

2005 discharge: EC general budget, Court of Justice

2006/2073(DEC) - 24/04/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted Daniel **CASPARY** (EPP-ED, D), and granted the Court of Justice's Registrar discharge for implementation of the Court of Justice budget for the financial year 2005. In doing so, Parliament made a series of observations in its accompanying resolution.

It began by noting that in 2005 the European Court of Justice (ECJ) had available commitment appropriations amounting to a total of EUR 232 602 467,74 (2004: 235 041 565) with a utilisation rate of 92,66%. Following the introduction of accrual accounting with effect from 1 January 2005 the ECJ's financial statements disclose a negative economic out-turn for the year (EUR 30 747 924) and an excess of liabilities over assets of EUR 43 902 361.

Parliament then recalled that in its Annual Report concerning the financial year 2004 the European Court of Auditors (ECA) criticised the fact that the head of the Internal Audit Service was responsible for ex ante verification of the authorising officers' operations. The same situation was noted concerning the financial year 2005. Parliament welcomed the fact that the administration of the ECJ proposed modifying this organisation by creating an administrative unit with exclusive competence for verification, which would be provided with two new posts. It also welcomed the fact that the new Internal Auditor carried out some specific audits and addressed recommendations to the services concerned.

With regard to the activities of the ECJ, Parliament noted with satisfaction that the number of completed cases per year in the ECJ rose from 494 in 2003 to 574 in 2005 while the number of cases pending fell from 974 to 740. It also noted that, following the creation of the Civil Service Tribunal and the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, the overall number of judges, advocates-general and registrars had now reached 72 and that the ECJ's expenditure on vehicles has increased by some 50% from EUR 809 853.24 in 2005 (out-turn) to EUR 1 218 000 in 2007 (budget estimate).

Parliament was content to note also that, following the comments contained in its previous year's discharge resolution, the Members of the Institution had agreed to set up a working group with the task of conducting a study on the advisability of drawing up a code of conduct applicable to them and of the contents of any such code. The question of a declaration of the Member's financial interests forms part of that study, and the Court of First Instance and the Civil Service Tribunal are also associated with this initiative. Parliament stressed its repeated request for publication of the declarations of economic and financial interests made by the judges of all three courts, and asked the ECJ to inform Parliament by 30 September 2007 of what appropriate measures it will take.

Lastly, Parliament noted with satisfaction the measures taken by the ECJ to reduce the quantity of documents to be translated and called upon the ECJ to explore the possibility of reducing the length of rulings in order to contribute to a further reduction in costs and to a better understanding of these rulings.