



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: iSupport Project: Request for Voluntary Contributions to improve the
Security of iSupport

Delegations will find in the Annex a call for voluntary contributions from the Hague Conference on Private International Law, on improving the security of iSupport, as a follow-up to the presentation made during the joint meeting of the Working Party on e-Law with the practitioners on 30 June 2017.



iSupport Project: Request for Voluntary Contributions to improve the Security of iSupport

The Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law presents its compliments to the National and Contact Organs of the Members, as well as to the Central Authorities designated under the *Hague Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance* (the 2007 Child Support Convention), and has the honour to announce the completion of the work on a new version of iSupport based on the MySQL database standard. The use of an open-source standard such as MySQL will reinforce the sustainability of the system for participating States.

Members will recall that the first phase of the iSupport Project resulted in the development of a complete case management system designed to facilitate the cross-border recovery of maintenance obligations under the 2009 EU Maintenance Regulation, the 2007 Child Support Convention or any other international instrument. This system, which uses the e-CODEX secure electronic transmission solution, has been successfully implemented by Portugal and the state of California, USA. Other States will follow suit over the course of this year and the Permanent Bureau welcomes and supports any new interest.

The second phase of the iSupport Project commenced on 1 September 2016, [thanks to](#) a significant action grant totalling € 605,705 provided by the European Union in partnership with the Hague Conference on Private International Law, 12 of its Member States (Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland), the state of California and one organisation (the Italian Institute of Legal Information Theory and Techniques (ITTIG)). The Permanent Bureau acknowledges with gratitude the contributions that have been pledged by the above-mentioned States and Organisations in relation to the iSupport Project.

From its inception, the designers of iSupport have been extremely attentive to security and data protection issues, implementing “privacy by design” even before the application of the 2016 Global Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). A constant concern has been to fully satisfy the needs of those participating States that can be accommodated by the Project. Currently, data exchanged between Central Authorities (“data in transit”) is fully encrypted. However, in January 2017 members of the iSupport Governing Body agreed in their [Conclusions and Recommendations](#), that a higher level of security would be achieved through encryption of sensitive data by the application not only when in transit but also when data is stored in the database (“data at rest”).

On that basis, the Permanent Bureau required an estimate of the costs of such an encryption from its contractor. Sensitive fields were identified in the application in order to protect the personal information of the data subjects (typically, debtors, creditors and children). A first estimate of **€80,000** was provided.

The Permanent Bureau thus takes the liberty to seek further voluntary contributions to cover costs relating to this critical enhancement of the security of the iSupport software. The Permanent Bureau believes that at a time of increased awareness of data protection issues, implementing a high standard of security directly within iSupport, instead of relying on each individual State to purchase expensive encryption tools, is the most economical and efficient way forward. This will secure data at rest irrespective of the national solutions in place and will increase the outreach of iSupport in particular among developing countries. It is important to underline that this solution represents a unique cost, as no further costs, such as licensing fees, will be incurred other than maintenance costs.

The Permanent Bureau would be grateful to the National and Contact Organs of its Members, and to the Central Authorities designated under the 2007 Child Support Convention, if they could provide an indication, **before 30 November 2017**, as to whether they would be in a position to contribute additional funds towards this Project, and, in the case of a positive response, the amount to be contributed. Please note that although the commitment has to be made **before 30 November**, the actual transfer of funds can take place at a later date but before 31 March 2018.

For more information on iSupport, please click [here](#).

The Permanent Bureau avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the National and Contact Organs of its Members and to the Central Authorities designated under the 2007 Child Support Convention the assurance of its highest consideration.

THE HAGUE, 6 April 2017

To the National and Contact Organs of the Members

To the Central Authorities designated under the 2007 Child Support Convention

Copy for information to the Diplomatic Missions of the Members

Copy for information to the participants in the 2017 meeting of the Council on General Affairs and Policy of the Conference

Copy for information to the iSupport Contact Points and Members of the iSupport Governing Body and Working Groups

Copy for information to the Chair of the Working Party on e-Law (e-Justice) of the Council of the European Union, Mr Alain Pilette

Copy for information to the Secretary of the European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matter, Mr Stefan Matyk



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