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[Press release](#) | 10.05.2011

## Budget discharge

### European Medicines Agency in need of urgent treatment

A majority of the European Parliament decided today not to grant discharge to the European Medicines Agency (EMA) in respect of the implementation of its 2009 budget. The agency now has 6 months to come up with a clear response and proposals to improve its procedures. After the vote, Green MEP and vice-chair of the EP budgetary control committee **Bart Staes** said:

*"This vote should be a wake up call for the European Medicines Agency. The EMA is a mess, with the European Court of Auditors having issued a damning verdict on how it managed its budget of almost €200 million in 2009. There is an urgent need to improve various aspects of its operations, notably the quality of its procurement procedures, which account for a significant chunk of the EMA's budget, as well as the apparent conflicts of interest with its staffing (1). Clearer procedures and oversight measures are also necessary to ensure the Agency's budget, which is co-financed through EU funds and pharmaceutical companies. Given the important role of this agency in ensuring the safety of new medicines on the EU market, it is all the more important that the EMA must now come forward with clear proposals to address these problems as soon as possible."*

French MEP **Michèle Rivasi** added:

*"The EP has today sent a strong message to the EMA to pull up its socks. Conflicts of interests of its staff, problems with access to documents, poor quality scientific analysis, accounting irregularities...the list of problems repeatedly highlighted by the Court of Auditors is long. This agency does not operate properly and the EMA needs to urgently undergo deep surgery."*

(1) The Court of Auditors criticised the failure to adhere to, and frequent lack of, implementing procedures regarding the identification and management of conflicts of interest for its staff and experts as well as the criteria used for recruiting staff. The court identified potential risks to the independence of experts/staff involved in the evaluation of medicinal products, which could have not only detrimental consequences but also negative effects on public health.

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## **Responsible MEPs**



Michèle Rivasi

Member



Bart Staes

Member

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