

ENISA's comments on the follow-up report on European Parliament's recommendations concerning 2017 ENISA discharge

Please find below ENISA's comments on the European Parliament resolution of 26 March 2019 with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security for the financial year 2017 (2018/2192(DEC))

The European Parliament

ENISA's comments

<i>Budget and financial management</i>	
1. Notes with appreciation that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2017 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99,99 %, representing an increase of 1,52 % compared to 2016; notes that the payment appropriations execution rate was 88,19 %, representing a slight decrease of 0,99 % compared to 2016;	ENISA ("the Agency") is grateful that its best efforts to implement a high budgetary rate are appreciated by the European Parliament.
<i>Cancellation of carryovers</i>	
2. Notes with concern that the cancellations of carryovers from 2016 to 2017 amounted to EUR 90 916, representing 9,39 % of the total amount carried forward, showing an increase of 3,67 % in comparison to 2016	<p>The cancelled amounts are mainly due to the cancellation of three minor projects and to the difficult estimation of provisional commitments.</p> <p>The cancellation only represents 0,87 % of 2016 budget, setting the overall 2016 budgetary execution to a satisfactory rate of 99,13 %.</p> <p>The cancelled amount of EUR 90 916 was returned back to the 2017 EU's general budget.</p>

Performance	
<p>3. Notes with satisfaction that the Agency uses certain key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess the added value provided by its activities and to enhance its budget management, focusing more qualitative indicators for the assessment of the achievement of its operational goals and more quantitative indicators for its administrative goals; notes, furthermore, that impact indicators show that the Agency's results exceeded the targets established in the Work Programme 2017, against the framework of the ENISA Strategy 2016–2020; invites the Agency to further develop the KPIs to better assess the outcome and impact of its activities, in order to gain advice on how to provide more added value for the Agency's outputs;</p>	<p>ENISA is thankful that the European Parliament acknowledges ENISA's results exceeding the 2017 targets.</p> <p>In order to best meet its stakeholders' expectations, the Agency is continuously enhancing its reporting package by tailoring its qualitative and quantitative KPIs to efficiently measure its impact.</p>
<p>4. Notes with appreciation that, in 2017, the Agency started the process of helping Member States to implement Directive (EU) 2016/1148 and that it compiled a data breach severity assessment tool, in collaboration with several Member States' authorities, in order to set up a coherent framework at Union level;</p>	<p>ENISA welcomes these appreciative comments.</p>
<p>5. Notes in addition that in 2017 ENISA received the EU Ombudsman Award for Good Administration for Excellence in Innovation – Transformation;</p>	
<p>6. Notes with appreciation that the Agency and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training signed a service-level agreement which enables them to share conference facilities and storage space among other synergies;</p>	<p>In order to use the EU budget more efficiently, ENISA will always encourage synergies' creation with other EU bodies.</p>
<p>7. Notes that a study on the external evaluation of the Agency's performance over the 2013 to 2016 period was carried out on behalf of the Commission in 2017; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority on the outcome of this study and the respective actions taken in order to address any recommendations made;</p>	<p>While no action plan was formalised, relevant recommendations have nevertheless been implemented.</p> <p>Moreover, an internal audit carried out by the IAS had overlapping recommendations for which a formal remedial action plan has been agreed.</p>

Staff policy	
8. Notes with concern that, on 31 December 2017, the establishment plan was only 87,5 % executed, with 42 temporary agents appointed out of 48 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (compared with 48 authorised posts in 2016); notes that, in addition, 29 contract agents and three seconded national experts worked for the Agency in 2017;	The Agency is facing a turnover of staff due to the difficulties in recruiting and retaining caused by the low salary coefficient factor in Greece, level of available post in the Agency establishment plan and the deficit and demand of professionals in the IT security labour market in Europe.
9. Notes that the Agency has adopted a policy on protecting the dignity of the person and preventing harassment; acknowledges that it organised training sessions and enabled confidential counselling;	ENISA welcomes the acknowledgment of its effort to manage this matter.
10. Notes from the Court's report that in 2016, the Agency moved eight additional staff to Athens, reducing the number of staff in Heraklion to 14; notes that according to the Agency, at the end 2017, that number was further reduced to 11 staff members; highlights the fact that in accordance with the Court's 2013 Report, it is likely that costs could be further reduced if all staff were centralised in one location; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority on any possible measures to address the situation;	A small number of seven staff members are currently working at Heraklion's premises. These staff members are involved in administrative or horizontal services. The Agency will further study the relevance of the facilities in Heraklion, in line with the current seat agreement and programs developed in those facilities. .
11. Notes with concern that the Agency finds it difficult to recruit, attract and hold suitably qualified staff, mainly due to the types of post that are being offered (contract agents posts) and the low correction coefficient factor which applies to the salaries of the Agency's employees in Greece;	The Agency has implemented a number of social measures (i.e. agreements with international schools, compensation for non-existing canteen in the agency facilities , etc...) in order to increase it's the agency attractiveness.
12. Welcomes the suggestion of the Court to publish vacancy notices also on the website of the European Personnel Selection Office in order to increase publicity; understands the concern of the Agency for what concerns translation costs;	The Agency do not have the necessary appropriations for advertise all posts in all EU languages as imposed by EPSO. The agency aligned with other EU decentralised Agencies to publish in several websites and publications across Europe and also the EU Agencies

	network website, at the moment the quantity and quality of application is considered adequate.
13. Regrets that, as pointed out by the Court, the hand-over process to the new accounting officer of the Agency was improperly carried out, in particular there was no hand-over report transmitted to the new accountant; notes from the Agency's reply that informal meetings took place in order to transfer knowledge and that the Agency will implement corrective actions to ensure adequate hand-over to new staff in the future; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority on the implementation of the corrective actions;	Hand-over procedures are currently being reviewed to address this particular issue. These are considered to be included in the sensitive posts policy which is currently being drafted for Management Board adoption late 2019.

<i>Prevention and management of conflicts of interests and transparency</i>	
14. Notes the Agency's existing measures on and ongoing efforts to secure transparency, prevention and management of conflicts of interests, and whistle-blower protection; points out with concern, however, that only the CVs of the executive director and the Chair of the management board (MB) are published on its website, and furthermore, that the Agency publishes only the executive director's declaration of conflicts of interests on its website, but not of the other senior management members; calls on the Agency to publish the CVs of all the members of the MB and the declarations of conflicts of interests of its senior management and to report to the discharge authority on the measures taken in this regard;	The CV of the Management Board members as well as their declaration of interest and declaration of commitment are now published on the ENISA webpage.

<i>Other comments</i>	
15. Notes with concern that, unlike most other agencies, the Agency did not carry out a comprehensive analysis of the likely impact of the United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union on its organisation, operations and accounts; note from the Agency's reply that it has revised some of its	BREXIT's impact on ENISA's operations and administration is very limited. However, the Agency has reviewed its internal processes (i.e. procurement, recruitment, relation with stakeholders etc.) to mitigate any risks linked to the BREXIT possibility.

relevant internal processes in that regard; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority on the measures taken in order to mitigate any risks involved;	Moreover, none of these risks are deemed as critical but are rather considered as very low.
16. Notes the Agency's moderate efforts to ensure a cost-effective and environment-friendly working place; points out that the Agency does not have any additional measures in place to reduce or offset CO ² emissions	ENISA has not yet formalised a strategy to ensure environment-friendly working place but several internal initiatives have been implemented to reduce its impact on the environment (i.e. increase of use of recycling bins, going green awareness for staff, etc.).
17. Refers, for other observations of a cross-cutting nature accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution of 26 March 2019 ¹ on the performance, financial management and control of the agencies.	

