

2022 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Ombudsman

2023/2137(DEC) - 10/10/2024 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Ombudsman for the financial year 2022.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision (EU) 2024/2243 of the European Parliament on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2022, Section VIII – European Ombudsman.

CONTENT: the European Parliament decided to grant discharge to the European Ombudsman in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Ombudsman for the financial year 2022.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 11 April 2024 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 11 April 2024).

The Ombudsman's budget amounted to EUR 12 222 108 in 2022, which represents a decrease of EUR 280 000 compared to 2021. This decrease is the result of a rationalisation of the budget based on actual needs.

The budget implementation rate was 96.97 % in 2022, which is higher compared to the previous year, when the implementation rate was 88.8 % due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was noted that the Ombudsman did not report any impact from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on its 2022 budget for missions, procurement or building.

Members noted that public access to documents has continued to be a major priority for the Ombudsman in 2022, with 121 complaints received, the highest number recorded within a year, and inquiries resulted in 90 complaints. They welcomed the swift handling of cases in the area of public access to documents, recalling that restrictions on access to documents, particularly legislative documents, should be exceptional and limited to what is absolutely necessary.

Members expressed regret that the Ombudsman has not formally joined the EU Transparency Register, despite aligning its practices with the register's principles. However, they commended the high level of transparency achieved by the Ombudsman, as evidenced by the publication of information on inquiries, missions, meetings, and events on its website.