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## Assessing the LCIA's 2021 Annual Casework Report

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On May 17, 2022, the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA) released its Annual Casework Report, which provides an insight into the LCIA's caseload in 2021. This follows statistics released by the International Court of Arbitration (ICC), the American Arbitration Association-International Centre for Dispute Resolution (AAA-ICDR), the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC), the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC), and the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC).

## Down, but Not Out

After a record-breaking 2020, the LCIA's Annual Casework Report reveals a solid 2021, receiving 377 referrals of which 322 were arbitrations pursuant to the LCIA Rules. Whilst this is a 21% decrease on the year before, the LCIA is quick to point to a "longer-term perspective of the data [which] shows a return to numbers more closely aligned to 2019." However, the LCIA's Annual Casework Report forewarns that the ongoing war in Ukraine, and the resulting sanctions, will have an impact on its caseload.

The LCIA is not the only arbitration institution to report a decrease in referrals of arbitrations in 2021:

- The **ICC** received **853 new arbitration cases** with 840 adopting the ICC Rules of Arbitration and the remaining 13 being filed under the ICC Appointing Authority Rules. This is just under 100 fewer cases than in 2020. However, the ICC reported a sharp increase in the average amount in dispute in new cases registered, with \$184 million in dispute (between January and October 2021) compared with the previous \$54.1 million (between January and December 2020). The median amount in dispute remained steady at \$5.7 million,

similar to the previous \$5.6million in 2020.

- The **AAA-ICDR** administered [9,196 cases](#) in 2021, a 4% reduction from 2020. The total claims fell just under \$3 billion from 2020, to \$15,286,121,813.
- The **HKIAC** received [277 arbitrations](#), a slight decrease on 2020's record-breaking year with 318 cases. A huge 81.6% of all arbitrations submitted to HKIAC in 2021 were international in nature, an increase from 72.3% in 2020.
- The **SIAC**, who celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021, received [469 new cases](#). This is the fifth consecutive year that SIAC's caseload has exceeded 400 — but is a decrease from the 1,080 new cases received in 2020.
- The **CIETAC** accepted [4,071 new cases](#) in 2021, 739 of which were “foreign-related cases.” Bucking the trend, these statistics represent a steady increase of 13% on [2020's statistics](#) and the first time the figures have exceeded 4,000.[http:](#)

The number of referrals have remained steady for many of the arbitration institutions, with relatively small decreases after a record-breaking 2020. These reports showcase the international nature of arbitration and the continued appetite for it as a dispute resolution mechanism. It remains to be seen what impact the invasion of Ukraine will have on 2022's numbers, but in an increasingly challenging geopolitical environment, the potential for conflict between international commercial entities seems rife.

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