EU Justice Scoreboard - civil and administrative justice in the Member States

2013/2117(INI) - 04/02/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the EU Justice Scoreboard.

Parliament noted that the Commission has issued the EU Justice Scoreboard, which compared national justice systems using particular indicators.

Members took note of the EU Justice Scoreboard with great interest and called on the **Commission to take this exercise forward** in accordance with the Treaties and in consultation with the Member States, while bearing in mind the need to avoid unnecessary duplication of work with other bodies.

It stated that the Scoreboard did not present an overall ranking of national justice systems, and it called on the Commission to take this exercise forward.

Indicators: Parliament pointed out the importance of assessing the functioning of justice systems as a whole as well as the importance of judicial benchmarking for cross-border mutual trust, for effective cooperation between justice institutions and for the **creation of a common judicial area and a European judicial culture**. It considered that any comparison of national justice systems, especially in relation to their previous situation, must be based on **objective criteria** and on evidence which is objectively compiled, compared and analysed. It stressed the importance of treating Member States impartially, thus ensuring equality of treatment between all Member States when assessing their justice systems. It pointed out that benchmarks must be set before information on national justice systems is gathered in order to develop a **common understanding of methodology and indicators**. Members called on the Commission to discuss the proposed method at an early date, in a transparent procedure involving the Member States.

Whilst praising the Commission’s efforts to provide measurable data, Parliament pointed out that certain goals, such as the quality and the impartiality of justice, were very difficult to measure objectively, nor could the effectiveness of the justice system be measured using statistically quantifiable parameters alone, but should also take into account **structural peculiarities and differing social traditions in the Member States.**

Member States were asked to examine the results of the 2013 Justice Scoreboard closely and to **determine whether any consequences need to be drawn therefrom** for the organisation and progress of their respective civil, commercial and administrative justice systems.

Parliament called for:

Member States to collect relevant data on issues such as the cost of proceedings, mediation cases and enforcement procedures;

- encouraging mutual understanding and cooperation between national judicial systems, including by means of networks of contact judges;
- greater importance to be given to training programmes for judges, court staff and other legal practitioners, especially in the fields of European and comparative law;
- receiving data on cross-border cases, which often involved a greater degree of complexity than purely domestic cases and demonstrated the obstacles that EU citizens face when exercising their rights deriving from the EU single market, particularly in the application of EU law;
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- giving consideration to cross-border mediation procedures in its next exercise of this kind, and Member States to actively promote mediation procedures with special regard to commercial matters and to family matters regulated at EU level (as in the cases of Rome III and Brussels II);
- the Commission to consider cross-border mediation procedures and promote the use of new technologies to effectively contribute to reducing costs and speeding up judicial procedures, in particular through the use of computerised applications and case management and communication tools.

Lastly, Parliament felt that the EU institutions should seek to cooperate with the Council of Europe's Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) since it provided an excellent basis for the exchange of best practices, and duplication needed to be avoided.