

Madrid Agreement and Protocol Concerning the International Registration of Marks

New Version of the Madrid Goods and Services Manager (MGS)

1. In March 2016, a new version of MGS was made available on the website of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). This version brings about improvements and new functionalities meant to enhance usefulness of the MGS application and improve accessibility to classification related information.

Display of Explanatory Notes of the Nice Classification in the 17 languages currently available in MGS

2. Explanatory Notes from the 2016 version of the tenth edition of the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purposes of the Registration of Marks (Nice Classification) are now accessible in all language interfaces of MGS, together with the associated Class Headings.

3. This means that, besides their official publication by WIPO in the three Madrid System working languages (i.e., in English, French and Spanish), Explanatory Notes can now also be found in all other MGS languages, thus providing improved guidance to trademark applicants.

4. It is recalled that Explanatory Notes relating to various classes provide very useful information to ascertain the correct classification of a good or a service that is not found in the Alphabetical List of Goods and Services. Explanatory Notes complement information provided by general indications of class headings associated with various classes of the Nice Classification.

Display of and Search by Similar Group Codes

5. Taxonomic systems have been developed by the Offices of certain countries with a view to grouping indications of goods and services considered to be “similar”. The resulting groups are coded in a way that is specific to each national taxonomic system. When conducting relative grounds examination, trademark examiners may refer to these codes, known as “similar group codes”, to carry out similarity searches within their national trademark registers.

6. Users will now benefit from access to national similar group codes in the new version of MGS, which can, for instance, facilitate prior mark similarity searches before filing an application.

7. The Japan Patent Office (JPO) and the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) have communicated to WIPO their similar group codes for indications deemed acceptable by each of those Offices, in particular, for indications contained in the Alphabetical List of the Nice Classification, as well as for general indications extracted from various class headings of the Nice Classification.

8. Users may now choose to display the similar group code used by JPO or KIPO next to the indications of goods and services that they have selected from MGS. The corresponding similar group code used by each Office will be displayed, provided it has been communicated for the indications that have been selected.

9. Similar group codes can also be used to find indications of goods and services by typing a code in the MGS Search box. This enables the extraction from the MGS database of indications of goods and services that are considered to be “similar” by JPO or KIPO. It is to be noted that the expressed “similarity” may horizontally link goods and services from distinct classes under one similar group code. Nonetheless, users can restrict to a selected class the search results, be they related to a search based on key words or on similar group codes.

Search by basic number of indications from the Alphabetical List of the Nice Classification

10. With a view to helping users to better manage their lists of goods and services, MGS displays the “basic number” associated with indications from the Alphabetical List of the Nice Classification.

11. In its new version, MGS also enables the search of Nice indications by their basic number. Entering a Nice basic number in the Search box will produce a list of results containing all synonymous indications stored under the given basic number.

12. For instance, the following results will be displayed if the basic number “300059” is entered in the Search box:

- corn flour
- corn meal
- maize flour
- maize meal

Update of the HELP and FAQ modules

13. In view of improvements and new functionalities introduced in the new version of MGS, the HELP and FAQ modules have been updated in all current MGS languages, in cooperation with the concerned Offices, so as to increase accessibility to the related information to all MGS users.

Extended list of MGS participating Contracting Parties

14. The number of Contracting Parties of the Madrid System whose Offices share acceptance information with WIPO, for the purposes of MGS, has increased to 26 Contracting Parties.

15. The acceptance information communicated by the Office of a Contracting Party is used in the MGS-exclusive function “Check acceptance by a designated Contracting Party”. This function is specifically designed to help trademark applicants avoid provisional refusals by the Offices of the Contracting Parties they designate in international applications.

16. The “Check acceptance by a designated Contracting Party” does not only provide information on whether indications proposed in MGS would be accepted in a number of Contracting Parties but, most importantly, this function also indicates which indications would be rejected in some of them. The Office of a Contracting Party might reject some indications of goods or services for various reasons, such as, for instance, high degree of specificity requirements, specific national laws or practices or bilateral agreements on geographical indications.

17. As of January 2016, the list of MGS participating Contracting Parties includes:

Austria	AT	Mexico	MX
Belarus	BY	Norway	NO
Benelux	BX	Portugal	PT
China	CN	Republic of Korea	KR
Colombia	CO	Russian Federation	RU
Denmark	DK	Serbia	RS
Estonia	EE	Singapore	SG
European Union	EM	Sweden	SE
Finland	FI	Switzerland	CH
Germany	DE	Turkey	TR
Israel	IL	Ukraine	UA
Italy	IT	United Kingdom	GB
Japan	JP	United States of America	US

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