



iSupport is funded by the  
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# iSupport

## *The electronic case management and communication system for international child support recovery*

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# Agenda



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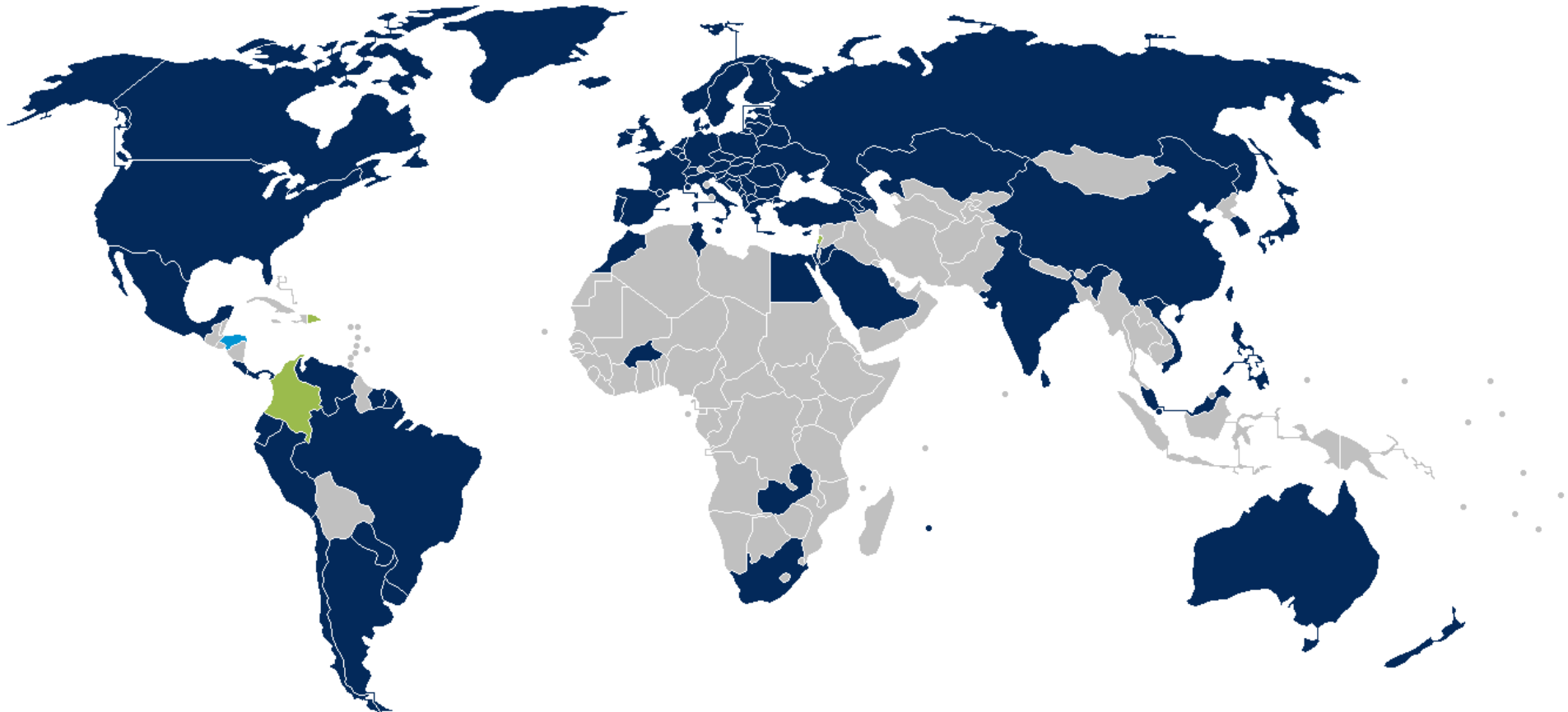
# What is the HCCH?



- An **intergovernmental organisation** with a **legislative function** – origin goes back to **1893**
- Works toward “**progressive unification** of the rules of **private international law**”  
(Art. 1, Statute)
- Develops and adopts **Hague Conventions and Protocols** (currently **39 + 1 soft law** instrument), dealing with:
  - (1) *Int’l Civil Procedure & Legal Co-operation*
  - (2) *Int’l Family Law & Child Protection*
  - (3) *Int’l Commercial Law & Finance Law*
- **Practical outcomes**, with **direct benefits**

# 83 HCCH Members

*82 States + 1 Regional Economic Integration Organisation (EU)*



## ■ Candidate State

*Applied for membership  
(six-month voting period)*



*Honduras*

## ■ Admitted State

*Applied for membership, admitted by  
affirmative vote, must still accept Statute*



*Dominican Republic Colombia Lebanon*

## ■ Member State

NB: Boundaries on this map are based upon those used by the UN Cartographic Section. The number of States reflects the Parties as recorded by the Depositary (NL MFA). Neither should be taken to imply official endorsement or acceptance.

# What is iSupport



- The global case management system for the international recovery of child support
- Administered by the Permanent Bureau of HCCH and a Governing Body of participating States
- Handles processes related to **international child support cases** (establishment, recognition and enforcement, modification as well as specific measures) and manages data about the actors of these cases
- **Open source**, available **free of charge** (with the exception of maintenance costs)
- Uses **e-CODEX** as a secure electronic communication medium

# iSupport movie



# Background of the project



- Preparatory work for an international Convention to facilitate the recovery of child support
  - The two pillars: administrative cooperation, recognition and enforcement
- Recognition that there are many (**more than one million**) unrecovered child support cases around the world
- Adoption of the ***Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance***
  - Technology and medium neutral, recommended and mandatory forms
- Production of a business plan for a global case management system:  
**iSupport**

# Objectives



- Leverage the Convention to **improve the recovery of child support**
- Address issues such as **postal delays, linguistic differences** and challenges of working across **different time zones**
- iSupport needed to be flexible enough to be adopted by a large number of Authorities with different work practices while adhering to the Convention (and subsequent EU Regulation)
- It also had to respect **strict standards of data protection**
- Efficiency gains contributing to **better enforcement and ultimately benefiting children and families**

# Partnership



- In 2014, a first EU Action Grant allowed HCCH to launch the development of iSupport with the support of 9 States
- In total **19 States** have contributed to iSupport (in kind and financially)
- **Current EU-funded project with 15 States:** Austria, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Switzerland, the United States of America
- iSupport is promoted in the context of the European Judicial Network (EU Member States), States and REIOs bound by the Convention (41), international subcommittee of the National Child Support Enforcement Association (NCSEA, North America & Worldwide)

# Implementation



- Release of a **first version of iSupport in 2016** (two years after the launch of iSupport)
- This was made possible by:
  - Working Groups with specific tasks (functional requirements, technical specifications, data protection, electronic communication)
  - **Agile development methodology** and careful choice of developer with a set budget
  - **Consensus-based decision making and constant involvement of recognised field experts**
- iSupport has cost € 2.2 million for the period 2014-2020



# Follow-up and adoption



- Continuous improvement of iSupport with versions released in December 2017, August 2018 and August 2019 – main features are **encryption in the application** and database for federal States
- Upgrade of e-CODEX set-up to reach a stable and maintainable version
- **Norway, Portugal, Brazil, Finland France and Germany now working on upgrading and / or setting-up iSupport**
- Next steps:
  - Promote 2007 Convention and iSupport worldwide
  - Modernise iSupport design and improve collection of statistics
  - Improve information and training on 2009 Regulation and 2007 Convention for applicants and caseworkers – prepare online application
  - Work on international transfer of funds

# Lessons learnt



- **Consensus-based decision making** and in-depth drafting of requirements
- **Common application** to provide the first step of digitisation
- Use of **open-source** tools within the context of the work on European interoperability to minimise costs and ensure adaptability
- Careful choice of subcontractor to ensure **consistent delivery within a given budget**
- **User involvement** and sequences of development
- **Core elements** of the system developed while taking into account additional components to be included later
- Coordination by an **international organisation**

# Conclusion



- The adoption of the 2007 Convention and 2009 EU Regulation meant that **the world became a smaller place for child support debtors**
- iSupport upholds the rule of law by ensuring the **effective enforcement of judicial decisions**
- iSupport allows governments to **save on welfare** while child support money goes to the right people
- When iSupport is implemented worldwide **debtors will have nowhere to hide**
- iSupport will make a difference to the lives of **millions of children**



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[www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net)