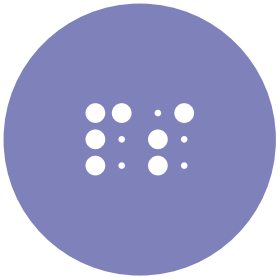# Technology & Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities

IACA-G3ICT SURVEY RESULTS

Survey Purpose & Methodology

Article 13 of the UN CRPD requires that States Parties ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others

As part of its global initiative, in September-December 2019, G3ict partnered with International Association of Court Administrators (IACA) to survey its members as well as other specialists working in or with courts about technology and access to justice

Courts and justice systems worldwide are undergoing digital transformations. It is not clear that their technology roadmaps include a commitment to ensuring access to justice for persons with disabilities
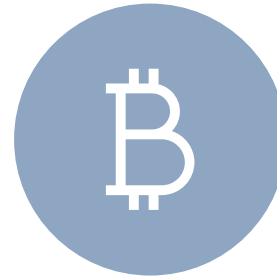
In order to promote greater progress on CRPD Article 13, G3ict has launched a global Access to Justice and Technology initiative

Key Findings:
Courts worldwide are investing in technology

67% of courts deploy mainstream technologies for internal and/or public use

60% of courts have budget allocated for digitization, but less than 10% specifically allocate budget to funding for ICT accessibility and digital inclusion of PWDs

Primary reasons for technology deployment are to increase efficiency, increase access to justice and save costs

75% of courts deploy digital documents and digital case management, over 50% of them deploy digital payments and procedures and provide remote access to data

# Key Findings: Courts lack focus on accessibility and inclusion

In 48% of cases courts do not or only partially meet the requests for accommodation from PWDs

Major obstacles to achieving more accessible technology and greater inclusion of PWDs in the courts are insufficient financial resources, lack of awareness about disability and lack of knowledge of accessible technologies
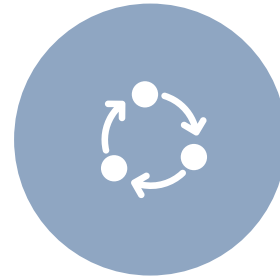
Around 40% of courts provide technologies and solutions to support digital inclusion of PWDs in comparison with almost 75% of courts that ensure physical accessibility of their premises
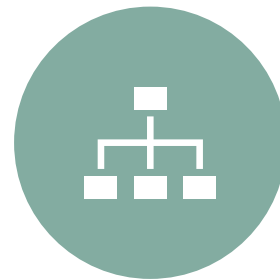
38% of courts provide low or very low level of accessibility and inclusiveness of the technology deployment for PWDs

Survey Participants

76 respondents from 29 countries

Albania	Indonesia	Macedonia
Australia	Jamaica	Russia
Austria	Kazakhstan	Rwanda
Bhutan	Kenya	Spain
Brazil	Latvia	Ukraine
Croatia	Malawi	United Arab Emirates
Finland	Nepal	United Kingdom
France	Netherlands	
Gambia	New Zealand	United States
Germany	Nigeria	
India	North	

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Other (please specify)	44.74%	34
Official at Court	30.26%	23
Judge	10.53%	8
Professor	10.53%	8
Official of a Ministry of Justice	2.63%	2
Prosecutor	1.32%	1
Student	1.32%	1
Total Respondents: 76		
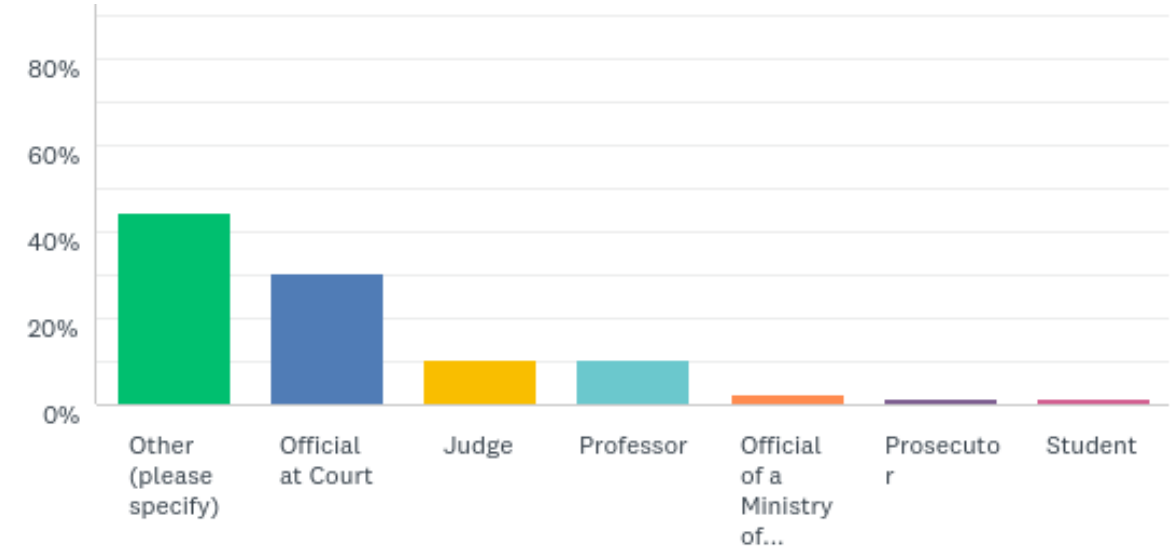
Diverse Respondents

Others **working with courts, e.g.** diplomats, human rights activists, IT specialists, architects, project managers, etc.

Courts and Digital Transformation
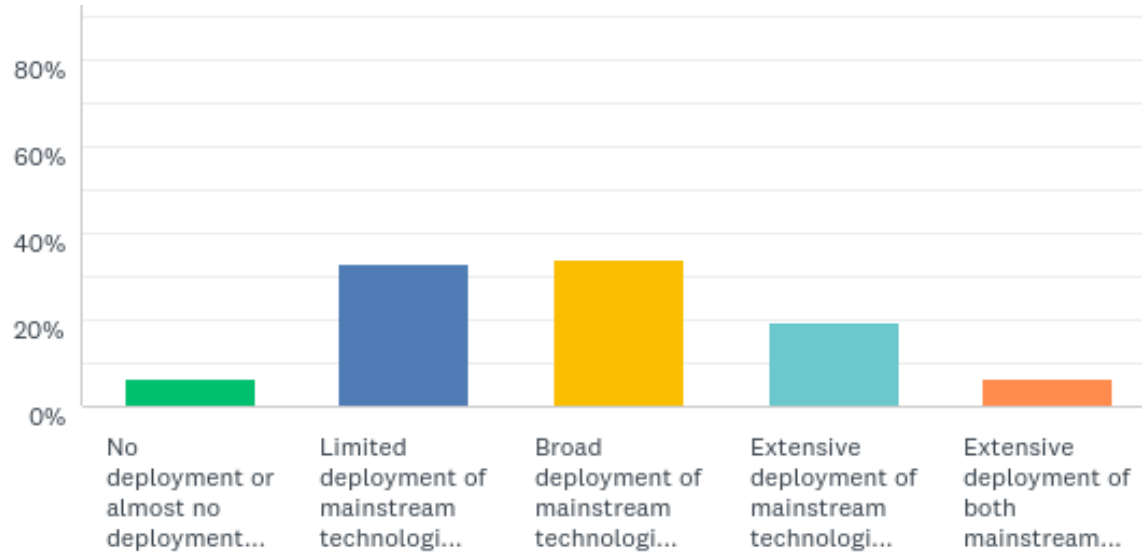
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No deployment or almost no deployment of technology	6.58%	5
Limited deployment of mainstream technologies (e.g. websites, mobile apps, digital documents) primarily for internal use	32.89%	25
Broad deployment of mainstream technologies (e.g. websites, mobile apps, digital documents), both for internal use and public use	34.21%	26
Extensive deployment of mainstream technologies for internal and public use. Exploring use of leading-edge technologies and smart solutions (e.g. artificial intelligence, online dispute resolution)	19.74%	15
Extensive deployment of both mainstream and leading-edge technologies delivering measurable impact and value	6.58%	5
TOTAL		76

Courts worldwide are becoming smarter

To what extent is technology being deployed in courts?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	59.21%	45
No	17.11%	13
Not sure	23.68%	18
TOTAL		76
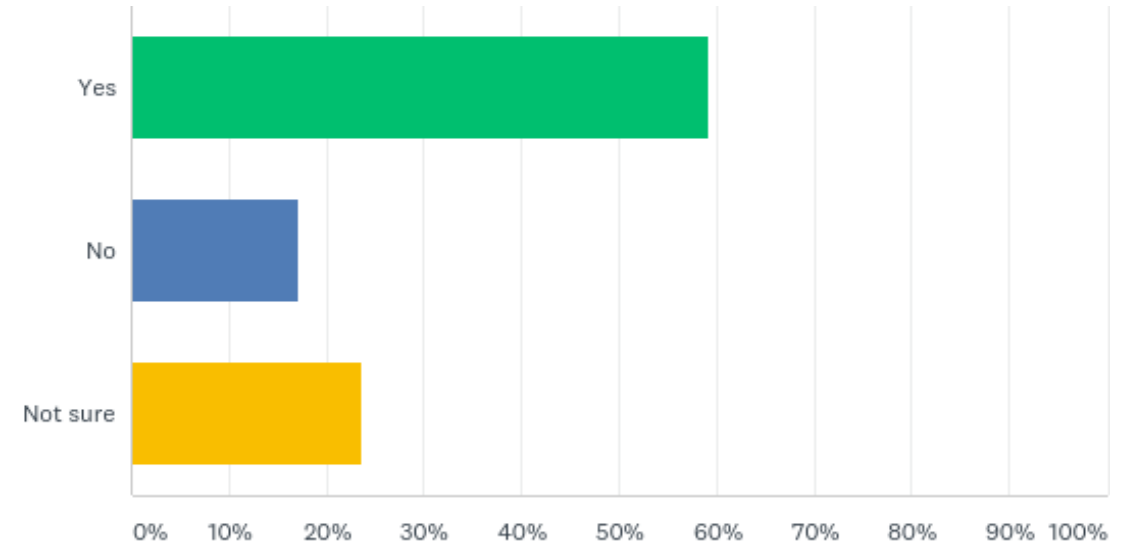
Most courts have budget to deploy technology

Do courts have an annual budget allocated to digitization and the deployment of technology?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increase efficiencies	78.95%	60
Increase access to justice	52.63%	40
Cost savings	47.37%	36
Collect and use data	26.32%	20
Provide better user experience	18.42%	14
Increase transparency	18.42%	14
Legal mandate	14.47%	11
Other (please specify)	5.26%	4
Environmental sustainability	3.95%	3
Total Respondents: 76		
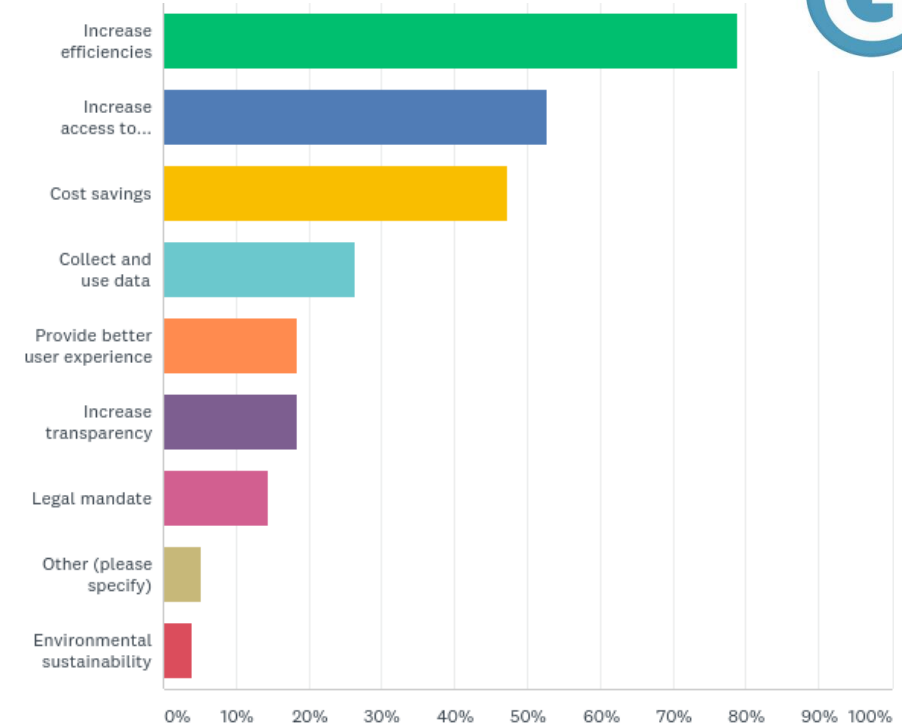
Courts want to be more efficient and more accessible

What are the primary reasons for deploying technology in courts?

| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Digital documents to replace paper	75.00%	57
Digital case management (system to track hearings, dispositions, etc.)	75.00%	57
Digital payments (web, mobile, kiosks to pay fines and fees, etc.)	59.21%	45
Digitalization of procedures (filling in forms, requesting services, etc.)	57.89%	44
Remote access to data (online legal documents, case bundles, case libraries, up-to-date hearing schedules)	56.58%	43
Electronic scheduling (e-scheduling)	47.37%	36
Remote court appearances (e.g. video-enabled trial hearings)	42.11%	32
Online Dispute Resolution (e.g. mechanisms of alternative dispute resolution online)	17.11%	13
Other (please specify)	6.58%	5
No technology is being deployed currently	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 76		
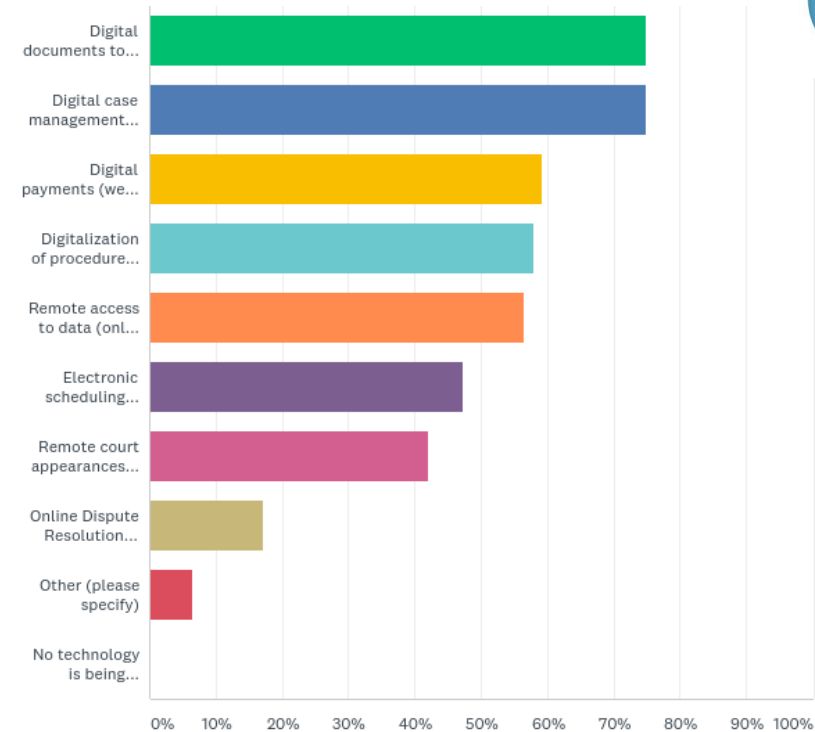
Courts are using tech to support core processes | Which technologies are currently deployed in the courts?

Courts and Accessibility

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	60.27%	44
No	35.62%	26
Not sure	4.11%	3
TOTAL		73
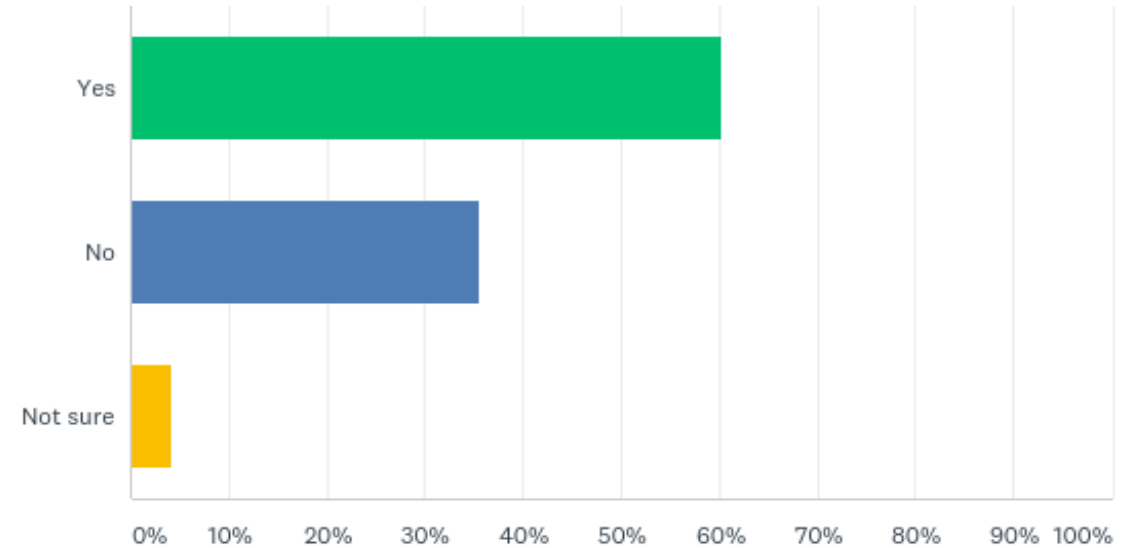
Most courts know they have international commitments

Are you aware of the UN CRPD, defining rights related to access to justice for persons with disabilities?

VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	VERY HIGH	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
16.44%	21.92%	45.21%	15.07%	1.37%		
12	16	33	11	1	73	2.63

Very low   Low   Moderate   High   Very high
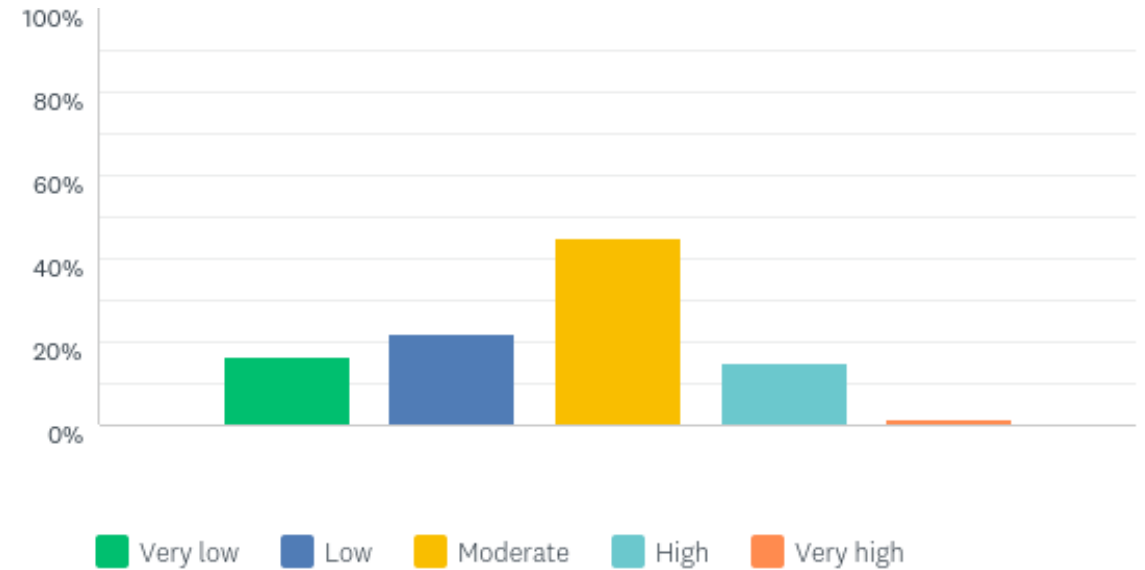
Court technologies are not accessible

How would you rate the accessibility & inclusiveness of technology deployments for persons with disabilities?

NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER	25% OF TIME (APPROXIMATELY)	50% OF TIME (APPROXIMATELY)	75% OF TIME (APPROXIMATELY)	ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
24.66% 18	23.29% 17	16.44% 12	12.33% 9	23.29% 17	73	2.86

Legend:
- Never or almost never
- 25% of time (approximately)
- 50% of time (approximately)
- 75% of time (approximately)
- Always or almost always
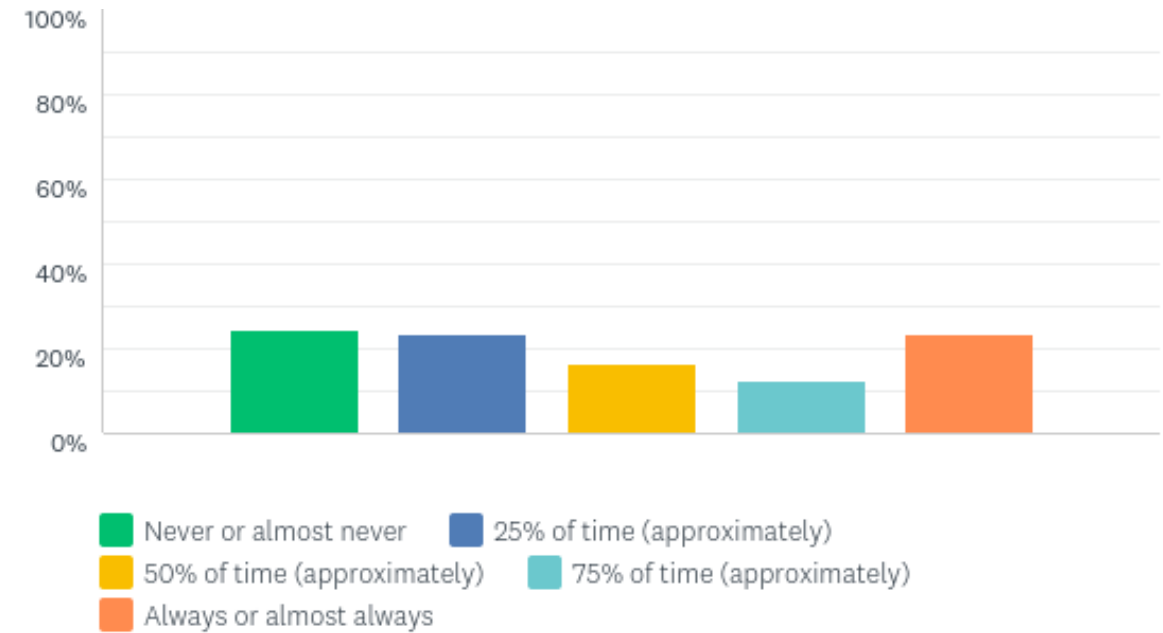
Courts are failing persons with disabilities

How often are requests for accommodation from persons with disabilities accepted and effectively applied courts?

Courts are better at physical accessibility than digital

Which technologies and procedures are available to support accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities?
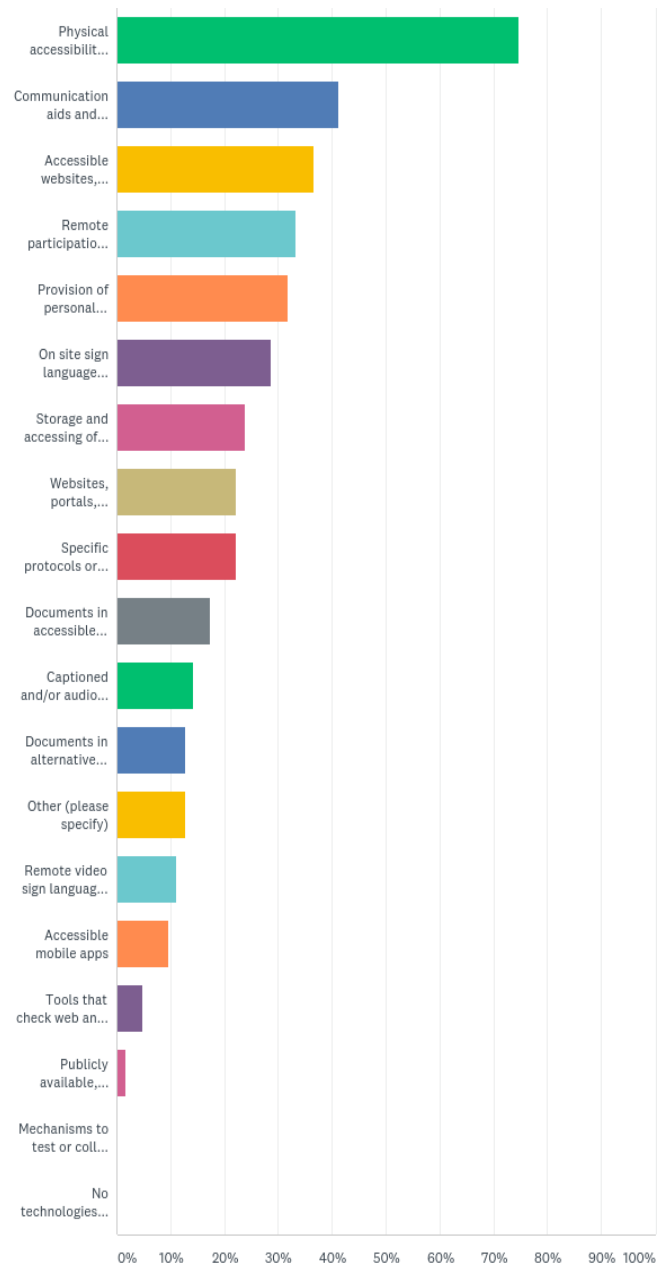
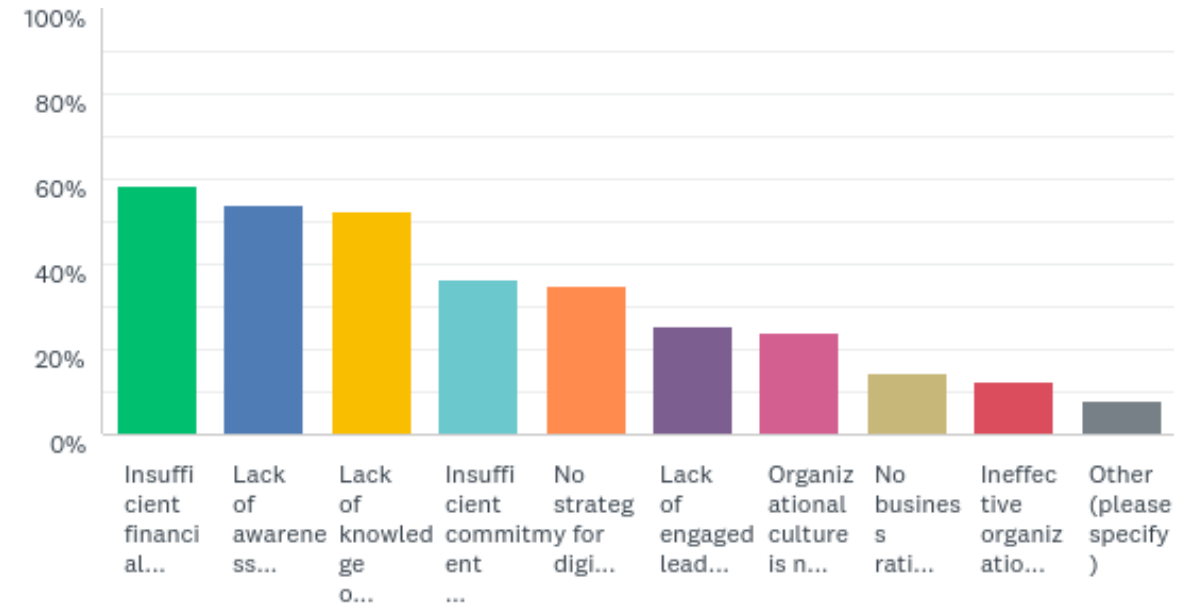| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Physical accessibility (built environment, e.g. ramps)	74.60%	47
Communication aids and services for persons with disabilities (e.g. visual, speech, hearing)	41.27%	26
Accessible websites, online portals or kiosks	36.51%	23
Remote participation in court (e.g. via phone, video)	33.33%	21
Provision of personal assistance for persons with disabilities	31.75%	20
On site sign language interpretation	28.57%	18
Storage and accessing of information online (general information and case-specific-databases)	23.81%	15
Websites, portals, platforms to provide information regarding measures available to and for persons with disabilities	22.22%	14
Specific protocols or procedures to address petitions of reasonable adjustments or accommodations	22.22%	14
Documents in accessible formats (formatted for use with a screen reader)	17.46%	11
Captioned and/or audio described video	14.29%	9
Documents in alternative formats (e.g. braille, easy-to-read format)	12.70%	8
Other (please specify)	12.70%	8
Remote video sign language interpretation	11.11%	7
Accessible mobile apps	9.52%	6
Tools that check web and document content for accessibility	4.76%	3
Publicly available, comprehensive and functional ICT accessibility policies	1.59%	1
Mechanisms to test or collect feedback on how the measures in place are working for users with disabilities	0.00%	0
No technologies to support accessibility are available currently	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 63		

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	9.52%	6
No	42.86%	27
Not sure	47.62%	30
TOTAL		63
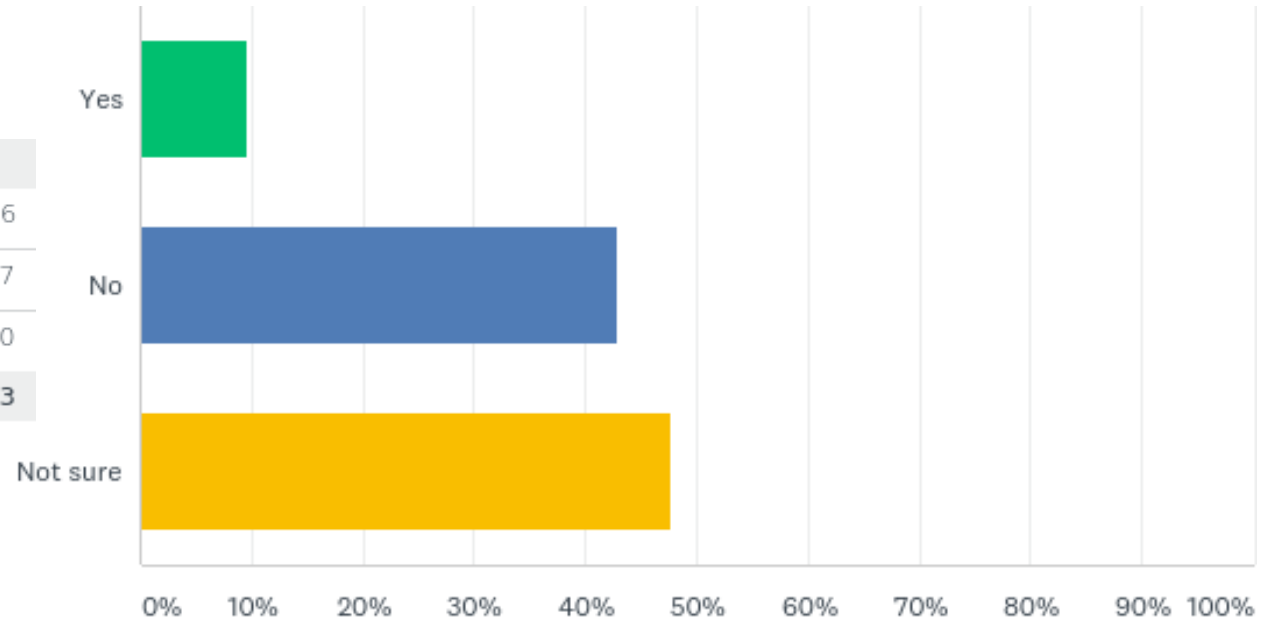
Courts may not be budgeting for digital inclusion

Do the courts have an annual budget for ICT accessibility and digital inclusion of persons with disabilities?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Insufficient financial resources	58.73%	37
Lack of awareness about disability	53.97%	34
Lack of knowledge of accessible technology	52.38%	33
Insufficient commitment to diversity and inclusion	36.51%	23
No strategy for digital inclusion	34.92%	22
Lack of engaged leadership	25.40%	16
Organizational culture is not supportive	23.81%	15
No business rationale for inclusion and accessibility	14.29%	9
Ineffective organizational processes (e.g. procurement)	12.70%	8
Other (please specify)	7.94%	5
Total Respondents: 63		

Courts need help to be more accessible and inclusive

What are the obstacles to achieving greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in courts?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
The procurement department and officials have limited awareness of ICT accessibility and digital inclusion. They include it as part of the procurement process only infrequently and in very general terms.	57.14%	36
The procurement department and officials use defined ICT accessibility and digital inclusion criteria and incorporate them in the procurement process. However, the criteria are applied inconsistently to technology products, services, and subcontractors.	25.40%	16
The procurement department and officials consistently require ICT accessibility and digital inclusion in the procurement process.	7.94%	5
In making buying decisions, the procurement department and officials give preference to the most accessible ICTs that support clear digital inclusion outcomes. They regularly assess whether the accessibility of products and services purchased is improving.	7.94%	5
The procurement department and officials prevent the purchase of inaccessible technology products or services and use metrics to ensure technology deployments meet the needs of all people.	1.59%	1
TOTAL		63
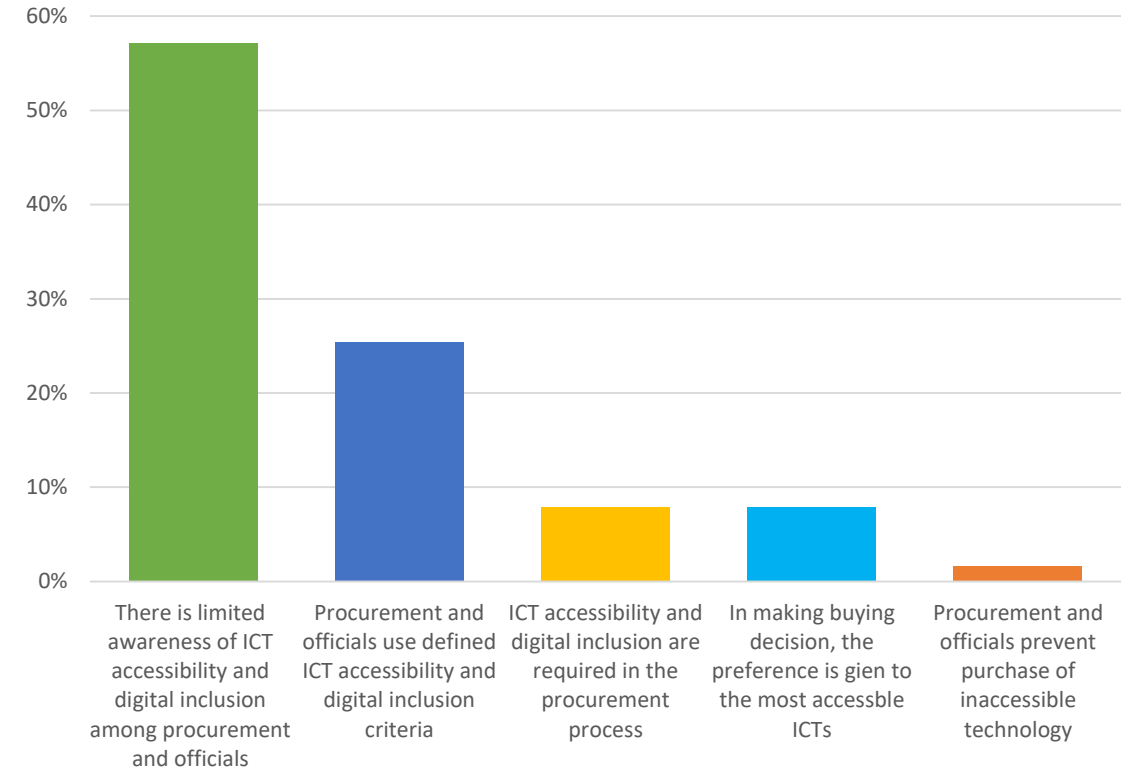
Most courts can use procurement to be more accessible and inclusive

How are accessibility and digital inclusion for persons with disabilities considered when purchasing technology in courts?

	STRONLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Technology could be used to improve access to justice for persons with disabilities	11.11% 7	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	23.81% 15	65.08% 41	63	4.32
Professionals working at courts and within the field of justice would benefit from training on disability and accessible technology	11.11% 7	0.00% 0	4.76% 3	30.16% 19	53.97% 34	63	4.16
I would be willing to use technology to increase access to justice for persons with disabilities in the court/s where I do work	9.52% 6	0.00% 0	6.35% 4	20.63% 13	63.49% 40	63	4.29
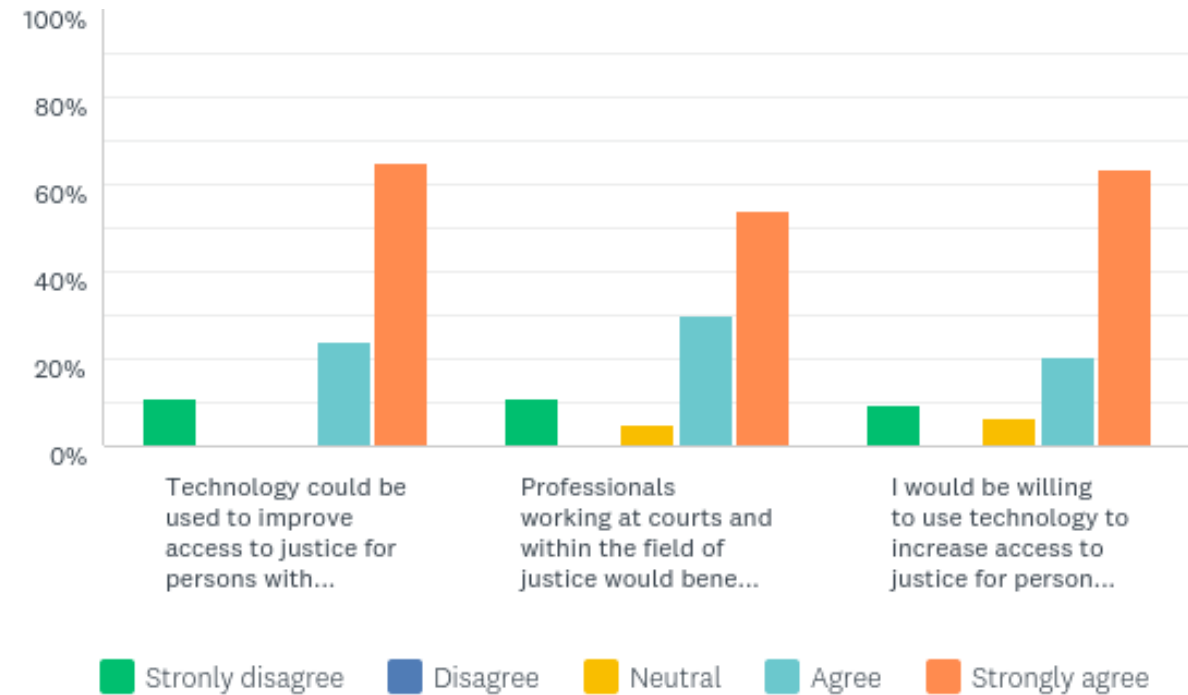
Court professionals see technology as a key to access to justice

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Contact information

James Thurston

G3ict – The Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs

Vice President for Global Strategy & Development

jthurston@g3ict.org

@jamesthu

www.g3ict.org

www.buyict4all.org