European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

2016/0256(COD) - 28/07/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs adopted the report by Enrique CALVET CHAMBON (ALDE, ES) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions (Eurofound), and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1365/75.

The committee recommended that the European Parliaments position adopted at first reading in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission proposal as follows.

Objective and tasks of the Agency: Members believe that Eurofound tasks should go beyond analysis and research to provide policy-makers, including social partners, with research-based policy proposals in the area of ??health and safety of workers. It should also carry out studies and, in the areas of the Agencys expertise, carry out pilot projects and preparatory actions on the basis of indirect management.

The Tripartite Agency should also:

- continue producing surveys in order to ensure the continuity of comparative analyses and trends in living and working conditions and labour market developments in the Union;
- collaborate, in particular with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and, where appropriate, other Union agencies.

Management Board: this shall include the participation of three independent experts appointed by the European Parliament after verifying that the appointments raise no conflicts of interest.

When appointing their respective representatives and alternates to the Management Board, the European Parliament, the Commission, the Member States and the social partners shall ensure a balanced representation of men and women. In additions, each member and alternate member shall sign a written declaration of interests when taking office. The declarations of interest shall be published on the Agencys website.

A representative of EU-OSHA, a representative of Cedefop and a representative of the European Training Foundation should have observer status at meetings of the Management Board in order to enhance the efficiency of the agencies and the synergies between them.

The Management Board shall, inter alia:

- give the strategic orientations for the Agency's activities, coherent with the needs of its main stakeholders;
- adopt rules, including measures for detecting potential risks at an early stage, for the prevention and management of conflicts of interest in respect of its members and independent experts, as well as for seconded national experts.

Members proposed deleting the provision authorising the Management Board to take all decisions concerning the Agencys internal structures and their modification.

Annual and multi-annual programming: the annual work programme shall comprise detailed objectives and expected results, including performance indicators, as well as activities and programmes that are to be subject to ex-ante or ex-post evaluations.

Where new tasks are conferred upon the Agency by the Union institutions or by Union legal acts, this shall be taken into account in its resource and financial programming.

Executive Director: the Executive Director shall be responsible for the overall management of the Agency in accordance with the strategic direction set out by the Management Board. Once appointed, the Executive Director shall attend a hearing at the responsible committee of the European Parliament.

The Executive Director shall also be responsible for:

- preparing the Agencys draft statement of estimates of revenue and expenditure and implementing its budget, as part of the Agencys programming document;
- taking decisions with regard to the management of human resources;
- taking decisions with regard to the Agency's internal structures and, where necessary, their amendment, taking into account needs relating to the Agency's activities and sound budgetary management;
- cooperating with other Union agencies, and concluding cooperation agreements with them;
- establishing an office in Brussels as a liaison office to further the Agency's cooperation with the relevant Union institutions.

The Deputy Director shall support the Executive Director in carrying out the Agencys functions and activities.

Eurofound budget: this should be prepared in accordance with the principle of performance-based budgeting taking into account its objectives and expected results. The Eurofound accounts should be audited by the European Court of Auditors.