

Key Resources in International Law

by Heather Hamilton

Many useful resources are available to lawyers who practice international law. A lawyer does not have to be a seasoned veteran to find needed information; rather, he or she only need know where to look. The following resources run the gamut from free to subscription-based, but they are all valuable tools to any lawyer practicing international law.

GlobaLex (<http://www.nyulawglobal.org/Globalex/>) is an electronic site focusing on foreign, international, and comparative law research. GlobaLex is maintained by the New York University School of Law and is continuously updated. The site's articles and guides are provided by leading international scholars and practitioners in foreign, comparative, and international law and by specialists in domestic law. GlobaLex is free and useful for those who may not regularly practice international law.

Zimmerman's Research Guides (<http://law.lexisnexis.com/infopro/zimmermans/>) are available on several international law topics and are provided by LexisNexis and the Electronic Information System for International Law, an online database of treaties and international conventions offered by the American Society of International Law. The society also provides an electronic resource guide that serves as a self-guided tour for practitioners.

The Foreign Law Guide (<http://www.foreignlawguide.com/>) is an excellent starting point for practitioners faced with foreign legal issues. The Foreign Law Guide is subscription-based and offers comprehensive information about almost two hundred countries and

jurisdictions. It provides sources to find legislation for legal fields such as intellectual property laws, marriage laws, and property laws. Additionally, the Foreign Law Guide was created with the American user in mind and offers English-language legislation or translations of foreign legislation into English. The guide offers more extensive coverage of issues and information than a site such as GlobaLex. The Foreign Law Guide is a convenient source of primary and secondary information for branches of law within many countries. For a firm regularly engaged in international law practice, the price is negligible when measured against the volume of information available.

Hein Online (<http://heinonline.org/>) offers a Foreign and International Law Resources database that includes international yearbooks and other serials, U.S. digests and cases concerning international law, decisions from international tribunals, and other significant works related to foreign and international law. Hein Online also offers a World Trials database that contains many famous cases, as well as commentary. Currently, the World Trials database contains American and English cases as well as war crimes trials, and it continues to add trials from other countries. The Hein Online international law databases are subscription-based.

Another valuable fee-based resource is the **Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law** (MPEPIL) <http://www.mpepil.com/>. This database serves as a comprehensive guide to current events and international law topics. MPEPIL places each topic in context

while explaining current trends and presenting the majority view for comparison purposes. MPEPIL reflects global and regional perspectives of international law. The authors of the articles are international legal scholars and practitioners.

Finally, one of the most important resources for an attorney is a law librarian, especially one who has a background in foreign and international law. Scattered throughout Virginia are several law librarians, working in both academic and firm environments, who are active members of the foreign, comparative, and international law special interest section of the American Association of Law Libraries.



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