

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

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*Session document*

FINAL  
A6-0110/2007

30.3.2007

## REPORT

on the discharge for implementation of the European Union general budget for  
the financial year 2005  
(C6-0469/2006 – 2006/2075(DEC))

Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee

Committee on Budgetary Control

Rapporteur: Daniel Caspary

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## 1. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

### **on the discharge for implementation of the European Union general budget for the financial year 2005, Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee (C6-0469/2006 – 2006/2075(DEC))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the European Union general budget for the financial year 2005<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Communities for the financial year 2005 – Volume I (C6-0469/2006),
  - having regard to the Annual Report of the Court of Auditors on implementation of the budget for the financial year 2005 and the Court of Auditors' special reports, together with the audited institutions' replies<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the statement of assurance as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions provided by the Court of Auditors pursuant to Article 248 of the EC Treaty<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to the Council's recommendation of ## (0000/2007 - C6-2007),
  - having regard to Articles 272(10), 274, 275 and 276 of the EC Treaty,
  - having regard to Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities<sup>4</sup>, and in particular Articles 50, 86, 145, 146 and 147 thereof,
  - having regard to Rule 71 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A6-0110/2007),
1. Grants the European Economic and Social Committee's Secretary-General discharge for the implementation of the European Economic and Social Committee budget for the financial year 2005;
  2. Sets out its observations in the resolution below;
  3. Instructs its President to forward this decision and the resolution that forms an integral part of it to the Council, the Commission, the Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the European Ombudsman and the European Data Protection Supervisor, and to arrange for their

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 60, 8.5.2005, p.1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 263, 31.10.2006, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 263, 31.10.2006, p.10.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1. Regulation as amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1).

publication in the Official Journal of the European Union (L series).

## 2. MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

**with observations forming an integral part of the decision on the discharge for the implementation of the European Union general budget for the financial year 2005, Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee (C6-0469/2006 – 2006/2075(DEC))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the European Union general budget for the financial year 2005<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Communities for the financial year 2005 – Volume I (C6-0469/2006),
  - having regard to the Annual Report of the Court of Auditors on implementation of the budget for the financial year 2005 and the Court of Auditors' special reports, together with the audited institutions' replies<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the statement of assurance as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, provided by the Court of Auditors pursuant to Article 248 of the EC Treaty<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to the Council's recommendation of ## (0000/2007 - C6-0000/2007),
  - having regard to Articles 272(10), 274, 275 and 276 of the EC Treaty,
  - having regard to Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities<sup>4</sup>, and in particular Articles 50, 86, 145, 146 and 147 thereof,
  - having regard to Rule 71 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A6-0110/2007),
1. Notes that in 2005 the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) had available commitment appropriations amounting to a total of EUR 106 880 105,67 with a utilisation rate of 94,99 %;
  2. Notes that following the introduction of accrual accounting with effect from 1 January 2005 the EESC's financial statements disclose a negative economic out-turn of EUR 3 811 889,47 (deficit) and identical amounts (EUR 168 387 721,19) in respect of both assets and liabilities;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 60, 8.5.2005, p.1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 263, 31.10.2006, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 263, 31.10.2006, p.10.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1. Regulation as amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1).

3. Notes the remark by the European Court of Auditors in paragraph 10.16 of its 2005 Annual Report that, notwithstanding the setting-up, in the course of 2005, of a unit responsible for coordinating financial and contractual activities throughout the joint services of the EESC and the Committee of the Regions (CoR), some weaknesses still appeared concerning the operational management of certain procurement and coordination procedures between the new unit and the operating units which had not been clearly defined;
4. Recalls that in 2005 the EESC began discussions with the Commission about taking over the office space in the van Maerlant building; notes further the EESC's reply to the questionnaire concerning the office space requirements of the EESC/CoR that following their expansion into the van Maerlant building the two institutions do not expect to need further buildings in the coming years;
5. Welcomes the fact that since 2004 all plenary sessions of the EESC have taken place in the European Parliament's premises;
6. Notes, from the EESC's activity report, that its Registry has called upon the financial actors concerned and the Quaestors' Group to consider establishing a clearer procedure for refunding travel expenses and paying travel and subsistence allowances, particularly in situations which are not explicitly envisaged by the rules;
7. Observes that further to the Belgian criminal proceedings against a former EESC Member concerning travel expenses (referred to in paragraph 4 of Parliament's discharge resolution of 27 April 2006 (Lundgren report)<sup>1</sup>) the EESC has brought a civil action for damages and that the Belgian Court is expected to give its judgment towards the middle of 2007;
8. Notes with interest that the Secretary-General and Internal Auditor have regular meetings at the same time each week to enable the Internal Auditor to remain abreast of activities and events in the Institution and to permit the Secretary-General to take maximum account of the Internal Auditor's comments;
9. Notes that the EESC and the CoR are currently considering whether they should continue to manage certain activities in common through the joint services, and, if so, what form that collaboration should in future take;
10. Notes that the administrative cooperation between the CoR and the EESC should be beneficial to both committees and financially advantageous for European taxpayers; insists that any new structures of administrative cooperation between the two committees should result in financial benefits; demands that both committees find a way to continue the administrative cooperation already in place;
11. Recalls that the CoR and the EESC, through their joint services, manage certain activities in common (translation, printing, buildings, security, library, procurement, catering, ushers, medical service, cars and drivers, security, IT etc) and that their cooperation agreement has recently been renewed for 6 months (with an option to extend it for a further 6 months) pending a decision on whether such cooperation should continue in

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<sup>1</sup> *Texts Adopted*, P6\_TA(2006)162.

future;

12. Invites the CoR and the ESC, having regard to the substantial divergences between the findings of the reports of the joint services and the CoR's two external experts, to conduct a joint analysis based on appropriate bench marks – if necessary with the help of the Court of Auditors – of the precise costs, benefits and savings generated by cooperation and to submit the results of their examination to the competent committee by 31 October 2007.

## PROCEDURE

<b>Title</b>	Discharge for 2005 - Economic and Social Committee
<b>Procedure number</b>	C6-0469/2006 - 2006/2075(DEC)
<b>Committee responsible</b> Date authorisation announced in plenary	CONT 14.12.2006
<b>Referral for opinion - date announced in plenary</b>	14.12.2006
<b>Rapporteur(s)</b> Date appointed	Daniel Caspary 20.4.2006
<b>Previous rapporteur(s)</b>	Nils Lundgren
<b>Discussed in committee</b>	29.1.2007      27.2.2007
<b>Date adopted</b>	27.3.2007
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+ 21 - 1 0 2
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Jean-Pierre Audy, Inés Ayala Sender, Herbert Bösch, Paul van Buitenen, Mogens N.J. Camre, Paulo Casaca, Petr Duchoň, Ingeborg Gräßle, Dan Jørgensen, Bogusław Liberadzki, Nils Lundgren, Marusya Ivanova Lyubcheva, Edith Mastenbroek, Jan Mulder, Francesco Musotto, Ovidiu Ioan Silaghi, Bart Staes, Alexander Stubb, Kyösti Virrankoski
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Daniel Caspary, Christopher Heaton-Harris, Edit Herczog, Petre Popeangă, Gabriele Stauner
<b>Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote</b>	
<b>Date tabled</b>	30.3.2007
<b>Comments (available in one language only)</b>	