

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is one of 18 Specialized Agencies linked with the United Nations through special agreements with the Economic and Social Council.

History and purpose

WIPO was established by a convention signed at Stockholm on July 14, 1967, which entered into force on April 26, 1970. It is the successor to the *Bureaux internationaux réunis pour la protection de la propriété intellectuelle*, which came into being with the union, in 1893, under one administration, of the separate secretariats of the Paris Union for the Protection of Industrial Property (1883) and the Berne Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886). Today WIPO is responsible for administering, in addition to the Paris and Berne Unions, the Madrid Union for the International Registration of Marks, the Hague Union for the International Deposit of Industrial Designs, the Locarno Union for the International Classification of Industrial Designs, the Nice Union for the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purpose of the Negotiation of Marks and the Lisbon Union for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration.

The objectives of WIPO are:

- (1) To promote the protection of intellectual property (patents, utility models, inventions, certificates, trade-marks, appellations of origin, industrial designs, copyright and neighbouring rights) throughout the world through co-operation among states and in collaboration with other international organizations. It accomplishes this by encouraging international treaties, by providing legal-technical assistance, by gathering and disseminating information and by maintaining services for international registration.
- (2) To ensure administrative co-operation among the international unions, treaties and agreements concerning intellectual property by centralizing their administration in the International Bureau (Secretariat of WIPO) in Geneva.

Structure and membership

Representatives of the 77 member states of WIPO meet in conference every three years to discuss the organization's technical and legal assistance program and questions of general interest. At the same time, representatives of members both of WIPO and of the Paris Union (83 members) or of the Berne Union (70