2020 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Data Protection Supervisor

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PURPOSE: presentation by the Commission of the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2020, as part of the 2020 discharge procedure.

Analysis of the accounts of the EU Institutions: European Data Protection Supervisor

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. They are prepared according to the highest available international public sector standards.

The discharge is a Parliament decision that reflects its conclusions at the end of a process, the discharge procedure, on the way the Commission (and other institutions and bodies) has carried out its task of implementing the EU budget.

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).

Implementation of the EDPS's appropriations for the financial year 2020

The EDPS was allocated a budget of **EUR 19 476 998**. This represents an increase of 16.3% compared to the 2019 budget. The overall increase was mainly due to the impact of the new tasks resulting from the European Data Protection Regulation 1725/2018 and the new supervisory tasks in connection with enforcement and judicial cooperation agencies (e.g. EPPO, Eurojust).

As regards budget implementation, the overall rate in commitment appropriations amounted to 73%. This rate is substantially lower than the previous year due to the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions on the Institution's activities.

The EDPS's activities in 2020 were marked by:

- the COVID-19 pandemic. The EDPS had to adapt its working methods as an employer, but also its priorities since COVID- 19 strengthened the call for the protection of individuals' privacy with the appearance of contact tracing apps and other technologies used for the fight against the coronavirus. While technology can certainly contribute to limiting the spread of the virus, the EDPS' priority is to ensure the protection of individuals' personal data and right to privacy;

- the new Strategy for 2020-2024 whose overarching aim is to shape a safer digital future, with three core pillars outlining the guiding actions and objectives for the organisation to the end of 2024: Foresight, Action and Solidarity;

- the start of the implementation of a new budget management tool, Bluebell.