2014 discharge: SESAR Joint Undertaking to develop the new generation European air traffic management system

2015/2197(DEC) - 28/04/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to grant the Executive Director of the SESAR Joint Undertaking discharge in respect of the implementation of the Joint Undertaking's budget for the financial year 2014. The vote on the decision on discharge covers the closure of the accounts (in accordance with Annex V, Article 5 (1) (a) to Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Noting that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the Joint Undertaking's annual accounts for the financial year 2014 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 515 votes to 111 with 1 abstention, 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 noted that the Court of Auditors' report is based on too many general remarks to the detriment of viable, specific ones. It therefore called for an audit with a sharper focus on the annual financial performance, on the implementation status of multiannual projects (including a clear presentation of the implementation of the budget for the respective year and for previous years) and on the results and their implementation.
- It also noted that the Institutions and Bodies are required to produce each year a Report on Budgetary and Financial Management and that the information provided by the Joint Undertaking in this report lacked harmonisation and was **often incomplete**. It called for guidance from the Commission as to the nature and content of the report.
- **Budget and financial management**: Parliament noted that the Joint Undertaking's final budget for the financial year 2014 included commitment appropriations of EUR 13 119 600 and payment appropriations of EUR 121 942 760. It noted that the utilisation rate for commitment appropriations was 99.4 %.
- It took into consideration that 100 % (EUR 556 million) of the Union and Eurocontrol cofinancing contributions payable to the other 15 members (since 1st January 2014) under the fourth amendment to the MFA have been committed and noted furthermore that 66 % (EUR 369 million) were paid out by 31 December 2014, while the remaining 34 % (EUR 187 million) are expected to be paid by 31 December 2017.
- **Audits**: Parliament noted the lack of information regarding the ex-post audits performed by SESAR and SESAR2. It called on the Court of Auditors to include, in the future reports, information regarding the number of ex-post audits, the total amounts covered and the findings.

Parliament also made a series of observations on conflicts of interest within the joint undertaking, its legal framework and on procurement, as well as risk management.

As far as the **role of the joint undertaking** is concerned, Parliament recalled that it plays a vital role in coordinating and implementing research into the SESAR project, which is a pillar project of the Single European Sky. It encouraged the Joint Undertaking and the Deployment Manager, in collaborating with Member States, to increase the number and quality of projects proposed under the Connecting Europe

Facility (CEF) transport programme. It recalled Parliament's position during the budgetary procedure which is in favour of recovering the total amounts that were relocated from CEF to the European Fund for Strategic Investments.