

# Discharge for the 2020 budget: European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex)

In May 2022, the European Parliament postponed its discharge decision on the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) for the financial year 2020. In its second report, Parliament's Budgetary Control Committee (CONT) is once again recommending Parliament refuses to grant discharge to Frontex, reiterating its demand that the Agency present a detailed road map showing how it intends to address the outstanding concerns.

## Discharge procedure

The [discharge procedure](#) (Article 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union – TFEU) is how Parliament scrutinises EU budget implementation, verifying compliance with relevant rules. Although Article 319 TFEU mentions only discharge to the Commission, Parliament also grants separate discharge to the other EU institutions for their respective sections of the EU general budget and to decentralised EU agencies and joint undertakings for implementation of their budgets, to ensure transparency and democratic scrutiny of how public funds are spent. Parliament's CONT committee [prepares](#) discharge reports for each EU institution or body, taking into account the Court of Auditors' [annual report](#) and [statement of assurance](#), annual activity reports, the Council's recommendation, hearings and the institution or body's replies to CONT questions. CONT makes a recommendation to plenary, and the accompanying motion for a resolution makes observations to be addressed by the body concerned.

## Position of the Committee on Budgetary Control

In March 2022, CONT adopted a [horizontal report](#) on the EU agencies' budget implementation in 2020, along with [32 individual reports](#), with discharge recommended for all agencies but Frontex. In May 2022, Parliament [postponed](#) its discharge decision, as it had the previous year. It noted that despite progress on fundamental rights, more action was still needed, and that Frontex had not therefore fulfilled the conditions set out in the previous [discharge report](#). In addition, the EU's Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) had presented findings from an investigation regarding harassment, misconduct and migrant pushbacks involving the Agency. These were deemed sufficiently serious as to not yet allow a decision on discharge before the Agency had addressed the findings, and the outcome had been shared with the Parliament.

On 6 October 2022, the CONT committee voted on a [second report](#), again proposing not to grant discharge to Frontex. The report expresses deep concern and utter dismay at the magnitude of the serious misconduct and other irregularities identified by OLAF, as well as at the level at which they have been committed. The report touches in particular on issues relating to financial management, transparency, data protection and harassment cases. It reiterates its call to the Agency to present a detailed road map showing how it intends to address the outstanding concerns. The CONT report notes that OLAF's report describes the failings of the individuals concerned. CONT welcomes the positive change in management style introduced by the acting executive director, but also stresses that some reports imply that the challenges facing the Agency have outlived the previous leadership. CONT also stresses that in future discharge cycles it will seriously consider all the issues raised so far. The report recommending refusal of discharge was adopted by CONT on 6 October 2022 (15 votes to 12). The plenary vote is scheduled for October.

Discharge procedure: [2021/2146\(DEC\)](#); Committee responsible: CONT; Rapporteur: Tomáš Zdechovský (EPP, Czechia). For further information see our earlier plenary 'at a glance' note – [Discharge for 2020 budget](#).

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Author: Alina Dobрева, Members' Research Service  
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