2013 discharge: Clean Sky Joint Undertaking

2014/2131(DEC) - 31/03/2015 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Ryszard CZARNECKI (ECR, PL) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the **Clean Joint Undertaking** for the financial year 2013.

It called on the European Parliament to grant the Executive Director of the Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking discharge in respect of the implementation of the Joint Undertaking's budget for the financial year 2013.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the annual accounts of the Centre for the financial year 2013 are reliable, and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Members called on the Parliament to approve the closure of the Centre's accounts. They made, however, a number of recommendations that needed 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.

- **Budgetary and financial management:** Members noted that the commitment appropriations utilisation rate was 90.6 % while the rate for payment appropriations was 87.7 %. They were concerned that the lower rate for payment appropriations still reflected **delays in budget implementation**, although the rate improved in comparison to the previous year (75 %). They also noted that the members of the Joint Undertaking other than the Commission must contribute resources of at least EUR 600 000 000, including their contributions to cover running costs. Members pointed out that at the time of the Court's audit, the contribution committed by the Union amounted to EUR 713 000 000 while the resources from the members amounted to EUR 409 000 000. They called on the Joint Undertaking to submit a report to the discharge authority concerning **the contributions of all members**, other than the Commission, including the application of the evaluation rules, together with an assessment by the Commission.

- **Internal controls:** Members noted that several weaknesses were identified when the Grant Management Tool was tested by the accounting officer. They agreed that **follow-up on resolving these weaknesses** was needed, in particular regarding the management of grants and internal governance regarding verification and validation of commitments.

- **Other observations:** Members noted the Joint Statement by the Parliament, the Council and the Commission on the **separate discharge for Joint Undertakings**. They called on the Court to present a complete and appropriate financial assessment of the rights and obligations of the Joint Undertaking for the period up to the date of Clean Sky 2 starting activity. The committee asked the Joint Undertaking to submit a report to the discharge authority on the social-economic benefits of the completed projects already. It recalled that the discharge authority had previously requested the Court to draw up a **special report** on the capacity of the joint undertakings, together with their private partners, to ensure added value and efficient execution of Union research, technological development and demonstration programmes.

- Members made a series of observations regarding conflicts of interests and urged the Joint Undertaking to provide a track record of all the conflict of interest cases resolved by the end of September 2015.

- Lastly, they believed that **links between the Joint Undertaking and the SESAR Joint Undertaking should be strengthened** in order to improve communication and reinforce synergies and complementarities.