DIGITAL TRANSPARENCY IN BRAZILIAN JUDICIAL POWER: A PANORAMIC APPLICATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN COURTS OF JUSTICE

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Abstract: Transparency can facilitate the opening of public agencies, allowing access to information. In addition to the Executive and Legislative powers, the Judiciary also has the responsibility for giving transparency to its activities. Thus, the present article seeks to verify how transparency is employed in the portals of three Courts of Justice - SP, BA and MS. For the collection of the material, guided navigation was proposed. Thus, with the material collected, the work analyzed the structure of access to information made available in the three portals of the Courts of Justice and verified the differences in the application of active transparency between them, considering the following aspects: organizational structure, program and actions, disclosure expenses, information on procurement and contracts, and legal issues. It was found that the Courts of Justice comply with the basic requirements of active transparency. In addition, each of the Courts has peculiarities in the application of transparency.

Keywords: Democracy; Digital Transparency; Judicial.

1 Introduction

Transparency can facilitate the opening of public bodies, enabling access to information and, consequently, reducing the State’s monopoly on official documents, making it a guardian of public information (MICHENER; CONTRERAS; NISKIER, 2018), then creating public transparency, that is, transparency on public affairs, relevant and of public interest element (ALMADA, 2017).

In the Brazilian case, there are different mechanisms created to access public information and, consequently, transparency. In addition to the Fiscal Responsibility Law, Brazil also has the so-called Access to Information Law. Created in 2011, Law 12,527 is a regulatory complement to Article 5 of the 1988 Constitution, as a public transparency mechanism, contemplating, as described in its Article 1, “the public bodies that are part of the direct administration of the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary branches” (BRASIL, 2017, online).

In addition to the Executive and Legislative branches, the Judiciary one is also in charge of applying the transparency of its activities to society, that is, the Judiciary branch must have an organized and structured management to develop access to information (ANGÉLICO et al., 2017).

Therefore, this article aims at analyzing how transparency is applied in the State Courts. The proposal is to verify how active transparency is applied in the portals of three State Courts, a
segment that represents more than half of the expenses, processes, magistrates and civil servants of the Brazilian Judiciary branch. This fact shows the States Courts importance and reinforces the importance and challenges of applying transparency within the Judiciary branch.

The analysis of transparency in the State Courts portals, proposed in this investigation, is relevant due to the importance of this sector in the Judiciary branch. The data presented by the “Justiça em Números” report, a survey carried out by the National Council of Justice, shows that one of the largest segments of the Brazilian Judiciary branch is the State Justice, where the State Courts – SC – are located.

Thus, the procedures and methods used in the article for the collection and analysis of material related to active transparency, are present in the State Courts portals, such as navigation oriented to the categories of the Public Transparency Assessment Index, developed by the Public Transparency Program at Fundação Getúlio Vargas.

The article is divided in four parts. The first one deals with the theoretical aspect of transparency and its presence in the Judiciary branch. After it, the methodological section of collection and analysis. Subsequently, the collected material analysis and, finally, the conclusions about the research are presented.

2 Judiciary Branch: Openness and Transparency

2.1 The transparency importance in the Judiciary branch

In addition to the Executive and Legislative branches, the Judiciary one is also in charge of applying the transparency of its activities to society, that is, it must have an organized and structured management to develop access to information (ANGÉLICO et al., 2017).

As Bochenek, Dalazoana and Rissetti (2013) recall, the responsible administration and public resources inspection are also necessary in the Judiciary branch. However, as highlighted by Hoch, Rigui and Silva (2013), it is important that the information made available by it is active.

With the use of transparency in the Judiciary branch, it is possible to dispute its inefficiency perception in daily actions (FRAGALE FILHO, 2011; BOCHENEK, DALAZOANA, RISSETTI, 2013). “Besides, with the effective implementation of transparency, it may be possible to clarify or find clues about the myth of slowness that involves the Judiciary branch” (BOCHENEK, DALAZOANA, RISSETTI, 2013, p. 542).

This way, through digital tools, it is possible to follow, for example, the progress of lawsuits and other information related to the Judiciary branch, or even contact it to report doubts or complaints. Thus, access to this type of information is related to access to Justice (OLIVEIRA; DINARTE, 2015, p. 287).

However, these tools need to be applied by the Judiciary branch. Courts need to build a structure that, besides presenting information, is easy for citizens to understand. In addition, it is necessary to promote these tools so that everybody knows them and actually uses them. After all,
if the mechanisms that promote transparency are applied in a precarious manner and without advertising, even with the digital environment, it will be ineffective.

Elena, Aquilino and Riviére (2014) argue that transparency in the Judiciary branch should be a standard behavior. The argument for this stance is that it provides a public service that affects the citizen’s daily life, so it should provide clarifications. As pointed out by Michener (2016), the application of transparency in the Judiciary branch can assist in the legitimacy of the independence conferred on this power sphere.

It is important to highlight that a greater opening of the Judiciary branch does not mean that pillars such as independence (VOERMANS, 2007) will be harmed. On the contrary, with the application of transparency, it is possible to bring this sector closer to society, publicizing and making the work monitoring and the decision-making process accessible. Fragale Filho (2011) suggests that, through this monitoring, society would act as an inspector of the actions carried out by the courts, that is, strengthening democracy and social control.

Steytler (2005) explains that the foundations for judicial integrity, which are essential for the functioning of a democracy, are independence, impartiality, accountability and transparency, and: “When any of them is undermined by institutional failures, the honest, open and responsible government is put at risk” (STEYTLER, 2005, p. 1).

However, more often than not, independence ends up removing the Judiciary branch from society by a closed perspective (OLIVEIRA; DINARTE, 2015, p. 278). An example of a mechanism for seeking independence from the Judiciary branch is that, unlike the Executive and Legislative ones, its members are not chosen or removed through an electoral process (MICHENER, 2016).

However, it is important to remember that the non-election of magistrates is necessary for greater independence of judges. This ends up being dangerous due to the possible formation of interest groups or an autonomy that makes the Judiciary branch not accountable to society.

Voermans (2007) states that it can no longer be protected with the claim of independence from public control and responsibility. Thus, it is necessary that tools are created for the application of transparency in this power sphere. This “is one of the solutions to this problem and a fundamental tool to ensure the legitimacy of the independence granted to the Judiciary branch” (MICHENER, 2016, p. 77).

As a result, transparency can collaborate in the legitimacy of actions through the openness and greater efficiency of Justice. This way, “Legitimacy of the State and, therefore, the Judiciary branch, is based on a mixture of ingredients: responsibility, representativeness, legality and transparency” (VELICOGNA, 2006, p. 375). Such efficiency and openness have been active through electronic means, with e-government initiatives.

As pointed out in a study by Elena, Aquilino and Riviére (2014), the Judiciary branch in Latin America, despite its progress, is one of the least willing to implement transparency and open
data policies. If used, data opening can, besides transparency, improve the efficiency of the judicial system (ELENA; AQUILINO; RIVIÈRE, 2014) and brings this power sphere closer to society (OLVEIRA; DINARTE, 2015).

Nevertheless, as Steytler (2005) and Fragale Filho (2011) argue, transparency is not just the simple availability of data to the people. It is necessary to clarify what functions are exercised in the courts and why. That is, there is no use in accessing information related to processes, such as processing time, if the citizen is not aware of the court’s procedures.

### 2.2 Applying transparency through digital tools

The transparency issue became more prominent thanks to the emergence of online media (MICHENER; BERSCH, 2013). With the Internet, information became more visible due to the offer of tools and possibilities for projects and initiatives that aim at producing transparency (ALMADA, 2017).

Meijer (2009) mentions that transparency in digital media helps to improve the fight against government corruption around the world. The author explains that the defenders of transparency mediated by digital devices argue that it provides more information to citizens and contributes to collective rationalization, resulting in a more democratic society. On the other hand, opponents argue that unidirectional, structured and decontextualized transparency results in a loss of social trust (MEIJER, 2009).

Both points are pertinent. Digital tools enable the development of much more sophisticated transparency mechanisms, besides providing access to information virtually and without citizens having to go to a public institution. However, the digital environment does not solve all transparency problems. There may still be opacity, such as the omission or changing of information, in addition to the provision of terrible structures for navigation, making it difficult to search for information.

For the digital transparency effectiveness in institutions, Silva (2009, p. 49) points out that, besides pertinent information, it is necessary to use “new technologies to promote, inform, clarify, justify and debate with the public on a regular basis”. Such facts can collaborate with the building of public opinion and citizen participation (TAVARES; PEREIRA, 2011). According to the authors, these characteristics undergo major changes in online media.

Thus, with the changes in communication provided by the online environment, State agencies needed to adapt and start using the tools available in the digital environment to grow closer to society (ALMADA, 2017). Some examples are websites and portals, as well as profiles on digital social networks.

Consequently, we can address some of the digital platforms characteristics, including their importance in social processes aimed at the production of transparency (HANSEN; FLYVERBOM, 2015). The authors state that dissemination devices are often applied to make
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objects, subjects and processes visible through visual, verbal and numerical representations. In this case, the representations that result from the disclosure are not only determined in institutional classifications and selections made in the production process, but also in the translation of knowledge and local relationships in new contexts and domains, also reducing or even potentially hiding the complexity of what the representations would make readable in the first place.

As a result, digital transparency initiatives have caused changes in the way public institutions are using the online environment to produce transparency (ALMADA, 2017). The idea is that there should be a good transparency with unrestricted access to information through platforms and applications or portals that are easy to manage and understand by the citizen. (GOMES; AMORIM; ALMADA, 2018).

2.2.1 Digital technologies as facilitators of transparency in the Judiciary branch

Through digital tools, public bodies, such as the Judiciary branch, can apply transparency and access to processes, what ends up improving the accessibility of public information and the quality of communication between citizens and the government (KIŠKIS; PETRAUSKAS, 2004). The authors emphasize that the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) can be used as tools for openness and a greater transparency of the Judiciary branch, and, consequently, collaborate for its legitimacy (VELICOGNA, 2006) and the democratic development. In addition, digital tools can assist not only in the transparency field, but also facilitate administrative procedures in this sphere, streamlining processes, judgments and consultations.

Another beneficial point about the digital tools is that it is possible to catalog and index information with the digitization of various administration aspects; thus, enabling the emergence of virtual environments for data control and consultation (KIŠKIS; PETRAUSKAS, 2004). For these practices, the Judiciary branch has improved, creating tools that collaborate with the interaction between courts and society (PITSICA, 2012). Some examples are the creation of ombudsman agencies and portals aimed at citizens, in which mechanisms can be found for making documents, processes, opinions and voting results available.

In addition to the issues mentioned, digital tools can also assist in legitimizing the independence of the Judiciary branch. The information made available, as well as the easy access to judicial defense, are items that collaborate to bringing this branch closer to civil society. (KIŠKIS; PETRAUSKAS, 2004).

We can see different ways of applying transparency in the Judiciary branch through the studies presented by Michener et al. (2016), Elena, Aquilino and Riviére (2014), Steytler (2005) and Velicogna (2006). The first one addresses the issue nationwide, the second one focuses on Latin America, while the third one addresses the issue in the Australian Judiciary branch. Finally, the fourth one compares the access structure to information in courts in the United States, the...
The research by Michener et al. (2016) aims at providing a compliance survey with the Access to Information Law in Brazilian courts. The research shows that the response rate to requests for information by the Judiciary branch takes an average of 12 days. Besides, the evaluation shows that the disclosure of information regarding budget, finances, staffing and wages suffers different interpretations, “in order to exempt the courts from responding to requests for access to information on other data not covered in the resolution” (MICHENER, 2016, pp. 130-131).

These facts point to a conduct contrary to that of the courts regarding the Access to Information Law. After all, the rule standardizes the information presentation for better understanding and comparison, benefiting the effectiveness of social control over public expenditure (MICHENER, 2016).

Another study that assesses transparency policies in the Judiciary branch is that of Elena, Aquilino and Riviére (2014), which focuses on the impact caused by the open data policy, more specifically in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. The authors’ research shows that there is no open data policy in the Argentinian, Chilean and Uruguayan Judiciary branches, although there is an adequate environment for data access.

The study highlights that, even with the lack of an open data policy in the studied judiciary branches, there is the implementation of comprehensive policies for publishing information, characterized by accessibility and non-discrimination. However, the shared data does not have free formats, requiring licensed software and making it difficult for users to promote the material.

In the research by Steytler (2005), it is possible to notice the search for transparency in the Australian Judiciary branch with the creation of the Judicial Conference of Australia, assisting in providing information to the media. “This body, which has achieved great success in its task, overcomes, to a certain extent, the difficulty resulting from the lack of advice from individual judges who speak out publicly on issues that concern them” (STEYTLER, 2005, p. 9). In addition, the Australian courts publish annual reports with information and statistics on the number of cases and delays.

Finally, Velicogna’s study (2006) analyzes whether access to information related to the Judiciary branch, such as court activities and cases available virtually, can increase its legitimacy. Therefore, the author accessed the websites of Italian and Dutch courts, and the ones from New York, in the United States.

Regarding the Italian Judiciary branch, Velicogna (2006) points to a low effort in the tools implementation on the websites, disabling clear access to the public. The author classifies the effort exerted as amateur, except for some experiences, such as the State Court of Cassation, the Court of Trieste, the administrative courts and the courts of Sicily.

In comparison, the analysis of the Dutch and New Yorker courts (VELICOGNA, 2006)
showed positive results, in contrast to the Italian case. The main feature of Dutch websites is showing a coherent image of a judicial system that is more open to the citizen, unifying its image and providing access to its activities. On the New York Unified Courts System website, information, data and tools from the courts are integrated into the portal, providing easy access to citizens.

Therefore, the studies presented here show different ways of making access to information available in different systems of the Judiciary branch, besides pointing out its successes and failures. This shows that there is not only one way to implement transparency in the online environment, which needs to be well-planned and structured to reach the people.

Consequently, it is possible to see how digital media can collaborate with access to information policies, thereby strengthening transparency in the public sector and making administration more efficient.

3 Methodological procedures

For the analysis, a corpus composed of three Courts of Justice was selected. The choice was made based on the division carried out by the NCJ\(^2\) in three different Court sizes: large (five Courts), medium (ten Courts) and small (twelve Courts). Such division is made based on the total expenses, number of cases, number of magistrates of civil servants in each Court.

To reach the number of three CJs, the court of each size with the largest budget was selected, verifying structures with different budgets. Besides, the financial resources volume made available can influence the access provision to information on the Courts of Justice websites. After all, the application of transparency requires financial resources to be put into practice.

Thus, the selected Courts of Justice were: CJ-SP (large); CJ-BA (medium size) and CJ-MS (small size). The table below shows the data that contributed to the selection of the aforementioned Courts of Justice. It corresponds to the one collected by the National Council of Justice in 2017 and presented in the “Justiça em Números” 2018 report, with the budget information as an exception, made available separately by the NCJ.

Table 1 – Selected Courts of Justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURT</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Total Expense</th>
<th>New Cases</th>
<th>Pending Cases</th>
<th>Magistrates</th>
<th>Civil Servants and Auxiliaries</th>
<th>General Budget</th>
<th>State Judiciary</th>
<th>JUDICIARY % ON THE STATE BUDGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LARGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJ - São Paulo</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>11,830,621</td>
<td>5,648,1</td>
<td>20,591</td>
<td>2,651</td>
<td>68,676</td>
<td>206,399.95</td>
<td>10,839.54</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.965</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,232</td>
<td>4,597</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJ - Bahia</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3,597,816</td>
<td>1,028.9</td>
<td>2,811</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>12,947</td>
<td>43,772.584</td>
<td>2,311,335</td>
<td>5.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>01</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>404</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.633</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SMALL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJ - Mato Grosso</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>977,542.27</td>
<td>344,795</td>
<td>889.97</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>5,374</td>
<td>13,991.974</td>
<td>848,282.5</td>
<td>6.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do Sul</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCJ (2018)

The data show the total expenses that each court had in 2017, as well as new and responsibility pending cases of each CJ. The table also shows the court staff, including magistrates, civil servants and auxiliaries. This data form a score that the NCJ calculates for the separation of each Court of Justice by size. The table also shows the total budget for each state, the amount allocated to the courts and the percentage of that amount before the state budget. This information helps to understand the Courts of Justice structure, from their size in volume of cases and employees to the budget made available, influencing the way in which each CJ is structurally organized.

For the collection of material related to transparency, present on the aforementioned Courts of Justice websites, the method used by Almada (2013; 2017) and Amorim (2012) is proposed.

In his study on access to information on each Brazilian capital’s city halls portals, Amorim (2012) reported that data collection was carried out through guided navigation, using an instrument base built on subsidies classified into three essential aspects, which are: general information, technical information and services, and specific information and services. In the study presented here, the following aspects related to the Courts of Justice were considered: organizational structure, program and actions, expenses disclosure, information on tenders and contracts, and also legal issues. Almada (2017) also performed data collection through guided navigation on the Federal Government portals of the countries analyzed in his research.
With this type of navigation, it was stipulated how to move through the links and pages, as well as the criteria and parameters to qualify the objects cataloged in the navigation, according to the categories validated and established in the exploratory research stage.

Thus, the work presented here located the contents related to transparency navigating from the main page of each Court of Justice, searching for links that lead to transparency content and comparing the content collected.

Almada (2017) explains that it is possible to reach the research goal and understand the transparency level of the Brazilian federal government through comparative research, and “from there identify on which aspects Brazil needs to improve or improve the way of using digital tools to become more transparent and open to citizens” (ALMADA, 2017, p. 163).

Therefore, the pages related to the transparency theme in the courts portals were browsed and cataloged by the author between September 4 and November 9, 2018, to see how it is applied to the transparency present in each court.

With these procedures, the survey verified how the Courts of Justice use online tools to employ active transparency on their websites. The analysis was divided into five categories, as established by the Public Transparency Assessment Index, developed by the Getúlio Vargas Foundation’s Public Transparency Program (FGV, 2018).

4. The application of transparency on the Courts of Justice websites

In this session, we will show the data and analysis of the material from the selected Courts of Justice, as well as the data discussion. The session is divided into six parts, with the first five referring to the variables analyzed: Organizational Structure, Programs and Actions, Expenses, Tenders and Contracts, and Legal Matters, and the last one is related to the data discussion.

4.1 Organizational structure

The “organizational structure” item is related to information on the body structure (organization chart, list of positions and sectors, or similar). In addition, there should be information about the address, telephone number and opening hours of the institution present on each of the Courts’ website.

Representative of the large Courts of Justice, CJ-SP fulfills almost all of the items, providing the address and telephone information at the bottom of its website, but not informing the opening hours. Its structure was not found in an organization chart, but the CJ provides information on sectors and positions in the Institutional item, in its menu bar.
Figure 1 – CJ-SP’s Information

In the medium-sized CJs category, the Court of Justice from Bahia also shows the address and telephone information. The data on the institution’s organizational chart can be accessed through a link called “Organizational Structure”, available at the bottom of the website.
Figure 2 – CJ-BA’s Information


Finally, the Mato Grosso do Sul CJ, categorized as “small”, fully complies with the items assessed. All service information and the address can be found at the bottom of the page. To access the organization chart, simply access the “Institutional” tab in the menu and click on the “Organizational Structure” link.
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**Figure 3** – CJ-MS 1’s Information

![Figure 3](http://www.tjms.jus.br/


**Figure 4** – CJ-MS 2’s Information

![Figure 4](http://www.tjms.jus.br/organograma/imagens/00_base.png)

4.2 Programs and actions

With regard to this dimension, the court must present information related to programs and actions developed by the institution. Therefore, there should be a page dedicated to the theme, a list of activities developed, a description of the programs and information about the activities carried out.

Starting with the large Court of Justice, CJ-SP, the category can be found in the “Transparency” tab, in the website menu and the “Projects” category. The Court does not have a dedicated page to gather the programs; however, it is possible to access the list and all the
Digital transparency in Brazilian Judicial Power: a panoramic application of access to information in courts of justice information through the menu aforementioned.

**Figure 5 – CJ-SP’s Programs and Actions**

![CJ-SP Programs and Actions](image-url)

Regarding the medium-sized CJ, at the Bahia Court of Justice, programs and actions can also be found easily. In the side menu, just click on the “Programs and Actions” option to open a submenu that provides access to links to all the Court’s activities.
**Figure 6** – CJ-BA’s Programs and Actions

Finally, analyzing the small CJ, at CJ-MS, the programs and actions offered can be viewed in the side menu of the home page. When clicking on the option, a submenu is opened with the list of links for each developed project. However, it was not possible to access the submenu several times. The pointer went through the option, but there was no answer to it. Therefore, to view the programs and actions list, the best option was to access them through the links available at the bottom of the page.
Figure 7 – CJ-MS 1’s Programs and Actions

A LITTLE HELP, A BIG FUTURE FOR HOST CHILDREN

SPONSOR PROJECT - BE A SPONSOR OR A VOLUNTEER:
- AFFECTIVE SPONSOR - SERVICE PROVIDER SPONSOR
- MATERIAL DONOR SPONSOR - CULTURAL SPONSOR

Institutional - Internal Affairs - Judicial School - EJUD
Transparency - Strategy Portal - Queries - Counties
Special Courts - CJMS Agency - Services

Actions and Projects
CEPA - Know the Judiciary Branch - Child and Youth Coordination
Women Coordination - COVEP – “Donating is legal” - Eco-management
ENAPA 2018 - Management by Competencies - Traffic Court
Itinerant Justice - Technical Support Center - NAT (in health)
Judicial Cooperation Center - Precedent Management Center - NUPEG
Permanent Dispute Resolution Center – NUPEMEC - Petition 10 Sentence 10

Precatories - Summary
PROCEDURAL CONSULTATION
01/11/2019 - 5:25 pm
CJMS determines medicine supply to SUS patient
01/11/2019 - 4:56 pm
Conviction for wrongful death in traffic maintained
01/11/2019 - 4:31 pm
In the forensic recess, the Capital Forum issued 45 travel permits
01/11/2019 - 2:44 pm
Women Coordinator highlights positive results in the biennium
01/11/2019 - 11:21 am
Arrested for drug trafficking has Habeas Corpus denied

MORE NEWS
Consultation term...
Consult

WOMEN STATE COORDINATION
NUPEMEC
Figure 8 – CJ-MS 2’s Programs and Actions

Institutional
Presidency - Vice-Presidency - Justice Internal Affairs Unit - Judiciary Branch Superior Council
Secretariat Directorate-General - Internal Control - Organizational Structure - Cameras - Special Body
Sections - Full Court - Intranet - Judiciary Branch - Memorial - Mission - Judiciary Ombudsman
Strategic Planning

Internal Affairs

Judicial School

Transparency
Presentation - Competence - Contracts - Payment to Suppliers - Fiscal Management Report
National Council of Justice Resolution 102 - National Council of Justice Resolution 151
National Council of Justice Resolution 195 - National Council of Justice Resolution 215
National Council of Justice Resolution 219 - National Council of Justice Resolution 235
Official Media

Strategy Portal
Strategic Planning
1st Degree Statistics and Special Courts - 2nd Grade Statistics and Recourse Groups

Queries
File - Library - Scripture Center - Public Service Exams - Single Account - Journal of Justice
Availability of the ESAJ Portal - Holidays – Jurisprudence - Trial Agenda - Service Portal (ESAJ)
Lawsuits - Digital Process - Stamps - Useful Phone Numbers

Judiciary Bonds
Judiciary Bonds Income Report - IR – Ranking – Debtors
Debt Balance per Borrowing Entity - Payments Made

Counties

Courts
Counties (Addresses) - Competence of the Campo Grande Courts
Supervisory Board of the Special Courts - Discard - Doctrine
Central Court - Legislation - Web Magazine - Recourse Groups
4.3 Expenses

In this category, the Courts must refer to amounts paid, the date of their payment, the object of the expense, the supplier and its documentation (Individual or Corporate Taxpayer Registration Number), in addition to the expense process number.

Starting with the large court, the information on Expenses is superficial at CJ-SP. The institution makes available a document in PDF format in which it lists only the type of expenditure and the amount per month. Moreover, the information is not easily accessible. In the “Transparency” tab of the menu, there is no direct link to expenses, so it is necessary to access the “Budgetary and Financial Execution” option in the “Budget” category.
**Figure 9** – CJ-SP’s Expenses

Unlike CJ-SP, it was not possible to find information on expenses at the Bahia Court of Justice – médium-sized CJ. It was browsed through the pages, but only reports of the Court’s budget were found, in addition to tax issues. A search was also carried out through the search engine of the portal, with no results.

For the small Court of Justice, the publication of expenses data in PDF file format was also found in the Mato Grosso do Sul Court of Justice. The information is available on the “Payment of Suppliers” page, which can be accessed on the “Transparency” option in the portal menu.
**Figure 10 – CJ-MS’s Expenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAYING MANAGING UNIT CODE</th>
<th>PAYDAY</th>
<th>FAVOURED UNIT / TAXPAYER</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>ESTIMATED VALUE / DEBT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50901</td>
<td>11/05/2018</td>
<td>03.119.724/0001-47</td>
<td>CORREIO DO ESTADO S.A.</td>
<td>598.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50901</td>
<td>11/05/2018</td>
<td>03.501.509/0001-06</td>
<td>PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE CAMPO GRANDE-MS</td>
<td>156.99</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50901</td>
<td>11/05/2018</td>
<td>03.501.509/0001-06</td>
<td>PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE CAMPO GRANDE-MS</td>
<td>115.34</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Tenders and contracts

According to this dimension, the Courts must make available the bids costs, the date of the last notice, object, modality or reference publication, or a link with information, besides a term or project.

Regarding the large CJ, as for CJ-SP, the Court’s tenders and contracts can be easily found in the “Transparency” tab. The contracts, in addition, can also be accessed through a link on the bidding page. Both items can be searched through a platform that makes it possible to use different filters, such as year, modality, supplier, among others.
Similarly to the previous CJ, it is also possible to easily find bids information on the website of the Bahia Court of Justice - a medium-sized CJ. The site offers the “Bidding” option in its side menu. By clicking on the category, a submenu is accessed with links to minutes, electronic trading, research, among others. On the “Search” page, the list of bids can be viewed, in addition to performing advanced searches. However, for access to public notices, the portal requires that citizens fill in a field with personal information.
Figure 12 – CJ-BA’s Tenders and Contracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date Entry</th>
<th>Keyword</th>
<th>Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Electronic Bidding No. 077/2018</td>
<td>Hiring of a specialized company to provide continuous cleaning, disinfection and analysis of water potability in upper and lower reservoirs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INVITATION</td>
<td></td>
<td>No. 003/2018</td>
<td>Hiring a specialized company to carry out personnel transport services, a round trip from the Pituaçu Stadium parking lot to the Headquarters of the Bahia Court of Justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL FOR PUBLIC ACTION</td>
<td>Accreditation of collection agents for the provision of collection services, through the Judicial and Extrajudicial Collection Document ? DAJE...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Bidding No. 049/2018</td>
<td>Registration of unit prices for invoice and eventual purchase of non-fiscal thermal mini printers for service vouchers, document protocol and authentication for a period of 12 (twelve) months, with on-site warranty (Salvador-BA) of 36 (thirty-six) months for each piece of equipment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Bidding No. 066/2018</td>
<td>Hiring a company to supply and install PVC shutters, with the supply of labor, material and tools.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Bidding No. 064/2018</td>
<td>Hiring of a company to provide maintenance services and replacement of the nominal load of extinguishing and/or expelling agent, with the supply of labor, material and tools.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Bidding No. 069/2018</td>
<td>Hiring a company to supply and apply solar control films in all capital units that are occupied by the Judiciary branch in Bahia, and in any new facilities that may be occupied, with the supply of labor, material and tools, as described in Annex I ? Term of Reference, which is an integral part of this Notice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call for Public Comment 001/2018</td>
<td>Call for Public Action aimed at the real-estate market prospecting for commercial urban properties, such as sheds, located in Salvador, Lauro de Freitas or Simões Filho.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Bidding No. 082/2018</td>
<td>Acquisition of liquid soap and paper towels.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Electronic Bidding No. 032/2018

Hiring of a company to provide specialized and continuous service of a Nursing Technician to serve the units of the Judiciary branch in Salvador for the initial period of 12 (twelve) months, which may be extended at the discretion of the CONTRACTING PARTY.

In the small Mato Grosso do Sul Court of Justice, bids can be accessed through a link in the “Services” tab of the side menu. The portal allows advanced searches for bids to be carried out. However, in order to have access to information about the companies, it is necessary to fill in the registration form with personal details. In addition, it is not possible to check the prices in the list of bids. An interesting aspect is that several stages of the process can be verified through PDF documents, from the notices, through e-mails with the draw of inspectors, to the homologation document of the bidding process.

**Figure 13** – CJ-MS’s Tenders and Contracts

4.5 Legal matters

Courts must provide information on sentences, regulations and statistics on cases filed, resolved and pending, and the publication of hearings scheduling.
Starting with the large CJ, CJ-SP makes it possible to quickly verify processes on its home page, but it is necessary to enter the number of the specific process. On the other hand, there is also a link on the home page to an advanced search platform, where it is possible to use filters such as terms, court, magistrate, date, case number, among others.

**Figure 14 – CJ-SP 1’s Legal Matters**

As in the previous CJ, the medium-sized one applies restrictions. The Bahia Court of Justice allows the consultation of cases as long as the Internet user has preliminary information. It is also possible to access details about the CJ’s productivity, in addition to making online appointments.

Figure 15 – CJ-BA’s Legal Matters

Another one that has details on the agenda is the small Mato Grosso do Sul Court of Justice. CJ-MS allows online procedural consultations. However, it does not offer data on the productivity of the Judiciary branch.
4.6 Data discussion

Through the collection and analysis of material related to transparency on each of the three selected Courts of Justice website, it was possible to verify how transparency is applied in each portal.

However, it is relevant to affirm that the way transparency is applied differs among the analyzed Courts. Some CJs offer more or less features compared to others, and the presentation of the information has divergences. As such, this difference can be related to different internal structural organizations.

Another interesting point is how to present the information and how to get to it. As for information such as address, telephone number and opening hours, all sites inform them at the end of the page by default. However, the information presented differs among the CJs. Some of them don’t provide phone numbers, while others don’t inform the opening hours. In addition, each
Court has its own ways of accessing information regarding transparency. There are cases in which links to bids and actions are already visible on the website homepage; in others, it is necessary to access specific menus, such as “Institutional”, “Administrative” or “Transparency”.

Such differences in the website presentation of each Court reinforce the importance of public communication to improve the connection between the State and society. After all, for effective transparency, there must be quality communication by the government. These facts are in line with Kunsch’s speech (2012), being necessary to overcome bureaucratic barriers to reach the citizens, and this involves the efficient use of digital tools.

It is logical that the improvement process is not simple, but the Courts need to correct their flaws and further improve what is already efficient. After all, as mentioned by Weber (2017), planning and organization are necessary to develop public communication with a political and strategic role.

Furthermore, it is noticeable that digital transparency meets transparency issues in the Courts of Justice, allowing greater monitoring and inspection by the Judiciary branch through different tools, and allowing access to expenses, bids or even legal procedures – even if these are restricted to interested parts.

However, it is not enough to just make the information available. It must be easily accessible and understood, which has not always been found in the analyzed sites. Therefore, it is essential that institutions work on constantly improving their transparency tools.

Issues directly related to the Judiciary branch must have a greater transparency, such as statistical data with trial time, process types, number of cases per magistrate, among other data that may be disclosed. We can mention the CJ-RJ case as an example when disclosing this type of information, not so widespread on other sites. Another function that could be considered is related to procedural steps, that is, to provide the citizen with information and tools that help and facilitate bureaucratic issues involving the legal field.

Such attitudes could collaborate for a greater opening of the Brazilian Judiciary branch, democratizing and legitimizing this power sphere before society and strengthening its independence through an increasingly effective transparency policy. As stated by Steytler (2005), the foundations for judicial integrity which are essential for the functioning of a democracy are independence, impartiality, responsibility and transparency.

A broader analysis among the Courts of Justice can be seen in Author (XXXX)\(^3\), where, in addition to the CJs mentioned in this article, six other Courts were analyzed and an index of transparency applied by the nine CJs was elaborated, three of each size: large, medium and small.

\(^3\) Quote removed not to identify the author of the article.
5. Final Considerations

This article aimed at analyzing how the Courts of Justice use online tools to apply active transparency on their websites. The proposal was to analyze how transparency is used in the portals of three Courts of Justice: São Paulo, Bahia and Mato Grosso do Sul ones.

The choice of three Courts of different sizes (large, medium and small) was based on the three largest budgets for each. Therefore, it was possible to verify the structure of Courts with different budgets.

For the collection of transparency material, guided navigation was used: a method used by Almada (2013; 2017) and Amorim (2012). Thus, with the collected material, the work compared the structure of access to information available in the three portals and verified the differences in applying active transparency among them.

It was found that the Courts of Justice analyzed comply with the basic requirements of active transparency, except for the Bahia one, which does not provide expenses information on its portal. However, each of them has peculiarities in the application of transparency, making the way of accessing information different among them.

In items related to the organizational structure, for example, the São Paulo Court of Justice does not inform its opening hours on the portal. The fact shows, in a way, an omission of important information for the citizens, which should be available on the institution’s portal. After all, it is necessary for the Public Authority to use the means of communication for a closer relationship and dialogue with society. As stated by Kunsch (2012), it is necessary to use the means of communication to inform and encourage public communication.

Another important point is related to the availability of tax information for expenses and bids. The Courts of Justice need to further facilitate access to this type of information.

The availability of this type of information, besides complying with legal issues, helps in the perception of good management and in fighting corruption. After all, transparency helps it through accountability (BERTOT; JAEGGER; GRIMES, 2010; MICHER; BERSCH, 2013).

However, as we can see when analyzing the availability of procedural information by the Courts of Justice, there are aspects that conflict the publicity of public information. To access the files, it was necessary to fill in preliminary details about the required information. Such fact occurs because the processes often show private information or even cases that, due to their nature, run in the secrecy of justice. Therefore, only those directly interested in that information can access it.

The situation is in line with the statements of Heald (2006) and Bentham (2009), when mentioning that transparency can be limited in some occasions, either to preserve the confidentiality of specific information or by limits on the cost of its implementation, and that publicity for the facts should be put aside if it unnecessarily harms innocent people or is provided for by law.
Through the analysis, it was also possible to verify the importance of Digital Transparency for the democratic growth. With the help of digital tools, it is possible to provide information and services previously restricted to physical environments, that is, it is not necessary to go to a forum to consult processes, just perform an online verification. There is also no need to move and prepare access requests for the analysis of a Court's budgetary issues, as the data can be consulted online.

These are issues that contribute to the democratic strengthening. After all, with greater ease in obtaining certain pieces of information, the citizen is able to exercise a greater participation in the public environment, whether using the data to inspect or to debate with political actors and society.

Referências


