

## **Eurocard accused: 'The trial is a shock for me'**



*Martti Enäjärvi, former Director of the PRH, at Helsinki District Court on 26 October 2011.*

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***- This trial is a shock to me, said Martti Enäjärvi, former Director General of the National Board of Patents and Registration, when he was questioned in the Eurocard case at Helsinki District Court.***

Mr Enäjärvi is charged with breach of duty and fraudulent use of payment instruments. Over five years, Mr Enäjärvi withdrew cash hundreds of times from ATMs using the state's Eurocard, totalling around €58,000. The money was returned to the agency's cashier in cash after a delay. So no money was lost.

According to the prosecutor, Mr Enäjärvi was not entitled to withdraw cash for his own use, but used the state Eurocard as his own bank account. Mr Enäjärvi has denied the charge. According to him, there were grounds for the card purchases.

Prosecutor Anja-Riitta Rinkinen is demanding a substantial fine for Enäjärvi.

### **Hundreds of withdrawals**

In Finland, Enäjärvi withdrew around €48,000 with his card. At the end of 2005 the amount was €580, in 2006 around €4,500, in 2007 around €8,300, in 2008 around €17,300, in 2009 around €15,900 and in 2010 around €2,100.

The indictment mentions 55 Eurocard bills, each with numerous withdrawals.

The case does not involve a cover-up. Mr Enäjärvi was entitled to withdraw cash for official duties, but not for personal expenses. The essential question in the case is therefore whether Mr Enäjärvi had a justification for these withdrawals.

According to the defence, Mr Enäjärvi was entitled and justified in using his card to withdraw cash.

*- On average, I have spent between 70 and 100 days a year travelling abroad on business, and if you include domestic trips, every second day I have been travelling. The working days were enormously long. I was under a lot of pressure, but I enjoyed it.*

*- I had to have at least a thousand euros in cash at all times.*

### **"I acted in good faith"**

*- I only read the instructions when the State Audit Office intervened. I have acted in good faith and returned every cent.*

Finally, a few months before his retirement, Enäjärvi had his state card taken away.

In court, Mr Enäjärvi portrayed himself as a generous manager who drew cash as a reserve and also paid state expenses out of his own pocket.

For example, Mr Enäjärvi said that he had lost some of his travel vouchers and paid for his own taxis when travelling on official business.

*- If I had to provide a second lunch for the same delegation in the same week, I did not consider that I could charge the state for it, but it was my own responsibility.*

### **"Preparing for travel"**

*- At the turn of last year, for example, there were a number of important foreign guests in connection with the election of the Director of the International Patent Office. I wanted to pay for it myself to avoid corruption charges. It was clearly a matter of official business anyway.*

*- Nor did I want to end up on the lists of Eurocard users published in the media.*

However, he stressed that it was mainly a question of making provisions for foreign travel.

*- They wanted to avoid withdrawing money from the till, so the card was a better option. I have had to take money as a precaution. I have made withdrawals in Finland because it is safe.*

Mr Enäjärvi told me that he had been robbed in Geneva. His card has been left in ATMs in several countries. It has also been copied and had to be skimmed.

*- They are all for official purposes. The Director General's salary is enough to cover his own expenses.*

*- I never imagined that I could misuse the money I withdrew. Everything has been repaid and there has been no cost to the state.*

Mr Enäjärvi repaid not only the amount withdrawn but also the cost of the cash withdrawals.

What about the emails?

Enäjärvi's defence argued that the practice had not been addressed before the 2010 report by the State Audit Office.

In court, the prosecution presented emails in which Eero Mantere, who had checked the invoices, had reprimanded Enäjärvi's card use. In the same case, Mr Mantere is accused of failing to monitor Mr Enäjärvi's card use with sufficient diligence.

*- We had differences of opinion. I had to be on my guard.*

Eero Mantere never prohibited card use.

According to Mr Mantere, Mr Enäjärvi was under the impression that he could withdraw up to EUR 3 000 a week for his own use.

### **Original text in Finnish at:**

<https://www.mtvuutiset.fi/artikkeli/eurocard-jupakan-syytetty-oikeudenkaynti-on-minulle-shokki/2061334>