# 2017 discharge: ECSEL Joint Undertaking

2018/2218(DEC) - 07/03/2019 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Martina DLABAJOVÁ (ALDE, CZ) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the ECSEL Joint Undertaking for the financial year 2017.

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 2017.

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 2017, 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:

***Budgetary and financial management***

The Joint Undertaking's final budget for the financial year 2017 included commitment appropriations of EUR 183 900 000 and payment appropriation of EUR 290 100 000. The utilisation rates for commitment and payment appropriations were 98 % and 83 % respectively.

Members noted that the Court issued a qualified opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts which is a result of projects taken over from Joint Undertaking's legal predecessors Artemis and ENIAC Joint Undertakings. They called on the Council to reconsider the methodology that results in repetitive qualified opinions based on this reoccurring issue that cannot be solved until the Seventh Framework Programme projects are terminated. The complexity of the Joint Undertaking´s budgetary and accounting model stemming from its tripartite nature. The JU would welcome further simplification and streamlining of accounting and auditing.

***Other observations***

The report also contained a series of observations on performance, procurement, internal control systems and audits. It noted in particular:

- the Joint Undertaking´s strong position in its area of expertise across whole Europe and its ability to create an interconnected ecosystem of relevant stakeholders;

- significant shortcomings in the management of the procurement procedures for administrative services. A budget, procurement and contracts assistant has been nominated to handle this problem.