2010 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Justice

2011/2204(DEC) - 10/05/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 558 votes to 69, with 7 abstentions, a decision granting discharge to the Registrar of the Court of Justice of the European Union in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2010.

In its resolution, adopted by 550 votes to 74, with 8 abstentions, accompanying the discharge decision, the Parliament notes that the Court of Auditors '**has no observation to make on the Court of Justice**'. It welcomes the fact that the Court concluded that the payments as a whole for the year ended on 31 December 2010 for administrative and other expenditure of the Institutions and bodies were free from material error.

Members also note that in 2010, the Court of Justice had commitment appropriations amounting to EUR 331 million (EUR 318 million in 2009), and that the implementation rate for those appropriations was 97.9 % (98.5 % in 2009). They stress that the budget of the Court of Justice is purely administrative, with 75 % spent on people working with the institution and 25 % on buildings, furniture, equipment and miscellaneous operating expenditure.

Administrative and financial management of the Court of Justice: Parliament points out that an in-depth assessment of supervisory and control systems was conducted in the Court of Justice in 2009. It also points out that the Court of Auditors found in 2009 that the Court of Justice had failed to anticipate the expiry of a framework contract. In the meantime, the uncertainties in regard to this situation have been dispelled.

Parliament also notes:

- the Directorate for Interpretation acted on the recommendations of the internal auditor concerning management of interpretation and of the expenditure relating to external interpreters ;
- the DirectorateGeneral for Infrastructure drew up an action plan in 2009 in response to the main recommendations made by the internal auditor concerning the management and conservation of works of art;
- the development of the 'e-Curia' application, enabling procedural documents to be lodged and served electronically should in due course make it possible to do away with a large proportion of correspondence, digitise documents coming in and going out, and optimise internal work flows;
- the significant increase in the number of sessions (+ 27 %), which was mainly attributable to enlargement and the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon;
- the importance of interinstitutional cooperation in regard to the management and recruitment of interpreters;
- the Court of Justice submitted to the budgetary authorities, in April 2011, an updated property investment plan for 2011-2013 based on two guiding principles: i) to **house all the Court of Justice's services on a single site** and, ii) for it to acquire ownership of the buildings (construction costs are estimated to be around EUR 355.3 million, of which an amount of EUR 40 million was still to be consolidated at the end of 2010).

Parliament expresses its satisfaction that the statistics concerning the Court of Justice's activity in 2010 show, overall, sustained productivity and a very significant improvement in efficiency as regards the duration of proceedings (in particular, a reduction in the length of cases). However, it expresses concern in

the **large increase in cases brought** before the Court of Justice and before the General Court. Members therefore support the initiative taken by the Court of Justice proposing the reform of its Statute (which provides, inter alia, for the creation of 12 additional posts for judges at the General Court). Parliament considers that this initiative should be implemented in the most cost-efficient way possible and hopes that these structural measures can be approved in early 2012, with a view to their implementation as early as possible that year.

Lastly, Parliament hopes that the next annual activity report will also include a comprehensive table of all the human resources that the Court of Justice has at its disposal.