

2011 discharge: Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCH Joint Undertaking)

2012/2220(DEC) - 21/03/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Gerben-Jan GERBRANDY (ADLE, NL) on discharge to be granted to the Executive Director of the Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking in respect of the implementation of the Undertaking's budget for the financial year 2011.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the annual accounts of the Joint Undertaking for the financial year 2011 are reliable but has **delivered a qualified opinion on the legality and the regularity of the transactions underlying the Undertaking's accounts**, Members approve the closure of its accounts. However, they make a number of recommendations that need to be taken into account when the discharge is granted, in addition to the general recommendations that appear in the [draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies](#):

- **Financing, budget and financial management:** Members recall that the maximum contribution for the period of 10 years from the Union to the Joint Undertaking is EUR 470 million to be paid from the budget of the Seventh Research Framework Programme. They also note that the 2011 Joint Undertaking's final budget included commitment and payment appropriations amounting to EUR 117 million and EUR 60 million respectively.
- **Implementation rate of appropriations and carryovers:** Members welcome the utilisation rates for the available commitment and payment appropriations which were 99.8% and 87.9% respectively. They note with concern that the budgetary procedure outlined in the Joint Undertaking's financial rules was not followed.
- **Qualified opinion of the Court of Auditors:** Members are concerned that the Joint Undertaking's annual accounts received a qualified opinion from the Court of Auditors on the legality and the regularity of the transactions underlying those accounts on the grounds that errors were detected in some ex-post audits.

Members made a series of observations as regards the Joint Undertaking's control systems, the annual assessment of the level of the in-kind contributions, treasury management as well as other management matters.

Lastly, Members invite the Court to provide, within a reasonable deadline, a special report to Parliament on common issues due to the nature of the joint undertakings in order to ensure **their added value and efficient execution of Union research, technological development and demonstration programmes**. They note, furthermore, that the report should include an assessment of the **effectiveness of the joint undertakings' establishment and structure**.