2016 discharge: EU general budget, European Council and Council

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By adopting the second report by Marco VALLI's (EFDD, IT) on the discharge for the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2016, Section II - European Council and Council, the Committee on Budgetary Control called on Parliament to **refuse discharge** to the Secretary-General of the Council on the implementation of the budget of the European Council and the Council for the financial year 2016.

Members deplored the fact that the **Council has not responded to the observations made by Parliament** in its discharge resolution of 18 April 2018, following the trend from previous years. They expressed support for the successful paradigm shift towards **performance-based budgeting** in the Commission's budget planning. The European Council and the Council are encouraged to apply this method to their own budget-planning procedure.

Outstanding issues: Members regretted that the request for the budgets of the European Council and the Council to be separated, made by Parliament in previous discharge resolutions, has not been considered. They called on the Council to:

- communicate as soon as possible its reply to the European Ombudsman's strategic report on the **transparency of the legislative procedure** to the Council. The Ombudsman had requested a response to suggestions for improvements by 9 May 2018;
- report on the progress of **building projects** and present a detailed breakdown of the costs incurred to date;
- present an overview of **human resources** to be broken down by category, grade, gender, nationality and training;
- clarify what measures it has taken to overcome the irregular nomination of a judge to the Court of Justice of the European Union;
- perform **impact assessments** on the financial, administrative, human and other consequences related to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union and inform Parliament of the conclusions of these assessments by the end of 2018.

Members reiterated their call for a successful outcome of the negotiations that will lead to Council joining the **register**.

State of play: Members welcomed the informal exchanges that took place between Parliament and Council in order to discuss solutions to the current impasse in respect of the discharge procedure. They regretted the **difficulties repeatedly encountered** in the discharge procedures to date which were due to a lack of cooperation from Council.

The report noted the Commission's view, expressed in January 2014, that all institutions are fully part of the follow-up process to the observations made by Parliament in the discharge exercise and that all institutions should cooperate to ensure the smooth functioning of the discharge procedure.