

2016 discharge: EU general budget, European Commission and executive agencies

2017/2136(DEC) - 10/07/2017 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE: presentation of a Commission report to the European Parliament and the Council concerns the follow-up to the discharge for the 2015 financial year.

CONTENT: as a reminder, discharge is the process by which the European Parliament and Council scrutinise the implementation of the EU budget and hold the Commission accountable for its financial management. The Annual report and special reports of the European Court of Auditors are key inputs along with the Commission's own reporting on the EU accounts as well as the management and performance of the EU budget.

It is a continuous process which provides an opportunity to learn from the past to improve future EU spending.

On 27 April 2017, the European Parliament on a recommendation by the Council granted the Commission discharge for the financial year 2015. The discharge procedure for the financial year 2015 was characterised by a fruitful interinstitutional exchange of views on how to improve the management of EU funds for the benefit of the EU citizens.

During the closing debate in the European Parliament in April 2017, the key actors from the European Parliament and the Council supported a stronger focus on results, confirming that achieving results with the EU budget is as important as ensuring that formal rules are complied with. This is fully in line with the Commission's initiative 'EU Budget Focused on Results' which aims at strengthening the systematic focus upon performance and results, while making it easier for citizens and stakeholders to understand the objectives and impacts of the EU budget.

In order to provide faster feedback on the key priorities of the European Parliament and the Council, the Commission decided this year to proceed with this follow-up report already in July.

This report follows up on the key requests made by the European Parliament and the Council in the discharge and is part of the EU Budget Integrated Financial Reporting Package 2016. It focuses in particular on:

- the future of EU finances;
- budgetary and financial management;
- getting results from the Union budget;
- the management of the African Peace Facility.

The detailed replies to the specific discharge requests made by the European Parliament and Council, including requests made in relation to special reports of the European Court of Auditors also covered by the 2015 discharge procedure, will be published at a later stage.