

Procedure file

Basic information		
DEC - Discharge procedure	2016/2206(DEC)	Procedure completed
Discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union agencies for the financial year 2015: performance, financial management and control		
Subject 8.70.03.05 2015 discharge		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	CONT Budgetary Control		08/08/2016
		S&D AYALA SENDER Inés	
		Shadow rapporteur	
		PPE ZDECHOVSKÝ Tomáš	
		ECR FITTO Raffaele	
		ALDE ALI Nedzhmi	
		GUE/NGL DE JONG Dennis	
		Verts/ALE JÁVOR Benedek	
		EFDD VALLI Marco	
		ENF KAPPEL Barbara	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	DEVE Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	INTA International Trade	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	BUDG Budgets	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		09/09/2016
		ALDE HARKIN Marian	
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	TRAN Transport and Tourism	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	REGI Regional Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

European Commission	PECH Fisheries	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	CULT Culture and Education	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	JURI Legal Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	12/10/2016 ALDE JEŽEK Petr
	AFCO Constitutional Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	PETI Petitions	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	Commission DG Budget	Commissioner GEORGIEVA Kristalina

Key events

11/07/2016	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2016)0475	
04/10/2016	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		
22/03/2017	Vote in committee, 1st reading/single reading		
31/03/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A8-0149/2017	Summary
26/04/2017	Debate in Parliament		
27/04/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
27/04/2017	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading	T8-0155/2017	Summary
27/04/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2016/2206(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Modified legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/8/07541

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2016)0475	11/07/2016	EC
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE592.095	02/02/2017	EP
Committee draft report		PE593.896	09/02/2017	EP
Committee opinion	LIBE	PE595.388	15/02/2017	EP
Amendments tabled in committee		PE600.901	07/03/2017	EP

Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A8-0149/2017	31/03/2017	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T8-0155/2017	27/04/2017	EP	Summary

2016/2206(DEC) - 31/03/2017 Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Inés AYALA SENDER (S&D, ES) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union agencies for the financial year 2015: performance, financial management and control.

Members emphasised that the agencies have significant influence on policy and decision-making and programme implementation in areas of vital importance to European citizens, such as health, the environment, human and social rights, migration, refugees, innovation, financial supervision, safety and security.

They insisted on the essential role that agencies have in enhancing the visibility of the Union in the Member States.

On a budgetary level, Members recalled that the agencies 2015 budget amounted to some EUR 2.8 billion, representing an increase of about 7.7 % compared to 2014 and about 2 % of the Unions general budget. The major part of the agencies budget is funded through Commission subsidies, whereas the rest is income from fees or other sources which amount to almost one-third. They noted with concern that Union regulatory agencies in charge of the risk assessment of regulated products, in particular the European Food Safety Authority, the European Chemicals Agency or the European Medicines Agency do not have the financial and legal resources to fulfil their mission properly.

Common approach and the Commissions Roadmap: Members stated that most of the Roadmap actions implemented by the agencies helped to improve their accountability and transparency, which further demonstrates the considerable efforts taken by the agencies to implement the Common Approach, despite the pressure in terms of resources, and showed that agencies are responsible, accountable and transparent. They noted with concern that the implementation of the actions had in addition a generally negative impact on the agencies efficiency, as well as that in certain areas the implementation resulted in significant increases in costs.

Budget and financial management: Members recalled that an elevated level of carry-overs of committed appropriations remains the most frequent issue of the budgetary and financial management affecting 32 agencies, compared with 28 in 2014. They noted that carry-overs may often be partly or fully justified by the multiannual nature of the agencies operational programmes and do not necessarily indicate weaknesses in budget planning and implementation, nor are they always at odds with the budgetary principle of annuality.

Cooperation between agencies: Members highlighted the benefits of sharing services, which enable consistent application of administrative implementing rules and procedures that concern human resources and finance issues. They stated that some agencies continue to have dual operational and administrative headquarters. It is essential that all dual headquarters which do not offer any operational added value should be done away with at the earliest opportunity.

They emphasised the importance of cooperation and exchange of ideas and practices between the agencies within the framework of the Union agencies performance development network, which contributes to more balanced governance and greater coherence between them.

Human resources management: Members are concerned that the Commission applied an additional levy of 5 % of staff to the agencies in order to create a redeployment pool from which it would allocate the posts to the agencies with new tasks entrusted to them or in a start-up phase. They are particularly concerned that with the additional staff reduction, fulfilment of the agencies mandates and annual work programmes proves increasingly difficult.

Conflicts of interest and transparency: Members noted that all agencies already adopted generic rules on whistleblowing as part of the ethics guidelines. They noted with concern however, that only 65 % of the agencies adopted additional internal rules on whistleblowing. They called on the agencies which have still not adopted the internal whistleblowing rules to do so without delay. They encouraged the agencies to further strengthen their visibility and to continue to develop various communication channels that would present their work and activities to wide public.

Other comments: Members acknowledged the high number of agencies which have been set up in the area of freedom, security and justice but reiterates the importance of the missions which they carry out and their direct impact on citizens' lives. They stressed that all agencies have been set up in response to a specific needs and created European added value.

Lastly, Members requested that all justice and home affairs agencies identify financial, resource or other bottlenecks hindering their operational performance.

2016/2206(DEC) - 27/04/2017 Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 506 votes to 98 with 27 abstentions, a resolution on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union agencies for the financial year 2015: performance, financial management and control.

Parliament emphasised that the agencies have significant influence on policy and decision-making and programme implementation in areas of vital importance to European citizens, such as health, the environment, human and social rights, migration, refugees, innovation, financial supervision, safety and security.

It insisted on the essential role that agencies have in enhancing the visibility of the Union in the Member States.

On a budgetary level, Parliament recalled that the agencies 2015 budget amounted to some EUR 2.8 billion, representing an increase of about 7.7 % compared to 2014 and about 2 % of the Unions general budget. The major part of the Agencies budget is funded through Commission subsidies, whereas the rest is income from fees or other sources which amount to almost one-third. It noted with concern that Union regulatory agencies in charge of the risk assessment of regulated products, in particular the European Food Safety Authority, the European Chemicals Agency or the European Medicines Agency do not have the financial and legal resources to fulfil their mission properly.

Common approach and the Commissions Roadmap: Parliament stated that most of the Roadmap actions implemented by the agencies helped to improve their accountability and transparency, which further demonstrates the considerable efforts taken by the agencies to implement the Common Approach, despite the pressure in terms of resources, and showed that agencies are responsible, accountable and transparent. It noted with concern that the implementation of the actions had in addition a generally negative impact on the agencies efficiency, as well as that in certain areas the implementation resulted in significant increases in costs. Parliament also acknowledged the administrative burden that the implementation of the Roadmap has caused to the agencies, as well as the outsourcing of several tasks related to collecting and consolidating agencies data and input to the Network, in particular with regard to the budgetary and discharge procedure. The Commission and the budgetary authority are called upon to recognise these efforts, and to provide additional resources in the establishment plan of the agencies.

Budget and financial management: Parliament recalled that an elevated level of carry-overs of committed appropriations remains the most frequent issue of the budgetary and financial management affecting 32 agencies, compared with 28 in 2014. It noted that carry-overs may often be partly or fully justified by the multiannual nature of the agencies operational programmes and do not necessarily indicate weaknesses in budget planning and implementation, nor are they always at odds with the budgetary principle of annuality.

Cooperation between agencies: Parliament highlighted the benefits of sharing services, which enable consistent application of administrative implementing rules and procedures that concern human resources and finance issues. It stated that some agencies continue to have dual operational and administrative headquarters. It is essential that all dual headquarters which do not offer any operational added value should be done away with at the earliest opportunity.

Members emphasised the importance of cooperation and exchange of ideas and practices between the agencies within the framework of the Union agencies performance development network, which contributes to more balanced governance and greater coherence between them.

Human resources management: Parliament is concerned that the Commission applied an additional levy of 5 % of staff to the agencies in order to create a redeployment pool from which it would allocate the posts to the agencies with new tasks entrusted to them or in a start-up phase. It is particularly concerned that with the additional staff reduction, fulfilment of the agencies mandates and annual work programmes proves increasingly difficult.

Conflicts of interest and transparency: Parliament noted that all agencies already adopted generic rules on whistleblowing as part of the ethics guidelines. It noted with concern however, that only 65 % of the agencies adopted additional internal rules on whistleblowing. It called on the agencies which have still not adopted the internal whistleblowing rules to do so without delay.

Communication and visibility: Parliament noted that the agencies are actively promoting their work through various channels, in particular by regularly updating their websites to provide information and promote the work delivered as well as open-days to provide citizens with opportunities to learn more about the work of the agencies and the Union institutions.

Other comments: Parliament acknowledged the high number of agencies which have been set up in the area of freedom, security and justice but reiterates the importance of the missions which they carry out and their direct impact on citizens' lives. It stressed that all agencies have been set up in response to a specific needs and created European added value.

Lastly, Parliament requested that all justice and home affairs agencies identify financial, resource or other bottlenecks hindering their operational performance.