2014 discharge: Artemis Joint Undertaking to implement a Joint Technology Initiative in Embedded Computing Systems

2015/2199(DEC) - 28/04/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament **decided to postpone its decision to grant discharge to the Executive Director of the ECSEL Joint Undertaking in respect of the implementation of Atemis's budget for the financial year 2014**.

It postponed the closure of the accounts of the Artemis Joint Undertaking (in accordance with Annex V, Article 5 (1)(b) to Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Parliament adopted by 600 votes to 35, with 0 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations, which form an integral part of the decision on discharge and which add to the general recommendations set out in the resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

- **General remark**: Parliament recalled that the Joint Undertaking and the ENIAC Joint Undertaking (ENIAC) were merged to create the Electronic Components and Systems for European leadership Joint Technology Initiative (ECSEL JTI), which started its activity in June 2014 and will run for 10 years.
- **Qualified opinion of the Court of Auditors**: Parliament are concerned that the Court in its report on the annual accounts of the Joint Undertaking issued a qualified opinion regarding the regularity and legality of the underlying transactions on the grounds that the administrative agreements signed with the national funding authorities ('NFAs') regarding the audit of project cost claims do not include practical arrangements for ex-post audits. It noted that the Joint Undertaking did not assess the quality of the audit reports received from the NFAs concerning the costs relating to completed projects even though the ECSEL JTI confirmed that its extensive assessment of the national assurance systems concluded that they can provide reasonable protection of the financial interests of the Joint Undertaking's members. Parliament invited the ECSEL initiative to further strengthen its controls and the Court to collect additional and necessary documents and information as an alternative way to justify its opinion. Parliament also called on the ECSEL JTI, following the assessment of the procedures applied by the **NFAs**, to invite the NFAs to produce evidence that the implementation of the national procedures provides a reasonable assurance on the legality and regularity of transactions.
- **Budget and financial management**: Parliament noted the Joint Undertaking's final budget for the financial year 2014 included commitment appropriations of EUR 2 554 510 and payment appropriations of EUR 30 330 178 (operational). It noted that the utilisation rate for administrative commitment appropriations was 38 % due to the merger of the Joint Undertaking and ENIAC in June 2014 and to the fact that the budget was adopted for the whole year.

Parliament noted the limited amount of information regarding in-kind and cash contribution. It called on the Court to include, in its reports to come, concrete provisions regarding the evaluation procedure and the level of in-kind and cash-paid contribution.

Lastly, Parliament issued a series of observations on internal audits, the undertakings legal framework, and on the issue of the management of conflicts of interest.