
Terms of Reference – Bars’ IT Experts Network

1. Background and rationale

Following the recommendations of the task force on the future priorities of the CCBE, the CCBE decided to set up a network of IT experts from its member Bars and Law Societies to respond to the challenge of digitalisation of judicial proceedings and justice systems and the integration of lawyers and Bars and Law Societies in this context.

The setting up of the network comes at a time of increasing adoption of digitalisation by governments and private actors everywhere and of particularly intense digitalisation effort in the EU and its Member States, supported by various EU-level initiatives, such as the Digital Justice Strategy 2030 and e-Justice Work Programme 2024-2028, as well as the newly proposed Justice Programme 2028-2034, the revised eIDAS Regulation (European Digital Identity Wallet) and the recently submitted Commission proposal on the European Business Wallet.

2. Objectives

The remit of the network will be to assist the CCBE and its committees and working groups with technical questions arising from the use of AI and IT systems insofar as affecting the administration of justice, working practices of lawyers and other matters falling within the scope of the work of the CCBE, including, particularly questions regarding e-identity and other technical matters in the field of digitalisation of judicial proceedings and justice systems. To this end, the network will:

- assess ongoing and emerging initiatives in the field of digitalisation of justice at international, Council of Europe, EU and national levels;
- provide expert technical advice on any IT challenges arising for lawyers and Bars and Law Societies in the context of cross-border judicial proceedings, including digital identities, authentication, e-filing and e-communications between lawyers and justice systems etc.;
- in particular, provide expert technical advice on any IT challenges arising for lawyers and Bars and Law Societies in the context EU judicial proceedings, including the EU’s e-CODEX infrastructure, the e-Justice Portal and other decentralised IT systems deployed at EU level,
- identify various challenges arising from the use of digital tools, including AI, in legal practice (by lawyers and by Bars);
- facilitate the exchange of good technical practices and important IT developments in the field of digitalisation of judicial proceedings.

3. Thematic scope of work

The network’s thematic focus will include but not be limited to:

- digitalisation of national justice systems and interoperability requirements: e-filing and electronic case management systems (lawyer-facing functionalities), secure communication channels for lawyers (in their contacts with courts), integration of AI-based tools where

relevant (e.g., speech-to-text, anonymisation), interoperability between national digital justice systems in case of cross-border proceedings;

- EU judicial proceedings: implementation challenges related to the digitalisation of European judicial cooperation instruments (e.g. European Payment Order, e-Evidence Regulation, mutual recognition and enforcement of judgments, European Arrest Warrant, European Investigation Order, etc.), including cross-border videoconferencing and remote hearings;
- digital identity and authentication: application of eID schemes for lawyers (EU Digital Identity Wallets, eIDAS Regulation, European Business Wallets), secure login procedures for lawyers, identity verification in e-justice services, secure digital access to case information.

4. Composition

The IT experts of the CCBE member Bars and Law Societies are appointed by their respective national delegation. It is suggested that Bars and Law Societies consider designating staff members and/or members of their IT committees from within their respective Bar or Law Society. The appointed experts should possess relevant technical or operational expertise on the thematic focus areas listed in point 3, in particular foundational knowledge of digital identity, cybersecurity, interoperability, digital authentication, and digital justice systems.

5. Working methods

The meetings of the Network will be convened as needed, primarily online, with the possibility of holding hybrid meetings when considered necessary.

The Network will be supported by the CCBE Secretariat which will ensure the appropriate division of tasks between the network and the IT Law Committee, and, where appropriate, other CCBE Committees and Working Groups.

The IT Law Committee will be regularly informed on the work of the network. If needs arise, the IT Law Committee and the Bars' IT Experts Network may hold meetings together and/or form dedicated working groups.

6. Deliverables

The Network may produce written deliverables, such as guidance documents, recommendations, and technical assessments.