2018 discharge: IMI 2 Joint Undertaking

2019/2103(DEC) - 13/05/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to grant the Executive Director of the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI 2) 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 633 votes to 22, with 38 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of observations which form an integral part of the discharge decision.

General

The maximum contribution for the period of 10 years from the Union to the IMI 2 Joint Undertaking is EUR 1 638 000 000, to be paid from the budget of Horizon 2020 and the members, other than the Commission, have to contribute 50 % of the running costs and should contribute to operational costs through cash or in-kind contributions, or both, equal to the financial contribution of the Union.

Budgetary and financial management

Parliament noted the clean opinion of the Court on the legality and regularity of transactions underlying the annual accounts of the IMI 2 Joint Undertaking for the year 2018 which are legal and regular in all material respects.

The final 2018 budget was EUR 275 600 000 in commitment appropriations and EUR 235 900 000 in payment appropriations. Parliament noted with satisfaction that in 2018 IMI Joint Undertaking utilisation rates for payment appropriations for the Seventh Framework Programme projects were 88 %, an improvement from the previous period when the utilisation rates stayed below 75 % for four consecutive years.

In 2018, three budget amendments were adopted by the IMI2 Joint Undertaking's governing board. In spite of these corrective measures, there are still weaknesses regarding planning and monitoring of the need for new payment appropriations.

Other observations

The resolution also contained a series of observations on performance, staff, recruitment and internal control systems.

It noted in particular:

- that 2018 was the first year when the IMI2 Joint Undertaking reported on revised key performance indicators in its 2018 annual activity report (AAR). This step has proven to be an effective monitoring tool that has resulted in increasing

the level of transparency regarding the IMI2 Joint Undertaking's achievements and thus attracted the interest of civil society members;

- that the IMI2 Joint Undertaking signed a total of 20 new grant agreements in 2018, bringing the total project portfolio to 119 (59 IMI Joint Undertaking + 60 IMI2 Joint Undertaking projects);

- the successful launch of EBOVAC3 in 2018 aimed at running clinical trials in children in Sierra Leone and Guinea. It is suggested that the Joint Undertaking should consider revising the number of funded projects in the future so as to concentrate on a smaller number of bigger and well-funded projects which would greatly clarify the area of operation of the IMI2 Joint Undertaking, and make it easier for the general public to comprehend its benefits; - that a proactive communications policy should be pursued by disseminating the results of its research to the public, such as by means of social media or other media outlets, thus raising public awareness of the impact of Union support;

- in December 2018, the total number of staff posts filled in the IMI2 Joint Undertaking was 48 (49 in 2017), 73 % of the 48 staff members were women and only 27 % men.