

EN

P-002704/2024

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(25.2.2025)

The EU Delegations play an essential role in the EU's representation on the global stage. They are at the frontline of the EU relationships and outreach with partners globally and a key asset for the EU, its institutions and Member States.

In the context of reduced budgetary resources for the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the new priorities and policies of the EU, it is necessary to ensure that the Delegations network is able to effectively deliver, including with proper expertise in the field.

This work is ongoing. There is a need for further analysis and to explore different options, to ensure the highest effectiveness of the EU's presence in the world in the current complex geopolitical context. No option has been endorsed yet.

In her appearance before the Committee on Budgetary Control (2023 EEAS discharge), the High Representative/Vice President stated that, in principle, no EU Delegations would close, while underlining that the EEAS effectiveness and efficiency could be further improved. The 145 EU Delegations are key for the implementation of EU policies.

The current multi-annual financial framework was built on stable staffing and no more than a 2% annual increase for non-salary expenditure. This is very challenging in the recent economic climate, and the EEAS has argued that the MFF parameters are not taking into consideration inflation outside the EU (close to 20%) which is a unique position and costs are linked to maintain a worldwide presence through the network of Delegations.

Thanks to the strong and much welcome support from the European Parliament, the Budgetary Authority agreed to grant more than the 2% standard increase to the EEAS in the 2025 budget procedure.

This will allow for some critical infrastructure work to be carried out in 2025. However, continued austerity measures and search for efficiencies and redeployments will continue in 2025, which may also require adaptations of the EU's diplomatic network.