

# Accelerating innovation at the confluence of public, political, citizen interests

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## Abstract

Could accelerating the best and highest quality innovation be the most effective strategy to drive sustainable growth? It tries to answer one of the great challenges of our time: what transformations will digital technology produce - from artificial intelligence to virtual reality - in social and political life, at the confluence of public, political, citizen interests? Analyzing how it can be used by the state and big technology companies with the aim of exercising control over people's lives and drawing inspiration from the millennial treasury of human thought, we try to challenge readers to review the meaning of concepts such as "democracy", "justice", "liberty" "equality", "power", "property". But sometimes or in such uncertain times, slowing down innovation can seem like an appropriate strategy. However, history shows us that accelerating relevant innovation is the best way to mitigate the consequences of any challenge. In this context, the Smart Cities International Conference (SCIC), 10th edition, 8 December 9 – 2022, with the provocative title Acceleration of innovation, organized by the Faculty of Public Administration within the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, invites you with love to the 10th edition of the Smart Cities International Conference, motivated us to "innovate" at a higher level, to strengthen the value equation of the conference and to further stimulate the interest of the readers.

**Keywords:** accelerating innovation, artificial intelligence, challenges, public interest, rights and freedoms.

## 1. Argument - warning: acceleration of innovation, steps towards the future or a return to the past?!

For our society, the year 2020 brought an unprecedented situation in a pandemic context never seen before by contemporaries. The danger of losing life and the fear of the unknown have determined and continue to determine a state of insecurity that fundamentally affects all areas of society. Of course, the sphere of law could not be avoided either, this very important field of society being seriously affected by all the measures that were taken to combat, limit and avoid the spread of the virus. This epidemiological challenge faced by humanity generated specific regulations but also highlighted the role of artificial intelligence, digitization, innovation, in general. Our work has been designed with an increased degree of accessibility and is intended for the public of any age and any intellectual, humanistic or scientific training, established specialists or young people at the beginning of their careers. It can also be used as didactic material in the university environment, with the aim of orienting and substantiating the taste for debate, practicing critical thinking, developing analytical capacity and showing the creative spirit. Analyzing the relationship between science and current technology acquisitions, we appreciate the fact that the products introduced to the market by hi-tech companies, in their vast majority, do not derive from scientific research, but above all from the induction of a consumer need.

Technological innovations do not emphasize human or social requirements, but the consideration of increasing profit in an era where technological dependence has become a reality and man's relationship with nature is disturbed by the power that technology gives him, by the exponential growth of the population during the last decades and an obvious decline of spiritual values. The democratization of access to technological means and the lack of knowledge of their balanced use will generate the progressive alteration of material resources and may lead to the extinction of communities. A possible solution would be to reconsider the forms of learning and put the emphasis on educating citizens. This must be accompanied by the rational management of technology, the development of artificial intelligence in accordance with human values and the choice of progress solutions that capitalize on the moral perspective, opting in full knowledge between good and evil. From the beginning of the health crisis and now in full war at Romania's borders, actions dedicated to research should be intensified, with the aim of seeing how the pandemic influenced the acceleration of innovation, as well as its effects on people.

The exponential speed of technological innovation has made the analysis of trends in the field the main driver of studies about the future. However, we remained deficient in the analysis of social developments associated with technological progress. Studies on the cutting-edge fields that ensure competitiveness, as well as strategic studies dedicated to the legal field, reveal that technology has become essential, and man is the main problem. We have solutions that can help us solve the problems generated by overcoming the technological frontier, but we cannot say that we also have solutions to the problems of the beneficiaries of technology, the people. This is perhaps the most important battle in the near future - the re-settlement of technology in the world order on a lower circle than man, an almost heroic recovery of the integralist vision of the known universe. His solution is one that completes the discourse on technology with a philosophical reflection on the man of the future. The synthesis of this solution, difficult to describe in a few words, is that man as a person, and not the consumer, needs his own evolution to respond to a highly technological future. The appeal to morality has an important role: "it is not possible for the lot of mankind to improve significantly until there is a significant change in the fundamental makeup of its way of thinking." So said the English philosopher John Stuart Mill in his *Autobiography* from 1873 [1]. The approach must be laborious, a true testing ground for the most significant effects of technologies on the state, democracy, justice and politics, but the real stake is to find the direction of change in the way of thinking and in society. It is not enough for the majority of citizens to have unrestricted access to the Internet and to have a high-performance smartphone. We must realize not only the fantastic power of technology that instantly integrates you into a civic or political platform of debate, but also the limits to which the digital framework established by manufacturers, internet providers and network administrators forces you. The more we use technology platforms to exercise our freedoms, the more we become constrained by technology. The more we use technology platforms to exercise our freedoms, the more we become constrained by technology. Also, online presence makes man the "study" object of technologies that monitor and evaluate him by collecting data about him. This informational integration is itself a form of power. It is for the first time in history that almost everything relevant about our lives and identity can be collected, analyzed and stored in the form of data. Even more important is another aspect. The more information available to government agencies and

technology companies, the more personalized tools there are that can be used to impose third-party behaviors and goals on us. It should also not be ignored that the mere act of collecting data can act as a deterrent to certain types of behavior – if we know we are being tracked, we are more likely to discipline ourselves.

Furthermore, technologies have the ability to control our perception of the world. We increasingly rely on them to gather and select information that serves a wide variety of needs. And the dilemma that, from now on, we will encounter more and more often is that between my technologically mediated reality and the technologically mediated reality of others. From this dilemma it will be very easy to pass to another problem: what effect will the use of artificial intelligence algorithms to solve the social and political problems caused by the determination of our political priorities? An artificial intelligence democracy that imposes new rules on social debate is no longer a utopian and very distant goal. At the same time, however, it is a very strange and worrying prospect because it represents a radical mutation in our traditional way of being. "If politics is about the collective life of people - why we live together, how we organize and bind our collective life, how we could or should organize and bind this collective life differently - then any change in what it means being human is likely to have important political consequences. A world in which a class of "new demigods" appears, who will live alongside the ancient homo sapiens, is one in which the very notion of politics ceases to have a clear or fixed meaning [2]." I hope that these lines and brief reflections to awaken your desire to participate in the debates about our future. In this sense, from the perspective of public and citizen interests, we will now address the issue of the influence of innovation in the legal and judicial system.

## **2. Acceleration of innovation and its impact on the legal and judicial system**

What is the concrete impact of new technologies on the legal world in Romania? To quote a famous song, when we refer to a significant impact of new technologies in justice, I think we can say that "the best is yet to come". Moreover, the technologies that are new in the justice system are far from having a novelty character in society in general, so we could also have a discussion about what can be defined as new technology in the legal world. Let's not forget, however, that until not long ago, the only way we could send documents to the courts outside of working hours, in order to be considered to have been submitted on that day, was through the Romanian Post, communications by email or fax confirming the date of dispatch [3]. I believe that there is still no significant impact of new technologies on the legal professions in Romania, nor on the day-to-day activity of the professionals. However, if I look back I can't help but notice how my daily work as a lawyer has changed. First, it is now much easier to process and access a much larger number of documents. As a rule, as a lawyer in very high-volume files you have to access and process a huge number of documents. Whether we're talking about internal documents or the pieces of a large criminal investigation file, they can all now be stored on a secure cloud or server and accessed safely from your mobile phone, tablet or laptop from anywhere. Unfortunately, the lack of digitization of authorities, whether we are talking about prosecutors' offices, courts or other public authorities, discourages the adoption of new technologies by professionals in the legal world. Internal communication between the teams of lawyers or lawyer and client is increasingly based on new technologies, while interaction with the authorities is hampered by a lack of digitization. I know that these are not new technologies

at the moment, but in order to be able to talk about new technologies it is essential that we first talk about digitization as a pillar of the development of new technologies [4].

Here we could talk about a series of changes brought recently in the practice of courts and prosecutors' offices in Romania, such as the use of the electronic file or correspondence carried out by email. Sure, they're not new technologies in 2021, but it seems the pandemic has led to their widespread acceptance and use nonetheless. Technology often simplifies and facilitates the work of those involved in the act of justice, including the work of lawyers. However, sometimes the imposition of certain methods of action (such as scheduling by email or through the programs made available by different courts for the registration of applications, the study of files, etc.) also creates some order that can even be considered counter-productive. If until now it was possible to study a file from one day to another, now these activities must be scheduled well in advance. Obviously, these aspects are not completely related to technology, but to the way in which we understand how to use it.

The pandemic has been a catalyst for some changes in the administration of justice, and I hope that the trend of improvements will continue. It would be regrettable to restore the previous situation from all points of view, including the technologies and good practices developed in the organization of justice, with the relaxation of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Until now, in our career or in our personal life, we have encountered applications or software that use Artificial Intelligence, but in the work of a lawyer, these software can be said to be largely absent, although they are extremely necessary. Empathy being a professional skill for me, always trying to think or understand the position of the one I interact with, I can say that when I use a software that uses AI and that software is still not very accurate, I always think that these technologies are at started and with time they can develop and be more and more useful. Just as computers were not the most useful tools in the 1990s and now they have become indispensable to anyone, whether we are talking about private or professional life, in the same way I believe that software using AI has the ability to become an ever-increasing support for us and maybe in a few years we will talk about addiction to them. Compared to their necessity in the activity of a lawyer, I think they can support the lawyer to study and identify the nerve points of a file, even if that file was composed of hundreds or thousands of volumes of two or three hundred pages of documents. And even if even now lawyers study the cases thoroughly and manage to formulate defenses, I think that the time required to actually study a case to formulate the best strategy could be greatly reduced. I can tell you that in a process reaction time is essential, sometimes even the best defense strategy, if applied too late, would no longer have any beneficial effect on the client's situation.

Humanity is now facing a global crisis. Perhaps the greatest crisis of our generation. The decisions that people and governments make in the next period will probably shape the world for years to come. They will shape not only our health systems, but also our economy, politics and culture. We must act quickly and decisively. We should also consider the long-term consequences of our actions. When choosing between alternatives, we should ask not only how to overcome the immediate threat, but also what kind of world we will live in once the storm passes. Yes, the storm will pass, humanity will survive, most of us will be

alive – but we will live in a different world. Many short-term emergency measures will become the norm of life. This is the nature of emergencies. They rapidly advance historical processes. Decisions that would normally take years of deliberation are made in a matter of hours. Immature and even dangerous technologies are put into operation because the risks of doing nothing are greater. Entire countries serve as guinea pigs in large-scale social experiments. What happens when everyone works from home and only communicates remotely? What happens when entire schools and universities operate online? In normal times, governments, businesses and boards of education would never agree to carry out such experiments. But these are not normal times. In this time of crisis, we face two particularly important choices. The first is between totalitarian surveillance and citizen empowerment. The second is between nationalist isolation and global solidarity [4].

Turning from the past to the future, we must ask ourselves how the revolutionary digital technologies - information and communication technologies - will influence our political system. This is the question that is the basis of this book. We know that the effects of technology differ from place to place. The advent of printing in China and Korea, for example, did not cause the change determined by the advent of Gutenberg's printing press in Europe, where society was more prepared for a religious and political revolution. Such differences can be explained, as a rule, through the prism of economic and political circumstances. Who owns and controls a certain technology, how it is received by the public, whether its possible uses are considered in advance and whether it is directed towards a certain goal - all these will influence the impact of that technology. Therefore we should not jump to the conclusion that the development of a certain technology will inevitably or inexorably produce a certain social effect. Consider the Internet: because its network structure was suitable for a decentralized and non-hierarchical organization, many confidently predicted that "life" in the online environment would be quite different from that in the offline world. However, things did not stay that way. Thanks, in large measure, to the commercial and political world in which it emerged, the Internet has increasingly come under the coordination and control of large companies and political entities that track and influence our online experience. Furthermore, we cannot consider technology to mean progress. Exempti, gratia, Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, believed that his explosives would make people give up war more than "a thousand international conventions". The creator of the machine gun believed that his invention would "make war impossible". In the 1890s, in the early days of the telephone, AT&T's chief engineer announced that "one day we will build a world-wide telephone network that will unite all the people on Earth in one brotherly community." In 1912, still optimistic, Guglielmo Marconi, the inventor of the radio, announced that "the beginning of the age of wireless communication will make it impossible to start a war because war will become ridiculous." In 1917, Jules Verne declared that "the submarine can contribute to the complete cessation of hostilities because fleets will become useless and war will become impossible." Here all these creations, as well as the torpedo, the hot air balloon, toxic gases, land mines, rockets and laser weapons have been announced as inventions that will end all war. Which didn't happen. While Lenin described communism as "Soviet power plus electrification", Trotsky realized that technological progress is no guarantee of moral progress. "Next to the 20th century", he wrote, "the 10th or 13th century" coexists: A hundred million people use electricity, but continue to believe in the magical power of omens and exorcism [5].

A modern justice requires the implementation of modern management standards, able to provide quality and effectiveness to the act of justice. The realization of an efficient, accessible and quality act of justice, based on an integrated strategic management, requires a coherent and integrated approach to the needs of equipment, "upgrading" and, last but not least, it needs a vision that, taking into account the principles of independence and decentralization, to allow the concentration of resources, taking into account the fact that the implementation of IT solutions is a continuous process, which requires permanent adaptation and renewal by reference to new technologies and emerging products [6]. Through the "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the digitalization of justice in the European Union", from 2020, the European Commission set out to identify at the Union level the opportunities offered by digital technologies, in order to ensure easy access to justice and judicial cooperation effective cross-border [7]. Also, the document aimed to guide and coordinate a process at EU level to accelerate the digitization of judicial procedures, to promote the interoperability of different national systems and the adoption of new technologies in the day-to-day functioning of justice systems, with the consolidation of procedures in which The EU has competence, especially in cross-border cases. If the Strategy for the Development of the Judicial System 2015-2020 formulated as an objective the transition to the digitization of the judicial system, currently, it is necessary to complete this objective [8].

The realization of the digitalization of the judicial system cannot be put into practice without a prior digitalization of the Ministry of Justice and subordinate institutions, considering the legal attributions and competences of the ministry in the logistical aspects of the functioning of the judicial system. The strategic vision on the digitalization of the justice system, at the national level, should also take into account an effective management of the use of equipment and financial resources, because only through a unitary vision can both the directions of action and their integration in a single compatible system, used both by the judicial system and by the ministry and subordinate institutions. In order to achieve a modern digitization system, able to respond to challenges that take into account the evolution of society and EU legislation, it is necessary to establish/modernize data centers, facilitate remote work by adopting mobile computing solutions, implement integrated registration systems, management and archiving of documents, digitization of the existing and generable archival fund, implementation of dedicated IT systems for processing and management of classified information, integrated surveillance and access control systems, securing the stations and the book fund in digital format, including the automation of managerial processes in the field of administration of the judicial public service, through artificial intelligence mechanisms and the introduction of computer robots to carry out recurring activities [9].

With the increase in the volume of data and taking into account the specifics of the activity and the level of security, such as the risks of cyber attack, it is imperative to take measures aimed at cyber security as a priority. Currently, the justice system faces a relatively low level of automation of certain procedures (e.g., it is necessary to develop new document-generating templates, including some issued by courts and prosecutor's offices), while certain workflows are not supported by the current system (eg, a good part of the registers provided by the legislative framework) or do not benefit from adequate data validation

procedures. The problems of the existing systems, from a technical point of view, are generated by an outdated architecture both in terms of system performance (e.g., inadequate reaction and response speeds at the level of courts/prosecutions with a high volume of activity, limitations in the use of certain functionalities such as predefined forms or types of functions for searching and displaying information, generating ad hoc reports for a large number of records, using the report generator for institutions with several departments, respecting security rules, etc.), as well as its maintenance ( e.g., implementing a relatively simple functionality requires disproportionate resources). The systems do not have a proper procedure for analyzing the functioning, identifying problems and their causes and developing solutions to solve them.

Currently, they represent a "mix" of functionalities and technologies, due to the outdated architecture and the multiple requirements introduced after the creation of these systems. In order to significantly improve performance, it would be necessary to redesign and rewrite the systems, using a unitary approach both from the point of view of functionalities and the technical solution, being necessary to adapt, modernize and expand the ECRIS electronic case management system, thus contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Judicial System Development Strategy. In order to achieve these objectives, it is necessary to establish, at the level and through collaboration with all the institutions involved, the development needs of the system, so that it corresponds in a significant percentage to the current requirements of the judicial system, both from a technological point of view and functional, with the subsequent establishment of state-of-the-art technologies, an IT&C system with an architecture based on services and layers, allowing the introduction of new functionalities to be done with minimal effort, ensuring a lifetime as long as possible of the system, under proper operating conditions.

Digitization has profound effects and is therefore coherently addressed at the level of all internal and external policies of the Union. The development of infrastructures, connectivity, user-centered services and protecting them all in times of crisis, together with the strengthening of regulations, investments, opportunities and impacts related to environmental and climate protection or sustainable development, as well as health, will play a important role. Building the right data ecosystem, according to the EU Commission's Data Strategy, will play a crucial role in how successfully Europe can shape the digital transformation. The stage and needs identified at the national level, as well as by the evolving European efforts, have outlined the EU guidelines regarding the digitalization of justice systems, constituting part of the new European impulse, an important objective foreseen among the political priorities of the Commission. In this sense, at the decision-making level, the need for digitization of justice was emphasized as representing an important condition for improving the quality of current systems, as well as the need for actions to be coordinated at the Union level, in order to effectively combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences his [10]. And now the armed conflict in Ukraine.

### **3. Digitized justice: realities and perspectives**

Some of our readers might be surprised by the optimistic tone of our more than optimistic statements about the use of artificial intelligence and digitization in our everyday lives. However, things are not quite like that, as anything man-made has advantages, some of its

effects also produce risks. When dealing with digital environments and the potential dangers they present, we must turn our attention not only to Google; nor can it simply be ignorance. Modern brain research shows that the widespread use of digital media is a serious cause for concern. Our brains are in a continuous process of change, from which it necessarily follows that the daily use of digital media cannot fail to have effects on us, the users. Digital media – computers, smart phones, game consoles and last but not least the television – are changing our lives. In the US, young people now spend more time on digital media – seven and a half hours a day – than they spend sleeping, according to a representative study of more than 2,000 children and young people between the ages of 8 and 18. In Germany, according to a survey of 43,500 students, ninth graders spend 7.5 hours a day on digital media, not including cell phones and MP3 players. That being the case, we find an alarm signal about digital dementia, a warning from Germany, from Manfred Spitzer, one of Germany's most famous neuroscientists, very involved in the debate about technology and education. He studied medicine, psychology and philosophy at the University of Freiburg, and is currently a professor of psychiatry at the University of Ulm, where he heads the University Psychiatric Clinic since 1997 and the Center for Neuroscience and Learning since 2004. He was twice visiting professor at Harvard University [11].

Another and more serious signal comes from here, in Romania, from the lawyer Gheorghe Piperea who, on a social network, draws attention to the fact that banks are preparing the introduction of digital currency issued by central banks. For the accuracy of the information, we reproduce the quote without interventions or comments. You, our readers, our judges, can do this. "Without wanting to annoy anyone, I'm highlighting a piece of news that slipped between the lines yesterday - that Romanian banks intend to abolish 3,000 ATMs. If implemented in a coordinated manner, the move will further reduce the circulation of peon money in the visible economy (with the consequence that circulation in the gray, non-visible economy will correspondingly increase). It is very likely that the coordinated cartel gesture of the banks comes in preparation for the imminent introduction of the digital currency issued by the central banks (CBDC - central bank digital currency), a totalitarian instrument through which we will be imprisoned in a global digital cage where everyone will sit , as in feudalism, on the bar corresponding to his social status. Each bee of the hive shall have the right to purchase with HIS money, obtained through HIS work/activity and taxed/taxed/penalized with amounts paid by HIM (to the state or state-approved corporation), only those products or services that he will allow the central bank. This horrible apartheid will be a simple matter, to be perfected from the buttons of the digital platform within which all our digital avatars (s.n) are stored and built from estimates of our behavior, made based on what we leave/upload on internet or in social networks every time we use them - and we do this with the awareness that our life is better, easier, more spectacular, and the decision belongs to us, not being manufactured, unconsciously, by the technological golem in which we were deep down With CBDC on the forehead, under the skin, in the smartphone, in the blood, we will no longer be able to buy or sell anything but what the beast will allow us, a beast whose mark we will be forced to wear everywhere, sleeping and waking, to work in the amphitheater or in the fields, in the church or in the bodega. However, here is what art. 2191 paragraph 1 CCIV: "By setting up a deposit of funds with a credit institution, it acquires ownership of the sums of money



deposited and is OBLIGED to return the same monetary quantity, of the same species, at the agreed term or, as the case may be, ANYTIME, at the depositor's request, in compliance with the notice period established by the parties or, failing that, by custom". Based on this legal text, all those who have money in the bank can request their withdrawal at any time, in full and in cash. The bank is obliged to return this money immediately - not to other bank accounts, but even in cash, at the counter. The bank may be forced to work with people and with physical money, at least to give us our money back, money on which they built their debt-money empire. Only if you have loose money can you do anything you want with it and buy anything with it without being forced to bear the mark of the Beast. Of course, you cannot make payments higher than 5 thousand lei per day - but who needs to consume 5000 lei per day?" [12]. There would be more to say about the criminal liability of artificial intelligence and the ethics of artificial intelligence [13]. All this and more in a future study. Now let's return to the subject of our scientific research endeavor, digital security, and discuss some topics that government officials should consider when planning or executing digital infrastructure upgrades. It's all too easy to focus on tackling each of these digital infrastructures separately—especially since the money often comes from a mission-focused funding source, in the case of a government agency that might distribute funds. Funds are expected to be spent by public administration officials or their private sector partners on distinct projects in specific infrastructures. Although this result is understandable, the adoption of such a narrow hierarchical vision generates a form of institutional myopia that limits the potential benefits that can be obtained from the unitary investment and the simultaneous modernization of several infrastructures. Can anyone predict how the 1956 bill that created the United States' interstate highway system will be useful and how the modernization of road infrastructure will transform the lives of Americans and even the landscape of the country. Digital technology evolves and improves rapidly, but physical infrastructure usually does not keep up. The largest city in Romania still uses water pipes that were installed in the 1960s. Unlike our personal electronics, where we routinely replace older products with new and improved ones, the infrastructure cannot simply remove and replace, so it is essential to consider the long-term implications of purchases. If you have a choice, instead of adding hardware that is difficult to upgrade later, opt for software-based solutions such as software-defined networking and cloud solutions. To the extent that the same capabilities can be achieved through either software-based or hardware-based solutions, software-based approaches can be updated and improved more quickly and affordably. The priorities for operational technologies in infrastructure are usually operational safety and reliability. Security is in third place. But cyber security must be included in any infrastructure project. Otherwise, not only is that infrastructure and its users vulnerable due to its interconnected nature, but we all become collectively vulnerable to cascading failures and consequences that can spread across sectors and regions.

For public/private entities modern infrastructure must be "smart". Disparate infrastructures should be able to communicate with each other, and funding agencies and infrastructure providers need to plan ahead for interoperability to avoid "siloed" solutions. Because threats can move across networks and to other networks, no infrastructure can afford to operate in an information vacuum, and cybersecurity plans must include threat intelligence sharing. You can't protect yourself against a threat you don't understand and can't see. Cyber attacks are inevitable, so infrastructure providers should be able to coordinate their

responses to improve their ability to recover from them. Just as first responders from neighboring jurisdictions must be able to use common communications in the event of an emergency requiring a multi-jurisdictional response, it is easier to plan for front-line interoperability than to improvise during a crisis.

## **5. Conclusions**

Innovation is the basis of all developed societies of the 21st century. Today, Romania is part of the European Union, one of the most innovative and dynamic communities worldwide. Moreover, innovation has become the differentiator in today's competitive landscape. Old solutions are no longer always applicable, and political decision-makers must quickly implement new ideas and solutions to remain competitive and relevant to their citizens. The innovation process is present in all fields and requires a thorough understanding on the part of public and private entities and innovation has become the element of synergy between the private, public and academic environments. In order to have a sustainable development, Romania must focus primarily on innovation in education, according to the answers of 49.2% of those surveyed, more precisely, in new education models, new subjects, methodologies adapted and converging to digitalization trends. In second place (20.6%) respondents selected technological innovation (using new technologies to create new products). The third place is occupied by the innovation of continuous improvement of organizational processes (15.9%), and the last place, with a percentage of 14.3%, is the radical innovation in business (new products, new types of services). The innovative element within the educational system is seen by the majority of respondents as relatively low (32.8%). 24.6% believe that innovation is present in the educational system in Romania, while 21.3% believe that it is not present at all [14].

At the same time, the new innovation model - innovation-as-a-service - proposes a pragmatic process for the future and in the context of geopolitical tensions and the health crisis, it represents good news for society in order to reach a substantial development threshold. The direct benefit of innovation-as-a-service is to reduce the complexity of innovation so that teams can focus on the core competencies that have brought the organization success so far: generating new ideas, being present in the market, keeping in touch with customers. Innovation-as-a-service reduces, and in some cases eliminates, the effort and cost of building a team. Currently, it is no longer possible to discuss innovation without the involvement of elements of sustainability, which has become a priority field in Romania. Innovation processes, in addition to the fact that they must improve operations and make them more efficient, must ensure that they also involve the element of sustainability, both financially, socially, climatically, and from the point of view of responsibility for those present but also for generations. Likewise, the same significant majority is maintained when it comes to the potential impact that innovation-as-a-service can have on the public environment, with the aim of accelerating certain processes with added value for citizens. So in the public domain this new service can be a real help.

Digital innovation has the potential to radically improve people's lives and help drive development. In addition, this pandemic has forced all of us, in all fields, to get out of our comfort zone, to adapt to the new situation generated by social restrictions and to find ways to continue functioning coherently and effectively. Society cannot stagnate from any point of view, especially in the legal field and their way of solving, justice being the regulator of

society. In trials, virtual hearings have become the new normal, and it remains to be seen whether the situation will remain that way. But we can predict that this benefit will remain earned, it is a tested possibility that has proven useful, functional and advantageous from various points of view, within the reach of those who want it, which can be quite easily adopted. Courts have had, and still have, the mission of being trend-setters in implementing the most modern means of carrying out procedures that meet user requirements. However, it is important to differentiate between different types of virtual hearings, complete or hybrid, dedicated to a certain procedural stage, which in a post-pandemic world can be harmoniously combined and used so that the arbitration can only benefit. For any form of virtual hearings, the participants together with the court are required to evaluate the applicable law and rules, in order to respect the parties' right to a fair trial and all procedural principles governing a fair trial. In the light of the recent adoption of new procedural rules by the majority of courts, which would provide openness and ensure the normative framework necessary for the use of these modern methodologies for conducting trials, the application of new technologies will become the habit and the organization of a virtual hearing will become more and more easier and used. Of course, not without weighing the advantages/risks of such a measure, according to the particular circumstances of each individual case. Certainly, the fact that many national courts are developing experience with remote hearings is an opportunity that should be cherished and taken advantage of, as it allows participants in the administration of justice to increase their set of tools and modern technologies to find the most suitable solution for each case.

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