

Foreword

The year which has just passed ended with a major event. On 1 December 2009 the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force after a long and complex ratification procedure. This Treaty, which is designed to endow the European Union with more effective legislative and administrative structures enhancing its ability to meet the challenges of the beginning of the 21st century, brings important changes to most of the fields of activity of the Court of Justice. Apart from the consequences resulting from the European Union's acquisition of legal personality and from the abandonment of its three-pillar structure, the Treaty of Lisbon introduces reforms relating both to the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice and to the procedures before the three courts of which it is composed.

The past year also saw a partial replacement of the membership of the Court, four of whose members departed. The governments of the Member States were again concerned, in this partial renewal, to make the appointments without delay and to safeguard the stability of the institution as far as possible, thereby enabling it to continue smoothly in the performance of its task. The Court cannot but welcome this.

Finally, 2009 was also marked by a very sad event, the death of Advocate General Dámaso Ruiz-Jarabo Colomer. The impact of his death continues to be strongly felt, if only because we are deliberating, and will continue to deliberate over the coming months, in cases which have had the benefit of his opinions. His thinking accompanies us in our work in a very concrete manner.

This Annual Report provides a full record of changes affecting the institution and its work in 2009. As is the case every year, a substantial part of the Annual Report is devoted to brief 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.



V. Skouris
President of the Court of Justice