

## **Connecting legal practitioners national applications with e-CODEX**

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### **Background**

The current landscape of e-justice components made available by the e-Justice Portal and developed by EU projects, and in particular by e-CODEX, already provides a set of functionalities to support cross-border communication in the justice domain. However, an analytical scrutiny of the components already in place and of those planned to be delivered within the timeline of this project, miss a specific component addressed to facilitate the cross-border communication for legal practitioners such as lawyers and notaries. Indeed, the e-Justice Portal is planned to deliver an entry point mainly to citizens' and business' needs. The addition of FALII will allow the e-Justice Portal to support also the qualification of lawyers. As of now, other legal practitioners such as notaries cannot access the services enabled by e-CODEX. In a nutshell, e-CODEX has been designed to provide general solutions and it is well tailored on national courts' needs, while the e-Justice Portal should provide a solution for non-repetitive players. At the same time, with exceptions, these solutions are not integrated with the applications that legal practitioners use to manage their business in the different member states. At present, private companies providing these systems seem not be interested in developing e-CODEX interfaces due to the limited number of users. In various member states, this appears as a crucial missing element in the sophisticated technological infrastructure already developed and planned. Indeed, this lack of interoperability between legal practitioners' applications and e-CODEX limits the growth of the number of users and transactions. A solution focused on legal practitioners needs, particularly those specialised in cross border litigation, can become the missing element to boost the number of users of e-CODEX, enabling procedures such as the EPO and the ESCP, and increasing the number of cross-border proceedings mediated by e-CODEX.

### **Rationale and goals**

The main goal of this project, called Pro-CODEX is to create conditions to support the development of the technological components required to make interoperable e-CODEX and the applications used by legal professionals (lawyers and notaries) at national level. The project aims to develop running pilots in a limited number of countries to ease the use of e-CODEX infrastructure and to increase the number of users among the different legal professions. More

in detail, in various member states, lawyers and notaries work with ad hoc applications developed usually by private companies to interface themselves with the national e-justice infrastructure. Such legal work-desks provide a number of functionalities for handling cases, managing clients, paying tax and court fee, billing for services, etc. Such functionalities are customised on the specific needs of law firms or notary offices, and benefit from interoperability with relevant systems at national levels (courts, tax authorities, national registries etc.). Therefore they represent the key working tools for European lawyers and notaries. The interoperability between such applications and e-CODEX can be supported by the existing projects just making public the standards adopted. However, this cannot be enough to make interoperable legal work-desks with European e-Justice systems. Legal practitioners associations, without incentives to cooperative actions and adequate assistance are not in the best position to develop and use the needed interoperability components, and an involvement of technology provider is necessary. At the same time, the partners of the e-CODEX project, do not have the means to take further action in this direction within the projet itself. More effective actions should be taken to overcome the current limitations.

## **Actions**

The following actions will be undertaken:

- In depth study of the current situation to connect the legal practitioners to e-CODEX in participating countries; Deliverable: Assessment report;
- Assessment of the possibility to connect Bartolus platform (the CNUE European Platform for Notaries Digital Signature and Role Verification) to e-CODEX infrastructure.
- Tuning and finalisation of the national strategies based on national opportunities and constraints; Deliverable: Strategy report;
- Development of semantic and software components which may be missing; Deliverable: software missing components [if needed];
- Development of national DOMIBUS connector components to interface e-CODEX with national legal practitioners applications; Deliverable: software missing components [if needed];
  
- Training and assistance to the service providers who will be involved in the project;
- Training and assistance to practitioners organisations (BARs, Notaries org.) who will be involved in the project;
- Assessment of the results and identification of best practices in the field: Deliverable: Best practices report;
- Dissemination of the results for benefits of other member states: website with public deliverables, participation to e-Justice and e-Gov meetings.

## **Beneficiaries**

National and European bar associations, Notaries associations, legal professionals service providers, individual lawyers and notaries.

The project will assign to the piloting partners a specific budget to be allocated to promote the development of needed technological components for the specific legal practitioners national applications. Given the heterogeneity of the national situations, each piloting country will develop its own strategy, based also on the feedback received from legal practitioners associations, and software and service providers.

## **Products**

>>> **Deliverables** >>> <https://oc2.irsig.cnr.it/owncloud/index.php/s/ke14PmxF5fFsHWR>

>>> **Reports** >>>> <https://oc2.irsig.cnr.it/owncloud/index.php/s/xjSolVEdVvhkrwQ>

