2017 discharge: Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI Joint Undertaking)

2018/2214(DEC) - 26/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to grant the Executive Director of the bio-based industries (BBI) Joint Undertaking discharge in respect of the implementation of the joint undertaking's budget for the financial year 2017 and to approve the closure of the joint undertaking's accounts.

Noting that the Court of Auditors considered that the annual accounts of the Joint Undertaking for the financial year 2017 accurately reflected the financial position of the Joint Undertaking as at 31 December 2017, as well as the results of its operations, Parliament adopted by 504 votes to 120, with 7 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of observations which form an integral part of the discharge decision.

General

Members noted that the maximum Union contribution to the activities of the Joint Undertaking is EUR 975 000 000, to be paid from Horizon 2020.

Budget and financial management

The Joint Undertaking's annual accounts provide that the final 2017 budget is to be available for implementation and include commitment appropriations of EUR 92 900 000 and payment appropriations of EUR 91 600 000, the utilisation rates for commitment and payment appropriations of which were 97 % and 95 %, respectively. The payment appropriations were used mainly for the pre-financing of grant agreements resulting from the 2016 calls for proposals.

Parliament regretted that out of the minimum EUR 182 500 000 of cash contributions to be made by the industry members to the Joint Undertaking's operational cost, only EUR 800 000 were paid by the end of 2017, having suspended the Commission EUR 50 000 000 of its cash contributions as a consequence.

Other observations

The resolution also contained a series of observations on procurement, recruitment, performance, internal audits and the legal framework. It noted in particular:

- by the end of 2017, the Joint Undertaking's staff was almost complete, with 20 posts filled out of a total of 22 posts allocated to the Joint Undertaking by the staff establishment plan;

- that in 2017, the human resources unit continued to strengthen the legal framework paying particular attention to the application of the implementing rules of the Commission to the Joint Undertaking. Seven new implementing rules have been adopted by the governing board in 2017;

- the fact that the Joint Undertaking, together with six other joint undertakings, launched a common joint-undertaking call for expression of interest to select up to seven confidential counsellors that will set up a network of confidential counsellors.