

This one is next: the Netherlands Commercial Court!

By Georgia Antonopoulou, Erlis Themeli, and Xandra Kramer, Erasmus University Rotterdam (PhD candidate, postdoc researcher and PI ERC project Building EU Civil Justice)

Following up on our previous post, asking which international commercial court would be established next, the adoption of the proposal for the Netherlands Commercial Court by the House of Representatives (*Tweede Kamer*) today answers the question. It will still have to pass the Senate (*Eerste Kamer*), but this should only be a matter of time. The Netherlands Commercial Court (NCC) is expected to open its doors on 1 July 2018 or shortly after.

The NCC is a specialized court established to meet the growing need for efficient dispute resolution in cross-border civil and commercial cases. This court is established as a special chamber of the Amsterdam District Court and of the Amsterdam Court of Appeal. Key features are that proceedings will take place in the English language, and before a panel of judges selected for their wide expertise in international commercial litigation and their English language skills.

To accommodate the demand for efficient court proceedings in these cases a special set of rules of procedure has been developed. The draft Rules of Procedure NCC can be consulted here in English and in Dutch. It goes without saying that the court is equipped with the necessary court technology.

The Netherlands prides itself on having one of the most efficient court systems in the world, as is also indicated in the Rule of Law Index – in the 2017-2018 Report it was ranked first in Civil Justice, and 5th in overall performance. The establishment of the NCC should also be understood from this perspective. According to the website of the Dutch judiciary, the NCC distinguishes itself by its pragmatic approach and active case management, allowing it to handle complex cases within short timeframes, and on the basis of fixed fees.

To be continued...