

2023 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Economic and Social Committee

2024/2025(DEC) - 07/05/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 538 votes to 96, with 27 abstentions, to **grant discharge** to the Secretary-General of the European Economic and Social Committee discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Economic and Social Committee for the financial year 2023, Section VI - European Economic and Social Committee.

In its resolution, adopted by 532 votes to 120, with 10 abstentions, Parliament made the following observations:

Budgetary and financial management

The final adopted budget for the Committee was **EUR 158 767 970 in 2023**, representing an overall increase of 4.1 % compared to 2022. The remuneration and allowances budget line increased by 8.4 % between 2022 and 2023 due to the inflation.

Its budget implementation rate was 98.70 % in 2023 with the payment appropriations execution rate increased to 90.67 % in 2023. The carry-over of appropriations from 2023 to 2024 amounted to EUR 13827713 (i.e. approx. 8.70 % of the Committee's budget for 2023), which represents a decrease from the previous year's level.

The impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continued to put pressure on the Committee's budget in 2023, through rising inflation and salary adjustments, challenges in building projects due to delays and higher raw material prices, the indexation of rental contracts, as well as indexation of maintenance and security service contracts.

Internal management, performance and internal control

In 2023, the Committee adopted 213 opinions and reports, an increase from 202 in 2022 and organised 146 hearings and 23 conferences, compared to 116 and 29 in 2022, respectively. The Committee's members participated in 429 high-level meetings, summits and conferences in 2023 compared to 345 in 2022.

Parliament highlighted that the efficient management of limited resources remained a key challenge throughout 2023 due to staffing constraints, compounded by increased activities under a continuous stable staffing policy.

Other observations

Parliament noted that:

- in the area of financial transactions, the Committee's internal audit service (IAS) adopted a new decision on the assessment of risks for the implementation of a simplified procedure in the beginning of 2023;
- the adoption of the new diversity and inclusion strategy, effective until 2027;

- the combined IT budget of both the Committee and the CoR was EUR 12 700 000 in 2023, compared to EUR 11 712 000 in 2022, i.e. an increase of 8.4 %. EUR 350 000 of that budget (or 3 % thereof) was paid for **cybersecurity** in 2023 and 6.24 % of the Committee's total budget for 2023 represented expenditure for actions implementing the new 'Digital Strategy 2024-2026'. Members urged the EESC to increase its cybersecurity budget to at least 10% of its total IT expenditures in line with EU cybersecurity directives, ensuring enhanced protection against cyber threats, especially for sensitive data related to policy and budgetary matters;
- in 2023, the Committee adopted a new procedure for handling **data breaches**, published a data protection guide and implemented several awareness-raising initiatives for its staff and members in 2023;
- budgetary and administrative **savings** were achieved through interinstitutional cooperation;
- the Committee and Parliament re-negotiated in 2023 and signed in 2024 their **inter-institutional agreement** which aims to provide more relevant and timely contributions throughout the legislative cycle and to reinforce bilateral cooperation.