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*Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety*

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**2015/2176(DEC)**

26.1.2016

# OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European  
Food Safety Authority for the financial year 2014  
(2015/2176(DEC))

Rapporteur: Giovanni La Via

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## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that in 2014 an amount of EUR 80 547 505 was made available to the European Food Safety Authority ('the Authority') through the general budget of the European Union and that this amount represents 0,056% of the overall EU budget;
2. Notes that the level of execution amounts to 98,9% which represents an amount of unused appropriations of EUR 0,918 million; notes also that this under-execution corresponds to the unused assigned revenue (the Authority's outturn of 2013), which was reused in 2015;
3. Takes note that 330 posts out of 344 had been filled by the end of 2014; welcomes the increase in the occupation rate compared to 2013;
4. Welcomes the fact that, in 2014, the Authority put in place a talent management programme to optimise the use of its human resources (staff and experts);
5. Is especially aware of the public interest in the decision-making process within the Authority, which takes place within its legal role and responsibilities; highlights the fact that credible rules on integrity are essential and furthermore that communication and availability for the media are paramount ; notes that the Authority is dedicating 74% of its human resources to scientific activities, evaluation and data collection and communication; encourages the Authority to further progress on this path;
6. Takes note of the comment made by the Court of Auditors, which focuses on mistakes in salary payments, leading to underpayment for the period 2005 to 2014, and calls on the Authority to take corrective measures accordingly as soon as possible;
7. Welcomes the Authority's efforts to implement corrective actions following the previous comments by the Court of Auditors, particularly the improvements made to its annual work programme to include more details on planned procurements and grants; acknowledges the work done, since 2012, to improve the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control system through rigorous self-assessment, a process that is still on-going;
8. Also welcomes the Authority's efforts to implement corrective actions following the comments made by the Parliament in the context of the 2013 discharge procedure, in the areas of financial controlling, internal control standards and internal audit; and furthermore takes note of the Authority's efforts to improve the system in place for managing the interests of the Authority's scientific experts;
9. Reminds the Authority of the European Ombudsman's ruling stating that the Authority "should revise its conflict of interest rules" to ensure that experts who work for academia declare all relevant information to the Authority;

10. Looks forward to the results of the Authority's systemic review of its policy on independence and the scientific decision-making process;
11. Points out that the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union gives individuals the right to access public documents; recalls that scientific rigour is best ensured by having transparency and accountability in relation to results;
12. Believes that the Authority should continue to pay special attention to public opinion, and commit itself, as much as possible, to openness and transparency; notes that the measures taken towards process transparency in risk-assessment are a welcome first step, however data transparency should also be ensured; welcomes, in this respect, the launch, in January 2013, of the transparency initiative; welcomes, in this context, the improved presentation and accessibility of information and documents on the Authority's homepage and other action taken, such as risk assessment opinions and the impact they have on Union citizens, towards an "open EFSA"; encourages the Authority to further progress on this path;
13. Asks the responsible body of the Authority to implement the anti-fraud strategy as soon as possible;
14. Welcomes the fact that the Court of Auditors announced that the transactions underlying the annual accounts of the Authority for the financial year 2014 were legal and regular in all material respects;
15. Recommends, on the basis of the facts available, that discharge be granted to the Executive Director of the European Food Safety Authority with respect to the implementation of the Authority's budget for the financial year 2014.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	21.1.2016
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 49 -: 14 0: 5
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Marco Affronte, Pilar Ayuso, Zoltán Balczó, Catherine Bearder, Ivo Belet, Simona Bonafè, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nessa Childers, Birgit Collin-Langen, Mireille D'Ornano, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Angélique Delahaye, Jörn Dohrmann, Ian Duncan, Stefan Eck, Bas Eickhout, Eleonora Evi, José Inácio Faria, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Sylvie Goddyn, Matthias Groote, Françoise Grossetête, Jytte Guteland, György Hölvényi, Jean-François Jalkh, Benedek Jávor, Karin Kadenbach, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Valentinas Mazuronis, Susanne Melior, Miroslav Mikolášik, Piernicola Pedicini, Bolesław G. Piecha, Marcus Pretzell, Frédérique Ries, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Davor Škrlec, Renate Sommer, Tibor Szanyi, Claudiu Ciprian Tălculescu, Estefanía Torres Martínez, Nils Torvalds, Glenis Willmott, Damiano Zoffoli
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Paul Brannen, Herbert Dorfmann, Christofer Fjellner, Luke Ming Flanagan, Elena Gentile, Martin Häusling, Karol Karski, Andrey Kovatchev, Merja Kyllönen, Marijana Petir, Christel Schaldemose, Jasenko Selimovic, Bart Staes, Mihai Stănescu, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Carlos Zorrinho
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Daniel Dalton