

European e-Justice Portal focus groups

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1. Introduction

This report presents findings from 5 focus groups conducted to evaluate professional user experiences with the European e-Justice Portal. The groups represent qualitative data collection designed to capture rich, contextual insights into legal professional's user discovery patterns, usage behaviours, satisfaction drivers, and barriers to adoption.

These focus groups target three key professional constituencies within the justice system:

- **Legal practitioners** (lawyers, legal advisors, legal consultants)
- **National authorities** (justice ministry officials, legal policy makers, administrative staff)
- **Judiciary members** (judges, court administrators, judicial officers)

1.1. Qualitative Data Methodology

5 Focus groups were conducted using a semi-structured approach, allowing for discussion between participants and their experiences with the e-Justice Portal. Each group was conducted in English and lasted approximately 60 minutes, ongoing from the 25th of August.

During each interview, we used Fathom, an AI Notetaker to record and transcribe each interview. We then used this transcript to apply a tagging framework for easier analysis.

2. Protocol

The focus group protocol was designed to gather in-depth insights from legal professionals regarding their experiences with the e-Justice Portal, with a specific emphasis on portal usefulness, current usage patterns and recommendation likelihood as emphasized by the client. The protocol built upon the tested framework from the individual interviews but was adapted to prioritize depth over breadth, allowing for more detailed exploration of professional experiences and collaborative discussion among participants.

3. Inventory

This chapter describes how we used AI tools to efficiently analyse focus group data and developed a specialized tagging system to understand how legal professionals adopt and use the portal.

3.1. AI-Assisted Process Overview

Our research process integrated AI tools (Claude and Fathom) to streamline analysis while preserving analytical rigor. This methodology enabled efficient removal of non-substantive content, including conversational filler, technical interruptions, and translator clarifications. Claude handled post-interview translation of foreign language segments (where applicable) into English and automated anonymization processes for secure data sharing with the client.

Iteration Process:

- AI-assisted transcription and preliminary coding across 80+ tag categories
- Human validation and refinement of AI-generated tag applications
- Multi-pass coding validation using established framework
- Cross-validation of key insights across user archetype patterns

3.2. Tagging Framework Development

This focus group tagging framework was derived from the interview tagging structure but emphasized analytical depth over breadth. The framework specifically targets legal professional adoption patterns - examining how professionals integrate (or fail to integrate) the portal into their practice, their quality expectations, and competitive landscape concerns.

In contrast, the individual interview tagging framework addresses broader user experience research across all user segments - capturing discovery patterns, fundamental usability issues, and general adoption barriers. The dual framework approach enables cross-analysis and comparative insights between different research methodologies.

Following the same iterative tagging process used for interviews, we systematically analysed transcripts post-session to identify not only participant archetypes but also attitudes, aspirations, and barriers regarding portal usage. Each tagged transcript underwent review to verify tag accuracy and alignment with the original session content.

The framework evolved through iterative analysis of pilot sessions and remained adaptable throughout the research process to accommodate emerging insights and patterns.

4. The tagging framework (focus group specific)

Below is the complete tagging framework applied to each group's transcript.:

4.1. Core Participant Categories

Always tag first:

- LEGAL_PROF - Legal professionals (universal tag)
- PRACTITIONER - Private practice lawyers/notaries
- NATIONAL_AUTH - Government/regulatory authority representatives
- JUDICIARY - Judges, court officials, judicial staff
- IN_HOUSE - Corporate/organizational legal counsel

Experience Level:

- EXPERIENCED - Has used portal extensively
- MODERATE_USER - Some portal experience
- FIRST_TIME - New to portal/seeing for first time
- AWARE_NON_USER - Knows about portal but hasn't used it

Professional Context & Integration

1. CONTENT MANAGEMENT ROLE

- CONTENT_CREATOR - Responsible for updating portal information
- CONTENT_CONSUMER - Uses portal information created by others
- DUAL_ROLE - Both creates and consumes portal content

2. PROFESSIONAL NETWORK POSITION

- NETWORK_COORDINATOR - EJM contact points, central authorities
- NETWORK_PARTICIPANT - Regular network members
- NETWORK_EXTERNAL - Outside formal judicial networks

3. PROFESSIONAL ROLE UNDERSTANDING

- SEES_PROFESSIONAL_TOOL - Views as legitimate professional resource
- SEES_PUBLIC_RESOURCE - Views primarily as citizen/business tool

- SEES_COMPLEMENTARY - Understands it complements professional services
- SEES_COMPETITIVE - Views as potential threat to professional services
- SEES_REFERRAL_TOOL - Primarily for directing clients/colleagues

4. PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION PATTERNS

- DAILY_INTEGRATION_HIGH - Extensively integrated into daily routine
- DAILY_INTEGRATION_LIMITED - Regular but limited daily use
- PROJECT_SPECIFIC_REGULAR - Frequent project-based use
- PROJECT_SPECIFIC_OCCASIONAL - Infrequent project-based use
- RESEARCH_SUPPLEMENT - Adds to existing research tools
- CLIENT_SUPPORT - Primarily to help clients
- TRAINING_RESOURCE - For professional development/learning
- BACKUP_RESOURCE - Fallback when primary tools insufficient
- NON_INTEGRATED - Doesn't fit current professional workflow

4.1.1. Professional Standards & Quality Assessment

5. INFORMATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

- HIGH_QUALITY_CONTENT - Trusts accuracy of information
- ADEQUATE_QUALITY - Generally reliable with minor concerns
- QUALITY_CONCERNS - Significant doubts about accuracy/completeness
- NEEDS_VERIFICATION - Always cross-checks portal information
- OUTDATED_CONCERNS - Worried about currency of information
- DEPTH_INSUFFICIENT - Too basic for professional needs
- DEPTH_APPROPRIATE - Right level of detail for intended use

6. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS EXPECTATION

- PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_HIGH - Expects professional-grade accuracy/depth
- PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_MODERATE - Accepts general information quality
- PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_FLEXIBLE - Adapts expectations to context

7. ONE-STOP SHOP EXPECTATION

- EXPECTS_COMPLETE_SOLUTION - Portal should provide final answers
- ACCEPTS_STARTING_POINT - Portal as research launching pad is sufficient
- HYBRID_EXPECTATION - Depends on specific use case

4.1.2. Usage Patterns & Professional Applications

8. PRIMARY PROFESSIONAL USE CASES

- CROSS_BORDER_EXPERTISE - International/EU law matters
- DOMESTIC_GUIDANCE - National legal procedures
- CLIENT_EDUCATION - Explaining processes to clients
- PROCEDURAL_REFERENCE - Court procedures, filing requirements
- JURISDICTION_RESEARCH - Understanding different legal systems
- COMPLIANCE_SUPPORT - Regulatory compliance matters
- PROFESSIONAL_LEARNING - Expanding knowledge base
- QUICK_VERIFICATION - Confirming basic legal information

9. PROFESSIONAL TEACHING ROLE

- FORMAL_EDUCATOR - Teaches/trains other professionals
- INFORMAL_MENTOR - Guides colleagues informally
- PEER_COLLABORATOR - Shares information among equals
- INFORMATION_CONSUMER - Primarily receives rather than shares

4.1.3. Recommendation & Professional Community Impact

10. RECOMMENDATION & REFERRAL BEHAVIOUR

- ACTIVE_PROMOTER - Regularly recommends to colleagues/clients
- SELECTIVE_REFERRER - Recommends in specific situations only
- INTERNAL_SHARING - Shares within own organization
- CLIENT_REFERRER - Primarily refers clients, not colleagues
- PEER_REFERRER - Primarily refers professional colleagues
- NON_PROMOTER - Doesn't recommend despite personal use
- DISCOURAGER - Actively advises against portal use

11. PROFESSIONAL ADVOCACY BEHAVIOR

- TRAINING_CHAMPION - Promotes portal in formal training/presentations
- WORD_OF_MOUTH_ADVOCATE - Positive recommendations when asked
- NEUTRAL_USER - Uses but doesn't actively promote
- CRITICAL_ADVOCATE - Recommends with strong caveats

12. COMPETITIVE/COLLABORATIVE PERSPECTIVE

- BUSINESS_COMPLEMENT - Enhances rather than threatens practice
- BUSINESS_THREAT - Worried about impact on professional income

- CLIENT_EMPOWERMENT - Values informed clients
- CLIENT_CONFUSION - Concerned portal confuses clients
- EFFICIENCY_GAIN - Portal makes professional work more efficient
- QUALITY_STANDARD - Portal maintains professional quality standards
- PROFESSIONAL_LIABILITY - Concerned about malpractice implications

4.1.4. Technical Context

13. NAVIGATION & SEARCH BEHAVIOUR

- SEARCH_DEPENDENT - Relies heavily on search function
- SEARCH_AVOIDANT - Avoids search, uses direct navigation
- BOOKMARK_RELIANT - Uses saved/favourite sections primarily
- BROWSE_PREFERRED - Prefers structured navigation

14. TECHNICAL & USABILITY NEEDS

- SPEED_CRITICAL - Portal must be fast for professional use
- MOBILE_ESSENTIAL - Needs mobile access for professional work
- INTEGRATION_NEEDED - Should integrate with professional software
- MULTI_JURISDICTION - Regularly works across jurisdictions

15. DIGITAL LITERACY CONTEXT

- TECH_EARLY_ADOPTER - Comfortable with new digital tools
- TECH_PRAGMATIC - Uses technology when necessary/helpful
- TECH_TRADITIONALIST - Prefers established methods
- TECH_DEVELOPING - Learning new digital approaches

16. AUTHORITY & CREDIBILITY FACTORS

- EU_AUTHORITY - Trusts because of EU official status
- NATIONAL_VALIDATION - Values national government backing
- PEER_VALIDATION - Influenced by colleague recommendations
- CONTENT_AUTHORSHIP - Cares about who wrote the content
- UPDATE_FREQUENCY - Values recent updates/maintenance
- LEGAL_CITATIONS - Wants proper legal references
- DISCLAIMER_CLARITY - Appreciates clear limitations statements

4.1.5. Barriers & Professional Challenges

17. PROFESSIONAL-SPECIFIC BARRIERS

- LIABILITY_CONCERNS - Worried about professional responsibility
- CLIENT_EXPECTATION - Clients expect more sophisticated tools
- FIRM_POLICY - Organizational restrictions on external resources
- BILLING_IMPLICATIONS - Unclear how portal use affects client billing
- COMPETITIVE_HESITATION - Reluctant to use "free" legal resource
- SPECIALIZATION_GAP - Portal doesn't cover their practice area
- LANGUAGE_PROFESSIONAL - Legal translation quality insufficient
- NAVIGATION_COMPLEXITY - Professional workflow disruption
- SEARCH_DYSFUNCTION - Search functionality inadequate

18. LANGUAGE & TRANSLATION CONTEXT

- NATIVE_LANG_ESSENTIAL - Must have native language
- NATIVE_LANG_PREFERRED - Prefers but can work without
- MULTILINGUAL_COMFORTABLE - Works easily across languages
- TRANSLATION_QUALITY_CRITICAL - Legal translation accuracy essential
- TRANSLATION_TOLERANT - Accepts imperfect translations

4.1.6. Comparative Context & Alternatives

19. ALTERNATIVE RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

- HAS_SUPERIOR_ALTERNATIVES - Other tools meet needs better
- PORTAL_FILLS_UNIQUE_NICHE - No good alternatives exist
- MIXED_RESOURCE_ECOSYSTEM - Portal complements other tools
- PORTAL_DEPENDENT - Would struggle without portal access

20. IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

- DEEPER_CONTENT - More sophisticated legal analysis needed
- FASTER_UPDATES - More current information required
- BETTER_CITATIONS - Stronger legal referencing system
- PRACTICE_INTEGRATION - Better workflow integration
- PROFESSIONAL_FEATURES - Tools specifically for legal professionals
- QUALITY_ASSURANCE - Stronger accuracy guarantees
- SPECIALIZATION_COVERAGE - Better coverage of niche practice areas

4.1.7. Cross-Framework Compatibility Tags

21. SCOPE UNDERSTANDING

- CORRECT_SCOPE_UNDERSTANDING - Knows portal covers both domestic and cross-border
- CROSSBORDER_ONLY_MISCONCEPTION - Thinks portal only for cross-border issues
- DOMESTIC_ONLY_MISCONCEPTION - Thinks portal only covers domestic issues
- SCOPE_UNCLEAR - Uncertain about portal coverage boundaries

22. AUDIENCE UNDERSTANDING

- FULL_AUDIENCE_UNDERSTANDING - Recognizes portal serves citizens, businesses, AND legal professionals
- SINGLE_AUDIENCE_CORRECT - Correctly identifies one target audience
- PROFESSIONAL_AUDIENCE_FOCUS - Primarily sees it as tool for legal professionals
- PUBLIC_AUDIENCE_FOCUS - Primarily sees it as tool for citizens/businesses
- AUDIENCE_UNCLEAR - Uncertain who portal is designed for

23. VALUE & IMPACT

- TIME_SAVING - Portal saves professional time
- COST_SAVING - Reduces costs (research, travel, etc.)
- CONFIDENCE_BUILDING - Increases confidence in legal positions
- CLIENT_SERVICE_IMPROVEMENT - Enhances client service quality
- PROFESSIONAL_DEVELOPMENT - Supports learning/skill development
- NO_CLEAR_BENEFIT - Doesn't see professional value

5. Participants profile analysis

In total 21 participants were recruited for the focus groups below the list shows which countries and in which groups they participated. We reached 17 EU member states, but did not speak to Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta or Slovenia in this task. Our original schedule included 4 groups of 5 participants; however, due to last-minute cancellations and scheduling conflicts, we adapted the group sizes accordingly.

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| FG1-P1 | Ireland |
| FG1-P2 | Greece |
| FG1-P3 | Austria |

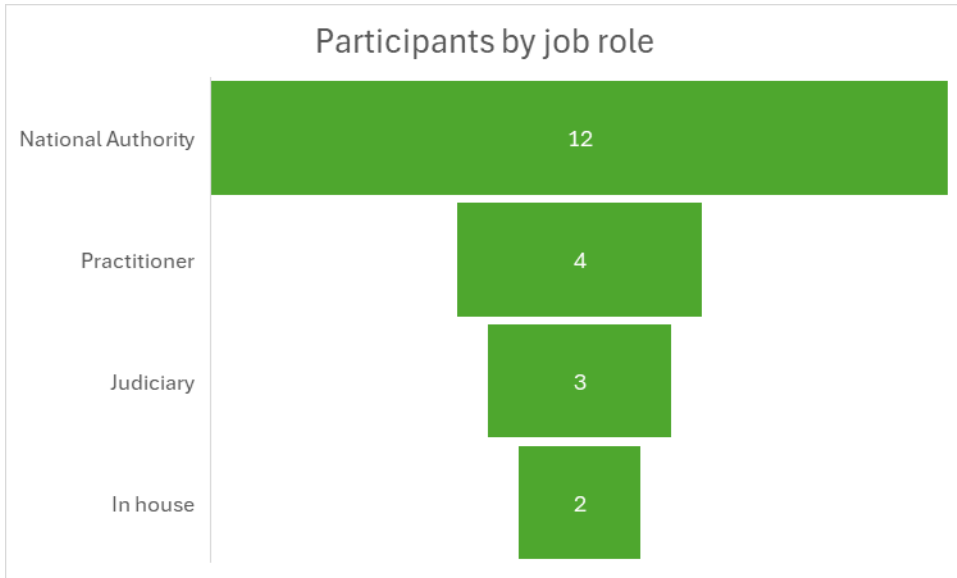
| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| FG2-P1 | France |
| FG2-P2 | Poland |
| FG2-P3 | Spain |
| FG2-P4 | Greece |
| FG2-P5 | Netherlands |
| FG3-P1 | Portugal |
| FG3-P2 | Belgium |
| FG3-P3 | Netherlands |
| FG3-P4 | Finland |
| FG3-P5 | Cyprus |
| FG4-P1 | Sweden |
| FG4-P2 | Czechia |
| FG4-P3 | Latvia |
| FG4-P4 | Germany |
| FG5-P1 | Portugal |
| FG5-P2 | Slovakia |
| FG5-P3 | Belgium |
| FG5-P4 | Romania |

6. Interpretation

In this chapter, we examine the data in greater depth, exploring key findings, insights, and recurring themes that emerged from our analysis.

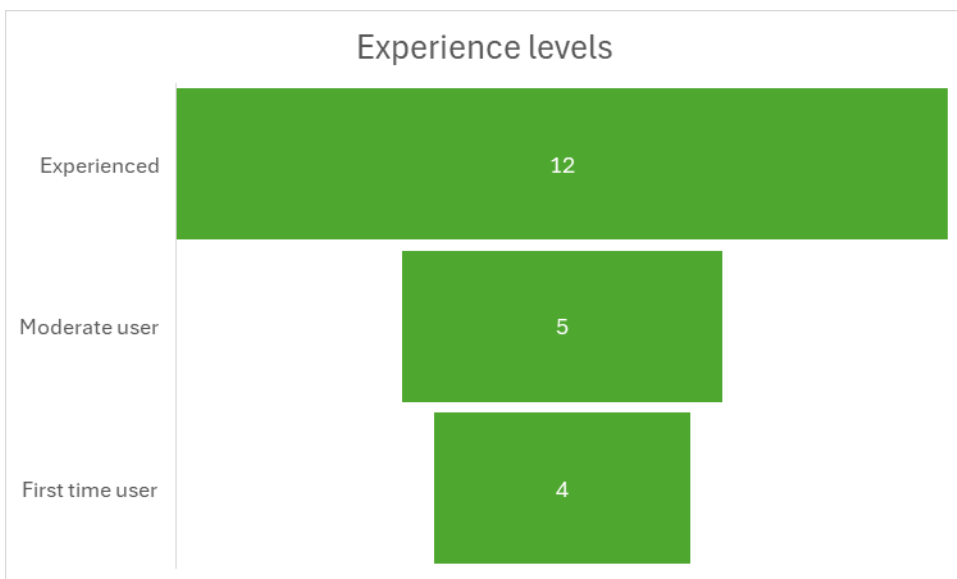
6.1. Focus Group Participant Summary and Key Barriers Analysis

Participant Distribution by Job Role



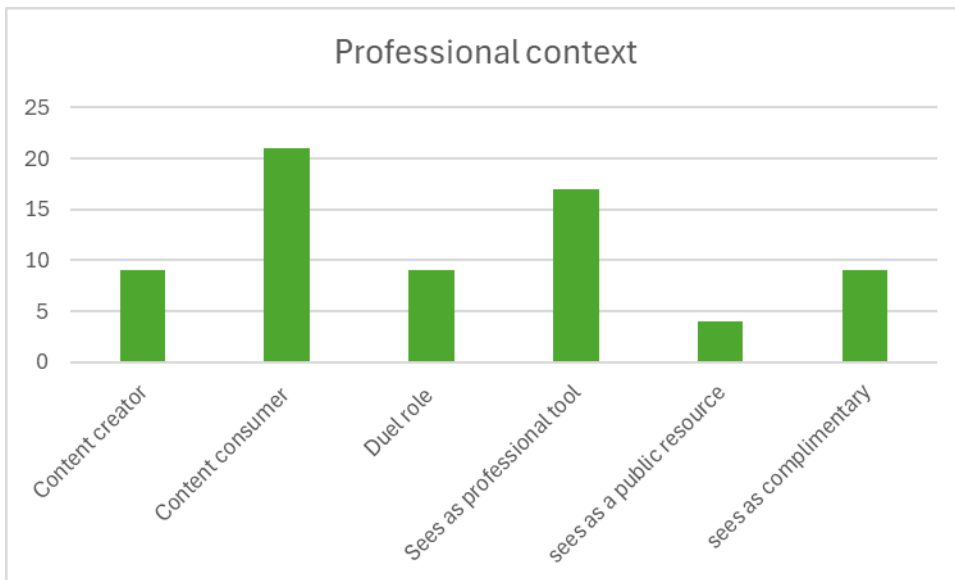
| Role Category | Count |
|--|-----------|
| NATIONAL_AUTH (Government/Ministry Officials) | 12 |
| PRACTITIONER (Private Practice Lawyers) | 4 |
| JUDICIARY (Judges/Court Personnel) | 3 |
| IN_HOUSE (Corporate Legal Counsel) | 2 |
| TOTAL PARTICIPANTS | 21 |

Experience Level Distribution



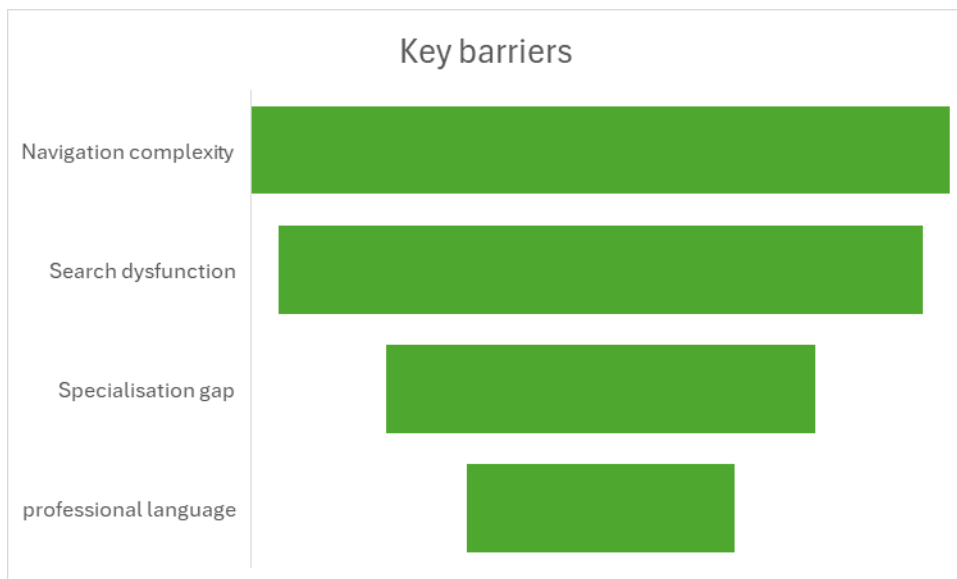
| Experience Level | Count |
|---|-------|
| EXPERIENCED (Deep portal familiarity) | 12 |
| MODERATE_USER (Occasional use) | 5 |
| FIRST_TIME (New to portal) | 4 |
| AWARE_NON_USER (Knows but hasn't used) | 0 |

Professional Context Analysis



| Context Category | Count | Key Insight |
|-------------------------------|-------|---|
| CONTENT_CREATOR | 9 | Nearly half manage portal content |
| CONTENT_CONSUMER | 21 | All participants use portal information |
| DUAL_ROLE | 9 | Many both create and consume content |
| SEES_PROFESSIONAL_TOOL | 17 | most view as legitimate professional resource |
| SEES_PUBLIC_RESOURCE | 4 | Only a small amount see it primarily for citizens |
| SEES_COMPLEMENTARY | 9 | Almost half see it as complementing professional services |

Key Barriers Analysis



| Barrier Type | Count | Primary Impact |
|------------------------------|-------|---|
| NAVIGATION_COMPLEXITY | 13 | Workflow disruption, time wasted |
| SEARCH_DYSFUNCTION | 12 | Cannot find information effectively |
| SPECIALIZATION_GAP | 8 | Portal doesn't cover practice areas |
| LANGUAGE_PROFESSIONAL | 5 | Translation quality insufficient |

6.2. Key Findings Summary

1. **Experience Paradox:** Despite 13 out of 21 participants being experienced users, navigation and search remain top barriers - suggesting fundamental structural problems rather than learning curve issues.
2. **Progressive Barrier Escalation:** FG4 shows 4 out of 4 participants with navigation issues and 3 out of 4 with search problems, suggesting either this group had different user types or accumulated frustration.
3. **Language Concentration:** Translation issues affect 5 out of 21 participants, primarily from smaller EU language markets (Czech republic, Latvia, Malta contexts).
4. **Specialisation gaps:** Specialization gaps emerged as participants identified several legal fields that were either missing or inadequately covered on the portal. Environmental law was notably absent according to FG1-P2, while FG2-P2 found that specific maintenance topics lacked sufficient coverage. Data protection cases and human rights applications were highlighted by FG4-P3 as

areas needing better representation, and FG2-P4 noted difficulties finding comprehensive research materials on general attorney powers. These gaps suggest that while the portal covers many legal areas, certain specialized fields require enhanced content development to meet professional needs.

The most striking finding is that **search dysfunction affects 12 out of 21 participants** despite significant resources being invested in search functionality - this suggests a fundamental mismatch between search design and professional user mental models.

Additional insight: **13 out of 21 participants** struggle with navigation complexity, making it the single most common barrier across all focus groups.

6.3. Key Insights for Portal Development

Dual Identity Challenge: Portal struggles between serving citizens (“tourist office” metaphor) vs. professionals (“GPS navigation” metaphor) - fundamental strategic decision needed. FG1-P3's tourism office analogy clearly articulated this tension: *"For Citizens: 'It tells you where the major landmarks are... but it doesn't take you on the journey itself.' For Practitioners: 'We don't need maps, we need a GPS with live data.'"*

This challenge is reflected in consistently higher recommendation scores for legal colleagues (6-7 range) versus citizens (4-7 range) across all focus groups. Two participants (FG5-P1, FG3 equivalents) explicitly stated the portal should serve **only** legal professionals, not citizens.

AI Positioning: FG1 participants identified AI as a competitive threat, with opportunities existing in unique data access and integrated AI tools. FG1-P1 noted: *"Portal is almost...in competition with AI platforms"* while FG1-P2 observed: *"AI has completely changed the landscape."* FG1-P2 suggested integration: *"sites like the portal had AI tools built in them."*

Resource-Quality Loop: Update quality depends on human resources, but poor quality reduces usage, creating negative feedback cycle. FG1-P1 identified the core issue: *"Portal's success really depends on the people and the time dedicated to it."* FG3-P3's insider knowledge revealed: *"delay in updates due to staff shortage,"* while multiple participants noted outdated information reducing trust.

Professional Segmentation: Different legal practice areas have vastly different portal utility - specialisation coverage gaps create significant barriers. FG1-P2 explicitly stated: *"it's not a primary source of my information when it comes to environmental law... which is something that I deal with really often."* FG2-P3's comparison to

"Prontuario Judicial" (Spain's specialised legal portal that's *updated every day*) demonstrates what professional-grade coverage could achieve.

Navigation and Search Dysfunction: 17 out of 21 participants mentioned navigation or search difficulties as primary barriers.

The majority of participants agreed that the search function was problematic, with specific quotes like *"If you make one typo nothing comes up"* and *"Search function...not useful."* With many others also mentioning various navigation issues or naming complexities.

Current usage limited by navigation and completeness concerns: Navigation complexity was the most frequently cited barrier, with participants describing extensive workarounds and bookmark reliance to avoid homepage navigation.

Strong potential for increased professional adoption if search and usability improved: Despite structural concerns, recommendation scores ranged from 7-10 for professional colleagues across all groups, indicating high potential if core usability issues were addressed.

High content authority maintains professional credibility despite usability issues: Most participants expressed trust in portal content quality due to EU official status, even while criticizing functionality. FG3 and FG2 participants specifically noted EU_AUTHORITY as a credibility factor.

Valuable tool for cross-border judicial cooperation: Multiple participants from different groups cited specific use cases for cross-border matters, particularly service of documents, taking of evidence, and judicial network information.

6.4. Professional Value Drivers

TIME_SAVING - 24/7 access without human contact needed: FG4-P3 specifically valued: *"it's accessible whenever I need it, not that I'm dependent on someone whom I can contact, for example, just during working hours."* FG3-P4 demonstrated high dependency: *"Don't know where I would go without the portal."*

EFFICIENCY_GAIN - Direct sharing of straightforward information: FG2-P2 and FG4-P4 both described efficiently forwarding factsheets to judges, with judges not requiring follow-up questions in many cases.

PROFESSIONAL_DEVELOPMENT - Comparative understanding of legal systems: Multiple participants across groups used the portal for understanding foreign legal

frameworks, with FG4-P1 noting its value for *"comparing Swedish legislation and justice systems with other countries."*

CLIENT_SERVICE_IMPROVEMENT - Judges get faster answers via factsheets: FG4-P4 provided specific example: *"very nice to look up the fact sheet and send it to the judge and the judge didn't have another question so I do think the question was solved."* FG5-P1 described a specific case: *"I had a Danish client that bought a house in Portugal, and he was worried...if he will die in Portugal, what happened to his assets...I consulted this portal to see about the UN regulations about herons and wheels in Europe. And then after that I was able to choose the solution that I would do."*

6.5. Quality and Authority Assessment

Most participants showed adequate quality assessment paired with EU authority trust, though this varied by focus group:

- **FG2:** Strong EU authority trust with generally adequate quality perceptions
- **FG3:** Mixed, with FG3-P3 stating: *"Don't trust it for the final word"* despite recognising official status
- **FG4:** Adequate quality with strong EU authority credibility
- **FG1:** Mixed quality assessments, with specialization gaps affecting perceived utility

The pattern shows institutional credibility maintaining usage despite acknowledged limitations in completeness and currency.

6.6. Content Managers vs. End Users Trust Differential:

Content Managers with Lower Trust:

- **FG3-P3** (Netherlands,): *"Don't trust it for the final word"* - has insider knowledge about completion rates and staff shortages
- **FG1-P1** (content creator): *"Portal's success really depends on the people and the time dedicated to it"* - understands resource constraints
- **FG3-P3** specifically noted: *"delay in updates due to staff shortage"*

End Users with Higher Trust:

- **FG3-P4:** *"Don't know where I would go without the portal"* (high dependency)
- **FG4 participants** (mostly end users) showed stronger trust in content quality

The theme of content managers being more sceptical due to behind-the-scenes knowledge shows how institutional knowledge can create more realistic (but less trusting) assessments of system reliability.

6.7. Universal Navigation/Filtering Concerns:

17 out of 21 participants mentioned wanting different ways to access information:

- **Search bar improvements** (all groups)
- **Cross-references between related topics** (FG4-P1, FG3-P1)
- **Clearer homepage structure** (FG3, FG4)
- **Better content organisation** (universal theme)

6.8. Magic wand responses

1. Search Functionality Overhaul

Most Critical Priority - 11 participants explicitly mentioned:

- FG1-P3: AI integration with modern search capabilities
- FG2-P3: "Introduce artificial intelligence to find, to search"
- FG2-P5: AI Assistant (SANDBOX_AI) trained only on portal information
- FG3-P1, FG3-P2, FG3-P3: All identified better search functionality as priority
- FG3-P3: "modern search technologies" with linked data capabilities
- FG4-P2: Better search functionality with typo tolerance
- FG4-P3: Topic-based rather than country-specific search
- FG5-P3: Search function "more highlighted"
- FG5-P4: "restart from scratch the platform using AI"

2. Professional vs. Citizen Segmentation

5 participants mention:

- FG2-P2: Separate information pathways
- FG5-P1: "website should be only for professionals in law, not for citizens"
- FG5-P3: Separate sections for professionals and general public
- FG2-P2: Clear topic distinctions between professional tools
- FG2-P4: Expert backend support for professionals

3. Content Organization & Comparative Tools

7 participants mention:

- FG2-P1: Country-by-country comparison tables
- FG2-P1: Condensed vs. detailed information hierarchy
- FG3-P1: Reduce overlap and eliminate duplicated content
- FG3-P4: Better organization by member state
- FG4-P1: Easier navigation
- FG4-P4: Missing factsheets and content updates
- FG5-P4: Clear indication of covered legal domains

4. Visual/UX Modernisation

2 participants mention:

- FG1-P1: More modern appearance, better white space
- FG1-P2: System-level AI integration

5. Technical Infrastructure & Integration

4 participants mention:

- FG1-P3: EU-wide authentication via eIDAS, API integration
- FG2-P5: Links to other member state resources
- FG2-P5: Video hearings support
- FG5-P3: Database integration and connectivity

6. Language & Translation

2 participants mention:

- FG5-P1: Information in native language or English
- FG5-P3: Translation accuracy improvements

Key Themes:

1. **Search dysfunction** is the dominant concern across all groups
2. **AI integration** seen as transformative solution by 8+ participants
3. **Professional-citizen distinction** needs clarification
4. **Comparative functionality** for cross-border analysis essential
5. **Content standardization** and completeness critical for trust

7. Additional feedback

The Hungarian National Chamber of Notaries was invited to participate in the focus group but was unable to attend. Instead, they provided a comprehensive written document titled "Comments of the Hungarian National Chamber of Notaries on the European Justice Portal" detailing their experiences with the platform.

This document outlines how Hungarian notaries currently use the portal, identifies specific technical and translation issues they have encountered, and offers concrete suggestions for improvements. Despite these identified faults, the document demonstrates that Hungarian notaries continue to actively use the portal in their daily practice, developing workarounds where necessary. We have summarised this document below.

Current Usage

Hungarian notaries primarily use the e-justice portal for serving summons for succession hearings and European payment orders to people in other EU countries, as well as obtaining information about foreign estate assets in probate proceedings. They also utilize the portal for issuing European Certificates of Succession, European Order for Payment forms, and European Enforcement Order forms. Additionally, notaries use the system for searching company and other registers in other Member States.

Technical Issues

The Hungarian National Chamber of Notaries has identified several technical problems with the European Justice Portal's electronic forms that limit functionality and mean they must create and implement workarounds in their daily practice. Below is an example of one of the faults.

European order for payment form (Form E) presents significant limitations in handling complex financial claims. The system can designate multiple debtors but cannot assign multiple claims to one debtor, forcing users to work around this restriction. Additionally, interest can only be entered as a fixed amount rather than as a percentage rate, despite EU case law allowing interest rates. When percentage rates are entered, the system either ignores them in calculations or incorrectly treats them as euro amounts rather than percentages.

European Certificate of Succession Form (Form V) and the European Enforcement Order form also have notable technical shortcomings. Form V requires filling both natural person AND organization fields in Annex II when users should be able to choose between them, while the European Enforcement Order form cannot handle multiple claims, forcing users to manually list them separated by commas in a single field.

Translation Issues

The document identifies several translation errors in the Hungarian version of the European Justice Portal forms, for example:

European Certificate of Succession Form (Form V):

- In section 6.9, the Hungarian version incorrectly shows "Date of birth:" instead of "Time of death:" for the field asking for "Time of death (year/month/day) and place"
- In section 5.12 ("Family relationship with the testator"), there's a typo in the Hungarian translation where the letter "r" is missing from the end of "Brother-in-law" - it should read "Fiútestvér" instead of the current incorrect version

Solutions Suggested:

The Hungarian National Chamber of Notaries proposed the following solutions for the technical issues:

- Add a button in Annex II (Form V) that allows users to choose between "natural person" and "organization" options, eliminating the need to fill in both sets of fields
- For Form E, improve the system to properly handle interest rates as percentages rather than fixed amounts.

The document notes that similar improvements should also be made to "Form A"

Workarounds Currently Used:

The notaries have developed several workarounds to address the system limitations:

European Enforcement Order Form: For the inability to handle multiple claims, they advise colleagues to include all claims in the main claim field separated by commas

European Order for Payment Form (Form E):

- When entering interest rates, users sometimes add a "%" sign, though the system fails to properly recognize and calculate this in the total amount
- Users have tried entering only the interest rate, but the system incorrectly adds it to the principal claim amount as a fixed euro value rather than treating it as a percentage

These workarounds highlight the practical challenges notaries face when the portal doesn't support standard legal and financial practices. This behaviour matches what we found in other focus groups, where legal professionals find ways of working through the technical issues on the portal in order to achieve what they need, but they still feel this struggle to implement the portal into their daily practices.

8. Research Limitations and Methodological Considerations

Below we examine the limitations of our research and outline considerations for future studies.

8.1. Sample Composition Bias

Institutional Perspective Overrepresentation: The participant distribution of 12 national authority representatives versus 4 private practitioners creates a significant

methodological limitation. This 4:1 ratio may have produced findings that reflect institutional administrative perspectives rather than authentic end-user experiences with the portal. National authority representatives often have different usage patterns, access levels, and professional motivations compared to independent legal practitioners who rely on the portal for client-facing work.

Content Creator Knowledge Bias: 8 out of 21 participants serve dual roles as both content creators and portal users. This insider knowledge provides valuable institutional perspective but may have introduced analytical bias, as content creators possess awareness of backend limitations, resource constraints, and technical challenges that typical users would not experience. Their assessments may reflect organizational frustrations rather than pure user experience evaluations.

8.2. Additional Research Limitations

Experience Level Homogeneity: With 12 out of 21 participants classified as experienced users, the research provides limited insight into first-time user experiences or adoption barriers that might affect broader professional uptake.

9. Raw data

Below sits all transcripts, anonymised and with tagging framework applied.

Focus Group 1

Participant Profiles

FG1-P1 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (EJN contact point for commercial matters, content creator)

FG1-P2 - LEGAL_PROF / MODERATE_USER / PRACTITIONER (Environmental/human rights lawyer)

FG1-P3 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / IN_HOUSE (Corporate legal counsel, European Payment Orders specialist)

Professional Use Cases & Integration

FG1-P1 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- PROJECT_SPECIFIC_REGULAR / RESEARCH_SUPPLEMENT - Court competences, service of documents
- PEER_COLLABORATOR - Responds to other member state requests

- CONTENT_CREATOR / DUAL_ROLE - Updates portal content and uses as end user

FG1-P2 - PRACTITIONER_PERSPECTIVE

- HAS_SUPERIOR_ALTERNATIVES - Prefers Eurolex, other databases
- SPECIALIZATION_GAP - Environmental/human rights law not well covered
- NON_INTEGRATED - Doesn't fit current workflow

FG1-P3 - IN_HOUSE_PERSPECTIVE

- DAILY_INTEGRATION_LIMITED / PROJECT_SPECIFIC_REGULAR - European Payment Orders, enforcement
- CROSS_BORDER_EXPERTISE - European Payment Orders for client enforcement
- EXPECTS_COMPLETE_SOLUTION - Wants integrated automated processes

Professional Quality Perceptions

- ADEQUATE_QUALITY / PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_MODERATE (FG1-P1)
- DEPTH_INSUFFICIENT - Too basic for professional needs (FG1-P2)
- QUALITY_CONCERNS / OUTDATED_CONCERNS - Austrian fees not updated (FG1-P3)
- PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_HIGH / NEEDS_VERIFICATION (FG1-P2, FG1-P3)

Professional Authority Recognition

- EU_AUTHORITY – All trust in official status
- UPDATE_FREQUENCY - Values currency of information (FG1-P1)
- CONTENT_AUTHORSHIP – All agree portal success depends on dedicated resources

Alternative Professional Resources

FG1-P1: Internal ministry resources, EJM network communications

FG1-P2: Eurolex database, specialized environmental law databases, AI tools (ChatGPT)

FG1-P3: Google Gemini, corporate legal databases, automated payment systems

Professional Referral Patterns

- SELECTIVE_REFERRER - All participants would recommend with caveats

- CRITICAL_ADVOCATE - Would recommend with strong limitations noted

Additional information:

FG1-P1: Would recommend but noted resource dependency issues and update challenges

FG1-P2: Has superior alternatives and sees portal as too basic for professional needs

FG1-P3: Would recommend but with strong technical modernization caveats about outdated systems

The "critical advocate" pattern emerges because they see value but have substantial reservations about recommending without warnings.

Magic Wand Professional Improvement Priorities

FG1-P1's Professional Needs

1. Visual/UX Modernization - TECH_PRAGMATIC
 - a. More modern appearance, less "blocky" text
 - b. Better use of white space

FG1-P2's System-Level Improvements

1. AI Integration - AI_ASSISTANCE
 - a. Built-in AI tools within portal
 - b. Integration with modern search capabilities

FG1-P3's Technical Infrastructure Vision

1. EU-wide Authentication Integration - INTEGRATION_NEEDED
 - a. Single sign-on via eIDAS
 - b. API integration for automated calculations
2. Data Analytics Value Proposition - PORTAL_FILLS_UNIQUE_NICHE
 - a. KPI data on cross-border legal efficiency

Critical Professional Insights

Scope & Audience Understanding

- CORRECT_SCOPE_UNDERSTANDING - All understand domestic and cross-border applications
- AUDIENCE_UNCLEAR - Uncertainty about primary target audience (FG1-P3's tourism office analogy)

Quality Standards & Expectations

- AI Competition concern - Portal competes with AI platforms for legal research

- Resource dependency - Portal success depends on human resource allocation

Focus Group 2

Participant Profiles

FG2-P1 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / PRACTITIONER

(Polish notary, Vice President Chamber of Notaries)

FG2-P2 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH

(French court clerk, Central Authority, content manager)

FG2-P3 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / PRACTITIONER

(Spanish prosecutor, civil matters)

FG2-P4 - LEGAL_PROF / FIRST_TIME / NATIONAL_AUTH

(Greek Ministry of Finance, new user)

FG2-P5 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / JUDICIARY

(Dutch judge, EJM contact point)

User Experience Descriptors

DEPTH_INSUFFICIENT - "General, lot of information, lack of information" (FG2-P1)

NAVIGATION_COMPLEXITY - "Useful, unknown, difficult to navigate" (FG2-P2)

NAVIGATION_COMPLEXITY - "For specialist, lots of information, you must know the problem" (FG2-P3)

NAVIGATION_COMPLEXITY - "Complex, potential, outdated, comparative" (FG2-P5)

Professional Use Cases & Integration

FG2-P1 - PRACTITIONER_PERSPECTIVE

- PROJECT_SPECIFIC - Not regular use, international cross-border problems
- RESEARCH_SUPPLEMENT - Uses as starting point for detailed research
- PROFESSIONAL_DEVELOPMENT - Civil partnerships, matrimonial regimes research

FG2-P2 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- DAILY_INTEGRATION - Uses every week as practitioner and CMS administrator
- PROFESSIONAL_LEARNING - Training colleagues on portal usage
- CROSS_BORDER_EXPERTISE - Family law cooperation, European regulations

FG2-P3 - PRACTITIONER_PERSPECTIVE

- DAILY_INTEGRATION - "Uses every day, useful to find applicable law"
- CLIENT_EDUCATION - Training colleagues through seminars and meetings
- PROCEDURAL_REFERENCE - Competent courts and tribunals

FG2-P4 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- FIRST_TIME / AWARE_NON_USER - "Did not know about existence of portal"
- CROSS_BORDER_EXPERTISE - Private international law research interest

FG2-P5 - JUDICIAL_PERSPECTIVE

- PROJECT_SPECIFIC - Couple times per month for educational purposes
- PROFESSIONAL_DEVELOPMENT - Education Center for Judiciary teaching
- BACKUP_RESOURCE - Information gathering on other legal systems

Professional Quality Perceptions

- ADEQUATE_QUALITY - Generally reliable information (most participants)
- DEPTH_APPROPRIATE - Right level for starting research (FG2-P1, FG2-P5)
- CONTENT_GAPS - "Some countries information is missing" (FG2-P1)
- OUTDATED_CONCERNS - Information not always current (FG2-P5 assessment)

Professional Authority Recognition

- EU_AUTHORITY - Strong trust in official status
- PROFESSIONAL_VALIDATION - Valued by judicial education context (FG2-P5)
- PEER_VALIDATION - Shared through professional networks

Alternative Professional Resources

FG2-P1: Oxford Library, Couples of Europe portal, Google research, developing ChatGPT use

FG2-P2: Hague Conference Portal, Eurolex, Légifrance, French Ministry documents

FG2-P3: mentions Prontuario Judicial and says it is "Very, very, very well done" - "Similar to Portal Justice but only for Spain" & "Updated all days" - gold standard comparison for a tool only used within Spain.

FG2-P4: EU Commission sites, Eurolex, IATE, paid legal databases

FG2-P5: Case law databases (Curia, Rechtspraak.nl), Legal Intelligence, Google

Net Promoter Scores - Professional Distinction

For Legal Colleagues:

- **FG2-P1:** 10 ("definitely, without any doubt")
- **FG2-P2:** 10 (strong promotion to judicial courts)
- **FG2-P3:** Active promotion in all training sessions
- **FG2-P4:** 9-10 (strong endorsement)
- **FG2-P5:** 7 (critical assessment - general information limitations)

FG2-P5's response was the lowest, for additional context : The portal promises comprehensive solutions but doesn't deliver the “one stop shop” that is advertised. It provides broad overviews but lacks case-specific depth that professionals need, so thus always requires additional research beyond the portal.

For Citizens/Non-Legal:

- FG2-P1: 8 (language accessibility concerns)
- FG2-P2: 6-7 (accessibility limitations)
- FG2-P4: 6 (legal complexity concerns)
- FG2-P5: 4-5 (insufficient depth for public use)

Although many participants expressed strong willingness to recommend the portal to fellow legal professionals, recommendation scores declined significantly when participants considered referring citizens or non-legal professionals. Participants frequently cited the portal's complexity and heavy use of legal jargon as primary barriers for general public use.

Professional Referral Patterns

- ACTIVE_PROMOTER - FG2-P3 uses in all training PowerPoints
- PEER_REFERRER - Strong professional network recommendations
- SELECTIVE_REFERRER - FG2-P5's critical assessment based on use case

Magic Wand Professional Improvement Priorities

FG2-P1's Professional Needs

1. Comparative Analysis Tools - COMPARISON_FUNCTIONALITY
 - a. Country-by-country comparison tables for specific legal topics
 - b. "Extrajudicial divorces" example - yes/no schema across countries
2. Practical Professional Information - PRACTICE_INTEGRATION
 - a. Power of attorney requirements across jurisdictions

- b. "What proxies do I need to have" for cross-border transactions
3. Content Completeness - CONTENT_STANDARDIZATION
 - a. Complete information from all countries (Poland matrimonial regimes example)
 - b. Condensed vs. detailed information hierarchy

Additional context:

1. Comparative Analysis Tools

- Country-by-country comparison tables for specific legal topics
- Simple yes/no schema format (e.g., "extrajudicial divorces" availability across EU)
- Quick reference capabilities without clicking through individual country pages

2. Practical Professional Information

- Cross-border transaction requirements (power of attorney, authentication, language standards)
- Actionable guidance for notaries and legal practitioners
- Compliance checklists for different jurisdictions

3. Standardized Content Architecture

- **Tier 1 (Condensed):** Quick reference tables, bullet points, standardized format
- **Tier 2 (Detailed):** Full legal explanations, procedural details, contact information
- Consistent information availability across all member states

Current Problem: The portal forces professionals to manually compile comparisons from inconsistent, mixed-depth content across different countries. This creates workflow friction when practitioners need standardized, comparative information for client advice rather than general educational content.

Professional Impact: Without readily available comparative tools, cross-border legal services become inefficient and create potential compliance risks, particularly for notaries handling international transactions.

1. FG2-P2's System-Level Improvements

1. Audience Differentiation - PROFESSIONAL_FEATURES
 - a. Separate information pathways for legal professionals vs. citizens
 - b. Clear topic distinctions (Judiciary Atlas vs. EJN documents)

2. Professional Directory Expansion
 - a. Extend beyond lawyers to other legal professionals (bailiffs, etc.)

FG2-P3's Core Need

1. SEARCH_DYSFUNCTION – AI assistance needed
 - a. "Introduce artificial intelligence to find, to search"

FG2-P4's Professional Support Vision

1. Expert Backend Support - PROFESSIONAL_INTEGRATION
 - a. Legal experts behind portal for repeated questions

FG2-P5's Technical Infrastructure Vision

1. AI Assistant - SANDBOX_AI
 - a. Trained only on portal information for reliability
 - b. Questions-based interaction model
2. Integrated Legal Infrastructure - SYSTEM_INTEGRATION
 - a. Links to background documents and legal systems
 - b. Connection to other member state resources
3. Judicial Infrastructure Integration - DIGITAL_HEARINGS
 - a. Video hearings and court proceedings support
 - b. Part of European judicial infrastructure

Critical Professional Insights

Scope & Audience Understanding

- CORRECT_SCOPE_UNDERSTANDING - All participants understand domestic and cross-border applications
- PROFESSIONAL_TOOL - Strong recognition as legitimate professional resource
- COMPLEMENTARY_USE - Enhances rather than replaces professional expertise

Professional Community Awareness Gap

- AWARENESS_BARRIER - "How little known the e-justice portal is amongst practitioners" (FG2-P5)
- High potential for adoption if awareness increased, word of mouth especially

Quality Standards & Expectations

FG2-P5's critical assessment reflects professional quality standards:

- ONE_STOP_SHOP_EXPECTATIONS - Portal promises but doesn't deliver complete solutions
- GENERAL_VS_SPECIFIC - Portal provides overview but lacks case-specific depth
- PROFESSIONAL_DEPTH_NEEDED - Always requires additional research

Comparative Professional Standards

FG2-P3's Prontuario Judicial example sets benchmark:

- Daily updates vs. periodic portal updates
- Restricted professional access vs. public portal
- Specialized focus vs. general coverage
- Demonstrates what professional-grade legal portal could achieve

Professional Integration Barriers

- Navigation complexity prevents seamless workflow integration
- Search limitations require workarounds
- Content gaps undermine professional reliability expectations
- Technical limitations vs. professional efficiency needs

Cross-Professional Perspective Differences

- Practitioners (FG2-P1, FG2-P3): Focus on practical application and client service
- National Authorities (FG2-P2, FG2-P4): Focus on system integration and colleague training
- Judiciary (FG2-P5): Focus on educational use and professional standards

All share common search and navigation concerns despite different professional contexts

Focus Group 3

Participant Profiles

FG3-P1 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (Portugal Ministry of Justice, content manager)

FG3-P2 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (Belgium Ministry of Justice, administrator)

FG3-P3 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (Netherlands, one of original founders of the portal)

FG3-P4 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (Finland Ministry of Justice, central authority)

FG3-P5 - LEGAL_PROF / MODERATE_USER / NATIONAL_AUTH (Cyprus Ministry of Justice, administrator)

Professional Use Cases & Integration

FG3-P1 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- PROJECT_SPECIFIC - Research on legal frameworks (taking of evidence)
- JURISDICTION_RESEARCH - Researching legal frameworks of other member states

FG3-P2 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- PROCEDURAL_REFERENCE - Service of documents, competent authorities
- CLIENT_SUPPORT - Supporting courts and providing guidance

FG3-P3 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- RESEARCH_SUPPLEMENT - Entry point requiring further research
- NON_INTEGRATED - Limited integration due to completeness concerns

FG3-P4 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- CLIENT_SUPPORT - Supporting courts and providing guidance
- PROFESSIONAL_LEARNING - Training colleagues on portal usage

FG3-P5 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- RESEARCH_SUPPLEMENT - Used for comparative legal research (general attorney powers across countries)
- JURISDICTION_RESEARCH - *"I had to search about the role of the general attorney in other countries because we have one issue in Cyprus"*

Professional Quality Perceptions

- QUALITY_CONCERNS - "Don't trust it for the final word" (FG3-P3)
- NEEDS_VERIFICATION - Information often incomplete or outdated (FG3-P3)
- ADEQUATE_QUALITY - Generally reliable with concerns (most participants)

- DEPTH_INSUFFICIENT - Templates not filled uniformly across member states (FG3-P3)
- OUTDATED_CONCERNS - Delay in updates due to staff shortage (FG3-P3)

Professional Authority Recognition

- EU_AUTHORITY - Strong trust in official EU status
- CONTENT_AUTHORSHIP - Concerns about content quality control
- PEER_VALIDATION - Internal knowledge about completion rates affects trust

Alternative Professional Resources

FG3-P1: Légifrance for France-specific information, national websites with translation tools

FG3-P3: National websites with translation tools, Google as starting point **FG3-P4:** "Don't know where I would go without the portal" - high dependency

FG3-P5: Legal publishers and official EU country websites

Net Promoter Scores - Professional Distinction

For Legal Colleagues:

- **FG3-P1:** 9-10 for lawyers using Brussels regulations
- **FG3-P2:** 10 (definitive recommendation)
- **FG3-P3:** 8-9 for forms, 5 for content, ~6 for case law
- **FG3-P4:** 7-8 for legal professionals
- **FG3-P5:** 8-9

For Citizens/Non-Legal:

- **FG3-P1:** 5-6 due to legal jargon and hidden content
- **FG3-P2:** 10 (but acknowledged limitations)
- **FG3-P3:** Various scores based on specific functionality
- **FG3-P4:** 6-7 due to complexity for citizens
- **FG3-P5:** 8-9 based on cross-border legal aid success

Professional Referral Patterns

- ACTIVE_PROMOTER - FG3-P2 strongly promotes usage
- SELECTIVE_REFERRER - FG3-P3 distinguishes by functionality type
- PEER_REFERRER - Strong professional network recommendations

Magic Wand Professional Improvement Priorities

1. **Search Engine Overhaul** (Universal Priority)
 - a. Better search functionality- All participants identified this
 - b. More sophisticated search capabilities
"with much more knowledge of linked data and the possible use of it" and *"maybe it's better to use modern search technologies"* (FG3-P3)
 - c. Ecli implementation- Technical specification updates needed (FG3-P3)
"my top priority, of course, is the implementation of the Revived Accounts Conclusions on the ECLI, in the ECLI search engine and the underlying data structure"
2. **Content Organization & Structure**
 - a. Reduce overlap- Eliminate duplicated content (FG3-P1)
 - b. Consolidate content - Better organisation by member state (FG3-P4)
 - c. Improve navigation - Less hunting for information
3. **Technical Infrastructure**
 - a. Better search engine referencing (FG3-P2)
 - b. Integrate AI assistance - Chatbot for user guidance (FG3-P2)

Critical Professional Insights

Scope & Audience Understanding

- FULL_AUDIENCE_UNDERSTANDING - Clear recognition portal serves multiple audiences
- PROFESSIONAL_AUDIENCE_FOCUS - Strong understanding of professional applications
- CORRECT_SCOPE_UNDERSTANDING - Both domestic and cross-border applications recognised

Quality Standards & Expectations

- Different portal functionalities have different quality levels:
 - Forms/Interactive tools: High quality and reliability
 - General information/Factsheets: Quality concerns, completeness issues
 - Databases/Registers: Significant technical shortcomings

Focus Group 4

Participant Profiles

FG4-P1 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (Content management role)

FG4-P2 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (Judicial system)

FG4-P3 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (Data protection cases)

FG4-P4 - LEGAL_PROF / EXPERIENCED / NATIONAL_AUTH (EJN contact point)

Professional Use Cases & Integration

FG4-P1 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- CROSS_BORDER_EXPERTISE - German court structures comparison

FG4-P2 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- PROCEDURAL_REFERENCE - Judicial atlas for fees and court systems
- BOOKMARK_RELIANT - Goes straight to atlas, avoids navigating

FG4-P3 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- PROFESSIONAL_LEARNING - Cross-checking Swedish court information

FG4-P4 - AUTHORITY_PERSPECTIVE

- CLIENT_SUPPORT - Judge assistance with Dutch national law via axel list
- PROCEDURAL_REFERENCE - Judicial atlas for fees and court systems

Professional Quality Perceptions

- HIGH_QUALITY_CONTENT - Strong trust in factsheets and judicial network info
- DEPTH_APPROPRIATE - Good for basic cross-border information needs
- OUTDATED_CONCERNS - "Not all member states have fact sheets" (FG4-P4)
- NEEDS_VERIFICATION - Sometimes requires direct EJN contact for niche answers

Professional Authority Recognition

- EU_AUTHORITY - Strong trust due to official EU status
- PEER_VALIDATION - Judges and authorities rely on EJN network backing
- UPDATE_FREQUENCY - Concerns about missing/outdated factsheets

Net Promoter Scores - Professional Distinction

For Legal Colleagues:

- FG4-P1: 8/9 (with navigation caveats)
- FG4-P2: 8 ("*because it's messy*")
- FG4-P3: 7 (struggle with country-by-country search)
- FG4-P4: 9 (strong advocate despite limitations)

Professional Referral Patterns

- SELECTIVE_REFERRER - Recommend with specific caveats about navigation
- PEER_REFERRER - Strong recommendations to other legal professionals
- QUALITY_STANDARD - High confidence in content quality despite usability issues

Magic Wand Professional Improvement Priorities

FG4-P1's:

1. Navigation Structure
 - a. EASIER_NAVIGATION - Less hunting for information

FG4-P2's:

1. Search Function Overhaul
 - a. BETTER_SEARCH_FUNCTIONALITY - Topic-based rather than country-specific
 - b. TYPO_TOLERANCE - Better search resilience

FG4-P3's:

1. Search Function Overhaul
 - a. TOPIC_ORGANISATION - Subject-based rather than country-based organisation

FG4-P4's:

1. Content Completeness
 - a. MISSING_FACTSHEETS - Add missing member state information
 - b. CONTENT_CURRENCY - Update old factsheets

Critical Professional Insights

Scope & Audience Understanding

- CORRECT_SCOPE_UNDERSTANDING: Partially - they understand cross-border applications, but focus primarily on professional use cases
- PROFESSIONAL_TOOL – all viewed as legitimate professional resource
- COMPLEMENTARY_USE - Enhances rather than replaces professional expertise

Quality Standards & Expectations

- Strong EU_AUTHORITY credibility maintains usage despite usability problems
- DAILY_INTEGRATION potential hindered by navigation issues
- BACKUP_RESOURCE - Currently used as fallback when primary tools insufficient

Focus Group 5

Participant Profiles

FG5-P1 - LEGAL_PROF / MODERATE_USER / PRACTITIONER (Portugal, law society, real estate/family law)

FG5-P2 - LEGAL_PROF / FIRST_TIME / IN_HOUSE (Slovakia, Higher Education Agency, administrative law)

FG5-P3 - LEGAL_PROF / FIRST_TIME / JUDICIARY (Belgium, trainee judge, civil/criminal law)

FG5-P4 - LEGAL_PROF / FIRST_TIME / JUDICIARY (Romania, judicial trainee, local law focus)

Professional Use Cases & Integration

FG5-P1 - PRACTITIONER_PERSPECTIVE

- CROSS_BORDER_EXPERTISE - Danish inheritance case requiring EU regulation consultation
- CLIENT_EDUCATION - "I had a case that the, a private client...he was worried if he will die in Portugal, what will happen"
- JURISDICTION_RESEARCH - Successfully used portal for applicable law determination
- PROJECT_SPECIFIC_OCCASIONAL - Uses for specific cross-border family/inheritance matters
- CLIENT_SERVICE_IMPROVEMENT - Portal enabled proper legal solution for Danish client

FG5-P2 - IN_HOUSE_PERSPECTIVE

- NON_INTEGRATED - "I don't have specific cases which I can confront in this portal"

- PROFESSIONAL_LEARNING - Potential PhD research applications
- RESEARCH_SUPPLEMENT - Administrative law applications not yet realized

FG5-P3 - JUDICIARY_PERSPECTIVE

- NON_INTEGRATED - "I haven't used it often because my area of expertise was more local law"
- CROSS_BORDER_EXPERTISE - Limited cross-border exposure but recognizes potential
- PROCEDURAL_REFERENCE - Would use for Netherlands/Luxembourg questions

FG5-P4 - JUDICIARY_PERSPECTIVE

- NON_INTEGRATED - "I haven't used the platform...at first glance, it's not looking very helpful"
- PROFESSIONAL_LEARNING - Limited exposure, primarily theoretical interest

Professional Quality Perceptions

FG5-P1 - SUCCESSFUL_USER_PERSPECTIVE

- HIGH_QUALITY_CONTENT - "I found out a UN regulation...I was able to decide to do a will"
- DEPTH_APPROPRIATE - Information sufficient for inheritance law application
- ACCEPTS_STARTING_POINT - Uses portal as reliable research foundation

FG5-P2 - OPTIMISTIC_NEWCOMER

- ADEQUATE_QUALITY - "My impression is very good"
- PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_MODERATE - Sees potential utility for administrative work

FG5-P3 - CRITICAL_PROFESSIONAL

- QUALITY_CONCERNS - "The website is very untidy"
- PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_HIGH - "I don't understand what the target audience...is"
- NAVIGATION_COMPLEXITY - "I don't really find my way in it at first glance"
- AUDIENCE_UNCLEAR - Questions whether for professionals or citizens

FG5-P4 - SKEPTICAL_PROFESSIONAL

- QUALITY_CONCERNS - "Platform doesn't really know what it wants to express"
- NEEDS_VERIFICATION - "I wouldn't trust that information without verifying it further"
- PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_HIGH - "Doesn't look like a platform for professionals"

Professional Authority Recognition

FG5-P1: EU_AUTHORITY - Trusts EU regulation information found on portal

FG5-P2: EU_AUTHORITY - Values access to EU legislation and case law

FG5-P3: Limited authority recognition due to usability concerns

FG5-P4: Minimal authority recognition, focuses on usability deficits

Alternative Professional Resources

FG5-P1: ChatGPT as research starting point, internal law firm AI tools, traditional legal databases for verification

FG5-P2: Academic research databases, EU legislation sources

FG5-P3: EJN databases for criminal matters, national court systems

FG5-P4: Perplexity for legal knowledge, Google search, traditional legal databases

AI Integration Professional Perspectives

FG5-P1 - AI_EARLY_ADOPTER

- TECH_EARLY_ADOPTER - Uses ChatGPT regularly for contract analysis and research kick-off
- EFFICIENCY_GAIN - "He helped me to not waste so much time in my research"
- NEEDS_VERIFICATION - Always confirms AI results with traditional sources

FG5-P2 - AI_CAUTIOUS_USER

- TECH_PRAGMATIC - Limited use, always verifies information
- Uses for law amendment proposals in higher education

FG5-P3 - AI_RESTRICTED_USER

- PROFESSIONAL_LIABILITY - "For drafting documents...it's forbidden ChatGPT...because of Professional Secrecy"
- TECH_PRAGMATIC - Strategic use for argument analysis and summarization

FG5-P4 - AI_PRAGMATIC_USER

- TECH_PRAGMATIC - "I don't usually use AI in my profession"
- Prefers Perplexity over ChatGPT for legal knowledge

Net Promoter Scores - Professional Distinction

For Legal Colleagues:

- **FG5-P1:** 7/10 - "To start a search or research about those teams that they have some doubts"
- **FG5-P2:** 7/10 - For organizational colleagues
- **FG5-P3:** 5/10 - "Difficult to find what you need, but the chance is high that it's there"
- **FG5-P4:** 4.5/10 - "Only for someone looking for something very specific"

For Citizens/Non-Legal:

- Generally lower scores due to complexity concerns
- **FG5-P1:** Would recommend for cross-border issues requiring legal consultation

Professional Referral Patterns

FG5-P1: SELECTIVE_REFERRER - Recommends for specific cross-border research needs
FG5-P2: SELECTIVE_REFERRER - Would recommend to organizational colleagues

FG5-P3: CRITICAL_ADVOCATE - Recommends with significant reservations about usability
FG5-P4: CRITICAL_ADVOCATE - Very limited recommendation scope

Magic Wand Professional Improvement Priorities

Professional Segmentation (FG5-P1, FG5-P3)

- **FG5-P1:** "This website should be only for professionals in law, not for citizens"
- **FG5-P3:** "Section for professionals and a section for the general public"

Search & Navigation Overhaul (Universal Priority)

- **FG5-P3:** "Search function would be more highlighted...you often find this website with a certain question in mind"
- **FG5-P4:** "I would focus on the search function...I would restart from scratch the platform using AI"

Content & Scope Clarity (FG5-P4)

- Clear indication of covered legal domains
- "I don't know what was the criteria that they used when they selected these sections"

Database Integration (FG5-P3)

- "All the databases are connected...make the information more accessible"

Language & Translation (FG5-P1, FG5-P3)

- **FG5-P1:** "Information must be provided in our home or native language or in English"
- **FG5-P3:** Notes translation accuracy issues in Dutch

Critical Professional Insights

Scope & Audience Understanding

- **FG5-P1:** PROFESSIONAL_AUDIENCE_FOCUS - Strong belief portal should serve only professionals
- **FG5-P2:** CROSSBORDER_ONLY_MISCONCEPTION - Limited understanding of domestic applications
- **FG5-P3:** AUDIENCE_UNCLEAR - Explicit confusion about target audience
- **FG5-P4:** AUDIENCE_UNCLEAR - Questions professional vs. public orientation

Technology Assessment

- **FG5-P4:** "This is a site that would have been successful perhaps in the year 2005"
- Universal agreement that AI integration could revolutionize functionality
- Strong consensus on search function inadequacy

Professional Integration Challenges

- Three of four participants show NON_INTEGRATED patterns
- Only FG5-P1 demonstrates successful professional integration

- Judiciary participants face professional restrictions limiting AI adoption

Quality Expectations vs. Reality

- Higher professional standards correlate with lower satisfaction scores
- First-time users show significant scepticism
- Successful user (FG5-P1) has specific domain focus limiting quality expectations