2000 discharge: ECSC budget

2001/2101(DEC) - 10/10/2001 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present the Annual Report from the Court of Auditors concerning the ECSC for the financial year 2000. CONTENT : budgetary and financial activity in the financial year 2000 was marked, as in the past, by the liquidation of the ECSC: the budget for the financial year 2000 was in surplus for the fifth consecutive year, due to cancellations of commitments and the under-implementation of budgetary expenditure, especially rehabilitation aid. This surplus enabled the ECSC to increase its solvency ratio and the level of the necessary provisions and value adjustments. Concerning the imminent liquidation of the ECSC, the Court observes that, despite the proposals submitted by the Commission to the Council, the only decision taken to date has come as a result of the Nice Protocol. With regard to the proposals that the Commission has submitted to the Council with a view to putting in place the procedures for the liquidation of the ECSC and the implementation of the research fund, these relate to : the laying down of the provisions required to implement the Nice Protocol; laying down of multiannual financial guidelines for managing the assets of the 'ECSC in liquidation' and laying down the multiannual technical guidelines for the research programme. With regard to the follow up by the Commission of the observations made in the previous reports, the report comments on the following issues: 1) Loans to officials : the Court states that there has not always been progress concerning the accounts of loans to officials. The Commission has set up a working party to study loans policy and propose changes to this, in the light of the fact that loans will only be granted up to the time that the ECSC is liquidated. 2) Performance of liquid assets : in 1999, the Court recommended that the Commission include, in the ECSC's annual report, the information needed to assess whether these liquid assets are being managed in a financially efficient manner, taking account of market conditions. In its reply, the Commission undertook to indicate, as from the financial year 2000, the average rate of yield on the liquid assets managed. This rate was 4,72% for the financial year 2000. 3) Dormant commitments : as a result of the corrective measures taken in 2000, the Commission cancelled interest subsidies of a total value of EUR 35,2 million in 2000. The amount cancelled could have been higher if the Commission had systematically cancelled commitments that were still to be settled and which had remained dormant for years. The Court estimates the additional amount that could have been cancelled in 2000 to be in the order of EUR 12 million. 4) Repayment of taxes levied at source : the Court highlights, like last year, a delay in the repayment of certain outstanding balances. With regard to the Statement of Assurance concerning the ECSC, the Court concludes that it obtained adequate assurance that the transactions, taken as a whole, are legal and regular.