2016 discharge: Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking

2017/2182(DEC) - 22/03/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Brian HAYES (EPP, IE) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking for the financial year 2016.

The committee called on the European Parliament to **grant the joint undertaking's Executive Director discharge** in respect of the implementation of the joint undertaking's budget for the financial year 2016.

Noting that the Court of Auditors issued a statement of assurance as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions for the financial year 2016, Members called on Parliament to **approve the closure of the joint undertaking's accounts**.

They made, however, a number of recommendations that need to be taken into account when the discharge is granted. They may be summarised as follows:

- **Follow-up of 2014 discharge**: Members took note that the Joint Undertaking incorporated into its procedures the common template for the declaration of absence of a conflict of interest as specified in the Commission´s guidelines.
- **Budgetary and financial management**: the Joint Undertaking's final budget for 2016 included commitment appropriations of EUR 310 498 422 and payment appropriations of EUR 287 755 748. The commitment appropriations utilisation rate was 97.5 % (compared to 99.5 % in 2015) and the rate of payment appropriations was 87.9 % (compared to 75.4 % in 2015). The lower implementation rate for payment appropriations was mainly due to delays in starting Horizon 2020 projects and, in particular, due to the delayed signature of one significant grant agreement. By the end of 2016, the Governing Board validated in-kind contributions from other members of EUR 554 682 257 and that a further EUR 33 503 466 had been reported by the other members, and that other members' cash contribution to the administrative costs were EUR 14 515 387.

Other observations: the report also contained a series of observations on calls for proposals, key controls, anti-fraud strategy and internal controls systems.

Members welcomed the fact that, the governing board adopted a common anti-fraud strategy action plan in 2016. They also welcomed the continued progress in the field of cooperation with Member States and Regions on synergies in aeronautics R&I with the Structural and Investment Funds.

Lastly, the Commission is called on to ensure the direct involvement of the Joint Undertaking in the process of the Horizon 2020 mid-term review in the sphere of further simplifications and harmonisation of joint undertakings.