

2019 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Data Protection Supervisor

2020/2148(DEC) - 29/03/2021 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Alin MITUA (Renew Europe, RO) calling on the European Parliament to grant discharge to the European Data Protection Supervisor in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2019.

Members welcomed the conclusion of the Court of Auditors, according to which the payments as a whole for the year ended on 31 December 2019 for administrative and other expenditure of the European Data Protection Supervisor were free from material error and that the examined supervisory and control systems for administrative and other expenditure were effective. They noted with satisfaction that in its annual report for 2019, the Court observed no serious weaknesses in respect of the audited topics related to the EDPS' human resources and procurement activities.

Budgetary and financial management

In 2019, the EDPS had a total allocated budget of EUR 16 638 572 (compared to EUR 14 449 068 in 2018), which represented a 15.15 % increase compared to the 2018 budget. The budget implementation rate in terms of commitments was 91.97 % (compared to 93.7 % in 2018). The report recognised the positive trend in terms of the payment implementation rate which was 80.69 % (compared to 75.2 % in 2018) with a payment appropriation carry-over rate of 12.18 %.

The overall budget increase was mainly due to the impact of the new tasks resulting from the General Data Protection Regulation, (GDPR), which lays down the data protection obligations for the Union institutions and bodies in relation to the processing of personal data and the development of new policies) and the necessary growth of the European Data Protection Board (EDPB) that was created on 25 May 2018 and for which the EDPS was entrusted to provide an independent secretariat. 2019 was the first full year of operation of the EDPB Secretariat and of the implementation of the GDPR, which justifies the increase.

Human resources

The EDPS' budget is mostly administrative, with a large proportion being used for expenditure relating to persons, buildings, furniture, equipment and miscellaneous running costs. A substantial number of staff are contract staff employed for a temporary period, such as the replacement of staff on parental leave or for the implementation of specific actions. Its staff comprises 19 Union nationalities and had a gender representation of 39 % male staff and 61 % female staff in 2019.

There is a slight geographical imbalance in staff, in that only 19 Union nationalities are represented in the EDPS, of which Belgian citizens hold 28 % of the positions.

Members unlined efforts made relating to wellbeing especially during the COVID-19 crisis.

Complaints and inquiries

The report concluded that in 2019, the EDPS received 59 admissible complaints seeking an in-depth inquiry, and that the EDPS issued 48 complaint decisions. It also received 151 inadmissible complaints, the majority relating to data processing at national level as opposed to processing by a Union institution or body. The EDPS replied to all inadmissible complaints, directing the complainant to the relevant authority.