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

2022/2083(DEC) - 17/10/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided, by 577 votes to 25, with 24 abstentions, to refuse to grant the Secretary-General of the Council discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Council and of the Council for the financial year 2021.

Once again, Parliament strongly regrets that 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.

According to Parliament, all other Union Institutions accept and understand the logic that given the delegation of power regarding the implementation of the budget, Parliament has the right and obligation to scrutinise their budgets and their implementation of those budgets as part of the discharge procedure and, with that in mind, finds it deplorable that the Council continues to refuse to cooperate with Parliament in that area.

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, Parliament reiterated that the Council is sending the wrong message to citizens at a time when greater transparency is needed.

Parliament 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.

Parliament demands full respect for its prerogative and role as guarantor of the democratic accountability principle. Therefore, it called on the Council to duly follow up on the recommendations adopted by Parliament in the context of the discharge procedure. It also invited it to resume negotiations with Parliament as soon as possible to find a solution in the current framework of the discharge procedure.