Court of Justice of the European Union: number of judges at the General Court (amend. Protocol No 3 on the Statute)

2011/0901B(COD) - 12/12/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 553 votes to 25 with 9 abstentions, **amendments** to the proposed Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending the Statute of the Court of Justice of the European Union to increase the number of judges at the General Court.

The matter was referred back to the competent committee for re-consideration. The vote on the legislative resolution was moved to a later plenary session.

Parliament recognised that the number of cases brought before the General Court has been steadily increasing over the years, resulting over time in an increase in the number of cases pending before that court and an increase in the duration of proceedings.

Accordingly, Parliament proposed that **the General Court should be composed of one Judge per Member State and 12 additional Judges.**

According to Members, the system should be as follows: one Judge per Member State would be appointed under the present system. Thus, an appropriate geographical balance would be ensured and representation of national legal systems taken into account.

The 12 additional Judges should be appointed exclusively on the basis of their professional and personal suitability, **regardless of their nationality.** All Member State governments may submit nominations. However, there should be no more than two Judges for any Member State.

To ensure that the experience of retiring judges is not lost, Parliament furthermore proposed that **retiring judges should be able to nominate themselves in direct submissions to the panel** referred to in Article 255 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The panel shall give an opinion on nominees' suitability to perform the duties of Judge of the General Court. The opinion on candidates' suitability will contain a list of candidates having the most suitable high-level experience, by order of merit.

The 12 additional Judges appointed on the basis of the Regulation shall take up their duties immediately once they have taken the oath.