

Mapping of Sections in India's MLAT Agreements

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This info-graphic diagram intends to map out and compare the various sections that exist in the 39 MLATs (mutual legal assistance treaty) between India and other countries. An MLAT is an agreement between two or more countries, drafted for the purpose of gathering and exchanging information in an effort to enforce public or criminal laws.

We have found that India's 39 MLAT documents are worded, formatted and sectioned differently. At the same time, many of the same sections exist across several MLATs. This diagram lists the sections found in the MLAT documents and indicates the treaties in which they were included or not included. To keep the list of sections concise and to more easily pinpoint the key differences between the agreements, we have merged sections that are synonymous in meaning but were worded slightly differently. For example: we would combine "Entry into force and termination" with "Ratification and termination" or "Expenses" with "Costs". At the same time, some sections that seemed quite similar and possible to merge were kept separate due to potential key differences that could be overlooked as a result. For example: "Limitation on use" vs. "Limitation on compliance" or "Serving of documents" vs. "Provision of (publicly available) documents/records/objects" remained separate for further analysis and comparison.

These differences in sectioning can be analysed to facilitate a thorough comparison between the effectiveness, efficiency, applicability and enforceability of the various provisions across the MLATs. The purpose of this initial mapping is to provide an overall picture of which sections exist in which MLAT documents. There will be further analysis of these sections to produce a more holistic content-based comparison of the MLATs.





