

2011 discharge: EU general budget, Section III, Commission and executive agencies

2012/2167(DEC) - 17/04/2013 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Commission for the financial year 2011.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision 2013/537/EU, Euratom of the European Parliament on discharge in respect of the implementation of the European Union's General Budget, section III – Commission and executive agencies, for the financial year 2011.

CONTENT: with the present decision, the European Parliament grants discharge to the Commission in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2011.

The parallel decision 2013/544/EU, Euratom approves the closure of the accounts for the financial year in question.

In its resolution annexed to the discharge decision, the European Parliament welcomed the fact that the annual accounts of the Union for the financial year 2011 present fairly, and in all material respects, the position of the Union as at 31 December 2011, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the then completed year. Parliament deeply regretted that **payments remain materially affected by error (3.9%)**. It noted with concern that the policy groups agriculture; market and direct support; rural development, environment, fisheries and health; regional policy, energy and transport; employment and social affairs, as well as research and other internal policies, are materially affected by error. It is dismayed about this increase compared to 2010.

Parliament considered that certain priority actions need to be taken in order to improve the implementation of the budget:

- actions to reinforce the present sanction system (interruption, suspension, financial corrections) by reducing the possibility of replacing ineligible expenditure with other expenditure during the next programming period thereby creating an additional incentive for Member States to detect and correct errors at an early stage (notably for actions and projects financed by Commission DGs AGRI and REGIO);
- measures to enhance the use of performance audits as well as the EU-added value of financed programmes;
- equip the Union with sufficient own resources for growth, identify and implement actions which would increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the collection of customs duties and VAT in the Member States;
- measures to ensure that all banking activities related to advising on, and setting up, offshore structures are made illegal and that **no bank within the European Union involved in such activities will or can receive European funding** under any scheme or benefit from national support measures.

Parliament also makes a series of other observations in a resolution annexed to the discharge decision. For further details concerning these observations, please refer to the summary of the opinion dated 17 April 2013.

It should also be noted that with Decisions 2013/538/EU, Euratom, 2013/539/EU, Euratom; 2013/540/EU, Euratom, 2013/541/EU, Euratom, 2013/542/EU, Euratom, and 2013/543/EU, Euratom, the European

Parliament also grants discharge to the directors of the executive agencies “Education, Audiovisual and Culture”, “Competitiveness and Innovation”, “Health and Consumers”, “Trans-European Networks For Transport”, “European Research Council” and, lastly, “Research” in respect of the implementation of their respective budgets for the financial year 2011.