RESOLUTION (EU) 2021/1627 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

of 29 April 2021

with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Euratom Supply Agency for the financial year 2019

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,

— having regard to its decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Euratom Supply Agency for the financial year 2019,

— having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0088/2021),

A. whereas, according to its financial statements of revenue and expenditure, the final budget of the Euratom Supply Agency (the 'Agency') for the financial year 2019 was EUR 223 000, representing an increase of 81,30 % compared to 2018, due to the implementation of an IT service contracts for which the Agency received an additional contribution from the Commission at the end of 2019; whereas the entire budget of the Agency derives from the Union budget;

B. whereas the Court of Auditors (the 'Court'), in its report on the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2019 (the 'Court's report'), states that the Court has obtained reasonable assurance that the Agency's annual accounts are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular;

Budget and financial management

1. Notes with appreciation that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2019 resulted in a commitment appropriations implementation rate of 99,86 % representing an increase of 2,02 % compared to 2018; regrets, however, that the payment appropriation execution rate was 41,05 %, representing a decrease of 31,85 % compared to 2018; whereas that decrease is due to carrying forward outstanding commitments that amounted to EUR 131 137,56 or 59 % of committed amounts in relation to signed IT service contracts that were not been completed by the year end;

Cancellation of carry-overs

2. Notes with regard to the follow-up actions to the Court's findings in 2018, that the cancellation rate of budget appropriations carried over from 2018 to 2019 was 17 %, demonstrating unjustified commitments in 2018; calls on the Agency to carry over budget appropriations only when justified;

Performance

3. Notes that in 2019 the Agency, under Article 52 of the Agency's Treaty activities, assigned 178 new registration references corresponding to new contracts and amendments or supplements to existing contracts and, under Articles 75 and 74 of the Treaty activities, the Agency assigned 139 new registration references covering transactions related to the provision of services for the supply of small quantities of nuclear materials; acknowledges the Agency's continuing efforts on the diversification of sources of supply;

4. Encourages the Agency to pursue the digitalisation of its services as a way of reducing bureaucracy;

Staff policy

5. Notes that on 31 December 2019, the establishment plan was 100 % implemented, with 17 Commission officials appointed out of 17 authorised posts in the establishment plan (compared to 25 authorised posts in 2018);

Internal controls

6. Notes that in 2019 the Agency applied the Commission's internal control standards (ICSs) for effective management in accordance with the Commission's communication of October 2007 concerning the revision of the ICSs; notes that the Agency performed a risk assessment with particular focus on finance and IT in 2019;

7. Notes that in 2019 the Agency started to develop the new internal control framework that will be effective from 2020; encourages the Agency to continue on that path and to keep the discharge authority informed about progress made;

Other comments

8. Notes, with regard to the UK's withdrawal from the Union, that the Joint Political Declaration stipulated that the future relationship should include a wide-ranging nuclear cooperation agreement between the Agency and the UK on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and parties agree on cooperation, through the exchange of information, on the supply of medical radioisotopes; calls on the Agency to ensure that it remains aware of the effects of the UK's withdrawal and that it reports to the discharge authority of the further developments in that regard;

9. Notes that the Agency had an acting director-general between January and March 2019 and that, following appointment by the Commission, a new director-general has been in charge since April 2019;

10. Calls on the Agency to focus on disseminating the results of its research and activities to the public via the social media and other media outlets;

11. Refers, for other observations of a cross-cutting nature accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution of 29 April 2021 ([1]) on the performance, financial management and control of the agencies.

([1]) Texts adopted, P9_TA(2021)0215.