








# Procedure file

Basic information		
DEC - Discharge procedure	2018/2174(DEC)	Procedure completed
2017 discharge: EU general budget, European Ombudsman		
Subject 8.70.03.02 2017 discharge		



Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	<b>CONT</b> Budgetary Control	 <a href="#">KOHN Arndt</a>	27/07/2018
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 <a href="#">SALAFRANCA SÁNCHEZ-NEYRA José Ignacio</a>	
		 <a href="#">FITTO Raffaele</a>	
		 <a href="#">KLINZ Wolf</a>	
		 <a href="#">JÁVOR Benedek</a>	
		 <a href="#">VALLI Marco</a>	
		 <a href="#">JALKH Jean-François</a>	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
<b>EMPL</b> Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>BUDG</b> Budgets	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>ITRE</b> Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>JURI</b> Legal Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>ECON</b> Economic and Monetary Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>LIBE</b> Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>INTA</b> International Trade	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>IMCO</b> Internal Market and Consumer Protection	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>TRAN</b> Transport and Tourism	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
<b>FEMM</b> Women's Rights and Gender Equality	The committee decided not to		

give an opinion.

<b>PETI</b> Petitions	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
<b>REGI</b> Regional Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
<b>AFCO</b> Constitutional Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
<b>DEVE</b> Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
<b>CULT</b> Culture and Education	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
<b>AFET</b> Foreign Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
<b>PECH</b> Fisheries	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
<b>AGRI</b> Agriculture and Rural Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
<b>ENVI</b> Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
Commission DG	Commissioner
<a href="#">Budget</a>	OETTINGER Günther

European Commission

### Key events

27/06/2018	Non-legislative basic document published	<a href="#">COM(2018)0521</a>	Summary
11/09/2018	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
20/02/2019	Vote in committee		
27/02/2019	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A8-0099/2019</a>	Summary
26/03/2019	Results of vote in Parliament		
26/03/2019	Debate in Parliament		
26/03/2019	Decision by Parliament	<a href="#">T8-0252/2019</a>	Summary
26/03/2019	End of procedure in Parliament		
27/09/2019	Final act published in Official Journal		

### Technical information

Procedure reference	2018/2174(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/8/14223

### Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	<a href="#">COM(2018)0521</a>	28/06/2018	EC	Summary
Court of Auditors: opinion, report	<a href="#">N8-0013/2019</a> <a href="#">OJ C 357 04.10.2018, p. 0001</a>	12/07/2018	CofA	Summary

Committee draft report		<a href="#">PE626.823</a>	13/12/2018	EP	
Supplementary non-legislative basic document		<a href="#">05824/2019</a>	11/02/2019	CSL	Summary
Amendments tabled in committee		<a href="#">PE634.536</a>	12/02/2019	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		<a href="#">A8-0099/2019</a>	27/02/2019	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		<a href="#">T8-0252/2019</a>	26/03/2019	EP	Summary

## Final act

Budget 2019/1430  
[OJ L 249 27.09.2019, p. 0127](#)

## 2017 discharge: EU general budget, European Ombudsman

**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 Ombudsman.

**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 the Ombudsmans appropriations for the financial year 2017: budgeted appropriations amounted to EUR 10 905 441.

As regards the implementation of the Ombudsmans budget, the [2017 Annual Activity Report](#) highlighted that this year was characterised by the following:

- 2 181 new complaints were dealt with; 447 inquiries opened and 363 closed;
- the offices Twitter account saw a 16% rise in followers (now more than 19 000) between 2016 and 2017;
- enhanced transparency as regards the Brexit negotiations.

## 2017 discharge: EU general budget, European Ombudsman

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 European Ombudsman.

## 2017 discharge: EU general budget, European Ombudsman

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The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Arndt KOHN (S&D, DE) 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 2017.

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 2017 for administrative and other expenditure of the institutions and bodies were free from material error.

### Budgetary and financial management

Members noted that the Ombudsmans 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 2017 to EUR 10 905 441 (EUR 10 658 951 in 2016).

They welcomed the Ombudsmans commitment to ensure that all available funds are spent in a result-oriented manner.

Of the total appropriations, 93.91 % were committed (compared to 95.40 % in 2016) and 86.20 % paid (compared to 85.89 % in 2016), with an implementation rate of 93.9 % (compared to 95.40 % in 2016).

Members noted a decrease in the implementation rate in 2017 which is the result of underspending of the budget line for European Schools.

### Complaints and inquiries

The report noted the increase of received complaints by 20 %, from 1 839 in 2016 to 2 216 in 2017. The Ombudsman opened a total of 433 inquiries on the basis of complaints (245 in 2016) and closed 348 such inquiries (291 in 2016).

In 2017, the overall number of new complaints dealt with was 2 181, of which 751 were within the mandate, compared to 1 880 complaints dealt with in 2016 of which 711 were within the mandate. Therefore, the number of complaints within the mandate has increased by 5.5%.

The average time for dealing with a complaint decreased from 86 in 2013 to 64 days and the average time for dealing with inquiries decreased from 369 days in 2013 to 266 days in 2017.

## 2017 discharge: EU general budget, European Ombudsman

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The European Parliament decided, by 529 votes to 97, with 11 abstentions, to grant discharge to the European Ombudsman in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Ombudsman for the 2016 financial year.

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 2017 for administrative and other expenditure of the institutions and bodies were free from material error.

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Parliament noted a decrease in the implementation rate in 2017 which is the result of underspending of the budget line for European Schools. It also welcomed the new budget appropriation which is intended to finance a scheme to support the use of public transport towards the various places of work.

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