

2022 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Council and Council

2023/2131(DEC) - 22/10/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **refuse to grant discharge** to the Secretary-General of the Council in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Council and the Council for the financial year 2022.

In its resolution, adopted by 431 votes to 131 with 83 abstentions, Parliament deeply regrets that since 2009, and again for the financial year 2022, Council continues to refuse to cooperate with Parliament on the discharge procedure, preventing Parliament from taking an informed decision based on a serious and thorough scrutiny of the implementation of the Council's budget and thereby compelling Parliament to refuse discharge. According to Members, this attitude has had a lasting negative effect on both institutions, has discredited the management and democratic scrutiny of the Union budget and has **damaged the trust** of citizens in the Union as a transparent entity.

The Council is called on to resume negotiations with Parliament at the highest level as soon as possible, involving the Secretary-Generals and the Presidents of both institutions, in order to **break the deadlock** and find a solution while respecting the respective roles of Parliament and the Council in the discharge procedure and ensuring transparency and proper democratic control of budget implementation.

Parliament stressed that 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. It underlined, however, that pending such a revision, the current situation must be improved through better interinstitutional cooperation within the current framework of the Treaties and urged the Council to actively engage with the Parliament in addressing the current situation.

Members also regretted that the Council did not prepare to avoid a Council Presidency led by a Member State subject to an Article 7 procedure (Suspension clause), with the consequence that the Council Presidency is being abused by the Hungarian government, and the principle of sincere cooperation violated.

Lastly, Parliament reiterated that the use of the unanimity voting procedure in the Council in certain policy areas is paralysing the Union's decision-making process and therefore making it prone to blackmailing by Member States, especially those who fail to respect the rule of law.