

Foreword

For the Courts of the European Union, 2011 was above all a year marked by particularly intense judicial activity. With 1 569 new cases and 1 518 cases completed, the Court of Justice of the European Union is seeing a significant increase in the number of actions brought before and disposed of by its three judicial organs. The institution can only be gladdened by this trend which indicates the confidence of national courts and of litigants in the Courts of the European Union. Nevertheless, this increase in the caseload demands a degree of vigilance on the part of both the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Union's legislative authorities in order that the effectiveness of the European Union's judicial system is not jeopardised and that European citizens continue to be served to the highest standards.

With this in mind, the Court of Justice proposed in the past year a series of amendments to its Statute and a complete recasting of its Rules of Procedure, seeking, first, to improve its efficiency and productivity and those of the General Court and, second, to modernise its procedures.

In 2011, three large-scale information technology projects, intended principally to bring the Court closer to the public, were also seen through to a successful conclusion. The opening of the e-Curia system which enables procedural documents to be lodged and served electronically, the launch of a new, more effective, search engine for consulting case-law and the putting online of the catalogue of the Court's library are designed to make the Court of Justice more accessible and more transparent.

The past year also saw the departure of the President and two members of the Civil Service Tribunal as a result of the partial renewal of its membership as well as the departure of one member of the Court of Justice and one member of the General Court.

This report provides a full record of changes concerning the institution and of its work in 2011. A substantial part of the report is devoted to succinct but exhaustive accounts of the main judicial activity of the Court of Justice, the General Court and the Civil Service Tribunal. Separate statistics for each court supplement and illustrate the analysis relating to the courts.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank warmly my colleagues in the three courts and the entire staff of the Court of Justice for the outstanding work carried out by them during this exceptionally demanding year.



V. Skouris
President of the Court of Justice