

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

Thirteenth Session
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REPORT ON TASK NO. 41 BY THE XML4IP TASK FORCE

Document prepared by the International Bureau

SUMMARY

1. The XML4IP Task Force is responsible for developing and maintaining extensible Markup Language (XML) components that comprise WIPO Standards, ST.36, ST.66, ST.86 and ST.96. During the monthly meetings held by the Task Force, progress has been made on the development of the patent record XML schemas, the development of Lisbon and Article 6ter XML schemas and a pilot for the centralized repository has been initiated. This report provides a summary of those activities.

BACKGROUND

2. At its eleventh session, held in 2023, the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) noted a progress report of the activities of the XML4IP Task Force completed while conducting Task No. 41 (see document CWS/11/2), the description of which reads:

“Ensure the necessary revisions and updates of WIPO Standards ST.36, ST.66, ST.86 and ST.96; and support the implementation of these Standards”.

3. Also at the eleventh session of the CWS, management of revisions for WIPO Standards ST.36, ST.66 and ST.86 was assigned to the XML4IP Task Force (see paragraph 16 of document CWS/11/28). Revisions to these other WIPO XML Standards were considered for the first time as part of the XML4IP workplan in 2025.

4. At its twelfth session, held in 2024, the CWS noted the release of version 8.0 of WIPO ST.96 and it agreed that discussions on the improvement of copyright orphan work components should be continued (see paragraphs 30, 111, and 112 of CWS/12/29).

5. In addition to the regular monthly Task Force meetings, the Task Force also participated in the first Joint API-XML4IP Task Force meeting from July 21 to 24, 2025 in Geneva. During these four days, participants discussed a range of topics which included the implementation of the centralized repository and the finalization of the patent record XML schemas. The agenda for this meeting can be found on the WIPO website at:

https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=86492.

PROGRESS REPORT

6. The XML4IP Task Force, which is led by the International Bureau, meets online monthly to discuss proposals for revision to WIPO Standard ST.96. During the February Task Force meeting this year, the Task Force approved the following development priority for the calendar year of 2025 (in no particular order):

- Support International Bureau to transition Article 6ter publications and Lisbon Express exports to ST.96;
- Finalize patent record/transaction schemas;
- Produce version 9.0 of WIPO ST.96 in April
- Make progress on centralized repository proposal; and
- Determine how to or whether to manage ST.36 updates.

Revision and implementation of WIPO Standard ST.96

7. Under the framework of Task No. 41, the XML4IP Task Force prepared and published a new major release, version 9.0, on April 1, 2025. Specific details regarding the release are provided below and the Standard is published on the WIPO website at:

<https://www.wipo.int/documents/d/standards/docs-en-03-96-01.pdf>. As a reminder for the CWS, the XML4IP Task Force has “fast track” approval for revisions to WIPO ST.96.

8. The CWS should note the following changes which were introduced in version 9.0:

- Addition of new XML Schema Definition (XSD) components for Lisbon Express and Article 6ter of the Paris Convention publication data;
- Updates to support design patent publication data; and
- Improvements made to the annotations, in particular for the Geographical Indication schema components.

9. Further details on the version 9.0 release, in particular changes made to Annexes III and IV of ST.96, are detailed in the release notes. Another new addition for version 9.0, is the automated production of release notes which provide tracked changes detailing any revisions made relative to version 8.0. The release notes for version 9.0 are published on the WIPO website at: <https://www.wipo.int/standards/en/st96/v9-0/release-notes.html>.

Patent record schemas

10. Development of patent record and patent transaction XML schemas was first proposed back in 2012 when discussions commenced on the development of XML components to capture the life cycle of a patent application and the wrapper for the transaction package of patent XML data respectively. Firstly, the Task Force proposed the development of a Patent Record component, which would reference the different events recorded for a particular patent application. Later, the Patent Transaction component was proposed to facilitate patent data exchange in XML in line with existing WIPO ST.96 components for trademark and industrial design data, namely Trademark Transaction and Design Transaction components.

11. This development activity has been part of the XML4IP Task Force workplan for the past three years and there has been some recent progress, including the progress reported at the

last session of the CWS (see paragraph 7 of document CWS/12/4). The only blocker for finalizing development of these schemas has been determining an answer for the outstanding question of whether or not the patent record implementation should be based on the patent legal status schemas, introduced in version 4.0. As such, this item was proposed for discussion at the Joint API-XML4IP Task Force discussion and was the sole focus of one of the preparatory meetings.

12. During the preparatory discussions for the Joint API-XML4IP Task Force meeting, regarding this topic, it was decided that schema development should take a flexible approach and allow IP offices to select either from implementation using the patent legal status component or alternatively implementation through use of a new component which would be developed and closely resemble the existing *MarkRecord* and *DesignRecord* components. An improved draft was prepared by the International Bureau and presented for discussion at the Joint API-XML4IP Task Force meeting. Participants supported the continued development of this draft for inclusion in a future official release of WIPO ST.96.

Centralized repository

13. The first proposal for a “centralized repository” was presented at the seventh session of the CWS (see Annex II of document CWS/7/3 REV.). The centralized repository was proposed by the XML4IP Task Force at this time, as a location where Offices’ customized WIPO ST.96 schemas would be hosted by the International Bureau. IP Offices have found it necessary to adapt an official version of WIPO Standard ST.96 in order to meet their individual business needs. Annex V of WIPO ST.96 provides detailed guidance on how Offices can customize official versions of WIPO ST.96 in order to produce ‘conformant’ schemas.

14. In recent years, the provision of a centralized repository has not been considered a priority. However, with the new PCT Regulations coming into force on January 1, 2026, there has been an upsurge in Offices implementing WIPO Standards, including WIPO ST.36 and ST.96. This has raised the priority of implementing this type of repository. As such, this item was proposed for discussion at the Joint API-XML4IP Task Force discussion and was the sole focus of one of the preparatory meetings.

15. During the preparatory discussions for the Joint API-XML4IP Task Force meeting on this topic, it was agreed that the best option considered as the technology to implement the repository was the external SharePoint sites. This could be rapidly created and deployed, and met all the ‘must-have’ requirements previously agreed to by the Task Force. The only feature that could not be supported using this technology was the ability to compare customized schemas submitted to the International Bureau to determine customizations in common between participating Offices.

16. During the Joint API-XML4IP Task Force meeting, the International Bureau invited Offices to participate in a pilot for the centralized repository based on an external SharePoint site which had been created for this purpose. They demonstrated the basic interface and top-level folder structure and confirmed that only participating Offices would have access to the repository at this stage. Outstanding questions which the International Bureau hopes to resolve during this pilot include:

- Determining whether design or flattened schemas should be provided;
- Determining the folder structure beyond the top-level structure;
- Determining which Office customizations are in common; and
- Determining exactly what content should be hosted on the repository, including example XML instances and presentations.

CHALLENGES

17. As is the case for many of the CWS Task Forces, there is a lot of work to be undertaken by the Task Force and its Members have limited resources available. Holding monthly meetings does assist in progressing the work but the International Bureau, as the Task Force leader, notes that items in the workplan proposed at the beginning of each year are often not completed between sessions of the CWS. Specific challenges for the Task Force include:

- Difficulty in implementing WIPO ST.96 or ST.36 by Offices who are recent adopters;
- Large number of different versions that are implemented, even within a particular Office for different IP rights;
- Lack of feedback from the Task Force received for new discussion rounds for schemas under development; and
- Large number of topics to manage, some of which have been under discussion for many years.

WORK PLAN

18. The XML4IP Task Force will continue to work on developing new XML schemas and improving the existing ones, based on requests made by Task Force members. The CWS should note that the finalization of the Patent Record XML schemas and the successful completion of pilot for the centralized repository remain a priority for the Task Force. Outstanding items from the 2025 workplan will be carried across to the 2026 workplan.

19. *The CWS is invited to:*

(a) note the contents of the present document;

(b) note the release of version 9.0 of WIPO ST.96 on April 1, 2025, as indicated above in paragraphs 7 to 9;

(c) encourage IP offices to participate in the pilot for the centralized repository, as indicated in paragraph 16 above; and

(d) note the challenges and future workplan of the XML4IP Task Force as indicated above in paragraphs 17 and 18 above.

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