

World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) | 27 Oct 2018

What is WIPO?

- WIPO is one of the oldest specialised agencies of United Nations.
- WIPO was created in 1967 "to encourage creative activity, to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world".
- WIPO currently administers 26 international treaties.
- It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Every year **World Intellectual Property Day** is being celebrated on 26th April.

Intellectual Property

- Intellectual property (IP) is a category of property that includes intangible creations of the human intellect, and primarily encompasses **copyrights, patents** and **trademarks**.
- It also includes other types of rights, such as **trade secrets, publicity rights, moral rights**, and rights against **unfair** competition.

Membership

- WIPO currently has 191 member states.
- All member states of the UN are entitled, though not obliged, to become members of the specialized agencies like WIPO.
- 188 of UN member states as well as Cook Islands, Holy See and Niue are members of WIPO.
- Palestine has permanent observer status.
- Some 250 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) have official observer status at WIPO meetings.
- India joined WIPO in 1975.

History of WIPO

1883 — Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial property	First step taken to protect intellectual work in other countries. It covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inventions(patents), ■ Trademarks, ■ Industrial Designs.
1886 — Berne Convention	For the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. It covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Novels, short stories, poems, plays; ■ Songs, opera, musicals; ■ Drawings, paintings, sculptures, architectural works.
1891 — Madrid Agreement	The first international IP filing service is launched.
1893 — BIRPI established	Two secretariats set up to administer the Paris and Berne Conventions combine to form the United International Bureaux for the Protection of Intellectual Property (BIRPI).
1970 — BIRPI becomes WIPO	WIPO becomes a member state-led intergovernmental organization.
1974 — WIPO joins the United Nations	WIPO become one of the agencies of UN.
1978 — Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) system launched	By filing one international patent application under the PCT, applicants can simultaneously seek protection for an invention

	in a very large number of countries.
1994 — Arbitration and Mediation Centre (AMC) established	The Centre offers alternative dispute resolution services to help solve international commercial disputes between private parties.

Functions

- Policy forum to shape balanced international IP rules for a changing world.
- Global services to protect IP across borders and to resolve disputes.
- Technical infrastructure to connect IP systems and share knowledge.
- Cooperation and capacity-building programs to enable all countries to use IP for economic, social and cultural development.
- A world reference source for IP information.

Limitations and Exceptions

- In order to maintain an appropriate balance between the interests of rightholders and users of protected works, copyright laws allow certain limitations on economic rights.
- These are cases in which protected works may be used without the authorization of the rightholder and with or without payment of compensation.
- Limitations and exceptions is an issue considered in the agenda of the WIPO.
- The debate has been focused mainly on three groups of beneficiaries or activities in relation to exceptions and limitations – on educational activities, on libraries and archives and on disabled persons, particularly visually impaired persons.

Name	Purpose	Has India Acceded/Ratified?
WIPO Performance and Phonograms Treaty	Deals with the rights of two kinds of beneficiaries, particularly in the digital environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ performers (actors, singers, musicians, etc.); and ■ producers of phonograms (persons or legal entities that take the initiative and have the responsibility for the fixation of sounds). 	India has acceded to this agreement.
Budapest Treaty	International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purposes of Patent Procedure.	India has acceded to the treaty.
Madrid Protocol for the International Registration of Marks	Provides for the international registration of trade marks by way of one application that can cover more than one country.	India has acceded to the protocol.
Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works by Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Print Disabilities	The treaty allows for copyright exceptions to facilitate the creation of accessible versions of books and other copyrighted works for visually impaired persons.	India has ratified the treaty.
WIPO Copyright Treaty	A special agreement under the Berne Convention which deals with the protection of works and the rights of their authors in the digital environment.	India has acceded to the treaty.

Publications

- **Global Innovation Index** - an annual ranking of countries by their capacity for, and success in, innovation.
- It is published in association with Cornell University and INSEAD.