

2016 discharge: IMI 2 Joint Undertaking

2017/2184(DEC) - 18/04/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Director of the Innovative Medicines Initiative 2 (IMI 2) Joint Undertaking in respect of 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 venture for the same financial year. Noting that the Court of Auditors 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 567 votes in favor, 121 against and 7 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of observations which form an integral part of the discharge decision:

Financial management: the final 2016 budget available for the Seventh Framework Programme and Horizon 2020 programme implementation included commitment appropriations of EUR 307 053 000 and payment appropriations of EUR 263 423 000. The utilisation rates for commitment appropriations were **94.1 %** (increase of 3.06 % compared to 2015).

Members regretted to note that **payment appropriations were for the third consecutive year below 75 %:** in 2016 they were at 69.6 %. The Joint Undertaking is asked to improve the payment appropriations for the procedure next year. At the end of 2016, **the in-kind and cash contributions of the industry members totalled EUR 506 million**, compared to the Union's cash contributions to the Seventh Framework Programme activities of the IMI Joint Undertaking, which amounted to EUR 728 million.

Other observations: the resolution also contained a series of observations on the anti-fraud strategy, internal control systems and the prevention and management of conflicts of interests. It stressed the following points:

- in 2016 **one instance of suspicion** was communicated to OLAF which decided to dismiss the case based on the documentation provided. The Joint Undertaking undertook in parallel an independent financial audit which concluded with a minor adjustment and no significant material findings;
- at the end of 2016, the IMI 2 Joint Undertaking had only partially completed the integration of its **control systems** with the Commission's common Horizon 2020 grant management and monitoring tools;
- the IMI 2 Joint Undertaking experienced **some delays in payments to beneficiaries** (universities, research organisations and small and medium-sized enterprises). The time-to-pay target of 90 days for interim payments was exceeded by 5 days in 2016. Corrective measures were taken by the IMI 2 Joint Undertaking to improve the situation, notably by enhancing cooperation with project consortia, by reviewing internal procedures and by hiring more staff for the financial unit.

Lastly, the Commission was called on to ensure the direct involvement of the IMI 2 Joint Undertaking in the process of the Horizon 2020 mid-term review in the sphere of further simplifications and harmonisation of joint undertakings.