



Use of IT within Austrian Justice



Information

as of October 2011



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1. Justice Enterprise

The Austrian Administration of Justice as a modern and innovative organisation offers an indispensable service to society. With an “annual turnover” of € 1.053 m and about 11.700 employees it can be regarded a major company.

The revenue figures demonstrate that this enterprise is also very efficient: about 73 percent of the expenditure is covered by revenue. It has to be taken into account that the Administration of Justice also has to fulfil functions (e.g. in the field of prison administration), where no income can be generated.

Figures for the year 2010:

Budget estimate:

- expenditure € 1.166 m
- revenue € 796 m
- IT budget € 35 m

Number of employees in the Administration of Justice Department: 11.200

2. Automation of Court Procedures

The Automation of Court Procedures (ACP) supports all courts and Public Prosecution Services with the maintenance of registers of more than 50 different types of procedures. Parts of procedures (e.g. summary proceedings) are processed fully automatically, court disposals are created automatically and dispatched via a central mailing facility. Submissions, applications and dispositions are transmitted by electronic communication (ERV) and court fees are collected electronically.

Functions:

- administration of court cases
- electronic dispatch of letters
- statistics
- court fees
- index of names (for the whole of Austria)
- Integrated Text Processing (Text blocks)
- National Insurance inquiries (especially identification of unknown third party debtor/employer in case of garnishee/attachment of earnings proceedings)
- Link to electronic legal communications (ELC)
- Interface to Edict File
- external electronic case inquiries
- online help

Facts:

- 7.500 internal users (of these about 2.000 judges and public prosecutors)
- 3 m court cases per year
- About 5,7 m electronic deliveries
- About 8,7 m postal deliveries

3. Electronically integrated assistance for Public Prosecution

IT-Solution EliAs – electronically integrated assistance for Public Prosecution – aims at simplifying the handling of files during the penal preliminary proceeding and at replacing the multitude of physical files (about 600.00 annual). Following phase 1 of the project at present all proceedings concerning unknown offenders (about 2/3 of all proceedings) are managed via EliAs. Incoming charges generate EliAs files which are then presented to the federal or district prosecutors. Using simple menu navigation prosecutors may abort the proceeding according to § 197 StPO (code of criminal procedure) in an electronic (paperless) way (about 90 % of actions concerning unknown offenders). Currently other constellations are handled by means of paper files.

Benefits already achieved at this stage are reduction of paper and storage space, less routine jobs and better support for federal and district prosecutors by office workers, reduction of processing time and electronic data transfer from other proceedings.

4. Electronic Legal Communication (ELC)

Electronic legal communication with the courts as an instrument of communication with the parties of proceedings, on the same level as paper, was introduced in 1990. As far as it is known the Austrian administration of justice is the first country that has introduced electronic communication.

Electronic communication in legal relations allows electronic transmission of applications or submissions and the automatic transfer of procedural data to the Automation of Court Procedures. The resulting personnel savings in the administration of justice, which could be achieved in the final development, are estimated at 133 manpower units.

In 1999 the "oncoming lane" on the "data highway of the administration of justice" has been opened: electronic service of court documents is also possible now by the so-called "return traffic stream". For the year 2008 savings on postage (with increasing tendency) of about € 3,6 m were achieved.

In the year 2007 the electronic legal communication was transferred to a web based technology, where open standards such as XML, Web services and SOAP are used. The electronic legal communication, which is secured by SSL and certificates, is accessible via clearing houses and opens amongst other things the possibility of appending attachments to submissions transmitted electronically.

As one of the outstanding e-Government-Applications in Europe, electronic legal communication has been awarded the EU "e-Government-Label" in 2001.

Facts for 2010:

11 m transmissions, amongst them:

- 3,6 m communications,
- i.e. 95 % of summary proceedings and
- 69 % of applications for enforcement
- 5,7 m transmissions via the "return traffic stream"

5. Land Register

At the beginning of the eighties the Federal Ministry for Economy and Employment (at that time: for Construction) and the Federal Ministry of Justice created in close co-operation a real property database at the Federal Computing Center, enabling the courts to maintain an automation supported Land Register and enabling the Land Surveying Offices to maintain an automation supported Cadastre (surveying and mapping). Since 1986 so-called "External Inquiries" have been possible: at that time already the general public was able to inspect the Land Register at the office or from home.

Since 1999.07.01 it has been possible to make external inquiries via the Internet. For these inquiries charging agencies have been set up.

(For further details see <http://www.justiz.gv.at/grundbuch/index.php?nav=93>).

In view of the technical developments in this application and in order to best fulfill the increasing demand of business and public administration as well as the administration of justice itself, a fundamental technological modernization of the real property database with all its applications has been launched.

As first results the land register now supports Electronic Legal Communication, management of court fees and automated creation of court decisions.

Since 2006 all documents necessary for land register entries are stored in the newly established electronic document archive of justice. Thus not only the land register entries themselves, but also the appropriate documents can be inspected online via charging agencies.

Figures for the year 2010:

- 3,1 m existing entries in the Land Register
- 10,4 m properties
- 684.000 entries
- 158.000 extracts of the Land Register at court
- 12 m inquiries

6. Commercial Register

Data of all companies in Austria requiring registration are stored in the Commercial Register (Principal Register). The documents, on which the entries are based, are stored in the Electronic Document Archive of the Administration of Justice (Document Collection). 16 Commercial Registry Courts issue their decisions automation supported. Further functions such as charging of court fees, delivery via the mailing facility are integrated in this application.

After the success of the Land Register the Commercial Register was similarly changed over to automation support. In addition, the Commercial Register law has been modified to reflect modern conditions: The Commercial Register Act has been in force since 1991.01.01; the new Commercial Register includes not only businesses but also co-operative societies and private foundations. The Commercial Register can also be queried world-wide over the Internet. (For further details see <http://www.justiz.gv.at/> Services >> e-Government >> Firmenbuch).

In 2001 the electronic transmission of annual financial statements was introduced. Publication of the Commercial Registry Courts is carried out fully automatically in the edict database.

From 2003 to 2006 software has been upgraded to a modern web-sphere software and Java-technology. Here the design of the user interface is similar to that of the Automation of Court Procedures. This modernization is a precondition for the implementation of the ELC in the Commercial Register. Since 2005 all documents submitted to the Commercial Register have been archived electronically.

Figures for the year 2010:

- 202.366 existing registered legal entities
- 269.000 entries
- 13.006 extracts from the Commercial Register at court
- 1,8 m external inquiries via the charging agencies
- 5,2 m query products (via courts and charging agencies) including excerpts, queries, documents, etc.

7. Expert, Interpreter and Mediator List and Official Receivers in Bankruptcy Database

The databases contain the individuals referred to above for each function with their special qualifications. They are primarily available to the courts for selection in court proceedings, but also to the public for inquiries on the Internet.

As from the beginning of 2004, the Expert and Interpreter Lists have been available on the Administration of Justice Intranet and on the Internet on the website <http://www.sdgliste.justiz.gv.at>. Experts, interpreters and receivers in bankruptcy are enabled to maintain certain data on the Lists (address, telephone number, e-mail, etc.) by using an appropriate certificate and to provide information on their company.

Since 2005 the new expert and interpreter identity card has been available which meets the standard of the citizen's card. Real estate experts also need their expert identity card to submit their expert's report (including photos) to the court electronically. In addition receivers in bankruptcy are able to announce sales and leases in insolvency proceedings with the help of their identity card. Mediators in civil cases can also be found on the Internet website <http://www.mediatorenliste.justiz.gv.at>.

Figures for October 2010:

- 828.958 inquiries of the SDG List

8. DocumentUploadService

This Lotus Domino based web application facilitates upload of report or translation documents by publicly appointed and sworn experts and interpreters. Documents are transferred to court or public prosecutor's office via secure connection. There are estimated 150.000 expert reports per year, 48% of them in social, labour and employment cases, another 31% in civil, family and criminal cases. Assuming that two third are suitable for digital transfer, about 100.000 cases of upload per year will be handled via Document Upload Service.

Experts and interpreters are integrated by means of Smartcard certificates. Due to integration with the official list of court experts and interpreters a personalized workflow is established. The application is already connected to the Austrian automation of court procedures, further connections to commercial and land register are planned.

Benefits of this solution are especially cost savings (reduction of postage, copying and handling), substantial improvement in speed and standardised transmission via secure connection.

9. Edict File (Insolvency File, Real Property Auctions, Commercial Register Publications...)

The Edict File (<http://www.edikte.justiz.gv.at>), initially restricted to publications in the field of insolvency cases, was continuously extended to other business sectors.

As from 2000.01.01 insolvencies (bankruptcies, compositions with creditors, settlement of debts) have been published exclusively on the Internet with legally binding effect. The costs of publications could be reduced by 95%. Every Internet user has access free of charge to the latest data on the Internet (<http://www.edikte.justiz.gv.at>). Data is copied automatically from the Insolvency Register of the ACP into the Insolvency File at the "push of a button". Petitions in bankruptcy have legal effect the following day.

Since 2002 real property auction edicts and publication of entries in the Commercial Register as well as the service of edicts can be retrieved in the Commercial Register from the Edict File.

Beginning of 2003 the Edict File was extended to publication of auctions in execution proceedings against personal property and to search for owners in criminal proceedings. Since 2005.01.01 all announcements provided for in court proceedings have been published exclusively in the Edict File. Public announcements in probate proceedings, declaration of nullity and official declaration of death as well as appointment of guardians are exemplary.

In Austria the Edict File won the Ökomanager Award 2000 of the Austrian Business Association (WKO) and the Justitia 2000 award – and, on the European level – the "e-Government Label for Good Practice 2005" as well as the "Crystal Scales of Justice 2006" award.

Facts for October 2010:

- 1.007.694 Inquiries of the Insolvency File
- 816.061 Inquiries of court auctions

10. Electronic Document Archive

When the Land Register and the Commercial Register were changed over to IT, for technical reasons, the Document Collections of these court divisions were not changed over to electronic storage. Now the technology for archiving documents has been improved considerably. Impulses and requirements from the legal practice demonstrated the necessity to modernize the court system with the help of IT.

A central Document Archive for the courts has been established, which can be used for all application and procedure types. It will be possible to archive documents (e.g. contracts with electronic signature) and to create a link to them from court in every application and category of procedure. This way a document once being archived can be used in different court proceedings.

Since 2005 the Collections of Documents of all Commercial Registry Courts and since 2006 those of the Land Register are maintained only electronically, thus implementing a further step towards an optimized and service oriented process according to plan. The data contents saved in the electronic document archives are regarded as an original of the document ("original fiction") up to the proof of the opposite. The Electronic Document Archive won the first prize in the "Amtsmanager Wettbewerb" of the Austrian Business Association (WKO) in 2006 and has been awarded the EU "e-Government-Label" in 2007.

Thus a further step towards optimized and service oriented procedures was taken.

Figures for 2010:

- 839.483 document inquiries in total
 - €0,70 fee for document retrieval
- 479.153 document inquiries from the Commercial Register's archive
- 360.330 inquiries from the Land Register's archive
- Percentage of documents transmitted electronically via COURTDOK: 65%
- Savings (personnel, paper, postage, storage) of € 1,- per document
- Documents saved in the electronic document archive:
1,7 m Commercial Register, 5,0 m Land Register

11. Electronic Signatures

Electronic legal communication with the courts has worked extremely well since its introduction in the year 1989. However, the electronic transmission of original documents and attachments to submissions to the courts in electronic legal communication has not been possible so far. In order to promote electronic legal communication the “Berufsrechts-Änderungsgesetz 2006” (BRÄG 2006) implemented the Electronic Document Archive of Justice and entitled public corporations to run such archives. Notaries, civil technicians and lawyers were enabled to create electronic (public) documents. For this purpose a specific electronic signature for these groups was introduced. Thus they are enabled to sign documents electronically in the context of their professional activity. In addition, notaries and civil technicians also have a special electronic legalization signature (“Beurkundungssignatur”), which gives them the possibility to sign electronically when acting sovereignly.

Likewise the BRÄG 2006 introduced the electronic signature of justice, meant to sign all judicial documents transmitted by electronic legal communication in the future. Since January 1st 2007 the electronic signature of justice has been applied in practice. Since then the electronic signature of justice confirms the authenticity of commercial register excerpts and documents stored in the electronic archives of land and commercial register. Starting from January 1st 2010 the electronic signature of justice will find use for judicial legalizations.

Apart from this electronic signatures have already been in use for expert and interpreter identity cards since 2005.

Since 1.11.2009 the first web form is available where the authentication takes place with the so-called "citizen card".

12. IT in Prison Administration

The objective of the "integrated administration of the prison regime (IAPR)" is a comprehensive automation support in the administration of prison inmates. After lengthy preparations version 1 was put into live operation at the end of 1999: It includes an inmate register, administration of cells, planning and administration of transfers and, of particular importance for the relief of prison officers, an automatic calculation of the end of prison terms and all other periods depending on it. In the meantime further modules followed: dates, absences, deposits, accounting of prisoners' funds and remuneration, IAPR for social services, IAPR for judges and public prosecutors, classification, detention planning tool and IT support for changing the location of detention.

At present work is in progress in the fields of medication module, reporting of key figures and electronically monitored house arrest.

Work is in progress on the exchange of data with the courts of decision (transfer of instructions relating to imprisonment, sentence reports), sentencing courts (preparation and decision regarding conditional release), police stations (arrest, committal to prison). Since the end of September 2002 there is also a possibility to use video conferencing for the first hearing of prisoners, which helps to reduce unscheduled transferrals (especially on weekends) to a considerable extent.

Facts for the year 2010:

- 11.972 custodial sentences commenced (remand in custody, imprisonment, detention in administrative penalty)
- on average 8.658 inmates per day

13. Advance Maintenance Payments

This IT solution supports the Higher Regional Courts in the settlement of payment and levy of Advance Maintenance Payment according to the Advance Maintenance Payment Act.

The IT procedure involves the following business processes:

- Collection und Processing of resolutions
- Monthly payment orders
- Processing of electronically transmitted repayments
- Correspondence with parties to the proceedings and public authorities
- Electronic data transfer from other judicial proceedings (Curatorship, Insolvency and the Heritage Register, Collection Department etc.)
- Booking in the federal budget account
- Settlement of the Family Burdens Equalisation Fund
- Keeping a fiscal calendar
- Statistics and evaluations

The procedure Advance Maintenance Payment was the first IT application in the Austrian's justice (1976).

The procedure has evolved continuously. Special attention is put on the integration of manual working processes and the implementation of electronic interfaces to other procedures.

In 2009 the electronic inquiry for youth welfare offices was implemented.

Figures (as at December 2010):

- In 4 Higher Regional Courts there are approx. 54 users in total.
- Total home records: 210.602
- Current home records: 46.874
- Monthly payouts: €9,43 m
- Monthly repayments: €4,73 m

14. Collection Department

The IT procedure supports the Collection Department (CDpt) in the national collection of court fees, costs, fines of all kinds, advance maintenance payments and granting of facilities for payment pursuant to § 9 GEG. The main purpose of the CDpt is a high collection quota by determining the best form of collection.

The IT procedure involves the following business processes:

- Transmission of all executable payment orders in an electronically structured form from the Automation of Court Procedures, the Advance Maintenance Payments and the Land Register to the CDpt
- Collection in the best way:
 - Application for payment
 - Facilities for payment
 - Filing of a claim in insolvency and heritage proceedings
 - Garnishee inquiry
 - Registration office inquiry
 - Land Register inquiry
 - Penal system inquiry
 - Execution
- Automatic inquiries relating to third party debtors at the Association of Social Insurance Agencies
- Automatic counter-checking of data in the insolvency and the heritage register
- Entering the receipt of payments
- Automatic fiscal calendar
- Creation of reports and statistics

This IT procedure is continually developed with the objectives integration of manual operating processes and electronic interfaces to other processes.

Figures and statistics:

Approximately 50 users work in the CDpt acting centrally for the Federal State.

	2010
Total number of Execution Files	161.929
Total number of Advance Maintenance Payments Files	59.563
Settled Dept-collections	63.893
Settled Advance Maintenance Payments	2.972
Decisions	114.910
Claim Bookings Dept-collections	104.974
Claim Bookings Advance Maintenance Payments	17.295
Receivables Dept-collections	50.702
Receivables Advance Maintenance Payments	49.266

15. Data ware house/statistics

The multiplicity of IT-applications covers the complete scope of Austrian justice.

This results in a comprehensive, nationwide data pool that proves highly advantageous for a multitude of necessary statistics.

Statistics can be roughly classified as follows:

- Performance statistics, monitoring judicial workload
- Statistics assisting efficient staff deployment
- Statistics assisting supervision
- Documentation of specific legal facts (e. g. convictions, duration of proceedings ...)
- Ad hoc statistics on behalf of the Austrian parliament and science
- Statistics evaluating IT-strategies

The data mentioned above originates from the applications' database or is generated by means of data warehouse technology.

In the long run statistics, especially those needed periodically and with foreseeable focus will be generated by means of data warehouse technology.

This technology provides more flexible and cheaper statistics avoiding interference with the original application.

Statistics of broader interest are published via a specific Intranet statistics database.

That database features user rights management, allowing customized views for specific user groups.

In addition the modern instrument of data warehouse offers the option of individual user defined reports.

16. Legal Information System (LIS)

The Legal Information System of the Federal Government operated by the Office of the Federal Chancellor has become the essential tool in today's court business for fast searches of court decisions, predominantly within the framework of the documentation of court practice and also for locating sources of law and literature. This instrument is available to administration of justice employees at all workstations.

The new Internet technology based version of the LIS ensures an even more efficient search for the required information and thus results in a speedier decision process. Important parts of the LIS, such as legislation and decisions of the Administrative Court and the Constitutional Court and the ordinary courts are already available to the public on the Internet (<http://www.ris.bka.gv.at>) free of charge.

17. Voice recognition

Voice recognition systems have been tested by the Austrian Justice since 1997. At that time a group of 10 voluntary judges and public prosecutors was equipped with voice recognition systems consisting of a notebook with headset and the program “Voice Type Simply Gold” by IBM. Both hardware and software have progressed significantly since then. Nowadays the voice recognition program can be supported by the standard equipment of all workstations, so no additional hardware is necessary.

The program Dragon Naturally Speaking (DNS) achieved the best results among all tested programs. Currently the version 11.0 of this program is used by about 200 judges, public prosecutors and some registrars on their workplaces. So far DNS 11.0 excelled with tremendously improved voice recognition. The users were also provided with their own law vocabulary built from the LIS documents as of 2001.01.26, the Supreme Court (OGH) decisions of the year 2004 and approximately 16,000 minutes and decisions of the Regional Court Eisenstadt. Users also add specific vocabulary on a regular base to further improve voice recognition.

In autumn 2011 a test run at the district court Favoriten will evaluate the use of DNS at clerical work stations. Minutes dictated by judges and registrars will be transformed into text by typists using DNS. According to plan typists will only have to check and correct the transformed text, thus saving time considerably. First reports on the test run are to be expected at the end of 2011.

18. Website of the judiciary – www.justiz.gv.at

Since 2009, the new Justice website offers attractive design combined with maximum accessibility to information and services of the judiciary.

Particularly noteworthy is the area "Service for Citizen". This summarizes the chapters on "Citizen's Info", "Legal Advice", "Legal Aid", "Justice Ombudsmen", "The Service Center", "Publications" and "All documents" together for the individuals most important information.

In the "Press" area all the media work of the courts, prosecution offices (contacts of press officers), the Ministry and the Cabinet (news headlines, photos, interviews and speeches by the Minister) is available in one place.

In the area "E-government" a "list of authorities" not only helps to quickly address data and the availability of videoconferencing facilities to determine the judicial authorities. It also provides a "court-search": If you enter one of Austria's 2357 municipalities, the relevant District Court and all competent instances are shown off.

In addition, if you enter a zip code assigned to one of the post-districts (17,365 in Austria) their assignment to a municipality is offered.

The webpage is based on a fail-safe and high-performance server landscape. It should be emphasized that the overall solution, which is based on standard Web servers (Tomcat) and standard database server (MySQL), ensures a clean separation between the provider (server - hardware), basic software (server - software) and content management system.

Quarterly there are approximately 2 million visits on the website by more than 33,000 different visitors each month.

19. Intranet Administration of Justice Homepage

The intranet appearance of justice is an internal information portal for all employees of the Austrian justice. The intranet is based on the same concepts and technologies as the internet; however, the categories are preset and the content available only to employees. The intranet is thereby a hub for all internal and selected external web applications and provides the staff with information.

Internal web applications like integrated administration of the prison regime, webmail, collections of forms and decrees, international legal aid and maintenance of the edict file can be accessed fast and simply. External applications like in particular legal information system, land register, commercial register and central registration office are also accessible via this information portal.

The information is collected and administered partially in its own content management system, but originates from already existing data bases or from data bases, which have been established specifically for that. The overall administration uses a content management system, which prepares the data for the presentation on the web. At present the website is subdivided into nine central subject areas: news, applications, specific information, forms, training and knowledge, personnel, data and facts, IT and links. This structure facilitates the editorial work and allows users fast and concise access.

In the column news on the homepage recent developments are presented in the form of headlines. The subdivisions of the columns facilitate a better overview. The intranet is constantly developed and flexibly adapted to the needs of the users. The intranet homepage - originally uniform for the entire Austrian justice - was extended content wise and renewed in design. A kind of "localization" was introduced. The information in the content management system is classified according to individual organization areas and then made available to them. These organization areas have their own cover pages (= "homepages"). There the employees find additional information for their area. Thus both individual needs of single organization areas are covered and information is efficiently distributed nationwide. The "localization" strengthens the identification with contents and supports a more focused use of the offer. This is expressed by in the meantime tripled access figures (at present on average 2,5 million accesses per month).

At this time the Ministry, the Supreme Court (OGH), the 4 Higher Regional Courts districts, the Prison Administration, the senior public prosecution department Vienna and the public prosecution department Vienna as well as the three courts located at the “Justizzentrum Wien Mitte” have their own intranet sites. For instance the assignments of business for all Austrian courts were implemented. Personnel news, the assignment of business for the Ministry of Justice and advanced education are extending the information offer. Existing areas such as collections of forms and decrees, tendering for permanent posts and some local offers are constantly revised, extended or supplemented.

Facts for 2010:

- On average 1010.000 accesses per working day
- Approximately 2,5 million accesses per month
- The accesses are made from 10.500 justice-pcs and 1.000 laptops
- About 15.000 documents in the content management system

20. European Order for Payment Procedure

The European Order for payment procedure established by Regulation (EC) No 1896/2006 is meant to simplify and accelerate cross border procedures for the enforcement of uncontested claims throughout the European Union. The Vienna's district court for commercial affairs (Bezirksgericht für Handelssachen Wien) is centrally competent for all payment orders in Austria. The forms provided in all EU languages cover the entire procedure.

On 12 December 2008 when the regulation came into force an IT application jointly developed by Austria and Germany was implemented. Austria reused various elements of its national application due to similarity to the European order for payment procedure. There are following functions:

- Simple processing of applications by input of data form A and the computerised production of subsequent printed forms and procedural steps.
- The essential details of the case are readily available in a “case factsteet” (table).
- All procedural steps are set out in order in a “list of contents” (table). All further steps such as correspondence and notes are performed from the list of contents.
- Autotext can be freely set and saved for all purposes.
- Procedural forms and decisions are directly sent for printing.

In the near future the Electronic legal communication (ELC) will be implemented. In addition there is already a concept for an international electronic legal communication. The IT application is to be developed in a form that can be used as a general principle in all member states and as a function of the European e-justice portal.

The IT application was awarded as the winner at the European eGovernment Awards 2009 in the category “eGovernment supporting the Single Market”. 259 submissions were received for the awards.

Figures in 2010:

- Almost 5.300 claims in Austria and Germany
- Total value of 88 million Euros in claims in Austria and Germany
- Little objection rate of 6 % in Austria

21. European Business Register (EBR)

Since 1999.01.04 (start of the trial run 1998.01.04) the EBR provides access within the framework of a European Economic Interest Grouping to the official Business Register data of (currently) France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg, Spain, Ireland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, UK, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Greece, the Netherlands, Jersey, Guernsey, Ukraine, Slovenia, Serbia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Austria through the appropriate national provider (in Austria, Telekom Austria AG). In total 20 million companies can be found online via EBR.

22. European Land Information System (EULIS)

Within the framework of the e-Content Program of the European Union a consortium of eight institutions, which are responsible for the maintenance of the Land Registers, was awarded the contract for the development of a European service which, like the EBR for the Business Registers, is to provide secure access to the official Land Registers and cadastres. The registration authorities of the Netherlands, England and Wales, Scotland, Sweden, Finland, Lithuania, Ireland and Austria are involved.

This project was completed with the development of a demonstrator (<http://www.eulis.org>). The consortium decided not to cease its work on EULIS but to continue with the project for the development of a functioning commercial system as EULIS EEIG (European Economic Interest Grouping). Just recently Spain joined EULIS EEIG. The European Commission funded further development of EULIS with the project LINE (Land Information in Europe).

23. User Administration

Two years ago the Federal Ministry of Justice started to introduce a comprehensive and uniform user administration system for all applications. The system administers the identity of the employees as well as their access rights to both internal and external applications within the framework of the Austrian E-government portal interconnection network (PV-Network). The PV-Network was introduced to provide a secure interconnection of all e-government portals.

All personal data currently stored in different listings and applications will be transferred to this new system. User rights and user roles as well as passwords will also be stored in this central meta-directory.

The personal data of the Justice Department are now replicated on a daily basis in the meta-directory by the Personnel Management System (PMSAP), thus providing an up-to-date record of changes in the personnel level of the Justice Department.

The user administration features:

- Central directory for the administration of all users
- Synchronization of the all sub-directories with data from the central meta directory
- Role-based access authorization to internal and external applications
- Administration of access authorizations to decentralized sections of the Austrian justice
- Enterprise/Legacy/Web access (to internal and external applications over a portal)
- Single Sign-On (SSO) for internal and external applications.

24. Video Conferencing

Since 2005 the procedural preconditions exist for the use of video conference systems in the hearing of witnesses, parties, experts and interpreters in civil proceedings as well as in the hearing of witnesses in criminal proceedings (defendants only in preliminary proceedings). The video conference technology offers the judges the possibility to question people that were summoned to the court, which is nearest to their domicile and equipped with a video conference system.

As a result, substantial time and cost saving arise because of the substantially shorter journey and the judges get a direct impression of the person. By avoiding legal assistance from other courts the duration of proceedings is shortened as well.

For scheduling video conference hearings a database for room reservation was provided to judges via the intranet. The database features the possibility to book the required court rooms while automatically informing the person responsible for the video conference by e-mail.

Since March 2011 all courts, public prosecution offices and prisons are equipped with video conference systems. In 2010 1960 video conferences were held throughout Austria, whereof 6 percent were held with foreign courts.

At the moment legal and technical frameworks are evaluated with the aim of widening the scope of video conferencing (court hearings, representatives of parties).

25. Electronic Paperwork Administration

Due to the permanent personnel shortenings initiated by the Federal Government 246 non-judicial permanent posts had to be cut in 2006. To work against the expected substantial effects in the area of typing departments, employees on parental leave having a PC with internet access, were given the possibility to do typing at home on a voluntary basis within the additional earnings limits. Therefore a Lotus Notes database was developed, which facilitates the safe dispatching of digital dictations and the automatic transmission of written texts, thus guaranteeing the optimal utilization of existing writing capacities.

With the higher regional courts clearing houses were installed, which are responsible for the supervision of the electronic paperwork administration as well as the collection and control of the typists active in the project.

Dictations, which cannot be written in a district court in a justifiable time, are placed into the database and automatically transferred into the pool of the special typing department at the superior regional court. From there the dictations are passed on automatically - if they can not be written within 48 hours - into the pool of the respective clearing house. The typists on parental leave can access the pool of their clearing house via internet and download dictations on their PC. Clearing houses can also assign electronic dictations to certain typists. As soon as the text file is transferred by the typist into the database, the person who placed his dictation into the database is informed by e-mail and can download the text file from the database. At the same time, the clearing house keeps the information necessary for the account of writing bonuses and can carry out the accounting supported by automation.

Due to the increased requirements also fully employed and temporary part-time employed judicial employees were given the possibility to do typing at home. In May 2011 186 home typists (thereof 24 typists on parental leave) were involved in the project. In March 2011 more than 41.500 pages were written by home typists. The average duration for transcription is 18 hours.

26. Foreign Applications

In addition to IT-solutions developed by the Austrian justice applications of other software providers - in particular for department-spanning affairs - are also used, among them the following:

- “ELAK im Bund”, which is based on Fabasoft components and operated by the ARGE ELAK (a daughter of the BRZ GmbH), supports as a federally uniform solution for administration of files and for workflows the all-electronic document guidance in the Federal Ministry of Justice.
- The applications HV- and PM-SAP, also operated in the BRZ GmbH are used in the area of budgeting and personnel administration.
- Enquiry options from not freely accessible data bases of other departments are used within the justice system, among them the central registration office (Zentrales Melderegister - ZMR) and the criminal record register EKIS (= Elektronisches Kriminalpolizeiliches Informations System).

27. Network Administration of Justice

Since the beginning of the nineteen-eighties the Austrian Ministry of Justice has built-up a comprehensive network for the general use of Information Technology. All courts, public prosecution services and penal institutions are connected to the Corporate Network Austria (CNA). All major applications of the Ministry of Justice are housed and operated in the two Federal Computing Centre (BRZ) premises. Both locations of the BRZ are connected to the CNA to provide a redundant connection.

Communication to other Ministries, other agencies and the general public are centralised in the BRZ. The minimum bandwidths to all justice locations will be 4 Mbit/s by the end of the first quarter 2010. All network connections can be used for telephone calls, video conferencing by applying voice over IP and applications.

This network is also the basis for the e-mail system of the administration of justice (using Lotus Notes) and Internet access by the court personnel. All employees have been equipped with a workstation connected to the CAN since February 2010. There are currently approximately 180 routers, 340 servers, 12,500 workstations, 160 video conference systems, 2,000 VoIP telephones and 1,100 laptops connected to the network. The changeover of the operating system from Windows 2000 to Windows XP will be completed by March 2010.

In future, options will also be examined for the use of open source operating system Linux. Openoffice is used for word processing and spreadsheets. A virtual private network (VPN) based on GPRS/UMTS data cards has also been implemented to provide all bailiffs with online access to the internal and external applications.