



Procedure file

Basic information		
DEC - Discharge procedure	2006/2063(DEC)	Procedure completed
2005 discharge: EC general budget, European Ombudsman		
Subject 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	CONT Budgetary Control		20/04/2006
		PPE-DE CASPARY Daniel	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	PETI Petitions	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	REGI Regional Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	AFCO Constitutional Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	DEVE Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	CULT Culture and Education	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	AFET Foreign Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	PECH Fisheries	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	BUDG Budgets	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	JURI Legal Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	INTA International Trade	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.		

	FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2787	27/02/2007
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Budget	KALLAS Siim	

Key events

25/07/2006	Non-legislative basic document published	SEC(2006)0915	Summary
14/12/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
27/03/2007	Vote in committee		Summary
30/03/2007	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0104/2007	
24/04/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
24/04/2007	Debate in Parliament		
24/04/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0110/2007	Summary
24/04/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		
15/07/2008	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2006/2063(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 100
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/6/34680

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		SEC(2006)0915 OJ C 263 31.10.2006, p. 0001	26/07/2006	EC	Summary
Court of Auditors: opinion, report		N6-0039/2006 OJ C 263 31.10.2006, p. 0001	31/10/2006	CofA	Summary
Committee draft report		PE382.618	10/01/2007	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE386.379	06/03/2007	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0104/2007	30/03/2007	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0110/2007	24/04/2007	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2007)2625/2	31/05/2007	EC	

Final act

[Budget 2008/505](#)
[OJ L 187 15.07.2008, p. 0071](#) Summary

2005 discharge: EC general budget, European Ombudsman

PURPOSE: presentation of the final annual accounts of the European Community for the financial year 2005 ? Other institutions : Section VIII (A) - European Ombudsman.

CONTENT: this document sets out the amount of expenditure and the financial statement of the European Ombudsman for 2005 and presents an analysis of its financial management. The available appropriations set out in the Ombudsman's 2005 budget amounted to EUR 7.72 million , with an 89.75% utilisation rate.

Main axes of 2004 expenditure: the implementation report states that the activities carried out by this institution can be characterised by 4 main issues :

- Ombudsman's workload following enlargement: with the arrival of 10 new Member States, the number of complaints increased from 3688 in 2004 to 3920 in 2005;
- Towards a new cooperation agreement with the EP to reinforce interinstitutional cooperation (this agreement should enter into force in 2006);
- A new ?Finance? department: the Ombudsman's Administration and Finance Department was overhauled in 2005, with its division into four sectors ? the Administration Sector, the Finance Sector, the Complaints-Handling Sector and the Communications Sector. The aim of this restructuring was to allow for greater specialisation within the individual sectors, with co-ordination ensured by the Head of the Department. Within the Legal Department, procedures for case-management and quality control were strengthened, to ensure consistent monitoring and reliable handling of larger numbers of complaints by a larger team of Legal Officers;
- Tenth anniversary: various events were organised with the EU institutions and bodies during the anniversary year.

Amendments to the 2004 budget: throughout 2004, the Ombudsman made amendments to the budget through 4 transfers between items and chapters:

- costs relating to the implementation of the Ombudsman's Work Programme (notably increasing its profile in the new Member States);
- costs relating to the reform of the Staff Regulations;
- mop up transfer;
- establishing a reserve of translators.

The main issues of the 2005 budget implementation can be summarised as follows:

Title I (Staff costs) : the budget implementation was marked by:

- the cut in mission and travel costs, a 60% rate of utilisation;
- costs relating to the organisation of training courses and the exchange of personnel were reduced;
- interinstitutional cooperation costs were increased following a budget transfer to cover translation costs.

Title II (Operational expenditure): this heading showed an increase in appropriations for office equipment and the hiring of an official car for the Ombudsman. On the other hand, an under-utilisation of item ?meetings in general? was noted.

Title III (Specific mission costs): only EUR 2139 were committed from the EUR 3000 available to cover costs relating to relations with the Ombudsman's international organisations.

For further details concerning the Committee's expenditure in 2005, please refer to the annexed detailed analysis of expenditure.

2005 discharge: EC general budget, European Ombudsman

The committee adopted the report by Daniel CASPARY (EPP-ED, DE) granting discharge to the European Ombudsman for 2005. In its accompanying resolution, the committee noted that the Ombudsman's annual caseload had increased from roughly 800 in 1996 to nearly 4000 in 2005, with a particularly sharp rise (53%) between 2003 and 2004. It also noted that there had been a 65% increase in the Ombudsman's budgetary allocations in 2005, and a 65% increase in staff in 2004 and 2005.

The committee stressed the importance of the information campaign carried out by the Ombudsman in 2005 through visits to the Member States in order to raise his profile among key members of the judiciary and enrich his collaboration with his national counterparts. MEPs said that, in order to identify target countries in which the Ombudsman's profile needed to be raised, the Ombudsman should rely on surveys on the awareness of citizens about his work rather than the number of complaints received from a particular country.

Lastly, the report said that, although the 1994 Ombudsman's Statute did not impose any obligation on the Ombudsman to publish his financial and economic interests, the Statute did place him "on a footing comparable with that of a Judge of the Court of Justice" and the Court (at Parliament's suggestion) had set up a working group to "examine the most appropriate way of ensuring transparency with regard to the judges' financial interests". The committee therefore called on the Ombudsman, pending the outcome of the inquiry, to follow the example set by the European Data Protection Supervisor and to publish a declaration of financial interests.

2005 discharge: EC general budget, European Ombudsman

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted Daniel CASPARY (EPP-ED, D) and granted the European Ombudsman discharge for implementation of the budget for the financial year 2005. In doing so, it made a series of observations on the discharge in its accompanying resolution.

Parliament noted that in 2005 the European Ombudsman had available commitment appropriations amounting to a total of EUR 7 224 554 (2004: EUR 5 782 968) with a utilisation rate of 84,27%. The Ombudsman's 2005 financial statements disclose a negative economic out-turn for the year (EUR 98 482) and identical totals of assets and liabilities (EUR 890 853). The Court of Auditors in its Annual Report on the 2005 financial year indicated that the audit did not give rise to any observations as regards the Ombudsman. However, self assessment indicated that improvements in effectiveness were needed in some areas (risk assessment, sensitive functions, multi-annual programming).

Parliament recorded that the Ombudsman's annual caseload had increased from roughly 800 in 1996 to nearly 4 000 in 2005, with a particularly sharp rise between 2003 and 2004 (53%). It noted that he continued his information visits to the Member States with a view to improving citizens' awareness about their rights, making 120 presentations at conferences, seminars and meetings during 2005, together with 50 interviews with journalists. The Ombudsman sought to target information to those countries where the level of complaints received was lower than might be expected given the size of the population, for example, Germany and Italy. The Ombudsman's media strategy is therefore to raise the Ombudsman's profile in such Member States. Parliament considered, however, that in order to identify target countries, the Ombudsman should rely on surveys on the awareness of the citizens about his work in the various Member States rather than the number of complaints.

Lastly, Parliament recalled that the Ombudsman's Statute laid down by the European Parliament in 1994 imposes no obligation on the Ombudsman to publish his financial and economic interests. However, it asked that the Ombudsman should follow the example set by the European Data Protection Supervisor and his deputy in publishing a declaration of financial interests based on the form used for the Register of Financial Interests of Members of the European Parliament.

2005 discharge: EC general budget, European Ombudsman

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Ombudsman for the 2005 financial year.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision 2008/505/EC of the European Parliament on the discharge for implementation of the European Union general budget for the financial year 2005 (Section VIII A - European Ombudsman).

CONTENT: with the present decision, the European Parliament grants the European Ombudsman discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2005.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 24 April 2007 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 24/04/2007).