Basic information

2009/2073(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2008 discharge: EU general budget, Economic and Social Committee **Subject** 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	CZARNECKI Ryszard (ECR)	01/10/2009

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
DEVE Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
INTA International Trade	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
BUDG Budgets	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

TRAN	Transport and Tourism	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
REGI	Regional Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
AGRI	Agriculture and Rural Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
PECH	Fisheries	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
CULT	Culture and Education	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
JURI	Legal Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	02/09/2009
LIBE	Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
AFCO	Constitutional Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
FEMM	Women's Rights and Gender Equality	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
PETI	Petitions	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	ŠEMETA Algirdas

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
23/07/2009	Non-legislative basic document published	SEC(2009)1089	Summary
07/10/2009	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/03/2010	Vote in committee		Summary
26/03/2010	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0080/2010	

21/04/2010	Debate in Parliament		
05/05/2010	Decision by Parliament	T7-0137/2010	Summary
05/05/2010	Results of vote in Parliament		
05/05/2010	End of procedure in Parliament		
25/09/2010	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2009/2073(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/7/00646

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE430.316	02/02/2010	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE439.358	03/03/2010	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0080/2010	26/03/2010	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0137/2010	05/05/2010	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	SEC(2009)1089	23/07/2009	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofA	Document attached to the procedure	N7-0036/2009 OJ C 269 10.11.2009, p. 0001	10/11/2009	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Decision 2010/0502
OJ L 252 25.09.2010, p. 0093 Summary

2008 discharge: EU general budget, Economic and Social Committee

2009/2073(DEC) - 10/11/2009

PURPOSE: to present the report of the Court of Auditors on the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2008 (other institutions - European Economic and Social Committee).

CONTENT: in its annual report for the financial year 2008, the Court focuses on the legality and regularity of the operating expenditure of the institutions. In 2008, the Court carried out audits in all the institutions on the following selected topics (procurement contracts, late payment penalties, payments on carried-over appropriations, transfers of acquired pension rights, etc…). In addition, the Court assessed the compliance of the supervisory and control systems applied by each institution with the requirements of the Financial Regulation.

In 2008, the Court notes that **all the institutions operated satisfactorily the supervisory and control systems** required by the Financial Regulation and **the transactions tested were free from material error of legality and regularity**.

Although the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts have been confirmed by the Court of Auditors, it does however draw attention to a number of findings which should be taken into consideration by the institutions concerned.

Nevertheless, in the specific case of the audit of the **European Economic and Social Committee**, the Court notes that the audit did not identify any reportable weakness in respect of the topics audited.

The Court makes a reference to the follow-up of discrepancies found in the 2007 Annual Report. In particular, it concerns the multiplication factor applicable to salaries. The Court notes that, by maintaining this discrepancy, the Economic and Social Committee grants its staff a financial advantage which the other institutions do not grant. The Court calls on the Committee to change this practice.

2008 discharge: EU general budget, Economic and Social Committee

2009/2073(DEC) - 05/05/2010 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the EESC for the financial year 2008.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision 2010/502/EU of the European Parliament on the discharge for implementation of the European Union general budget for the financial year 2008 (Section VI - European Economic and Social Committee).

CONTENT: with the present decision, the European Parliament grants the Secretary-General of the European Economic and Social Committee discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2008.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament’s resolution adopted on 5 May 2010 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 5 May 2010).

2008 discharge: EU general budget, Economic and Social Committee

2009/2073(DEC) - 05/05/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a decision aiming to grant discharge to the European Economic and Social Committee's Secretary-General in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2008.

The Parliament also adopted a resolution containing a number of observations which forms an integral part of the discharge decision. The resolution notes that in 2008 the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) had commitment appropriations available amounting to a total of **EUR 118 million** (EUR 116 million in 2007), with a utilisation rate of 95.64%, the same as the average of the other institutions (95.67%).

The Parliament notes that the Court of Auditors indicated in its annual report that the audit did not give rise to any significant observations as regards the EESC.

Parliament also points to the remark made by the Court of Auditors on the different approach of the EESC (as well as the Parliament) when applying the provisions of the Staff Regulations as regards the multiplication factor. It points out that the EESC thereby grants its staff a financial advantage not

granted by the other institutions, and that that results in higher expenses. It reiterates that the provisions of the Staff Regulations concerning the multiplication factor should be interpreted and implemented by all the institutions in the same way and notes the EESC's intention to adapt its practice in conformity with the awaited Civil Service Tribunal's ruling.

Welcoming the implementation of the **Administrative Cooperation Agreement between the EESC and the Committee of the Regions (CoR) for the period 2008 to 2014**, Parliament invites the EESC and the Committee of the Regions (CoR) to communicate the progress made as regards harmonising their internal control standards, as well as relevant financial procedures relating to the Joint Services.

Parliament recalls that de-coupling resulting from the Administrative Cooperation Agreement should be budget neutral, and is looking forward to the mid-term review of the Agreement, due in 2011. It welcomes the results of evaluation of the mini-cooperation agreements in the areas affected by de-coupling, as carried out jointly by the EESC and the CoR, in particular, their conclusions that the new governance structure has improved the administrative cooperation between the Committees.

Furthermore, Members urge that **travel expenses of members of the EESC** should be based only on actual travel costs. They suggest that daily allowances should be equal to the ones received by the Members of the European Parliament.

Lastly, Parliament recalls that members of the EESC do not declare their financial interests or disclose relevant information on declarable professional activities and remunerated posts or activities. It requests that the EESC introduces this obligation for its members without delay.

2008 discharge: EU general budget, Economic and Social Committee

2009/2073(DEC) - 23/07/2009 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to present the final annual accounts of the European Communities for the financial year 2008 - Other institutions: section VI - Economic and Social Committee.

CONTENT: this document sets out the amount of expenditure and the financial statement of the Economic and Social Committee (ESC) for 2008. It presents an analysis of the institution’s financial management as well as its main axes of expenditure.

The figures mentioned hereafter are taken from volume I of the consolidated annual accounts of the European Communities for the year 2008:

Commitments

- authorised commitments: EUR 118 million;
- commitments made in 2008: EUR 113 million (implementation rate of 95.64%);
- appropriations lapsing: EUR 5 million (4.13% of the budget).

Payments

- authorised payments: EUR 126 million;
- amounts paid in 2008: EUR 114 million, a budget implementation rate of 90.74%;
- payments lapsed: EUR 6 million, or 4.56% of the budget.

Main axes of expenditure in 2008 (according to the Economic and Social Committee’s Annual Activity Report 2008): the three main priorities of the new President of the EESC are the Lisbon Strategy, participatory democracy reinforced by the Lisbon Strategy and rights and the European social model.

Other major policy priorities of 2008 focused on the following 7 themes as defined by the 2008 EESC’s work programme.

- assistance for members;
- interinstitutional cooperation;
- communication;
- implementation of the cooperation agreement with the Committee of the Regions (CoR);
- management of the secretariat (see below);
- human resources policy;
- ensuring smooth transition under the new Secretary-General.

Regarding the activities of the Secretariat of the EESC, the report draws attention to the following facts:

- **formulating the secretariat's key activity and performance indicators**: they were finalised in 2008 and were included in the annual activity report;

- **inventory of all decisions in force within the Secretariat**: this work was carried out by the internal auditor in 2007 in cooperation with the directorates concerned. They are accessible to all through the Intranet. A formal procedure was introduced for updating the inventory, under which each unit concerned will examine the texts which are in force within its remit and, where necessary, will recommend retaining them, revising them or scrapping them, depending on their usefulness and relevance;

- **internal cooperation within the Secretariat in 2008**: particular attention was paid to a discussion on ways and means of rationalizing and improving internal cooperation in the secretariat. In this context, the Intranet site was revised and an analysis of emails sent by the various directorates was begun. Lastly, there were regular meetings open to all staff members to promote information and dialogue on particular subjects. In view of the success of these initiatives, it was decided to continue along the same route.

The other main points concerning the implementation of the EESC budget can be summarised as follows:

Title I *(staff expenditure):* this Title was characterised by:

- a net decrease in overtime costs due to the revision of policy in this area;
- an improvement of the implementation costs related to staff training;
- the strengthening of the means allocated to measures aimed at disabled staff;
- the strengthening of the Committee's medical service.

Title II *(operating expenditure):* this budget heading has been mainly characterised by the achievement of the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions' building projects. The most important work involved the fitting out of the premises for which calls for tender had been launched. The large amount left uncommitted is explained by the fact that two calls for tender for fitting-out projects were scheduled to be awarded in 2008, but couldn't, given that in one case, no tenders were received and in the other case, the tenders were considered too expensive (more than twice the amount estimated).

The following should also be noted:

- the revision of the cleaning and maintenance contracts which lead to savings;
- insufficient implementation of conference appropriations (the corresponding expenditure is highly dependant on the EESC's work programme, which cannot be established with great accuracy at the time the budget is finalised. Also, the cost of travel can vary considerably, depending on the countries of origin of participants. Often, low-cost airlines are used or travel costs are covered by the participant's own organisation, but it is impossible to take this into account long time before the event);
- the under-utilisation of appropriations under the interpretation budget item (due to the frequent unavailability of several requested languages for meetings).

Lastly, the report notes a net increase as regards the rent and related service charges for the building, situated Rue Van Maerlandt, 2. This building is rented from the Commission. Service charges cover maintenance, cleaning, energy etc. The Commission sends its balance statement for the amounts due in 2007 only in 2008 which as a result increased the appropriations under this item. A sufficient safety margin must be kept in order to be able to fulfil all contractual obligations.