



The Court of Justice of the European Union adapts in order to guarantee the continuity of the European public administration of justice

The institution ensures that its judicial activities continue in a situation of widespread remote working

The need to adapt to the situation

In line with the measures adopted by the public authorities of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and its neighbouring countries, the Court of Justice has decided to implement **a widespread system of remote working as from 16 March 2020**. In order to protect staff and contribute to combating the spread of the coronavirus, the premises of the institution are inaccessible to visitors and members of staff, with the exception of persons required to perform critical functions.

As an immediate step, in view of the restrictions on movement applicable in both Luxembourg and the majority of the Member States, the **hearings at the Court of Justice and the General Court scheduled between 16 March and, respectively, 30 April and 15 May have had to be postponed**. The Registries of the two courts have contacted the representatives of the parties in order to inform them of those deferments and to provide them with detailed information regarding the way in which proceedings are to be continued. A page on the institution's website sets out up-to-date information in that regard.

By relying on the structures and procedures that had been established for crisis situations, **all measures have been taken to ensure that the activities of the courts and their departments may continue in order to guarantee the continuity of the European public administration of justice**, under conditions which are as close as possible to those that would normally apply and which have been appropriately tailored to the exceptional circumstances.

Thus, in anticipation of this situation, the campaign to provide staff with **computing equipment** enabling remote working has been expedited since the beginning of February. To date, a very large majority of colleagues at the Court of Justice are in a position to contribute remotely to the activity of the institution.

Moreover, various **methods** have been implemented, in line with the applicable rules of procedure, so that the processing of cases is not interrupted: decisions taken using a written procedure; questions addressed to the parties in writing; specific ways of holding hearings for the delivery of judgments and the reading of Opinions; and simplified conditions for opening an e-Curia account (an application which allows procedural documents to be lodged and notified electronically).

The continuation of judicial activities

Although the two courts have decided to give priority to the processing of cases which are particularly urgent (such as urgent proceedings, expedited proceedings and proceedings for interim relief), the processing of other cases is also ongoing.

Thus, since 16 March 2020, **86 cases have been resolved by the Court of Justice and the General Court**. For organisational and precautionary reasons, the delivery of judgments and the reading of Opinions has been done in bundles by the President of the Court of Justice and an Advocate General, on the one hand, and by the President of the General Court, on the other, on 19 March (6 judgments, 5 Opinions), 26 March (23 judgments, 4 Opinions) and 2 April (22 judgments, 9 Opinions). Those judgments and Opinions have been translated, distributed, published and communicated remotely in accordance with the standards usually applied by the Court of Justice and the General Court.

Other sessions for the delivery of judgments and the reading of Opinions are scheduled for the coming weeks (Thursdays for the Court of Justice, Wednesdays for the General Court) and are registered in the calendar published on the institution's website.

Moreover, **52 new cases have been brought** during the same period. They are being processed remotely by the Registries, which continue to be available to the representatives of the parties, and translations and pre-processing legal analyses thereof are being carried out by the competent departments; the same is true of procedural documents relating to all other cases pending before the two courts.

Lastly, in order not to delay the entry into office of Advocate General Richard de la Tour, the Court of Justice maintained the **taking of the oath** by Mr Richard de la Tour on the initially-scheduled date of 23 March. Exceptionally, the ceremony was held remotely, using video-conferencing technology.

By establishing all those measures and thanks to the commitment of all its staff, the Court of Justice of the European Union has created the conditions for continuing — as far as possible, in view of the current crisis situation — to carry out its duty of serving individuals under the Treaties.

You are invited to keep up to date with the news from the Court of Justice and the General Court on the CVRIA website (<https://curia.europa.eu>) and via the institution's Twitter and LinkedIn accounts.

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