

<b>Title</b>	Statistics on selected HCCH Conventions: Report of 2025
<b>Document</b>	Prel. Doc. No 16 of February 2025
<b>Author</b>	PB
<b>Agenda Item</b>	Item III.6
<b>Mandate(s)</b>	C&D No 59 of CGAP 2024
<b>Objective</b>	To report on statistical data collected on selected HCCH Conventions
<b>Action to be Taken</b>	For Decision <input type="checkbox"/> For Approval <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action / Completion <input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Annexes</b>	Annex I: statistical data collected on HCCH Core Conventions
<b>Related Documents</b>	N/A

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# Statistics on selected HCCH Conventions: Report of 2025

## I. Introduction

- 1 This document reports on the basic statistical data collected for selected HCCH Conventions and provides initial reflections on this first collection. At its 2024 meeting, the Council on General Affairs and Policy (CGAP) mandated the Permanent Bureau (PB) to collect basic statistical data annually for selected HCCH Conventions,<sup>1</sup> specifically the:
  - 1961 Apostille Convention,
  - 1965 Service Convention,
  - 1970 Evidence Convention,
  - 1980 Access to Justice Convention,
  - 1980 Child Abduction Convention,
  - 1996 Child Protection Convention, and
  - 2000 Protection of Adults Convention.
- 2 In its decision, CGAP noted that the reporting period should be specified and that, apart from the 1961 Apostille Convention, the requested data concerns only requests received by Contracting Parties from other Contracting Parties. Regarding the 1961 Apostille Convention, only data on the number of Apostilles issued by Competent Authorities is to be requested. For the 1980 Child Abduction Convention, CGAP specified that return and access cases should be distinguished.<sup>2</sup>
- 3 In October 2024, Members were consulted on the draft questions to be used for the collection of basic data for each of the selected Conventions with a Central or Competent Authority mechanism.<sup>3</sup> On 7 January 2025, concurrently with the sending of the first HCCH General Circular of 2025, a Focused Circular was sent for each selected HCCH Convention to all Contracting Parties to the Convention (or, as may be the case for the European Union (EU), States to which the Convention applies), with a link to the survey. These Circulars were, in principle, sent to all Central (or in the case of the Apostille Convention, Competent) Authorities with e-mail addresses on record with the PB – with a request to the Contracting Parties to follow up with their Central (or Competent) Authorities where possible, to confirm receipt, and ensure a response using the provided link.

## II. Findings and Assessment

- 4 The PB has received 340 entries in total (across all the Conventions). These responses have come from 68 different Parties, out of which 63 are Members of the HCCH.<sup>4</sup> For these Reports, where the PB has received multiple responses from different authorities of the same Contracting Party, it has tallied the results for each Convention. Where relevant, the PB has included comments from Contracting Parties regarding the submitted data. Notably, the PB has specified if the reported

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<sup>1</sup> Conclusion & Decision (C&D) No 59 of CGAP 2024, available on the HCCH website at [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) under “Governance” then “Council on General Affairs and Policy” and “Archive (2000-2024)”.

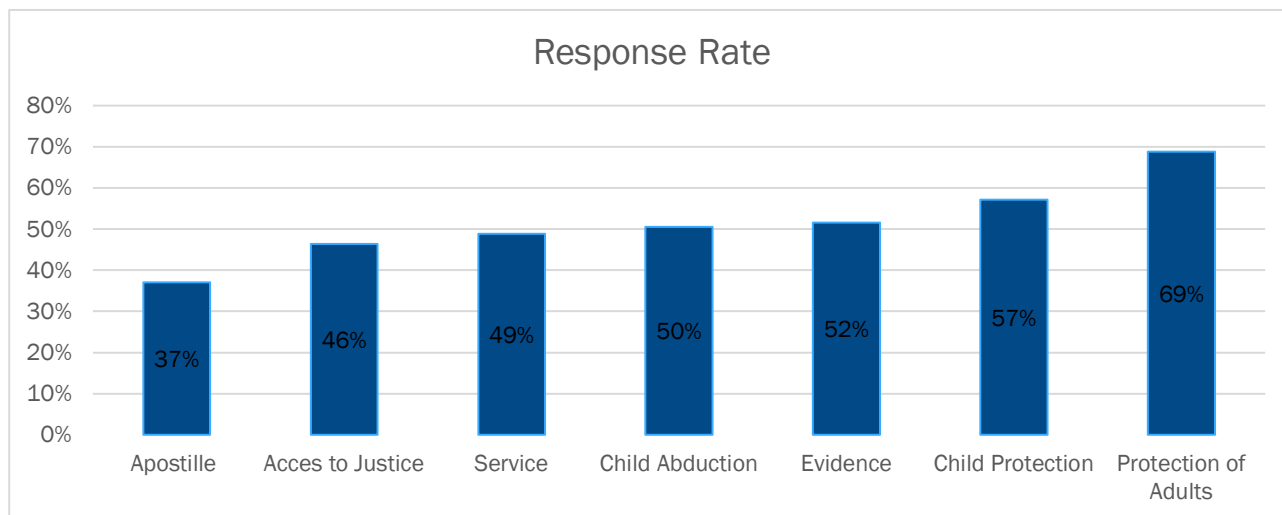
<sup>2</sup> C&D No 59 of CGAP 2024.

<sup>3</sup> See HCCH 2024 Focused Circular No 59: Collection of statistical data. In response to the feedback received, the question regarding the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention was slightly modified to limit requests to those made under Chapter V of the Convention, as these are easier for Central Authorities to track. No other questions were changed.

<sup>4</sup> The 5 non-Member Contracting Parties submitting a response in relation to one or more of the HCCH Conventions are Belize, Cabo Verde, Guatemala, Jamaica, and Pakistan.

figures were collected during a period other than from 1 January to 31 December 2024.<sup>5</sup> The PB has also added a note if a Contracting Party has indicated that the number reported is an estimate and / or may not be complete. If a response included the exact number of requests received from non-Contracting Parties, these have, where possible, been removed from the total number reported in Annex I.<sup>6</sup>

- 5 For most of the selected HCCH Conventions, the response rate (number of responding Contracting Parties divided by the total number of Contracting Parties to the Convention) was around 50% – with the response rate for the 1961 Apostille Convention being considerably lower (37%),<sup>7</sup> while the response rate for the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention was considerably higher (69%).<sup>8</sup> The graphic below provides a breakdown of the response rate:



- 6 While it is difficult to offer much analysis in terms of the responses received, given that this is the first year the statistics have been collected in this manner, it is possible to point out that it is likely that for many of the Conventions, the numbers reported are likely (significantly) lower than the actual numbers. This is because some Contracting Parties have indicated that their responses are not complete or provisional, while others have indicated that the numbers reported are not for the full period.<sup>9</sup> It is also important to acknowledge that the statistics reported include some estimates.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For these cases, the PB has decided to merely include the number as reported over part of the period rather than to attempt to correct for the difference in the period. Japan has indicated that the number of Apostilles reported (174,082) entails the number of Apostilles collected during its fiscal year, *i.e.*, from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Given that the number reported concerns the number of Apostilles issued over one year, the PB has decided to keep the reported number as is.

<sup>6</sup> It is recalled that CGAP noted that the requested data concerns only requests received by Contracting Parties from other Contracting Parties.

<sup>7</sup> With 127 Contracting Parties, the Apostille Convention has the highest number of Contracting Parties among all HCCH Conventions (including a large number of non-Member Contracting Parties). It also has by far the largest number of involved authorities, making the comprehensive collection of statistical data particularly challenging.

<sup>8</sup> It should in this respect be acknowledged, of course, that the number of Contracting Parties for each (selected) Convention varies. The breakdown of the total number of Contracting Parties responding to the question(s) for each Convention is as follows: Apostille: 47 (out of a total of 127 Contracting Parties to the Convention); Service: 41 (out of 84); Evidence 34 (out of 66); Child Abduction: 52 (out of 103); Access to Justice: 13 (out of 28); Child Protection: 32 (out of 56); Protection of Adults: 11 (out of 16).

<sup>9</sup> Where either of these is applicable to the numbers reported, this has been indicated in the column with comments in Annex I.

<sup>10</sup> The PB has decided to include these numbers, as the estimates have been provided by the Central (or Competent) Authorities responsible for the Conventions and therefore provide a good indication of the actual numbers. Whether a number reported concerns an estimate has been indicated in the column with comments in Annex I.

### III. Reflections on the collection of data

- 7 At the outset, the PB would like to express its gratitude to all Members and Contracting Parties, as well as their respective Competent and Central Authorities for their participation in the survey. Given that this is the first time these statistics have been requested in this manner and that the Parties had a short period of time to submit the requested information, the overall number of responses received is encouraging. However, there is potential to further improve both the process and the response rate. It is hoped that, with more experience in the coming year(s), the response rate will increase, and the information provided will become more comprehensive.
- 8 While a large number of HCCH Members have responded to one or more of the questions, only five non-Member Contracting Parties have submitted a response. The PB faces greater challenges in connecting with non-Member Contracting Parties for the collection of statistical data. The response rate among non-Member Contracting Parties is clearly an area where further improvements can be made, and the PB aims to explore ways to enhance this.
- 9 In the weeks leading up to the deadline, the PB received several messages from Members indicating that, despite CGAP's 2024 decision, they would be unable to provide the requested data for various reasons. The most cited reason was the need for more time to collect the data. As a result, the PB left the survey open, and all responses received until Wednesday 12 February 2025 have been included in the Reports in Annex I. In this regard, the PB would like to reiterate that, exceptionally, the survey will remain open until 1 April 2025. The PB encourages any Contracting Parties that have not yet responded to do so by completing the survey.<sup>11</sup> These responses could then be included in next year's Report(s).
- 10 This raises the question of whether it would be beneficial to extend the deadline for next year's data collection by one week (in February 2026). While this would reduce the PB's time for analysis and mean that Members would receive the Reports (Annex I) shortly before the CGAP meeting, it could contribute to a more comprehensive collection of data.

### IV. Proposal for CGAP

- 11 In light of this update on the first collection of statistical data at the HCCH, and subject to any further suggestions made by CGAP at its 2025 meeting, the PB proposes the following C&D:
- CGAP noted the Report on Statistics on selected HCCH Conventions and invited the PB to make further efforts to improve both the response rate and the comprehensiveness of responses in future surveys.
- The PB will report on Statistics on selected HCCH Conventions to CGAP 2026.

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<sup>11</sup> The survey can be found here: <https://limesurvey.hcch.net/index.php/148835?lang=en>.

## **ANNEXES**

## Annex I

### 1961 Apostille Convention

Contracting Parties	How many Apostilles were issued by your Competent Authority from 1 January – 31 December 2024?	Comments
Andorra	7.835	
Australia	108.968	
Belize	6.149	
Bulgaria	106.213	
Canada	148.211	
Chile	2.145.540	
Croatia	19.468	
Cyprus	267.729	
Denmark	54.679	
Dominican Republic	265.457	
Ecuador	459.458	
El Salvador	136.487	
Finland	34.809	
Georgia	162.177	
Germany	406.675	<i>This amount may also include the number of documents legalised (of a few Competent Authorities).</i>
Greece	118.226	
Guatemala	88.809	
Hungary	10.560	
India	1.193.870	
Ireland	46.003	
Israel	563.816	
Italy	134.571	<i>Data collected from 86 Prefectures. Out of these 86, 29 Prefectures only reported data up to November 2024.</i>
Japan	174.082	<i>Statistics collected during period from 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024 (fiscal year).</i>
Latvia	21.931	
Lithuania	25.187	
Luxembourg	55.842	
Malta	38.563	
Mauritius	28.933	
Mexico	72.255	
Montenegro	1.734	
Norway	57.873	
Pakistan	178.610	<i>Number of Apostilles issued from 17 May 2024 (the date Pakistan commenced issuing Apostilles) until 31 December 2024.</i>
Paraguay	126.084	
Peru	688.884	
Philippines	569.690	
Poland	65.073	
Portugal	73.482	
Republic of Moldova	330.963	

Saudi Arabia	60.268	
Singapore	187.478	
Slovakia	25.850	
Spain	1.130.896	
Switzerland	200.000	<i>Precise data is not available. This is an estimate based on previous numbers.</i>
Ukraine	402.582	
United Kingdom	630.270	
United States of America	1.507.691	<i>Data collected represents the U.S. Department of State and 39 out of 56 state and other jurisdictions competent authorities. It therefore does not represent an accurate count, just a count of those competent authorities that reported data.</i>
Uruguay	290.250	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>13.430.181</b>	



**1965 Service Convention**

<b>Contracting Parties</b>	<b>How many requests for service from other Contracting Parties were received by the Central Authority from 1 January – 31 December 2024?</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Slovenia	28	
Andorra	171	
Argentina	246	
Australia	811	<i>Data collected by the Attorney-General's Department as Central Authority and the additional authorities across the Australian States and Territories. This data is expected to be a minimum, as not all authorities have full records.</i>
Austria	1.902	
Belgium	201	
Belize	5	
Brazil	730	
Bulgaria	201	
Canada	1.931	
Croatia	32	
Cyprus	48	
Estonia	72	
Finland	49	
France	727	
Germany	12.396	<i>Please note that some data is still missing, therefore the number given is just a preliminary one and is in any case higher.</i>
Hungary	126	
Israel	769	
Italia	216	
Japan	1.067	
Latvia	38	
Lithuania	75	
Luxembourg	67	
Mexico	723	
Montenegro	50	
Norway	1.029	
Pakistan	82	

Philippines	996	
Poland	300	
Portugal	992	
Romania	99	
Serbia	350	
Singapore	519	
Spain	349	
Sweden	206	
Switzerland	3.000	<i>This number is an estimate.</i>
Ukraine	951	
United Kingdom	11.203	
United States of America	7.721	
Morocco	276	
Republic of Korea	809	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>51.563</b>	

## 1970 Evidence Convention

Contracting Parties	How many Letters of Request from other Contracting Parties were received by the Central Authority from 1 January – 31 December 2024?	Comments
Slovenia	5	
Andorra	8	
Argentina	27	
Australia	69	<i>Data collected by the Attorney-General's Department as Central Authority and the additional authorities across the Australian States and Territories. This data is expected to be a minimum, as not all authorities have full records.</i>
Brazil	72	
Bulgaria	142	
Croatia	5	
Cyprus	26	
Estonia	4	
Finland	13	
France	312	
Georgia	6	
Germany	1.464	<i>Please note that some data is still missing, therefore the number given is just a preliminary one and is in any case higher</i>
Hungary	13	
Israel	28	
Latvia	6	
Lithuania	5	
Luxembourg	13	
Mexico	84	
Montenegro	21	
Norway	99	
Poland	38	
Portugal	137	
Romania	21	

Serbia	21	
Singapore	12	
Spain	175	
Sweden	12	
Switzerland	500	<i>The number provided is a pure estimate.</i>
Ukraine	76	
United Kingdom	682	
United States of America	512	
Morocco	6	
Republic of Korea	56	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4.670</b>	

## 1980 Child Abduction Convention

Contracting Parties	How many incoming applications from other Contracting Parties for assistance in securing the return of the child were received by the Central Authority from 1 January – 31 December 2024?	How many incoming applications from other Contracting Parties to make arrangements for organising or securing the effective exercise of rights of access were received by the Central Authority from 1 January – 31 December 2024?	Comments
Argentina	32	6	
Australia	38	10	
Austria	69	13	
Belgium	39	6	
Brazil	74	3	
Bulgaria	20	0	
Cabo Verde	0	0	
Canada	68	16	
Chile	37	3	
Costa Rica	21	1	
Croatia	9	0	
Cuba	2	0	
Czech Republic	13	4	
Denmark	6	4	
Ecuador	34	8	
El Salvador	1	1	
Estonia	6	0	
Finland	8	3	
France	112	16	<i>This number may include cases concerning non-Contracting Parties, but, if so, only a very limited number.</i>
Georgia	11	0	
Germany	164	54	
Hungary	23	1	
Ireland	37	10	
Israel	13	3	
Italia	76	13	
Jamaica	10	5	
Japan	13	12	
Latvia	8	2	

Lithuania	21	2	
Luxembourg	3	2	
Mexico	100	5	
Montenegro		1	
New Zealand	18	2	
Norway	21	4	
Panama	2	2	
Paraguay	20	3	
Peru	45	7	
Philippines	4	1	
Poland	126	25	
Portugal	36	2	<i>Data collected from 1 March until 31 December</i>
Republic of Moldova	24	4	
Romania	80	3	
Serbia	21	0	
Spain	130	8	
Sweden	19	8	
Switzerland	55	8	
Ukraine	18	0	
United Kingdom	149	81	
Slovakia	22	2	
Morocco	44	0	
Netherlands	30	4	
Nicaragua	14	1	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1.946</b>	<b>369</b>	

**1980 Access to Justice Convention**

<b>Contracting Parties</b>	<b>How many applications for legal aid from other Contracting Parties were received by the Central Authority from 1 January – 31 December 2024?</b>
Slovenia	0
Brazil	0
Bulgaria	0
Canada	0
Cyprus	0
Ecuador	21
Estonia	0
Finland	0
France	9
Latvia	0
Lithuania	0
Romania	0
Sweden	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30</b>

## 1996 Child Protection Convention

Contracting Parties	How many requests from other Contracting Parties were received by the Central Authority from 1 January – 31 December 2024?	Comments
Australia	166	
Austria	36	
Belgium	39	
Bulgaria	44	
Cabo Verde	2	
Czech Republic	28	
Denmark	54	
Ecuador	31	
El Salvador	0	
Estonia	5	
Finland	5	
France	573	<i>This number may include cases concerning non-Contracting Parties, but, if so, only a very limited number.</i>
Georgia	23	
Germany	186	
Hungary	45	
Ireland	86	
Italia	125	
Latvia	44	
Lithuania	93	
Luxembourg	5	
Norway	71	
Paraguay	1	
Poland	217	
Portugal	106	<i>Data collected from 1 March until 31 December</i>
Republic of Moldova	0	
Romania	222	
Spain	330	
Sweden	45	
United Kingdom	352	



<b>Slovakia</b>	35
<b>Morocco</b>	43
<b>Nicaragua</b>	7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3.019</b>

## 2000 Protection of Adults Convention

<b>Contracting Parties</b>	<b>How many requests from other Contracting Parties were received by the Central Authority from 1 January – 31 December 2024? (For this question only requests under Chapter V are to be considered.)</b>
Austria	3
Belgium	8
Estonia	1
Finland	2
France	41
Germany	20
Ireland	0
Latvia	0
Malta	0
Portugal	26
United Kingdom	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>106</b>