2016 discharge: Fuel Cells and Hydrogen 2 Joint Undertaking - FCH 2 Joint Undertaking

2017/2185(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 Fuel Cells and Hydrogen (FCH) 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:

Budget and financial management: the FCH2´s final budget for the financial year 2016 included commitment appropriations of EUR 127 762 297 and payment appropriations of EUR 115 535 426. Commitment appropriations increased by 5 % compared to 2015 due to the addition to the initial budget of unused appropriations from previous years, mainly used for the 2016 call for proposals and payment appropriations increased by 17 %, reflecting the higher pre-financing needs for the 2016 call.

Members regretted that the overall **2016 budget execution of commitment and payment appropriations reached 77.7 % and 83.9 % respectively**, representing a lower commitment execution rate compared to previous year due to the outcome of the evaluation for the 2016 call. They noted that the payment execution represented the **best execution rate of payments** for the FCH2 to date.

The report recognised the need for the FCH2 to communicate with Union citizens, through the Union institutions, concerning the significant research and collaboration that it is undertaking. It stressed the importance of highlighting the real improvements achieved as a consequence of its work, which are an important part of its mandate.

Lastly, Members called on the Commission 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.