

## The cracked image of the Court of Justice

*“Let us live our institution in the image of what the entire European Union as a whole should ideally be!” (Koen Lenaerts, President of the Court of Justice, News@Curia 203, 8 October 2021)*

If this solemn declaration, made at the highest level of our institution, is to be believed, the Court of Justice has taken on the role of setting an example to be followed by the European Union as a whole.

One of the principles which the Court of Justice should exemplify is respect for **social dialogue** with the social partners. This stems from the first para. of Article 152 TFEU, which states that *“the Union recognises and promotes the role of the social partners at its level”*<sup>1</sup>. In a [report published by Nicolas Schmit](#), Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, the Commission recommends strengthening social dialogue by improving the representativeness of the social partners.

However, the image that the Court presents to “the European Union as a whole” is tarnished

- if both its Staff Committee and a representative trade union, such as **EPSU-CJ**, are taken by surprise by measures that seriously aggravate staff working conditions;
- if we have to learn from our members that a pilot project involving a fundamental change in working conditions was decided upon, which will start in three language Units; in particular that they will have to give up the office on which their name is written and will become part of an experiment of a – deeply demoralising and doomed to failure “first come, first served” – system, which will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April!

Neither **EPSU-CJ**<sup>2</sup> nor the staff representation as a whole have been consulted or even informed about such a project, which disrupts staff working conditions that are closely linked to the feeling of belonging to the institution.

Can sectors suffering from structural work overload be exposed to an experiment that disorganises them and transforms its staff to visitors?

Has anyone thought about the morale of colleagues who will become itinerant? Will they still be willing to come to the premises of the institution, or will they seek to telework as much as possible?

Has staff management become secondary to building policy and budgetary considerations?

**EPSU-CJ** dares to hope that the Court of Justice will withdraw this project and comply with its President’s aspirations (see at the beginning of this text).

The **EPSU-CJ** [Executive Committee](#)

<sup>1</sup> To which **EPSU-CJ** is indirectly affiliated, see [USF organisation chart](#).

<sup>2</sup> A [representative](#) trade union [at the Court](#).