# 2018 discharge: Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI Joint Undertaking)

2019/2102(DEC) - 13/05/2020 - 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 2018 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 2018 accurately reflected the financial position of the Joint Undertaking as at 31 December 2018, as well as the results of its operations, Parliament adopted by 629 votes to 59, with 5 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 2018 budget is to be available for implementation and include commitment appropriations of EUR 121 231 820 and payment appropriations of EUR 118 126 520, the utilisation rates for commitment and payment appropriations of which were 99 % and 71 %, respectively. The payment appropriations were used mainly for the pre-financing of grant agreements resulting from the 2017 call for proposals and interim payments for projects from the previous 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 costs, only EUR 800 000 were paid by the end of 2018, and that, as a result, the Commission decided at the end of 2018 to reduce the Joint Undertaking's 2020 budget of EUR 205 000 000 by EUR 140 000 000.

***Other observations***

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

It noted in particular:

- that by early 2018, the Joint Undertaking programme had a portfolio of 101 ongoing projects with a total of 1 169 participants from 35 countries with a total grant value of EUR 499 000 000. 19 out of 101 retained proposals from the 2018 call for proposals were at the grant agreement preparation stage by the end of 2018;

- that the Joint Undertaking achieved a reasonable gender balance in its various bodies (scientific committee: 60 % women and 40 % men), with the exception of the governing board (20 % women and 80 % men);

- at the end of 2018, the Joint Undertaking’s staff comprised 23 members reaching its full staff establishment plan;

- 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. As a result, two confidential counsellors were appointed by the executive directors in November 2018.