

AHB-Lite Platform Level Interrupt Controller

Data sheet

HTTP://ROALOGIC.GITHUB.IO/PLIC

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Contents

| 1 | AH | B-Lite | PLIC | 1 | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|--------------|------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | 1.1 | Featur | res | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Spe | ecifications | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2.1 | Functi | ional Description | 2 | | | | | | | | |
| | 2.2 | Interr | upt Handling Handshake | 3 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.2.1 | PLIC Configuration | 4 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.2.2 | Interrupt Request | 4 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.2.3 | Interrupt Notification | 4 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.2.4 | Claim Response | 4 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.2.5 | Interrupt Handler | 4 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.2.6 | Interrupt Completion | 5 | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Con | ıfigura | ations | 6 | | | | | | | | |
| | 3.1 | Core I | Parameters | 6 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.1.1 | HADDR_SIZE | 6 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.1.2 | HDATA_SIZE | 6 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.1.3 | SOURCES | 6 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.1.4 | TARGETS | 6 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.1.5 | PRIORITIES | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.1.6 | MAX_PENDING_COUNT | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.1.7 | HAS_THRESHOLD | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.1.8 | HAS_CONFIG_REG | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Inte | erfaces | | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| | 4.1 | AHB- | Lite Interface | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 4.1.1 | HRESETn | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 4.1.2 | HCLK | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 4.1.3 | HSEL | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 4.1.4 | HTRANS | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 4.1.5 | HADDR | 9 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 4 1 6 | HWDATA | 9 | | | | | | | | |

| | 4.1.7 HRDATA | 9 |
|-----|-----------------------------|----|
| | 4.1.8 HWRITE | 9 |
| | 4.1.9 HSIZE | 9 |
| | 4.1.10 HBURST | 9 |
| | 4.1.11 HPROT | 10 |
| | 4.1.12 HREADYOUT | 10 |
| | 4.1.13 HREADY | 10 |
| | 4.1.14 HRESP | 10 |
| 4.2 | PLIC Interface | 11 |
| | 4.2.1 SRC | 11 |
| | 4.2.2 IRQ | 11 |
| 4.3 | Register Interface | 11 |
| | 4.3.1 Register Descriptions | 12 |
| | 4.3.2 Register Address Map | 14 |
| 4.4 | Resources | 18 |
| 4.5 | References | 19 |
| 4.6 | Revision History | 20 |

1. AHB-Lite PLIC

The Roa Logic AHB-Lite PLIC (Platform Level Interrupt Controller) IP is a fully parameterised soft IP implementing the Interrupt Controller defined in the RISC-V Privileged v1.9.1 specification¹.

The IP features an AHB-Lite Slave interface, fully compliant with the AMBA 3 AHB-Lite v1.0 specifications.

Bus address and data widths as well as the number of Interrupt Sources and Targets supported are configurable via compile-time parameters.

The controller further supports user configurable priority levels and pending events, in addition to interrupt masking via programmable priority thresholds.

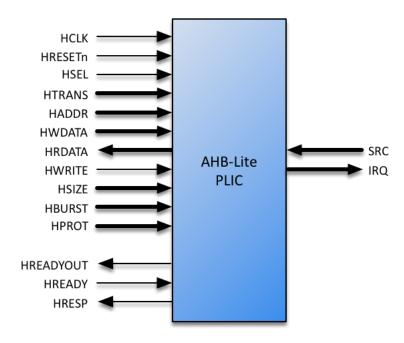


Figure 1.1: PLIC Port Diagram

1.1 Features

- AHB-Lite Interface with parameterised address and data width
- User defined number of Interrupt Sources and Targets
- User defined priority level per Interrupt Source
- Interrupt masking per target via Priority Threshold support
- User defined Interrupt Pending queue depth per source

 $^{^1\}mathrm{Full}$ specification details are provided in the References section

2. Specifications

2.1 Functional Description

The AHB-Lite PLIC IP core is a fully parameterised Platform-Level Interrupt Controller, featuring a single AHB-Lite Slave interface and support for a user-defined number of both Interrupt Sources and Targets.

The purpose of the PLIC core is to connect multiple interrupt sources to one or more interrupt targets. The core supports a programmable number of simultaneous pending interrupt requests per source and individual routing of those interrupt requests to each target.

Per the RISC-V Privileged Architecture Instruction Set specification (v1.9.1), the core performs full interrupt prioritisation of each interrupt source; each may be assigned a separate priority and enabled per target via a matrix of interrupt enable bits. Further, an optional priority threshold per target may be defined to mask lower priority interrupts.

To reduce latency, the PLIC core presents all asserted interrupts to the target in priority order, queuing them so that a software interrupt handler can service all pending interrupts without the need to restore the interrupted context.

For illustration, a simplified example system using the PLIC core is shown below:

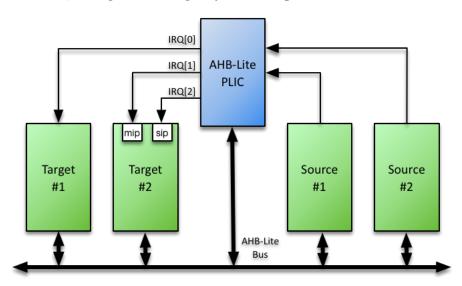


Figure 2.1: PLIC System Diagram

2.2 Interrupt Handling Handshake

The Roa Logic implementation of the handshake between Interrupt source, target and PLIC is illustrated below, and described in further detail in the subsequent sections:

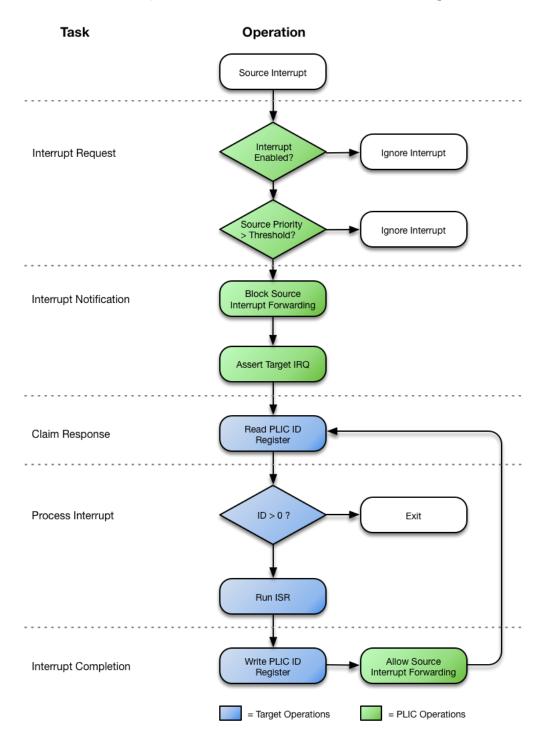


Figure 2.2: Interrupt Handling handshake

2.2.1 PLIC Configuration

A matrix of Interrupt Enable vectors – one IE register per target – determines which target processes the interrupts from which source.

Each Interrupt Source attached to the PLIC is then assigned a Priority Level - an unsigned integer that determines the relative priority of the interrupt source. The greater the integer, the greater the priority level. A Priority Threshold per target may also be defined to mask lower priority interrupts such that interrupts will only be presented to a target if the assigned Priority Level is greater than the Priority Threshold.

In addition each source is automatically assigned an Interrupt Identifier (ID) – an unique unsigned integer. This identifier determines interrupt priority when 2 or more interrupts with the same priority level are asserted. The lower the ID assigned to the source, the greater the interrupt priority.

2.2.2 Interrupt Request

A source asserts an interrupt request to the PLIC. The PLIC validates the request by first checking if an interrupt enable bit is set for each target and if the priority of the interrupt source exceeds any defined Interrupt Priority Threshold. If these conditions do not hold, the Interrupt Request is deemed invalid and stalled pending updates to the interrupt enable and/or priority threshold bits.

The PLIC also determines if a previous interrupt request has been made by the same source. If an interrupt is defined as level triggered and has already been asserted but not yet serviced, the request is ignored. If an interrupt is defined as edge triggered and has already been asserted but not yet serviced, the request is queued by incrementing a Interrupt Pending counter by one. The depth of this counter is parameterised.

If the request is deemed valid the request is forwarded to the appropriate target. In the case of queued edge-triggered requests, the interrupt pending counter is decremented by one immediately upon claim of the interrupt by the target.

2.2.3 Interrupt Notification

A target is notified of an interrupt request by the assertion of the IRQ output for the relevant target. The PLIC also blocks the forwarding of any further requests from the interrupt source until the asserted request is serviced.

On each clock cycle the ID register is loaded with the unique identifier of the highest priority interrupt to be processed.

2.2.4 Claim Response

A target makes an interrupt claim response by reading the ID register, which also notifies the target of the interrupt source to service. The PLIC de-asserts the IRQ output for the target in response to the claim. unless another, lower priority, interrupt is still pending.

2.2.5 Interrupt Handler

If the ID read is greater than zero, the target services the identified interrupt source. If the ID read is zero, this indicates no outstanding pending interrupts remain and the handler

may terminate.

2.2.6 Interrupt Completion

Once an interrupt has been serviced, completion is signalled to the PLIC by writing to the ID register. The act of writing to the register is the completion notification; the value written is irrelevant.

On receiving the completion notification the PLIC will again allow interrupts to be forwarded from the corresponding source.

The Interrupt Handler may then exit, however it is possible a new interrupt request may have been asserted while the handler was running. To reduce latency the handler may instead determine if a new interrupt has been received and if so again claim the interrupt (See earlier). In this way the interrupt handler can service all interrupts without the need to restore the interrupted context.

3. Configurations

3.1 Core Parameters

The size and implementation style of the PLIC module is defined via HDL parameters as specified below:

| Parameter | Type | Default | Description |
|---------------------|---------|---------|------------------------------|
| AHB Interface: | | | |
| HADDR_SIZE | Integer | 32 | Width of AHB Address Bus |
| HDATA_SIZE | Integer | 32 | Width of AHB Data Buses |
| PLIC Configuration: | | | |
| SOURCES | Integer | 16 | Number of Interrupt Sources |
| TARGETS | Integer | 4 | Number of Interrupt Targets |
| PRIORITIES | Integer | 8 | Number of Priority Levels |
| MAX_PENDING_COUNT | Integer | 8 | Max number of pending events |
| HAS_THRESHOLD | Integer | 1 | Is Threshold Implemented |
| HAS_CONFIG_REG | Integer | 1 | Is Config Reg. Implemented |

Table 3.1: Core Parameters

3.1.1 HADDR_SIZE

The HADDR_SIZE parameter specifies the address bus size to connect to the AHB-Lite based host. Valid values are 32 and 64. The default value is 32.

3.1.2 HDATA_SIZE

The HDATA_SIZE parameter specifies the data bus size to connect to the AHB-Lite based host. Valid values are 32 and 64. The default value is 32

3.1.3 SOURCES

The SOURCES parameter defines the number of individual interrupt sources supported by the PLIC IP. The default value is 16. The minimum value is 1.

3.1.4 TARGETS

The TARGETS parameter defines the number of targets supported by the PLIC IP. The default value is 4. The minimum value is 1.

3.1.5 PRIORITIES

The PLIC IP supports prioritisation of individual interrupt sources. The PRIORITIES parameter defines the number of priority levels supported by the PLIC IP. The default value is 8. The minimum value is 1.

3.1.6 MAX_PENDING_COUNT

An interrupt source may generate multiple edge-triggered interrupts before being fully serviced by the target. To support this the PLIC is able to queue these requests up to a user-defined limit per interrupt source. This limit is defined by the parameter MAX_PENDING_COUNT.

If the number of interrupts generated by a source exceeds the value of MAX_PENDING_COUNT, those additional interrupts are silently ignored.

The default value of MAX_PENDING_COUNT is 8. The minimum value is 0.

3.1.7 HAS THRESHOLD

The PLIC module supports interrupt thresholds – the masking of individual interrupt sources based on their priority level. The HAS_THRESHOLD parameter defines if this capability is enabled.

The default value is enabled ('1'). To disable, this parameter should be set to '0'.

3.1.8 HAS_CONFIG_REG

The PLIC module supports an optional Configuration Register, which is documented in section 0. The HAS_CONFIG_REG parameter defines if this capability is enabled.

The default value is enabled (1'). To disable this parameter should be set to '0'.

4. Interfaces

4.1 AHB-Lite Interface

The AHB-Lite interface is a regular AHB-Lite slave port. All signals are supported. See the AMBA 3 AHB-Lite Specification for a complete description of the signals.

| Port | Size Direction | | Description |
|-----------|----------------|--------|-------------------------------|
| HRESETn | 1 | Input | Asynchronous active low reset |
| HCLK | 1 | Input | Clock Input |
| HSEL | 1 | Input | Bus Select |
| HTRANS | 2 | Input | Transfer Type |
| HADDR | HADDR_SIZE | Input | Address Bus |
| HWDATA | HDATA_SIZE | Input | Write Data Bus |
| HRDATA | HDATA_SIZE | Output | Read Data Bus |
| HWRITE | 1 | Input | Write Select |
| HSIZE | 3 | Input | Transfer Size |
| HBURST | 3 | Input | Transfer Burst Size |
| HPROT | 4 | Input | Transfer Protection Level |
| HREADYOUT | 1 | Output | Transfer Ready Output |
| HREADY | 1 | Input | Transfer Ready Input |
| HRESP | 1 | Output | Transfer Response |

Table 4.1: PLIC Interface Signals

4.1.1 HRESETn

When the active low asynchronous HRESETn input is asserted ('0'), the interface is put into its initial reset state.

4.1.2 HCLK

HCLK is the interface system clock. All internal logic for the AHB-Lite interface operates at the rising edge of this system clock and AHB bus timings are related to the rising edge of HCLK.

4.1.3 **HSEL**

The AHB-Lite interface only responds to other signals on its bus – with the exception of the global asynchronous reset signal HRESETn – when HSEL is asserted ('1'). When HSEL is negated ('0') the interface considers the bus IDLE.

4.1.4 HTRANS

HTRANS indicates the type of the current transfer as shown in Table 4.2

| HTRANS | \mathbf{Type} | Description |
|--------|-----------------|---|
| 00 | IDLE | No transfer required |
| 01 | BUSY | Connected master is not ready to accept data, but intents to continue the current |
| | | burst. |
| 10 | NONSEQ | First transfer of a burst or a single transfer |
| 11 | SEQ | Remaining transfers of a burst |

Table 4.2: HTRANS Signal Types

4.1.5 **HADDR**

HADDR is the address bus. Its size is determined by the HADDR_SIZE parameter and is driven to the connected peripheral.

4.1.6 HWDATA

HWDATA is the write data bus. Its size is determined by the HDATA_SIZE parameter and is driven to the connected peripheral.

4.1.7 HRDATA

HRDATA is the read data bus. Its size is determined by the HDATA_SIZE parameter and is sourced by the connected peripheral.

4.1.8 HWRITE

HWRITE is the read/write signal. HWRITE asserted ('1') indicates a write transfer.

4.1.9 **HSIZE**

HSIZE indicates the size of the current transfer as shown in table 4.3:

| HSIZE | Size | Description |
|-------|----------|-------------|
| 000 | 8 bit | Byte |
| 001 | 16 bit | Half Word |
| 010 | 32 bit | Word |
| 011 | 64 bits | Double Word |
| 100 | 128 bit | |
| 101 | 256 bit | |
| 110 | 512 bit | |
| 111 | 1024 bit | |

Table 4.3: HSIZE Values

4.1.10 HBURST

HBURST indicates the transaction burst type – a single transfer or part of a burst.

| HBURST | Type | Description |
|--------|--------|------------------------------|
| 000 | SINGLE | Single access** |
| 001 | INCR | Continuous incremental burst |
| 010 | WRAP4 | 4-beat wrapping burst |
| 011 | INCR4 | 4-beat incrementing burst |
| 100 | WRAP8 | 8-beat wrapping burst |
| 101 | INCR8 | 8-beat incrementing burst |
| 110 | WRAP16 | 16-beat wrapping burst |
| 111 | INCR16 | 16-beat incrementing burst |

Table 4.4: HBURST Types

4.1.11 HPROT

The HPROT signals provide additional information about the bus transfer and are intended to implement a level of protection.

| Bit# | Value | Description |
|------|-------|--------------------------------|
| 3 | 1 | Cacheable region addressed |
| | 0 | Non-cacheable region addressed |
| 2 | 1 | Bufferable |
| | 0 | Non-bufferable |
| 1 | 1 | Privileged Access |
| | 0 | User Access |
| 0 | 1 | Data Access |
| | 0 | Opcode fetch |

Table 4.5: HPROT Indicators

4.1.12 HREADYOUT

HREADYOUT indicates that the current transfer has finished. Note, for the AHB-Lite PLIC this signal is constantly asserted as the core is always ready for data access.

4.1.13 HREADY

HREADY indicates whether or not the addressed peripheral is ready to transfer data. When HREADY is negated ('0') the peripheral is not ready, forcing wait states. When HREADY is asserted ('1') the peripheral is ready and the transfer completed.

4.1.14 HRESP

HRESP is the instruction transfer response and indicates OKAY ('0') or ERROR ('1').

4.2 PLIC Interface

The PLIC provides a single input bus to which all interrupt sources must connect, one bit of the bus per source. A single output bus similarly connects to all interrupt targets, one bit per target. The width of each of these interface buses is specified as a core parameter.

| Port | Size | Direction | Description |
|------|---------|-----------|--------------------|
| SRC | SOURCES | Input | Interrupt Sources |
| IRQ | TARGETS | Output | Interrupt Requests |

Table 4.6: PLIC Interface Signals

4.2.1 SRC

Interrupt sources connect to the SRC[SOURCES-1..0] input of the PLIC module. The width of this interface is defined by the SOURCES parameter.

4.2.2 IRQ

Interrupt targets are sourced by the IRQ[TARGETS-1..0] output of the PLIC module. The width of this interface is defined by the TARGETS parameter.

4.3 Register Interface

The operation and run-time configuration of the PLIC is managed via a memory mapped register interface consisting of the following registers:

| Register | Registers | Width (bits) | \mathbf{Mode} | Function |
|-----------|-----------|--|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| CONFIG | 1 | 64 | RO | Configuration |
| EL | 1 | SOURCES | RW | Edge/Level Trigger |
| IE | TARGETS | SOURCES | RW | Interrupt Enable |
| ID | TARGETS | $\operatorname{clog}_2(\mathtt{SOURCES})$ | RW | ID of Highest priority IRQ, |
| | | | | Int. Claim (R), |
| | | | | Int. Complete (W) |
| PRIORITY | SOURCES | $\operatorname{clog}_2(\mathtt{PRIORITIES})$ | RW | Priority Level |
| THRESHOLD | TARGETS | $\operatorname{clog}_2(\mathtt{PRIORITIES})$ | RW | Priority Threshold |

Table 4.7: PLIC Register Interface

Note: $clog_2()$ refers to the System Verilog function by the same name, defined as:

The system function \$clog2 shall return the ceiling of the log base 2 of the argument (the log rounded up to an integer value). The argument can be an integer or an arbitrary sized vector value. The argument shall be treated as an unsigned value, and an argument value of 0 shall produce a result of 0.

4.3.1 Register Descriptions

The purpose and functionality of each register of the interface is documented in the following sections:

CONFIG

The CONFIG register is a Read-Only register that enables a software routine to determine the hardware configuration of the PLIC module.

When enabled via the HAS_CONFIG_REG hardware parameter, the CONFIG register returns a 64 bit value constructed as follows:

| Bit Position | 63 | | 49 | 48 | 47 | | 32 | 31 | | 16 | 15 | | 0 |
|--------------|----|---|----|-------------------|----|------|-----|----|-------|----|----|-------|----|
| Value | | 0 | | HAS_ THRESHOLD | | ORIT | IES | TA | ARGE! | rs | S | DURCE | ES |

Figure 4.1: Configuration Register

The values, HAS_THRESHOLD, PRIORITIES, TARGETS and SOURCES correspond to the hardware parameters documented in section 3.1 Core Parameters.

The CONFIG register is always 64 bits. For 32 bit implementations this means 2 physical registers are required, 1 each for the upper and lower word. For 64 bit implementations a single register will be implemented.

EL

The EL Read/Write register defines if an interrupt source is Edge or Level Triggered.

The number of interrupt sources, as defined by the SOURCES parameter, determines the width of the EL register. One bit within the register corresponds to an interrupt source, where a logic high ('1') defines a rising-edge triggered interrupt and a logic low ('0') defines a level triggered interrupt. These bits will be packed into the minimum number of registers.

The physical number of registers implemented can be calculated as follows:

```
No. of Registers = ROUNDUP(SOURCES/HDATA_SIZE)
```

Example: For a 32 bit system supporting 48 interrupt sources

```
No. of Registers = ROUNDUP(SOURCES/HDATA_SIZE)
= ROUNDUP(48/32)
= ROUNDUP(1.5)
= 2
```

IE[]

A matrix of IE[] Read/Write registers define if an interrupt source is enabled or disabled for a specific target. When disabled, any interrupts generated by the source will be ignored by the PLIC.

The number of targets determines the number of <code>IE[]</code> registers. The number of interrupt sources, as defined by the <code>SOURCES</code> parameter, determines the width of each <code>IE[]</code> register.

One bit within the register corresponds to an individual interrupt source, where a logic high ('1') defines an interrupt source as enabled and a logic low ('0') as disabled. These bits will be packed into the fewest registers possible and the resulting number of registers calculated as follows:

```
No. of Registers = ROUNDUP(SOURCES/HDATA_SIZE)*TARGETS
```

Example: For a 32 bit system supporting 48 interrupt sources and 4 targets

```
No. of Registers = ROUNDUP(SOURCES/HDATA_SIZE)*TARGETS
= ROUNDUP(48/32)*4
= ROUNDUP(1.5)*4
= 2*4
= 8
```


The ID[] Read/Write register identifies to each target the ID of the highest priority pending interrupt request.

```
No. of Registers = TARGETS
```

This register indicates to the target which of potentially multiple pending interrupts should be serviced rather than relying on this being resolved by the software Interrupt Service Routine.

When a target reads this register, this also indicates the target has claimed the interrupt for the defined source and will service then service the interrupt source.

A target then writes to this register to indicate completion of servicing the interrupt source. It is the action of writing to this register which generates the interrupt completion notification – the value written will not update the register which continues to identify the highest priority interrupt source to be serviced.

PRIORITY[]

The PRIORITY[] Read/Write registers define the priority level of each interrupt source. Interrupt priority increases with larger values of PRIORITY.

Each interrupt source can be assigned a priority, which is defined as positive integer. The PLIC parameter PRIORITIES defines the number of priority levels for a specific implementation, which then allows a source to be assigned a priority between 1 and PRIORITIES.

These priority levels are packed into <code>HDATA_SIZE</code> bit registers, as fields aligned to 4-bit nibble boundaries

```
No. of Registers = ROUNDUP(SOURCES/FPR)
```

where:

Example: For a 32 bit system supporting 48 interrupt sources and 8 priority levels

Note: $clog_2()$ refers to the System Verilog function by the same name and calculates the number of binary bits required to represent a given integer.

THRESHOLD[]

Each target may be assigned a priority threshold via the THRESHOLD[] registers and therefore the PLIC implements 1 register per threshold.

```
No. of Registers = TARGETS
```

Only active interrupts that have a priority strictly greater than the threshold will cause an interrupt notification to be sent to the target. A THRESHOLD[] value of 0 means that no interrupts will be masked.

4.3.2 Register Address Map

The PLIC supports a wide variety of options and unlimited user-definable number of both interrupt sources and targets. To configure and control the PLIC requires a memory-mapped register interface that must be defined according to the specific implementation.

To ease the development of PLIC based systems, the Roa Logic PLIC implements a dynamic register interface based on the hardware parameters set during generation of the implementation, packing multiple bit-fields into registers where feasible to minimise the required address space.

The following sections describe the calculations performed during generation of the dynamic register interface so that the user may determine the registers available and the memory mapping of those registers for a given implementation.

A spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel format is available to perform these calculations based on user-defined parameters to show the registers and memory mapping. Further, simulation of the PLIC will also shows the registers and memory mapping.

The order of the registers in the memory map is defined as Table 4.8.

| Order | Registers |
|-------|---------------------|
| 1 | CONFIG Register(s) |
| 2 | EL Registers |
| 3 | PRIORITY Registers |
| 4 | IE Registers |
| 5 | THRESHOLD Registers |
| 6 | ID Registers |

Table 4.8: Register Address Order

Registers are mapped to consecutive addresses based on this order and the number of registers required.

Address Map Example

Using the example of a 32 bit system supporting 48 interrupt sources, 4 targets and 8 priority levels as shown in Table 4.9:

| Parameter | Number |
|-------------|--------|
| HDATA_WIDTH | 32 |
| SOURCES | 48 |
| TARGETS | 4 |
| PRIORITIES | 8 |

Table 4.9: Example Parameters

The resulting number of registers is:

| Registers | Number |
|---------------------|--------|
| CONFIG | 2 |
| EL | 2 |
| PRIORITY | 6 |
| IE | 8 |
| THRESHOLD | 4 |
| ID | 4 |
| Total | 26 |

Table 4.10: No of Registers

These registers will be then mapped as follows according to the order defined in Table 4.8:

| Reg | Parameter | Value | |
|----------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| 0 | 0x0 | CONFIG | |
| 1 | 0x4 | CONFIG | |
| 2 | 0x8 | EL | |
| 3 | 0xC | EL | |
| $oldsymbol{4}$ | 0x10 | 10 PRIORITY | |
| 5 | 0x14 | PRIORITY | |
| 6 | 0x18 | PRIORITY | |
| 7 | 0x1C | PRIORITY | |
| 8 | 0x20 | PRIORITY | |
| 9 | 0x24 | PRIORITY | |
| 10 | 0x28 | IE | |
| 11 | 0x2C | ${ m IE}$ | |
| 12 | 0x30 | IE | |
| 13 | 0x34 | IE | |
| 14 | 0x38 | IE | |
| 15 | 0x3C | ${ m IE}$ | |
| 16 | 0x40 | ${ m IE}$ | |
| 17 | 0x44 | ${ m IE}$ | |
| 18 | 0x48 | THRESHOLD | |
| 19 | 0x4C | THRESHOLD | |
| 20 | 0x50 | THRESHOLD | |
| 21 | 0x54 | THRESHOLD | |
| 22 | 0x58 | ID | |
| 23 | 0x5C | ID | |
| 24 | 0x60 | ID | |
| 25 | 0x64 | ID | |

Table 4.11: Example Address Map

Note: When simulating the PLIC, the simulator will print a detailed Register Address Mapping showing explicitly how each interrupt source and target maps to the register fields. A Microsoft Excel worksheet is also available from the Roa Logic web site showing the same Address Map.

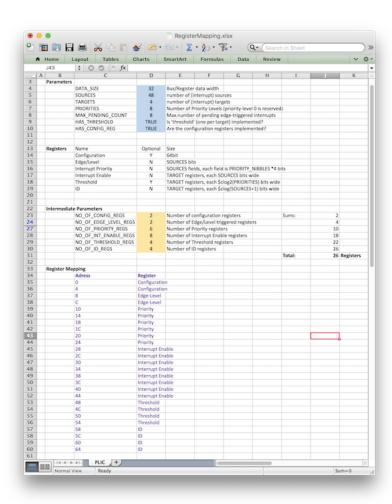


Figure 4.2: Register Mapping Worksheet

4.4 Resources

Below are some example implementations for various platforms.

All implementations are push button, no effort has been undertaken to reduce area or improve performance.

Platform DFF Logic Cells Memory Performance (MHz)

Table 4.12: Resource Utilisation Examples

4.5 References

The PLIC is designed to be compliant with the following specifications, as licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License:

"The RISC-V Instruction Set Manual, Volume I: User-Level ISA, Document Version 2.2", Editors Andrew Waterman and Krste Asanović, RISC-V Foundation, May 2017.

"The RISC-VInstruction Set Manual, Volume II: Privileged Architecture, Version 1.9.1", Editors Andrew Waterman and Krste Asanović, RISC-V Foundation, November 2016

4.6 Revision History

| Date | Rev. | Comments |
|---------------------|------|-----------------|
| October, 2017 ** ** | 1.0 | Initial Release |
| ** ** | | |
| ** ** | | |

Table 4.13: Revision History

Todo list