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Item No. 12 on the agenda: Communications strategy and social media outreach

(prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary	*Description of the activities undertaken on the UNIDROIT website and social media channels*
Action to be taken	*The Governing Council is invited to take note of the activities and support the initiatives of the Secretariat*
Related documents	*UNIDROIT 2021 – C.D. (100) B.23;* *UNIDROIT 2021 – C.D. (100) B.19;* *UNIDROIT 2022 – C.D. (101) 19;* *UNIDROIT 2023 – C.D. (102) 22*

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In alignment with the objectives announced during the 100th session of the UNIDROIT Governing Council, UNIDROIT's online presence is a key driver in spreading awareness of the Institute's activities and the impact of its instruments.

2. The efforts put into the revamping and building of a simplified navigation system for the UNIDROIT website, now integrated with its social media strategy, have been instrumental in ensuring a steady increase in UNIDROIT's audience and users at a global level and across diverse demographics.

II. WEBSITE

3. UNIDROIT revamped its website and launched the current version during the 100th session of the Governing Council. Since then, the Secretariat has continued to improve the website to increase accessibility and facilitate the way through which documents and information can be easily found. A member of the General Services staff within the Secretariat has been provided with extensive training and designated to aid and support the IT administrator in his tasks, to ensure continuity in his absence. A majority of the legal officers and support staff are now trained and independent in the procedure of updating website content.

4. The website's new functionalities have allowed the Secretariat to work on its projects in a more convenient and efficient way. This has included using tools such as password-protected pages on the website, draft pages, and integration with online events, as well as better video and media integration. Since its launch, the Secretariat has continued to introduce new features, sections and functionalities to the new website in order to facilitate accessibility to information on UNIDROIT's work. Several new sections were added to the website in 2023, including items related to two Academic

Institutes recently established under the aegis of the UNIDROIT Academy (namely, the Roma Tre – UNIDROIT Centre for Transnational Commercial Law and International Arbitration, and the Nordic Law Centre). New features, pictures and multimedia content are also continually being added to provide better introductions to members of the staff and to the Institute's projects.

5.   The website is monitored with Google Analytics. Most users of the UNIDROIT website in 2023 were from the United States (more than 9%), China (more than 8%), France and Italy (almost 6%), and the United Kingdom (5.35%). The most consulted webpages were those relating to the UNIDROIT Scholarship, Internship and Research Programme, and the UNIDROIT Principles on International Commercial Contracts (UPICC) 2016 and Model Clauses, followed by the project on Digital Assets and Private Law, the Cape Town Convention and its Protocols, and the 1995 Cultural Property Convention.

6.   Despite its recent changes and achievements, the website could benefit from further improvements. To address this, the Secretariat has compiled a report on the "Reorganisation and Improvements to the UNIDROIT Website", proposing modifications to increase efficiency and achieve a more user-friendly experience. The report can be found as an annexe to this document.

III.   SOCIAL MEDIA

7.   UNIDROIT launched its social media programme during the Institute's 90th anniversary celebrations in April 2016. The purpose of UNIDROIT's social media presence continues to be to:

- raise UNIDROIT's public profile and online awareness of its current projects;

- promote upcoming events and encourage participation from relevant stakeholders;

- allow researchers, visiting professionals, interns, and other stakeholders to connect with each other and maintain a connection with UNIDROIT;

- serve as a dynamic channel to communicate with the global community interested in UNIDROIT's work; and

- allow UNIDROIT to widely advertise vacancies and opportunities for internships and scholarships.

8.   UNIDROIT currently maintains accounts on [LinkedIn](#) (since 2016), Facebook (since 2016), [X](#) (formerly Twitter) (since 2018), and [YouTube](#) (relaunched in 2019). UNIDROIT's presence on YouTube was relaunched to promote videos of presentations made at the Institute by international legal experts and visiting scholars and to share promotional videos about UNIDROIT instruments and events.

9.   In general, pursuant to a regularly-updated internal social media strategy, the Secretariat focuses on sharing the following types of content through its various social media channels:

- updates relating to projects;

- notable anniversaries of signatures, ratifications, accessions and entries into force of UNIDROIT instruments, under the #UNIDROITanniversaries hashtag;

- UNIDROIT events (past and upcoming);

- external events relevant to UNIDROIT's work (e.g. international moot court competitions utilising UNIDROIT instruments);

- UNIDROIT attendance at other international meetings;

- profiles of scholars and interns;

- internship and scholarship opportunities;

- vacancy opportunities;

- library news;

- webinars;

- history of the Institute;

- announcements of partnerships with other organisations;

- sharing relevant content from the social media accounts of partner organisations; and

- monthly themes to promote certain projects.

10.   Additionally, in order to enhance its digital presence and outreach, the Secretariat collaborates with universities, affiliated international organisations, and individuals who share an interest in UNIDROIT's work. All posts are accompanied by relevant images or videos that are either captured at UNIDROIT or are royalty-free. Furthermore, every post contains a link back to the UNIDROIT website to direct traffic and increase the website's visitors.

11.   Over the years, the Secretariat has benefitted from attending the "Social Media Roundtable" organised every six months by the United States Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome. These meetings bring together social media managers from international organisations based in Rome (FAO, IFAD, WFP, IDLO, UNIDROIT, ICCROM, etc.) to discuss best practices in social media management and effective strategies, share knowledge, and improve social media coordination. This forum has allowed the Institute to benefit from the professional social media expertise of larger organisations to improve its own social media practices.

IV.   PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

12.   The three key performance indicators for the Institute's Communication Strategy are: (i) number of followers; (ii) the reach of the social media programme (the total number of people that see UNIDROIT social media content); and (iii) the number of referrals to the UNIDROIT website. Since its launch, the UNIDROIT social media programme has exceeded expectations on all three key performance indicators, as showcased by the substantial growth in followers, engagement rates and referrals. As of 14 March 2024, the Institute had more than 32,563 followers on LinkedIn, 5,908 followers on Facebook, 2,373 followers on X (formerly Twitter), and 596 subscribers on YouTube. As for the Institute's reach across social media, over the past twelve months UNIDROIT content was displayed on news feeds more than 928,966 times on LinkedIn, around 76,200 times on X, and 33,292 times on Facebook. Additionally, videos on the UNIDROIT YouTube channel were viewed more than 8,238 times in the past 12 months, with a total watch time of more than 500 hours. In the past 12 months, UNIDROIT's LinkedIn page received a total of 15,000 reactions and over 1,000,000 impressions.

13.   UNIDROIT's social media channels have a global reach and cut across social demographics. Social media has consistently served as the largest source of referrals for the website (except search engines). Of these referrals, the majority (more than 50%) come through LinkedIn, Facebook, and X. These statistics reaffirm the importance of LinkedIn, Facebook, and X towards the promotion of UNIDROIT activities.

14.   None of UNIDROIT's social media accounts requires subscription fees. UNIDROIT utilises a software called SocialChamp to simultaneously post content to its different platforms, which significantly lowers the amount of time required to maintain them. Through SocialChamp, posts can be scheduled in advance, which allows UNIDROIT to promote content at strategic times to ensure maximum engagement.

15.   In 2021, UNIDROIT launched a Social Media Internship Programme, which has welcomed interns to assist the Secretariat in producing content for the Institute's social media channels, with a particular focus on videos. This programme continued throughout 2023 and UNIDROIT now maintains an Explanatory Videos Playlist on its YouTube channel, which includes concise videos explaining UNIDROIT instruments, projects, and other activities, such as the International Programme for Law and Development. The UNIDROIT YouTube channel hosts a total of 92 videos.

V.   ACTION TO BE TAKEN

16.   *The Governing Council is invited to take note of the activities of the Secretariat and to support its initiatives in this field. The Council is further invited to alert the Secretariat to possible improvements to the organisation's website, as evidenced in their utilisation of the website.*

<div align="right">**ANNEXE**</div>

Reorganisation and Improvements to the UNIDROIT Website

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   The purpose of this document is to provide information to the Governing Council regarding the UNIDROIT website and its proposed reorganisation and improvements.

II.   BACKGROUND

2.   The current version of the UNIDROIT website was launched during the 100th session of the UNIDROIT Governing Council in September 2021.[1] Since then, the Secretariat has strived to introduce new features, sections and functionalities to the website in order to allow users to access more information on UNIDROIT's work.

3.   Currently, the website's layout is divided into a number of different components:

- Top Section: This is present at the top of every page and contains the UNIDROIT logo, the menus "About UNIDROIT" and "Contact", and a search bar. In the upper right corner, users can change the language between English and French;

- Top Menu: a horizontal list of menus highlighting different areas of UNIDROIT's work;

- Main Body: the body of the website containing the main text. At the top, a thick dividing bar of colour is used to separate the Top Menu from the Main Body;

- Sidebar: A vertical list of menus found to the right of the Main Body, which contains further links relating to the page currently visited;

- Bottom Section: This is present at the bottom of every page and contains a short description of UNIDROIT ("About UNIDROIT"), a vertical list of links linking to UNIDROIT's areas of work ("Our Links"), and contact details ("Get in Touch").

4.   The reorganisation of the website is considered without making amendments to the fundamental layout of the website as described above in order to avoid additional costs.

5.   A limitation derived from this approach is the number of items on the Top Menu. The current number of items is the maximum that the Top Menu can contain. Careful consideration should be given to the Top Menu items to ensure that only the most important items are contained therein.
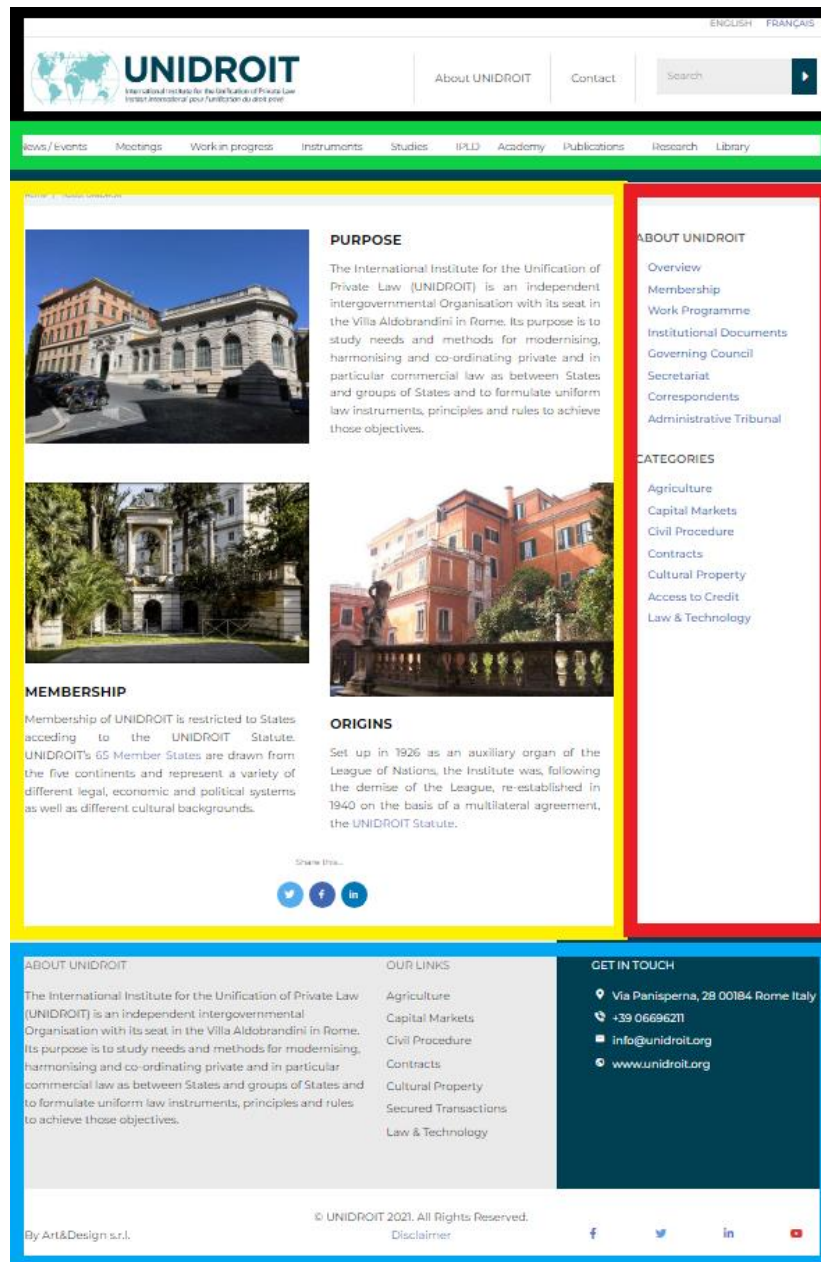
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[1]   See C.D. (101) 19 at para. 3.

Figure 1: Screenshot of the "About Unidroit" page with the components set out in paragraph 3: Top Section (Black frame), Top Menu (Green frame), Main Body (Yellow frame), Sidebar (Red frame), and Bottom Section (Blue frame).

III.   REORGANISATION OF WEBSITE STRUCTURE

The Top Menu

6.   The Top Menu moves as the user scrolls down the webpage. As such, it allows users to access the Top Menu links without having to scroll to a specific location of the website.

7.   Currently, the Top Menu contains the following links, many of which generate a list of additional links when hovering the cursor:

- News/Events

- Meetings

- Work in progress

- Instruments

- Studies

- IPLD

- Academy

- Publications

- Research

- Library.
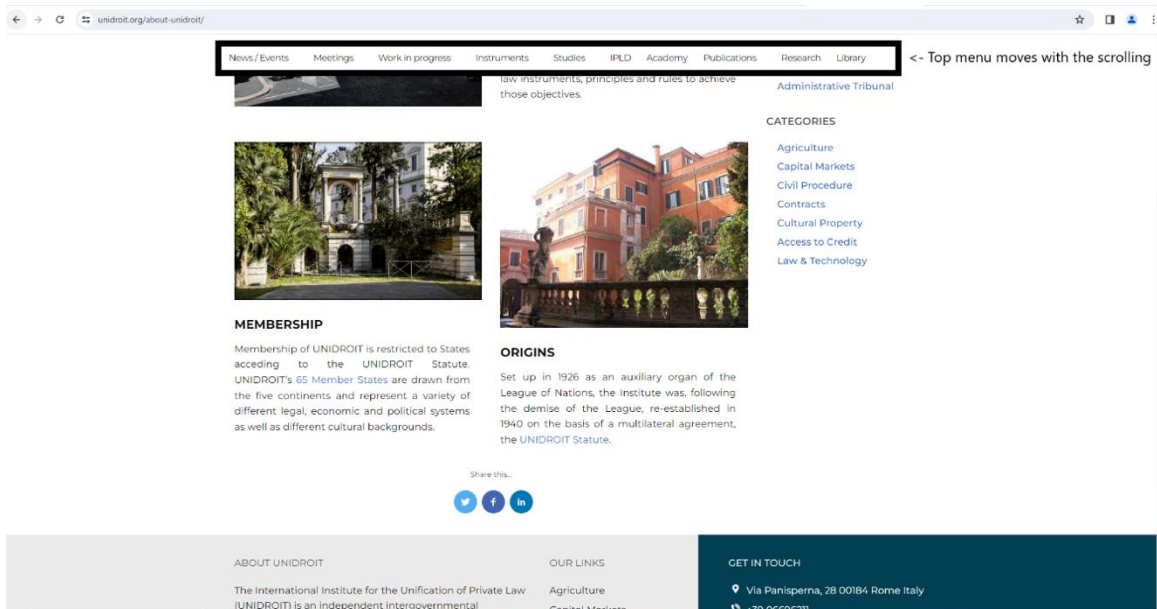
Figure 2: Screenshot showing the Top Menu (in black frame) moving when scrolling.

"About UNIDROIT"
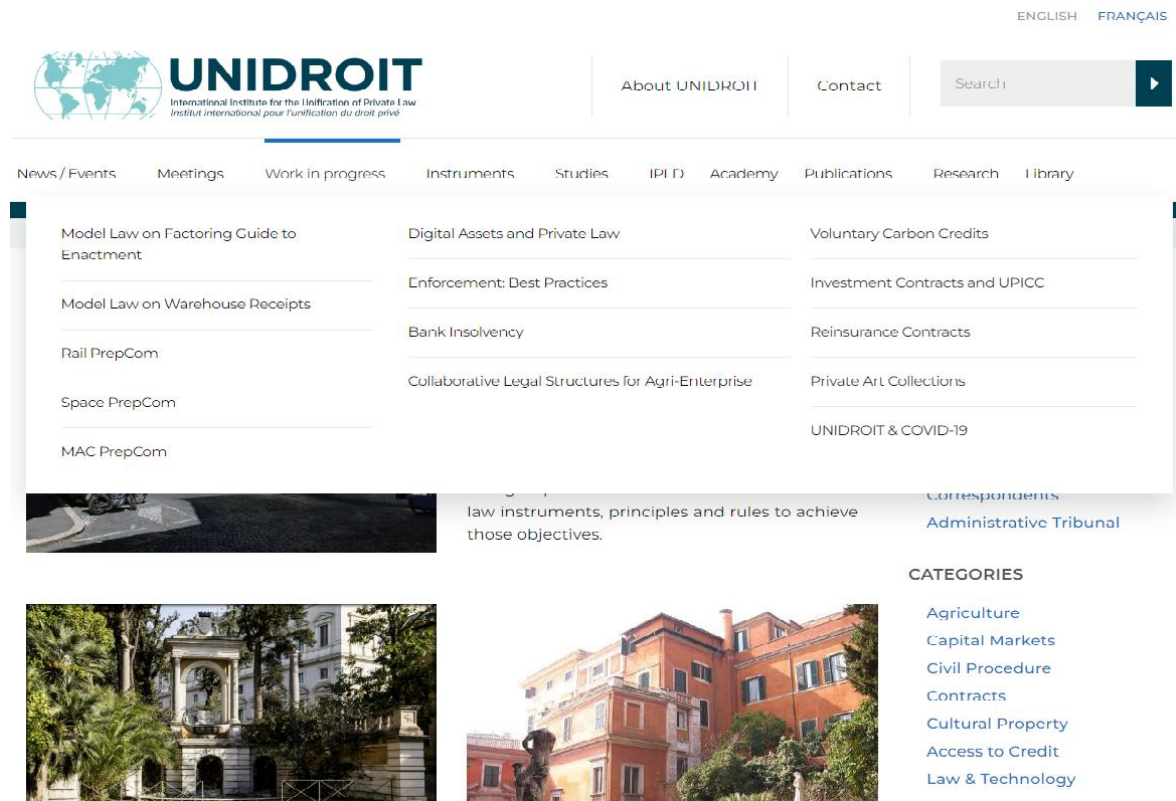
Figure 3: Screenshot showing the hovering over the "Work in progress" tab in the Top Menu, which reveals additional sub-menus.

8.   Currently, a tab labelled "About UNIDROIT" is contained in the Top Section of the website. Hovering over this tab opens up additional links, including sub-pages describing the membership of UNIDROIT, Secretariat staff, institutional documents, the Governing Council, etc.

Inclusion of "Opportunities" sub-page within "About UNIDROIT"

9.   Many international organisations have dedicated pages on their website for "jobs" or "opportunities" to facilitate recruitment and involvement in general.[2] In this sense, *it is proposed to add in a separate page under "About UNIDROIT"* (in both the Top Section and the Top Menu) *entitled "Opportunities".* This page would include any vacancies within the UNIDROIT Secretariat and would also link to the pages of the UNIDROIT Scholarship, Internship and Research Programme and the proposed current call for applications page.

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[2]   For example, the United Nations website has a "Get Involved" label at the top of their website (see https://www.un.org/en/get-involved), the Food and Agricultural Organization has a "jobs" link at the bottom of their website (see https://www.fao.org/home/en), and the Hague Conference of Private International Law has a "Recruitment" link at the bottom of their website (see https://www.hcch.net/en/home).
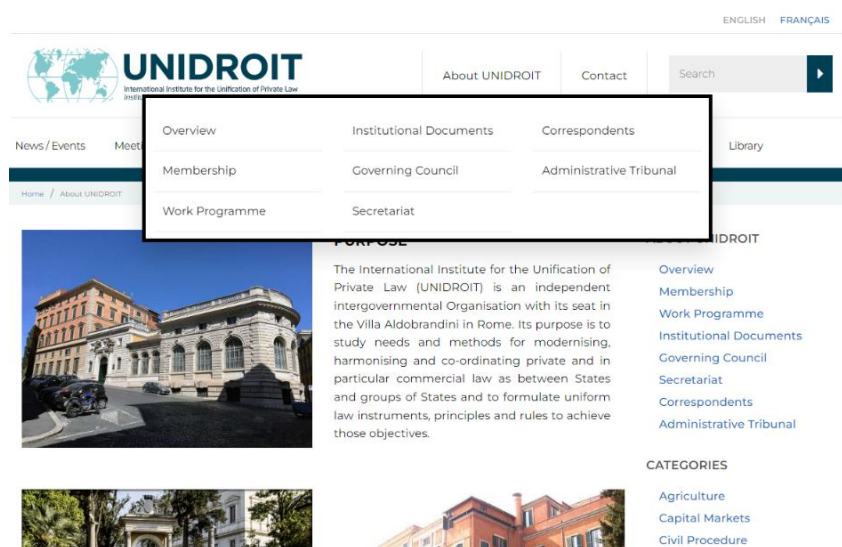
Figure 4: Screenshot showing the hovering over the "About UNIDROIT" tab in the Top Section, which reveals additional sub-menus.

Inclusion of "About UNIDROIT" in the Top Menu

10.   While the information regarding UNIDROIT as an institute is important, users currently have to scroll up to the top of the page and use the "About UNIDROIT" tab in the Top Section to access it. Therefore*, it is proposed to add this information to the Top Menu by creating a new label – "About UNIDROIT" – containing all the links to sub-pages.* It is proposed that the current "About UNIDROIT" tab in the Top Section be retained.

The "Academy"

11.   UNIDROIT's non-legislative, academic activities are effectively displayed under a dedicated header in the website's Top Menu entitled "Academy". When clicking on the "Academy" menu, an introductory page opens,[3] which features a description of the Academy and a list of activities or other initiatives falling under its scope, namely:

- UNIDROIT Academic Projects

- UNIDROIT Academic Institutes

- International Programme for Law and Development

- UNIDROIT Chair Programmes

- UNIDROIT Library

- UNIDROIT Scholarships, Internships and Research Programme

- UNIDROIT Publications.

Each of the above has a hyperlink leading to a dedicated webpage.

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3   https://www.unidroit.org/unidroit-academy/.

Making full use of the "Academy" tab in the Top Menu

12.   To make effective use of the Top Menu and to ensure consistency therein, *it is proposed that, when hovering over the "Academy" tab in the Top Menu, the links to the different aspects of the* UNIDROIT *Academy (as amended in the proposals below) be shown*.

*Proposed removal of "*UNIDROIT *Library" from the "Academy" page*

13.   Currently, the content of the webpage entitled "UNIDROIT Library" under the "Academy" page is a repetition of the webpage entitled "Overview"[4] under "Library" in the Top Menu. *It is proposed that the box "*UNIDROIT *Library" under the "Academy" page be deleted to avoid unnecessary duplication and possible confusion.*

14.   The UNIDROIT Library section should be maintained as a separate, self-standing section independent of the "Academy" page, given the pivotal and historical role of the Library in the work of UNIDROIT. This will also ensure more visibility of the Library and its self-standing status.

*Consolidation of "*UNIDROIT *Scholarships, Internships and Research Programme" under "Academy"*

15.   Currently, UNIDROIT research activities and opportunities from the "UNIDROIT Scholarships, Internships and Research Programme" page[5] can be accessed under both the "Research" tab in the website's Top Menu and via the sub-menu "UNIDROIT Scholarships, Internships and Research Programme" under the "Academy" page.[6]

16.   To reduce duplication of information, strengthen the role of the Academy page, and considering that the "Research" tab in the Top Menu is not fully utilised since it does not generate any sub-menus, consideration could be given *as to whether the "Research" tab should be removed from the Top Menu.* However, retaining the "Research" tab in the Top Menu would emphasise its prominence. It should be noted, however, that even if the page is removed from the Top Menu, it would still be linked under the "Opportunities" sub-page under the "About UNIDROIT" menu.

17.   Within the "UNIDROIT Scholarships, Internships and Research Programme" webpage[7] itself, **it** *is proposed for the "*UNIDROIT *Alumni Association" to be added to the general description's list*. In the beginning of the webpage, *it is proposed to add an item entitled "Current Call for Applications" to reflect current research or internship opportunities*.

The IPLD section

18.   Currently, the International Programme for Law and Development (IPLD) page[8] can be accessed through the website's Top Menu, both through the "IPLD" tab and via the "Academy" section.

19.   *It is further proposed to improve the dedicated IPLD page by linking its dedicated banner to the corresponding webpage, which should contain the current call for applications, background*

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[4]   https://www.unidroit.org/library/overview/.
[5]   https://www.unidroit.org/research-and-internships-2-2/.
[6]   https://www.unidroit.org/unidroit-academy/.
[7]   https://www.unidroit.org/research-and-internships-2-2/.
[8]   https://www.unidroit.org/ipld/.

information and the dedicated video. In addition, the title should be changed to British spelling ("programme").

Reorganisation of the "Library" section

20.   Currently, information related to the UNIDROIT Library is displayed when one clicks on the "Library" tab in the website's Top Menu. As suggested above, *it is proposed that the "Library" section be independent from the "Academy" section*.

21.   The "Library" page[9] offers a description of the Library and its functions and lists a number of items and activities:

- Overview
- Access and hours
- Library rules
- Scholarships programme
- Gorla Collection
- Online catalogue

Each of the above has a hyperlink leading to a dedicated page.

22.   The pages within the "Library" section could benefit from a reorganisation. Firstly, *it is proposed to create a new webpage entitled "Collections"* to accommodate both the existing "Gorla Collection"[10] and the new "Cordero-Cordero Moss Collection", the latter being a result of a recent donation and connected with the establishment of the Nordic Law Centre. It is proposed that each collection have an introductory page setting out the history of the collection (similar to the current "History" page of the Gorla Collection[11]) and linking to the catalogue.

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[9]   https://www.unidroit.org/library/.
[10]   https://www.unidroit.org/library/history/.
[11]   https://www.unidroit.org/library/history/.
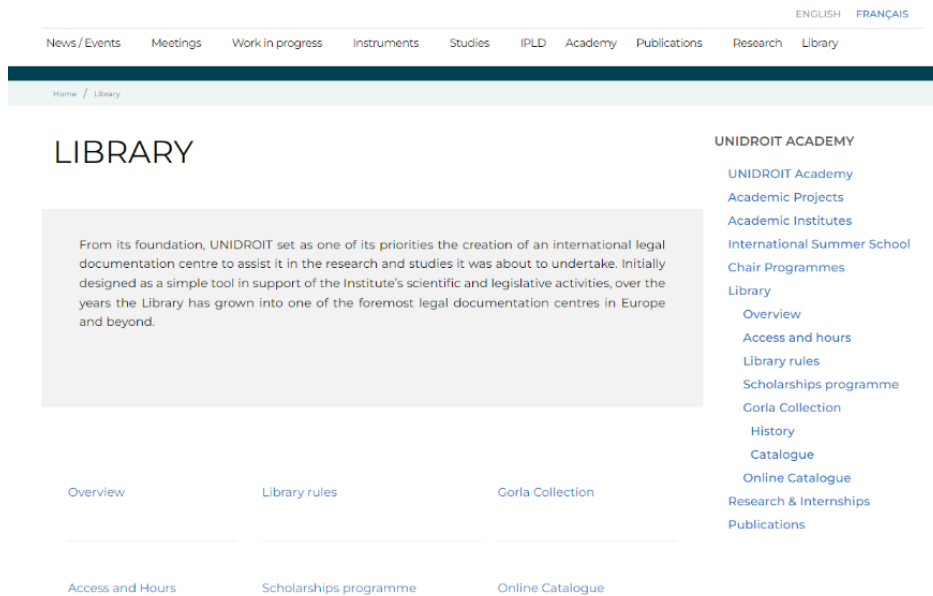
Figure 5: Screenshot of the "Library" page with the items and activities shown

23.   Secondly, as the "Scholarships programme" page[12] contains information which is already addressed under the "UNIDROIT Scholarship, Internship and Research Programme" page,[13] *it is proposed that the "Scholarships programme" page be deleted from the "Library" section.*

24.   Thirdly, the pages under the Library section would benefit from a careful review to add in missing information. For example, the opening hours of the Library are missing in the page "Access and Hours".[14]

25.   Since the Library section is proposed to be separate and distinct from the "Academy" section, pages under the Library section should also benefit from a separate sidebar dedicated to the Library section. If the above changes to the Library section are adopted, the proposed sidebar for the Library section could be as follows.

> **LIBRARY**
>
> Overview
>
> Access and hours
>
> Library rules
>
> Collections
>
> > Gorla Collection
> >
> > Cordero-Cordero Moss Collection
>
> Online catalogue

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12   https://www.unidroit.org/library/scholarships-programme/.
13   https://www.unidroit.org/research-and-internships-2-2/.
14   https://www.unidroit.org/library/access-and-hours/.

IV.   CONSOLIDATING AND HIGHLIGHTING AREAS OF WORK

Introduction

26.   Currently, an "Areas of Work" section is located at the bottom of UNIDROIT's home page, with icons and text descriptions of UNIDROIT's current areas of work, namely:

- Agriculture

- Civil Procedure

- Cultural Property

- Law & Technology

- Capital Markets & Financial Law

- Contracts

- Access to Credit

- UNIDROIT Academy
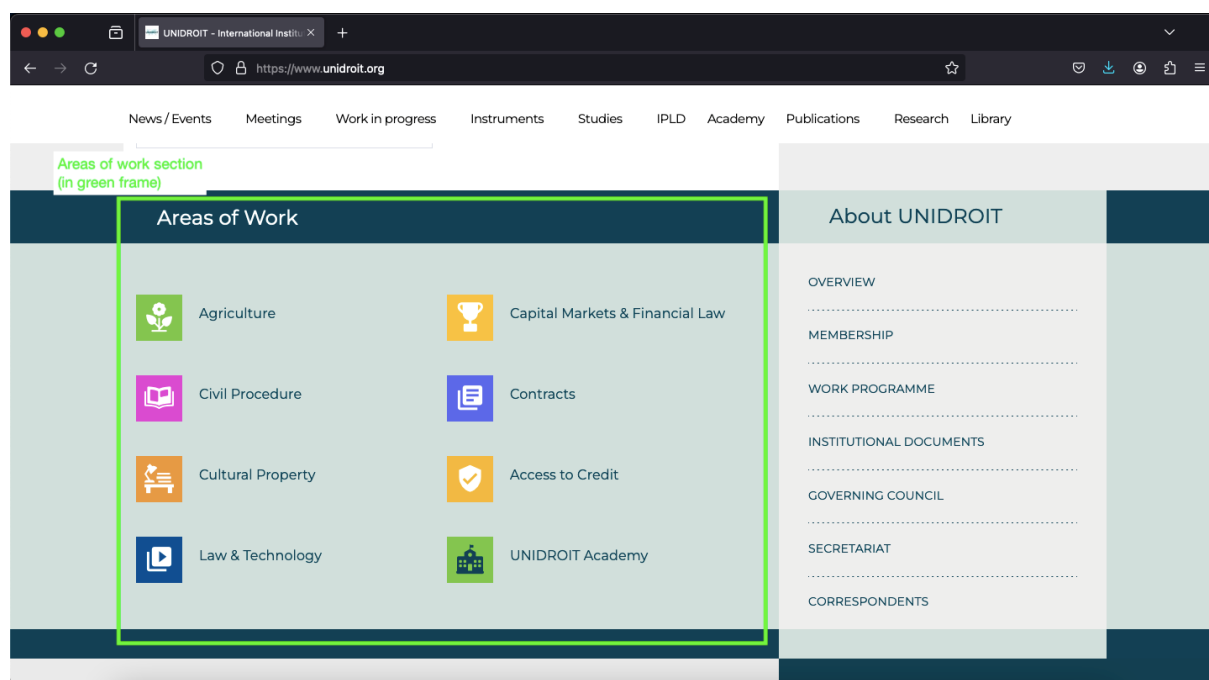
Figure 6: Screenshot of the UNIDROIT homepage with Areas of Work shown in green frame

27.   In the Bottom Section of the website, the "Our Links" section also contains a list of areas of work:

- Agriculture

- Capital Markets

- Civil Procedure

- Contracts

- Cultural Property

- Secured Transactions

- Law & Technology
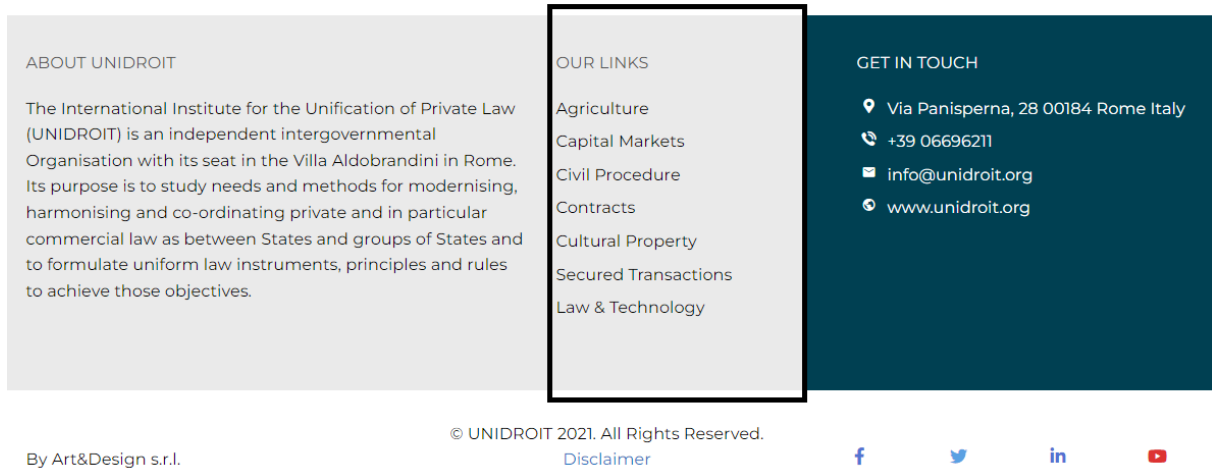
Figure 7: Screenshot of the Bottom Section with the "Our Links" section in black frame

28.   It should be noted that this list differs from the "Areas of Work" list (notably, "UNIDROIT Academy" is absent). However, while the labels are different, the links are the same (e.g. the "Capital Markets & Financial Law" label in the Areas of Work section and the "Capital Markets" in the Bottom Section both link to the "Capital Markets" dedicated page,[15] and the "Access to Credit" label in the Areas of Work section and the "Secured Transactions" label in the Bottom Section both link to the "Secured Transactions" dedicated page[16]).

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15   https://www.unidroit.org/capital-markets/.

16   https://www.unidroit.org/access-to-finance/.

29.   Each area of work has a hyperlink leading to a dedicated webpage (see, e.g., the "Agriculture" page[17] and the "Civil Procedure" page[18]). The main body of each of these webpages currently varies among the different areas of work.
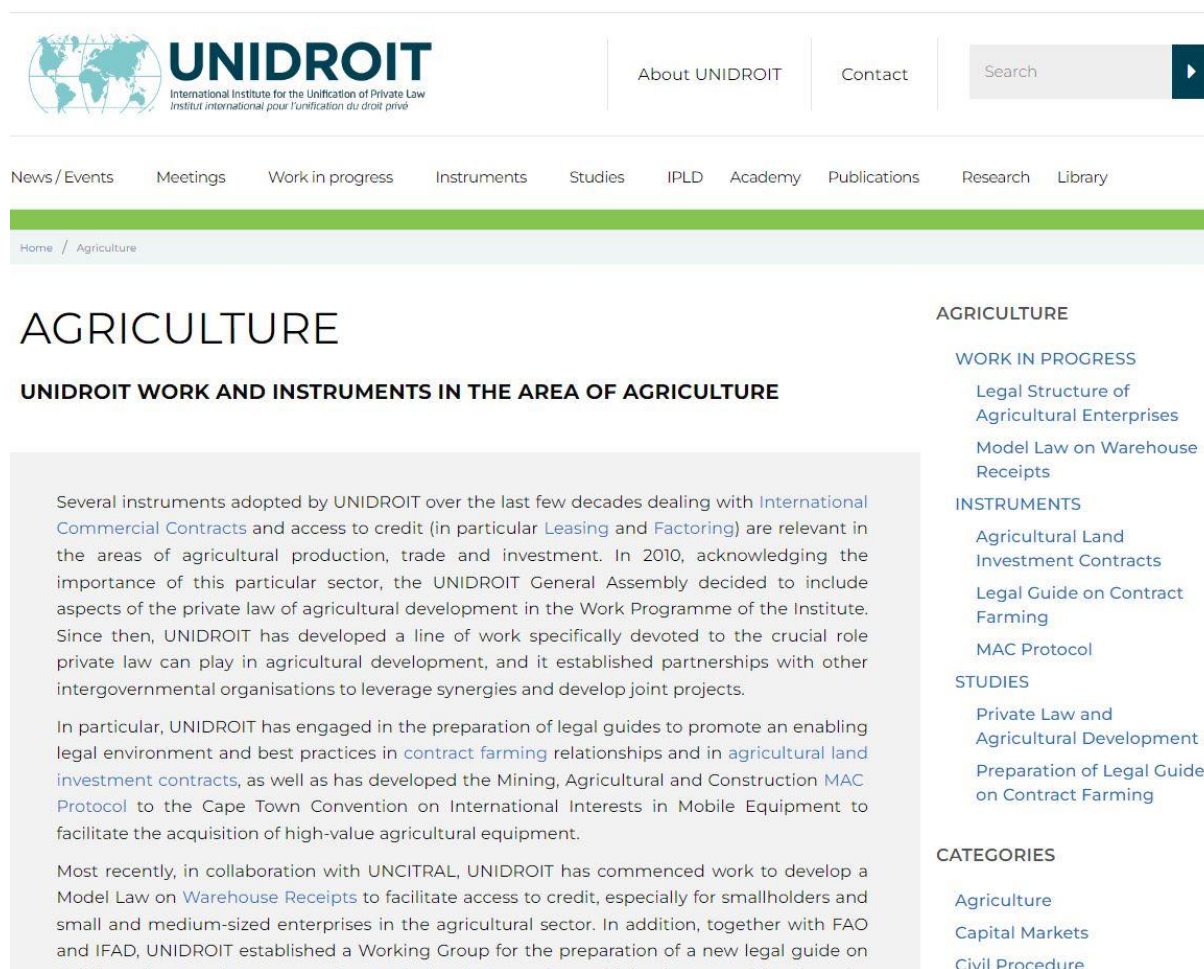
Figure 8: Screenshot of the dedicated page on "Agriculture"

Proposed consolidation and consistency in "Areas of Work" and dedicated pages

30.   At the outset, *it is proposed for any references and labelling in relation to the "Areas of work", including in the Bottom Section and the Sidebar, to have the same consistent wording and in accordance with UNIDROIT's Work Programme for 2023-2025.*[19] Therefore, "Our Links" in the Bottom Section and "Categories" in the Sidebar should be changed to "Areas of Work".

31.   Also in accordance with UNIDROIT's Work Programme for 2023-2025, *it is proposed for "Sustainable Development" to be added to the list.* On the other hand, *it is also proposed for "UNIDROIT Academy" to be removed from the list,* on the basis that it is a self-standing project with a dedicated header in the website's Top Menu. In addition, the order in which the Areas of Work are listed should be consistent, sorted either in alphabetical order or to reflect the order of the Work Programme.

32.   To improve consistency, *it is further proposed that all the dedicated pages for the areas of work be amended* to display the following content (from top to bottom): (i) picture representative of

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17   https://www.unidroit.org/agriculture/.
18   https://www.unidroit.org/civil-procedure/.
19   https://www.unidroit.org/about-unidroit/work-programme/.

the area of work (all in the same size and format); (ii) text box summarising UNIDROIT's work in that area; (iii) drop-down text and hyperlinks to work in progress, instruments, and studies that are classified by that area (as currently listed in the right-hand sidebar); and (iv) latest news.

Banner improvements on home page

33.   UNIDROIT's areas of work are currently displayed in a graphic banner which is featured prominently on the UNIDROIT homepage. The banner highlights specific areas of work, changing every few seconds. Neither the current banner nor the forward and backward arrows at the sides of the banner is clickable.

34.   To improve consistency and utility, *it is proposed that the banner display areas of work in the same order as they are listed in the "Areas of Work" section. Additionally, the banner should be clickable, with hyperlinks leading to the corresponding dedicated pages, with the small arrows to the left and right of the banner clickable as well. Furthermore, all of the areas of work should be contained within the banner to allow quick access to dedicated pages*.

Making better use of colour coding

35.   In the "Areas of Work" section, each area of work is paired with a different icon, the colour of which is reflected in the top stripe of the dedicated page. The colours assigned to each area of work are the following: (i) Agriculture – green; (ii) Civil Procedure – pink/purple; (iii) Cultural Property – orange; (iv) Law & Technology – blue; (v) Capital Markets & Financial Law – yellow; (vi) Contracts – purple; (vii) Access to Credit – yellow.

Figure 9: Proposed inclusion of all areas of work into the banner

Figure 10: Note the green band in the top strip in this screenshot of the dedicated page on "Agriculture"

36.   *It is proposed for the colour for either Capital Markets & Financial Law or Access to Credit to be changed to avoid repetition*. Secondly, if a dedicated Sustainable Development webpage is added (as proposed above), an additional colour would have to be identified.

37.   *Furthermore, it is also proposed that the same colour coding be reflected in the webpages dedicated to each project/instrument/study according to their classification by area of work, as applicable*. For instance, the webpage dedicated to the project on Best Practices for Effective Enforcement[20] could be colour coded in pink/purple, and so forth.

Figure 11: Rendering of the proposed colour coding with the page "Enforcement: Best Practices" as an example (colour coding the page in pink/purple).

Consolidating and emphasising areas of work through the sidebar

38.   In order to emphasise the areas of work of Unidroit, <u>it is proposed</u> for the *"Areas of Work" to be highlighted in the sidebar for each page,* with each linking to its dedicated page at the top of the Sidebar (as applicable) and a list of the areas of work after the content of the page at the bottom of the sidebar.

V.   FUTURE STEPS

39.   The Unidroit Secretariat will continue to evaluate and monitor the use of the website to ensure smooth operation. The Unidroit Secretariat will also continue to make minor adjustments to the website in order to improve user experience, accessibility and reliability. The following is an illustrative list of minor improvements so far identified:

- Consistent use of British English across the website;

- Consistent alignment of text in website;

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20   https://www.unidroit.org/work-in-progress/enforcement-best-practices/.

- Improve accessibility by having options for alt-text, text-to-speech, high-contrast for ease of reading, etc.;

- Check and troubleshoot buttons to ensure they are working; and

- Include social media links within "Contact us".