

C.CWS 206/C.PCT 1701

May 15, 2026

Re: Survey regarding challenges experienced by Offices in digitizing IP documentation

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Madam,  
Sir,

This Circular is addressed to your Office or Organization in its capacity:

- (a) as a member of the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS); and/or
- (b) as a receiving Office (RO), an International Searching Authority (ISA) and International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA); and/or designated/elected Office (DO/EO) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

*Background*

At the thirteenth session of the CWS in November 2025, the International Bureau presented a document reporting on the challenges that Offices were experiencing in the digitization of their Intellectual Property (IP) documentation (see document [CWS/13/28](#)). A non-exhaustive list of specific challenges included poor Optical Character Recognition (OCR) quality, poor layout detection and badly tagged information when producing instances compliant with WIPO Standards ST.36 and ST.96. The International Bureau also noted the result of a previous survey of CWS Members on the problems experienced in exchanging IP data, where Offices indicated that digitization of their IP documentation was one of the major obstacles in improving data exchange with other Offices.

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As a means to have a more comprehensive picture of the challenges experienced by Offices when digitizing their IP documentation and facilitate the preparation of a set of IP document digitization guidelines, the CWS approved a proposal for the International Bureau to conduct a survey by issuing a joint CWS and PCT Circular (see paragraph 212 of document [CWS/13/33](#)).

### *Digitization Guidelines Survey*

Your Office or Organization is invited to respond to the survey on digitization of IP document collections by June 15, 2026. The survey is available in English, French and Spanish at the following URL: <https://surveys.wipo.int/s3/Digitization-Guidelines-Survey>.

When loading the survey, the online platform will select a default language based on your web browser settings. You may change the language using the dropdown menu in the top right-hand corner of the web page. At any time, you may save your progress and return to the questionnaire later by selecting the "Save and Continue" link at the top of the page. Once your answers are finalized, please click the "Submit" button on the last page of the survey.

Additional instructions are provided within the online questionnaire.

### *Next steps*

The International Bureau will host an online workshop in the second half of 2026 to discuss the outcomes of the survey and analysis of the responses. All survey recipients will be invited to this workshop. The results of the survey and outcomes of the workshop will be reported to the fourteenth session of the CWS, scheduled to take place from November 23 to 27, 2026.

For any questions regarding this survey, including technical issues with the online survey tool, please contact the Secretariat at: [cws.surveys@wipo.int](mailto:cws.surveys@wipo.int).

Yours sincerely,



Daren Tang  
Director General