2015 discharge: Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking

2016/2196(DEC) - 27/04/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided 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 2015.

Based on the statement of assurance provided by the Court of Auditors concerning the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, it decided to **approve the closure of the accounts** of the Joint Undertaking for the same financial year.

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 2015 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 502 votes to 92 with 21 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations which form an integral part of the decision on discharge.

Follow-up of 2015 discharge: Members took note that the Joint Undertaking disclosed performance indicators and indicators for monitoring cross-cutting issues in its annual activity report as required and that it achieved its targets in majority of them.

Budgetary and financial management: the Joint Undertaking's final budget for 2015 included commitment appropriations of EUR 440 705 606 and payment appropriations of EUR 245 990 262. Members noted that:

- the Joint Undertaking successfully faced the challenge of managing the highest budget in its history (amounting to 192 % in commitments of the 2014 budget and 166 % in payment appropriations of the 2014 budget). The **commitment appropriations utilisation rate was 99.47 %** (compared to 82.58 % in 2014) and the **rate of payment appropriations was 75.44 %** (compared to 90.19 % in 2014);
- out of the total amount of EUR 1 755 000 000 for the operational and administrative activities to be funded under Horizon 2020, the Joint Undertaking made operational commitments of EUR 436 682 680 and payments of EUR 89 799 324;
- out of the reported EUR 47 103 981 of in-kind contributions related to Horizon 2020 operational expenses, EUR 27 776 996 were certified but not yet validated by the Governing Board, and EUR 19 326 985 were still to be certified and validated. Members pointed out that private sector members experienced **difficulties presenting their in-kind contribution figures** by the deadline of 31 January and is concerned that this could become a recurring issue.

Other observations: the resolution also contained a series of observations on calls for procedure, *ex-ante* control procedures, ex-post audits, anti-fraud and internal controls.

Members appreciated that, in terms of widening participation, during the first year of Clean Sky 2 programme 76 new core partners joined the programme and took note of the progress made by the Joint Undertaking in **involving SMEs** in the programme by achieving 36% participation rate by the end 2016.

The Joint Undertaking is urged to **improve the gender balance** in its various bodies and to put forward a plan for realising that goal.