

## Italian Department of Prison Administration

### EMC Documentum supports the department—from the computerized register to the prisoner file



#### Business overview

The Italian Department of Prison Administration, Dipartimento dell'Amministrazione Penitenziaria (DAP), is one of the four departments in the Ministry of Justice. The judicial system is divided into two phases—jurisdiction and penalty enforcement. The DAP directs everything that takes place after criminal proceedings end, implementing organizational processes to manage individuals who are either deprived of their personal freedom or dealt with by alternative measures, the facilities that host them, and the administrative apparatus to operate the entire system.

#### Challenges

Innovating isn't easy—especially in the government. Even when objectives are clear, contextual difficulties, financial limitations, and organizational or political uncertainties create obstacles that government organizations and their partners must tackle with accuracy and perseverance to achieve tangible results.

In the Ministry of Justice, discussions and disagreements about judicial statistics relating to both the trial process and the enforcement of sentences occurred every day—a clear sign that complete computerization of Ministry systems was lacking. Although there were state-of-the-art niche solutions and many developed sectors, the Italian judicial system still fell far short of total automation.

The prison administration system, in particular, had always been extremely difficult to manage, due to both the intrinsic complexity of an activity such as penal enforcement, as well as the magnitude of the resources used and the various factors that come into play. As a result, automation was needed to improve information management to support decision-making and management control.

Each of the department's processes is supported by a complex computerized system. "The DAP's computer system was set up in 1970," explains Ferdinando Mulas, who manages the department's office dedicated to developing and managing the automated information system. "Over time, it has evolved into an extensive system for managing prisoners and the respective logistics, but there are some delays in the work being done to manage resources (human, financial, and physical) assigned to the DAP." To handle these critical functions, the DAP needed better technology.

#### EMC solution

##### Introduction of the computerized register in the department

In 2001, the Ministry of Justice deployed EMC® Documentum® to launch a radical internal digitization process, known as the computerized register. The project has been extended from the central department to a number of external sites. The register project has created tangible benefits that help the departments organize work, and it covers all processes involving the DAP. As a result of these solid achievements, the register has become the basis for the development of an innovative project—the creation of the single prisoner file, which will generate savings and efficiency in the judicial system.

“Administration processes are cross-over activities that relate to all the DAP’s activities. The DAP’s computerized register, which is now based on the EMC Documentum platform,” Mulas points out, “was introduced in all the department’s offices in 2001 and subsequently extended to a limited number of local offices . Because of its nature, this process requires strong decision-making at the top and its purposes need to be shared by the organizations involved, which can potentially include around three hundred peripheral offices across the country and a total of around two thousand users.”

The DAP’s requirement was to ensure that its administration activities were simplified, rationalized, and made transparent. In terms of efficiency, the whole lifecycle of documents needed to be managed and files needed to be processed by the various offices, according to the relevant administrative procedures, by means of appropriate workflow processes.

For this reason, an application model has been developed on the same technological platform used by the register to manage procedures and create an information repository in the disputes management, studies, and contract management offices. In terms of technological support structure, the system involves the physical centralization—within the DAP—of the hardware and software needed to manage the register, with online logical distribution of the solution to the offices and users involved.

This centralization and virtualization model concentrates processing and archiving resources and limits the number of peripheral servers, while at the same time allowing services to be used across the country, via the web platform, by all three hundred offices.

**“To sum up, the adoption of EMC Documentum for the register has allowed the number of registered documents to be increased significantly, while also reducing processing times.”**

**Ferdinando Mulas, Department Manager**

The computerized register provides numerous functions, including:

- Registration
- Register marking using barcodes
- Electronic management of the images of incoming and outgoing hard copy correspondence
- Searching and consulting of register and document data
- Administration of the system itself

To enhance administration, the system provides editing, cancellation, and record-keeping functions for the computerized register, and manages emergencies, statistics, security levels, and access control list (ACL) definition.

### **Benefits**

The Documentum-based computerized register and document management systems have considerably improved the internal activities of the department, resulting in a number of tangible benefits. “The benefits of adopting this system,” says Mulas, “essentially lie in the process optimization achieved by introducing efficiency and effectiveness, eliminating internal hard copy registers, and reducing the number of registration offices. The system has allowed the process to be standardized, reducing document classification errors. Unique registration numbers avoid the problems associated, for example, with numbering errors, such as number jumping and duplication. Furthermore, the system ensures the prompt management of documentation, because it allows information to be found and shared across the whole structure, avoiding the need for frequently exhausting or fruitless searches through paper archives. To sum up, the adoption of EMC Documentum for the register has allowed the number of registered documents to be increased significantly, while also reducing processing times.”

The computerized register is therefore a starting point for the automation of office processes which, because of their nature, also affect other processes. The computerized register is the main source that feeds all systems that manage the information that ends up in the prisoner files.

Four different situations have been tested thus far: dispute management, document management, IT contract management, and digital prisoner file management. For dispute management, the register is the basis for a filing system that can briefly be divided into three main concepts: file, sub-file, and document category. For document management in an area such as the studies department, the filing system is based on the concept of a file placed in a three-tier hierarchy (area-sector-subject) of matters dealt with by the department. IT contract management has a filing system in which the concepts of file and document category are the most important. A plan is currently being approved for digital prisoner file management, a system that automatically routes required files and documents to the computerized register, rather than the archive.

“The development path based on the computerized register,” adds Mulas, “aims to achieve a greater degree of dematerialization and simplification of administrative processes, while ensuring the required standards of security, in accordance with current legislation (Digital Administration Code and previous legislation). Consequently, the computerized procedures so far designed to support the paper document management process have to evolve into procedures for creating, managing, and storing computerized documents.”

Implementation activities are being planned as part of the development of the department’s computerized register: sorting and allocating registered correspondence within the DAP, implementing a filing procedure associated with the classification plan, implementing a storage process, and integrating the computerized register system with standard and certified e-mail and digital signatures.

### **Developments and evolution**

Of the document management programs being considered by the DAP office assigned to developing and managing the information system, the one with the most potential benefits is the electronic prisoner file. At the moment, a personal file is opened for each prisoner, both centrally, within the DAP, and locally, in the specific prison facility. The file is re-created every time a transfer takes place.

The aim is to digitize a single prisoner file in order to increase the information held by the SIAP/AFIS (prison administration information system/automatic fingerprint identification system) and therefore support the management and investigation activities of all the relevant parties, internal and external, to the DAP.

### **Summary**

The EMC Documentum solution has fulfilled the DAP’s critical requirements, including the creation of a digital archive of all the documents associated with a particular individual: fingerprints, identity photographs, identity documents, court decisions, police memos, medical and healthcare documentation, employment-related documentation, transfer documents, punishments, reports, faxes, e-mails, images, and video or audio recordings. The file is then connected to the structured data of the national registration office through the unique identification code or CUI (codice univoco di identificazione); therefore, the judicial position, movements, and identity record card of the prisoner whose file is being viewed can be requested.

The system is connected with the register so that documents that have been digitized and filed in EMC Documentum may be obtained anywhere in the country. “Storage in a single collection center, which is accessible not only for prison administration purposes, but also for investigation and criminal police inquiries,” concludes Mulas, “will provide a fast response to the increasing number of requests made by the National Anti-Mafia Department for quick, flexible, and complete information and meet the need for details of the soon-to-be implemented precautionary measures to be included in the database.”



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