2016 discharge: Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking

2017/2182(DEC) - 18/04/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to grant the Director of the Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking **discharge** for the implementation of the budget of the Joint Undertaking for the financial year 2016 and to approve the closure of the accounts of the Joint Undertaking for the same exercise.

Noting that the Court of Auditors has considered that the annual accounts of the Joint Undertaking for the financial year 2016 accurately reflect the financial position of the Joint Undertaking as at 31 December 2016, as well as the results of its operations, Parliament adopted by 564 votes in favor, 120 against and 13 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of observations which form an integral part of the discharge decision:

- **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 resolution also contained a series of observations on calls for proposals, key controls, anti-fraud strategy and internal controls systems.

At the end of 2016, the Joint Undertaking had not yet cleared any of the prefinancing payments (EUR 176 million) made to its industrial members for projects under Horizon 2020 grant agreements. Members considered that **regular clearing of its prefinancing payments** against statements of reported costs from the members would decrease the exposure of the Joint Undertaking to financial risk.

Parliament 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 was 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.