

2018 Discharge

Questionnaire to the Council and the European Council

Hearing: 12 November 2019

General Questions

1. What has been done to prevent repeating the problem of very high amounts of appropriations carried over from 2017 to 2018, particularly those in respect of furniture, technical equipment, transport and computer systems?
2. Has there been, besides harmonisation of budget planning at a central level by integrating Multiannual Activity and Budget Planning (MABP), any further effort in the Council to improve its financial management and performance?
3. Is the Council planning to do something about the lack of cooperation with the Parliament in order to prevent difficulties repeatedly encountered in the discharge procedures?
4. Has the Council done any measures to speed up its procedure for the discharge recommendations?
5. Does the Council intend to give discharge recommendations to the other EU institutions?
6. Is the Council planning to take any steps to reach an agreement with the Parliament on how to cooperate in addressing the discharge procedure?
7. How much revenue has Bulgaria presidency (January-June 2018) and Austria the presidency (July-December 2018) raised through the corporate sponsorship?
8. Have you considered a separate budget line for the activities of presidency?
9. Please name three of the institution's main achievements and successes in 2018. How do they affect in the institution's challenges for the future?
10. What was the cost of outsourcing of translation in 2018? What would have been the cost if the translations had been carried out by in-house services?

Staff

11. Could you please provide a table of all human resources broken down by nationality, type of contract, gender and grade for the year 2018, and an overview of how these figures compare with the year 2017?

12. Could you please provide us a table of staff broken down by type of contract for 2013 and 2018? What was the average duration of contractual employments (including renewal of contracts) in 2013 and in 2018?
13. Please present a gender and nationality breakdown of your middle and senior management positions.
14. We would appreciate a comprehensive overview of staff on sick leave in 2018, broken down by the total number of staff member that were on sick leave and by how many days they were on sick leave in total. How many days lasted the three longest cases of sick leave? How many days of sick leave concerned Mondays and Fridays in 2018? What was the evolution since 2013?
15. To what extent has staff been involved in carrying out activities that would justify a higher function group?
16. What were the three most important actions taken by the institution in favour of equality?
17. What were the three most important actions taken by the institution in favour of disabled people?
18. Were there any improvements done to the organisation of workspaces? What changes have there been in 2018?
19. What flexible working arrangements does your institution offer?
20. How often are flexible working arrangements used? Has there been a development in the frequency?
21. What is the share of men and women respectively using these working arrangements?
22. To what extent does your institution encourage young parents to make use of flexible working arrangements to improve work life balance?
23. Can all categories of staff apply to these working arrangements?
24. Was there any staff member placed on leave in the interest of the service according to Article 50 of the staff regulations? If yes, what were the reasons?
25. Would you say that the Council had a fair recruitment practice policy in 2018? Were there any complaints, lawsuits or otherwise reported cases of non-transparent hiring or firing of staff?
26. What were the costs in 2018 respectively for away days, trainings, closed conferences or similar events for staff? How many staff members participated in the respective events? Where did these events take place?

Harassment

27. What were the expenditures in 2018 for the management of court cases and Court sentences? What was the specific amount for harassment cases?
28. Where there any cases related to harassment reported, investigated and/or concluded in 2018?
29. What measures is your institution taking to raise awareness about the possibility to file harassment complaints?
30. Do you have a functioning team of the confidential-staff-councillors? Did they and the staff as a whole, receive any special training / seminars on the prevention of harassment?
31. Has there been any recent modifications to your anti-harassment rules, and could you specify to what extent?

Whistleblowing

32. Were there any whistleblower cases coming out of the Council and in such a case how did you follow-up on them?

Communications

33. What has been done to improve the communication with Union citizens?
34. How do you reach out for specific target groups via social media channels? Based on available insights and/or social media analytics can you tell whether this target group has been reached? What difference do you observe in this regards among the different social media channels?

Transparency

35. What has been done to separate budget of the Council in order to contribute to transparency in the financial management of the institutions and to improve the accountability of both institutions?
36. The Commission wanted to cover Presidencies under the Transparency Register rules, as well as the deputies in the 'Committee of the Permanent Representatives of the Governments of the Member States to the European Union' or COREPER, and also the Council's Secretary General and Directors General. The original proposal was that all of these people would only meet with lobbyists who are registered in the Transparency Register, in order to make the register as "mandatory" as possible. The Council includes to the Transparency Register rules only its Secretary General and Directors General. Have you considered to extend the Transparency Register rules to all staff?
37. How many call for tenders did your institution organise in 2018? Please indicate the value and the number of applicants for each tender.

38. On 11 December 2018, the rules for data protection in the EU Institutions were brought in line with the rules set out in the GDPR. Did your institution need to proceed to any changes in the way it handles data to adapt to this new legislation? What were those changes?

Fraud & Corruption (including co-operation with OLAF)

39. How did you co-operate with OLAF and ECA in the spheres of prevention, investigation or corrective measures?

Conflict of Interests (Rules and control mechanism)

40. What measures / rules has (or had been introduced in 2018) the Council to prevent and fight conflict of interests? How did those rules change until today?
41. What measures has the Council at hand in case one of the Member States' Ministers or even Prime Ministers would find themselves in a serious Conflict of Interests? Were any of such cases discussed on official level?

Activities to Lower the Environmental footprint (EMAS rules, energy, water, paper consumption, CO2 offsetting)

42. Please present your activities and achieved results in this field.
43. How successful have been so far the Council's measures to improve its waste management, increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon footprint?

Cybersecurity

44. What steps have you taken towards improving on cybersecurity of your institution? Were any of these steps coordinated with any other EU institution or has the Council started taking such steps on its own initiative?