



Procedure file

Basic information		
DEC - Discharge procedure	2006/2158(DEC)	Procedure completed
2005 discharge: European Environment Agency		
Subject 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	CONT Budgetary Control		20/04/2006
		PSE HERCZOG Edit	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		14/09/2006
		PSE HAUG Jutta	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2787	27/02/2007
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Budget	KALLAS Siim	

Key events			
31/10/2006	Non-legislative basic document published	N6-0026/2006	Summary
29/11/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
26/03/2007	Vote in committee		Summary
30/03/2007	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0103/2007	
24/04/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
24/04/2007	Debate in Parliament		
24/04/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0117/2007	Summary
24/04/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		
15/07/2008	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2006/2158(DEC)

Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 100
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/6/42408

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		N6-0026/2006 OJ C 266 31.10.2006, p. 0001	31/10/2006	OS	Summary
Court of Auditors: opinion, report		N6-0001/2007 OJ C 312 19.12.2006, p. 0001	19/12/2006	CofA	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document		05711/2007	07/02/2007	CSL	Summary
Committee draft report		PE384.437	09/02/2007	EP	
Committee opinion	ENVI	PE382.437	28/02/2007	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE386.400	08/03/2007	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0103/2007	30/03/2007	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0117/2007	24/04/2007	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2007)2625/2	31/05/2007	EC	

Final act

[Budget 2008/515](#)
[OJ L 187 15.07.2008, p. 0106](#) Summary

2005 discharge: European Environment Agency

PURPOSE: presentation of the final accounts of the European Environment Agency for the financial year 2005.

CONTENT: this document published in the Official Journal of the EU sets out a detailed account of the implementation of the 2005 budget, including the revenue and expenditure and the balance sheet for the year concerned.

According to this document, the final budget amounted to EUR 32.1 million (against EUR 31.1 million in 2004) including an 84% Community subsidy.

As regards the staffing policy, the Agency, whose headquarters are in Copenhagen (Denmark), officially set out 115 posts in its establishment plan. 107 of these posts are currently occupied with + 34 other posts (auxiliary contracts, seconded national experts, local and employment-agency staff) assigned to operational, administrative and mixed tasks. Staff expenditure amounted to EUR 14.5 million.

The Agency's main activities concentrated on the following :

- the launch of the report on the state of, trends in and prospects for the environment entitled 'The European environment: state and outlook 2005';
- implementation of base indicators concerning the state of the environment as an operational part of the AEE's environmental information system;
- launch of the process of 'Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators';
- launch of two new topic centres on biodiversity and resource and waste management;
- seminars organised under the Presidency of the Council;
- assistance in harmonising data;
- management of the EIONET network (European Environment Information and Observation Network).

The complete version of the final accounts may be found at the following address:

2005 discharge: European Environment Agency

The committee adopted the report by Edit HERCZOG (PES, HU) granting discharge to the European Environment Agency for 2005. In its accompanying resolution, it made a number of general points concerning the majority of the EU agencies:

- the ever-growing number of Community Agencies and the activities of some of them do not seem to form part of an overall policy framework, and "the remits of some Agencies do not always reflect the real needs of the Union or the expectations of its citizens?";
- the Commission should therefore define an overall policy framework and should present a cost-benefit study before the setting up of any new Agency, and the Court of Auditors should give its opinion on this study before Parliament takes its decision;
- every 5 years, the Commission should present a study on the added value of every existing Agency; where the evaluation is negative in the case of a particular Agency the latter?s mandate should be reformulated or the Agency should be closed;
- the Commission should improve administrative and technical support to the Agencies, given the growing complexity of the Community?s administrative rules and technical problems;
- the Agencies should improve their cooperation and benchmarking with actors in the field;
- the Commission should harmonise the format of the annual reporting by the Agencies to develop performance indicators which would allow a comparison of their efficiency.

In its specific remarks concerning the European Environment Agency, the report noted that the carry-over rate for commitments for its operating activities remained high, at 30%, and called for this to be reduced given the difficulties it created for the management of the following year?s appropriations. The committee also called for improved information in the authorising officer?s annual activity report and for full compliance with EU recruitment procedures. Lastly, the Agency was encouraged to develop its communication methods in order to attract more media coverage for its findings "and thus feed public debate on important environmental issues".

2005 discharge: European Environment Agency

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Edit HERCZOG (PSE, HU), and granted the executive director of the European Environment Agency discharge for the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2005. It then approved closing the accounts of the Agency for the financial year 2005.

The Parliamentary resolution is divided into two parts. The first contained general points, and concerned the majority of EU Agencies requiring individual discharge. The second part contained specific points relating to the Agency.

General points: Parliament considers that the ever-growing number of Community Agencies and the activities of certain of them do not seem to form part of an overall policy framework, and that the remits of some Agencies do not always reflect the real needs of the Union. Accordingly, it invites the Commission to define an overall policy framework for the setting up of new Community Agencies and to present a cost-benefit study before the setting up of any new agency, while being careful to avoid any overlap of activities between Agencies or with the remits of other European organisations. Parliament calls on the Court of Auditors to give its opinion on this cost-benefit study before Parliament takes its decision, and it asks the Commission to present every five years a study on the added value of every existing Agency. ; invites all relevant institutions In the case of a negative evaluation of the added value of an Agency, all relevant institutions are asked to take the necessary steps by reformulating the mandate of that Agency or by closing it.

In view of the constantly increasing number of Agencies, Parliament feels that the Directorates-General of the Commission charged with the setting up and monitoring of Agencies must develop a common approach to the Agencies. It also asks the Commission to improve administrative and technical support to the Agencies. Parliament regretted that the negotiations on the draft interinstitutional agreement on the operating framework for the European regulatory agencies have not yet been concluded, and calls on the Commission, in consultation with the Court of Auditors, to do their utmost to ensure that the agreement is brought to a rapid conclusion. Noting that the Commission's budgetary responsibility calls for closer linking of the Agencies to the Commission, Parliament calls on the Commission and the Council to take all necessary steps to give the Commission a blocking minority in the supervisory bodies of the regulatory Agencies by 31 December 2007 and to provide for such a minority from the outset when new Agencies are set up. It invites the Court of Auditors to create an additional chapter in its Annual Report, devoted to all Agencies to be discharged under the Commission's accounts in order to have a much clearer picture of the use of EU funds by Agencies.

Parliament goes on to ask the Commission to come up with a proposal to harmonise the format of the annual reporting by the Agencies and to develop performance indicators which would allow a comparison of their efficiency. The Commission is urged to monitor and direct the management of the Agencies, especially in relation to the proper application of tender procedures, transparency of recruitment procedures, sound financial management and, most importantly, the proper application of the rules concerning the internal control framework.

Specific points concerning the European Environment Agency: Parliament notes that the carry-over rate for commitments for its operating activities remained high, at 30%, and called for this to be reduced given the difficulties it created for the management of the following year?s appropriations. The Agency was asked to improve the internal control systems, noting that the authorising officers have not provided a formal description of the systems that they use for supplying and substantiating accounts information and the accounting officer has therefore still not been able to validate them. There are still shortcomings in the authorising officer's annual activity report which does not supply adequate information on the results of the year's activities in relation to the objectives established, the associated risks, the use of resources and the functioning of the internal control systems. Parliament asks the Agency to respect procedures for recruitment, as well as the evaluation criteria in procurement procedures. It considers the Agency to be a source of important environmental information for all EU institutions and

policy-making, noting with satisfaction that the Agency has been able to transform some complicated data into clear conclusions and to communicate them to the public. Parliament acknowledges, in particular, the importance of the report 'The European environment - State and outlook 2005' in providing user-friendly information on the environment and pinpointing the key challenges facing the EU and Member States.

Lastly, Parliament asks that, before 1 January 2010 and every five years thereafter, the Agency commission an independent external evaluation of its achievements and work programmes. The Agency should examine the conclusions of the evaluation and draft such recommendations to the Commission and Parliament as may be necessary regarding changes in the Agency, its working practices and programmes. The evaluation and the recommendations should be made public.

2005 discharge: European Environment Agency

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Environment Agency for the financial year 2005.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision 2008/515/EC of the European Parliament on the discharge for the implementation of the budget of the European Environment Agency for the financial year 2005.

CONTENT: with the present decision, the European Parliament grants discharge to the Executive Director of the European Environment Agency for the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2005.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 24 April 2007 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 24/04/2007).