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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Intermediary report on the implementation of the 2019-2023 e-Justice Portal - January 2020

1. As was done in July 2019, the General Secretariat presents in the following document the main results achieved in the past semester.
2. Taking into account remarks done in July 2019, this document also contains a summary of financing opportunities, provisionally available for 2020.

I. MAIN RESULTS OF EXPERT GROUPS

3. Over the second semester of 2019, the following Expert group meetings took place :
 - a) Expert group on Data Sets (e-Justice Portal), on three dates, in July, September and November 2019,
 - b) Expert group on New uses of technology, in September 2019,
 - c) Expert group on Data Sets (Judicial auctions), in October 2019, and
 - d) Expert group on Videoconferencing, in November 2019.

4. The pilot project on the use of Videoconferencing for Expert group meetings was continued during the semester, allowing for a more ecological approach to Council work. The results will be discussed in CoRePer and will be assessed for a possible extension of the project.

A. EXPERT GROUP ON DATA SETS (E-JUSTICE PORTAL)

5. Over the course of the semester, the structure of the page on the rights of defendant in criminal proceedings was revised and a new structure was proposed. The new structure did not call for any comments from Member States after the November 2019 meeting. It will therefore be proposed for final adoption during the January meeting of the Expert group.
6. However, the work on the revised structure brought to light that the methodology for revision was too inefficient. A new methodology for the work will be proposed during the January meeting of the Expert group, with the hope of streamlining the process.

B. EXPERT GROUP ON NEW USES OF TECHNOLOGY

7. During the Expert group meeting were presented documents concerning the methodology of work. However, concerns arose during the meeting on the exact goals of the Expert group. The original aim of the Expert group, which was to produce a report on the use of Artificial Intelligence in Member States judiciaries, appeared to be a duplication of the study conducted by the Commission. There was still an interest in the subject matter of the Expert group, expressed by several Member States, which seemed to indicate that, while the deliverable for the Expert group was not relevant enough, an alternative could be found, in order to continue the work on the field. In order to reframe the purpose of the Expert group, a revised mandate will be presented in the Working Party meeting in January 2020.

C. EXPERT GROUP ON DATA SETS (JUDICIAL AUCTIONS)

8. The Chair of the Expert group presented the project which will be submitted to the Commission in the framework of a call for tenders in 2020. The Chair called onto Member States to express interest, in order to garner as much support for the project as possible. The results of the call will be available in 2020

D. EXPERT GROUP ON VIDEOCONFERENCING

9. The Expert group on Videoconferencing continued with its work, displaying advancements in various fields linked to videoconferencing, such as simultaneous interpretation, a UNICEF pilot project, along with miscellaneous developments.

II. E-JUSTICE WORKSHOP

10. The Finnish Presidency organised a workshop in Helsinki on the anonymisation and pseudonymisation of Justice data, in particular Court decisions. One result for this workshop was the increased awareness of a French project using Artificial Intelligence to automatically pseudo/anonymise Court decisions. This led to a proposal to exchange information and expertise between France and some other Member States (Austria and Finland, prominently).

III. FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES

11. The Call for proposals for action grants to support national or transnational e-Justice projects opened for submission of proposals on 15 January 2020 with a deadline for submission: 23 April 2020. The total budget available for the call is EUR 2 800 000.
 12. The co-financing rate is 90% and project activities under this call would in principle include:
 - a) analytical, conceptual, design and elaboration work;
 - b) IT software development, quality assurance and related auxiliary measures necessary for the establishment of IT systems;
 - c) expansion and adaptation of existing national and transnational solutions towards addressing the objectives of the call.
 13. The priorities for the call have been listed in a message sent by the General Secretariat on 19 December 2019.
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