

Working Group on the Legal Development of the Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs

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UPDATED FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW LANGUAGES

Document prepared by the International Bureau

BACKGROUND

1. At its thirteenth session, held from October 21 to 23, 2024, the Working Group on the Legal Development of the Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs (hereinafter referred to as the “Working Group”), discussed document [H/LD/WG/13/5](#) entitled “Proposal by the Delegation of China”. The proposal was made in the context of the possible introduction of new languages into the Hague System and followed an agreement by the Working Group at its twelfth session to continue discussions on the possible introduction of new Hague System languages in the spirit of promoting the Hague System¹.

2. The Working Group requested the International Bureau to prepare, for its next session, a document providing:

- (i) an updated financial analysis of the introduction of new languages;
- (ii) possible options regarding technical solutions for reducing the cost in translation, such as differentiated translation practices and machine translation; and
- (iii) an update of the statistics contained in document H/LD/WG/12/8².

¹ See document [H/LD/WG/12/9](#) “Summary by the Chair”, paragraph 15. See also document [H/LD/WG/7/5](#) “Proposal by the Delegation of the Russian Federation”.

² See document [H/LD/WG/13/6](#) “Summary by the Acting Chair”, paragraph 16.

3. The International Bureau has prepared three documents to meet the requests made by the Working Group³. This document presents an updated financial analysis of the introduction of new languages.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS

4. At its eighth session held in 2019, the Working Group discussed document [H/LD/WG/8/5](#), entitled “Possible Options for the Introduction of New Languages into the Hague System”, and requested the International Bureau to prepare, for discussion at its next session, an advanced study of the cost implications and technical feasibility of the introduction of the Chinese and Russian languages into the Hague System⁴.

5. The International Bureau prepared the requested study for consideration by the Working Group at its ninth session held in 2020. However, the topic was removed from the agenda of that session due to the hybrid meeting format and the International Bureau prepared an update of the aforementioned study for consideration by the Working Group at its tenth session held in 2021 (document [H/LD/WG/10/4](#) entitled “Update on Advanced Study of the Cost Implications and Technical Feasibility of the Introduction of the Chinese and Russian Languages into the Hague System”). The present analysis builds on the study contained in the aforementioned document.

6. Document H/LD/WG/10/4 presented five possible implementation options for introducing new languages into the Hague System, namely as a filing language (Option “A”), filing and communication language (Option “B”), publication language (Option “C”), publication and office communication language (Option “D”) and working language (Option “E”)⁵. So far, only the inclusion of a new language either as a filing language⁶ or as a working language⁷ were mentioned in discussions. Therefore, the updated financial analysis will focus on those two options. Given that the filing language option is the least complex and the working language option is the most complex implementation option, the estimated costs for these two options provide the frame for possible cost implications for the other options.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

7. The financial analysis includes both set-up and recurring costs that would occur if a new language were introduced in the Hague System. Concrete examples are provided, where useful or necessary. The analysis also outlines possible cost-savings, such as through technical solutions or a different translation practice. The estimated costs are presented per new language.

SET-UP COSTS

8. The introduction of a new language would require modifications to the current ICT system and the translation of relevant materials.

³ Document [H/LD/WG/14/6](#) provides an update of the statistics contained in document [H/LD/WG/12/8](#), and document [H/LD/WG/14/7](#) concerns technical solutions for reducing the cost in translation.

⁴ See document [H/LD/WG/8/8](#), paragraph 29.

⁵ See document H/LD/WG/10/4, paragraphs 6 to 20.

⁶ See document [H/LD/WG/10/5](#), paragraph 3.

⁷ See document H/LD/WG/7/5 for the inclusion of Russian and document H/LD/WG/13/5 for the inclusion of Chinese as working languages of the Hague System.

ICT Systems

Filing Language Option

9. This option would require changes to the current ICT system to enable applicants to file international applications in a new language. The system developments for this option would require an investment of approximately 0.2 million Swiss francs per new language.

Working Language Option

10. This option would require changes to the current ICT system to enable applicants and holders to perform all online transactions in a new language. Additionally, internal system updates would be required to enable the International Bureau to examine international applications, communicate with applicants, holders and Offices of designated Contracting Parties, and record and publish all information concerning international registrations in the new language. System developments for this option would require an investment of approximately 0.3 million Swiss francs per new language.

Translation

Filing Language Option

11. The introduction of a new language as a filing language would require translation of the eHague filing interface, form DM/1 and all information materials. Some of the information materials are already available in some languages⁸, in which case the set-up costs would be lower than the estimated costs outlined below.

12. The analysis provides a general estimate of the costs for the translation per new language. The estimated translation costs would be approximately 0.051 million Swiss francs for translations with full revision or 0.031 million Swiss francs for translations where a percentage undergoes quality control.

Working Language Option

13. The introduction of a new language as a working language would require translation of all resources, including eHague interfaces, forms, database interfaces, the International Designs Bulletin, and all notification templates⁹.

14. The estimated translation costs per new language would be approximately 0.064 million Swiss francs for translations with full revision or 0.039 million Swiss francs for translations where a percentage undergoes quality control.

Summary

15. Based on the above, the total set-up costs for the ICT system development and translation of all materials would be approximately between 0.231 and 0.251 million Swiss francs for the filing language option and between 0.339 and 0.364 million Swiss francs for the working language option.

⁸ The Hague legal texts, Hague Guide for Users, the Guidance on Reproductions, the Guidance on Multiple Designs and Accession Kit already exist in all six UN languages. See document H/LD/WG/10/4, Annex I.

⁹ See footnote 8, above.

RECURRING COSTS

16. The introduction of a new language would increase annual costs under both implementation options, as the International Bureau would have to maintain the ICT system and provide translations of international applications, customer support, outreach and promotion in a new language.

17. Additionally, operational costs would increase further under the working language option, as the International Bureau would be required to examine international applications, communicate with applicants, holders and Offices of designated Contracting Parties, and record and publish all information concerning international registrations in the new language.

18. It is noted that, under both options, the introduction of a new language would require additional recurring translations throughout the year, including updates to information materials ([Hague Guide for Users](#), [Guidance on Reproductions](#), [Guidance on Multiple Designs](#), [Hague System Member Profiles](#)), legal texts, forms, Information Notices, news items, tutorials, Accession Kit, and the distance learning course. These additional translations would be carried out by the Language Division, subject to its internal language resources¹⁰.

19. It is further noted that communications from Offices of designated Contracting Parties are not translated by the International Bureau. Under the working language option, Offices of designated Contracting Parties would be able to send communications (e.g., notifications of refusal and statements of grant of protection) in the new language. The International Bureau would record such decisions in the International Register, publish them in the International Designs Bulletin, and transmit a copy of that notification to the holder of the international registration in the new language.

ICT Systems

20. The introduction of a new language would entail maintenance work and updates to the ICT system and online resources, such as eHague. The estimated annual costs are approximately 0.1 million Swiss francs per language under both implementation options.

Translation

Filing Language Option

21. Under this option, applicants would be able to file international applications in a new language, in addition to the current three languages. The International Bureau would translate text matters contained in international applications into English as the “relay language”, and from English into French and Spanish¹¹.

22. The estimates of cost implications for additional translation costs were based on the forecasted number of international applications filed in Chinese and Russian in previous documents¹². The present financial analysis of the introduction of new languages is not based on a forecast of the number of international applications for a specific language, but on the number of words contained in international applications filed in a new language. For this, the estimated translation costs are based on the average number of words contained in international applications per design¹³.

¹⁰ The Language Division performs these translations under the current language regime. Translations for which the Language Division does not have the internal resources would be outsourced.

¹¹ For the introduction of “indirect translation” via English as the relay language, see document H/LD/WG/8/5, paragraphs 24 to 29.

¹² See documents H/LD/WG/8/5, [H/LD/WG/9/4](#) and H/LD/WG/10/4.

¹³ In the 18-month period from January 2024 to June 2025, an international application contained 24 words per design on average.

23. In this regard, it should be recalled that the daily operation of the Hague System relies entirely on the Madrid translation resources for translating the above text matters. Since neither the Madrid Registry nor the Hague Registry have the translation resources to perform translations in new languages, these translations would need to be outsourced, and translators would control the quality of the outsourced translation work.

24. The present financial analysis presents estimated translation costs based on the rates applicable for translations in the PCT System in 2025¹⁴. These translation rates differ for each language combination¹⁵. Based on the PCT rates applicable in 2025 and the average number of words contained in international applications per design, it is estimated that the additional translation costs per design would range from 2.40 Swiss francs for the language combination with the lowest rate and 6.72 Swiss francs for the language combination with the highest rate.

25. For illustration purposes, table I below shows the potential additional translation costs based on the number of designs contained in international applications. For example, if the International Bureau had received international applications containing 1,000 designs in a new language in 2024, the estimated additional translation costs would have been between 2,400 and 6,720 Swiss francs (1,000 designs x 2.40 and 6.72 Swiss francs per design).

Table I: Estimated Translation Costs per Language

Number of designs contained in international applications per year	Cost range per year (in CHF)¹⁶
100	240 to 672
500	1,200 to 3,360
1,000	2,400 to 6,720
2,000	4,800 to 13,440
3,000	7,200 to 20,160
4,000	9,600 to 26,880
5,000	12,000 to 33,600
6,000	14,400 to 40,320
7,000	16,800 to 47,040

26. For reference purposes, table II below shows the number of designs contained in international applications in 2024, filed by applicants from Contracting Parties by the language spoken in the jurisdiction of the applicant¹⁷. For example, in 2024, 4,868 designs were contained in international applications from China. The annual translation costs from Chinese into English would have been just under 12,000 Swiss francs in 2024 if all these international applications had been filed in Chinese¹⁸.

¹⁴ It is recalled that the translation transactions in relation to Hague applications concern the indication of the product, a description of the characteristic features of the industrial design, claims and legends. The nature of the text contained in PCT international applications is more similar to Hague text matter than the text in Madrid international applications (for more information, see Annex II to document H/LD/WG/10/4, footnote 12 and document [H/LD/WG/11/4](#), paragraph 17). One option to estimate the possible costs for the translation of Hague applications more precisely would be to conduct a Request for Information (RFI) process for translations specifically for text matter in design applications.

¹⁵ The PCT rates for translations into English increase in cost per word in the following order from lowest to highest rate: Chinese, German, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese and Arabic.

¹⁶ This column shows the range of possible costs based on the lowest and highest rates applicable for outsourcing translations in the PCT System.

¹⁷ Table II follows the same methodology as tables I and II contained in document H/LD/WG/14/6 (see paragraph 7).

¹⁸ See table I and footnote 15, above.

Table II: Number of Designs Contained in International Applications (2024)¹⁹

	Language	Number of Designs
1	German	5,757
2	Chinese	4,868
3	English	4,507
4	French	2,461
5	Italian	2,460
6	Korean	1,448
7	Dutch	961
8	Japanese	951
9	Turkish	596
10	Polish	370
11	Danish	343
12	Spanish	338
13	Swedish	301
14	Greek	230
15	Hebrew	212
16	Portuguese	179
17	Maltese	145
18	Arabic	137
19	Czech	114
20	Ukrainian	111
21	Norwegian	106
22	Bulgarian	104
23	Finnish	76
24	Russian	69
25	Croatian	62
26	Hungarian	52
27	Serbian	51
28	Slovenian	40
29	Romanian	36
30	Estonian	34

27. The International Bureau does not have any translation memories for new languages. However, the International Bureau should be able to benefit gradually from the compilation of translation data, which would reduce the volume of translations which need to be outsourced. It is estimated that the International Bureau should be able to translate 2.5 per cent of the words per language automatically, with this percentage increasing by 2.5 per cent annually (up to approximately 40 per cent²⁰).

Working Language Option

28. Under this option, the language regime currently envisaged in Rule 6 of the Regulations under the Geneva Act (1999) of the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs would also apply to a new language. As with the filing language option, applicants would be able to file international applications in a new language, and the International Bureau would translate the text matters contained in international applications from a new language into the current three languages.

29. In addition, under the working language option, the International Bureau would record and publish international registrations in any new language in addition to English, French and Spanish. Therefore, the International Bureau would also translate the text matter contained in

¹⁹ The table shows the top 30 languages in descending order.

²⁰ See document H/LD/WG/11/4, paragraph 40.

international applications filed in the current three languages into the new language. If several new languages were introduced into the Hague System, the International Bureau would also translate the text matter contained in international applications into the other new languages.

30. Regarding any new languages, the International Bureau would translate the text matter using English as the “relay language”²¹. Therefore, the additional translation work compared to the current translation workload would consist of translating text matter either from a new language into English or from English into a new language.

31. The additional translation costs depend on the total number of words contained in international applications and the applicable fees per word. Based on the PCT rates applicable in 2025, the additional translation costs for a new working language would be between 2.40 and 6.72 Swiss francs per design, depending on the language²². These costs would apply for each new language.

32. For example, in 2024, 27,161 designs were contained in international applications²³. If the Hague System had operated with four working languages in 2024, the additional annual translation costs would have been between 65,186 and 182,522 Swiss francs (27,161 designs x 2.40 or 6.72 Swiss francs per design, based on the assumption that all text matters contained in international applications would have had to be translated either from a new language into English or *vice versa*).

33. Table III below shows the estimated additional translation costs per new language based on forecasted results for designs contained in international applications prepared by the WIPO Department for Economics and Data Analytics in July 2025²⁴.

Table III: Forecast Designs in Applications and Estimated Costs

Year	Designs	Growth	Costs per new language in Swiss francs
2025	28,260	4.0%	67,824 to 189,907
2026	31,540	11.6%	75,696 to 211,949
2027	33,150	5.1%	79,560 to 222,768
2028	34,790	4.9%	83,496 to 233,789
2029	36,380	4.6%	87,312 to 244,474

Quality control

34. Seven per cent of the outsourced translation work would be subject to quality control by a senior translator²⁵. The introduction of a new language as a filing language would require a translator whose mother tongue is English and who is proficient in the new language. The introduction of a new language as a working language would additionally require a translator whose mother tongue is the new language and who is proficient in English.

35. For this, the International Bureau would engage translators under ICS contracts. Until the workload warrants the retention of a full-time translator, the International Bureau would engage translators on a part-time basis. It is estimated that the workload would not have exceeded three workdays for the filing language option and 12 workdays for the working language option for any new language in 2024²⁶.

²¹ See paragraph 21, above.

²² See paragraph 24, above. While the current rates applicable for translations in the PCT System only apply for translations from the PCT publication languages into English, the present analysis applies those rates for both directions in the absence of other applicable rates.

²³ See [Hague Yearly Review 2025](#).

²⁴ Based on the translation costs of 2.40 and 6.72 Swiss francs per design.

²⁵ See Annex II to document H/LD/WG/10/4, paragraph 26.

²⁶ The engagement of a senior ICS would require an investment of approximately 0.012 million Swiss francs per month.

Differentiated Translation Practice

36. One possible solution to reduce the potential additional translation costs would be to apply a differentiated translation practice²⁷. The differentiated translation practice and its impact on translation workload are outlined in document [H/LD/WG/14/7](#). Such a practice would reduce the additional translation workload under the working language option for new languages in a comparable manner²⁸.

37. A differentiated translation practice would equally reduce the additional costs for quality control, given that fewer translations would be subject to quality control²⁹. The volume of quality control required under a differentiated translation practice would be low.

Examination

Filing Language Option

38. Under this option, the International Bureau would translate international applications filed in new languages into English for examination. Therefore, the International Bureau would not require examiners proficient in new languages and the introduction of a new language under this option would not impact the examination costs³⁰.

Working Language Option

39. Under this option, the International Bureau would examine international applications, communicate with applicants, holders and Offices of designated Contracting Parties, and record and publish all information concerning international registrations in a new language. Therefore, the International Bureau would require examiners proficient in that language³¹.

40. While the number of examiners depends on the volume of filings in a new language, ideally the International Bureau should retain at least two examiners proficient in a new language to ensure business continuity.

41. In general, for a new language with more than 1,000 international applications per year, two full-time examiners (G6-level) would be required. For a new language with fewer than 1,000 international applications per year, two part-time examiners (G6-level) would be required at 50 per cent capacity. The annual standard cost for a G6 is approximately 0.1488 million Swiss francs³², while that of an ICS is approximately 0.1 million Swiss francs.

42. Thus, a new language with more than 1,000 filings would require an annual expenditure of between approximately 0.2 million Swiss francs (two ICS) and 0.3 million Swiss francs (two G6-level personnel). A new language with fewer than 1,000 filings would require an annual expenditure of between 0.1 million Swiss francs (two ICS at 50 per cent) and 0.15 million Swiss francs (two G6-level personnel at 50 per cent). The extent to which such expenditure would take the form of additional costs depends primarily on two independent factors: the current capacity of the International Bureau to examine applications in that new language, and the

²⁷ For more information, see document H/LD/WG/14/7, paragraph 7.

²⁸ A differentiated translation practice would not reduce the additional translation workload under the filing language option because all international applications filed in a new language would be translated into English, independent of the Contracting Parties designated therein.

²⁹ See paragraphs 34 and 35, above.

³⁰ See, however, paragraphs 44 and 47, above. The majority of customer queries concern specific cases.

³¹ At present, the Hague Registry has minimum resources to examine international applications in some new languages (see document H/LD/WG/10/4, paragraph 33).

³² 148,800 Swiss francs for G6 regular post in Geneva in 2025, according to the annual standard cost for the 2024/25 biennium.

extent to which such filings come in addition to filings that would otherwise have been made in any of the current languages. Also, these costs for additional examiners could possibly be reduced if the International Bureau can recruit multilingual examiners who can work in multiple languages³³.

43. The International Bureau could also streamline examination and customer support in new languages by recruiting and training cross-skilled personnel to handle both examination and customer support in a new language. For a new language with more than 1,000 international applications per year, three cross-skilled personnel would be required. For a new language with fewer than 1,000 international applications per year, two to three cross-skilled personnel would be required at 50 per cent capacity. Given the broader skills required, such cross-skilled professionals would be recruited at the P2-level. The annual standard cost for a P2 is approximately 0.174 million Swiss francs³⁴.

Customer Support and Relations

44. If a new language is introduced into the Hague System, customer support and outreach must be provided in that language under both options. The International Bureau would be required to respond to user enquiries, provide webinars and carry out outreach and promotion activities in that language³⁵. Therefore, the International Bureau would require customer support agents proficient in that language.

45. For a new language with more than 1,000 international applications per year, two customer support agents (G6-level) proficient in that language would be required for back-up. For a new language with fewer than 1,000 international applications per year, two customer support agents (G6-level) proficient in the new language would be required at 50 per cent capacity. The costs could potentially be reduced if the International Bureau can recruit multilingual customer support agents who can work in multiple languages³⁶. For a new language with fewer than 500 international applications per year, the International Bureau could provide customer service with one customer support agent (G6-level) and the assistance of machine translation³⁷.

46. Thus, providing customer support for a new language with more than 1,000 filings would require an annual investment of between approximately 0.2 million Swiss francs (two ICS) and 0.3 million Swiss francs (two G6-level personnel). A new language with fewer than 1,000 filings would require an annual investment of between 0.1 million Swiss francs (two ICS at 50 per cent) and 0.15 million Swiss francs (two G6-level personnel at 50 per cent). A new language with fewer than 500 filings would require an annual investment of between approximately 0.05 million Swiss francs (one ICS at 50 per cent) and 0.074 million Swiss francs (one G6-level personnel at 50 per cent).

47. The majority of Hague customer inquiries (approximately 73 per cent) concern specific cases (i.e., applications, registrations or renewals), while the remaining inquiries are general in nature (e.g., requests for information, legal and technical questions). If the International Bureau can streamline examination and customer support in new languages, as mentioned in paragraph 43, above, cross-skilled professionals (P2-level) could handle examination, customer support and outreach in a new language.

³³ If several new languages are introduced into the Hague System, the costs for additional examiners could possibly be reduced if multilingual examiners proficient in several new languages (in addition to English) could be recruited. However, examiners with such language skills are rare. In addition, a second examiner proficient in each new language would be required for back-up.

³⁴ 174,200 Swiss francs for P2 regular post in Geneva in 2025, according to the annual standard cost for the 2024/25 biennium.

³⁵ For more information, see Annex II to document H/LD/WG/10/4, paragraphs 15 and 16.

³⁶ See paragraph 42, above.

³⁷ Any such machine translation tool must ensure confidentiality of the exchanged information. Implementing a suitable machine translation tool will have set-up costs.

48. If the International Bureau recruits and trains cross-skilled personnel who can examine and provide customer support in a new language, an additional annual investment of approximately 0.523 million Swiss francs (three P2-level personnel) would be required for a new language with more than 1,000 international applications per year. An annual investment of between 0.174 and 0.261 million Swiss francs (two to three P2-level personnel at 50 per cent) would be required for a new language with fewer than 1,000 international applications per year. These professionals would cover examination, customer support and outreach activities in that new language.

Summary

Filing Language Option

49. In view of the above, the total recurring annual costs for the maintenance of the ICT system would be approximately 0.1 million Swiss francs³⁸.

50. The annual costs for translation and quality control of international applications³⁹ depend on the number of words in international applications filed in a new language and the applicable fees per word⁴⁰. It is expected that the compilation of translation data in translation memories for new languages would reduce the additional costs both for translations and quality control over time⁴¹.

51. Under this implementation option, there would be no additional costs for the examination of international applications⁴².

52. The recurring annual costs for customer support, outreach and promotion depend on the number of international applications filed in a new language which would determine the necessary human resources. It is estimated that those additional costs would be between 0.05 and 0.3 million Swiss francs⁴³.

Working Language Option

53. The total recurring annual costs for the maintenance of the ICT system would be 0.1 million Swiss francs⁴⁴.

54. The annual costs for translation and quality control depend on the total number of words in international applications and the applicable fees per word⁴⁵. The compilation of translation data in translation memories for new languages and the use of a differentiated translation practice would reduce the additional costs both for translations and quality control⁴⁶.

³⁸ See paragraph 20, above.

³⁹ Further translations that are required throughout the year are carried out by the Language Division (see paragraph 18, above).

⁴⁰ See paragraphs 22 to 24, and 35, above.

⁴¹ See paragraph 27, above.

⁴² See paragraph 38, above.

⁴³ See paragraph 46, above. Languages with fewer than fewer than 500 filings would require an annual investment of at least 0.05 million Swiss francs (one ICS at 50 per cent). Languages with more than 1,000 filings would require a maximum annual investment of 0.3 million Swiss francs (two G6-level personnel).

⁴⁴ See paragraph 20, above.

⁴⁵ See paragraphs 31 and 35, above.

⁴⁶ See paragraphs 27, 36 and 37, above.

55. The recurring annual costs for examination, customer support, outreach and promotion depend on the number of international applications filed in a new language which would determine the necessary human resources. The estimated additional annual costs would be between 0.15 and 0.6 million Swiss francs per language⁴⁷. These estimated additional annual costs could be reduced to between 0.174 and 0.523 million Swiss francs per language, if the International Bureau can recruit and train cross-skilled personnel⁴⁸.

56. *The Working Group is invited to:*

(i) consider the contents of this document; and

(ii) provide further instructions to the International Bureau.

[End of document]

⁴⁷ See paragraphs 42 and 46, above. Languages with fewer than 500 filings would require an annual investment between 0.15 million Swiss francs (0.1 million Swiss francs for examination and 0.05 million Swiss francs for customer support and outreach) and 0.224 million Swiss francs (0.15 million Swiss francs for examination and 0.074 million Swiss francs for customer support and outreach). Languages with 500 to 1,000 filings would require an annual investment between 0.2 million Swiss francs (0.1 million Swiss francs for examination and 0.1 million Swiss francs for customer support and outreach) and 0.3 million Swiss francs (0.15 million Swiss francs for examination and 0.15 million Swiss francs for customer support and outreach). Languages with more than 1,000 filings would require an annual investment between 0.4 (0.2 million Swiss francs for examination and 0.2 million Swiss francs for customer support and outreach) and 0.6 million Swiss francs (0.3 million Swiss francs for examination and 0.3 million Swiss francs for customer support and outreach).

⁴⁸ See paragraph 48, above.