2016 discharge: EU general budget, European Commission and executive agencies

2017/2136(DEC) - 03/10/2018 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Commission for the financial year 2016.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision (EU, Euratom) 2018/1313 of the European Parliament on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2016, Section III — Commission.

CONTENT: the European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Commission for the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2016.

This decision is accompanied by a resolution of the European Parliament containing the observations which form an integral part of the discharge decision in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2016 (*please refer to the summary dated 18.4.2018*).

In this resolution, Parliament called on the Member States to **align the Union's policy objectives and financial cycles, the legislative period of the Parliament and the mandate of the Commission**. It insisted that the Union budget, as a consequence of the 'budget focused on results initiative', be presented according to the Union's political objectives for the MFF.

The Commission is invited to:

- commit itself to fundamentally reviewing the young farmers' and greening schemes for the next MFF;
- speed up the delivery of cohesion policy programmes and related payments with a view to reducing the length of the implementation period, initially, to year n+2;
- fulfil the original 20 % spending target in integrating climate action into the various Union spending programmes;
- improve transparency of migration policy, for trust funds and for the external assistance management reports, regularly providing all data at its disposal;
- speed up the preparation of the Union accounts, to ensure that reliable information from Member States on shared management spending is obtained in a more timely manner and to present the management's view on Union spending earlier and together with the accounts, with the view to adopting a discharge decision in year n+1.

The resolution stressed the need to establish an independent disclosure, advice and referral body in order to help whistleblowers use the right channels to disclose information on possible irregularities.

Parliament also regretted that, for the 23rd consecutive year, payments are **materially affected by error** due to the fact that management and control systems are only partially effective in ensuring sound financial management and timely payments.

It invited the Commission to:

- take into account the growth in outstanding commitments in its forecast of payment appropriations for the next MFF, in order to help ensure an orderly balance between commitment and payment appropriations;
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to make proposals to the Parliament and the Council, ensuring a consistent approach to the issue of whether or not special instruments are counted within the ceilings for payment appropriations in the MFF.