

Discharge: MEPs delay signing off on accounts of EU border control agency Frontex

- Border and Coast Guard's discharge withheld until full OLAF investigation report becomes available
- Discharge granted to European Court of Auditors
- Additional measures needed to ensure Recovery and Resilience facility funds are used correctly

Parliament signed off on the 2020 budgets of most EU bodies, except for Frontex, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Council.

In a vote by show of hands, Parliament withheld their approval of the management by the EU's border control agency Frontex of its 2020 budget.

As justification, in a resolution adopted by 492 votes in favour, 145 against and 8 abstentions, MEPs cite a failure to fulfil the conditions set out in Parliament's [previous discharge report](#), as well as the ongoing investigations by the EU's Anti-Fraud watchdog OLAF regarding fundamental rights incidents, including migrant push-backs. MEPs point to the fact that they have not seen the full investigation report and thus are unable to take an informed decision at this point.

The rapporteur [Tomáš Zdechovský](#) (EPP, CZ) said ahead of the vote:

"Frontex operates in challenging circumstances and with its enhanced role comes the need for effective management and greater accountability. Though the Agency has made progress in the last year, we currently do not have enough information to make a well-informed decision to grant discharge. We therefore postpone this decision to autumn 2022."

European Court of Auditors

MEPs decided with 333 in favour, 291 against and 8 abstentions to grant discharge for the Court of Auditors.

Nevertheless, in the accompanying resolution, adopted by 361 in favour, 240 against and 46 abstentions, MEPs ask the Court to solve a number of ethical and financial management issues involving its members and president that have caused damage to the Court's reputation and raised doubts about its impartiality. The [adopted resolution on the 2020 discharge of the Court of Auditors will be available here \(4.05.2022.\)](#)

Commission expenditure: first year of COVID-19

Parliament approved the management of the Commission's budget, which makes up the vast majority of the EU's general expenditure, totalling EUR 173.3 billion in 2020.

See [the announcement by Parliament's rapporteur Oliver Chastel \(Renew, BE\) ahead of the vote.](#)

In an accompanying resolution, adopted by 451 votes in favour, 175 against and 17 abstentions, MEPs point out that in 2020 EUR 34.2 billion was provided for activities related to COVID-19, and the rules for disbursing EU funds to member states were relaxed to provide liquidity to deal with the pandemic. This increased the risk of non-transparent procedures, misuse and fraud, such as already-recorded criminal activities affecting the supply of some health and safety equipment and fake vaccine offers.

MEPs ask for risk audits and a scoreboard for measuring the efficiency of spending of the [Recovery and Resilience Facility](#) funds to ensure they are not subject to similar misuse.

They also repeat their call for the introduction of a mandatory single reporting and monitoring system covering beneficiaries of funds from all EU programmes, to prevent the misuse of funds, fraud, conflicts of interest, double-funding, and other systemic problems. They also want in tandem a single database of the beneficiaries of all EU funds from all programmes.

Other EU bodies

With 429 votes in favour, 158 against and 46 abstentions, MEPs postponed their discharge decision for the European Economic and Social Committee, pointing to the slow implementation of the settlement agreements with a victim of moral harassment and delays in reaching settlement agreements with two other victims of serious misconduct.

Also, as has been the case for more than a decade now, MEPs postponed discharge for the Council, due to non-cooperation.

Parliament approved the management of the 2020 budgets of all other EU institutions, bodies and agencies. See the vote results [here](#).

Next steps

The EU bodies whose discharge has been postponed now have to provide additional information and address the concerns raised by MEPs, before a second vote is held in

Parliament in September/October.

Background

The discharge procedure is the most important tool for the European Parliament to check how public funds have been spent and how EU projects are being carried out. Parliament has the exclusive right to approve the budget implementation of the EU institutions and agencies for individual years. Parliament has to adopt its discharge decisions in Plenary before 15 May each year.

Further information

[Committee on Budgetary Control](#)

[The adopted texts will be available here \(4.05.2022\)](#)

[The plenary debate \(4.05.2022\)](#)

[See the results of discharge votes here](#)

[Discharge procedure: how Parliament scrutinises the EU budget](#)

Contacts

Agnese KRIVADE

Press Officer

☎ (+32) 228 46 718 (BXL)

📱 (+32) 470 89 01 46

✉ agnese.krivade@europarl.europa.eu

✉ cont-press@europarl.europa.eu

🐦 [@EP_budgcontrol](https://twitter.com/EP_budgcontrol)
