Resolution on the future of GMES

2012/2509(RSP) - 16/02/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the future of GMES, tabled on behalf of the Industry, Research and Energy Committee, in response to the Commission's communication of 30 November 2011 on the European Earth Monitoring Programme (GMES) and its operations (from 2014 onwards).

Parliament regrets the fact that the Commission published only a communication and did not come forward with a legislative proposal on GMES, given that the current Regulation (EU) No 911/2010 covers only initial operations and will expire by the end of 2013.

Furthermore, it **disagrees with the direction that the Commission indicated in its communication as regards the future financing and government of GMES,** the aim being intergovernmental funding of the project. It is concerned that this direction will be hugely detrimental to the future development of the programme, and cause the programme to lose its European dimension, contradict the principles of transparency and full, open and equal access for all, and be seen as a sign of disengagement by the EU from this flagship initiative. Parliament does not believe that financing GMES outside the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) – with the funding and governance structure that the Commission proposed in its communication – is a viable option. GMES has been set up as a Union programme, financed through the EU budget, totalling approximately EUR 3 2 billion up to 2013, under the management and responsibility of the EU.

Members point out that **uncertainty about the future of the GMES programme and its financing is hugely detrimental** to the development and market uptake of GMES services and applications, which are expected to generate economic growth and wellbeing for European citizens. The lack of a credible financing plan providing long-term and stable financial support would probably lead to higher costs in the longer term, disparity of access to resulting information and benefits for European citizens, and an interruption or even a suspension of the programme and its data provision, and could ultimately mean that the investment made to date has been fruitless and that Europe would lose its independence and technological advancement in this important space infrastructure.

Parliament calls, therefore, on the Commission to speedily table a legislative proposal for the long-term governance, funding and operation of the GMES programme, financed under the MFF, with the aim of securing the proper deployment and operation of the programme and achieving its objective of being fully operational as from 2014.