Discharge 2024: General budget of the EU - European Council and Council

2025/2147(DEC) - 21/10/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided, by 434 votes to 203, with 21 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 2024.

State of play

Parliament initially postponed its final decision on the Council's 2024 budget during the April 2026 plenary session. It reiterated its deep regret that the Council continues to evade the standard discharge procedure and insisted that the administrative expenditures of the European Council and the Council must be subject to the exact same democratic scrutiny and accountability standards as those of any other Union institution. The Council is called on to resume negotiations with Parliament without delay to establish a binding working arrangement for the discharge procedure.

The resolution stressed that Parliament's observations concerning budgetary and financial management, internal management, performance and internal control, human resources, equality and well-being, ethical framework and transparency, digitalisation, cybersecurity and data protection, buildings, environment and sustainability, interinstitutional cooperation and communication from its discharge resolution of 29 April 2026 are still valid.

Members reiterated their regret that the budget of the European Council and the Council has **not been divided into two clearly separated budgets** as recommended by Parliament in previous discharge resolutions in order to improve transparency and accountability, not least concerning the European Council, given that it is currently impossible to obtain reliable information regarding its costs.

Lastly, Parliament stressed that, while unanimity voting remains a core principle of the Treaties, its application in certain circumstances and in critical policy areas can affect the Union's timelines and effectiveness, including by paralysing the Union's decision-making process and thereby leaving it vulnerable to being blocked or prone to blackmail by individual Member States, particularly those that fail to respect the rule of law. It called for **targeted Treaty reforms** or, alternatively, practical improvements within the existing Treaty framework, in order to strengthen transparency, democratic decision-making, accountability and the efficiency of the Council's works.