# 2019 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Council and Council

2020/2142(DEC) - 19/10/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the decision **refusing to grant discharge** to the Secretary-General of the Council in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Council and of the Council for the financial year 2019, Section II – European Council and Council.

Parliament regretted that for more than ten years the Council has refused to cooperate with Parliament in the framework of the discharge procedure. It considered that the lack of cooperation by the European Council and the Council with the discharge authority not only contravenes the principle of loyal cooperation among the institutions and sends a negative signal to the citizens of the Union.

***Separate budget***

Once again, Parliament regretted that the budget of the European Council and the Council has not been divided into two separate budgets, as recommended by Parliament in recent discharge resolutions for reasons of transparency and to improve both expenditure efficiency and accountability for each of the two institutions.

***Financial management and performance system***

While welcoming the Council's improved financial management and performance system, Parliament regretted that no report currently provides a comprehensive summary of the major key performance indicators and results, thus preventing any measurement of achievements reached against objectives set.

***General lack of information***

Parliament regretted the lack of information on several issues such as:

- measures taken to improve **legislative transparency** and publish Council working documents, record and publish Member States' positions, and **make available more trilogue documents**;

- measures taken to ensure **equal opportunities** for persons with disabilities at the Council;

- effective actions taken to tackle **gender and geographical imbalances**, including at management level;

- the need for an **ethical framework**, to transparency and to the prevention, identification and avoidance of conflicts of interest;

- records of meetings held between **lobbyists** and the President of the European Council or members of his cabinet;

- the appointment of the European Prosecutors.

The Council is criticised for **categorically rejecting Parliaments' proposals to increase digitalisation in the area of audit and control** and refuses to cooperate on increasing the interoperability of existing Union and national databases and reporting and monitoring systems.

***Parliamentary questions***

Lastly, Parliament regretted that the Council continues to fail to provide answers to Parliament's questions as well as to attend the hearings of the secretary-generals of the institutions.