

2007 discharge: EU general budget, Committee of the Regions

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PURPOSE: to present the final annual accounts of the European Communities for the financial year 2007
- Other institutions: section VII - Committee of the Regions.

CONTENT: this document sets out the amount of expenditure and the financial statement of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) for 2007. 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 2007:

Commitment appropriations:

- commitment appropriations authorised: EUR 68 million;
- commitments made in 2007: EUR 66 million (implementation rate of 96.22%);
- appropriations carried over to 2008: insignificant (0.13% of total commitments);
- appropriations lapsing: EUR 2 million (3.65% of the budget).

Payment appropriations:

- payment appropriations authorised: EUR 78 million;
- payments made in 2007: EUR 68 million (implementation rate of 86.89%);
- appropriations carried over to 2008: EUR 6 million (8.02% of total payments);
- appropriations lapsing: EUR 4 million (5.09% of the budget).

Main axes of expenditure for 2007: in the context of its political activities and its mission (namely its involvement in the EU decision-making process and policy-orientation debates as a consultative organ), the CoR, in 2007, represented local and regional authorities within the European institutions. By means of its **consultative activities** (adoption of opinions) and **structured cooperation** with the European institutions and associations of local and regional authorities, the CoR fully implemented its work programme and overall political strategy.

The main event organised by the CoR in 2007 (along with the seminars organised by the CoR's Commissions and the Open Days) was the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome (22-23 March 2007).

In 2007, the CoR also:

- adopted 44 opinions, of which the most important concerned structural funds, EU reform and enlargement, sustainable development and mobility and better lawmaking;
- continued its efforts in its consultative role to support the creation of the Security, Justice and Freedom Area, at the Conference in Adeje in the Canary Islands (October 2007);
- improved its image with Open Days held from 8 to 11 October 2007 under the theme "Making it Happen" with some 5 500 policymakers as well as with the traditional inter-institutional "Portes ouvertes" exercise in May;

- improved its level of external information with the creation of the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network (June 2007). This network aims to facilitate the exchange of information between local and regional authorities of the EU as regards the proposals of the European Commission which will have an impact on subsidiarity when adopted. Its main achievements included producing the report “Horizon 2010 - Local and Regional Authorities for Growth and Jobs;
- strengthened interinstitutional cooperation (particularly with the Council and Member States);
- held several meeting (ordinary and external) in Würzburg (Germany) and Vilamoura (Portugal);
- agreed to a new agreement on administrative cooperation with the EESC with a view to ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of these two institutions: the agreement concerns the Joint Services, mainly the production chain services from translation to printing, as well as IT /Telecommunications, Security and Catering services. Some services were integrated in the “own” services of each Committee, such as the library, socio-medical service, the pre-press and internal services. A new governance structure was also created, which contributes to the transparency of operations;
- completed the administrative reform of the institution;
- further developed control standards.

With regard to the implementation of the budget, the activity report notes that, on the whole, the implementation rate improved considerably. The rate of carry-over appropriations is now significantly lower than in previous years (the CoR had an implementation rate of 97% for payment appropriations in 2007, up from an implementation rate of 84% in 2006).

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

Title I (staff expenditure): this Title is characterised by a reduction in remuneration and allowances (due to lower than expected salaries indexation), lower recruitment costs, considerably lower costs related to the interinstitutional crèche (miscalculation of costs by the Commission led to significant unforeseen savings for the CoR) and a notable reduction in expenditure on publishing.

Title II (operating expenditure): this Title is characterised by the cancellation of certain appropriations carried over, particularly for the item entitled “annual lease payments” for the advance payments of the Trèves 74 and Belliard 93 buildings, as well as for “observer” costs for the activities of Romanian and Bulgarian observers - these countries entered the EU on 1 January 2007. This Title was also characterised by the non-implementation of appropriations carried over from 2006 for the items “expenditure on publishing and participation in public events” (mostly travel and accommodation costs for journalists), “general publications” and other “communication activities”.