

<b>Title</b>	Development of e-Country Profiles for key HCCH Conventions
<b>Document</b>	Prel. Doc. No 16 of January 2024
<b>Author</b>	PB
<b>Agenda Item</b>	Item III.4
<b>Mandate(s)</b>	C&D No 48 of CGAP 2023
<b>Objective</b>	To provide an update on the development of e-Country Profiles
<b>Action to be Taken</b>	For Decision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Approval <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For Action / Completion <input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Annexes</b>	N/A
<b>Related Documents</b>	<a href="#">Prel. Doc. No 12B of December 2023</a> , 1965 Service, 1970 Evidence, and 1980 Access to Justice Conventions: Plans for the next meeting of the Special Commission

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# Development of e-Country Profiles for key HCCH Conventions

## I. EU Action Grant for the development of e-Country Profiles for key HCCH Conventions

- 1 The “e-Country Profiles” project, which commenced in September 2023 and will end in August 2025, is funded at 90% by the European Union, the remainder being covered by other voluntary contributions from Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, and the European Union Bailiffs’ Foundation (EUBF). The Permanent Bureau (PB) is most grateful for all these voluntary contributions. EUBF is also participating in the project through the provision of expertise.
- 2 The development of e-Country Profiles was welcomed by the Council on General Affairs and Policy (CGAP) at its 2023 meeting.<sup>1</sup> The e-Country Profile is a standardised web page that will be available to Contracting Parties to complete, view and update electronically. The e-Country Profile is intended to assist with the practical operation of selected Conventions by facilitating the exchange of information between Contracting Parties and by providing information about Central Authorities and other authorities in Contracting Parties. e-Country Profiles will be developed for the following core HCCH Conventions:
  - 1965 Service Convention;
  - 1970 Evidence Convention;
  - 1980 Child Abduction Convention;
  - 1993 Adoption Convention;
  - 1996 Child Protection Convention;
  - 2000 Protection of Adults Convention;
  - 2007 Child Support Convention.

## II. State of play

- 3 Country Profiles already exist for some of these Conventions, for others, they are being developed or are yet to be developed. Below is an outline of the situation per Convention:
  - 1965 Service and 1970 Evidence Conventions: Country Profiles are currently being drafted and will be submitted for discussion at the meeting of the Special Commission (SC) in July 2024, with a view to adoption by CGAP at its meeting in 2025 or, if completed well in advance of CGAP 2025, through a written procedure.<sup>2</sup>
  - 1980 Child Abduction Convention: A revised Country Profile was approved by the SC at its Eighth Meeting in October 2023. It will be submitted to CGAP for approval as part of the SC’s Conclusions & Recommendations.<sup>3</sup>
  - 1993 Adoption Convention: A Country Profile has already been approved.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Conclusion & Decision (C&D) No 48 of CGAP 2023, available on the HCCH website at [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) under “Governance” then “Council on General Affairs and Policy” then “Archive 2000-2023”.

2 See [Prel. Doc. No 12B of December 2023](#) – 1965 Service, 1970 Evidence, and 1980 Access to Justice Conventions: Plans for the next meeting of the Special Commission, paras 10-11, available on the HCCH website at [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) under “Governance” then “Council on General Affairs and Policy”.

3 Conclusion and recommendation (C&R) No 51 of the Eighth Meeting of the Special Commission on the Practical Operation of the 1980 Child Abduction Convention and the 1996 Child Protection Convention, 10-17 October 2023: “The SC approved the revision of some items of the Country Profile under the 1980 Child Abduction Convention subject to the PB undertaking final editing and incorporating amendments to the text to reflect the comments received during the meeting of the SC.” The C&R are available on the HCCH website at [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) under “Child Abduction” then “Special Commission meetings”.

4 Available on the HCCH website at [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) under “Adoption” then “Country Profiles”.

- 1996 Child Protection Convention: Work will continue towards the adoption of a Country Profile<sup>5</sup> at the end of 2024.<sup>6</sup>
- 2000 Protection of Adults Convention: A Country Profile has been drafted and is currently the subject of a written procedure ending on 26 January 2024.<sup>7</sup>
- 2007 Child Support Convention: the Convention is already supported by a Country Profile and an e-Country Profile, subject to minor revisions.<sup>8</sup> However, the e-Country Profile could benefit from modernisation. The backend of the software could be modified to allow the PB to extract information for research purposes, which would greatly increase efficiency in using collected data. Furthermore, Central Authority contact details on the HCCH website could be automatically updated using input from the e-Country Profile and notifications sent to Contracting Parties in case of updates to a Country Profile.<sup>9</sup> Finally, response times when a page is loaded could be improved. Recently, the PB conducted a first review of the functionalities and technical requirements of the existing e-Country Profile for the 2007 Convention. It was found that it would be a good basis to build upon for the other six Conventions, with the additional features mentioned above. In addition, user management (the creation and maintenance of user profiles to add or modify Country Profiles) could also be improved, including with the use of two-factor authentication.

### III. Next steps

- 4 In the coming weeks, the PB will review the existing detailed deliverables including specifications for the e-Country Profile for the 2007 Convention and amend them to reflect proposed additions and amendments. The PB will also consider hosting arrangements and evaluate future needs. In March/April of 2024, a call for tender will be prepared and sent out in order to choose a company to develop the e-Country Profiles within the allocated budget. A meeting to present a first version of the call for tender will be organised and comments from Members sought. In June 2024, responses to the call for tender will be received and analysed – Members will be invited to take part in the committee that will choose the company, on a voluntary basis and with the understanding that it is preferable to keep the number of participants relatively low.
- 5 This will lead, by September 2024, to the consolidation of functional and technical requirements with the service provider. Taking into account the timeline set out in paragraph 3 above, the development of e-Country Profiles could be envisaged in batches, for instance with the 1980 Child Abduction, 1993 Adoption, 2000 Protection of Adults and 2007 Child Support Conventions’ e-

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<sup>5</sup> “Draft Country Profile for the 1996 Child Protection Convention”, Prel. Doc. No 9 of July 2023, available on the HCCH website at [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) under “Child Protection” then “Special Commission meetings”.

<sup>6</sup> C&R No 93 of the 2023 SC: “Recalling C&R No 45 of the 2017 SC and the mandate given by CGAP in C&R No 19 of 2018, and considering comments received by States in relation to its structure and content, the SC noted that the PB will continue its work on the draft Country Profile for the 1996 Child Protection Convention in consultation with States. The SC recommended that this work be undertaken with a high degree of priority and be included within the remit of the WG referred to in the C&R No 92 above” [emphasis added].

<sup>7</sup> “2000 Protection of Adults Convention Draft Country Profile”, Prel. Doc. No 7 of December 2023 (third revised version), available on the HCCH website at [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) under “Protection of Adults” then “Special Commission meetings”. See Focused Circular No 66 of 12 December 2023.

<sup>8</sup> C&R No 68 of the First Meeting of the SC on the practical operation of the 2007 Child Support Convention and on the 2007 Maintenance Obligations Protocol, 17-19 May 2022: “The SC invited the PB to consult Contracting Parties and HCCH Members about possible revisions to questions and relevant tick boxes/responses in the recommended Country Profile form. The PB will work in consultation with the Administrative Cooperation Working Group (ACWG) to carry out those revisions. This will be done in order to ensure that, when Contracting Parties complete their Country Profile, the information set out therein provides a complete and accurate reflection of their laws, procedures and services, as provided by Article 57. A reviewed recommended Country Profile form will be circulated to Contracting Parties and HCCH Members for approval.” The C&R are available on the HCCH website at [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) under “Child Support” then “Special Commission meetings”.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, C&R No 60: “The SC invited the PB to explore further, subject to available resources, the development of a system to inform Contracting Parties about recent updates to the 2007 Convention electronic Country Profiles available on the HCCH website.”

Country Profiles being released in February 2025, followed by the 1965 Service, 1970 Evidence and 1996 Child Protection Conventions' e-Country Profiles in June 2025. The PB suggests that the Working Groups (WG) already established or to be established (see Prel. Docs Nos 9 and 12B) for each of the Country Profiles ascertain the mandatory and optional fields and to take part in the testing of that Country Profile prior to its release.

#### **IV. Proposals to CGAP**

- 6 The PB proposes the following C&Ds to CGAP:
- CGAP welcomed the update on the development of e-Country Profiles under the 1965 Service Convention, 1970 Evidence Convention, 1980 Child Abduction Convention, 1993 Adoption Convention, 1996 Child Protection Convention, 2000 Protection of Adults Convention and 2007 Child Support Convention and took note of the proposed work programme and schedule for their delivery.