2022 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Parliament

2023/2130(DEC) - 11/04/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 527 votes to 73, with 11 abstentions, to grant its President discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Parliament for the financial year 2022.

In its resolution adopted by 499 votes to 69, with 47 abstentions, Parliament made the following observations:

Parliament's budgetary and financial management

Members noted that Parliament's final appropriations for 2022 totalled **EUR 2 161 million**, or 19.55 % of Heading 7 of the Multiannual Financial Framework set aside for the 2022 administrative expenditure of the Union institutions as a whole, representing a **4.76 % increase** compared to the 2021 budget.

The total revenue entered in the accounts as of 31 December 2022 was EUR 250 473 772 (compared to EUR 215 332 108 in 2021). Assigned revenue made available in 2022 amounted to EUR 61 267 620 (compared to EUR 37 150 962 in 2021).

Five chapters accounted for 76.5 % of total commitments: Chapter 10 'Members of the institution'; Chapter 12 'Officials and temporary staff'; Chapter 14 'Other staff and external services'; Chapter 20 'Buildings and associated costs'; and Chapter 42 'Expenditure relating to parliamentary assistance'.

Members noted that the COVID-19 pandemic is estimated to have generated a moderate surplus of EUR 16 417 325 and that is necessary to reinforce other budget lines by a total of EUR 7 549 000.

2022 was a year of transition for the Union institutions, including Parliament, measures introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic were discontinued by June 2022. Members welcomed the efforts of all DGs and the Secretary-General to put the necessary tools in place to resume parliamentary work so that it functions in the same way as it did before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parliament's administration has put considerable effort into the implementation of the budget with a view to meeting urgent needs arising from the crisis situation due to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the exceptionally high level of inflation.

Presidency, Communication

Parliament welcomed the swift action taken by Parliament following the cases of alleged corruption involving Members and officials in December 2022 and the 14-point action plan proposed by the President. It welcomed the increased use of the transparency register as an information and reference tool for interest representation activities at EU level. It called for rigorous standards of transparency and access to the EU institutions for all entities in the transparency register. It reiterated its concern at the large-scale disinformation campaigns and foreign interference targeting the EU, particularly on the part of Russia. There is a need for an enhanced security culture within Parliament.

DG COMM is invited to continue to develop and implement effective strategies to combat disinformation and manipulation of information, particularly in an electoral context.

Personnel

Members recalled that, on 13 January 2020, the Bureau approved new and more ambitious targets for gender balance at the senior and middle management levels of Parliament's administration to be achieved by 2024, meaning that women should hold 50% of head of units posts, 50% of director posts and 40% of director-general posts. Members praised the work carried out by DG PERS with accredited parliamentary assistants (APAs), who have seen the recognition of their work gradually increase over the years. They welcomed the progress made in revising the rules governing the employment of accredited parliamentary assistants. The minimum budgetary allocation for parliamentary assistance should be set at a minimum of 35%.

Infrastructure and logistics

Parliament acknowledged that Parliament's 'Building Strategy beyond 2019' provides a coherent framework for decisions and contributes to consolidating Parliament's real estate portfolio while adapting facilities to the evolution of meeting patterns, going local and closer to citizens through the gradual roll-out of Europa Experience Centres, enhancing security for Parliament's buildings, and achieving the interconnection of its central buildings .The majority of the policies and actions referred to in the current Building Strategy are either completed or well under way.

Members also welcomed Parliament's efforts to encourage staff to use sustainable means of transport for commuting by providing an increasing number of conventional and electric bicycles free of charge and by reimbursing part of the cost of public transport tickets in exchange for restricted access to car parks.

Interpretation, translation

Parliament welcomed DG TRAD's commitment to providing high-quality language services on time. It noted that DG TRAD ensures that Parliament's procedural content is available in the 24 official and working languages of the Union. It praised the outstanding work done by the interpreters in 2022, which ensured that, as far as possible, interpretation of the debates could be provided in all the official and working languages of the Union.

Innovation and Technological Support

Parliament welcomed the fact that DG ITEC partners with client Directorates-General to deliver a user-centred, secure, hybrid and data driven working environment for Members and staff. It noted with satisfaction its promotion of the sustainable and responsible deployment of innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence and data analytics to enhance the decision-making capabilities of Parliament's services. Parliament's cyber-defence activities were strongly marked by a constantly growing cyber threat. Members welcomed the creation of the Directorate for Cybersecurity in 2022 and urged Parliament to maintain its efforts and increase its investment in cybersecurity. They welcomed that DG ITEC offered the possibility to check IT equipment for evidence of spyware such as PEGASUS.

Harassment

Members welcomed Parliament's zero tolerance policy on harassment and the awareness-raising campaigns carried out. In 2022, 56 Members participated in the training session. The resolution noted that members of staff and APAs had participated in anti-harassment training courses.

Lastly, Parliament commented on whistleblowers, the voluntary pension fund, and European political parties and foundations. It welcomed the essential role played by the Authority which, in complete

independence and in close collaboration with Parliament, ensures that European political parties and foundations respect the legal framework, guarantee transparency for citizens and contribute to the integrity of Parliament's elections.