Basic information	
2020/2147(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2019 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Ombudsman **Subject** 8.70.03.09 2019 discharge	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	CHASTEL Olivier (Renew)	10/07/2020
	Shadow rapporteur LENAERS Jeroen (EPP) GARCÍA MUÑOZ Isabel (S&D) PEKSA Mikuláš (Greens/EFA) CZARNECKI Ryszard (ECR) FLANAGAN Luke Ming (GUE/NGL)	

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	HAHN Johannes

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
29/06/2020	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2020)0288	
15/09/2020	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
01/03/2021	Vote in committee		
26/03/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0065/2021	Summary
27/04/2021	Debate in Parliament		
28/04/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0171/2021	Summary
24/09/2021	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2020/2147(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/9/03829

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE657.244	13/01/2021	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE680.749	05/02/2021	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0065/2021	26/03/2021	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0171/2021	28/04/2021	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	05792/2021	05/02/2021	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2020)0288	29/06/2020	

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

Final act
Budget 2021/1556 OJ L 340 24.09.2021, p. 0162

2019 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Ombudsman

2020/2147(DEC) - 26/03/2021 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Olivier CHASTEL (Renew Europe, BE) calling on the European Parliament to give discharge to the European Ombudsman in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Ombudsman for the financial year 2019.

It welcomed the fact that the Court of Auditors observed that no significant weaknesses had been identified in respect of the audited topics relating to human resources and procurement for the Ombudsman. The Court concluded that the payments as a whole for the year ended on 31 December 2019 for administrative and other expenditure of the institutions and bodies were free from material error.

2019 was a transition year for the Ombudsman given that it coincided with the end of her first mandate and her re-election for the 2019-2024 parliamentary term. Members fully support the objectives identified by the Ombudsman for her strategy ‘Towards 2024’ covering her second mandate.

Budgetary and financial management

Members noted that the Ombudsman’s budget is mostly administrative, with a large amount being used for expenditure related to persons, buildings, furniture, equipment and miscellaneous running costs. This amounted in 2019 to EUR 11 496 261 (EUR 10 837 545 in 2018). The implementation rate in terms of commitments (including appropriations carried over from 2019 to 2020) is 92.3 % (compared to 95.3 % in 2018) and that of the total appropriations, 89.5 % were paid in 2019 (compared to 91.3 % in 2018).

The report welcomed the improvements in carry-overs, such as the fact that the amount of appropriations carried over from 2019 to 2020 is EUR 323 410 representing 2.8 % of the 2019 budget (compared to EUR 433 866 carried over from 2018 to 2019, representing 4 % of the 2018 budget).

Human resources

The need for gender balance at all hierarchical levels was recalled. The report acknowledged plans for a reorganisation in 2020 to increase the Ombudsman’s efficiency resulting in a reduction in the number of managers, while taking into account the geographical balance, to the extent possible.

The Ombudsman was called on to tackle personnel-related issues and look into ways of improving recruitment processes. The flexible working arrangement offered to staff (flexitime, telework and part-time work) as well as training on team cohesion was highlighted. The Ombudsman should be a more inclusive workplace for persons with disabilities.

Complaints and inquiries

The report observed that in 2019, the number of complaints registered was 2171 (compared to 2160 in 2018), that the number of new cases processed was 2201 (compared to 2180 in 2018) and that the number of cases within the Ombudsman’s mandate was 871 (compared to 880 in 2018). It noted that the Ombudsman opened 456 new inquiries based on complaints (compared to 482 in 2018) and closed a record number of 552 complaint-based inquiries (compared to 534 in 2018) and as a result of the high turnover of cases, only 117 inquiries were carried over to 2020 (compared to (222 carried over to 2019).

The categories of complaints that saw the biggest increase include: respect for fundamental rights, proper use of discretion (including infringement procedures), culture of service, transparency and respect for procedural rights.

2019 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Ombudsman

2020/2147(DEC) - 28/04/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 682 votes to 9, with 7 abstentions, to **grant discharge** to the European Ombudsman in respect of the implementation of the European Ombudsman's budget for the financial year 2019.

In the resolution accompanying its discharge decision (adopted by 658 votes to 14, with 19 abstentions), the European Parliament made a series of observations:

Parliament welcomed the fact that the Court of Auditors observed that no significant weaknesses had been identified in respect of the audited topics relating to human resources and procurement for the Ombudsman. The payments as a whole for the year ended on 31 December 2019 for administrative and other expenditure of the institutions and bodies were free from material error.

Budgetary and financial management

Parliament noted that the Ombudsman's budget is mostly administrative, with a large amount being used for expenditure related to persons, buildings, furniture, equipment and miscellaneous running costs. This amounted in 2019 to EUR 11 496 261 (EUR 10 837 545 in 2018). The implementation rate in terms of commitments (including appropriations carried over from 2019 to 2020) is 92.3 % (compared to 95.3 % in 2018) and that of the total appropriations, 89.5 % were paid in 2019 (compared to 91.3 % in 2018).

The resolution welcomed the improvements in carry-overs, such as the fact that the amount of appropriations carried over from 2019 to 2020 is EUR 323 410 representing 2.8 % of the 2019 budget (compared to EUR 433 866 carried over from 2018 to 2019, representing 4 % of the 2018 budget).

Overall, Parliament recognised the sound financial management of the Ombudsman. Whenever, the underspending for certain budget lines appears to be systemic, the Ombudsman reduces the related appropriations in subsequent years, such as the budget line for publications, which was reduced proactively and progressively from EUR 219 000 in 2017 to EUR 123 000 in the 2021 draft budget.

Inter-institutional cooperation

Given the ever increasing workload, Parliament encouraged the Ombudsman to maintain and expand contacts with bodies at EU and national level, which serve the purpose of exchanging information and best practice and adopting common approaches on general administrative, financial, personnel and IT matters as well as on ethics, transparency and public integrity.

The Ombudsman is called on to cooperates closer with Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control by making that Committee aware of relevant failures, in form of maladministration and/or institutions' negative replies to recommendations made by the Ombudsman in a concise and time-relevant format.

Human resources

The need for gender balance at all hierarchical levels was recalled. The resolution acknowledged plans for a reorganisation in 2020 to increase the Ombudsman's efficiency resulting in a reduction in the number of managers, while taking into account the geographical balance, to the extent possible.

The Ombudsman was called on to tackle personnel-related issues and look into ways of improving recruitment processes. The flexible working arrangement offered to staff (flexitime, telework and part-time work) as well as training on team cohesion was highlighted. The Ombudsman should be a more inclusive workplace for persons with disabilities.

Complaints and inquiries

Parliament observed that in 2019, the number of complaints registered was 2171 (compared to 2160 in 2018), that the number of new cases processed was 2201 (compared to 2180 in 2018) and that the number of cases within the Ombudsman's mandate was 871 (compared to 880 in 2018). It noted that the Ombudsman opened 456 new inquiries based on complaints (compared to 482 in 2018) and closed a record number of 552 complaint-based inquiries (compared to 534 in 2018) and as a result of the high turnover of cases, only 117 inquiries were carried over to 2020 (compared to (222 carried over to 2019).

The categories of complaints that saw the biggest increase include: respect for fundamental rights, proper use of discretion (including infringement procedures), culture of service, transparency and respect for procedural rights.