2021 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Council and Council

2022/2083(DEC) - 25/09/2023 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the second report by Mikuláš PEKSA (Greens/EFA, CZ) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021, Section II – European Council and Council.

The committee responsible recommends that the European Parliament **refuse 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 2021.

Members strongly regret that once again for the financial year 2021, the Council was the only Union institution that refused to cooperate with Parliament in the discharge procedure, compelling Parliament to refuse discharge.

In the current situation, Parliament can only examine the reports of the European Court of Auditors and the European Ombudsman and the information on the Council's website, without receiving any written or oral answers from the Council. Members therefore believe that Parliament is unable to carry out its duties properly and take an informed decision on granting discharge.

In view of the fact that for more than a decade the Council has refused to cooperate and provide Parliament with sufficient information on the discharge, Members reiterated that the Council is sending the wrong message to citizens at a time when greater transparency is needed.

The resolution stressed that, while the current situation must be improved through better interinstitutional cooperation within the framework of the Treaties, a revision of the Treaties could render the discharge procedure clearer and more transparent by giving Parliament the explicit competence to grant discharge to all Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies individually.

Members called on the Council to duly follow up on the recommendations adopted by Parliament in the context of the discharge procedure and invited it to resume negotiations with Parliament as soon as possible in order to find a solution in the current framework of the discharge procedure.