Basic information

2018/2171(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2017 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Auditors **Subject** 8.70.03.02 2017 discharge	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	KOHN Arndt (S&D)	27/07/2018
	Shadow rapporteur SALAFRANCA SÁNCHEZ-NEYRA José Ignacio (PPE) MACOVEI Monica (ECR) KLINZ Wolf (ALDE) DE JONG Dennis (GUE/NGL) JÁVOR Benedek (Verts/ALE) VALLI Marco (EFDD) JALKH Jean-François (ENF)	

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.	
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	OETTINGER Günther

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
28/06/2018	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2018)0521	Summary
11/09/2018	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
20/02/2019	Vote in committee		
27/02/2019	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0097/2019	Summary
26/03/2019	Decision by Parliament	T8-0248/2019	Summary
26/03/2019	Results of vote in Parliament		
26/03/2019	Debate in Parliament		
26/03/2019	End of procedure in Parliament		
27/09/2019	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2018/2171(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/8/14163

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE626.820	13/12/2018	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE634.531	05/02/2019	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0097/2019	27/02/2019	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0248/2019	26/03/2019	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	05824/2019	11/02/2019	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2018)0521	28/06/2018	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofA	Court of Auditors: opinion, report	N8-0013/2019 OJ C 357 04.10.2018, p. 0001	12/07/2018	Summary

Additional information		
Source	**Document**	**Date**
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act
Budget 2019/1422 OJ L 249 27.09.2019, p. 0105

2017 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Auditors

2018/2171(DEC) - 26/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 519 votes to 94, with 24 abstentions, to grant discharge to the Secretary-General of the Court of Auditors of the European Union with regard to the implementation of the Court's budget for the 2017 financial year, Section V – Court of Auditors.

It took note of the opinion of the external auditor that the financial statements of the Court give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Court.

Budgetary and financial management

In 2017, the Court's final appropriations amounted to a total of EUR 141 240 000 (compared to EUR 137 557 000 in 2016) and that the overall rate of implementation for the budget was 97.73 % (compared to 99 % in 2016). Parliament stressed that the Court's budget is purely administrative, with a large amount being used for expenditure in relation to persons working within the institution and in relation to buildings, movable property, equipment and miscellaneous operating expenditure.

The Court is called on to continue improving payment execution rates.

Staff

Members noted that the reduction of 5 % in staff numbers over the period 2013-2017 has been achieved. However, they are concerned by the increase in sick leave taken by staff from 8 636 days in total (for 687 members of staff) in 2015 to 10 327 days (for 677 members of staff) in 2017. They welcomed the transparency of the Court regarding the number of cases of staff burnout which occurred in 2017. The Court is called on to acknowledge this worrying trend and to prepare an action plan on improving the well-being of the staff, thus strengthening its efforts to improve staff well-being and work-life balance.

Brexit

The resolution noted that the United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union will not have a major impact on the structure and human resources of the Court. Members welcomed the fact that the Court has decided to follow a case-by-case approach to deciding on the extension of contracts for British temporary and contract agents and not to dismiss them on the sole ground that they are no longer nationals of a Member State.

Moreover, they noted that the member of the Court from the United Kingdom will not be in service as of 1 April 2019 and that the budgetary impact of his departure, eight months earlier than the termination of the mandate, will amount to about EUR 108 000.

2017 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Auditors

2018/2171(DEC) - 28/06/2018 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: presentation by the Commission of the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2017, as part of the 2017 discharge procedure.

Analysis of the accounts of the EU Institutions: **European Court of Auditors**.

CONTENT: the organisational governance of the EU consists of institutions, agencies and other EU bodies whose expenditure is included in the general budget of the Union.

This Commission document concerns the **EU's consolidated accounts for the year 2017** and details how spending by the EU institutions and bodies was carried out. The consolidated annual accounts of the EU provide financial information on the activities of the institutions, agencies and other bodies of the EU from an accrual accounting and budgetary perspective.

It is the responsibility of the Commission's Accounting Officer to prepare the EU's consolidated annual accounts and ensure that they present fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position, the result of the operations and the cash flows of the EU institutions and bodies with a view to granting discharge.

Discharge procedure: **the final step of a budget lifecycle is the discharge**. It is the decision by which the European Parliament '**releases**' the Commission from its responsibility for management of a given budget by marking the end of that budget's existence. It is granted by the European Parliament on the recommendation of the Council.

The decision is based in particular on the European Court of Auditors reports, in particular its annual report, in which the Court provides a Statement of Assurance (DAS) on the legality and regularity of transactions (payments and commitments).

The procedure results in the granting, postponement or refusal of discharge.

The final discharge report including specific recommendations to the Commission for action is adopted in plenary by the European Parliament and are subject to an annual follow up report in which the Commission outlines the concrete actions it has taken to implement the recommendations made.

All EU institutions and other agencies, bodies and joint undertakings are subject to their own discharge procedures.

(2) Implementation of Court of Auditors' appropriations for the financial year 2017: the CoA's budget amounted to around **EUR 141 million**. This represents less than 0.1 % of total EU spending or around 1.5 % of EU's total administrative spending. The proportion of the 2017 budget used was 98 %.

As regards the Court of Auditor's expenditure, the information is drawn from the Court of Auditors 2017 Annual Activity Report and highlighted that 2017 was marked by:

- the official celebration of the Court's **40th anniversary**;
- a landscape review of EU action on energy and climate change and a rapid case review of the EU institutions' staff reduction;
- **the production of 55 specific annual reports** on the accounts of the EU's various agencies, bodies and joint undertakings located across the Union; **28 special reports** examining the effectiveness and added value of EU policies and programmes in areas such as youth unemployment, environment, migration and the banking union; **five opinions** on proposed new or updated EU laws with significant financial management implications, including one on the Financial Regulation for the EU budget and one on the funding of European political parties.

External audit of the ECA: the ECA's annual accounts are audited by an independent external auditor (PricewaterhouseCoopers Sàrl).

2017 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Auditors

2018/2171(DEC) - 27/02/2019 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Arndt KOHN (S&D, DE) calling on the European Parliament to give discharge to the Secretary-General of the European Court of Auditors in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Court for the financial year 2017, Section V – Court of Auditor.

Members took note of the opinion of the external auditor that the financial statements of the Court give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Court.

Budgetary and financial management

In 2017, the Court's final appropriations amounted to a total of EUR 141 240 000 (compared to EUR 137 557 000 in 2016) and that the overall rate of implementation for the budget was 97.73 % (compared to 99 % in 2016).

Staff

Members noted that the reduction of 5 % in staff numbers over the period 2013-2017 has been achieved. However, they are concerned by the increase in sick leave taken by staff from 8 636 days in total (for 687 members of staff) in 2015 to 10 327 days (for 677 members of staff) in 2017. They

welcomed the transparency of the Court regarding the number of cases of staff burnout which occurred in 2017. The Court is called on to acknowledge this worrying trend and to prepare an action plan on improving the well-being of the staff, thus strengthening its efforts to improve staff well-being and work-life balance.

Brexit

The report noted that the United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union will not have a major impact on the structure and human resources of the Court. Members welcomed the fact that the Court has decided to follow a case-by-case approach to deciding on the extension of contracts for British temporary and contract agents and not to dismiss them on the sole ground that they are no longer nationals of a Member State.

Moreover, they noted that the member of the Court from the United Kingdom will not be in service as of 1 April 2019 and that the budgetary impact of his departure, eight months earlier than the termination of the mandate, will amount to about EUR 108 000.

2017 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Auditors

2018/2171(DEC) - 12/07/2018

PURPOSE: presentation of the Annual report of the Court of Auditors on the implementation of the budget concerning the financial year 2017.

CONTENT: the Court of Auditors published its 41th annual report on the implementation of the general budget of the Union for the year 2017. This report follows a five-part structure:

- the statement of assurance (DAS) and a summary of the results of the audit on the reliability of accounts and the regularity of transactions;

- the analysis of budgetary and financial management;

- the Commission's performance reporting framework;

- the findings on EU revenue;

- the presentation of the main headings of the current multiannual financial framework (MFF), the results of the testing of the regularity of transactions.

The Court concludes that payments for 2017 are legal and regular, with the expenditure recorded in 2017 covering spending on a reimbursement basis. It believes that the EU accounts present a true and fair view of the EU's financial position.

The report also assessed the potential impact on the 2017 accounts of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union. On 29 March 2017, the United Kingdom (UK) formally notified the European Council of its intention to leave the European Union (EU). On 22 May 2017, the negotiations started for the withdrawal agreement between the EU and the UK.

Part Five (Financial Provisions) of the draft withdrawal agreement of 19 March 2018 concerning the financial settlement states that the UK will pay all its obligations under the current and previous Multiannual Financial Frameworks as if it were still a Member State.

Based on this, the Court concluded that the accounts as at 31 December 2017 correctly reflect the withdrawal process.

The audit also focuses on the budget implementation of the Committee of the ***European Court of Auditors***.

The overall audit evidence indicates that the level of error in spending on 'Administration' was not material. For this MFF heading, the testing of transactions produced an estimated overall level of error of 0.5 %

According to the external auditor's report, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the European Court of Auditors as of 31 December 2017, and of the results of its operations, its cash flows and the changes in net assets for the year then ended.

2017 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Auditors

2018/2171(DEC) - 11/02/2019 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

Based on the observations contained in the report by the Court of Auditors, the Council called on the European Parliament to grant discharge to all of the EU institutions in respect of the implementation of their respective budgets for the financial year 2017.

However, it considered that budget implementation required a series of comments from the Council which should be fully taken into account by the Commission.

The Council welcomed the fact that the administrative and related expenditure of the EU institutions remained, as in previous years, free from material error with an estimated level of error of 0.5 %, which while being well below the materiality threshold is higher by 0.3 % compared to the Court's findings for 2016 (0.2 %). It noted with satisfaction that no serious weaknesses were identified by the Court in the supervisory and control systems and in the examined annual activity reports.

The Council took note that, as in previous years, there was a small number of errors relating to staff costs and some weaknesses in the Office for Administration and Payment of individual entitlements' (PMO) management of family allowances. It called on the Commission to improve its procedures to avoid errors related to staff expenditure.

The Court did not identify any specific problems concerning the Court of Auditors of the European Union.