2014 discharge: EU general budget, Court of Justice

2015/2157(DEC) - 28/04/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge to the Registrar** of the Court of Justice in respect of the implementation of the budget of the Court of Justice for the financial year 2014.

In its resolution accompanying the decision on discharge, adopted 523 votes to 117 with 9 abstentions, Parliament noted with satisfaction the fact that the Court of Auditors in its 2014 annual report indicated **no significant weaknesses** in respect of the audited topics relating to human resources and procurement for the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Furthermore, the payments as a whole for the year ended on 31 December 2014 for administrative and other expenditure of the institutions and bodies were free from material error.

Budgetary and financial management: Parliament noted that, in 2014, the Court of Justice had appropriations amounting to **EUR 355 367 500** (EUR 354 880 000 in 2013) and that the implementation rate was **99 %**. It welcomed the increase of the utilisation rate in 2014 when compared to that of 96.3 % in 2013.

Court of Justice's actions: Members welcomed the productivity of the judicial activity of the Court in 2014 with 1691 cases brought before the three courts and 1685 cases completed in that year.

The Court of Justice completed 719 cases in 2014 (701 completed cases in 2013) and had 622 new cases brought before it (699 in 2013). Members endorsed the positive statistical results and believed performance can be improved in the future. There was a general increase in the number of General Court proceedings when compared to 2012 and 2013. The creation of nine temporary secretary posts at the General Court in 2014 strengthened the judicial team, ensuring its efficiency and increasing its rate of performance. However, in 2014, the Civil Service Tribunal was less efficient in its general judicial activity.

Members encouraged the Court of Justice to **continue improving the use of the existing resources**, and welcomed the Court of Auditors' plan to carry out a review of the Court of Justice to assess its performance.

Parliament made a **series of observations** on the daily management of the Court of Justice:

- an overview of all **external activities undertaken by each judge** and disclosure of all resources used in conjunction with judges' external activities, e.g. translation services, law clerks and drivers;
- availability to the public of information on the outside activities of each judge on the website of the Court of Justice;
- a **declaration of judges' financial interests** to be posted on the website of the Court of Justice;
- carrying out an **impact assessment** in order to confirm that the ongoing reform of the General Court is adequate;
- greater use of **new technologies** so that a further reduction in the number of paper copies, translators and interpreters needed is possible without undermining the Court's responsibilities;
- savings can still be made in relation to the **non-judicial documents** applying a restricted translation regime;

- presentation of data according to the harmonised methodology agreed within the inter-institutional group on key inter-institutional activity and performance indicators that covers amongst other matters the **costs of translations**;
- the agenda of the Court of Justice meetings to be included as an annex in its annual activity reports;
- the correction of the **gender imbalance**, in particular in regard to positions of responsibility;
- clear responses to questions sent to it by Parliament and full transparency concerning **pensions**;
- reduction in the number of **official cars** at the disposal of Members and their staff. The Court of Justice has 75 official vehicles in its fleet at a cost of EUR 1 168 251, whilst the drivers´ salaries amounted to EUR 2 434 599 in 2014. Parliament considered this to be an excessively high expense.

Lastly, Parliament welcomed the measures taken by the Court of Justice to meet the principle of green public procurement.