



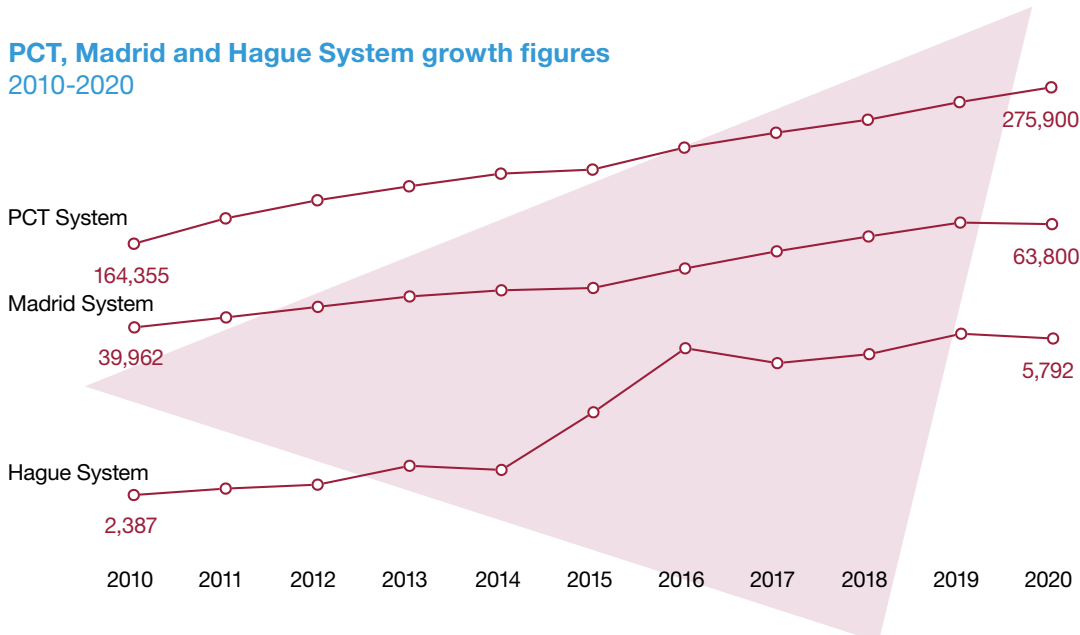
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# High-Quality Services, Knowledge and Data

When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in early 2020, the key priorities for WIPO were to ensure that the Global IP Services continued to function and to support users in the challenges they were facing. Despite the considerable challenges in pivoting to remote working for the first time in WIPO's history, our personnel worked hard and creatively to adapt to this new way of working whilst ensuring that outputs and targets were maintained.

The digitalization of processes and communications was accelerated, and we also took steps to offer extensive legal relief to users struggling with deadlines. As a result of these measures, we were able to continue providing our users with our Global IP Services throughout the crisis.

## PCT, Madrid and Hague System growth figures 2010-2020



Source: WIPO, 2021.

## Global IP Protection Services

Work continued to create a smooth customer journey for users of the Global IP Services, whatever their profile. Development of the WIPO IP Portal continued with the integration of six additional WIPO applications and the migration of nine applications into the common look and feel. Other major milestones included the deployment of an enterprise-oriented data analytics platform, and the implementation of a web analytics

tracker in 39 IP Portal-integrated applications and for the WIPO website. New payment methods were also introduced for the online payment of PCT-related fees, with the go-live of ePay fully integrated within the WIPO IP Portal.

“The WIPO IP Portal will continue improving organizational convergence through a product-oriented and customer-centered approach that will create transformative opportunities for WIPO’s digitalization journey.”

#### The PCT System

The PCT system continued to be in very good health and performed consistently, delivering value to its users and developing positively. PCT users around the world also continued to communicate very high levels of satisfaction with the PCT system and its services.

In 2020, there was an increase in filings of 4 percent over 2019. While a slight decrease materialized during the first two months of 2021, by the end of the first quarter the figures were back in the low positive range and we expect moderate growth for the year.

The average cost of processing a PCT application by the International Bureau (IB) fell in 2020 and WIPO also experienced greater efficiency, consistency and validation of transfers of fees between PCT collecting and beneficiary offices due to the formal introduction and expansion of the WIPO Fee Transfer Service.

Productivity and quality of formalities examination continued to improve in 2020. With the same number of staff, the productivity of formalities examination increased by 8.4 percent, compared to 2019, and the aggregate quality index increased from 96.9 percent in 2019 to 98.0 percent in 2020. These trends are likely to continue in 2021.

Among the most significant information technology developments in 2020 was the continued growth in use and reach of the ePCT application filing and management platform: in 2020, 71 PCT receiving offices (ROs) accepted ePCT filings, and more than 16 percent of all PCT filings were filed using it.

PCT information technology (IT) services continued to be assured with 99.9 percent service availability of all major systems, despite significant resourcing challenges. Software modernization efforts continue to be delivered, resulting in greater system agility and reduced technical debt. Development of next-generation PCT processing automation has been initiated, initially focusing on RO/IB processing.



“We will further enhance the quality and value of the PCT by engaging with PCT Offices and Authorities in order to provide critically important services and data to our users, and seek to increase compliance with PCT time limits.”



### The Madrid System

The impact of the global health crisis on Madrid filings turned out to be less severe than originally feared. By the end of 2020, Madrid filings only saw a modest decline of 0.6 percent compared to 2019, which contrasts with the much more severe drop of 14 percent witnessed in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008–2009. Since then, the filing rate has picked up quickly in the first part of 2021. Based on current trends, the filing target originally set in the 2020/21 Program and Budget prior to the crisis might very well be exceeded by the end of 2021.

In line with the Organization’s Medium-Term Strategic Plan, we have recently embarked upon a multi-year effort to unlock the potential of the Madrid System, particularly in terms of its use by small and medium-sized enterprises.

The geographical scope of the Madrid System has been widened by the arrival of two new members, Trinidad and Tobago and Pakistan, bringing the total number of countries covered to 124.

Apart from digitized communications with users and offices, good progress was also made in other aspects of the development of a new Madrid IT Platform. This includes the entry into production of a more robust and reliable notification back-end system, the release of a number of online forms improving the customer journey for the execution of certain transactions, the introduction of payment by credit card for new applications in more than 80 countries and the establishment of a blueprint for the modernization of the current IT system’s architecture.

The Madrid System has expanded its outreach and awareness activities held in virtual mode, allowing wider participation and reaching close to 20,000 participants in over 135 countries.

In 2020, the unit cost for processing Madrid applications and related service requests dropped and improvements in pendency were achieved for most Madrid transactions.

### The Hague System

The Hague System showed some resilience in 2020 in the face of the pandemic, with applications filed dipping by only 1.7 percent. Furthermore, whilst after 14 years of growth, designs contained in applications declined by 15 percent, this phenomenon owed more to the growing proportion of filings coming from, and made for, jurisdictions with single design systems in place.

In contrast to this decline on the filing front, the numbers of international registrations and of designs registered both reached new records in 2020, underscoring the



Organization's successful migration to a remote-working environment. New records were also set in the numbers of designs renewed and office decisions received and processed. In the first half of 2021, applications filed and designs contained have both rebounded beyond expectations and, together with the number of office decisions, are well set to reach yet new record marks.

The Geneva Act welcomed two new members in 2020, namely Mexico and Suriname, the latter upgrading its status from being a 1960 Act member only. In the first half of 2021, Belarus deposited its instrument of accession to the Geneva Act, expanding total coverage to 92 countries.

The Hague Externalization Project, a user-focused project that aims at delivering sustainable, user-driven services and enhanced standardized integrations with offices, delivered its first features during the period under review. These included all data exchange with offices successfully upgraded to the latest data standard, the development of the new Hague web services (machine to machine), the end-to-end automation of office decisions, and the greater integration of the user electronic filing and managing environment with the WIPO IP Platform.

Customer relations and outreach activities have also benefited from further digitalization. A modern Hague System Customer Service was deployed in 2020, enabling granular data gathering and continuous monitoring of key performance indicators (KPIs), and work has begun on turning the dedicated website into a more dynamic and easy-to-navigate environment. Outreach and capacity-building activities continue to be held in virtual mode, allowing wider participation.

### The Lisbon System

The Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement entered into force in February 2020. While its impact was inevitably delayed by the global health crisis, accession and filing rates picked up quickly. Based on current trends, the targets originally set in the 2020/21 Program and Budget prior to the crisis will be fully met and even largely exceeded. The first half of 2021 already saw a 500 percent increase in applications for international registrations. The total number of transactions is also projected to grow, with an expected increase in 2021 of 700 percent over average annual transactions since 2016.

The Lisbon System extends to 55 countries, 34 of which are covered by the Geneva Act. The new accessions have had an impact on the composition of the membership of the Lisbon Union, confirming the increasing interest among producers from developing countries in protecting and commercializing their origin products worldwide. The international registration of the geographical indication Kampot Pepper by Cambodia in October 2020 is a clear illustration of this trend.

The IT project eLisbon began development. It will deploy a modern management system for the Lisbon Registry and provide online services for users of the Lisbon System, such as filing and centralized management of portfolio.

Outreach and capacity building activities moved online, allowing wider participation. A series of public webinars on the Lisbon System was launched, in addition to targeted activities in response to specific WIPO Members' requests. In 2021, work began to overhaul the dedicated Lisbon website to make it more dynamic and user-friendly, and the Lisbon Newsletter was launched.

“We will further digitalize our services and consolidate WIPO’s position as the go-to place for the international registration of trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications for the benefit of branding businesses worldwide.”



#### **WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center**

The Center’s mediation and arbitration caseload increased by 24 percent in 2020, with further growth in 2021, while the mediation settlement rate grew to 78 percent. Meetings and hearings were conducted remotely using WIPO tools, including a new WIPO Checklist for online proceedings.

As brand owners further shifted their business to online channels, they stepped up their brand enforcement on the Internet. To counter the growth of counterfeiting, phishing and other online trademark abuse in the pandemic, right holders in 2020 filed 4,204 cases with the Center under the WIPO-initiated Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) – an increase of 14 percent over the caseload in 2019, with growth continuing in 2021. With the addition in 2021 of the .SA and السعودية (Saudi Arabia) domains, the number of country code top-level domains for which WIPO provides dispute resolution services grew to 79 registries in all regions. The Center continued its active policy engagement to safeguard rights protection in the evolving domain name space.

#### **Enhancing service quality, communication and customer feedback gathering**

##### **WIPO Contact Center**

Customer experience was further improved through various initiatives, including the establishment of the WIPO Contact Center, the implementation of a live chat service and the organization-wide deployment of a system to automatically channel calls to customer service teams.

A Customer Satisfaction Index for both the PCT and the Madrid system was created by incorporating a WIPO customer satisfaction framework in the respective biennial surveys, enabling consistent reporting, comparability of data and common interpretation of data through the IP services.

A new survey platform was deployed to support different mechanisms for customer insight data collection and to measure the impact of WIPO’s activities. The new platform contributes to the streamlining and alignment of customer insight data.

#### **Building the IP knowledge base**

WIPO generates, collates and curates IP data to create information and knowledge products that are topical, relevant and accessible to a wide range of stakeholders.



### IP statistics and global databases

IP statistics continue to be a key performance metric for a large variety of decision-makers. With the generous support of Member States, we have continuously expanded the geographical coverage of our statistics, which are freely available through the IP Statistics Data Center, and the key trends are reported in our major statistical reports, World IP Indicators and the Yearly Reviews of the PCT, Madrid and Hague Systems.

Work has continued to improve the geographical coverage and completeness of the WIPO Global Databases. New national patent collections have been added to PATENTSCOPE, as well as searchable descriptions and claims, bringing the total number of national and regional patent collections to 73. Work has also started to include open access non-patent literature documents to PATENTSCOPE with the addition of almost 200,000 documents from Wikipedia and from the publisher Nature. Five new national trademark collections representing more than 2 million new records were added to the Global Brand Database, while five national industrial designs collections were added to the Global Design Database.

A number of functional improvements were made to the databases. PATENTSCOPE was upgraded to include the possibility to search Markush structures, making this expert functionality available for free online to universities, SMEs and IP offices for the first time. An improved version of image similarity search for the Global Brand Database has been deployed, improving the precision (relevancy) and recall (completeness) of searches for mixed trademarks logos containing both text and figurative elements.

“We’re working to provide a better environment, built around the needs of the customer, to improve access to knowledge and data for the benefit of all.”

### Flagship knowledge products

The *Global Innovation Index (GII)* takes the pulse of the latest innovation trends worldwide and ranks the innovation ecosystem performance of 132 economies. The 2021 edition assesses how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected global innovation performance.

Many Member States have embraced the *GII* to gain insight into the strengths and weaknesses of their national innovation systems. Based on the *GII*, governments have brought together the various national stakeholders that make up an innovation system with a view to strengthening and refining the policy framework that promotes a vibrant innovation economy.

Innovations in technology can help grow economies and have the potential to make a huge impact on individual lives. In the area of assistive technology, advances in technology can affect the 1 billion people living with physical or cognitive impairments who need assistive technologies to be more independent and interact fully with the world. *WIPO Technology Trends: Assistive Technologies* was published in March 2021, focusing on trends in patenting in this area and how close these new technologies are to

coming to market. The publication was accompanied by an interactive platform showing the technology readiness, number of patents, ease of adoption and expected impact on assistive technologies.

## IP-based platforms and tools to address global challenges

WIPO hosts a number of platforms and tools in collaboration with civil society, universities and research organizations, and the private sector, which are important forums for knowledge transfer and technology adaptation.

### WIPO GREEN

The WIPO GREEN technology exchange platform publicizes nearly 200 needs from 91 countries worldwide and offers more than 6,000 environment-friendly technologies addressing climate change, environmental and food-security challenges in seven categories of green technology.

WIPO GREEN's transformation into a green business intelligence hub is underway, with new database architecture, improved and AI-based search functions, new filter functions, saved searches, bookmarks, user dashboard, auto-matching, knowledge material, and relevant PCT listings from PATENTSCOPE. It serves the public and over 1,800 registered users from 133 countries, including SMEs, academia and multinational companies.

WIPO GREEN has 127 partners – 31 of whom are in Japan, through the efforts of the WIPO Japan Office – and the network continues to grow. Acceleration projects constitute its core means of engagement. It launched an acceleration project in Indonesia to limit greenhouse gas emissions from palm oil mill waste. To date, 20 mills and 41 technology providers representing 10 different technologies have been contacted. Government of Japan funding enabled WIPO GREEN to enhance its climate-smart agriculture acceleration project (launched in 2019) in Latin America.

### WIPO Re:Search

WIPO Re:Search celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021. This public–private consortium has grown from an initial 30 members to an international network of 155 organizations spanning 45 countries on six continents. Its membership includes eight of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, plus academic and research institutions – all dedicated to sharing IP to advance science on neglected tropical diseases, malaria, and tuberculosis. Fifty-five scientific collaboration agreements fostered by WIPO Re:Search are ongoing and 10 are advancing through key early-stage research and development (R&D) milestones.

