

*Online Courts in China: A New Hybrid Model for Access to Justice**

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Abstract

Amidst the global movement for online courts and digitization of justice, many jurisdictions have to overcome concerns over new technological barriers that negatively impact access to justice for all. China's implementation of the online courts since 2020 introduces a distinctive approach, setting itself apart by providing litigants with a unique freedom of choice between online and offline mechanisms for every aspect of civil and administrative litigation in any Chinese court. Several inherent characteristics or even perceived weaknesses of the Chinese political and judicial system contributed to this move that had not been tested before in China or elsewhere. This innovative model creates a new hybrid judicial framework for the digital era, potentially reshaping traditional paradigms and offering solutions to the emerging challenges faced by contemporary legal systems, as part of China's notable efforts to influence global discussions and understanding of important topics such as law and governance.

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