1994 discharge: EC General budget

1995/2271(DEC) - 17/04/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Terence WYNN (PSE, RU), Parliament noted that 80% of the Union budget is managed by Member States and that no meaningful and durable improvement of the budget implementation is conceivable without efforts to improve management at national, regional and local level. Whilst giving discharge (except for EAGGF expenditure on which final checks still have to be made), Parliament regretted the lukewarm attitude taken by the Commission towards Member States ignoring their legal obligations, and insisted that it make full use of the means at its disposal to guarantee the effective utilization of appropriations. For the first time the discharge contains the Court of Auditors' Statement of Assurance (DAS), issued under the Maastricht Treaty, on the legality of transactions. The EP asked the Commission henceforth to include in its accounts an account under the heading 'specified amounts subject to recovery proceedings', with a view to providing better information to the budgetary authority on the measures taken to recover payments made in error. Parliament also made a number of comments on, inter alia, the following points: - the transit system, on which Parliament was awaiting the conclusions of its committee of inquiry; - certain agricultural spending: it pointed out the big gap between budget estimates and actual spending, and deplored the fall in the rate of utilization for monitoring EAGGF Guarantee Expenditure; - the Common Organization of the Market for fruit and vegetables, in connection with which it noted the large number of errors made by several Member States in the implementation of the rules (winegrowing and tobacco sectors in particular); - the Structural Funds, which raised administrative problems that could lead to genuine bottlenecks in the years ahead; - the ESF, whose decision-making processes relating to finance were not always clear; - the fight against fraud, in respect of which it regretted the low usage of appropriations of some headings (notably agriculture and research); - cooperation with third countries, whose supervision and control procedures should be better targeted; - the PHARE and TACIS programmes, in respect of which Parliament asked for a number of points to be clarified and on which it awaited reports for the second half of 1996 concerning the management and the financial responsibilities of all elements.