2016 discharge: European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

2017/2177(DEC) - 09/02/2018 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

Having examined the revenue and expenditure accounts for the financial year 2016 and the balance sheet as at 31 December 2016 of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), as well as the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the Office for the financial year 2016, accompanied by the Office's replies to the Court's observations, the Council recommended the European Parliament to give a discharge to the Executive Director of the Office in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2016.

The Council welcomed the Court's opinion that, in all material respects, the Office's annual accounts present fairly its financial position as at 31 December 2016 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of the Office's Financial Regulation, and that the underlying transactions for 2016 are legal and regular in all material respects.

Nevertheless, the following observations were made:

- procurement: the Council noted the increased level of responsibility and the Office's involvement in tackling the migration crisis in 2016. In this regard, it regretted the Court's qualified opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts due to the lack of rigour in the management of two procurement procedures. It called on the Office to request further explanations from tenderers that present abnormally low offers and introduce systematic checks for every supplier's quotes and invoices issued to the framework contractor. The Council also called on the Office to improve the planning for procurement procedures for administrative expenditure and to improve the monitoring of procedures and contracts under framework contracts, as already agreed in an action plan between the Office and Commission's Internal Audit Service;
- financial planning: the Council called on the Office to continue improving its financial programming in order to reduce the level of commitments carried over to the next financial year to the minimum strictly necessary;
- action plan: lastly, the Office is encouraged to implement the action plan to increase the efficiency of operations and to further ensure cooperation and coherence of activities with its EU and international partners working on migration related issues.