

**APPLICATION FORM FOR UNDP PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS
CATEGORY 4**

Institution Name *: Ministry of Justice of Turkey

Institution Acronym: MoJ

Institution Type*: Government

Specific initiative *: YES

Name of initiative (Initiative acronym): UYAP (National Judiciary Informatics System)

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What was the situation before the initiative? (the problem)

Describe in no more than 500 words, the problem to which the initiative was a solution, including major issues, trends and conditions, as well as which social groups were affected.

UYAP, as an outstanding and comprehensive e-justice system, has been developed to address the chronic problems of the Turkish Judiciary. The problems faced by the Turkish judiciary were complex, ranging from: enormous workloads; insufficient number of staff; missing or chaotic files; delayed cases; inadequate training; outdated equipments; inability to keep up with technological change; and lack of effective administrative support. Legal procedures were generally perceived to be protracted, expensive, complicated and inefficient by citizens, putting them off pursuing worthwhile cases in court. Such effects of inefficient judiciary were detrimental to the public confidence in the judiciary and prevent access to justice. ICT support was urgently required, to transform an old fashioned, outdated, poor working judicial system, into a modern, effectively-functioning organization which has earned the confidence of society.

UYAP has improved the working practices and the interaction between courts, police, lawyers and parties, while easing information-sharing amongst them. UYAP provides state of the art solutions on the daily life of all judges and public prosecutors, court staff, lawyers and lastly for all citizens. UYAP covers all judicial process and units and effectively meets all the requirements of the staff along with the individuals having to resort the various branches of the judiciary. All the judicial proceedings were transferred into electronic environment enabling paperless office environment. All bureaucratic procedures and formal writings are made in the electronic environment, thereby avoiding delays and reducing mistakes, especially those related to codes of procedures, as well as ensuring some degree of transparency. When UYAP put into practice in courts, it has become the indispensable for all of the users due intelligence and ease of use come with it after the adaptation period. Judicial process took hours or days can be done within minutes in UYAP. In addition UYAP software has designed with great flexibility which met the different working methods of judges. Each user has given the capability to personalize the templates according to their needs. For these reasons UYAP has embraced by the staff very quickly. With the on-line connection and correspondence in courts, expenses of bureaucracy and postal costs have been eliminated. All information is digitally delivered or inserted among them. The processes and correspondence that formerly took hours or days can now be done in minutes through UYAP. While preparing daily, monthly or annual statistics of the judiciary took hours, weeks or months, thanks to UYAP it can be done instantly by using electronic means. Dispatch of the files and works of courts and enforcement units are done and monitored easily and fairly by UYAP. Serving term of offenders can be calculated automatically by considering all related enforcement laws in detail. Miscalculations, discrepancies and time wasting are prevented. Overall, the most time consuming and hard tasks for legal professions can be easily and swiftly done in electronic environment by UYAP.

1-What is the initiative about? (the solution)

In no more than 500 words, summarize the achievement(s) implemented; how the impact was measured, quantitatively and qualitatively, and who benefited from it. Please note that the summary should be in a narrative, not point form.

The initiative is about UYAP (National Judiciary Informatics System) which is a smarter and intelligent central e-justice knowledge management system that has improved the functioning of entire judiciary by use of ICT. All judicial units have been fully equipped with necessary ICT tools, document and case management systems, connected to each other by a secure network and given access to central database of UYAP which contains all relevant information needed in the judicial proceedings. Databases of governmental departments have been integrated with the UYAP so as to enable online and swift information sharing among concerned authorities. All processes and transactions are transferred into electronic environment that provides effective knowledge management in judiciary, acceleration in judicial proceedings, reduction in duration of trial proceedings and better access to justice. In all of the units, each day nearly more than 4.000.000 electronic documents are being processed by 55.000 end users, nearly 1.233.000 online search and 1.110.000 online communication are realized in the system, preventing users making physical correspondence. UYAP, through the use of modern ICT tools in the justice system, has introduced a new concept on the daily life of all judges and public prosecutors, court staff, lawyers, public institutions and lastly for all citizens by the way of changing the image of the judiciary and promoting innovation. Therefore UYAP has transformed an old-fashioned, paper based Judiciary into a smoothly functioning organization, which is assessed as the biggest revolution in the Turkish Judiciary.

There are many impact measurement tools in place within different modules. The performance of the judicial staff, judges and prosecutors can be followed online by policy makers which enable them to see and assess the effects of the UYAP. Through these measurement tools great amounts of time, money and labor force savings has been recorded since the introduction of the UYAP. Similarly a significant positive declining trend in the duration of the judicial proceedings has been observed by SQLs. Data can be analyzed through a data mining reporting tools thereby improving the management of the courts. Easy access to the relevant data by policy makers has developed the knowledge management strategy and enhances the performance of the judiciary. Transformation of all judicial processes in electronic environment makes more accurate and quick statistics possible. Thanks to instant access to every kind of data and statistics such as crime maps, courts workload and performance of units, policy makers produce more efficient strategies and policies. Therefore financial, technical and human resources of Judiciary are managed more efficiently. Policy makers can access to all data at a macro or micro level and assess this data simultaneously to make policies to reduce the rate of crime, to balance the workload of courts, to highlight critical situations such as the most common judicial mistakes, jail vacancy rate and the rate of recidivism. Policy makers can foresee future trends and needs and introduce new laws or improve the current legislation which may promote the rule of law and socio-economic development.

2-Who proposed the solution, who implemented it and who were the stakeholders?

In no more than 500 words, specify who contributed to the design and/or implementation of the initiative, including relevant civil servants, public institutions, organizations, citizens, NGOs, private sector, etc.

In the past Turkish Justice System was criticized of being slow, inefficient and outdated. There was a consensus on the idea that there had to be a reform in the judiciary. Taking into account the expectations of the society, IT Department of the MOJ was established in 1999 and given the responsibility to realize the swift and reliable justice system by using ICT which is provided as one of the fundamental priorities in the Constitution. Within the project, several committees were set up being composed of judges, personnel, jurists from all range of judicial organizations such as high courts, first instance courts, inspection board and ministerial units. They were authorized to discuss all the suggestions and other needs for the development of the system. All range of possible users and beneficiaries, even lawyers, citizens and representatives of governmental units involved in developing the system. The knowledge of the individuals has been transformed into organizational knowledge by this full level of know-how sharing. The innovation, awareness, support, tolerance and patience of users were maintained with this degree of involvement and consultation. UYAP High Board, which was responsible for taking necessary measures and ensuring harmony, as well as for eliminating obstacles to implement the project, was established. In addition there has also been a strong share of know-how, consultative discussions and collaboration with ICT experts from universities and IBM. With regards to system security, support has been taken from Turkish Science Institute and Pro-G Company. The entire system has been developed and maintained by own engineers of UYAP, however the quality of the system has been checked by some private companies. In several stages, TAIEX workshops and various seminars were organized; some similar ICT projects and systems in Turkey and abroad were examined in order to determine the vision and road map of the project. In summary the expertise of people within and outside the MoJ has been leveraged.

Within UYAP, distant training methods are used, in order to reduce the digital gap among personnel and enhance the usage of system. 52.605 personnel have been trained via internet by this method, providing 25.644.318 € savings so far. While the computer literacy of the Turkish judicial staff was only 5% before the UYAP, it has been increased to 95% since the introduction of the UYAP. Judges and prosecutors have become the integral part of the information society. The IT skills of all judicial workers are enhanced at organizational and functional level by providing continuous online learning and working means in their daily routine. After users involve in and perceive the benefits of the UYAP in their daily routine as it dramatically reduces the labour force and time and facilitate the complex procedure, the usage of the UYAP has increased significantly. Using ICT in Judicial process has also enhanced the performance of the judiciary as a whole, facilitated case management thanks to easy access to relevant data, streamlined the Judicial tasks by standard procedures and templates, avoided duplications of work by decision support system.

3-Describe how and when the initiative was implemented by answering these questions

- a. What were the strategies used to implement the initiative? In no more than 500 words, provide a summary of the main objectives and strategies of the initiative, how they were established and by whom**

The main strategies and objectives were established in full cooperation with all judicial actors such as judges and prosecutors from all level of the judiciary along with lawyers, other judicial staff, citizens, representatives of governmental units. The main strategies can be summarized as follows; firstly, it was decided to include the entire judiciary into the project with an overall approach in terms of functionality. Then, judicial structures and procedures were analyzed very carefully. The needs and requirements of the user were defined and ascertained through interviews before design, coding, integration and user acceptance testing stages. The system was tested in 30 pilot units thoroughly before its nationwide deployment, for highlighting the problems and issues that have to be solved before going any further. In order to provide uninterrupted service, LAN and WAN were completed through territorial lines and satellite which are the substitute of each other. Preference of open code sources and standard technologies for end users allows the Turkish judiciary to develop independent, integrated and cost effective solutions. Judges and prosecutors have been enabled to reach to the system by VPN from their houses with their laptop, which has facilitated their preparation and research for trials and the writing of judgments. Central database was set up in order to collect and share all data effectively and economically to be called up by judges and court staff when needed rather than local ones which can cause data duplication and discrepancies. All the data is backed up regularly to prevent data loss in Disaster Centre. It has been developed as internally and externally integrated system to collect, refine and disseminate data among judicial and non-judicial actors in order to promote the quality of justice services. After a training period for IT skills all judges and prosecutors were given laptop computers for case management and private purposes. A regulation was also issued that all the documents which are to be signed with e-signature are required to be sent in the electronic means. It has been tried to harmonize and simplify the procedural rules, codes and working practices according to the need of system. All the judicial processes have been redesigned according to implementation necessities of UYAP within the innovative methods, enhancing the performance of the judiciary and promoting the knowledge management. Data Security unit was established within IT Department, in order to set up robust information security principles and apply appropriate security standards. By creating intelligent warning-systems, user faults have been remarkably reduced and that led to fewer serious mistakes in judicial proceedings. In order to maintain the institutionalization, teamwork principle based on a knowledge sharing strategy is preferred in UYAP rather than depending on individual skills .The objectives of UYAP can be stated briefly as establishing a completely paper-free judicial organization, increasing the efficiency of the judiciary system and decreasing the response times for citizens, minimizing the procedural errors, providing accuracy and increasing the public trust in the justice system.

**b. What were the key development and implementation steps and the chronology?
No more than 500 words**

The first studies concerning UYAP started in 1998 as a brain storming activities within MoJ so as to find solutions to the existing problems of the judiciary. In order to realize modernization of judiciary, IT Department was established in 1999. Later on, having discussed with the prospective users and the technology companies, to decide which data technologies shall be used, it was decided that it would be better to carry out modernization as a whole Project covering all judicial units. UYAP has been put into effect stage by stage in order to allow users to adapt to working in an electronic environment, and to collect user feedback at each stage, to improve and optimize the whole process. Firstly system was tested in 30 test and pilot units consisting of courthouses which had small, middle and huge workload to test every functions of justice. Pilot and testing stage was started in 2002 and completed in 2005. The next step was to make the system widespread to the entire organization. In order to roll out and maintain the system in provincial units, 371 expert users and 592 technical staff (and also 159 UYAP judges and prosecutors as an additional task) were assigned in these units to give support to all judicial staff nationwide. This skeleton crew, went to the fields, trained the staff on these fields and made all the units operational in a short while. The project started in 2000, has transformed into a system by the end of 2007 because of being used in all judicial units in their daily routine.

After the enactment of the Law on Electronic Signature, the MoJ, all judges, prosecutors and clerks have been given e-signature to be used in their daily work. A regulation was issued by the MoJ that documents will no longer be circulated physically among the judicial units after 01.07.2008. At the end of 2008, all of the registry books and cartoons have been abrogated and started to be kept in electronic environment Afterwards, all judiciary, financial and administrative applications, transactions and trials of these units were transmitted into electronic environment and processed electronically through UYAP. Automatic allocation of cases developed and integrated in the case management systems has provided utmost accountability within judiciary and prevent workload inequality among the courts. Subsequently all high courts were included to the system and the circulation of files and verdicts among first instance and high courts were begun to realize into electronic environment. The next step was setting up an integration with the different departments of governments such as birth registry, criminal records, telecommunication authority, post offices, police offices, land registry and some banks etc. enabling online exchange of information among them. The major key development and implementation steps of UYAP are summarized as; project management arrangements; needs assessment analysis with the end users; architectural design; programming and installation; user testing in pilots, acceptance, training and implementation; dissemination; use and maintenance; and system evaluation.

c. What were the main obstacles encountered? How were they overcome? No more than 500 words

Various obstacles were came across in the implementation of UYAP, such as lack of experienced engineers, resistance of users, lack of IT capability, slow legislation proceedings for use of ICT in judicial proceedings, lack of determination and motivation of the users at the initial stage of the system. In parallel to the changes in IT, another problem was the continuous amendments of laws, making IT designers unable to adapt themselves to all these changes. Another important obstacle was the addiction of some judges to the use of paper. They believed that paper was indispensable and more secure in the trial proceedings, due to lack of knowledge about how IT works.

In order to solve the problem of employing skilled ICT professionals in the government sector due to insufficient social and economic conditions, new regulations have been enacted capable of providing sufficient economic and social conditions for technicians. In addition, skilled computer engineers were recruited by the Foundation for Strengthening the Organization of Justice in order to give support to the technical team of UYAP. The resistance of the users was solved by open communications, regular meetings, clear incentives, promotions and awards. Sharing of knowledge among judges, the participation and motivation of judicial workers were provided by email groups and free discussion forums. In order to encourage Judges and prosecutors to use the system effectively, they have been given a laptop that are left to their possession after a five year of usage. These laptops are renewed in every 5 years. All staff, judges and prosecutors have been trained through distant learning method. In a very short time users started to use the electronic environment in their daily works and they confessed that they wished to use that system earlier. Judges who have hesitations about the reliability of e-signature have been assured by the authentication methods such as safe identity verification of digital signatures. In addition to this, they understood that the digital form of the documents is far more endurable and secure than the hardcopy ones. In 2007 all of the registry books and folders were removed and started to be kept in electronic environment. The procedural rules, codes and working practices have been harmonized and simplified according to the requirements of UYAP. Simplifying tasks for the development of on-line proceedings have mitigated users' disquiet, encouraging citizens to enter into litigation by online means, and also reducing the complexity of the task to a manageable level. It is realized that the support for UYAP was not only regained in a short time thanks to saving from costs but it also increased the value and quality of justice which cannot be weighed in money. Then strong government support has been given to facilitate the speeding up of the process of UYAP. As a result of ten years continuous and determined effort by all actors in the judiciary, all arguments in courts without any exception have been recorded into the system and processed electronically.

d. What resources were used for the initiative and what were its key benefits? In no more than 500 words, specify what were the financial, technical and human resources costs associated with this initiative. Describe how resources were mobilized.

National budget resources have been used in all phases of UYAP. All hardware has been upgraded and also software has been improved and updated by the own project team of the IT department of the MoJ. Project Team has consisted of the Head of Department, judges and computer-engineers, electronic-engineers and programmers amounting to 250 personnel in the centre. There have been technical personnel who have been full time responsible for face-to-face support to end users in provincial units. 7/24 help desk support is given to end users including citizens and lawyers. In sum, own resources of MoJ have been used so as to maintain and develop the system, which has resulted in a huge amount of cost saving.

UYAP has been improved to support open code sources and standard technologies for end users to allow the Turkish judiciary to develop independent, integrated and cost effective solutions. There has been created a new word processor (UDF) by engineers of UYAP for the own needs of judiciary in internal communications, enabling saving from license fee for office program. In external communication open office is used. Judges can reach the system by VPN technology from their houses with their laptop, enabling mobilization of access to files anywhere and anytime. Within UYAP, Online Vehicle Restriction System enables to do any restriction (capture, confiscation, precautionary attachment, interlocutory injunction etc.) adding and/or removing actions on the records of motor vehicles at electronic environment. Prosecutors can also block the mobile phones that are subject to crime via UYAP so as to prevent resale. MABS system within UYAP allows law enforcement units rendering mobile search (at sea, borders or in mobile patrol car) to make online inquiry of apprehension-arrest decisions that are taken by judicial units. E-announcement enables the information and documents prepared by the judiciary units announced on the internet in accordance with the legislation.

With the electronic exchange of information, the number of employees, the re-entry of information, time spent on the manual engineering of information and on the transportation of documents/information and also costs of all these processes have been drastically reduced. Courts have become functional 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via internet, both for the consultation and the submission of documents for institutions, citizens and lawyers. They can also have access to some basic information about their rights, main legislation, some statistics regarding justice services and procedural rules through the WebPages of MoJ. Citizens' feedbacks are collected through these sites in order to evaluate the development of the services. These tools have maximized the connectivity between courts and citizens, improved the delivery of justice services, enhanced the transparency and accountability. UYAP is also known to be effective in reducing CO2 emissions by helping to minimize the movement of people and goods and decrease the use of paper and other office supplies.

4-Is the initiative sustainable and transferable?

In no more than 500 words, describe how the initiative is being sustained (for example in terms of financial, social and economic, cultural, environmental, institutional and regulatory sustainability). Describe whether the initiative is being replicated or disseminated throughout the public service at the national and/or international levels and/or how it could be replicated

The system is being sustained with the own financial and human resources of the MoJ. Even though regular budget is allocated to the system in each year for the maintenance costs, it is proved that using online means in judicial communication itself brings about huge amount savings. In the past it was spent at least 5 Euros as postal cost for each communication on average, today there is no such a cost. Everyday around 1,233,000 on-line searches and 1,110,000 on-line communications are realised in the system, preventing users making physical correspondence. As a result, daily saving of UYAP only for communication costs has amounted up to 11,715,000 Euros. In addition, the duration of these processes has decreased from ten days on average to seconds, and the labour force has been reduced significantly. Even though the value of delivering justice in a fast and effective way by UYAP cannot be assessed on costly bases, this example shows how system is sustainable and valuable. Proceedings have been prevented from being repeated and so time and work loses have been reduced. This makes judges and prosecutors more enthusiastic for benefiting from the ICT so that they can fight against crime more effectively. In sum, financial, social, cultural and institutional concrete benefits have been provided with UYAP and these benefits meet all sustainability criteria.

It is believed that UYAP sets up a very good example as a comprehensive e-justice system for other countries. (look at: J.Hunter;<http://www.adalet.gov.tr/duyurular/2008/kasim08/ENExpertReportUYAP.pdf>).

UYAP's case and document management system and word processor software were designed to be easily used by other judicial systems. The software has been developed in line with the CMMI3 standards based on open source code. The Software Development laboratory is compatible with world standards since CVS and IBM Rational products are used. The main components of the UYAP have already been transferred to other ministries and institutions of Turkey such as Customs, Social Insurance Service and some universities in Turkey after making some minor modifications according to their needs. This kind of information sharing promotes the usage of document management systems in other sectors. It also improves harmonization and online exchange of data among the ministries and agencies. As a result, it is completely possible to import and replicate the components of the UYAP to other judicial organizations and countries. It also should be noted that, there have been cooperation activities so as to transfer some components of the UYAP to some countries such as Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, UAE, Jordan, Oman, Ghana, Syria etc. (look at: <http://www.e-justice.gov.tr/news/visitation/visitation.html>). UYAP has been ready for the Xml based integration. Therefore, in this context, it is also aimed to establish links to the central databases of the EU members and the UN member countries' systems. Achieving this goal will result in secure and swift transmission of international requests such as rogatory letters, extradition of criminals and transfer of sentenced persons, exchange of information that enable combating with the international crime and terrorism effectively.

5-What are the impact of your initiative and the lessons learned?

In no more than 500 words, describe the key elements that made your initiative a success.

The most important impact of the UYAP is the having fast, reliable, efficient, effective, economic, smarter, intelligent and transparent justice system by using ICT tools. UYAP has reduced the administrative and correspondence costs of traditional paper-based system. The proceedings and correspondences those continued hours or days in paper-based system can now be done only in minutes or seconds through the UYAP. While preparing daily, monthly or annual statistics of judiciary took continued hours, weeks or months, thanks to the UYAP it can be done instantly by using electronic means. All bureaucratic procedures and formal correspondences are made in the electronic environment, thereby delays are avoided and mistakes are reduced, especially those related to codes of procedures. Also the system ensures transparency. Due to template forms, all data are automatically being received from the system and transmitted into the documents. This system has provided approximately 30 % labor savings, speed and reliance. Thanks to the UYAP the judicial inspections can be made online and remotely. Thanks to the database which provides updated legal sources, delivering judgments have been facilitated and reaching similar judgments has been simplified. Corruption has been prevented thanks to electronic logging of every movement in the system. Electronic correspondence is provided by the use of electronic signatures which is faster, more accurate and cheaper than paper-based systems. As an example thanks to transforming the physical process into electronic environment, document dispatch units in the courts and arrest tracking units in the police organization were abolished and the personnel of these units (2500 personnel in police units) were employed in other departments.

How to transform the huge structure of Turkish Judiciary into the smooth functioning system, and also successful introduction of a centralized e-justice system covering all judicial units and its functions are the most important lessons to be learned. The UYAP system in Turkey is also a perfect example for the use of cloud technology since all justice related organizations use the same infrastructure of hardware and software without making extra investment. Considering the fact that implementing a large scale project requires constant training, it is understood that distance learning is the most efficient and cost saving method. It is also realized the importance of the centralize system that enable collect and share all data effectively and economically for all users of judiciary and prevent data discrepancy. Thanks to the paperless office environment, problems caused by handling of paper are no longer a burden for the judiciary such as non-filing and misfiling of documents, loss of case files and need for huge storage places. Overall, it is learned that how the effective application of ICT in judicial sector can develop the quality of justice services, improve the management of justice, promote the better access to justice, and enhance benefiting from the information which may lead to the establishment of a high level information society.