

## REMOTE MANAGEMENT OF SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES DURING COVID-19



We have recently negotiated and finalized a settlement procedure, between an EU corporate client and its former Italian employee, using solely remote and videoconferencing systems such as the Zoom platform. The parties, their respective lawyers and the appointed mediators have all attended the virtual meeting using their webcams. The virtual meeting ended with the signing of the settlement agreement in remote and digital mode.

First of all, the mediator identified the parties intervening in videoconference, then verified and validated the content of the settlement agreement. Next, each party printed and signed the validated settlement agreement and sent it by e-mail to the other party and to the mediator in order to collect all the relevant signatures. The mediator printed the agreement signed by the parties, signed it, scanned it in .pdf format and emailed it back to the parties and their lawyers.

The remote settlement procedure has been decisive in reaching the signing of the settlement agreement, as it provided the parties with the opportunity to participate in the same, despite being physically located in different countries due to the restrictive measures adopted by their respective national governments following the Covid-19 pandemic emergency.

This experience has further confirmed that the use of IT tools is the necessary evolution also for the provision of legal services, especially in international and cross border transactions. The use of technology and IT tools will not be limited to the current emergency situation, but will remain an irreversible technologically advanced system to provide legal and business services, especially related to international trade.

BACCIARDI and PARTNERS, at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic emergency, was already equipped with advanced IT systems, due to the fact that we have been working at an international level for over thirty years. Following the pandemic emergency, we have further strengthened our hardware and software tools, acquiring full capacity to support not only all forms of remote and smart working for the 26 professionals of the Firm, but also all the procedures and protocols for developing remote negotiations through digital platforms and virtual rooms, through which we are increasingly negotiating and concluding agreements between our clients and their counterparts.

But above all, we have started a total virtualization of the Law Firm and from January 1st, 2021 we will implement the new Elibra management system, which is today the most advanced management system for law firms in the Italian market. This will allow us to automate and make more efficient our internal processes and move towards innovative, green, sustainable and totally paperless solutions.