en

News | 18.10.2017

Glimmer of hope

Accountability of the Council budget may soon be improved, ending seven-year stalemate

A seven-year dispute between the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union over whether or not the Parliament should have the right to oversee how the Council spends its budget, may soon be resolved, if all goes according to plan.

For the last seven years, the European Parliament has refused to sign off on the Council's annual accounts because the Council has simply refused to engage with Members of the European Parliament's Budgetary Control Committee, claiming that elected members have no role to play in overseeing or approving the way the Council spends its budget.

After some failed attempts to correct this flagrant omission, and to ensure that there is some oversight of the Council by directly elected politicians (see here for news from last year), there is now finally a glimmer of hope.

This year, Bart Staes from the Greens/EFA Group is in charge of the Council's discharge, and he is proposing that the Parliament and Council sit down constructively to negotiate a new agreement, which would allow for some oversight of the budget whilst taking on board the Council's concerns.

Assuming the Parliament's Conference of Presidents agrees to this, then Bart, together with the chair of the Budgetary Control Committee and the Parliament's Secretary General Klaus Welle, will start to negotiate with the Council.

This has the potential of bringing back under public scrutiny the spending of over €541,8 million of the EU's annual budget. If the Council accepts, they will have to answer a series of questions from the CONT Committee MEPs, and attend public hearings on the matter. In a sign of good faith, the Parliament would also agree to answer questions from the Council. In this way, both institutions would be overseeing each other, thus resulting in more transparency and accountability - which is good for everyone!

None of this is a done deal, but if you're interested in the progress of the negotiations, watch this space!!

Recommended

Press release

European Council



Meet Nicolae Ștefănuță at the Summit of Heads of State…

15.10.2026

Press release

Leonardo1982



Parliament puts far-right party on notice

07.07.2026

Press release

European External Action Service (https://www.flickr.com/photos/eeas/32978511020)



[Now is the time to transform the EU before another Orb…]

21.04.2026

Press release

Foto von Sasun Bughdaryan auf Unsplash



[GDPR: MEPs to vote on faster and fairer enforcement]

21.10.2025

Contact person



Pam Bartlett Quintanilla

Team leader - Outreach and campaigns

Please share

- E-Mail