**European Parliament**
2024-2029

**TEXTS ADOPTED**

# P10_TA(2026)0131

## Discharge 2024: EU general budget - European Economic and Social Committee

### 1. European Parliament decision of 29 April 2026 on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024, Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee (2025/2151(DEC))

*The European Parliament*,

– having regard to the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024[1],

– having regard to the consolidated annual accounts of the European Union for the financial year 2024 (COM(2025)0359 – C10-0150/2025)[2],

– having regard to the European Economic and Social Committee's annual report to the discharge authority on internal audits carried out in 2024,

– having regard to the Court of Auditors' annual report on the implementation of the budget concerning the financial year 2024, together with the institutions' replies[3],

– having regard to the statement of assurance[4] 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 2024, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

– having regard to Article 314(10) and Articles 317, 318 and 319 of the

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1 OJ L, 2024/207, 22.2.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/budget/2024/207/oj.
2 OJ C, C/2025/4944, 13.10.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/4944/oj.
3 OJ C, C/2025/5409, 8.10.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/5409/oj.
4 OJ C, C/2025/5407, 13.10.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/5407/oj.

Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

– having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012[5], and in particular Articles 59, 118, 260, 261 and 262 thereof,

– having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union[6], and in particular Articles 59, 118, 266, 267 and 268 thereof,

– having regard to Rule 102 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A10-0059/2026),

1. Grants the Secretary-General of the European Economic and Social Committee discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the of the European Economic and Social Committee for the financial year 2024;

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 European Economic and Social Committee, 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).

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[5] OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1046/oj.

[6] OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj.

**2. European Parliament resolution of 29 April 2026 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 2024, Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee (2025/2151(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 2024, Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee,

– having regard to Rule 102 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A10-0059/2026),

A. whereas in the context of the discharge procedure, the discharge authority wishes to stress the particular importance of further strengthening the democratic legitimacy of the Union institutions by improving transparency and accountability, and by implementing the concept of performance-based budgeting and good governance of human resources;

B. whereas the European Economic and Social Committee (the ‘Committee’) is an advisory body of the Union providing a forum for consultation, dialogue and consensus among representatives of the various economic, social and civil components of organised civil society from the Member States;

C. whereas the Committee contributes to the Union decision-making process and, by ensuring links between Union policies and economic, social and civic circumstances, pursues its missions of better law making, participatory democracy and the promotion of European values;

D. whereas the consultation of the Committee by the Commission or the Council is mandatory in certain cases, and the Committee may also adopt opinions on its own initiative while enjoying a wide scope for referral as set out in the Treaties, allowing it to be consulted by Parliament;

E. whereas the Committee’s Commission for Financial and Budgetary Affairs (CAF) is the Committee’s supervisory body for all budgetary procedures and, in particular, the establishment of the budget estimates, the budget implementation, the annual activity report, the discharge and the follow up to the annual report of the Court of Auditors (the ‘Court’);

F. whereas in the last years the Committee has consistently taken initiatives to attract and retain skilled staff, optimise its organisational structure and working methods and promote a respectful working environment, in the context of a limited budget;

G. whereas in 2024 the Committee appointed a new Secretary-General whose mandate is to make the Committee more efficient, impactful and relevant;

H. whereas the Committee started a transformation process in 2024 with the objective of being an impact-driven organisation empowering its members to amplify and protect the voice of organised civil society;

I. Whereas, pursuant to Articles 300 and 304 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Economic and Social Committee is a consultative body whose mandate is primarily to issuing opinions;

1. Notes that the budget of the Committee falls under MFF heading 7 ‘European public administration’, which amounted to a total of EUR 13,3 billion, i.e. 6,9 % of Union budget spending, in 2024; notes that, in 2024, the budget of the Committee represented 1,50 % of MFF heading 7 appropriations, up from 1,29 % in 2023;

2. Notes that the Court of Auditors (the ‘Court’), in its Annual Report for the financial year 2024 (the ‘Court’s report’), examined a sample of 70 transactions under the heading ‘Administration’, the same number as in 2023; whereas the Court further states that administrative expenditure comprises expenditure on human resources, including expenditure on pensions, which in 2024 accounted for approximately 69 % of the total administrative expenditure, and expenditure on buildings, equipment, energy, communications and information technology (IT), and that its work over many years indicates that, overall, such spending is low risk;

3. Notes that 16 (23 %) of the 70 transactions contained errors but that the Court, based on the three errors which were quantified, estimates the level of error to be below the materiality threshold; notes that the Court’s report did not identify any specific issues concerning the Committee;

***Budgetary and financial management***

4. Notes that the final adopted budget for the Committee was EUR 164 945 524 in 2024, representing an overall increase of 3,90 % compared to 2023; notes from the Committee’s replies to the questionnaire submitted by the Committee on Budgetary Control for the 2024 budgetary discharge (the ‘Questionnaire’) that two budget lines of the Committee , namely 1200 (staff remuneration and allowances) and 1004 (Members’ travel and subsistence allowances),

make up most of Committee budget, i.e. 65,80 % in 2024, up from 65,58 % in 2023;

5. Notes the Committee’s shift from a spending-oriented approach towards resource management and prioritisation, as reflected in the Strategic Financial Package endorsed by the Committee’s Bureau and the introduction of prioritisation exercises; observes that those measures aim to improve financial governance and align budgetary decisions with strategic objectives; notes efforts to reduce administrative burden and streamline processes in pursuit of cost-effectiveness; calls on the Committee to further consolidate this approach by integrating performance indicators and foresight planning into its annual financial cycle;

6. Commends the Committee on its high level of budget implementation of current year commitment appropriations which increased from 98,70 % in 2023 to 99,21 % in 2024, thanks to the successful monitoring of its budget implementation, but also due to a high inflation rate impacting staff salaries and building costs; notes, in that context, the Committee’s reallocation efforts through budgetary transfers totalling EUR 2 487 139 (representing 1,51 % of its 2024 budget) across various budget lines, with the most significant increases relating to the operation and maintenance of software systems (+ EUR 519 682) and buildings (+ EUR 421 880); notes further with satisfaction that the current year payment appropriations execution rate increased from 88,12 % in 2022 and 90,67 % in 2023 to 92,85 % in 2024 and the average payment time decreased from 20,14 days in 2023 to 16,06 days in 2024, which is the Committee’s best performance since 2021; encourages the continuation of efficient monitoring, cost containment, and strategic reallocation to ensure value for money and transparency;

7. Notes that the carry-over of appropriations from 2023 to 2024 amounted to EUR 13 827 713 or 8,38 % of the Committee’s budget for 2024, which represents a decrease from the previous year’s level of EUR 15 466 316 (i.e. 9,74 % of the Committee’s budget for 2023); notes further that the rate of implementation of the appropriations carried over from 2023 to 2024 was 84,74 % in 2024, lower than 86,76 % in 2023;

8. Notes that on 21 June 2024, the Council adopted a new decision on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travel expenses of Committee members and their alternates, whereby the daily allowance for beneficiaries attending in-person meetings is set at EUR 367 (up from EUR 290) and the daily allowance for beneficiaries attending meetings remotely by electronic means is set EUR 149 (up from EUR 145); notes from the Questionnaire that in 2024 the Committee reimbursed EUR 259 669 (EUR 294 930 in 2023) for remote participation, the equivalent of 1 744 meeting days (2 006 meeting days in 2023), while the total amount of flat-rate

allowances paid for in-person participation in meetings was EUR 6 579 196 in 2024 (up from EUR 5 902 963 in 2023); calls on the Committee to strengthen transparency and proportionality of the system on the remote participation allowance in order to reinforce the public trust and stresses that financial compensation for remote attendance must be strictly justified; notes further that the Committee has a system in place to confirm the actual attendance of remote participation in meetings through electronic means; considers that remote attendance is an important instrument and a valuable tool for modern institutions - reducing meeting costs and enabling broader participation - such as allowance for participating remotely in meetings; welcomes the Committee's approach to allocating allowances for remote participation in a fair and proportionate manner, reflecting members' responsibilities and preparations requirement; recalls that members of the Committee do not receive a salary for their mandate;

9. Notes that the Committee's own services carried out 10 negotiated procedures with value between EUR 15 000 and EUR 60 000 and one procedure with a single tender for a value in that same bracket, mostly for studies; notes that the Committee also launched six procurement procedures (for framework contracts) with the joint services shared with the European Committee of the Regions (the 'CoR') covering catering, logistics and maintenance, among other;

10. Notes from the Questionnaire that the impact of Russia's war of aggression continued putting pressure on the Committee's budget in 2024, due to inflation and energy market volatility that created higher operating costs; notes, over the period 2021-2024, an estimated increase of + 16,53 % in costs with Committee's rents and + 15 % in costs with maintenance and security service contracts; notes moreover from the Questionnaire that the Committee's lease payment has increased by 4,7 % in 2024, which is above the Commission's 2 % cap for non-salary-related expenses; notes further that the energy costs for the Committee decreased from EUR 1 923 391 in 2023 to EUR 711 608 in 2024; commends in this context the Committee for its efforts to make its operations more cost effective, including through intensified energy-saving efforts; acknowledges the need of all Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies to improve their budget management by also taking into account price volatility, especially in the energy sector, when concluding contracts with service providers;

11. Calls on the Committee's administration to actively identify and implement cost-saving measures, including through the increased use of hybrid meeting technologies, the optimisation of building usage, the consolidation of parliamentary activities and the reduction of unnecessary logistical expenses; requests regular progress reports on the measures implemented and savings achieved;

12. Notes from the Questionnaire that Committee’s staff carried out 415 missions (300 in 2023) for a total amount of EUR 448 655 in 2024 which represents a 25 % increase compared to 2023, due to an increase in the number of missions and the actual costs of flights and hotel accommodation; notes the Committee’s estimation to have saved approximately EUR 40 000 on mission costs in 2024 when applying a notional inflation rate of 21 % over the period 2020-2023 to the amount paid for missions by the Committee in 2019 (i.e. EUR 402 097), pre-COVID; appreciates the Committee’s policy of keeping annual mission expenditure to a strict minimum; notes that the Committee’s President carried out missions totalling 88 days in 2024 (up from 69 days in 2023) with a total cost of approximately EUR 113 000 (up from approximately EUR 72 000 in 2023), whereas such missions were necessary to allow for the Committee President’s participation in international forums, Union-level initiatives and other events that required the Committee’s active participation;

13. Notes from the Questionnaire that the Joint Directorate for Innovation and Information Technology (DIIT) of the Committee and the CoR allocates some 4 % of its IT budget to cybersecurity (up from 3 % in 2023) which is still far from the 10 % target foreseen in the relevant legislation; reiterates its call to the co-legislators and the Commission to take this into account in the framework of the annual budgetary procedure; acknowledges the need of the Committee to deploy a cybersecurity upgrade for both committees for a total amount of approximately EUR 1,2 million, which would bring cybersecurity spending to 10 % of the Committee’s total IT budget;

***Internal management, performance and internal control***

14. Acknowledges that the Committee plays a fundamental role in contributing to the Union’s policy development and decision-making processes by representing the voices of all areas of organised civil society within the Union, thus bringing Union closer to its citizens and increasing the democratic legitimacy of Union legislation; recalls that as part of its annual work programme, the Committee has a performance monitoring system with indicators in various areas, such as IT, HR, translation and communication structured around five core values and five key strategic objectives, in the framework of the general secretariat’s strategy for 2021-2025; considers, however, that the added value of its activities for Union citizens remains largely under-reported;  notes with satisfaction from the Committee’s follow-up to observations in Parliament’s 2023 discharge resolution (the ‘Follow-up report’) and the Questionnaire that, following an audit, the Committee launched a structured process to improve its performance monitoring by aligning its performance framework with strategic objectives through key performance indicators and impact indicators to be aligned with the Committee’s future strategic goals; welcomes the Committee’s efforts to integrate impact measurement

into its decision-making and calls for clear quantifiable key performance indicators and regular reporting to ensure measurable results and accountability; invites the Committee to further strengthen its impact assessment framework by better demonstrating how its opinions and initiatives translate into concrete policy outcomes and tangible benefits for citizens, whereas the Committee’s senior management will play a key role in the use of those indicators; expects to be informed of the outcome of the implementation of this new framework by means of Committee’s future reporting to the discharge authority;

15. Notes that the Committee pursues its mission through opinions, which refer to legislative proposals made by the Commission (referrals), own-initiative opinions, which call on Union institutions to take action, and exploratory opinions, which feed into the Commission’s work on its planned initiatives, and that the Committee’s positions can be highlighted in resolutions or included in evaluation and information reports; commends the Committee for its performance in assisting Parliament, the Council and the Commission in the legislative cycle in 2024; notes in this context that, in 2024, the Committee adopted 142 opinions and reports, a decrease from 213 in 2023 and organised 148 hearings and 26 conferences, compared to 146 and 24 respectively in 2023, respectively; acknowledges that the renewal of the legislature in 2024 led to a reduced number of referrals and, consequently, of the number of opinions adopted by the Committee that year; notes that Committee members participated in 518 high-level meetings, summits and conferences in 2024 compared to 429 in 2023; encourages the prioritisation of initiatives that support economic growth, competitiveness, and Union strategic autonomy;

16. Encourages the Committee to continue its efforts to focus its work on areas where it can deliver clear, measurable and policy-relevant contributions, and to further develop performance and impact-based indicators that go beyond activity-based outputs and better reflect outcomes and relevance for citizens;

17. Welcomes from the Follow-up report the Committee’s commitment to formulate opinions on labour rights, social inclusion, and human rights violations, and to expand the scope of its evaluations with regard to Union legislation and programmes, provided adequate resources are available;

18. Appreciates the actions taken by the Committee in 2024 to improve the visibility and impact of its work in the political and legislative cycle; welcomes the official launch, following a pilot project, of a new format of opinions drawn up in response to mandatory referrals from Parliament, the Council or the Commission; notes that the new format enhances user-friendliness and usability by the legislator, while also improving the prioritisation of Committee’s work; notes

further that, thanks to reinforced follow-up on selected opinions by means of a checklist and guidance, the Committee expects that they will remain relevant beyond their adoption and feed into multi-layer legislative processes; welcomes further the integration of the Committee's opinions into the EU Law Tracker (EULT) as of April 2024, whereby they now appear as references in legislative files; notes with appreciation that the Committee also adopted an internal plan to better anticipate Union's priorities, improve interinstitutional coordination, strengthen dissemination and follow-up, and measure impact more systematically;

19. Appreciates the Committee's actions taken in 2024 to improve the accessibility, clarity and usability of its opinions for the Union institutions; underlines that such actions are intended to enhance the capacity of legislators to take informed decisions;

20. Notes with appreciation that the Committee advanced several flagship initiatives that strengthened participation, inclusion and policy impact across the Union; notes that the Committee took the lead as of September 2024 in applying the EU Youth Test in its opinion-making process, involving a network of 73 youth organisations and youth-testing around 40 opinions; welcomes and supports the Committee's initiatives to strengthen the participation of young people in the policy-making process; notes that the Committee expanded its engagement, with an inclusive dialogue initiative with candidate countries for future enlargement preparation, through the Enlargement Candidate Member initiative, enabling 146 civil society representatives to contribute directly to the Committee's opinions, through participation in study groups, section meetings and plenary (held in October 2024); commends the Committee for advancing its EU Blue Deal, helping place water resilience on the Union's agenda; underlines that the Committee continued to lead the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, and co-organised the EU Organic Awards in 2024, reinforcing links with civil society actors in organic farming; encourages the Committee to extend the scope of the opinions to encompass further public goods related to Union legislation, and measurable outcomes;

21. Invites the Committee to enhance the development of a comprehensive digital transformation strategy, covering artificial intelligence (AI), bearing in mind the need to ensure the human oversight of the use of AI. The strategy should also cover automation, interoperability and data governance, while accompanied by a robust framework ensuring safe, ethical, responsible and transparent use of emerging technologies;

22. Notes with interest from the Questionnaire the Committee's efforts to adopt a more strategic approach to prioritising its impact-related work and introduce impact management at the centre of decision-

making; notes, in this context, the organisation of three high-level strategic seminars with political leadership in 2024 and 2025, during which foresight exercises were the core of developing criteria for prioritising or de-prioritising initiatives and for ensuring thematic alignment with the long-term needs of civil society, among other objectives; notes that this prioritisation exercise will be integrated into the Committee’s core activities, as it will be conducted annually and complemented, every 2,5 years, by a review of all the Committee’s bodies, activities, and major events;

23. Notes with regard to the 2024 compliance exercise a high level of compliance with an average rate of 85 % (87 % in 2023); regrets that the effectiveness of the internal control system dropped from 78 % in 2023 to 66 % in 2024; notes in that context a gap between formal compliance and practical effectiveness in daily operations; calls on the Committee to address the structural causes of the decline in internal control effectiveness, notably by strengthening risk-awareness culture, improving internal communication channels, and accelerating the modernisation of document and information management systems, among other; notes further that in 2024 the Committee adopted a revised decision, for the simplification of 23 types of verifications, applicable as of January 2025; welcomes the fact that the ex-post controls already carried with regard to those verifications confirmed that the simplification did not introduce additional risks;

24. Notes from Committee’s annual activity report for 2024 (the ‘Committee’s report’) that five new audits were carried out in 2024 on duration and distance allowance, risk management, referrals, key activity and performance indicators and travel expenses – which led to a total of 14 recommendations; notes in particular the internal auditor’s findings with regard to duration and distance allowances, such as a lack of clear definition of “usual place of residence” and missing requirements for supporting documentation; notes further that 13 of the recommendations remained open at the end of January 2025; notes further that seven recommendations are still open from previous audits, in particular on ethics and integrity, payment times, meeting authorisations, Consultative Commission on Industrial Change delegates and strategic cycle; welcomes in that context the fact that the Committee has adopted new rules on meeting authorisations, allowances and reimbursements; invites the Committee to ensure the rapid closure of all outstanding audit recommendations, particularly those related to allowances, ethics and integrity, and to continue keeping the discharge authority informed of the progress made in the implementation of all ongoing recommendations;

***Human resources, equality and staff well-being***

25. Notes that, at the end of 2024, the Committee was employing 713

staff, compared to 707 in 2023; notes further that 48 contract agents and 144 temporary agents (of which 42 were recruited in 2024) were employed in 2024 (compared to 49 contract agents and 130 temporary agents in 2023); stresses the importance of providing permanent contracts in order to maintain skills, continuity and productive and stable working environment, and warns against an excessive reliance on external service providers; notes, in addition, that the Committee was employing 10 service providers and 14 external staff working intra-muros, excluding those in the fields of catering, maintenance, security and safety; takes note that the occupation rate was 96 % (95,50 % in 2023) and that staff turnover rate was 5,60 % in 2024 (down from 7 % in 2023);

26. Commends the Committee for being a net importer of talent from other institutions in 2024 for the third consecutive year, as a result of implementing its recruitment and retention action plan, whereas 42 % of recruitments in 2024 were linked to interinstitutional transfers; notes further from the Follow-up report an increase of 11,60 % in the number of applications received by the Committee for permanent posts and of 41 % for temporary and contract agents' positions; welcomes the fact that the Committee launched an internal competition, open to temporary and contract staff, with a reserve list expected by end of 2025; underlines that internal competitions are important for retaining talent and expertise, and stabilising Committee's human resources in general; notes with satisfaction the participation of the Committee in career events and fairs (including virtual ones) and Open Days; notes that in 2024 the Committee organised a virtual career fair dedicated to specific job profiles and career opportunities, which attracted 270 participants, whereas 19 of them also applied for the first vacancy notice open at the time of the event;

27. Welcomes the ongoing efforts of the Committee to improve its HR framework with a view to becoming an attractive employer and a fully inclusive workplace, where every individual is valued and can fully develop their potential; notes that the Committee analysed the results of the 2023 staff engagement survey, identified various concerns and ultimately initiated targeted follow-up actions which were taken throughout 2024; notes among such actions the implementation of the new decision on working conditions (hybrid work, overtime, special leave), the revision of appraisal and promotions rules, the adoption of a new policy on mobility and management of sensitive posts, the implementation of the new Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan adopted at the end of 2023, the revision of the absence management policy to be adopted in 2025 and work (ongoing) on the Committee's new skills strategy, among other; welcomes the further improvement in the staff engagement score, as shown in the Committee's latest survey, rising from 70,5 % in 2023 to 75 % in 2025;

28. Notes that, in 2024, the Committee was employing staff representing all Union nationalities, with some of them being overrepresented; notes with satisfaction that 62,70 % of the staff were women and 37,30 % were men; notes from the Follow-up report that women hold 52 % of the management positions making the Committee a frontrunner in that regard; reiterates its welcoming of the appointment of a female Secretary-General in January 2024 as a positive step towards achieving gender balance; acknowledges recent progress in embedding gender equality and diversity as strategic priorities to foster an inclusive and respectful workplace culture; welcomes the implementation of a diversity and inclusion strategy and action plan,  targeted mentoring and leadership development programmes for women and underrepresented groups; regrets however that the percentage of women in senior management remained low in 2024, with only two out of seven senior management positions currently being held by women, the same as in 2023; acknowledges that the low turnover rate inherent to the Committee's size is one of the reasons for the low share of women in those positions; welcomes the Committee's commitment to raise awareness on this issue among appointing authorities, to promote gender-balanced appointments, and to engage in targeted actions through the Women's Forum and the Management Forum which support leadership development and career progression for women in middle management;

29. Recalls the Committee's initiative to introduce a new approach to strategic workforce planning and staff allocation, leveraging data collection on staff skills, active listening across the organisation, and reflections on strategic priorities by the Committee's political bodies; notes from the Follow-up report that this new type of planning will be kicked off through a pilot project in a limited number of services selected based on strategic priorities; invites the Committee to keep the discharge authority informed of progress and subsequent developments; stresses the importance of strategic workforce planning to optimize resource allocation and ensure alignment with high-level priorities;

30. Welcomes the Committee's efforts to create a healthy work environment for its staff; commends particularly the attention paid by the Committee to the mental and physical health of staff, and the efforts made on awareness-raising for health-related issues; notes the Committee's measures on sick-leave management, such as medical part-time and extended remote working, to ensure that staff on long-term sickness-related absence return to work timely; notes a decrease by 7,50 % in the total number of registered sick leave days from 10 552 days in 2023 to 9 763 in 2024, as well as a decrease in the absence rate from 4,08 % in 2023 to 3,75 % in 2024 (the lowest since 2021); regrets that the Committee is once again unable to provide data on cases of burnout; notes among the Committee's arguments the lack of obligation for staff to share medical data

upfront, that burnout is not a recognised medical diagnosis and the reasons for burnout may not be work related, as well as medical secrecy; notes that the Committee collects anonymised statistical data on sick leaves related to mental health, but available data do not allow a differentiation between work-related burnout and other issues that are non-work related; underlines nevertheless that burnout can also be measured without medical data, whereas there are work-related burnout assessment tools that can be used and European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) supports anonymous questionnaires to measure work-related stress and burnout factors separately from non-work-related mental-health issues; urges the Committee to also consult the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) regarding the collection of burnout data by means of medical or non-medical tools, and keep the discharge authority updated of the follow-up;

31. Notes from the Questionnaire that, in 2024, the Committee and the CoR launched the SPaCES project to modernise and optimise their workspaces through a fully participatory and transparent process involving staff representatives and social partners; underlines that the project constitutes a long-term transformation aimed at improving efficiency, collaboration, and flexibility across both institutions, in line with hybrid working; notes that the SPaCES project is being implemented through a fully participatory approach, ensuring staff involvement and representation at every stage; observes that the first phase -supported by an external contractor and due for completion in summer 2025 includes workshops with management and all services of both Committees, as well as a detailed activity-based working analysis to identify future workspace needs; welcomes the fact that a dedicated governance structure, project team and contact-point network has been established to guide the process, ensure transparency, and represent all relevant interests;

32. Notes that the Committee hired 52 trainees long-term (5 months) and two trainees short-term, all of whom received a monthly allowance in 2024, in compliance with the Parliament resolution of 14 June 2023 on quality traineeships in the Union (2020/2005(INL)), which calls for all internships in Europe to be paid;

33. Welcomes the strong and structured social dialogue in organisational change processes throughout 2024; encourages the Committee to maintain and further strengthen the systematic involvement of staff representatives in reforms related, inter alia, to digitalisation, internal reorganisation and new working methods;

***Ethical framework and transparency***

34. Recalls that in the framework of a reinforced ethical framework the Committee and the internal auditor have agreed on an action plan

relating to the audit on the Committee’s ethics and integrity, with ten recommendations, eight of which were closed by March 2025; notes from the Follow-up report that the Committee addressed the two remaining open recommendations by revising and updating the guide regarding the obligations of officials of the Committee the content of which will be reflected also on Committee’s intranet;

35. Notes that the Committee continued to train staff and raise awareness about ethics related topics in 2024; notes with satisfaction that the Committee offers trainings on ethics and integrity that are compulsory for all staff, whereas nine such trainings were attended by 54 participants in 2024; notes further that 40 out of 47 managers attended sessions on respect at work and the role of managers and 25 staff attended trainings offered by the Investigation and Disciplinary Office of the Commission on potential temptations that carry disciplinary consequences throughout 2024; welcomes the fact that surveys show a high rate of awareness among Committee’s staff with regard to its strong values and ethical standards, procedures for reporting wrongdoing and network of confidential counsellors, among other;

36. Notes from the Questionnaire that two cases of alleged harassment were reported in 2024, and investigated and closed in 2025, whereas in one case there wase no finding of harassment and in the other a formal apology was accepted for inappropriate behaviour of the concerned person; notes further that a decision was taken on another case, submitted before 2024, on harassment linked to a disciplinary procedure; notes further that no sexual harassment was reported in 2024; reiterates the need for a zero-tolerance policy towards harassment to ensure the protection of staff well-being and recalls that this is an obligation incumbent on any employer;

37. Takes note from the Follow-up report of the development regarding legal proceedings initiated by the Belgian authorities against a former Committee member accused of misconduct linked to a harassment complaint within the Committee which was open and closed by the Committee in 2023; notes that those proceedings are suspended as the relevant Belgian court asked the Court of Justice of the European Union for clarification on the interpretation of Article 10 of Protocol (No 7) on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Union; invites the Committee to keep the discharge authority updated on subsequent developments on this matter;

38. Notes with satisfaction that the Committee is a frontrunner with regard to transparency, as the first body, beyond the initial signatories, to have joined the Union’s Transparency Register; welcomes the transparency measures adopted by the Committee, including the recommendation for the Committee’s members to meet only with registered stakeholders, the obligation for its members to publish their meetings online and the possibility for the Committee’s

rapporteurs, including through a pilot project initiated in 2025, to attach a “legislative footprint” to their opinions; notes that by now Committee’s opinions are visible as milestones within legislative files in the EULT; notes further with satisfaction from the Questionnaire the Committee’s transparency actions with regard to its core administrative operations in areas such as finance, procurement, HR and access to documents;

39. Notes that the Committee has a solid framework to prevent conflicts of interest and avoid cases of revolving doors; notes with regard to its staff, that the Committee ensures that conflict-of-interest considerations are embedded in all recruitment and selection procedures; notes that staff are obliged to proactively declare any situation that could give rise to a conflict of interest; notes with regard to Committee members, that in the event of a change in the information declared by them, they shall submit a new declaration at the latest within two months of the change in question; notes with regard to its members that the Committee’s Ethical committee handled one request for guidance regarding a possible conflict of interest; notes with regard to the Committee’s staff that no cases of conflict of interest or whistleblowing were reported in 2024;

40. Notes with concern a suspected case of fraud involving an external service provider which was dismissed by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and subsequently referred to the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) for potentially criminal offences in 2024; notes with satisfaction from the Questionnaire that the Committee is fully cooperating with the EPPO in this case; notes further that that service provider has paid the agreed liquidated damages to the Committee; welcomes in that context the measures taken by the Committee to better prevent such cases in the future by doing more rigorous compliance checks during procurement and contract execution and reinforcing guidance and training on that matter; notes that one OLAF case from 2023 was referred back to the Committee for an internal simplified administrative inquiry which was launched in 2024 and led to a final report addressed to the Appointing Authority in July 2025; invites the Committee to inform the discharge authority on whether a final decision has been taken in this case; notes further that an enquiry opened by the Ombudsman in 2023 was closed in 2024 with the finding that there was no maladministration on the side of the Committee;

41. Notes with satisfaction from the Questionnaire that the Committee, following Parliament’s previous calls, drafted an anti-fraud strategy that includes the accompanying action plan with concrete measures to be implemented covering training policies, as well as awareness campaigns and revised cooperation agreements with OLAF and EPPO, which has been submitted to interservice consultation and adoption process; invites the Committee to inform the discharge authority on the follow-up thereto; welcomes the fact that the

Committee organised two training sessions delivered by OLAF staff on fraud awareness and prevention in public procurement, which were attended by 21 participants and one awareness-raising session organised together with the EPPO, to familiarise the Committee’s staff with the EPPO’s mandate and provide guidance on how to report potential cases to the EPPO; invites the Committee to strengthen its procedures on risk assessment, prevention, detection and follow-up in the implementation of the anti-fraud strategy;

***Digitalisation, cybersecurity and data protection***

42. Notes that the combined IT budget of the Committee and the CoR was EUR 13 700 000 in 2024, compared to EUR 12 700 000 in 2023, i.e. an increase of 7,87 %, whereas EUR 760 000 of that budget (approximately 6 %) was paid for cybersecurity in 2024; notes from the Questionnaire that IT project funding increased by EUR 109 000 compared to 2023, representing a 4 % rise, primarily supporting the M365 Workplace Programme and the Cybersecurity Transformation Programme; further notes that equipment expenditure grew by EUR 117 000 (i.e. a 20 % increase), mainly due to price adjustments and strategic investments in telephony infrastructure; acknowledges the Committee’s concern that it is structurally underfunded in the areas of digitalisation and cybersecurity and warns that persistent underinvestment in cybersecurity poses a structural risk to the integrity of the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies; calls on the Committee to adapt a structured roadmap to progressively reach the 10% cybersecurity spending benchmark, including annual milestones, risk-based prioritisation and regular reporting to the discharge authority; stress the need for strengthened cooperation with Cybersecurity Service for the Union Institutions, Bodies, Offices and Agencies (CERT-EU) and Union institutions, bodies offices and agencies to ensure a coherent and resilient cybersecurity posture ; regrets in this context that the budgetary authority did not include in the Union budget for 2026 the amount of EUR 1 176 000 necessary for the Committee (and the CoR) to operate a major cybersecurity upgrade, thereby rendering unachievable the target referred to in Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2023/2841[1] of dedicating around 10 % of its total IT expenditure to cybersecurity; calls for appropriate funds to allow the Committee and the CoR to operate a major cybersecurity upgrade;

43. Notes key improvements with regard to digitalisation and IT governance in 2024 such an extension of Wi-Fi coverage, deployment of Microsoft 365 and AI pilots, cloud migration and awareness-

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1 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2023/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2023 laying down measures for a high common level of cybersecurity at the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union (OJ L, 2023/2841, 18.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2841/oj).

raising through Cybersecurity Days, among other; welcomes the multiannual digital strategy (DS 2024-2026), launched by the DIIT, which is built around four flagship programmes: M365 (digital workplace programme), ARES (the Commission's document management system), EdiT (shared tool among Union institutions for drafting legislative documents), and Cybersecurity; notes from the Committee's report and the Questionnaire that the Committee's Digital Strategy 2024-2026 introduces a revised digital governance model aimed enhancing institutional collaboration, streamlining workflows, automating processes, improving legislative drafting and strengthening resilience;

44. Notes from the Questionnaire the implementation of the HAN (HERMES-ARES-NOMCOM) system for secure document management and compliance with data protection rules and the adoption of the EdiT XML editor for legislative drafting; welcomes the progress made in records management, with a full rollout expected by 2026; acknowledges improvements in IT infrastructure, including automation, cloud migration, and the deployment of a new HR management tool (HRT replacing Sysper) in 2024;

45. Notes that the Committee uses eTranslation, the Commission's neural machine translation platform to generate translations automatically, as an additional aid to translators' work; notes that in parallel the Committee successfully conducted a pilot project on AI-based speech-to-text transcription using software developed by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2024; further notes that the Directorate for Translation launched a one-year pilot project in June 2024 to assess the use of DeepL as an alternative translation tool which was deemed not to provide added value in comparison to the already deployed systems for the translation of Committee documents;

46. Notes from the Questionnaire that the Committee maintains close cooperation with CERT-EU and uses various tools and continuous monitoring to detect and address system vulnerabilities; further notes that DIIT began implementing the "Essentials 8", the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF), and OWASP as reference models to strengthen risk management, improve governance, and integrate security across identification, protection, detection, response, and recovery processes; acknowledges that the work to achieve full alignment with operational and regulatory requirements is ongoing; notes from the Follow-up report that cybersecurity has been reframed by the Committee as a shared responsibility across all staff, supported by a multiannual plan, continuous training, and awareness campaigns;

47. Notes with satisfaction that the Committee's communication channels are also accessible by persons with disabilities; notes that the Committee applies Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and for

most its applications, comprehensive accessibility is conducted; notes in this context that Committee's website is regularly audited by accessibility specialists who issue recommendations that are then implemented, whereas the next audit is set to take place in 2026;

48. Commends Committee's efforts in 2024 to ensure that staff acquire the digital skills needed for an increasingly digitalised work environment and for implementing targeted information campaigns, offering a comprehensive training and coaching programme, and maintaining an up-to-date IT knowledge base with an AI-powered interface to support staff development; encourages trainings on cybersecurity and safe, ethical and efficient use of AI;

49. Notes from the Follow-up report that in 2024 no investigations were initiated by the EDPS regarding the application of data protection rules at the Committee; notes however that an enquiry concerning the management of an external audit, launched in 2023, is still pending; asks the Committee to keep the discharge authority informed on the follow-up to this matter;

***Buildings***

50. Notes from the Follow-up report that the Committee is working on a long-term building strategy given the upcoming renovation of the SPAAK building and the fact that the B-100 building will be vacated in August 2026; notes further that the outcome of the ongoing technical and environmental audits of Committee's buildings will be included in that strategy; invites the Committee to keep the discharge authority updated on these matters;

51. Appreciates that the Committee completed modernisation and accessibility upgrades for all six elevators on the west side of the JDE building, including one specifically designed for persons with reduced mobility in 2024; welcomes the significant improvements introduced for wheelchair users, blind and visually impaired persons, deaf persons, and people with reduced mobility or other physical limitations, including enhanced audio and visual signalling, adapted controls, extended door times, mirrors and safety features, and handrails;

52. Notes form the Committee's report that, in 2024, a new shared communication space was created in the JDE building in collaboration with the CoR; highlights that the facility, located in the former library area, includes a state-of-the-art recording studio, a 'stand-up' interview room, and a dedicated conference space;

***Environment and sustainability***

53. Notes from the Questionnaire that, in 2024, the Committee earmarked EUR 198 894 for greening its operations, with 55 % dedicated to consultancy and expert services in energy management

and efficiency and 45 % to infrastructure improvements such as LED lighting, bicycle parking, and energy metering; welcomes that these investments, together with continued initiatives in innovative building installations, 100 % green electricity, smart energy-saving technologies, and digitalisation, contributed to reducing energy consumption and emissions;

54. Notes from the Questionnaire a decrease in consumption of electricity (-19 %), gas (- 13 %) and water (- 12 %), as well as a decrease in waste volumes (–12 %) and an increase in paper consumption (+1 %) in 2024 compared to 2023; welcomes further a decrease in carbon emissions per FTE by 4,30 % (emissions from Committee members' travel not included) during that same period; notes from the Questionnaire the Committee's actions to promote more sustainable travel options among its staff and members and the ongoing revision of the mission guide for staff which will include environmental footprint as key component; welcomes further the Committee's focus on waste management and recycling to foster a culture of waste reduction and resource efficiency;

55. Notes with satisfaction that all of the Committee's calls for tenders above EUR 60 000 and those above EUR 25 000 managed jointly with the CoR include sustainability clauses in line with standards of the Energy Union, European Green Deal and circular economy principles; notes that the Committee's new framework contract for catering service entered into force in August 2024 has requirements for ecological and locally produced products, food donations and seasonal fruits and vegetables;

56. Notes with satisfaction from the Questionnaire the Committee's continued efforts to promote sustainable mobility among its staff; notes in particular that the Committee offers financial contributions for public transport travel passes, for staff using a bike to commute, and, as of 2024, contributions to Flex SNCB subscriptions to reflect considerations around hybrid working arrangements; notes the plan of the Committee to participate jointly with the CoR in a call for tender (to be relaunched in 2026) led by the Commission, to purchase and maintain electric bikes; welcomes the continued cooperation with the Brussels-Capital Region on mobility planning and the Committee's participation in interinstitutional initiatives, which contribute to a culture of sustainable commuting;

### *Interinstitutional cooperation*

57. Commends the close cooperation established by the Committee with the CoR at administrative level, whereas the two committees share premises and joint services in the areas of translation, infrastructure, logistics, security, procurement, financial management and IT, while maintaining full institutional autonomy; notes that the two committees, in order to expand cooperation in other areas and given

budgetary constraints, have jointly launched two key projects 2024, i.e. the SPaCES project for the transformation of the office environment and a strategic reform of the Directorate for Translation through structural reorganisation, improved use of language technologies and a gradual reduction in human translation capacity for increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness;

58. Welcomes the positive results achieved during the first year of implementing the agreement of the Committee and the CoR in the audio-visual area, such as budgetary savings of approximately EUR 140 000 compared to an independently run project and an increased production capacity, with 85 videos produced already by June 2025 compared to around 90 for the whole of 2024;

59. Commends the Committee for the significant savings made thanks to the implementation of its Cooperation Agreement with the CoR, which has established Joint Services covering tasks mainly in the fields of IT, logistics and public procurement; notes with satisfaction from the Questionnaire the Committee’s estimated savings in 2024 in the fields of IT (approximately EUR 16 million), infrastructure (approximately 8 million), printing services (approximately EUR 125 000) and security services (approximately EUR 800 000); notes further that should the Committee and the CoR have separate translation and procurement services, overall staffing costs would increase by at least 30 %; reiterates its call to expand as much as possible this cooperation, to the level of setting up a single administration for the joint services, and keeping separate the services and unit in charge of their core independent mandates;

60. Notes with satisfaction the significant budgetary and administrative savings achieved by the Committee through Service level agreements, in particular with the Commission for the use of financial and key HR management IT tools; welcomes further the Committee’s participation in interinstitutional procurement procedures led by other institutions such as Parliament and the Commission in areas such as corporate travel, insurance, travel, IT, translation and audiovisual equipment; notes from the Questionnaire that the total cost incurred by the Committee for the outsourcing of specific services to the Commission increased from EUR 793 000 in 2023 to EUR 893 000 in 2024;

61. Notes some developments and data with regard to the cooperation between the Committee and Parliament in 2024: the adoption of a new cooperation agreement, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in preparation for the the European elections, the participation of 55 Members in 38 Committee events, the participation of the Committee in 32 Parliament events, as well as attendance at various bilateral and political group meetings;

62. Notes some developments and data with regard to the cooperation

between the Committee and the Commission in 2024: attendance by commissioners of 10 Committee plenary sessions and other events organised by the Committee, over 30 joint communication projects to engage civil society, 20 specific joint activities, Committee contributions to 17 Commission expert groups, six exploratory opinions and three evaluation reports delivered by the Committee at the request of the Commission;

63. Notes some developments and data with regard to the cooperation between the Committee and the Council/European Council in 2024: three high-levels meetings with presidents of the European Council and 21 exploratory opinions delivered by the Committee at the request of the Belgian Presidency and the Hungarian Presidency;

64. Observes that budgetary savings and efficiency gains continued to be realised through active cooperation between the Committee and Union institutions in 2024, including by organising the Committee's plenary sessions on Commission and Parliament premises, where the venues and associated services are provided either free of charge or at rates below external market prices;

65. Notes that the Committee plays a pivotal role in reinforcing the links with and between the national economic and social councils (NESCs) of the Member States; notes in this context the launch of a new thematic working group composed of 13 NECS, the publication of 32 news articles and 26 executive summaries of NESC-adopted reports, the organisation of the annual meeting of presidents and secretaries-general of NESC in Brussels and a jointly organised seminar with 100 participants from European social partners, civil society organisations, representatives of Union institutions and academics in 2024; calls for continued cooperation on topics of common interest and the exchange of good practices, emphasising the vital role of civil society in addressing the Union's current challenges;

### *Communication*

66. Notes from the Questionnaire that the Committee's overall budget for communication, publications and acquisitions of documentation was approximately EUR 2,5 million in 2024 (about the same as in 2023), representing 1,4 % of the Committee's overall budget after transfers for 2024; welcomes the fact that the Committee focused its resources in 2024 on a limited number of communication priorities linked to the legislative priorities of the Union institutions, such as energy affordability, AI, mental health, strategic autonomy, economic reform, gender equality, youth, and enlargement, in line with the Committee's impact-driven communication;

67. Notes from the Questionnaire and the Committee's report that in 2024 the Committee implemented a comprehensive communication plan in the framework of the European elections campaign through

local events outreach events and the Civil Society Week; appreciates in this context that 104 Committee members attended 122 outreach events directly involving some 350 000 citizens on top of the social media outreach; commends further the Committee's reported performance with regard to the organisation of the Civil Society Week, i.e. 800 participants, more than 8 000 interactions, more than 1 million impressions and about 96 000 video view, thus marking a strong social media presence;

68. Welcomes the efforts made by the Committee to increase the visibility of its work; considers, however, that further efforts are needed to ensure that communication activities clearly explain the Committee's role and concrete contributions to Union's presence on the ground, in a manner that is accessible and meaningful to citizens; appreciates the launch of the NaviGate platform in May 2024; notes that this platform, which feeds with weblinks the EULT, has significantly increased the visibility of the Committee's work and enhanced the user experience for Members, staff, visitors from other institutions, and the public, reaching 4 600 unique visitors in 2024;

69. Notes from the Committee's report that its social media presence continued to expand, with the Committee's four main accounts achieving an overall increase in the number of followers of more than 18  % compared to 2023; highlights that engagement grew significantly, rising by 45 % and surpassing 416 000 interactions across platforms; further notes that by the end of 2024 the Committee had reached 62 868 followers on X, 79 647 on LinkedIn, 49,494 on Facebook and 29,987 on Instagram, reflecting strong platform-specific growth compared to 2023; notes that the highest increase in the number of followers was recorded on the Instagram account in 2024 (+ 72 %); notes that, in line with the common approach of Union institutions, the Committee opened its first Bluesky account in 2024 to secure its official presence, with activities beginning in January 2025;