



## PRESS RELEASE No 93/25

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Judgment of the General Court in Case T-480/24 | Le Pen and Others v Parliament

### The General Court of the European Union upholds the decision of the European Parliament to recover sums unduly received by Jean-Marie Le Pen

In 2024, Jean-Marie Le Pen brought an action before the General Court of the European Union seeking annulment of the decision of the Secretary-General of the European Parliament. By that decision, he was asked to repay €303 200.99, a sum considered to have been wrongly received.

According to the Parliament, Mr Le Pen had improperly invoiced personal expenses <sup>1</sup> under budget item 400, intended for MEPs' parliamentary expenses. <sup>2</sup>

In his action, Mr Le Pen claimed infringement of the principles of legal certainty and legitimate expectations and infringement of his right to a fair trial. The former MEP also sought annulment of the debit note issued against him and an order that the Parliament pay the costs.

Following the death of Mr Le Pen on 7 January 2025, his daughters Marion Le Pen, Yann Maréchal and Marie-Caroline Olivier, as his heirs, pursued the pending proceedings.

#### The General Court dismisses the action brought by Mr Le Pen and his heirs.

In its judgment, the Court holds that the procedure which led the Parliament to adopt the recovery decision and to issue the debit note is **not contrary to the principles of legal certainty and the protection of legitimate expectations**.

It notes that, as early as 23 January 2024, the Secretary-General of the European Parliament had informed Mr Le Pen of the irregularities of which he was accused and had invited him to submit any observations within two months.

Moreover, the Court observes that the recovery decision whose annulment is sought contained a detailed account of the factual and legal context relating to the irregularities alleged against Mr Le Pen: in that decision, the Secretary-General of the Parliament invited Mr Le Pen to submit his observations on those irregularities, cited, inter alia, the essential points of the response to that invitation provided by Mrs Maréchal in March 2024 and noted that no evidence that the appropriations had been used in accordance with the applicable rules had been produced.

The Court also finds that **the right to a fair trial has not been infringed**.

The Court recalls that the right to a fair trial, according to the case-law, relates only to judicial proceedings before a 'tribunal'. It adds that, in the course of its investigation, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) informed Mr Le Pen of all the facts alleged against him and invited him to submit his observations, which Mr Le Pen did. Moreover, during the administrative procedure initiated by the Parliament further to OLAF's final investigation report, Mr Le Pen was again invited to submit his observations. His daughters responded to that invitation in their capacity as representatives.

**NOTE:** An action for annulment seeks the annulment of acts of the institutions of the European Union that are contrary to EU law. The Member States, the European institutions and individuals may, under certain conditions, bring an action for annulment before the Court of Justice or the General Court. If the action is well founded, the act is annulled. The institution concerned must fill any legal vacuum created by the annulment of the act.

**NOTE:** An appeal, limited to points of law only, may be brought before the Court of Justice against the decision of the General Court within two months and ten days of notification of the decision.

Unofficial document for media use, not binding on the General Court.

The [full text and, as the case may be, an abstract](#) of the judgment is published on the CURIA website on the day of delivery.

Press contact: Jacques René Zammit ☎ (+352) 4303 3355.

Pictures of the delivery of the Judgment are available from '[Europe by Satellite](#)' ☎ (+32) 2 2964106.

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<sup>1</sup> Those irregularities are referred to in the report of the European Anti-Fraud Office concerning the period 2009-2018.

<sup>2</sup> Budget item 400, also referred to as 'flat-rate general expenditure allowance', is a monthly sum paid to MEPs to cover expenses linked to the performance of their duties. It is used, *inter alia*, to cover the cost of office rental and equipment in the Member State in which they are elected, telecommunications, internet, stationery and documentation expenses, the purchase of IT or communications equipment, or information or representation activities.