



TEXTS ADOPTED

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Discharge 2015: EU general budget - European Parliament

1. European Parliament decision of 27 April 2017 on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015, Section I – European Parliament (2016/2152(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015¹,
- having regard to the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2015 (COM(2016)0475 – C8-0270/2016)²,
- having regard to the report on budgetary and financial management for the financial year 2015, Section I – European Parliament³,
- having regard to the Internal Auditor’s annual report for the financial year 2015,
- having regard to the Court of Auditors’ annual report on the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2015, together with the institutions’ replies⁴,
- having regard to the statement of assurance⁵ as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions provided by the Court of Auditors for the financial year 2015, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Article 314(10) and Article 318 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002⁶, and in particular Articles 164, 165 and 166 thereof,

¹ OJ L 69, 13.3.2015.

² OJ C 380, 14.10.2016, p. 1.

³ OJ C 354, 27.9.2016, p. 1.

⁴ OJ C 375, 13.10.2016, p. 1.

⁵ OJ C 375, 13.10.2016, p. 10.

⁶ OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

- having regard to the Bureau decision of 16 June 2014 on the Internal Rules on the implementation of the European Parliament’s budget¹, and in particular Article 22 thereof,
 - having regard to Rule 94 and Rule 98(3) of, and Annex IV to, its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A8-0153/2017),
- A. whereas the President adopted Parliament's accounts for the financial year 2015 on 4 July 2016;
- B. whereas the Secretary-General, as principal authorising officer by delegation, certified, on 24 June 2016, his reasonable assurance that the resources assigned for Parliament's budget have been used for their intended purpose, in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that the control procedures established give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions;
- C. whereas the audit of the Court of Auditors stated that, in its specific assessment of administrative and other expenditure in 2015, it did not identify any serious weaknesses in the examined annual activity reports and internal control systems of the institutions and bodies required by Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012;
- D. whereas Article 166(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 requires each Union institution to take all appropriate steps to act on the observations accompanying Parliament’s discharge decision;
1. Grants its President discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Parliament for the financial year 2015;
 2. Sets out its observations in the resolution below;
 3. Instructs its President to forward this decision and the resolution forming an integral part of it to the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors, and to arrange for their publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L series).

¹ PE 422.541/Bur.

2. European Parliament resolution of 27 April 2017 with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015, Section I – European Parliament (2016/2152(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015, Section I – European Parliament,
 - having regard to Rule 94 and Rule 98(3) of, and Annex IV to, its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A8-0153/2017),
- A. whereas in his certification of the final accounts, the European Parliament's ("Parliament's") accounting officer stated his reasonable assurance that the accounts present a true and fair view of the financial position of Parliament in all material respects and that no issues requiring a reservation have been brought to his attention;
- B. whereas, in accordance with the usual procedure, 129 questions were sent to Parliament's administration and written replies were received and discussed publicly by the Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT), in the presence of the vice-president responsible for the budget, the Secretary-General and the internal auditor;
- C. whereas scrutiny, particularly in the form of the yearly discharge procedure is essential to ensure that Parliament's political leadership and administration are held accountable to citizens in the Union; whereas there is permanent scope for improvement in terms of quality, efficiency, and effectiveness in the management of public finances; whereas the principle of performance-based budgeting and good governance of human resources should be a core element when executing the budget;

Oversight over Parliament's budgetary and financial management

1. Notes that the formal oversight system of Parliament's budgetary and financial management consists of four main components:
 - (a) the certification of the final accounts by Parliament's accounting officer;
 - (b) the annual reports of the internal auditor and his opinion on the internal control system;
 - (c) the assessment of administrative and other expenditure for all the Union institutions, including Parliament, by its external auditor, the Court of Auditors (the "Court"); and
 - (d) the discharge procedure prepared by CONT resulting in a decision of Parliament on granting the President of Parliament discharge.
2. Notes that the annual report of the internal auditor contains findings based on specific audit work; aims to improve budgetary and financial management but not to provide a comprehensive picture of Parliament's budgetary and financial management; notes, similarly, that the Court's report only represents the results of a small sample (16 transactions) in respect of Parliament's transactions;
3. Understands that, in general, the low level of error in respect of the administrative expenditure may account for the relatively little attention paid by the Court to Parliament's transactions;
4. Points out, however, that even if the error rate is remarkably low, the reputational risk is relatively high, given that such financial and budgetary errors might impact negatively on the standing of the institution;
5. Adds that, more recently, as a consequence of the generally felt need for performance based budgeting, discharges should not be confined to detecting irregularities but also include measurement of concrete performance and results and that this too is particularly important in the case of Parliament, since lack of results has a direct impact on the institution's reputation;
6. Notes that, against this background, the work undertaken by Parliament in the context of the discharge procedure offers an opportunity to consider more thoroughly the accounts of Parliament's administration; calls for a strengthening of in-house expertise on accounts and auditing that rapporteurs can make use of in the preparation of their discharge reports;

Parliament's accounts

7. Notes that Parliament's final appropriations for 2015 totalled EUR 1 794 929 112, or 19,78 % of heading 5 of the Multiannual Financial Framework¹ set aside for the 2015 administrative expenditure of the Union institutions as a whole, representing a 2,2 %

¹ Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884).

increase compared to the 2014 budget (EUR 1 755 631 742);

8. Notes that total revenue entered in the accounts as at 31 December 2015 was EUR 176 367 724 (2014: EUR 174 436 852), including EUR 27 988 590 in assigned revenue (2014: EUR 26 979 032);
9. Points out that four chapters accounted for 71 % of total commitments: Chapter 10 (Members of the institution), Chapter 12 (Officials and temporary staff), Chapter 20 (Buildings and associated costs) and Chapter 42 (Expenditure relating to parliamentary assistance); notes that this indicates that Parliament's expenditure is characterised by a high level of continuity for the major part linked to remunerations for Members and staff, adjusted according to the Staff Regulations and other contractual obligations;
10. Notes the figures on the basis of which Parliament's accounts for the financial year 2015 were closed, namely:

(a) Available appropriations (EUR)	
appropriations for 2015:	1 794 929 112
non-automatic carry-overs from financial year 2014:	-
automatic carry-overs from financial year 2014:	277 911 825
appropriations corresponding to assigned revenue for 2015:	27 988 590
carry-overs corresponding to assigned revenue from 2014:	106 077 150
Total:	2 206 906 677
(b) Utilisation of appropriations in the financial year 2015 (EUR)	
commitments:	2 176 992 756
payments made:	1 770 807 099
appropriations carried forward automatically including those arising from assigned revenue:	392 379 176
appropriations carried forward non-automatically:	-
appropriations cancelled:	43 720 402
(c) Budgetary receipts (EUR)	
received in 2015:	176 367 724
(d) Total balance sheet at 31 December 2015 (EUR)	1 511 058 599

11. Notes that, in 2015, 99,1 % of the appropriations entered in Parliament's budget were committed with a cancellation rate of 0,9 % and that, as in previous years, a very high level of budget implementation was achieved;
12. Draws attention to the fact that the appropriations cancelled totalled EUR 41 422 684 with the bulk of the cancellations made against salaries and expenditure related to buildings;
13. Notes that the 'mopping-up' transfer accounted for EUR 71 000 000, which represents 4 % of the total appropriations transferred from provisional appropriation headings and from other sources, so as to help fund the annual lease payments for the Konrad Adenauer building; urges that Parliament's building policy be laid down with sufficient clarity, as part of the budgetary strategy; considers that level of the 'mopping-up'

transfer as very high; is of the firm opinion that an effective management of the budget should reduce this transfer to the bare minimum; calls on the Court, in this connection, to draw up a report on Parliament's building policy;

Court's opinions on the reliability of the 2015 accounts and on the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying those accounts

14. Notes that overall audit evidence indicates that the spending on 'administration' is not affected by a material level of error, but that on the basis of the seven quantified errors the estimated level of error present under heading 5 of the MFF on administration is 0,6 % (up from 0,5 % in 2014);
15. Is very concerned about the Court's finding that of the 151 transactions examined for all the Union institutions, 22 (14,6 %) were affected by error; notes, however, that, of these 22 transactions, only seven errors were quantified, and thus had financial implications, resulting in an estimated level of error of 0,6 %;
16. Notes, furthermore, the specific findings concerning Parliament contained in the annual report of the Court for 2015; notes that the Court found weaknesses in controls on the authorisation and settlement of expenditure made in 2014; these involved only one out of 16 Parliament transactions that were examined, concerning one or other of the political groups, and those weaknesses were cleared in 2015;
17. Notes the responses given by Parliament to the Court during the adversarial procedure; asks the Court to keep the responsible committee informed on the implementation of its recommendation to provide better guidance and to review the existing control framework for the implementation of budget appropriations allocated to political groups;

The internal auditor's annual report

18. Notes that, at the competent open committee meeting with the internal auditor held on 30 January 2017, the internal auditor presented his annual report and described that in 2015 he had adopted reports on the following subjects:
 - Follow-up of open actions from internal audit reports;
 - Code of conduct on multilingualism;
 - IT operational efficiency and performance measurement;
 - Financial Management System (FMS);
 - Debt recovery process;
 - Business continuity management;
 - IT data centre inventory and management of external expertise;
19. Notes and supports the views expressed by the internal auditor concerning the need:
 - to draft a reasoned proposal for updating the code of conduct on multilingualism for interpretation services that includes specific provisions on the planning of

trilogue-related meetings;

- to improve the regulatory framework applicable to meetings with interpretation, including: better alignment between existing sets of rules; measures to spread demand more evenly over the week and to identify and fill underused slots; underscores the need to reduce the number of meetings cancelled at short notice, since this results in considerable misallocation of resources;
 - to draw up relevant criteria and indicative thresholds for starting legal procedures and for waiving debts and submitting these for approval by the principal authorising officer by delegation;
 - to establish an adequate governance and policy (including institutional guidance and practical arrangements) for business continuity management;
20. Notes that, at the end of 2015, after successive follow-up audits, four actions from the review of the internal control framework, all of them “moderate risk”, remain open, one of which had its due-date deferred to 2017 in the context of Parliament’s new financial management system; calls on the internal auditor to keep CONT informed on the progress achieved on those actions;
21. Asks the Internal Auditor in presenting the annual report, to focus more closely on those aspects where shortcomings and/or irregularities have been encountered; asks also the Internal Auditor to make his reports on follow-up, developments and solutions relating to problems identified in the course of his mandate available to the Committee on Budgetary Control; asks the Secretary-General to introduce procedures for the assessment of performance and results;

Follow-up to the 2014 discharge resolution

22. Notes the written answers to the 2014 discharge resolution provided to CONT on 20 October 2016 and of the presentation, by the Secretary-General, of the various questions and requests in respect of Parliament's 2014 discharge resolution and of the exchange of views with Members that followed; regrets, however, that many of these applications have not been followed up and that no reason or justification has been given; stresses the importance being able to discuss more frequently with the Secretary-General in CONT issues affecting Parliament's budget and its implementation.
23. Notes that there was an inconsistency between the dates of presentation of the draft Parliament discharge report and the possible tabling of additional questions to the Secretary-General; asks the Secretary-General to provide replies to the supplementary questions before the deadline for amendments and, if necessary, before the vote in committee is taken;

Parliament's 2015 discharge

24. Notes the exchange of views between the vice-president responsible for the budget, the Secretary-General and CONT in the presence of the member of the Court and the internal auditor, on 30 January 2017;
25. Expresses its satisfaction with the commitment of Parliament’s administration to continuously improving the performance of Parliament’s services as a whole and to do so in an efficient manner, although it also considers that it is taking too long in some

cases to put the changes into practice;

26. Notes that Parliament, which costs about EUR 3,60 per citizen per year, does not need to shy away from comparisons with other parliamentary systems, especially since one-third of costs is accounted for by basic factors (multilingualism and number of sites) over which Parliament itself has limited influence and which do not apply to other parliaments in the same way;
27. Notes, however, that attention paid to performance based budgeting varies between the directorates-general, and is well developed in, for example, the Directorate-General for Finance (DG FINS), but is still at a preliminary stage elsewhere in the administration; calls upon the Secretary-General to ensure that clear, measurable targets are set and monitored throughout the administration;
28. Notes the Secretary-General's reply regarding the accessibility of the ePetition application for Members and the general public as well as the Legal Service report; asks the Secretary-General to report on the actions to follow-up the recommendations of the Legal Service;
29. Welcomes the attention paid by the administration to sustainability, in particular, in the context of public procurement procedures; notes, however, that, with the entry into force of the new directive on public procurement¹, it has become possible to increase the weight of criteria related to social and environmental sustainability relative to the criterion of the lowest price;
30. Calls upon the Secretary-General to submit a plan of action on how to apply sustainability criteria in Parliament's public procurement procedures and, in this respect, to include an evaluation of the use made of green public procurement as an instrument;
31. Acknowledges that, according to the Court, the costs of the geographic dispersion of Parliament amount to EUR 114 million per year and notes the finding, in its resolution of 20 November 2013 on the location of the seats of the European Union's Institutions², that 78 % of all missions by Parliament staff coming under the Staff Regulations arise as a direct result of the fact that Parliament's services are geographically dispersed; recalls that the estimate of the environmental impact of that dispersal is between 11 000 to 19 000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions; calls on the Bureau to request the Secretary-General to develop, without delay, a roadmap for a single seat for Parliament; reiterates its call on Parliament and the Council to address, in order to create long-term savings, the need for a roadmap for a single seat, as stated by Parliament in several previous resolutions; believes that the withdrawal of the UK and the need to reallocate the European Agencies which currently have their seats in the UK could provide an excellent opportunity to solve several issues in the same time; points however to Article 341 TFEU which establishes that the seats of the institutions of the Union shall be determined by common accord of the governments of the Member States and Protocol 6 annexed to the TEU and the TFEU which lays down that Parliament shall have its seat in Strasbourg; recalls that a single-seat solution requires Treaty change;

¹ Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65).

² OJ C 436, 24.11.2016, p. 2.

32. Recalls the reply by the Administration to Question 75 in the questionnaire concerning the discharge for Parliament for 2013, namely that it had decided to discontinue the 'practice of long-term missions ..., ... leading to considerable savings', but views as a major contradiction the fact that 13 members of staff are currently on long-term missions; considers that a long-term mission for a member of staff, involving an expatriation allowance and daily allowances, to a place where that person was already living and working is a reprehensible use of taxpayers' money and contrary to the Staff Regulations; insists on a clarification of the circumstances of every long-term mission, and in particular on the disclosure of the reasons and costs for that long-term mission;
33. Recalls that all officials and other servants of the Union, even those who work within cabinets, are to carry out their duties solely with the interests of the Union in mind, according to the rules laid down in the Staff Regulations; points out that Union officials are paid by taxpayers' money, which is not intended to finance press or other staff engaged in promoting any national political interest of a President; calls on the Bureau to lay down clear provisions in Parliament's regulations;
34. Notes the decision of the President of 21 October 2015, by which he sought to appoint people to managerial posts within Parliament without observing procedures, and in particular without calls for applications; notes that that decision 'did not correspond to the rules' (Administration's reply in connection with the second questionnaire from CONT); insists that that decision by the President be formally revoked;
35. Notes that, on 15 December 2015, the President gave himself authority to allocate an uncapped special allowance to his cabinet staffers, over and above the existing cabinet allowance, despite the fact that the Staff Regulations make no provision for such a special allowance; raises again the question of the lawfulness of that authority and the validity of the special allowances; asks for consideration to be given to whether the decision concerned should be revoked;

Management of the subsidy scheme for visitors' groups

36. Notes the fact that, on 24 October 2016, the Bureau adopted the revised Rules governing the payment of financial contributions for sponsored visitors groups;
37. Welcomes the fact that this considerably reduces cash payments and introduces mandatory electronic transfers thereby reducing the risks of theft, as well as the reputational risk for Parliament, while still providing for considerable flexibility; supports the Bureau's intention to evaluate the revised system after one year of implementation; regrets, however, that Parliamentary Assistants can be nominated to receive payments to their personal accounts and to certify the group's expenses; is concerned this places an unnecessary legal and financial responsibility on APAs and exposes them to potential risks; urges the Bureau to reconsider this as a priority;
38. Deplores the fact that Parliament granted discharge to its President in respect of the implementation of the Parliament's budget for the financial year 2014 and, at the last minute, deleted important paragraphs, raising further questions concerning the President's political activities and his financial behaviour during the 2014 European elections;

Transparency register and conflict of interest

39. Welcomes the increasing attention on the part of the media and the public to Parliament and its administration; notes, however, that some journalists find it difficult to obtain the specific information they are looking for; points out that transparency of Parliament and its administration is essential for the legitimacy of the institution and that, always respecting the rules governing the protection of personal data, access to information should be improved;
40. Calls on the Bureau to publish on Parliament's website the relevant documents submitted to it by the Secretary-General in a machine-readable format, unless the nature of the information contained therein makes this impossible, as is the case, for example, for the protection of personal data;
41. Stresses the need to make the work of Parliament's internal decision-making bodies, in particular the Bureau, more transparent and accessible; calls for Bureau agendas to be published on the Intranet in good time and for the minutes of meetings to be published much more promptly; observes that it is not necessary to wait until they are translated into all languages;
42. Recalls the obligation on Members to inform the administration immediately of any change in their declarations of interests;
43. Asks the Secretary-General to forward this resolution to the Bureau, highlighting all requests for action or decisions by the Bureau; calls on the Secretary-General to establish a plan of action and a timetable enabling the Bureau to follow up and/or respond to the recommendations contained in Parliament's discharge resolutions and to include the results in the annual monitoring document; asks the Secretary-General to report in good time to the Committee on Budgets and CONT on all projects with a significant budgetary impact that have been submitted to the Bureau;
44. Believes that Members ought to be able to use Parliament's website to provide their constituents with the greatest possible transparency on their activities and, therefore, calls upon the Secretary-General to develop a system that Members can use to publish details of their meetings with interest representatives; and urges the Secretary-General to make this possible without further delay, as already requested in Parliament's 2014 discharge resolution;
45. Calls on the Bureau to define and publish the rules concerning the use of the general expenditure allowance (GEA);
46. Notes the low level of awareness, among Members, of the possibility of returning general expenditure allowance surpluses; reminds Members that the GEA does not constitute an additional personal salary; asks the Secretary-General to publicise this possibility as a priority; urges Members to return surpluses at the end of their mandate;
47. Similarly, calls on the Secretary-General to provide Members who would like to publish on their own websites details of payments to them of any other Parliament allowances , with appropriate data records that can be easily reprocessed;
48. Calls, further, on the Secretary-General to assist interested political groups in the same way;
49. Notes that Parliament's website makes available a range of documents regarding the decision on the recognition of the European political parties and European political

foundations alongside details specifying the final funding amount; asks Parliament to request the Commission to present a proposal for a revision of the current Union legal act on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations¹, including stricter requirements for the setting up of European political parties and foundations, in order to prevent abuses;

50. Welcomes the introduction of a special form for rapporteurs where they can indicate which interest representatives had influenced their reports (legislative footprint);
51. Reiterates its call for Parliament's administration to produce a report on the use of Parliament's premises by interest representatives and other external organisations;
52. Is concerned that the current code of conduct for Members may need to be further improved in order to avoid conflicts of interests paying specific attention to:
 - paid side-jobs of Members;
 - lobbying activities directed towards the European institutions of former Members while they are entitled to a transition allowance;
 - the registration of declarations of Members' interests;
 - the composition and competences of the advisory committee.

Directorate-General for Communication

53. Welcomes the development of indicators for the performance measurement of Parliament's communication activities and invites the Secretary-General to devote a separate section on the effectiveness of this new performance-based approach in the field of communication in the 2016 report on Parliament's activities;
54. Supports the various programmes aimed at facilitating visits by journalists and citizens who are interested in finding out more about Parliament's activities;
55. Reiterates, in this regard, its call in the 2014 discharge where it was noted that Parliament website remained relatively un-user-friendly, difficult to navigate and had not yet incorporated the most recent technological developments, with the result that it was difficult to find relevant information quickly; it was also pointed out that, given the importance of communication with European citizens, the website did not contribute to improving the image of Parliament with the public at large;
56. Calls on the Directorate-General for Communications (DG COMM) to introduce a more efficient and user-friendly website that incorporates a more efficient website search engine, one that will raise the profile of Parliament with the general public and respond more directly to the needs and interests of citizens; notes that mediocre results only have been obtained, despite the expenditure of considerable resources;
57. Expresses concern about the effectiveness of Parliament's communication strategy; calls in this respect for a comprehensive review of the current strategy and, in particular,

¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations (OJ L 317, 4.11.2014, p. 1).

for a more active approach towards those who are not automatically interested in Parliament's activities or who may even be sceptical about its functioning; invites the Secretary-General to develop a new strategy to reach out further in order to engage with these citizens too, including by facilitating access to information, to adequately address unjustified prejudices against Parliament, while avoiding unnecessary and costly advertising campaigns;

58. Underlines the need to modernise the mission of the information offices of Parliament by optimising the use of new communication technologies and patterns and taking advantage of their privileged geographical positions, close to citizens, to further intensify "going local" activities, such as debates organised with Members and civil society, with a view to listening to people and engaging with them; emphasises that online debate and media attention triggered by such events should contribute to increase outreach to citizens still further; notes that building and staff costs for the information offices in the Member States are disproportionately high in relation to the amount of money spent on the key functions of those offices; calls on the Secretary General to present, by the end of 2017, to CONT a detailed activity and financial report on the information offices in the cities of Brussels and Strasbourg respectively, with a special focus on the value that they add;
59. Is concerned at the replies given to the questions for written response on Parliament's information offices in some Member States, as in most cases only a fraction of their operating costs arise from the real goals and tasks of such offices, whilst the lion's share of the money is spent on office rentals and the salaries and travel expenses of their staff;
60. Invites the Secretary-General to improve internal communication between the various directorates-general, so that, for instance the development of new important tools such as the legislative train gets known to a wider public, both internal and external;

LUX Prize

61. Welcomes the joint presentation made to CONT and the Committee on Culture and Education of the survey as requested in the 2013 discharge conducted to determine whether the LUX Prize is well known and how, if at all, it is viewed in their respective Member States and of the findings therein;
62. Recalls that the survey mainly related to the awareness of the LUX Film Prize among Members and film-makers, on the aim of the Prize, which is to illustrate to citizens Parliament's commitment to consensual values such as human rights and solidarity, as well as its commitment to cultural and linguistic diversity;
63. Notes that the survey had a low response rate, just 18 % of Parliament's constituent Members, corresponding to 137 Members from all political groups and Member States, and that, among those Members, more than 90 % were aware of the LUX Film Prize, 75 % understood its purpose and more than 80 % have a positive image of it.
64. Is not convinced of the selection method, by which Members decide about the nominations and the final election of the Prize winner, and invites the Bureau to report on alternative models for obtaining the desired results, for example, by supporting a comparable initiative taken by film-makers' organisations themselves;
65. Notes that, although during the years the amount of spectators has increased, a number

of 43 000 within the Union is still very low and raises the question whether the Lux Prize is justifiable;

House of European History

66. Regrets the repeated delays of the opening of the House of European History, which was originally planned for March 2016, was subsequently delayed till September and November 2016 and is now scheduled to take place on 6 May 2017;
67. Notes with concern the on-going discussions on the nature of its temporary exhibitions; emphasises the importance of the academic independence of the House of European History in terms of exhibition content and design, these being determined exclusively by museological and historical criteria;
68. Is pleased that, according to estimates, the House of European History will welcome 250 000 visitors a year; points out that the annual operating costs of this facility are estimated in advance at EUR 13,3 million; expresses its concern at the proportionally low number of visitors compared to the high operating costs, bearing in mind that, in 2015, Parliament welcomed 326 080 visitors, and that the operating cost was just EUR 4,3 million;
69. Notes that with the establishment of the Parliamentarium and the opening of the House of European History, the Parliament and its surroundings are becoming a citizens' and tourist attraction that will bring about a better knowledge of the role of Parliament and illustrate for citizens Parliament's commitment to consensual values such as human rights and solidarity; requests that the Bureau consider entering into a dialogue with the local authorities to see how the latter can contribute to the financing and management of the House of European History;
70. Calls on the Bureau to consider adapting the management of the House of European History to a more inter-institutional approach, exploring further cooperation with other institutions of the Union, especially the Commission and the Council;
71. Welcomes the Commission decision to contribute EUR 800 000 a year to the operating costs of the House of European History; considers, however, that the Commission should contribute a much higher proportion of the estimated annual operating costs;

Directorate-General for Personnel (DG PERS)

72. Notes that, by 31 December 2015, a total of 5 391 officials and temporary staff were employed within the Secretariat (an increase of 96 compared with 31 December 2014) and a total of 771 officials and temporary staff were employed within the political groups (an increase of 26 compared with 31 December 2014); notes that, together with contract agents, DG PERS was responsible for 9 402 staff (an increase of 467 compared with 31 December 2014);
73. Notes that at 1 January 2015, 47 posts were deleted from Parliament's establishment plan in accordance with the 2014 revision of the Staff Regulations and the MFF for 2014-2020, leaving the total establishment plan at 6 739 posts of which 5 723 (84,9 %) were for the secretariat and 1 016 (15,1 %) for the political groups; notes that, on 31 December 2015, 4,9 % of the posts in the secretariat were vacant, compared to 9,6 % at the end of 2014;

74. Welcomes the fact that the gender balance of the directors-general improved from 18,2 % / 81,8 % in 2014 to 33,3 % / 66,7 % in 2015, but notes that the gender balance of directors fell from 34 % / 66 %, in 2014, to 31,1 % / 68,9 %, in 2015; recalls that the absolute majority of the Parliament staff is composed of women but that women are in a limited part of the managerial posts; notes that the gender balance in heads of unit continued to improve from 30 % / 70 %, at the end of 2014, to 31,2 % / 68,8 %, at the end of 2015; emphasises that imbalances for managerial posts therefore persist and that an equal opportunities programme for these posts remains of the utmost importance; is of the firm opinion that Parliament should have at least 40 % of women in managerial posts by 2019;
75. Expresses its surprise that Parliament's advisory committee on the appointment of senior officials consists solely of higher management and invites the Secretary-General to include a representative of a staff association;
76. Emphasises that geographical balance, namely the relationship between the numbers of staff having a particular nationality and the size of population of their corresponding Member States, should still remain an important element of resources management particularly with respect to the Member States that have acceded to the Union since 2004, welcomes the fact that Parliament has reached an overall balanced composition of officials from the Member States which joined the Union before and since 2004; but points out that these Member States still represent only 3 % of staff at "higher administrator" (AD12-16) level at the three places of work, compared to their share of the population of the Union, which is 21 %, and that progress on this is still awaited;
77. Recognises that, for certain activities, such as running the canteens and cleaning, outsourcing has been Parliament's preferred option and that, as a consequence, for certain DG's, the number of external staff on Parliament's premises may even exceed the number of officials;
78. Notes, however, that such outsourcing decisions cannot provide an explanation for the use of all external staff and that, for example in the Directorate-General Innovation and Technological Support (DG ITEC), the ratio between external staff and officials is difficult to explain;
79. Expresses the opinion that external staff should not be used to compensate for the reduction of the number of posts as agreed in the context of the 2014 revision of the Staff Regulations and the current MFF;
80. Notes the Secretary-General's replies regarding the conditions for external contracting by Parliament; emphasises that the administration must carefully and systematically ensure strict compliance by service providers with employment, safety and welfare legislation etc. applicable to all external staff working on Parliament premises, such as canteen, cleaning and maintenance staff etc.; calls on Parliament to introduce regular alert and monitoring mechanisms for the prevention and detection of any isolated or systematic cases of negligence, abuse or infringement, enabling it to take immediate action;
81. Notes that the procedure for bringing Parliament's security guard service in-house is complete and that the procedure for doing the same for the drivers' service is on-going; calls on the Secretary-General to report to CONT on what has been learnt from these procedures and any savings that have been made as a result;

82. Notes with concern that canteen personnel are not paid in accordance with the hours in their contract for weeks when Members work elsewhere, such as constituency weeks or plenary sessions in Strasbourg and that a considerable number are assigned short-time work, affecting their employment and earnings; calls on the Secretary-General to come up with a solution in negotiation with the canteen service provider that guarantees the employees regular hours and payments every week;
83. Notes that, at the end of 2015, there were 1 813 accredited parliamentary assistants (APAs) working at Parliament, compared to 1 686 a year before; calls for special consideration of the rights of APAs and local assistants, as their contracts are directly linked to the mandate of the Members they support, bearing in mind that APAs are members of staff holding Parliament employment contracts, while local assistants are subject to various national legislations;
84. Regrets that the evaluation report on the application of the provisions governing APAs was not submitted to CONT before the end of 2016, as called for in the resolution on the 2014 discharge, and that it still has not been submitted;
85. Points out that, in cases of harassment or whistleblowing, APAs are in a particularly vulnerable position, as their contracts are based on mutual trust between the Member and his or her assistant; notes that, if this trust is lacking, this in itself is a reason for terminating the contract; notes, furthermore, that if the Member has to resign as a result of reputational damage arising from a criminal offence or other violation of law, this normally means that the contracts of all his or her assistants will also be terminated; calls, therefore, for the immediate strengthening of the representation of APAs in the advisory committee on harassment, ensuring that there is a gender balance, as already requested in the context of the 2013 and 2014 discharges; calls on the Bureau to assign appropriate funds to cover the travel and subsistence expenses of APA claimants, who often don't have the necessary means to come to Brussels to attend in person and state their case to the harassment committee; calls also for the possibility of financial compensatory measures for APAs to be considered in the next revision of the Staff Regulations in order to ensure equal treatment of APAs and recognition of their particular vulnerability in cases of harassment or whistleblowing;
86. Welcomes the intention of the administration to launch the process for adaptation of the flat rate allowances for Strasbourg missions received by APAs, which are significantly lower than those for permanent officials; emphasises that this adaptation should be based on transparent calculation methodology and that it should be in direct correlation with the recent upwards revision of allowances and accommodation ceilings for permanent officials; also emphasises that automatic indexation of the allowances for future revisions should be introduced;
87. Deplores the fact that the Bureau has not responded to the requests made by Parliament in its 2013 and 2014 discharge Resolutions to apply to APAs the same daily allowances than the other staff; asks the Secretary General to provide, before any changes are implemented, an estimation of the additional cost which would arise through this adjustment; meanwhile underlines that the current mission reimbursements ceilings for APAs have not been adjusted since 2009 and that the discrepancy between APAs and other staff has further increased up to at least 40% following the introduction of new ceilings approved by the Council on 9 September 2016 and so far applied, from 10 September 2016 only to officials; calls, therefore, on the Bureau to take the necessary measures to remedy this inequality;

88. Deeply regrets the fact that the employment period of an APA in the case of death or resignation of his or her Member ceases at the end of the relevant calendar month; emphasises that this could mean that an APA would not have a single day of notice if the Member's term of office happens to end on the final day of a given month; calls for this unacceptable situation to be resolved in the next revision of the Staff Regulations, by linking notice periods to a defined period of time, such as four weeks, rather than to calendar months; further calls on the Bureau to swiftly introduce temporary measures that could provide a provisional solution to this problem before such legal revision takes place;
89. Is concerned about the alleged practice of Members obliging APAs to undertake missions, particularly to Strasbourg, without mission orders, without mission costs or simply without travel costs; is of opinion that such a practice leaves room for abuse: where APAs travel without a mission order they not only have to pay for the costs by their own means, they are also not covered by workplace insurance ; calls on the Bureau make sure that the Staff Regulations are properly implemented and to penalise Members who breach the rules;
90. Notes that trainees are entitled to a discount of EUR 0,50 on main dishes in all the self-service restaurants in Brussels and Luxembourg EUR 0,80 in Strasbourg; considers, however, that, taking into account their average pay levels and the high prices charged over the last two years, these discounts are not sufficient to have even a minimal impact on their finances; calls on the Secretary-General to grant price reductions in line with their earnings;
91. Calls on the Bureau to ensure that social and pension rights are guaranteed for APAs that have worked with no interruption for the last two legislative parliamentary terms; in this regard, invites the administration to put forward a proposal that takes into account the decision to have early elections in 2014 and the time spent in the recruitment procedure, when calculating the 10 year service period required by the Staff Regulations;
92. Calls on the Conference of Presidents to reconsider the possibility for APAs, at certain conditions to be set, to accompany Members in official Parliament Delegations and Missions, as already requested by several Members.
93. Calls on the Secretary-General and the Bureau to look into and resolve problems arising mainly from the last change of term in relation to APAs (as delays in signing contracts, interruption of contracts, early European elections, etc.) which can have serious consequences on future acquisition labour rights of APAs; ask APAs' representatives to be involved in the search for solutions;
94. Asks the Parliament, in the interests of equal opportunities and respect for employment rights, to adopt guidelines on attribution of a grade to APAs and to develop corresponding clear job descriptions, responsibilities and tasks for each function group;
95. Notes that in 2015 the number of terminations of service of staff was 154, of which 126 were retirements, 13 invalidities, nine resignations and six deaths; invites the Secretary-General to strictly enforce the fourth paragraph of Article 16 of the Staff Regulations on potential conflicts of interest after termination of service in Parliament, in particular in cases of resignation, as it is striking that no cases of potential conflicts of interest have ever been published;

96. Notes with concern that no special arrangements have been made for staff in the event that a Member State decides to leave the Union; whilst recognising that this issue is relevant to all European institutions, invites the Secretary-General to engage in dialogue with the Commission in order to ensure that British staff do not become victims of Brexit, and that their statutory, contractual and acquired rights are fully safeguarded;
97. Calls for a more efficient organisation of training courses in order to adapt them to the specific needs of APAs; calls, in particular, for the administration to take into account the calendar of parliamentary and MEP's activities and define tailored timetables and specific topics.
98. Points to the fact that 43 % of Parliament's staff considers that teleworking would have a positive effect on their job satisfaction; emphasises that Parliament is the only institution that has not introduced teleworking and a flexitime system, while both have been present for many years in most of the other institutions, including the Commission, with proven results in terms of increased productivity and better quality of life for members of staff; notes that Parliament introduced occasional teleworking in October 2016; asks the Secretary-General to report to all interested services, including Members and their assistants, on the implementation of this service; calls also for the 'flexitime' system to be incorporated as soon as possible into Parliament's working practices;
99. Calls on Parliament to change its rules governing internships offered by MEPs and political groups in order to improve the situation of interns and trainees in Parliament, including decent remuneration, the fixing of a limited duration of traineeships and a learning agreement.

DG FINS

Contracts awarded by the Parliament

100. Notes with satisfaction that Parliament publishes a complete annual list on its website of all those of its contractors who obtained contracts with a value of more than EUR 15 000, and that that list includes the name and address of the contractor, the type and subject of the contract, its duration, its value, the procedure followed and the relevant directorate-general;
101. Points out that this list goes beyond the transparency requirements set out in the Financial Regulation; encourages all the Union institutions to make available full information on all contractors and contracts awarded through public procurement, including cases of direct awarding or restricted procedures;
102. Supports the Court's conclusion that the Union institutions need to set up a single public repository of information related to their procurement contracts in order to allow effective transparency and *ex post* monitoring of their procurement activities;
103. Points out that, despite previous calls for improvement, the service offered by Parliament's travel agency remains unsatisfactory, since prices are relatively high and the agency has failed to negotiate agreements with the major airlines to secure better rates and more flexibility when making travel arrangements;
104. Calls on the agency to actively seek to offer lower prices whatever the airline in question; requests that the agency introduces a feedback process (user satisfaction surveys) with a view to identifying areas in which further progress might be made;

Voluntary Pension Fund

105. Notes that the voluntary pension fund increased its estimated actuarial deficit to EUR 276,8 million at the end of 2015; further notes that at the end of 2015, the amount of net assets to be taken into account and the actuarial commitment amount to EUR 155,5 million and EUR 432,3 million respectively;
106. Recalls that these projected future liabilities are spread over several decades but notes that the total amount paid in 2015 by the voluntary pension fund amounts to EUR 15,8 million;
107. Points out that this raises concerns about the possible exhaustion of the fund and that Parliament is the guarantor for the payment of pension rights when and if this fund is unable to meet its obligations;
108. Calls once again on the Bureau to make an assessment as soon as possible of the current situation of the Pension Fund;
109. Recalls Paragraph 112 of last year's discharge resolution¹ that calls for an assessment of the current situation of the pension fund; regrets that such an assessment has not yet been delivered;
110. Recalls that the Court of Justice ruled in 2013 that the decision to increase the age of retirement for Fund subscribers from 60 to 63 years in order to avoid the early exhaustion of the capital and to align it with the new statute for Members was valid;
111. Considers that, whereas national pension funds normally have to meet strict standards and are not allowed to have any actuarial deficit at all, the voluntary pension fund is now facing an actuarial deficit of 64 % of the actuarial commitment, calls on the Secretary-General to present the Bureau with a comprehensive plan of action to avoid the early exhaustion of the fund;

Other matters

112. Regrets the fact that, in selecting the financial institutions that Parliament deals with for its payments and accounts, no attention is paid to the policies of these institutions in respect of corporate social responsibility and calls on the Secretary-General to make sure that, in future, Parliament primarily deals with financial institutions that have investment policies that focus on sustainability and other aspects of corporate social responsibility;
113. Emphasises that in 2015 Parliament had on average EUR 106.25 million on bank accounts raising no interest income whatsoever; invites the Secretary-General to examine whether it is necessary to have such a high amount of liquidity and in particular, invites him to improve treasury management in this respect and, if possible, to find ways of increasing the returns on such deposits;

DG ITEC

114. Is satisfied with the implementation of DG ITEC's strategic orientations 2014-2019; considers that many changes in the electronic working environment for Members and

¹ OJ L 246, 14.9.2016, p. 3.

staff are being implemented, but that the implications of these changes, including new opportunities, are relatively little known and are being developed mainly inside DG ITEC; calls for closer co-operation between DG ITEC and DG COMM to improve internal and external communication concerning the many innovations that have been or will soon be implemented;

115. Understands the efforts of DG ITEC to improve the number of hits for Parliament's webpages in the context of Google's search engine; is, however, also of the opinion that the search engine on Parliament's webpage itself should lead to meaningful results, so that users can actually use the portal of the site to quickly get to the relevant webpages; is concerned that, at the moment, this search engine does not function properly, and invites the Secretary-General to find a quick solution for this long-standing problem;
116. Notes, with concern, that, despite the fact that, within the remit of DG ITEC, expenses incurred on an annual basis for the acquisition of new hardware amount to more than EUR 35 million, there is no clear policy for environmental and social sustainable procurement and invites the Secretary-General to develop an action plan in this regard to make sure that in the future all calls for tender include environmental and social selection criteria of hardware;
117. Calls on DG ITEC to make all Parliament's web pages accessible to portable devices, since, even though a large proportion of visitors to the pages use an iPad or mobile phone to access the sites of Parliament and the specialised committees, the current interfaces cannot be considered to be compatible with portable devices; proposes the implementation of measures to improve, tangibly and within a reasonable time-frame, the accessibility of the web pages to portable devices;
118. Finds it essential for the mandate of the Members that printers remain in their offices; points out that cheap generic cartridges may possibly lead to dangerous levels of emissions of particles and to health damages; calls, therefore, for measures to be taken by DG ITEC and Directorate-General for Infrastructure and Logistics (DG INLO) to promote the procurement of eco-friendly printers and to ensure the sole use of original cartridges, whilst creating options for Members and their staff to have printers located strategically near but not inside their offices;
119. Notes the adoption by the Bureau on 7 September 2015 of an information and communications technology systems security policy ("ICT security policy") ; stresses that, in the current global context, a considerably more robust ICT security policy that fully addresses the management of risks associated with cyber security urgently needs to be implemented; welcomes in this regard the appointment of a cyber security officer of Parliament;
120. Reiterates the call in its 2014 discharge resolution for the creation of an emergency rapid alert system which allows DG ITEC, in collaboration with the Directorate-General for Security and Safety (DG SAFE), to send swift communications by SMS or e-mail to Members and staff that agree to their contact details being included on a communication list for use in specific emergency situations;
121. Commends DG ITEC for rolling out Wi-Fi throughout Parliament's buildings; notes, however, the Wi-Fi in the hemicycle in Strasbourg is unreliable , especially when, during voting sessions and key debates, many Members use the system simultaneously; calls on the Secretary-General to take the necessary remedial measures in this respect;

Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union

122. Welcomes the fact that certain public meetings of inter-parliamentary delegations are already being broadcast by web-streaming; asks the Secretary-General to continue developing and expanding this service, together with the content of the delegations' web pages;

DG INLO

123. Notes that the 2010 – medium term building strategy is currently being revised; calls for that strategy to be extended to cover a longer-term perspective, and for it to include a case study of the likely consequences of Brexit;
124. Welcomes the fact that from 2019 onwards, the amount of office space for Members and their assistants in Strasbourg will increase; calls on the Secretary-General to ensure that, as long as no single-seat solution has been found for the working place of Parliament, the minimum amount of square meters per assistant in accordance with the current rules on labour conditions, will be guaranteed, since Parliament's position on this issue is vulnerable, as it deliberately disrespects those rules on the minimum amount of office space;
125. Deeply regrets the decision to change the furniture in the offices of Members and their assistants in Brussels and calls for this to be halted immediately; notes that most of the furniture is perfectly serviceable and presentable, and that there is therefore absolutely no need to change it; considers that feedback from a number of Members – as opposed to a general survey – is not, on its own, sufficient justification for the change, while arguments put forward by the administration on matters of taste, fashion or outdated style are equally inadequate; individual items of furniture should only be changed if there are clear signs of deterioration, major wear and tear or health risk at the workplace of a specific or general nature (such as the possible development of more ergonomic office chairs); points out that, at a time of economic crisis, resulting in our current straitened financial circumstances, such concern with external appearances might seriously compromise the credibility of Parliament and its Members, in particular in the eyes of citizens and public opinion;
126. Recognises that, in accordance with the Bureau decisions of 2013 and 2015, the new catering contracts do not provide for any direct subsidies from Parliament's budget; is concerned, however, that certain services were offered at higher than market prices in 2015; refers, in this respect, to the coffee service during meetings; notes prices were revised in August 2016;
127. Regrets deeply the arbitrary, subjective and disproportionate criteria used for the recruitment of drivers and the internalisation of this service initiated in 2016 for safety reasons; regrets that the procedure did not take into account the skills and experience acquired by drivers during years of work in direct contact with Members and the relationship of trust established with them and the fact that they then found themselves unemployed, many of them already at an age at which it is difficult to find work;

Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences (DG INTE)

128. Is concerned about the problematic social dialogue between DG INTE and the representatives of interpreters, which started in January 2014 and which, to date, has

produced no agreement; calls on the Secretary-General to initiate a mediation between the parties involved to improve the mutual understanding of the positions and to find solutions that are agreeable to all;

129. Expresses its satisfaction with the progress that has already been achieved in the modernisation process of DG INTE, notably with respect to the enhanced availability of interpreters, the moderate increase in the number of hours interpreters spend delivering interpretation and the improved distribution of interpreter workloads; notes that the calculation method with regard to statistics has been clarified and that all annual leave and sick leave have now been excluded from the calculation of the average number of hours spent by interpreters in the booth;
130. Requests information from the Secretary-General regarding the measures that have been taken since the adoption of the resolution on the discharge on the budget 2014 to achieve more resource efficiency and effectiveness in the organisation of meetings by streamlining conference management in Parliament;

DG SAFE

131. Welcomes the continuous efforts to work on safety and security in and around Parliament's premises ; acknowledges that safety within Parliament must seek to achieve a delicate balance between taking a number of protective measures into account, and introducing an overly security conscious regime that slows down the activity of Parliament; nevertheless, insists that Parliament's security should be further reinforced, and calls on the Secretary-General to ensure that staff are correctly trained and able to perform their tasks professionally, including in emergency situations;
132. Calls on the Secretary-General to ensure that cooperation with the other Institutions of the Union is actively pursued, along with cooperation with the Belgian, French and Luxemburgish authorities.
133. Calls on DG ITEC and DG SAFE to reinforce cyber-defence capabilities in light of the increased threat of cyber-attacks in recent months;

Environment-friendly Parliament

134. Recalls that the Bureau launched the Environmental management system (EMAS) project in Parliament on 19 April 2004; notes that a revised environmental policy was adopted by the Bureau in 2016 that retains and reaffirms the commitment of Parliament to continuous environmental improvement;
135. Welcomes the installation of the inter-institutional helpdesk on green public procurement, which is now to be fully implemented by setting clear targets in the field, as well as stepping up efforts in internal information, promotion and effective governance on green public procurement; underlines also the fact that sub-contracted service providers must equally comply with the rules; deplores the high use of plastic bottles, cups, containers and packaging in Parliament in this respect;
136. Bears in mind that Parliament committed itself to making a 30 % reduction per FTE of its CO₂ emissions by 2020 compared to 2006; commends the fact that, between 2006 and 2015, this indicator fell by approximately 24,3 %;
137. Considers it to be of the utmost importance, therefore, that Parliament set itself new,

more challenging, quantitative targets, and that those targets should be regularly measured by the responsible services; notes, in this regard, the Bureau 2015 decision to offset the total amount of Parliament's carbon emissions, including emissions from flights by Members between their country of origin and Parliament's working places;

138. Reminds Parliament of its commitment under Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency which stipulates that it will, "without prejudice to applicable budgetary and procurement rules, undertake to apply the same requirements to the buildings they own and occupy as those applicable to the buildings of Member States' central government under Articles 5 and 6" thereof, due to the high visibility of the buildings and the leading role that it should play with regard to the energy performance of buildings; underlines the urgency of compliance with this declaration, not at least for its own credibility in the currently ongoing revisions of the energy performance of buildings and the energy efficiency directives;
139. Calls on the Bureau to study an incentive scheme for promoting more sustainable and efficient transport for home-work commuting;
140. Welcomes Parliament's initiative with regard to the implementation of a comprehensive policy to reduce food waste; calls on Parliament to ensure that food waste is actively prevented by all the catering providers in all the premises of Parliament; calls on Parliament to intensify the practice of donation of unsold food for charity purposes;
141. Assumes that the introduction of an efficient meeting room reservation system and a facility management register can bring into play considerable potential as regards Parliament's costs and environmental efforts, and calls on the Secretary-General to take that approach forward, accordingly;

Political Groups (budget item 4 0 0)

142. Notes that, in 2015, the appropriations entered under budget item 4 0 0, attributed to the political groups and non-attached Members were used as follows:

Group	2015					2014**				
	Annual appropriations	Own resources and carried-over appropriations	Expenditure	Rate of use of annual appropriations	Amounts carried over to next period	Annual appropriations	Own resources and carried-over appropriations	Expenditure	Rate of use of annual appropriations	Amounts carried over to next period (2011)
EPP	17 440	10 198	17 101	98,06 %	8 720	19 919	7 908	17 796	89,34 %	9 960
S&D	15 256	5 748	15 379	100,81 %	5 625	15 619	4 653	14 850	95,07 %	5 422
ECR	5 959	1 614	5 065	84,99 %	2 509	5 014	1 060	4 476	105,43 %	1 598
ALDE	5 692	2 517	5 865	103,03 %	2 344	6 214	1 774	5 491	88,35 %	2 498
GUE/NGL	4 305	1 256	3 832	89,02 %	1 729	3 527	417	2 689	76,62 %	1 255
Greens/EF A	4 153	1 293	3 890	93,67 %	1 556	4 292	1 389	4 396	88,41 %	1 287
EFDD	3 843	1 643	3 629	94,45 %	1 856	3 231	1 142	2 708	88,83 %	1 615
ENF	1 587	0	827	52,09 %	760					
Non-attached Members	1 627	533	1 001	61,51 %	214	1 991	441	1 281	64,32 %	533
Total	59 860	24 803	56 588	94,53 %	25 312	59 807	18 784	53 687	89,76 %	24 168
* <i>all amounts in thousands of EUR</i>										
** <i>2014 consisted of two financial years due to parliamentary elections in May 2014. The figures for 2014 in the table represent the consolidated amounts.</i>										

143. Recalls that the Court recommended in its annual report that Parliament “review the existing control framework for the implementation of budget appropriations allocated to political groups and in addition, that Parliament provide better guidance through reinforced monitoring on the application by the groups of the rules for authorisation and settlement of expenditure, and for procurement procedures”

European Political Parties and European Political Foundations

144. Notes that, in 2015, the appropriations entered under budget item 4 0 2 were used as follows¹:

Party	Abbreviation	Own resources*	EP grant	Total revenue	EP grant as % of eligible expenditure (max. 85 %)	Revenue surplus (transfer to reserves) or loss
European People's Party	EPP	1 926	8 053	12 241	85 %	363
Party of European Socialists	PES	1 246	5 828	8 024	85 %	40
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party	ALDE	561	2 093	2 789	85 %	90
European Green Party	EGP	480	1 666	2 245	85 %	83
Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists	AECR	395	1 952	2 401	85 %	8
Party of the European Left	EL	372	1 484	2 044	85 %	71
European Democratic Party	EDP/PDE	120	457	577	85 %	0
EUDemocrats	EUD	55	292	370	85 %	3
European Free Alliance	EFA	127	636	845	85 %	0
European Christian Political Movement	ECPM	87	461	560	85 %	4
European Alliance for Freedom	EAF	94	494	588	85 %	7
Alliance of European National Movements	AENM	53	292	399	85 %	0

¹ *Notes:*
all amounts in thousands of EUR
Note ⁽¹⁾ : total revenue includes previous year's carry-over in accordance with Article 125(6) of the Financial Regulation

Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom	MENF	161	401	562	85%	0
Alliance for Direct Democracy in Europe	ADDE	250	821	1.070	85 %	-403
Movement for a Europe of Liberties and Democracy	MELD	91	44	226	85 %	-208
Total		6 017	24 974	34 943	85 %	59
(*) all amounts in thousands EUR						

145. Notes that in 2015 the appropriations entered under budget item 4 0 3 were used as follows¹:

Foundation	Abbreviation	Affiliated to party	Own resources*	EP grant	Total revenue	EP grant as % of eligible expenditure (max. 85 %)
Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies	WMCES	EPP	949	4 725	5 674	85 %
Foundation for European Progressive Studies	FEPS	PES	847	3 848	4 695	85 %
European Liberal Forum	ELF	ALDE	183	880	1 063	85 %
Green European Foundation	GEF	EGP	163	914	1 077	85 %
Transform Europe	TE	EL	159	847	1 066	85 %
Institute of European Democrats	IED	PDE	47	284	331	85 %
Centre Maurits Coppieters	CMC	EFA	57	241	298	85 %
New Direction - Foundation for European Reform	ND	AECR	323	1 100	1 423	85 %
European Foundation for Freedom	EFF	EAF	47	268	315	85 %

¹ *Notes:*
all amounts in thousand EUR

Organisation For European Interstate Cooperation	OEIC	EUD	33	132	165	85 %
Christian Political Foundation for Europe	CPFE	ECPM	51	267	318	85 %
Foundation for a Europe of Liberties and Democracy	FELD	MELD	50	248	298	85 %
Institute for Direct Democracy in Europe	IDDE	ADDE	144	673	817	85 %
European Identities and Traditions	EIT	AENM	32	169	201	85 %
Total			3 085	14 596	17 681	85 %
(*) all amounts in thousands EUR.						

146. Notes with concern that, in the cases of the Alliance for Direct Democracy in Europe, the Movement for a Europe of Liberties and Democracy, the Initiative for Direct Democracy in Europe and the Foundation for a Europe of Liberties and Democracy major irregularities have been detected, relating to prohibited direct or indirect financing of national parties and to donations;
147. Expresses its concern about the reputational risk for Parliament any such irregularities constitute and is convinced of the need for quick and effective action to prevent and address any similar irregularities in the future; considers however that these irregularities are limited to a limited number of political parties and foundations; is of the opinion that these irregularities should not question the financial management of the other political parties and foundations;
148. Is aware of the new regulations, namely Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1142/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014¹, which will start to affect the funding of European political parties and foundations for the financial year 2018, and of the important role of the newly established Authority for European political parties and European political foundations, as well as of the on-going discussions in the Bureau of the proposals of the Secretary-General to address a number of issues not resolved by those Regulations; calls on Parliament's internal auditor to make a new audit report on the financing of the European political parties and foundations as soon as possible after the entry into force of the new Regulation;
149. Considers it to be essential in this respect to look into any deficiencies in the current system of internal and external controls in respect of the avoidance of major irregularities; notes the declarations of the external accountant, EY, that its audits are aimed at obtaining a reasonable assurance that the annual accounts are free of material misstatements and that the entity has complied with in scope of rules and regulations,

¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1142/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 as regards the financing of European political parties (OJ L 317, 4.11.2014, p. 28).

and that they include examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the opinion; notes, however, that the examinations do not include investigations of possible fraudulent statements and documents, and therefore provide only for a somewhat limited insight in the financial activities examined;

150. Notes the scarce human resources (effectively 2 FTEs) in DG FINS devoted to checking the accounts of European political parties and foundations; is of the firm opinion that considering the high reputational risk involved, more resources could be devoted to this activity;
151. Calls on the Bureau, in so far as the principle of confidentiality allows it, to facilitate access to the underlying documents contained in the final reports of European political parties and foundations and, in particular the accounts and the audits undertaken;
152. Requests the new established Authority to submit a progress report to Parliament after its first year of activity, namely 2017; and calls on the Secretary-General to ensure that the authority will have at his disposal all necessary resources to fulfil its tasks;