



2017/2139(DEC)

25.10.2017

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Legal Affairs

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2016, Section IV – Court of Justice (2017/2139(DEC))

Rapporteur: Pavel Svoboda

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Legal Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Appreciates that the budget implementation for the financial year 2016 represents a very high rate of use of final appropriation (98,23 %), even if slightly lower than the 2015 rate (99,1 %), due mainly to the gradual arrival in 2016 of 12 new Judges at the General Court;
2. Stresses that the budget of the Court of Justice is purely administrative, with approximately 75 % spent on persons working with the institution and the remainder on buildings, furniture, information technology and miscellaneous operating expenditure;
3. Expresses its satisfaction that in its 2016 Annual Report the Court of Auditors made no observation concerning the Court of Justice, as has been the case since 2010; points out that it is some time since the Court of Auditors issued a special report dealing with the Court of Justice;
4. Notes that the 2016 statistics for the three courts which make up the Court of Justice confirm the trend seen in recent years as regards the average duration of proceedings, which remains satisfactory (Court of Justice: 15 months for requests for a preliminary ruling (15,3 months in 2015), 2,7 months for urgent requests for a preliminary ruling (1,9 months in 2015), 19,3 months for direct actions (17,6 months in 2015) and 12,9 months for appeals (14 months in 2015);
5. Applauds the fact that overall the three courts making up the Court of Justice closed 1628 cases in 2016, the number slightly lower than in 2015 (1775 cases closed) but still very positive;
6. Welcomes the constant growth of the accesses to ‘e-Curia’ application (numbers of access accounts: 3599 in 2016, compared to 2914 in 2015), and the fact that in 2016 all the Member States used “e- Curia”, showing that the public's awareness of the existence and the advantages of this application has been efficiently raised;
7. Welcomes the fact that the Court is working towards a gender balance in positions of high responsibility and that the European Parliament and the Council have indicated, among their objectives, a balanced representation of genders in appointing new Judges to the General Court (as of this date, five women Judges and two women Advocates General are part of the organisation chart of the Court and ten women Judges are part of the organisation chart of the General Court).