Basic information

2023/2135(DEC) DEC - Discharge procedure	Procedure completed
2022 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Economic and Social Committee **Subject** 8.70.03.12 2022 discharge	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CONT Budgetary Control	FLANAGAN Luke Ming (The Left)	26/05/2023
	Shadow rapporteur MARINESCU Marian-Jean (EPP) RÓNAI Sándor (S&D) CHASTEL Olivier (Renew) PEKSA Mikuláš (Greens/EFA) RAFALSKA Elżbieta (ECR) KUHS Joachim (ID)	

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.	

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	HAHN Johannes

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
28/06/2023	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2023)0391	
12/09/2023	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/02/2024	Vote in committee		
07/03/2024	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0072/2024	Summary
10/04/2024	Debate in Parliament		
11/04/2024	Decision by Parliament	T9-0232/2024	Summary
11/04/2024	Results of vote in Parliament		
10/10/2024	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2023/2135(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/9/12851

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE753.483	13/12/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE758.202	31/01/2024	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0072/2024	07/03/2024	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0232/2024	11/04/2024	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	06179/2024	12/03/2024	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2023)0391	28/06/2023	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofA	Court of Auditors: opinion, report	N9-0060/2023 OJ C 000 04.10.2023, p. 0000	04/10/2023	

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

Meetings with interest representatives published in line with the Rules of Procedure

Rapporteurs, Shadow Rapporteurs and Committee Chairs

Transparency				
Name	**Role**	**Committee**	**Date**	**Interest representatives**
FLANAGAN Luke Ming	Rapporteur	CONT	17/10/2023	Secretary General of The European Economic and Social Committee

Final act	
Budget 2024/2239 OJ OJ L 10.10.2024	Summary

2022 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Economic and Social Committee

2023/2135(DEC) - 11/04/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 527 votes to 62, with 0 abstentions, to give discharge to the Secretary-General of the European Economic and Social Committee in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Economic and Social Committee in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Court of Auditors for the financial year 2022.

In its resolution, adopted by 540 votes to 67 with 1 abstention, Parliament made the following observations:

In its annual report for the financial year 2022, the Court of Auditors did not identify any specific problems concerning the Committee. Members noted that 14 (23%) of the 60 transactions contained errors, but that the Court considers, on the basis of the five errors that could be quantified, that the error rate is below the materiality threshold.

Budgetary and financial management

In 2022, the final adopted budget for the Committee amounted to **EUR 152 451 643**, representing an overall increase of 5.1 % compared to 2021. The remuneration and allowances budget line increased by 5 % between 2021 and 2022 due to the annual indexation of salaries, whereas the budget line for the fitting out of premises decreased by 77 % between 2021 and 2022 and came back to usual levels after the implementation of important refurbishment works in 2021.

The implementation rate was 96.12 % in 2022, after two years of lower budgetary implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the related travel restrictions. Members noted that the payment execution rate followed the same trend and reached 88.12 % in 2022. The carry-over of appropriations to the year 2022 amounted to EUR 20 162 518, i.e. approximately 13 % of the 2022 annual budget, which was substantially higher than the average in previous years due to the postponement of buildings works in 2020 and 2021.

Members noted that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in various ways created budgetary pressures for the Committee, including through rising inflation and salary adjustments, strongly increasing energy costs and the cost of construction and raw materials.

Moreover, the 2022 budget for staff missions increased by EUR 25 000 as compared to 2021, which was financed by a budget transfer, to cover higher expenses due to the increase in flight and hotel prices in 2022 and amounted to a total of EUR 398 974.

Members considered that an allowance for remote participation in meetings (a daily rate of EUR 145) is difficult for the public to understand.

Internal management, performance and internal control

Parliament noted that the Committee pursues its mission through opinions, which refer to legislative proposals made by the Commission (referrals), own-initiative opinions, and exploratory opinions, which feed into the Commission's work on its planned initiatives, and that the Committee's positions can be highlighted in resolutions or included in evaluation and information reports. In 2022, the Committee adopted 202 opinion and reports which is in line with its average annual performance. The Committee also enhanced its engagement in the political and legislative cycle by attending 345 high-level national, Union and international meetings, summits and conferences, and by organising 116 hearings and 29 conferences. In 2022, Members of Parliament participated in meetings or events organised by the Committee on 68 occasions, which remained at the same level as in 2021.

The resolution noted that the Committee continued to reinforce its internal control framework in 2022 with the simplification of the financial circuits under the 'light verification' procedure for some low-value transactions and to develop its policy on sensitive posts.

Human resources, equality and staff well-being

At the end of 2022, the Committee had a total of 706 members of staff, compared to 699 in 2021. The occupation rate of the posts in the establishment plan was 95.1 %. The Committee continued to employ a high proportion of female staff (64.6 % of all staff), including at middle management level (59 % of all managers). Members recommended improving the representation of women in senior management positions. They also encouraged the Committee to continue to take steps to achieve an adequate geographical balance among its staff.

Ethical framework and transparency

Members noted that the rules of procedure are now aligned and consistent with the code of conduct adopted in 2021 following the Committee's internal audit on ethics and integrity. They noted with satisfaction that the Committee continued to train staff and raise awareness about the ethics framework in place, in particular the new code of conduct, harassment and whistleblowing, and the role and responsibilities of the ethics counsellors whose mandate started in January 2022. They believe that only a zero tolerance of harassment policy will prevent the Committee from future allegations of harassment and serious misconduct.

The Committee is congratulated for taking the decision to formally join, as of 1 June 2023, the **EU transparency register** between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission.

Although the Committee has a series of measures in place to prevent fraud, Member regret that an integrated anti-fraud strategy has not yet been put in place despite previous requests from Parliament.

Buildings

Members recalled that the Committee and the Committee of Regions (CoR) lost 5 000 m² in office space following the take-over of the rental contract of the former EEAS building at Belliard 100, which took effect in September 2021, and the building exchange between the Committee and the CoR's Belliard 68 and Trèves 74 and the Commission's Van Maerlant 2 (VMA), which took effect in September 2022.

In 2022, the building strategy of the Committee and the CoR focused on the geographical concentration of the buildings which was achieved by physically connecting all the buildings used by the Committees to their main building. Members welcomed the new physical connection to Parliament's buildings which became operational in November 2022.

Interinstitutional cooperation

Parliament welcomed the budgetary and administrative savings achieved through interinstitutional cooperation, in particular the close cooperation established at administrative level with the CoR with which the Committee shares premises and joint services in the areas of translation, infrastructure, logistics and IT while maintaining its full institutional autonomy. It invited the Committee and the CoR to explore the possibility of setting up a single administration for their joint services.

Members also welcomed the Committee's strengthened involvement in the legislative cycle and called on the Committee to ensure that its opinions are shared with the members of the relevant committees of Parliament in line with the cooperation agreement between Parliament and the Committee.

Communication

In 2022, the Committee's overall budget for communication was EUR 1.5 million, the same amount as in 2021. Parliament welcomed that the Committee ensures that citizens have open access to its documents via a dedicated electronic register.

With regard to **digitalisation**, Members noted that the Committee adopted a digital strategy aimed at providing IT services in line with best IT management practice while optimising the use of human and financial resources. They encouraged the Committee to raise awareness of cyber security among its members and staff. With regard to the environment and sustainability, Parliament welcomed the sustainable practices adopted by the Committee and the CoR, in particular the "paperless" approach, which has enabled them to reduce their environmental footprint.

2022 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Economic and Social Committee

2023/2135(DEC) - 07/03/2024 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Luke Ming FLANAGAN (The Left, IE) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2022, Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant 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 2022.

Budgetary and financial management

The report noted that, in 2022, the final adopted budget for the Committee amounted to EUR 152 451 643, representing an overall increase of 5.1 % compared to 2021. The remuneration and allowances budget line increased by 5 % between 2021 and 2022 due to the annual indexation of salaries. It also noted that the distribution of appropriations across budget lines in the 2022 budget remained comparable to previous years' distribution.

The European Economic and Social Committee's budget implementation rate was 96.12 % in 2022, after two years of lower budgetary implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the related travel restrictions. Members noted that the payment execution rate followed the same trend and reached 88.12 % in 2022. The carry-over of appropriations to the year 2022 amounted to EUR 20 162 518, i.e. approximately 13 % of the 2022 annual budget, which was substantially higher than the average in previous years due to the postponement of buildings works in 2020 and 2021.

Members noted that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in various ways created budgetary pressures for the Committee, including through rising inflation and salary adjustments, strongly increasing energy costs and the cost of construction and raw materials.

Moreover, the 2022 budget for staff missions increased by EUR 25 000 as compared to 2021, which was financed by a budget transfer, to cover higher expenses due to the increase in flight and hotel prices in 2022 and amounted to a total of EUR 398 974.

Internal management, performance and internal control

The report noted that the Committee pursues its mission through opinions, which refer to legislative proposals made by the Commission (referrals), own-initiative opinions, which call on the Union institutions to take action, and exploratory opinions, which feed into the Commission's work on its planned initiatives, and that the Committee's positions can be highlighted in resolutions or included in evaluation and information reports. In 2022, the Committee adopted 202 opinion and reports which is in line with its average annual performance, excluding 2019 and 2020 when the activity of the Committee was lower. The Committee also enhanced its engagement in the political and legislative cycle by attending 345 high-level national, Union and international meetings, summits and conferences, and by organising 116 hearings and 29 conferences.

The report noted that the Committee continued to reinforce its internal control framework in 2022 with the simplification of the financial circuits under the 'light verification' procedure for some low-value transactions and to develop its policy on sensitive posts.

Ethical framework and transparency

Members noted that the Committee continued its internal reform process with the adoption of new rules of procedures in March 2022 and their implementing provisions in November 2022. They also noted with satisfaction that the Committee continued to train staff and raise awareness about the ethics framework in place, in particular the new code of conduct, harassment and whistleblowing, and the role and responsibilities of the ethics counsellors whose mandate started in January 2022.

The Committee is congratulated for taking the decision to formally join, as of 1 June 2023, the EU transparency register between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission.

Although the Committee has a series of measures in place to prevent fraud, Member regret that an integrated anti-fraud strategy has not yet been put in place despite previous requests from Parliament.

Buildings

The report recalled that the Committee and the Committee of Regions (CoR) lost 5 000 m² in office space following the take-over of the rental contract of the former EEAS building at Belliard 100, which took effect in September 2021, and the building exchange between the Committee and the CoR's Belliard 68 and Trèves 74 and the Commission's Van Maerlant 2 (VMA), which took effect in September 2022.

In 2022, the building strategy of the Committee and the CoR focused on the geographical concentration of the buildings which was achieved by physically connecting all the buildings used by the Committees to their main building. Members welcomed the new physical connection to Parliament's buildings which became operational in November 2022, offering a more direct, easier and 125 m shorter pathway between the buildings of the Committee and the CoR and the buildings of Parliament.

Interinstitutional cooperation

The report welcomed the budgetary and administrative savings achieved through interinstitutional cooperation, in particular the close cooperation established at administrative level with the CoR with which the Committee shares premises and joint services in the areas of translation, infrastructure, logistics and IT while maintaining its full institutional autonomy.

Members also welcomed the Committee’s strengthened involvement in the legislative cycle and called on the Committee to ensure that its opinions are shared with the members of the relevant committees of Parliament in line with the cooperation agreement between Parliament and the Committee.

Communication

In 2022, the Committee’s overall budget for communication was EUR 1.5 million, the same amount as in 2021. This budget was primarily allocated to support the development and maintenance of the Committee’s website, social media communication, media monitoring, media relations and promotion of major activities and events of the Committee.

Lastly, the report welcomed that the Committee ensures that citizens have open access to its documents via a dedicated electronic register.

2022 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Economic and Social Committee

2023/2135(DEC) - 10/10/2024 - Final act

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Economic and Social Committee for the financial year 2022.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision (EU) 2024/2239 of the European Parliament on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2022, Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee.

CONTENT: the European Parliament decided to grant discharge to the Secretary-General of the European Economic and Social Committee in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Economic and Social Committee for the financial year 2016.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 11 April 2024 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 11 April 2024).

In 2022, the final adopted budget for the Committee amounted to **EUR 152 451 643**, representing an overall increase of 5.1 % compared to 2021. The remuneration and allowances budget line increased by 5 % between 2021 and 2022 due to the annual indexation of salaries, whereas the budget line for the fitting out of premises decreased by 77 % between 2021 and 2022 and came back to usual levels after the implementation of important refurbishment works in 2021.

The implementation rate was 96.12 % in 2022, after two years of lower budgetary implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the related travel restrictions. Members noted that the payment execution rate followed the same trend and reached 88.12 % in 2022. The carry-over of appropriations to the year 2022 amounted to EUR 20 162 518, i.e. approximately 13 % of the 2022 annual budget, which was substantially higher than the average in previous years due to the postponement of building works in 2020 and 2021.

Members noted that Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine in various ways created budgetary pressures for the Committee, including through rising inflation and salary adjustments, strongly increasing energy costs and the cost of construction and raw materials.

Moreover, the 2022 budget for staff missions increased by EUR 25 000 as compared to 2021, which was financed by a budget transfer, to cover higher expenses due to the increase in flight and hotel prices in 2022 and amounted to a total of EUR 398 974.