

2021 QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE 1st STUDY COMMISSION OF THE IAJ-UIM

“ACCESS TO JUSTICE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC”

1) The pandemic and the closing of the courthouses

a) Please inform if the courthouses have been closed, fully or partially, for some time in your country due to the pandemic. If so, please inform for how long, approximately, they were closed (fully or partially). Who decided to close or restrict the courthouses?

b) During that period as mentioned above, were in-person operations maintained for urgent cases? Were the most vulnerable judges and officials excused from in-person work? What circumstances were taken into consideration for the judge(s) or court official(s) to be excused from in-person work?

c) While the Judiciary buildings remained closed (fully or partially), did the judges and officials work from home? If so, please state whether *all* judges and court officials worked from home or only a percentage of them; if only a percentage, please share which percentage exactly.

d) After the reopening of the courthouses, did all judicial activities return to being in-person or did part of the work continue to be done online?

e) What are the precautions that have been adopted by the Judiciary in your country due to the pandemic (such as hand sanitizer, masks, etc.) for the protection of judges, court officials, attorneys, parties and the public in general?

2) The pandemic and digital cases

a) Before the pandemic, were the cases already being handled digitally in your country? If not, please explain if this measure was taken after the start of the pandemic.

b) Before the pandemic, were procedural acts such as hearings, testimonies of witnesses and trials carried out by video conference? If not, please inform if this measure was taken after the start of the pandemic.

c) Were measures taken so that people who do not have regular access to the internet could participate in virtual procedural acts?

d) For the performance of the virtual judicial acts, were equipment and internet broadband provided to judges and court officials or did they have to use their own resources?

3) The pandemic and Judicial Independence

a) Has the Judiciary in your country been called upon to decide on the legality of restrictions on fundamental rights imposed due to the pandemic? If so, give an example of government measures that have been challenged in court.

b) Have the judges who have made the judicial decisions that analyzed restrictive measures imposed by the government of your country been criticized and/or attacked by authorities or even by the public due to their decisions?

c) Has any judge undergone disciplinary proceedings in your country because of a decision that he/she has made about the restrictive measures adopted by the government due to the pandemic?

d) Have judges and court officials in your country suffered a decrease in wages or a delay in the payment of their salaries due to the pandemic? If so, did this measure occur only with the judges and court officials or with the public sector as a whole?

4) Regarding the topic of 2022, you are kindly requested to choose between the following options:

a) Maintain the topic that was decided upon in 2019 – “Disciplinary Proceedings and Judicial Independence”. ()

b) Choose a new topic entirely. ()

If you select this option, please share your topic suggestion: _____