

Lisbon System for the International Registration of Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications

Safeguards in Case of Failure to Meet a Time Limit and Extension of Time Limits

1. In light of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) wishes to remind users of the Lisbon System of the safeguards available under the Common Regulations under the Lisbon Agreement and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement (the “Common Regulations”) against failure to meet a time limit under the Lisbon System, and to suggest measures users can take against possible disruptions in mail or delivery services.

I. Closure of the Competent Authority of a Contracting Party (Rule 2(3) of the Common Regulations)

2. The COVID-19 pandemic might cause the business closure of a Competent Authority for a certain period. In such case, Competent Authorities of Contracting Parties may inform the International Bureau of WIPO of the fact that they are not open to the public and indicate the dates on which they will remain closed, either in the same communication or as soon as those dates are known, and specify the date on which they will reopen.

3. Under Rule 2(3) of the Common Regulations, if a period applying to a Competent Authority expires on a day, which is not a working day for that Competent Authority, or under the present exceptional circumstances on a day on which the Competent Authority is not open to the public, the period would expire on the first subsequent working day, or in the present case on the first subsequent day on which that Competent Authority reopened. All time limits concerning applications for international registrations filed through the Lisbon System that concern that Competent Authority (e.g., the time limits relating to refusals or irregularities) would be extended accordingly.

4. In the communication mentioned in paragraph 2, above, Competent Authorities are strongly encouraged to include information on further flexibilities or remedies available to holders of international registrations or third interested parties in connection with time limits afforded by those Competent Authorities concerning applications filed through the Lisbon System.

II. Measures Against Possible Disruptions in Mail or Delivery Services

5. The International Bureau of WIPO strongly encourages applicants, beneficiaries, third interested parties, their representatives and Competent Authorities, to use electronic communication to mitigate the negative effects of possible disruptions in mail or delivery services.

6. Most importantly, Competent Authorities are strongly encouraged to provide an e-mail address to receive electronic communications from the International Bureau of WIPO. Those who have not yet provided an e-mail address may do so through the following generic e-mail address of the Lisbon System: lisbon.system@wipo.int.

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