More efficient rules for handling appeals before the EU Court of Justice

In order to improve the functioning of the Court of Justice of the EU, which has seen a huge increase in the number of cases brought before it, the Council today adopted a new filtering mechanism for appeals by changing the Statute of the Court of Justice of the EU. In order to implement the change in practice, the Council also approved a set of amendments to the Court's Rules of Procedure.

The improved rules will facilitate the work of the Court of Justice of the EU by introducing a filtering mechanism for identifying appeals that merit examination, thus allowing the court to concentrate on its core business. The Court of Justice is overburdened and must prioritise. This decision will increase efficiency and enhance legal protection in the EU.

George Ciamba, Romanian Minister Delegate for European Affairs

The regulation agreed today will introduce a new filtering mechanism for appeals relating to decisions by certain EU agencies and offices. Appeals brought in cases which have already been considered twice, first by an independent board of appeal, then by the General Court, will not be allowed to proceed before the Court of Justice unless it is demonstrated that they raise an issue that is significant with respect to the unity, consistency or development of EU law. Statistics show that many such appeals in fact end up being dismissed on the grounds that they are either patently unfounded or manifestly inadmissible.

Specifically, the new rules will apply to appeal procedures emanating from one of the following EU agencies and offices:

- the European Union Intellectual Property Office;
- the Community Plant Variety Office;
- the European Chemicals Agency; and
- the European Union Aviation Safety Agency.

There has been a large increase over the past few years in the number of cases brought before the Court of Justice. The new procedure will reduce the workload of the court, allowing it to concentrate on cases that require its full attention.

The regulation adopted today is based on a proposal from the Court of Justice and has been agreed in negotiations between the Court of Justice, the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council. The Council today also approved an accompanying set of amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Court of Justice setting out the new system for handling appeals in detail.