

## Justice systems and ICT What can be learned from Europe?

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### Abstract

The rapid development of information and communication technologies (ICT) opens up new opportunities to significantly improve the administration of justice. The availability of web services, the use of electronic filing, the electronic exchange of legal documents, the possibility of on-line legislation and case law are only some examples that are spurring judicial administrations around the world to rethink their current functions and activities. ICT can be used to enhance efficiency, access, timeliness, transparency and accountability, thus helping judiciaries to provide adequate services. As many empirical examples show, this is, however, not always the case. The interaction between technology and highly regulated organisations, such as courts, may often lead to unexpected results.

Europe, with its different institutional settings and experiences, allows the exploration of a variety of solutions that can be implemented to support the administration of justice. Most importantly, it also provides the opportunities for a unique insight into the dynamics and problems that may characterize such experiences. This article seeks to provide an empirically derived account on the uses of ICT within the courts and for judicial data interchange. The article is based on data collected through several research projects by the Research Institute on Judicial Systems of the Italian National Research Council, in partnership with other European institutions, including Universities and Ministries of Justice.

### Keywords

Information and communication technology; technological innovation; judicial administration; e-governance; electronic data interchange

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