2013 discharge: ENIAC Joint Undertaking for the implementation of the Joint Technology Initiative on nanoelectronics

2014/2135(DEC) - 29/04/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 439 votes to 248, with 8 abstentions, to postpone its decision on granting the Executive Director of the ECSEL Joint Undertaking discharge in respect of the implementation of the ENIAC Joint Undertaking's budget for the financial year 2013. It postponed the closure of the accounts of the ECSEL accounts for the financial year 2013.

Parliament also adopted by 659 votes to 19, with 9 abstentions, a resolution containing a number recommendations that form an integral part of the discharge decision and as well as the general recommendations that appear in the resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

- **Budgetary and financial management**: Parliament was deeply concerned that the Court issued a qualified opinion, for a third consecutive year, on the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the annual accounts, on the grounds of not being able to conclude whether or not the ex post audit strategy provided sufficient assurance with respect to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions. The qualified opinion **put into question the willingness of the Joint Undertaking to be effective and efficient**. Members acknowledged that the Joint Undertaking had submitted an action plan which aimed to remedy the deficiencies identified by the Court in its qualified opinion, and they looked forward to the successful implementation of the entire action plan. Parliament called on the Joint Undertaking to provide a first interim evaluation report on the implementation of the action plan. At the same time, Parliament was concerned that there was limited information available regarding the evaluation of the Member States' and AENEAS' contributions corresponding to the actual level of Union payments. It 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.
- **Conflicts of interests**: Parliament acknowledged that the Joint Undertaking has taken comprehensive measures to prevent conflicts of interest and has published them on its website; notes from the Court's report that further improvements should be considered such as setting up a database to include all information concerning conflicts of interest. It recalled that the discharge authority has 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.

Other observations: Parliament went on to make a series of observation on the legal framework of the Undertaking, the calls for proposals underway and the system of internal control at the Undertaking. It noted that between September 2012 and February 2013, the Commission carried out its Second Interim Evaluation in order to assess the Joint Undertaking and the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and research quality. It also noted that the report was issued in May 2013 and contained several recommendations for the Joint Undertaking.