKI Ryszard (ECR)	08/09/2020
	Shadow rapporteur CHRISTOFOROU Lefteris (EPP) RÓNAI Sándor (S&D) CHASTEL Olivier (Renew) EICKHOUT Bas (Greens/EFA) OMARJEE Younous (GUE/NGL)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
TRAN Transport and Tourism	GRAPINI Maria (S&D)	08/10/2020

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	HAHN Johannes

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
29/06/2020	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2020)0288	
15/09/2020	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/03/2021	Vote in committee		

30/03/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0077/2021	
27/04/2021	Debate in Parliament		
28/04/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0189/2021	Summary
24/09/2021	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2020/2165(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/9/03888

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE657.197	12/01/2021	
Committee opinion	TRAN	PE660.296	29/01/2021	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE680.791	05/03/2021	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0077/2021	30/03/2021	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0189/2021	28/04/2021	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	05793/2021	05/02/2021	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2020)0288	29/06/2020	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Budget 2021/1607
OJ L 340 24.09.2021, p. 0307

2019 discharge: European Union Agency for Railways (ERA)

2020/2165(DEC) - 28/04/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 635 votes to 59, with 4 abstentions, to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of the European Union Agency for Railways in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2019 and to approve the closure of the accounts for that year.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2019 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Parliament adopted, by 624 votes to 58 with 9 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations which form an integral part of the discharge decision and which complement the general recommendations contained in the resolution on the performance, financial management and control of EU agencies.

Agency's financial statements

The Agency's final budget for the financial year 2019 was EUR 27 139 347, which represents a decrease of 5.74% compared to 2018.

Budgetary and financial management

Parliament welcomed the budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2019, which resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.98 %, equal to the implementation rate in 2018. Payment appropriations execution rate was 92.22 %, representing an increase of 3.27 % compared to 2018.

Due to the expansion of the Agency's mandate under its new Regulation, the Agency started in 2019 to collect fees and charges for certification tasks. The increase in revenue from fees is offset by a decrease in the subsidy to the Agency. Members regretted that the increase in activity was not considered by the Commission as a reason to increase the subsidy.

Parliament called for an increase in the Agency's budget to give it the means to act effectively as an authority and to carry out its tasks, including those related to enhancing competitiveness, improving safety and cross-border interoperability.

The Agency is also invited to break the trend of increasing ex-post non-nonconformities and to emphasise preventive measures.

Other comments

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

In particular, they noted that:

- the Agency has achieved a satisfactory rate of achievement for its key performance indicators and output targets. It is invited to provide the KPI scores and to extend cooperation with all EU agencies;

- on 31 December 2019, the establishment plan was 93.92 % executed, with 139 temporary agents appointed out of 148 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget. Of particular concern is the lack of gender balance in senior management (89% men and 11% women) and the Management Board (70% men and 30% women);

- the Agency needs to further develop a long-term human resources policy framework covering work-life balance, lifelong guidance and career development, gender balance, teleworking, geographical balance and the recruitment and integration of people with disabilities;

- the Agency failed to formally appoint at least one member of an evaluation committee of a procurement procedure, jeopardising the transparency of the procurement procedure. Members noted the measures taken by the Agency to prevent this failure from recurring;

- the Agency's exposure to conflicts of interest increased from 16 June 2019, when the Agency became an authority with significant decision-making powers. The Management Board adopted a framework of good administrative behaviour in May 2019 which contains strict measures on the management of conflicts of interest for those involved in the implementation of the fourth railway package;

- since 16 June 2019, the Agency has successfully started to fulfil its role as the EU authority responsible for issuing marketing authorisations for railway vehicles, single safety certificates for railway undertakings and approvals for trackside equipment in the framework of the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS). These missions were carried out in conjunction with the eight Member States that had transposed the technical pillar of the fourth railway package in 2019.