

**APPLICATION FORM FOR UNDP PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS**

**CATEGORY 1**

**SMS Information System**

Institution Name \*: Ministry of Justice of Turkey

Institution Acronym: MoJ

Institution Type\*: Government

Specific initiative \*: YES

Name of initiative (Initiative acronym): SMS Information System

Contact's Position: Judge

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Institution Acronym: TUSIAD

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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.

Before the SMS Information System was implemented, there were examples of serious misconduct with regard to citizens due to the judicial procedures being carried out in a physical environment. Such cases of misconduct have originated from malicious acts of persons abusing legal gaps or malicious acts of persons within the judicial authorities. For instance, a malicious person might start an executive proceeding about a person but might not send the related notification to the correct address, which resulted in the finalization of the bailiff's writ without notifying the debtor of the situation. Or the lawyer of the debtor might not attend the trial without notifying the debtor. In another example, when it was understood that certain procedures carried out by the judicial authorities were wrong, some changes might be made by the related authority in absence of the parties, which resulted in serious unjust treatment.

The most important point was the fact that people began to lose their confidence in judicial bodies as reliable institutions which resolved problems within the society and which constituted a place to be applied to whenever people needed. This loss of confidence affected all individuals and institutions within the society negatively while strengthening illegal mafia activities.

With SMS Information System, even if malicious parties, lawyers and even judicial staff want to carry out abusive acts, it is now possible to ensure that related parties are informed about the issue thanks to the automatic information system and to eliminate the aforementioned loss of confidence in judicial bodies gradually by ensuring real legal protection.

### **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 narrative, not point form.

Turkey is a country which has the most intensive population in its region in respect of the population and for that reason has excessive number of cases. Within this intensity, a very detailed control of the certain acts at all stages for the acts carried out by the judiciary units. Apart from this, as all citizens have no information on law and do not assert their rights, due to very simple misleading or ill-wishers using civil lucidities, serious unjust treatments have

been experienced. For example, a lawsuit brought against the person results against the person due to an undue service to his address, this person can only be notified of this matter when he is suffered juristically. Another problem is that parties are informed after the proceedings are realized and this situation eliminates the reliability and transparency of the jurisdiction.

A working group consisting of the judges, engineers and executive officers of the Information technology was established in 2008 to remove the complaints from the citizens and abuses leading to these complaints and make the jurisdiction more transparent and controllable. Requiring no additional investment of the solution, its commonly usage, easy to use function and requiring no additional personnel for operation of the system are adopted as main principle. According to the research, it is stipulated that transmitting of any act carried out in the judiciary units automatically via SMS to the parties of the file with a feature to be added to UYAP Informatics System which is used by all judiciary units will constitute the required solution.

To determine the impacts and advantages of the system, it is monitored transiently how many people examines the cases via SMS, to how many people automatic SMS are sent, how many SMS is sent by the user on UYAP screens. In average 2.000 new users are included into the system ever day. Moreover, to send the demands and opinions of the parties using this system, a module was formed in UYAP Help Desk; [www.sms.uyap.gov.tr](http://www.sms.uyap.gov.tr) and [uyap\\_sms@adalet.gov.tr](mailto:uyap_sms@adalet.gov.tr) e-mail address is activated. The system has been developed constantly in line with data received from statistics screen and recommendations from SMS users. For example, although when the system initiated in 2008 it only covered first-instance courts, the Court of Cassation participated in the system in 2010 according to the demands.

Not only citizens but also lawyers for their case files and the institutions for cases to which they are parties can utilize from these produced legal protection. So that all natural person or legal identity parties to any judicial issue are allowed to utilize from this system. At the same time, sending SMS to the mobile phones of the parties by judiciary units directly from UYAP screens are ensured.

### **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.

SMS project commenced with a commission to find a solution by the Ministry of Justice, Department of Information Technologies upon the requests of citizens to eliminate complaints regarding misuse and to make the jurisdiction more transparent and was put forth as a most suitable solution for the problem as a result of considerations of the working group consisting of judges, executive officers of information technologies and engineers.

A team consisting of one coordinator judge and four engineers worked for 4 months within the body of Ministry of Justice, Department of Information Technologies for development of the project. Within this period, which contents and trial phases are included into SMS system was determined by the relevant judge after making interviews with judges on duty and users, for these determined periods necessary software was developed by engineers using SOA (Service Oriented Architecture) technology and the practice was put into practice in 2008. To transmit SMSs formed with the practice to the parties, necessary integrations have been achieved with operators that can send SMS. Necessary software for these integrations was prepared simultaneously by the relevant operator.

**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***

As a main principle, service was decided to be given from a platform easy to reach for parties as the main objective of SMS project is to eliminate misuses and notify all parties of all kinds of legal event automatically. As a result of an evaluation, was decided that this service could be given via the internet but as all relevant parties must have access to internet and control their information periodically, it would not be so practical. It was decided that this practice could be implemented via SMS to be sent to mobile phones automatically as rate of mobile phone usage in Turkey equals to the population, in other words almost everyone has a mobile phone. So that person anywhere can receive information without loss of time, everything can be carried out automatically without extra control of people and costs can be remained at very low levels.

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

The most important step for development of the project is to ensure that this service is given to mobile phone and home phone users without any operator separation and at single standard by providing necessary integrations with all GSM operators and SMS sending service that are in service in Turkey. Thus it is ensured that received messages are really reliable and sent by judiciary units are guaranteed as all automatic messages sent by UYAP Informatics System are transmitted to the users with single sender name (UYAP) and for all sent messages only single number is displayed.

While realizing SMS system, which judicial stages primarily will be sent to the parties chronologically as messages was determined. Then when these acts are realized, necessary software for forming messages was prepared. At the next stage, for sending these messages at a standard infrastructure via related GSM and fixed operators, necessary integrations were completed. After all tests were achieved successfully, this project was released to the public in April, 2008.

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

The most important problem encountered during development of this project was that all operators to be made integration wanted to make this integration using different technologies. To solve this problem, easy integration with all operators rendering service in different platforms was achieved using SOA (Service Oriented Architecture) in the project. Furthermore, for ensuring participation of the operators in this service, it is guaranteed with protocols that half of the cost to be acquired in exchange for SMS service will be paid to the related operator. So that operators could allocate adequate source and personnel for the service.

***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.***

All codes formed during the project are written by engineers working under Ministry of Justice, Department of Information Technologies and any off-the-shelf software is not implemented. In determination of the contents of the SMS, one judge from Department of Information Technologies carried out coordination. To put the project into practice, one judge and four engineers worked together for four months. In the development of the project, software language is Java and this enables platform to practice independently. The most important acquisition is revision of the product once again according to the needs and its functionality of easy to extend in the other institutions because at design and activation stages, completely institution's own resources are used.

***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

Dissemination and development of SMS Information System is very easy as it is developed with Java under institution's own body and SOA is used as technology. For example, when the project was put into practice in April 2008, SMS was sent to the parties for only legal events occurred in the first-instance courts. But then the Court of Cassation requested to use the system and the system was made available in the Court of Cassation in 2010 with a 15-day performance. When the system was put into practice firstly, manual SMS sending of judicial units were not possible. Upon the request from the units, this feature was integrated into UYAP practice within a short period that is 1 day.

Upon the request from the citizens, mobile versions of the practice were prepared and brought into use in 2011 for mobile phones and tablet pc. While achieving this development, direct usage was supplied without making any changes to existing services.

The first one of the two easy steps necessary for system to be put into practice is to determine related SMSs are sent after which actions are carried out and the second one is to ensure integration with at least one mobile phone operator to send these SMSs.

### **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.

After SMS information service is brought into use, it is seen as insurance especially among the citizens and intensive subscriptions have been made. Subscription number of the system is more than half million at present.

The most important impact is inspection of the judicial units instantly by the parties of the case instead of inspection by inspectors once in two years. The trust in the judiciary is increased as nationals, lawyers and institutions can access to the judicial processes non-spatially. This pleasure can be observed on the appreciation e-mails received from the users. At the same time, the parties, informed about their cases by SMS instantly, has started to complain about the abnormal proceedings to the concerning units. Thanks to this, the transparency of the judiciary is increased. Because the judicial units tend to be more careful and try not to make any mistakes as they are aware that the parties are informed automatically by SMS when any proceeding is carried out.

The most important lesson of the Ministry of Justice taken out from this service is that there is no need to invest too much to solve big problems and sometimes simple and cheap solutions may be sufficient to achieve big successes. By taking the example of success of the SMS system, a simple structure was established enabling questioning of the persons under arrest warrant of the police force directly through their mobile phones and a system with 3500 employees is deactivated.

Observing the simplicity, cheapness and easiness of this system used by judicial systems, other public institutions have started to render certain services through SMS. For example, on the purchase and sale of a vehicle, all of the information regarding the vehicle can be learned through SMS.

SMS information system is a leading project on the management of the service providing of public institutions. It has brought in a new vision on the service provided to the nationals and changed the way of the processes.

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