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Judicial statistics 2024: significant increase both in new cases before the Court of Justice and in cases completed by the institution as a whole

With 922 cases completed during the year, the General Court improves on its result from the previous year and considerably exceeds its average in recent years. It also manages to reduce the stock of pending cases to a significant degree

Court of Justice

- The past year can be described as an **extraordinary year**, as regards both the number of cases brought before the Court of Justice and the number of cases completed by the institution as a whole.
- In 2024, **920** cases were brought before the Court of Justice, an increase of 12%; it completed **863** cases, an increase of 10% and a number almost identical to the record number of cases completed in 2019.
- **The figures from 2024 are reminiscent of the historic heights reached in 2019** and fully illustrate the reasons behind the **legislative reform** that entered into force on 1 October 2024 which covered the partial transfer of jurisdiction to give preliminary rulings from the Court of Justice to the General Court in certain specific fields. ¹ There were a total of 19 requests for a preliminary ruling lodged in the final three months of 2024 from 12 different Member States.

General Court

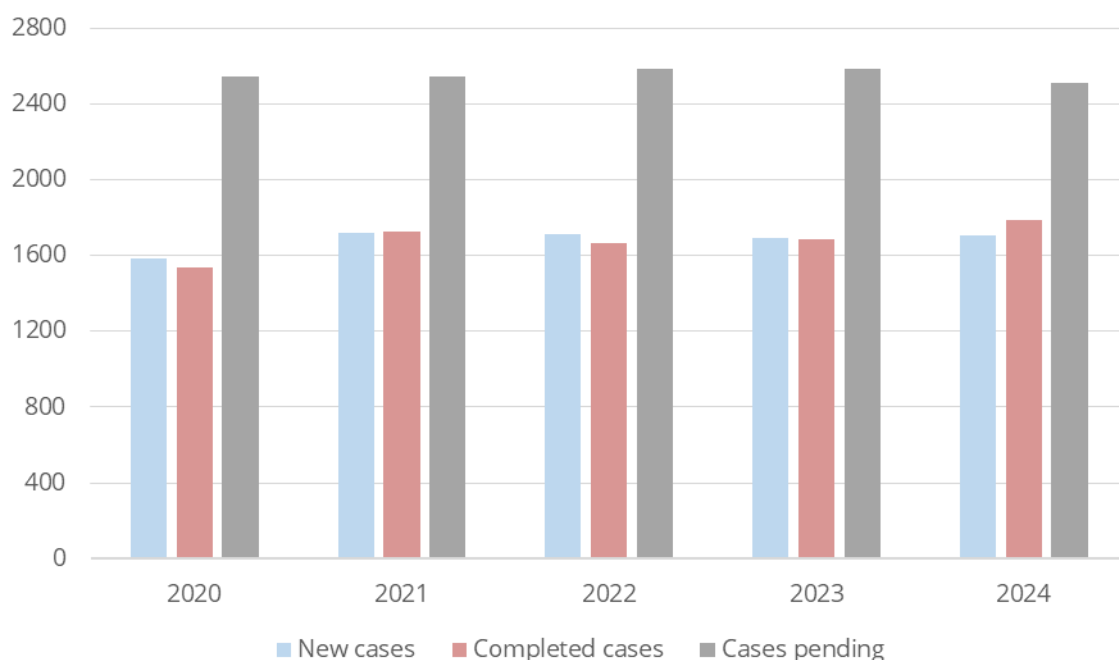
- **With 922 cases completed in 2024, the General Court improved on the previous year**, and considerably better than the average in recent years.
- The General Court also managed to **reduce the stock of pending cases** to a significant degree; there are 1 302 pending cases, which is the lowest figure since 2015.

The number of new cases brought before both courts in 2024 is 1 706. That figure is comparable to the figure in previous years (1 689 in 2023; ² 1 710 in 2022; 1 720 in 2021).

As regards the number of cases dealt with, the Court of Justice and the General Court completed a total of 1 785 cases in 2024, an exceptional figure compared with that of previous years (1 687 in 2023, 1 666 in 2022, and 1 723 in 2021).

The number of cases pending before the two courts, 2 508, ³ is lower than the previous year (2 587 in 2023) and is below the level observed in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

General development of the institution's judicial activity 2020-2024



General overview	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
New cases	1 584	1 720	1 710	1 689	1 706
Completed cases	1 540	1 723	1 666	1 687	1 785
Cases pending	2 544	2 541	2 585	2 587	2 508

Court of Justice

In 2024, the number of **cases brought** before the Court of Justice was **920**. That was not the highest number in its history – the record having been set five years earlier, with 966 new cases in 2019 – but that figure nevertheless represents an **increase of 12%** compared with the previous year (821 new cases in 2023).

The subject matter of the cases referred to the Court of Justice over the past year is largely in line with that of previous years. As in the past, in 2024 it was seised of numerous cases relating to **consumer and environmental protection, social policy and transport**, and **competition and State aid**. A high number of cases concern **economic and monetary policy, and restrictive measures adopted in the context of the war in Ukraine**, as well as the **area of freedom, security and justice**. No fewer than 123 cases, including 117 requests for a preliminary ruling, were brought before the Court of Justice in the latter field in 2024, that is to say, 40 more than in the previous year.

It **completed 863 cases**, that is to say, a number almost identical to the record number of five years earlier (865). That result, which represents an increase of 10% compared with the previous year in which 783 cases were completed, reflects the consistent efforts of the court to keep step with its workload.

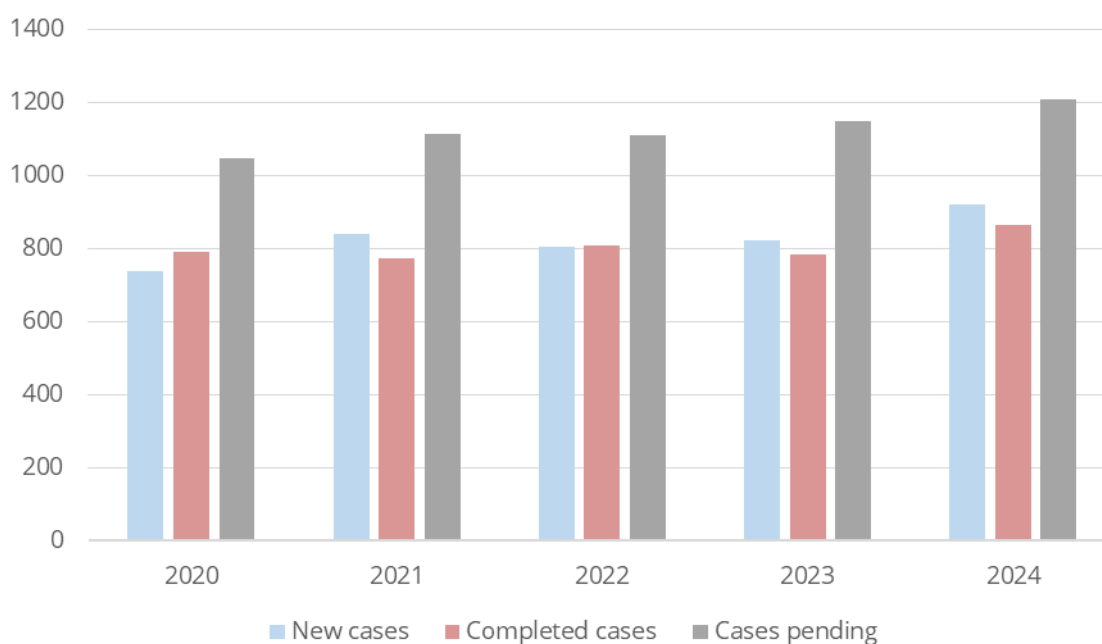
The **average time taken to deal with requests for a preliminary ruling** itself rose from 16.8 months in 2023 to **17.2 months** in 2024, whereas **the average time for dealing with direct actions increased during the same period from 20.8 months to 21.5 months**. The average time taken to deal with cases subject to the urgent preliminary ruling procedure decreased from 4.3 months in 2023 to 3.3 months in 2024.

As regards the breakdown of decisions delivered by formation of the Court, it is particularly noteworthy that there has been **a sharp increase in the number of decisions delivered by the Grand Chamber**. In 2024, 74 cases were completed by that formation of the court, whereas the same figure for the previous year was only 36.

Although the number of cases completed by the Court of Justice in 2024 was exceptionally high, it nevertheless remains lower than the number of new cases, which results in an **increase in the number of pending cases**, which amounted to **1 206** on 31 December 2024. That is the highest number ever recorded in the history of the Court of Justice. While it reflects the trust which the citizens and courts of the Member States of the European Union place in the Court of Justice in resolving questions of interpretation of EU law, it also highlights the importance of the legislative reform which entered into force in October 2024, which aims to rebalance the workload between the Court of Justice and the General Court by transferring to the latter part of the Court of Justice's jurisdiction to give preliminary rulings.

As pointed out by Mr Koen Lenaerts, the President of the Court of Justice of the European Union, *'in a complex global context, the Court of Justice of the European Union has maintained its course, guided by the mission to uphold justice and the rule of law entrusted to it by the Treaties. It has continued its daily work of protecting the fundamental values of the European Union and helping to construct a common legal system for the Member States. It has also prepared new ground crucial for its functioning in the years ahead.'*

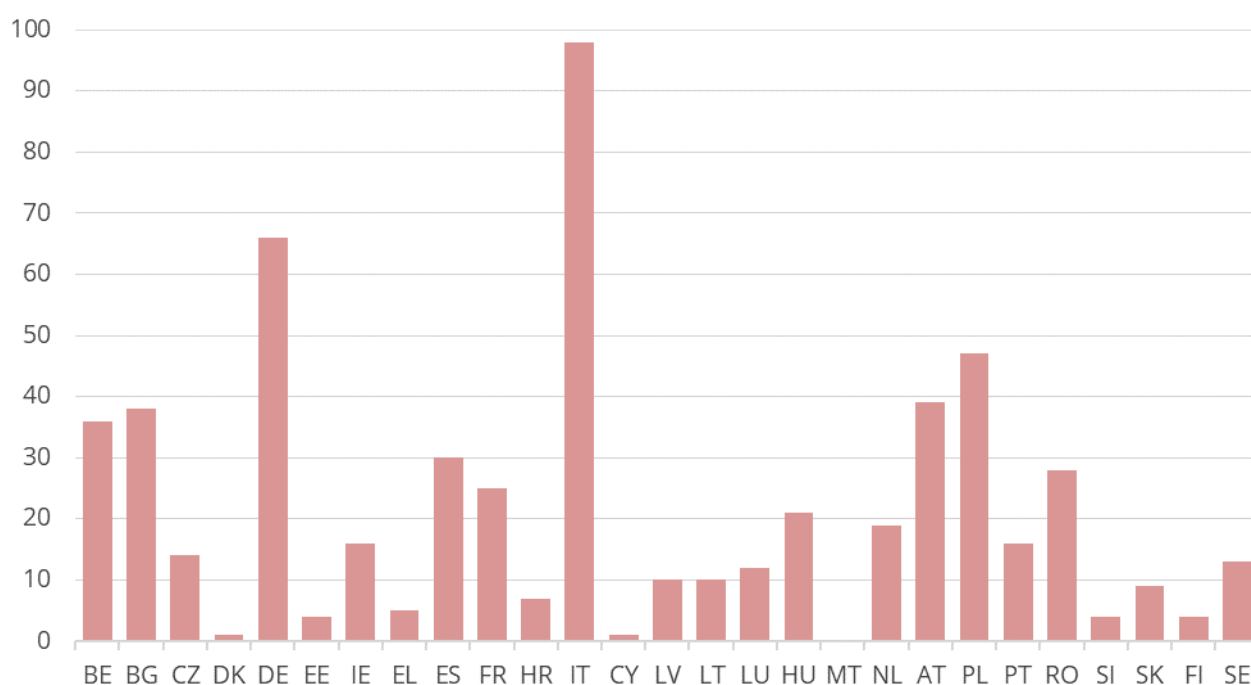
General activity of the Court of Justice: new, completed and pending cases (2020-2024)



General overview	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
New cases	737	838	806	821	920
Completed cases	792	772	808	783	863
Cases pending	1 047	1 113	1 111	1 149	1 206

Much can be learnt from an analysis of the geographical origin of the requests for a preliminary ruling submitted to the Court of Justice in 2024. While the references made by the **Italian** courts had declined sharply in 2023, their number increased significantly in 2024, those courts having submitted almost a hundred requests for a preliminary ruling to the Court of Justice in 2024 (98, as compared with only 43 in 2023), which is the highest number ever received from that State in a single year. By contrast, the number of references made by the **German** courts saw the opposite trend, since, with 66 requests, that number is at its lowest for the last fifteen years – it was still 94 in 2023 and 140 three years earlier (2020); at the same time, the number of references made by the **Polish** courts remained stable, those courts having sent requests to the Court of Justice on 47 occasions in 2024 (as compared with 48 the previous year). They are followed, in decreasing order, by the **Austrian (39)**, **Bulgarian (38)** and **Belgian courts (36)**.

References for a preliminary ruling to the Court of Justice from the courts of the Member States (2024)



BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	Total
36	38	14	1	66	4	16	5	30	25	7	98	1	10	10	12	21	0	19	39	47	16	28	4	9	4	13	573

General Court

There were **786 new cases** brought before the General Court in 2024.

As regards litigation relating to **intellectual property law**, there is a slight decrease in the number of cases brought (268 as compared with 309 in 2023), even though the Boards of Appeal of the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) completed more proceedings than in the previous year. The downward trend in that litigation before the General Court may continue, since appeals brought before the Boards of Appeal of EUIPO have decreased (by 6%) and the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms before EUIPO was encouraged.

Cases coming within the field of **economic and monetary policy** – which include, inter alia, banking law – are falling sharply, in particular as regards actions against the Single Resolution Board (SRB). ⁴

Litigation concerning the **regulation of digital markets and services** has led to the introduction of six cases concerning Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 on digital services (the Digital Services Act (DSA)), which relate either to classification as a 'very large online platform' or to the amount of the supervisory fee, and of two cases relating to Regulation (EU) 2022/1925 on digital markets (the Digital Markets Act (DMA)), which concern decisions to designate parties as 'gatekeepers'. **At this stage, the General Court has not yet received any cases concerning the implementation by the Commission of the substantive obligations imposed on economic actors, which could give rise to litigation in the coming years.**

Litigation of **restrictive measures** remains stable as compared with 2023 (63 cases). Like that year, the vast majority of new cases in that area (47 cases out of 63) relate to the series of restrictive measures adopted by the European Union in respect of natural or legal persons in the context of the war in **Ukraine**.

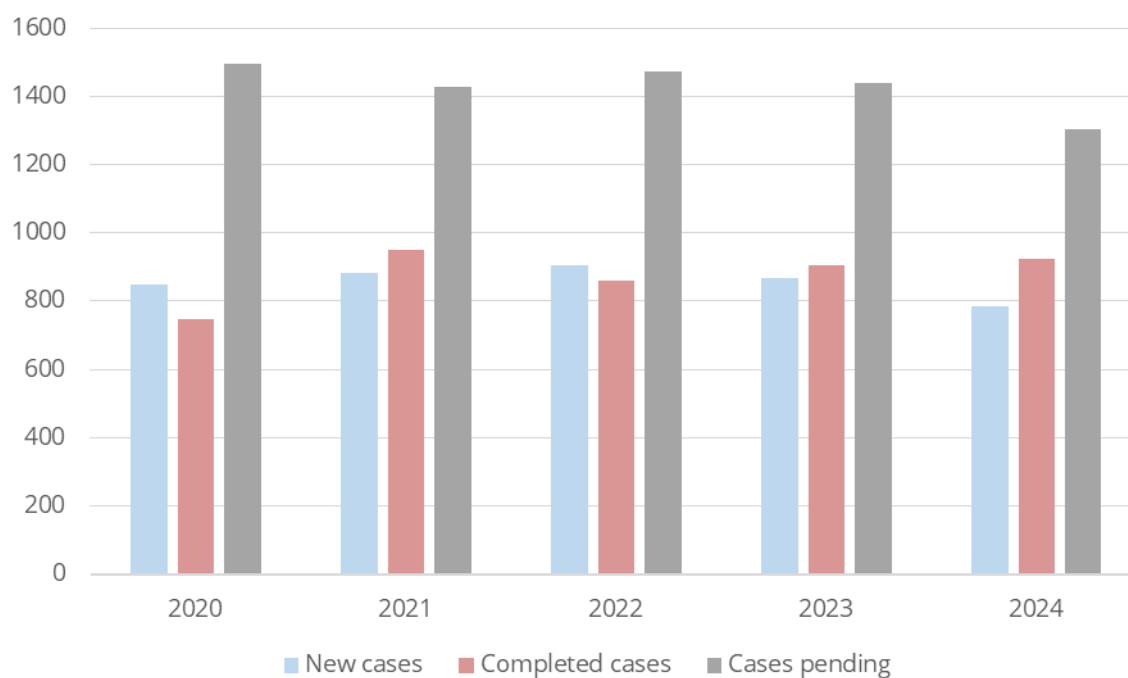
As regards the traditional areas of litigation brought before the General Court, litigation in the context of the **civil service** remains stable (78 cases as compared with 82 in 2023). In the field of **State aid**, 23 new cases were brought, compared with only 10 in 2023, remaining well below historical levels. Lastly, as in 2022 and 2023, there were few **competition** cases, namely 10 new cases in 2024.

With **922 cases completed** during the course of the year, the General Court has made some improvement on the previous year, and a considerable improvement on the average for the past years. It has also managed to **reduce the stock of pending cases** to a significant degree: since there were 136 more completed cases than new cases, there were, on 31 December 2024, 1 302 pending cases (if the group of 404 cases brought in 2023 that are essentially identical is counted as a single case, the total number would be 1 705). This is the lowest figure since 2015.

The average length of proceedings remained almost stable, seeing a very slight increase. It amounts to **18.5** months in 2024 for cases completed by judgment or order (as compared with 18.2 in 2023) and **22.1** (as compared with 21 in 2023), taking into account solely cases completed by judgment. For the latter category, the average duration of the proceedings varies between 42.6 months in competition law cases (37.2 in State aid cases) and 13.5 in intellectual property cases. The completion of several complex and older cases or groups of cases, in particular in the areas of State aid, competition or banking law, has contributed to an increase in the average duration of proceedings in those areas. That phenomenon is expected to wane, and the average duration of proceedings should therefore decrease in the coming years.

As Mr Marc van der Woude, President of the General Court, points out, *'in the light of its new jurisdiction in preliminary rulings, as well as its new responsibilities following the extension of the mechanism to determine whether appeals are allowed to proceed, the General Court has equipped itself with all the tools necessary to deal effectively and proactively with the cases brought before it, whilst preparing for the upcoming three-year period beginning in October 2025'*.

General activity of the General Court: new, completed and pending cases (2020-24)



General overview	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
New cases	847	882	904	868	786
Completed cases	748	951	858	904	922
Cases pending	1 497	1 428	1 474	1 438	1 302

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¹ Their subject matter falls into the following fields: 1) the common system of value added tax (VAT), 2) excise duties, 3) the Customs Code, 4) tariff classification regulations for goods in the Combined Nomenclature, 5) compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights, and 6) the scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading.

² Counting a series of 404 cases lodged in October 2023 before the General Court, which are essentially identical, as a single case. Those actions (T-620/23 to T-1023/23) concern an amendment to the Additional Voluntary Pension Scheme of Members of the European Parliament.

³ Ibid.

⁴ That is explained by the fact that, from 2024, the Single Resolution Board ceased levying *ex ante* contributions on institutions subject to the Single Resolution Fund, which were the principal source of disputes. The 14 actions lodged in 2024 sought the adoption of a new decision concerning *ex ante* contributions to the Single Resolution Fund for 2021 and are similar to the 48 cases concerning contributions for 2023.