



A Look Back at 2021: Top IP Stories

AGIP brings the most notable IP updates and key developments over the last year.

Here you find our close-up of the IP highlights of 2021.

Trademarks

West Bank:

- New changes in trademark practices where a trademark application could be filed along with a scanned simply signed POA; however, the simply signed POA should be notarized, legalized up to the concerned Palestinian Consulate and submitted at the TM Office within one month as from the filing date.

KSA:

- A new body for IP protection has been established under the name “Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property (SAIP)” to regulate, promote and protect IPRs in the Kingdom. Trademark enforcement jurisdiction was transferred to this new body.
- KSA accepted the registration of sound marks, collective marks and family name as a trademark, entering a new IP era.
- The 11th Edition of Nice Classification has officially been adopted in the Kingdom.

Egypt:

- Egypt joined TMclass with goods and services in Arabic.

Pakistan:

- Pakistan has formally joined the Madrid System for international trademark registrations on May 24, 2021.

Yemen:

- All trademark applications that were opposed before 2015 were considered as abandoned, due to the complexity of issuing their opposition decisions, since many files were misplaced during the civil unrest situation in Yemen back in 2011 and afterwards, and the relocation of the Ministry building.

Libya:

- The TM Office resumed the issuance of the Official Gazette after the interruption of trademarks publication since 2015. The Office issued the Official Gazette number one (1) for the year 2020, starting from the application number 20466.
- A new Ministerial Decision was issued preventing the renewal of trademark applications submitted after a missed deadline.

Algeria:

- The use of class headings as the list of goods in trademark applications became no longer accepted. Trademark applications with class heading are not accepted because each claimed list of goods and/or services should be specified in details to avoid any possible rejection during the examination phase.

Oman:

- An electronic platform for the filing of trademark applications has been introduced starting from March 7, 2021.

Sudan:

- Electronic POA for trademark registration became accepted.

Erbil:

- New directives for trademark registration extension have been introduced, suspending the legal extension of registered Iraqi trademarks to Kurdistan region until further notice. Trademark registration should be sought directly with the Kurdistan TM Office.

UAE:

- The period of filing the POA for new trademark applications has been extended to 30 days from the date of filing. The new grace period applies only on new trademark applications. Hence, the POA for oppositions and appeals must be filed with the application.
- Issuance of the Official Trademark Gazette became once every two weeks (twice a month) as from June 15, 2021.
- UAE joined the Madrid System on December 28, 2021.

Russia:

- The automation of the entire process of generation and issuance of trademark registration certificates for all applications filed after January 17, 2021.

Somalia:

- After a suspension period of almost three decades, trademark registration became possible in Somalia, where the examination and publication of trademark applications became compulsory.

Domain Names

Qatar:

- New requirements of the Qatar’s Domain Name Registry, where all the domain names .COM.QA must provide either a copy of trademark registration certificate issued in Qatar or a trade license/ commercial license issued in Qatar. As for .QA, all the previous domain names registered for this extension related to a company should register .COM.QA.

KSA:

- KSA adopted the “Registry-Registrar” model, which allows registering Saudi domain names through accredited registrars from the private sector.

Cyprus:

- New domain name regulations have been issued, concerning the registration and renewal of top-level domain name extension .cy.

Kuwait:

- CITRA started renewal and registration of (.KW) domains for a period of one year in Kuwait. However, this was previously restricted for a period of two years.
- New requirements for .KW renewal, where a new instruction letter from the mother company became required for renewal, provided that all the necessary conditions were satisfied.

Patents

KSA:

- KSA developed new executive rules for the compulsory patent licensing in the KSA.

Kuwait:

- An electronic platform for the filing of patent applications has been introduced.

Jordan:

- The Article 20 of the Jordanian Patent Regulation related to examination fees has been activated. The decision was implemented with a retroactive effect on all pending applications filed starting from December 9, 2018, as long as their filing formalities are completed.

GCC:

- The GCC Supreme Council has approved the Amended Patent Law (Regulation) for the Gulf Cooperation Council. Patent protection in the GCC states is available through separate patent filing at the National Patent Offices.
- New Implementing Bylaws of the GCC Patent Regulations were issued. GCC Patent Office receives and handles patent applications, their prosecution, examination, and grants only and separately for the GCC state(s) requests on behalf of their national Patent Offices. The grant of patents is subject to approval from the requesting member state and only valid in that state.

India:

- The new Patents (Amendment) Rules 2021 were published, amending the Patents Rules of 2003.

Libya:

- Protection term of patent applications filed between years 2005 to 2007 can be extended for further five years if local conditions are met.

Fees & VAT

Tunisia:

- The official fees for trademark services have been increased.

Turkey:

- The official fees for all IP matters have been increased.

Oman:

- VAT of 5% has been imposed in the Sultanate.

Kurdistan:

- The official fees for trademark registration have been increased.

Gaza:

- New fees for domain name registration.

Sudan:

- New official fees have been implemented in respect of IP matters as from July 27, 2021.

UAE:

- The official fees for trademark services have been reduced.
- The official fees for some services related to patents, utility models and industrial designs have been waived, including annuity/renewal, publication, recordals, amendment, restoration and status report.

Bahrain:

- The VAT will be doubled from 5% to 10% starting from January 2022.

Syria:

- The official fees for trademark publication, search and other administrative fees have been increased.

Egypt:

- VAT charges of 14% became no longer imposed on trademark related services as of July 7, 2021.

Yemen:

- New additional amount of YR 2,000 (US\$ 4.00) has been added on all official fees for publication of applications in Yemen, including pending applications and all new applications.

General IP Issues

UAE:

New changes in IP laws including Industrial Property Law, Copyrights Law and Trademarks Laws. Among the amendments is the abolition of the requirement to have a trade license to allow the registration of a trademark, and granting SME owners a temporary protection to protect the trademark of their products during participation in exhibitions. Multiclass applications became allowed.

Egypt:

- The registration of geographical indications has started for the first time in the country.
- Several amendments to the Law of the Protection of Intellectual Property Rights No. 82 of 2002 have been ratified
- New import regulations have been issued.

Oman:

- Oman joined Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement.

West Bank:

- The third article of the Patents and Industrial Designs Law No. 22 for the year 1953 related to Agents registration has been amended, stipulating the establishment of new registry for Industrial Property agents.