

LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

LOCATING FOREIGN LAW TEXTS ON THE INTERNET

This list includes selected, multijurisdictional websites that are useful in locating foreign law texts, some of which may be in translation. It does not include single-country databases, although many of the websites provide links to such databases. Note that even though some of the sources are authoritative, translations are not generally considered official versions of legal texts, other than translations into languages specifically named as official by a multi-lingual jurisdiction.

I. International Organizations

- ANTI-SPAM LAWS AND AUTHORITIES WORLDWIDE, INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION, <http://www.itu.int/osg/spu/spam/law.html>. This website provides links to anti-spam laws and related information and is organized alphabetically by country. The laws are not translated.
- DOING BUSINESS: LAW LIBRARY, <http://www.doingbusiness.org/law-library>. This database, compiled by the International Finance Corporation and the World Bank, includes laws on many business-related topics, such as banking, land and building, and taxation. It links to official government sources when possible. The database is searchable by geographic region and topic, as well as by individual jurisdiction. Some texts are in translation (unofficial unless otherwise noted).
- GLOBAL LEGAL INFORMATION NETWORK (GLIN), <http://www.glin.gov/search.action>. GLIN is an international cooperative organization that has created a database of laws from a number of countries. The coverage is not global (contents are summarized online at <https://www.glin.gov/databaseContentsPopup.action>). Each law is summarized in English and usually in its original language as well, and subject term searching can be cross-lingual (e.g., searches using an English subject term might locate a Korean law on the subject, even though the law is not translated).
- INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW—TREATIES & DOCUMENTS: ICRC, <http://www.icrc.org/ihl>. This International Committee of the Red Cross database contains 100 treaties and information on their signatory and ratification statuses, in addition to other texts, such as laws protecting the victims of war and laws governing the conduct of hostilities, from 1856 to the present.
- MIGRATION LAW DATABASE, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM), <http://www.imldb.iom.int/section.do>. This database, compiled by the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of global migration, is searchable by document title or number, country, date, subject, and language. It includes international, regional, and national legal instruments on topics related to migration; some of these are available in translation. It is possible, for example, to select the

language “English” and the country “Belgium” to find Belgian law texts in English translation.

- NATLEX, http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home. NATLEX, a database of legal information compiled by the International Labour Organization, focuses on labor rights, but with coverage of human rights and basic codes as well. It is possible to search by country or by topic. Although in most cases the results are just citations, the database indicates when legislation has been amended. In some cases a link to the law, in translation or in the original language, is included.
- UNESCO Databases (Selected):
 - COLLECTION OF NATIONAL COPYRIGHT LAWS, http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=14076&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html. Texts in this database are largely not translated. It includes copyright and related rights legislation of UNESCO member states and to date has about 150 laws.
 - DATABASE OF NATIONAL CULTURAL HERITAGE LAWS, <http://www.unesco.org/culture/natlaws/>. This database can be searched by title, type of document, country, subject, keyword, and several other parameters. The search can be limited to documents in translation.
- United Nations Databases (Selected):
 - ECOLEX, <http://www.ecolex.org/start.php>. This searchable database contains treaties, laws, decisions, and literature on environmental law. Although texts are not translated, some are accompanied by English-language information about the laws.
 - FAOLEX and FISHPLEX, <http://faolex.fao.org/faolex/index.htm>, <http://faolex.fao.org/fishery/index.htm>. Created by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, these are searchable databases of laws on their designated topics.
 - INTERNATIONAL LAW, <http://www.un.org/en/law/index.shtml>. This website is a portal for access to treaties and other international legal materials.
 - LEGAL TOOLS, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/legal-tools/index.html?ref=menuseide>. Created by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, this website offers a number of resources, including a human trafficking case law database, model laws, treaty information, and other materials.
 - REFWORLD, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain>. This database was created by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and includes a section on legal documents; texts of laws reach far beyond the topic of refugee rights.
- WIPO LEX, <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/>. Compiled by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), this database contains links by country to the intellectual property legislation of WIPO, World Trade Organization, and United

Nations members, as well as related information. Some items are available in translation.

- WHO – INTERNATIONAL DIGEST OF HEALTH LEGISLATION (IDHL), <http://apps.who.int/idhl-rils/frame.cfm?language=english>. This World Health Organization (WHO) database contains English-language summaries of laws from many nations, together with some links to full texts. It can be searched by country, subject, IDHL volume, IDHL issue, or keyword. It supersedes a print publication of the same name that was produced by the WHO from 1948 to 1999.

II. Regional Organizations

- ASEAN LEGAL INFORMATION NETWORK SYSTEM, <http://www.aseansec.org/11172.htm>. This Association of Southeast Asian Nations website links to the government websites of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Brunei, Singapore, and Vietnam's sites are in English and contain further links to legal texts.
- ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICA (ECOWAS), <http://www.ecowas.int/>. This website has links to the government websites of each of the fifteen West African member nations. Some of the links lead to legal materials, but they are generally not translated.
- LEGISLATION AND TREATIES – EUROPA.EU, http://europa.eu/documentation/legislation/index_en.htm. The Legislation and Treaties section of the European Union's official website provides links to a number of databases containing EU legal materials (including EUR-Lex), all available in English, and the domestic laws of EU Member states (including N-Lex), some of which has been translated. The site also provides information on EU procedures and links to EU core documents.
- Organization of American States (Selected):
 - FAMILY AND CHILD LAW, DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, OAS, http://www.oas.org/dil/family_law.htm. This site provides access to laws on topics related to child welfare and the family from most of the OAS's thirty-five member countries.
 - SECRETARIAT FOR LEGAL AFFAIRS, OAS, <http://www.oas.org/dil/>. This website has information on and links to regional treaties and agreements on a variety of topics and can be searched by year or subject.

III. Academic Institutions and Private Organizations

- CONSTITUTION FINDER, <http://confinder.richmond.edu/>. This database of constitutions, many in translation, was compiled by the T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond.
- INSTITUTE FOR TRANSNATIONAL LAW FOREIGN LAW TRANSLATIONS, http://www.utexas.edu/law/academics/centers/transnational/work_new/. Hosted by the School of

Law at the University of Texas at Austin, this website links to selected translations of decisions and statutes from France and Germany, plus decisions from Austria and Israel.

- INTERNATIONAL LAW IN BRIEF *and* INTERNATIONAL LEGAL MATERIALS, AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW (ASIL), <http://www.asil.org/ilibmenu.cfm>, <http://www.asil.org/ilm.cfm>. These ASIL publications contain texts of laws and judicial decisions from around the world.
- LAW BY SOURCE: GLOBAL, CORNELL LEGAL INFORMATION INSTITUTE (LII), <http://www.law.cornell.edu/world/>. Produced by Cornell University Law School's LII, this database is arranged by jurisdiction and the amount of material varies from country to country.
- NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONS, <http://www.constitution.org/cons/natlcons.htm>. This database of constitutions, many of them in English translation, is the work of the Constitution Society, which is a private, nonprofit organization.
- POLITICAL DATABASE OF THE AMERICAS, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>. This database, published by the Center for Latin American Studies at Georgetown University in collaboration with other international entities, contains texts of the constitutions of countries in the Americas and of laws on several subjects, including political parties and elections. Most are in the original languages but some translations are included.
- PRIVATE SECURITY REGULATION.NET, <http://www.privatesecurityregulation.net/pm-sc-regulation-database>. This database was created by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and has links to international and regional treaties plus national laws, regulations, and draft laws on private security and military services from more than fifty countries. Translations are provided for some materials. The DCAF is an international foundation with sixty-one member states.
- WATERLEX HRWS ONLINE LEGAL DATABASE, <http://www.waterlex.org/waterlex/en/resources/online-legal-database>. This database is scheduled to become operational in March 2012. WaterLex was founded in 2010 as a private, non-profit organization established in Geneva, Switzerland. The database will include international and national legislation.
- WORLD LEGAL INFORMATION INSTITUTE (WORLDLII), <http://www.worldlii.org/>. This web portal claims to link to “1230 databases from 123 jurisdictions via 14 Legal Information Institutes.” A number of the linked databases provide full texts of laws, some of which are available in English. The website is subdivided into regional sections and also provides a page on which the linked websites are organized by country. WorldLII describes itself as “a free, independent and non-profit global legal research facility developed collaboratively” by several listed LIIs and other organizations.
- WORLD WIDE CONSTITUTIONS, http://www.concourt.am/armenian/legal_resources/world_constitutions/constit/const21.htm. This website, produced by Constitutional

Court of the Republic of Armenia, includes many constitutions of the world in translation.

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