2004 discharge: EC general budget, Court of Justice

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PURPOSE : presentation of the final annual accounts of the European Community for the financial year 2004 – Other institutions : Section IV – Court of Justice.

CONTENT : this document sets out the amount of expenditure and the financial statement of the Court of Justice for 2004 and presents an analysis of its financial management. The available appropriations set out in the Court's 2004 budget amounted to EUR 235 million, a 94% implementation rate.

Main axes of 2004 expenditure : budget implementation of the Court can be characterised by:

- the impacts of enlargement;
- a significant increase in the budget relating to building policy.

Amendments to the budget : throughout 2004, several budget lines were amended. Appropriation transfers between items were made in order to fund these amendments, concerning in particular:

- costs relating to building installations;
- rental and lease-purchase costs;
- interpretation costs.

The main issues of the 2004 budget implementation can be summarised as follows :

Title I (Staff costs) : an increase in Members' costs (+28,6% compared to 2003) due to the increase in their numbers (from 40 to 60) following enlargement, including 10 new judges in the Court of Justice and 10 new judges in the Court of First Instance. The budget was also marked by an increase in the expenditure relating to the improvement of the socio-medical infrastructure of the institution (+41%) and by the recruitment of a new nurse and doctor. The number of medical visits also increased. Other increases can be noted in the areas of : staff training for the new recruits; interpretation and translation.

Furthermore, other issues can be noted:

- a slow recruitment rate of new staff ;
- a large decrease in mission costs (-20,6% compared to 2003).

Title II (Operational expenditure) : the setting up of a housing stock marked the 2004 budget with an increase of 159% compared to 2003. The reason for this being to accommodate new staff arriving in 2004. To this effect, 2 new buildings were rented and another was renovated in order to house the Members. With a view to reducing the 2005 budget, an additional amount of EUR 12,6 million was included in the 2004 budget in order to anticipate the payment of indemnities due for 2005.

This budget title also welcomes other surplus appropriations to make early purchase payments for Annexes A, B and C of the Court's Palace in Luxembourg (an additional amount of EUR 9,6 million was raised for this purpose). A new 150 m² computer room and a 110 m² IT room have been set up which cost EUR 2 million.

The budget implementation of Title II also concerns:

- savings on rental costs to be paid for 2 new administrative buildings rented in 2004;

- the increase in IT costs (400 new computers, flat screens and teleworking provisions, updating the CURIA website, …);

- savings on transport with the introduction of a leasing contract for Members' cars (instead of purchasing them);

- increased operational costs.

Titre III (Particular expenditure) : it mainly concerns the chapter devoted to lawyer fees and other expenses in order to improve the free service offering legal assistance.

DETAILED SYNTHESIS OF 2004 EXPENDITURE: this detailed synthesis analyses the breakdown of the Court of Justice expenditure for the financial year 2004. The figures mentioned can also be found in the "Final annual accounts of the European Communities - Financial year 2004 – Volume III".

Implementation rate in 2004 :

- Appropriations available for 2004: **EUR235.041.565;**
- Appropriations committed amounted to EUR 220.847.247,72, a **94%** implementation rate;
- Appropriations paid amounted to EUR 207.845.228,89;
- Appropriations carried over from 2003 to 2004: EUR 8.903.994,89.

Main budget items and use of committed appropriations (Titles I, II et III):

- I : Institutional costs (Members and active staff) : EUR 151,64 million;
- II : Operational costs (including buildings and material) : EUR 69,19 million;
- III : Specific mission costs :EUR 0,016 million.