

# Just launched: EU public consultation on modernising judicial cooperation between EU countries - use of digital technology

The public consultation on the *EU initiative modernising judicial cooperation between EU countries - use of digital technology* is open from 16 February 2021 until 11 May 2021 (midnight Brussels time), [click here](#). We have previously reported on the EU feedback period of this initiative here (which is a previous step and is part of the roadmap).

The public consultation consists of a questionnaire with 15 questions (mainly multiple-choice). An interesting question is the following:

“9) In case it is decided to propose a **new EU legal instrument**, what aspects of digitalisation should it regulate (Multiple choice - one or several replies are possible): - The mandatory or optional nature of electronic communication with and between competent national authorities - The legal validity of electronic documents and evidence - The conditions for the use of electronic signatures/seals - The responsibilities for data protection obligations - The architecture of the IT system to be used - Other (Please elaborate in the box below).”

With regard to the purpose of this initiative, the EU website states the following:

“This consultation concerns cross-border judicial cooperation in the European Union. It refers to civil, commercial and criminal cases and involves, for various reasons, more than one EU Member State. The European Commission is planning a new initiative aiming at digitalising cross-border judicial cooperation procedures. The purpose is to make use of new digital tools for electronic communication between courts, other competent authorities of the Member States and also to give the possibility to individuals and businesses to start proceedings and to communicate with the courts and the other competent

authorities in other EU countries electronically, to be able to submit electronic documents from the comfort of their homes and offices. Currently, the communication from individuals/businesses to judicial authorities and between the public authorities themselves is carried out mainly on paper, which causes delays, involves more costs and is susceptible to crises such as COVID-19 pandemic. The European Commission seeks the views and opinions of stakeholders and all persons who could be impacted by the future initiative in order to take them into consideration when deciding on the possible options and the way forward.”