2017 discharge: EU general budget, European Committee of the Regions

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PURPOSE: presentation by the Commission of the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2017, as part of the 2017 discharge procedure.

Analysis of the accounts of the EU Institutions: **Committee of the Regions.**

CONTENT: the organisational governance of the EU consists of institutions, agencies and other EU bodies whose expenditure is included in the general budget of the Union.

This Commission document concerns the **EU's consolidated accounts for the year 2017** and details how spending by the EU institutions and bodies was carried out. The consolidated annual accounts of the EU provide financial information on the activities of the institutions, agencies and other bodies of the EU from an accrual accounting and budgetary perspective.

It is the responsibility of the Commission's Accounting Officer to prepare the EU's consolidated annual accounts and ensure that they present fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position, the result of the operations and the cash flows of the EU institutions and bodies with a view to granting discharge.

Discharge procedure: **the final step of a budget lifecycle is the discharge**. It is the decision by which the European Parliament '**releases**' the Commission from its responsibility for management of a given budget by marking the end of that budget's existence. It is granted by the European Parliament on the recommendation of the Council.

The decision is based in particular on the European Court of Auditors reports, in particular its annual report, in which the Court provides a Statement of Assurance (DAS) on the legality and regularity of transactions (payments and commitments).

The procedure results in the granting, postponement or refusal of discharge.

The final discharge report including specific recommendations to the Commission for action is adopted in plenary by the European Parliament and are subject to an annual follow up report in which the Commission outlines the concrete actions it has taken to implement the recommendations made.

All EU institutions and other agencies, bodies and joint undertakings are subject to their own discharge procedures.

Implementation of the Committee of the Regions' appropriations for the financial year 2017: the approved budget for 2017 was **EUR 93.3 million**. **98%** of all appropriations were committed by the end of 2017.

As regards the budgetary implementation of the CoR, the 2017 Annual Activity Report noted that the Committee focused on the following:

- 2017 was the third year of the CoR’s sixth term of office 2015-2020 under the Presidency of Markku Markkula as its President and Karl-Heinz Lambertz as First Vice-President. In 2017, Karl-Heinz Lambertz took over as President and Markku Markkula became in his turn First Vice-President;
- the CoR met five times in Plenary Session in 2017 and two external Bureau meetings were organised marking the EU Presidencies.