

**Bird & Bird & A COVID-19 Update:
The Status of the IPO & General Courts**

Contents

The team provides an up to date look at what's happening with the different courts in the jurisdictions we operate. We have also provided live links to our sources for more detailed information. You can view the whole table in this document or click below on your country of interest.

Please note this document is for guidance purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

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The Status of the IPO & General Courts

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Australia	<p>Future hearings will be conducted by video conference, telephone or written submission.</p> <p>Extensions of time for patents, trade marks and designs may be available. Requests for waiver or refund of the fee for the extension of time will be considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>It may be possible for Plant Breeder's Rights (PBR) applicants to defer certain actions.</p> <p>Until further notice PBR examiners will not be conducting the examination of field trials for PBR purposes that involve domestic flights or overnight stays. The Australian Cultivar Registration Authority is closed for receiving plant specimens until further notice.</p> <p>While Australia's Intellectual Property office continues to operate, clients impacted by COVID-19 can now request a free extension of time of up to 3 months on most Australian IP deadlines.</p>	<p>IP Australia Communications</p>	<p>Federal Court of Australia</p> <p>On 17 March, Chief Justice of the Federal Court sent a notice advising that as of 18 March 2020, unless specifically and individually excepted by the Court, all Federal Court of Australia listings up to 30 June 2020 will be vacated. Urgent cases will be heard provided the need for urgency is explained.</p> <p>Parties with listed hearings up to 30 June 2020 will be contacted by the Court directly about the need for the matter to proceed and possible options for achieving that where appropriate.</p> <p>Public facing counters are closed as of 24 March 2020.</p> <p>Latest update 24.03.2020</p> <p>High Court of Australia</p> <p>The High Court has suspended hearings in April, May and June, except for urgent matters and special leave applications which will be heard by video link.</p> <p>Latest update 24.03.2020</p> <p>Victoria and New South Wales</p>	<p>Federal Court Communications</p> <p>23 March: Federal Court - Chief Justice Special Measures Note</p> <p>High Court: Notices/Opening Section</p>

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	<p>The arrangement applies to most patent, trade mark and design extensions of time (but it does not apply to payment of renewal fees or continuation fees).</p> <p>All that is required is a one-sentence declaration from your trade mark representation (law firm/agent) that you're unable to meet the deadline due to disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Latest update 27.04.2020</p>		<p>Courts across the state of Victoria and the Supreme Court and District Court of New South Wales have suspended new jury trials. Latest update 24.03.2020</p>	
Benelux	<p><u>Benelux IPO</u></p> <p>On 25 May 2020 a new Director General rule was published by the BOIP, setting 25 May 2020 as the end of the period during which deadlines were extended.</p> <p>All new deadlines will apply in the usual way from 25 May 2020. All deadlines that were extended under the COVID-19 situation automatically expired on 25 June 2020.</p> <p>The BOIP published a FAQ page for answering questions in relation to the extension of the deadlines. In the meantime, all the proceedings and deadlines have returned to normal and is considered to be "business-as-usual".</p>	<p>11 May 2020: Proposed BAU date: removal of the general extension of deadlines at BOIP</p> <p>20 March 2020: Compliance with deadlines during the period of public health restrictions caused by the corona virus</p> <p>16 March 2020: BOIP takes measures to combat coronavirus</p> <p>25 May 2020: BAU date: termination of the general extension of deadlines at BOIP</p> <p>BOIP FAQ page</p>	<p><u>Netherlands</u></p> <p>However, most cases – if possible – take place via videoconference, this also applies to IP cases.</p> <p>Deadlines for exchanging and submitting written documents and dockets dates remain unchanged. The accelerated regime in patent cases at The Hague District Court will remain unaffected.</p> <p>Central Desks are closed in all courts. Paper documents can be couriered to the delivery entrance of the court buildings. Documents of up to a few dozen pages can be faxed. An increasing number of courts are now also allowing communication by e-mails.</p> <p>Deadlines for exchanging and submitting written documents and dockets dates remain unchanged. The</p>	<p>The Judiciary and Coronavirus (Dutch)</p> <p>Luxembourg: Ministerial order ° B 1010 of 16 March fixing hearings to 3 April</p> <p>Luxembourg: Communication 20 March 2020</p>

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	<p>Latest update 09.11.2020</p>		<p>accelerated regime in patent cases at The Hague District Court will remain unaffected.</p> <p>Central Desks are closed in all courts. Paper documents can be couriered to the delivery entrance of the court buildings. Documents of up to a few dozen pages can be faxed. An increasing number of courts are now also allowing communication by e-mails.</p> <p>For PI actions, court decides when the request comes in whether it concerns urgent or very urgent proceedings. If that is the case, de PI judge schedules a hearing (if possible physical) and otherwise digitally via videoconferencing or parties are asked if they could agree with written proceedings.</p> <p>Latest update 11.01.21</p> <p><u>Belgium</u></p> <p>Courts are operating according to the normal procedural order and legal provisions. All hearings are to be held in the most normal way possible according to the availability of judges and clerks. If not all hearings can be held, reasoned choices will be made. In any event, all urgent cases must be dealt with.</p> <p>However :</p>	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In view of the exceptional circumstances, the use of videoconferencing is encouraged. • The use of the written procedure should also be encouraged when appropriate. This assessment is left to the judge. It is suggested that court clerks ask lawyers whose cases are set within four weeks whether they accept the use of this type of procedure. • Pursuant to the Law of 20 May 2020 laying down various provisions on justice in the fight against the spread of the coronavirus COVID-19, until 31 March 2021, any document instituting proceedings or appeals and any application or request of any kind addressed to the judge, and their annexes, may be lodged at the registry of a court or tribunal by e-Deposit. <p>Latest update 09.11.2020</p> <p><u>Luxembourg</u></p> <p>Judicial administration services are reduced public access to judicial sites has been restricted to the absolute minimum. Dates for hearings have been amended as published in Memorial B, n ° B 1010.</p> <p>Physical reception and legal information services counters and the</p>	

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			civil directory are closed until further notice.	
Community Plant Variety Office	Community Plant Variety Office Please see the link for details.			https://cpvo.europa.eu/en
China			<p>Mainland</p> <p>Hearings are being conducted by video. Court filings are done by post or online. Hearings before the Beijing IP Court have been adjourned and we have not received any notification on new hearing dates.</p> <p>Latest update 16.03.2020</p> <p>Hong Kong</p> <p>Courts have been closed since early February and all hearings were adjourned under a "General Adjournment Period", which was due to expire on 22 March. On 22 March, the Judiciary announced that the "General Adjournment Period" would be extended until 5 April 2020 (subject to review). Court hearings scheduled from 24 March to 5 April will generally be adjourned unless they are urgent as directed by the court. Parties will be notified if their hearings will be held as scheduled during this two week period.</p> <p>Court registries will generally be closed during the adjournment and</p>	Hong Kong: Communication from the Judiciary

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			<p>will only provide support services for urgent matters.</p> <p>Judges have been handling some applications on paper.</p> <p>Latest update 24.03.2020</p>	
Czech Republic	<p>Where possible, the Czech IP Office prefers using written, electronic or telephone form of communication. In case of personal contact, use of face masks is mandatory. The Czech IP Office is open for public only on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9am to 2pm, except that the Central Desk for making filings and payment of fees remains open every working day from 9am to 2pm.</p> <p>Latest update: 06/01/2021</p>	<p>Rules for operation of the Industrial Property Office between 27 December 2020 to 10 January 2021 (in Czech language)</p>	<p>On 17 December 2020, the Ministry of Justice issued a recommendation for the courts that oral hearings in the presence of the participants should take place only if necessary, taking into account statutory deadlines or urgent nature of the matters, and without endangering any health protection measures. In its recommendation, the Ministry of Justice leaves decision on any specific measures to the competence of the chair judges of individual courts.</p> <p>Latest update: 06/01/2021</p>	<p>Recommendation of the Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic dated 17 December 2020 (in Czech language)</p>
Denmark	<p>The DKPTO is operating as normal. From 15 June, it became possible to submit applications in person and electronic and paper applications can still be submitted.</p> <p>DKPTO will still not hold any physical meetings and if possible, planned meetings will be replaced by meetings via Skype.</p> <p>It follows from the update from the Danish PTO that no additional legislation providing dispensation from existing due dates stated in legislation administered by the</p>	<p>17 June 2020: COVID 19: The Danish Patent and Trademark Office is operating as normal</p>	<p>The National Courts Administration issued a plan for the reopening of the Danish courts 18 April.</p> <p>In the plan it is stated that the reopening must consider the materiality of the cases and the capacity of the courts to settle cases, while reducing the risk of infection to the greatest intent.</p> <p>However, it is stated in the plan that it is not expected that the courts are able to settle all cases and reach the usual</p>	<p>The reopening plan for the Danish courts (in Danish)</p> <p>The Danish government issues 7 mio. DKK to reduce case piles</p> <p>Stricter recommendations regarding the hearing and adjudication of cases</p>

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	<p>Office within the field of intellectual property rights has been passed.</p> <p>With regard to the due dates which are set by the Danish Patent and Trademark Office according to administrative guidelines in relation to the processing of applications, extensions may be granted. This will happen on a case by case basis upon evaluation and in accordance with their normal procedures.</p> <p>Latest update: 07-01-2021</p>		<p>capacity before the health situation is normalized.</p> <p>The plan proposes the following priority of criminal and civil cases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prisoner and jury trials 2. Violence and weapon cases 3. Urgent civil cases (custody cases, forced detention cases and injunction proceedings) 4. Regular cases heard by a court and lay judges and civil cases: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The cases are prioritized on a case-by-case basis considering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Criminal cases: the time of the crime, the length of the case in general, the nature of the case and the length of the sentence. ii. Civil cases: The length, character and importance of the case. 	

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			<p>5. Criminal cases without lay judges (traffic cases etc.)</p> <p>a. The cases are prioritized on a case-by-case basis considering the length of the case, the nature of the case and the length of the sentence.</p> <p>However, the specific prioritization of cases and areas of practice is still laid down by the management of the court in question.</p> <p>Postponed civil cases in the high courts should be dealt with in writing to the extent applicable. Furthermore, the parties in cases before the district courts and the high courts should be more encouraged to settle the case through mediation.</p> <p>Additionally, the Danish government has decided to allocate 7 mio. DKK to reduce case piles that have arisen during the Covid-19 lockdown.</p> <p>The Danish Court's emergency staff decided 5 January 2021 to recommend stricter measures to ensure the safe hearing and adjudication of cases.</p> <p>It is recommended that the courts up to and including 17 January or until a renewed assessment is issued</p>	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only conduct cases where the requirement of 2 meters distance can be observed • prioritize the most critical cases • cancel or postpone non-urgent smaller cases on the basis of a specific assessment • do not hold hearings outside the court building if it cannot be held safely except for in exceptional circumstances. <p>Latest update 07-01-2021</p>	
EPO	<p>Oral proceedings in opposition will usually be held by video conference. Where there are serious reasons preventing the use of video conference in opposition, oral proceedings will be postponed until after 15 September 2021. Oral proceedings in examination will continue to be held by videoconference.</p> <p>The parties are invited to check the respective files online via the European Patent Register.</p> <p>Oral proceedings before the Boards of Appeal are scheduled in consideration of measures adopted due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. These may be held in person (at the premises in Haar or in the Isar building in Munich).</p>	<p>Continually updated information from the EPO</p> <p>Decision of the President of the EPO dated 1 April 2020 concerning oral proceedings by videoconference before examining divisions</p> <p>Notice by the Boards of Appeal dated 29 July 2020:</p> <p>https://www.epo.org/law-practice/case-law-appeals/communications/2020/20200729.html</p>		

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	<p>Oral proceedings before the Boards of Appeal can also be conducted via video conferencing according to new Article 15a RPBA.</p> <p>Parties are invited to consult the online calendar approximately three days before their oral proceedings to check on short notice information.</p> <p>Attendance is generally restricted to a maximum of two people per party.</p> <p>Latest update 15.01.2021</p>			
European Union	<p><u>EUIPO</u></p> <p>On 15 May 2020 the Executive Director published an Order with the effect that all extensions to deadlines to 18 May came to an end on 18 May 2020. Guidance and clarifications have been issued in relation to the usual procedure for extending deadlines stipulated in the applicable Regulations, in case parties continue to face operational difficulties in light of the pandemic.</p> <p>Latest update 24.05.2020</p>	Communication	<p><u>CJEU</u></p> <p>Judicial activity continues, but priority will be given urgent cases (urgent proceedings, expedited proceedings and interim proceedings).</p> <p>Hearings are currently suspended and the hearing originally listed in some cases has been replaced with written questions to the parties. If circumstances relating to health permit it, the CJEU has said that it anticipates holding hearings once again with effect from Monday 25 May 2020. In respect of hearings that are re-listed, the representatives of the parties in the cases concerned will be informed by the registry of the dates and times of those hearings. Where</p>	Communication

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			<p>physical hearings take place, strict sanitary measures will be taken.</p> <p>Procedural time limits for instituting proceedings and lodging appeals continue to run as usual, but time limits in on-going proceedings (except for particularly urgent matters) are extended by one month. Until further notice, time limits to be fixed by the registry are also increased by one month.</p> <p>Latest update 22.05.2020</p> <p><u>General Court</u></p> <p>Judicial activity continues, but priority will be given urgent cases (urgent proceedings, expedited proceedings and interim proceedings).</p> <p>Hearings that had been fixed in the period to 15 May 2020 are adjourned. If circumstances relating to health so permit, the GC anticipates that hearings will progressively be resumed in the Court's hearing rooms with effect from 25 May 2020. The representatives of the parties in the cases concerned will be informed of the dates and times of those hearings, and strict sanitary measures will be taken.</p> <p>Time limits shall continue to run. Parties seeking an extension, where it is possible for time limits to be extended, have been told to make a</p>	

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			request in good time so that the Court can make a ruling on that request. Latest update 03.05.2020	
Finland	<p>The customer service of the Finnish Patent and Registration Office (PRH) in Helsinki is closed until 31 January 2021. The office staff is telecommuting but the office aims to process notifications and applications normally. Online services and telephone services are running normally. PRH takes into account the exceptional situation caused by the Coronavirus when assessing extensions to deadlines in individual cases.</p> <p>Latest update 07.01.2021</p>	<p>16 March 2020: Our customer service in Helsinki is closed until further notice</p> <p>01 July 2020: Our customer service in Helsinki will be open again on 3 August 2020</p> <p>19 October 2020: Effects of the coronavirus on our office and customers</p> <p>10 November 2020: Oral hearings will be held remotely in opposition proceedings for patents</p> <p>5 January 2021: Our customer service in Helsinki is closed until 31 January 2021 – online services are running normally</p>	<p>The Ministry of Justice of Finland has stated that some court hearings may be postponed and some may be cancelled. Changes in the operating environment may lengthen the duration of consideration.</p> <p>In the Market Court (a special court hearing IPR cases), some oral proceedings were moved from spring to autumn. With regard to written procedures, there have been no significant delays.</p> <p>According to its communication of 31 August 2020, the Market Court seeks to organize its activities in such a way that they can continue as normal as possible despite the Coronavirus situation. In all organization of operations, the aim is to take the Coronavirus situation into account in such a way that the risk of infection can be minimized.</p> <p>Latest update 22.09.2020</p>	<p>Communication of the Ministry of Justice</p> <p>31 August 2020: On the effects of Coronavirus situation on the operation of the Market Court (in Finnish)</p>
France	<p>Since 23 June 2020, handling of communications by the INPI has reverted back to normal.</p> <p>Further to the new lockdown announced on 29 October 2020, the office buildings of the INPI are now close to the public. The other</p>	<p>Press release of the INPI of 29 October 2020</p>	<p>Since 31 August 2020, the functioning of the Tribunal is close to back to normal. Trial hearings (including for summary proceedings) are once again scheduled before the Tribunal, with however obligation on all participants to wearing a mask.</p>	<p>Ordinance No 181/2020 of the Court of Appeal of Paris</p> <p>Ordinance No 95/2020 of the Judiciary Tribunal of Paris</p>

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	<p>activities of the institute continue normally.</p> <p>Latest update 05.11.2020</p>		<p>Differences in comparison with the pre-covid period are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - case management hearings should be held remotely - no hearing should be held for ex parte proceedings (such as petitions for seizure). <p>The Court reverted back to its usual functioning as from 25 June 2020, with the possibility left to the presiding judges to resort to the procedure without hearing if required by the health situation and/or the available workforce.</p> <p>The new lockdown announced on 29 October 2020 has not changed anything to the functioning of the French jurisdictions put in place during the summer.</p> <p>Latest update 05.11.2020</p>	<p>Press release of the Judiciary Tribunal of Paris of 1st November 2020</p>
Germany	<p>The German Patent and Trademark Office is closed to visitors, except for exceptional circumstances. Customer service staff can still be reached by telephone and email. Delays are expected, in particular any paper-based/faxed mail to be sent/received (E-filing is recommended), the issuance of registration certificates, register extracts, apostilles and priority documents. Publication of IP</p>	<p>Coronavirus (COVID-19) - continually updated information for customers, external partners and potential visitors</p>	<p>Court hearings are taking place with limited accessibility for uninvolved visitors. A few court hearings are conducted digitally, but most hearings are still conducted in-person.</p> <p>Latest update 06.01.2021</p>	

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	<p>gazettes are also likely to be affected.</p> <p>Latest update 06.01.2021</p>			
Hungary	<p>As of 2 June 2020 opening hours are limited to weekdays between 10:00-12:00.</p> <p>Queries shall be directed to the HIPO through phone and email. A toll free hotline has been introduced. File inspections are limited, based solely on agreed dates.</p> <p>Primary electronic filing system and post shall be used. There is an automatic docketing machine available 24/7 in the central building of the HIPO.</p> <p>Personal consultations are suspended as of 16 March 2020 for an indefinite period. Examiners can be reached via phone and e-mail.</p> <p>Deadlines are unaffected, but the HIPO as of yet holds personal hearings only in urgent cases with strict safety requirements.</p> <p>Latest update 11.01.2021</p>	<p>Communication (on opening hours)</p>	<p>As of 4 November 2020, the state of emergency has been reinstated. This means that during this period (with parliamentary approval) the Government is entitled to take any measures necessary in order to eliminate the consequences of COVID-19. For now courts are still operating according to the normal procedural order and legal provisions (save for some exceptions). Rules entered into force in June 2020 allow for hearings to be held electronically if official measures due to the pandemic prompt that as necessary.</p> <p>Latest update 11.01.2021</p>	<p>Communication</p>
Indonesia	<p>The IPO's service counter will be closed up to 21 April 2020. However, any applications, letters and/or documents can still be submitted by online.</p>	<p>Communication</p>		

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	<p>During this period, the IPO will be applying dispensations for any form of delay with regards to completeness of documents for applications which are due up to 21 April 2020.</p> <p>Latest update 01.04.2020</p>			
Italy	<p>Maintenance or renewal of industrial property rights</p> <p>All certificates, attestations, permits, concessions, authorizations relating to industrial property rights, expiring between 31 January 2020 and 31 July 2020, remain valid for 90 days after the date of 31 July 2020. Payments aimed at renewing/maintaining the industrial property rights should be therefore performed within 31 October 2020.</p> <p>Latest update 11.01.2021</p>	<p>Extension of the period for the payment of industrial property rights</p>	<p>Court hearings can be conducted in person, but with limited accessibility for the assisting lawyers (1 or max 2 per party). A few court hearings (especially the formal ones) are conducted through written notes or digitally.</p> <p>Moreover, some Courts (among which the Court of Milan) are strongly encouraging the parties to jointly ask the scheduling of digital hearing (instead of physical ones). Access to Court for chancery activities is limited and is possible only on the basis of appointment with the Bailiff (for service of deeds) or with the Clerk for other duties. Latest update 11.01.2021</p>	
LATAM:				
Argentina	<p>The National PTO will be closed until March 31, 2020.</p> <p>All terms and deadlines have been suspended until April 12, 2020.</p> <p>All terms and deadlines have been suspended until April 26, 2020.</p>	<p>https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/detalleAviso/primera/227751/20200414</p>		

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	<p>Online system is available.</p> <p>Latest update 14.04.2020</p>			
Brazil	<p>The National PTO is currently closed.</p> <p>Deadlines and terms that fall between March 16, 2020 and April 14, 2020, have been postponed until April 15, 2020.</p> <p>Online system is available.</p> <p>Latest update 25.03.2020</p>			
Chile	<p>The National PTO is open and working with restrictions.</p> <p>Deadlines and terms will be extended in certain situations.</p> <p>Online system is available.</p> <p>Latest update 25.03.2020</p>			
Colombia	<p>The National PTO will be closed until further notice.</p> <p>All terms and deadlines have been suspended until further notice.</p> <p>Online system is available.</p> <p>Latest update 14.04.2020</p>	<p>https://www.sic.gov.co/sites/default/files/normatividad/042020/res%2012169.pdf</p>		
Costa Rica	<p>The National PTO is open and working.</p> <p>Deadlines and terms have not been suspended.</p> <p>Online system is not available.</p> <p>Latest update 25.03.2020</p>			

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Dominican Republic	<p>The National PTO is currently closed.</p> <p>All terms and deadlines were suspended from March 20 to April 13, 2020. Provide that the emergency state is not renewed, terms will reassume on April 16.</p> <p>Online system is not available.</p> <p>Latest update 25.03.2020</p>			
Ecuador	<p>The National PTO will be closed until April 19, 2020.</p> <p>All terms and deadlines have been suspended until April 19, 2020.</p> <p>Online system is available in limited cases and only by email.</p> <p>Latest update 14.04.2020</p>	<p>https://www.derechosintelectuales.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Resoluci%C3%B3n-No.-008-2020-DG-SENADI-12-DE-ABRIL-2020.pdf</p>		
El Salvador	<p>The National PTO will be closed until April 21, 2020.</p> <p>Deadlines and terms have been suspended until further notice.</p> <p>Online system is not available.</p> <p>Latest update 25.03.2020</p>			
Guatemala	<p>The office is partially open during limited hours and for matters that are still pending.</p> <p>Latest update 14.04.2020</p>	<p>https://rpi.gob.gt/portalrpi/nod/e/93</p>		

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Mexico	<p>The National PTO will be closed from March 27 until April 19, 2020.</p> <p>All terms and deadlines have been suspended until April 20, 2020.</p> <p>Online system is not available.</p> <p>Latest update 25.03.2020</p>			
Panamá	<p>The National PTO will be closed until April 21, 2020.</p> <p>Deadlines and terms have been suspended until further notice.</p> <p>Online system is not available.</p> <p>Latest update 25.03.2020</p>			
Paraguay	<p>The National PTO is closed.</p> <p>All terms and deadlines have been suspended until April 19, 2020.</p> <p>Online system is not available.</p> <p>Latest update 14.04.2020</p>	https://www.dinapi.gov.py/porta/v2/		
Peru	<p>The National PTO will be closed until May 7, 2020.</p> <p>All terms and deadlines have been suspended until May 7, 2020.</p> <p>Fillings are available through their online system</p> <p>Latest update 14.04.2020</p>	https://www.indecopi.gob.pe/-/indecopi-reactiva-servicios-de-registro-virtual-de-marcas-y-obras		
Uruguay	<p>The National PTO is open and working.</p> <p>Deadlines and terms have not been suspended.</p>			

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	Online system is available. Latest update 25.03.2020			
Venezuela	The National PTO is closed. Deadlines and terms suspended until further notice. Online system is not available. Latest update 25.03.2020			
Middle East:				
Algeria	The Intellectual Property Office has limited working hours from 22 March 2020 till 10 April 2020. A grace period of one month will be granted once business is back to normal. Last updated 02/04/2020			
Bahrain	The Intellectual Property Office is closed until further notice. Applications can be filed electronically. Last updated 02/04/2020			
Egypt	The Trademark Office and the Patent Office suspended all operations until 8 April 2020. Any deadlines are automatically extended to the first working day. Last updated 02/04/2020			
Gaza	The Patent and Trademark Office announced that it has suspended operations until 5 April 2020. Deadlines falling between 22			

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	<p>March 2020 and 4 April 2020 are automatically extended to 5 April 2020.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Iraq	<p>The Trademark Office has suspended all operations until 11 April 2020. Deadlines are automatically extended to the first working day.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Jordan	<p>The Trade Mark Office has suspended all operations until 14 April 2020. Any application submitted online will not be dealt with until the office re-opens.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Kuwait	<p>The Patent and Trademark Office has announced that it will resume operations on 12 April 2020. Deadlines falling between 12 March 2020 and 11 April 2020 are automatically extended to 12 April 2020.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Lebanon	<p>The Trade Mark Office has suspended all operations until 14 April 2020.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			

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Libya	<p>The Patent and Trademark Office announced that it has suspended operations until 6 April 2020. Deadlines falling between 22 March 2020 and 5 April 2020 are automatically extended to 6 April 2020.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Morocco	<p>The Patent and Trade Mark Office is only accepting online trade mark applications. All deadlines are suspended until further notice.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Oman	<p>The Patent and Trademark Office announced that it has suspended all operations until further notice. Deadlines are automatically extended to the first working day.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Qatar	<p>The Intellectual Property office is only accepting new filing applications. All other matters are suspended until further notice.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Saudi Arabia	<p>The Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property (SAIP) announced that it is operating online. Applicants cannot submit original documents until further notice.</p>			

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	Last updated 02/04/2020			
Sudan	<p>The Trade Mark Office is accepting new filing applications only. All other services are suspended until further notice.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Syria	<p>The Intellectual Property Office has suspended operations until further notice. Deadlines falling during the time of suspension will be extended to the first working day after the suspension has been lifted.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Tunisia	<p>The Patent and Trade Mark Office announced that it has suspended operations until 20 April 2020. Deadlines falling between 23 March 2020 and 19 April 2020 are extended to 20 April 2020.Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Turkey	<p>The Patent and Trademark Office announced that it will remain operational during the pandemic. However, all procedural deadlines (including opposition and appeal terms, payment terms of the official fees, etc.) expiring between 13 March 2020 and 30 April 2020 are suspended.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			

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UAE	<p>The Trade Mark Office online services such as filings, renewals, searches, oppositions, various payments, etc. are fully active, however, for anyone who needs to visit the TMO, a health form must be filed beforehand. In addition, physical attendance at hearings has been suspended and will be run virtually. Memos usually submitted during hearings will be sent via emails and the minutes of hearings will also be circulated via email to the parties.</p> <p>Notary Public services, in all branches, have suspended operations from 29 March 2020 until 9 April 2020. During this period, services will be conducted remotely and all requests should be sent via email. A reduction in fees is also expected to be announced in early April.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
West Bank	<p>The Patent and Trademark Office announced that it has suspended operations until 6 April 2020. Deadlines falling between 22 March 2020 and 5 April 2020 are automatically extended to 6 April 2020. The Trademark Office will continue to accept new trademark applications online but will provide filing numbers once hard copies of</p>			

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	<p>the original documents are submitted.</p> <p>Last updated 02/04/2020</p>			
Yemen	<p>The Intellectual Property Office is fully active to date.</p> <p>Last updated 31.03.2020</p>			
Poland	<p>The Polish Patent Office is currently operating, although physical distancing measures are enforced.</p> <p>From 8 March until 1 July 2020, all deadlines for filing trademark oppositions and translations of European patents were deemed not to have started. The deadlines have restarted on 1 July 2020.</p>		<p>The majority of courts are currently operating, but remote hearings are now the default option in civil and administrative law cases during the epidemic state and one year after its cancellation (although many courts seem hesitant to make wide use of these measures, and traditional hearings are often a <i>de facto</i> standard). With a recent increase of active cases of COVID-19, some courts have decided to cancel hearings, although no country-wide closure of courts is currently in place. Almost all administrative law cases are currently considered without a hearing.</p> <p>Latest update 11.01.2021</p>	
Singapore	<p>No communication from the IPO.</p>		<p>Courts and the IP Office are still hearing matters. There are stringent checks for those entering the premises, but there has been no shut down of services or adjournment of hearings.</p> <p>Latest update 16.03.2020</p>	

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Slovakia	<p>No communication from the IPO with regards to COVID-19 restrictions.</p> <p>However, all employers should comply with the general obligations arising from the recommendations of the Slovak Public Health Authority. For more details, please see the following column regarding courts.</p>		<p>The Slovak Ministry of Justice issued a notice that the official status of “crisis” due to pandemic situation should not restrict activities of the Ministry, nor the courts.</p> <p>However, all organizations under the auspice of the Ministry of Justice are obliged as an employer to comply with the obligations arising from the Decree of the Slovak Public Health Authority no. 16/2020 of 30 October 2020, which prescribes measures in the event of a threat to public health and the regime of entry of persons into the premises of facility operators and the premises of the employer, e.g. masks, notifications, physical distancing measures, disinfections, etc.</p> <p>In principal, hearings are often postponed, but procedural deadlines are ongoing.</p> <p>Latest update 06.01.2021</p>	<p>Communication of the Slovak Ministry of Justice</p>
Spain	<p>The Government lifted the suspension in administrative proceedings deadlines on 1 June. Nowadays the administrative proceedings before the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office (hereinafter “Spanish IPO”) are reactivated.</p> <p>The Spanish IPO is currently operating normally, mostly in remote way except for some activities that are considered</p>	<p>4 June Communication</p> <p>Royal Decree concerning to the new State of Alert</p>	<p>On 4 June all the hearings and judicial deadlines, including prescriptions and limitation of actions were reactivated. The Spanish Courts are operational.</p> <p>Up to three months after the completion of the State of Alert, all procedural acts would be taken place in telematic presence, where technically possible. The Ministry of Justice has launched a project that allows the live broadcasting of hearings or consult them later from</p>	<p>General Council of the Judiciary communication</p> <p>13 April Communication</p> <p>Royal Decree concerning judicial measures.</p>

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	<p>essential. Physical visits and inquiries at the Spanish IPO are not allowed. Therefore, the Spanish IPO encourages customers to make use of electronic services such as email and phone contact.</p> <p>On 25 October, Spanish Government declared again the State of Alert. This time, the deadlines in administrative proceedings have not been suspended.</p> <p>Latest update 11.11.2020</p>		<p>the Electronic Judicial Site, enhancing the right to a public hearing in legal proceedings pursuant to Article 120 of the Constitution, when they are not confidential.</p> <p>On 25 October, Spanish Government declared again the State of Alert, that has not changed anything to the functioning of the Spanish jurisdictions. This fact has promoted that most of the hearings must continue be taken in telematic presence unless they required to be conducted in-person, taken all the security measures to minimised the risk of Covid infection and spread.</p> <p>Latest update 11.11.2020</p>	
Sweden	<p>Until further notice, the opening hours of the Swedish IPO's offices in Stockholm and Söderhamn are limited to 9:00-11:00 am.</p> <p>The majority of the IPO's staff works from home and the processing of paper forms and correspondence is limited. The IPO therefore encourage customers to make use of the IPO's electronic services.</p> <p>Upon request the IPO can extend the time period to respond to a technical injunction in a patent matter from two to four months.</p>	<p>Information for customers in regard of the Corona Pandemic</p>	<p>The Swedish courts are operational, but with many court employees working from home. The decision on how to handle the current situation lies with the separate courts and varies between the courts.</p> <p>Visitors and participants in court proceeding who have respiratory symptoms (cough, breathing difficulties fever or a runny nose) are advised to not visit the courts. This is true even if you only have mild symptoms. Some courts have shortened the register's opening hours. Further, some court hearings have been suspended due to parties,</p>	<p>https://www.domstol.se/en/information-about-coronavirus-covid-19/</p>

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	<p>IPO do not charge late payment fees in patent matters, due to the corona pandemic.</p> <p>Following WIPO's recommendation regarding facilitations in the processing of international patent applications, the IPO has applied the possibility according to PCT to have late fixed remedies accepted due to the corona pandemic.</p> <p>If oral hearings are required these will mostly be held digitally, but if possible, also physically.</p> <p>Latest update 11.01.2021</p>		<p>counsels or witnesses being ill. There have also been some procedural impediments due to older lay judges not being able to attend hearings. However, the courts are able to call in replacements, and a hearing can continue even if a lay judge should become sick. Lay judges sit in on, for example, criminal cases and family law cases and some IP proceedings, but not civil cases.</p> <p>Some courts in some regions, which has been the most affected by COVID-19, has suspended all court hearings that are not urgent. IP matters have not been specifically targeted. However, most courts have now resumed to "normal" and hearings are held physically, and in some cases digitally.</p> <p>Swedish procedural law allows for hearings to be conducted via video conference or telephone, when deemed suitable. Swedish courts have regularly used this technology and they now use it even more than normally.</p> <p>All deadlines for submissions set by the courts are still valid and the courts will not extend deadlines of their own accord. These can be extended at the concerned party's request if a reasonable explanation has been presented. However, statutory deadlines, such as deadlines to appeal, cannot be extended by the courts regardless of the COVID-19 outbreak.</p>

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			Latest update 16.11.2020. Checked 11.01.2021 – no changes.	
UK	<p>The UKIPO has decided to declare 24 March, and subsequent days until further notice, interrupted days. An ‘interrupted day’ is a day in which the normal course of business at the IPO is not possible.</p> <p>Following the UKIPO’s initial review on 17 April 2020, a further review was conducted on 7 May 2020 to provide updated guidelines and maintain the period of ‘interrupted days’ until the UKIPO’s next review on 28 May 2020.</p> <p>This means that any deadlines for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •patents; •supplementary protection certificates; •trade marks; •designs, <p>and applications for these rights, which fall on an interrupted day will be extended until the IPO notifies the end of the interrupted days period.</p> <p>The UKIPO has stated that it will give 2 weeks’ notice before ending the interrupted days period.</p>	<p>Formal Notice - Interrupted Days</p> <p>Certificate of Declaration Communication</p>	<p>The information below only applies to the courts of England & Wales (apart from the UKSC).</p> <p>Courts are operational, but with some restrictions. Evidence shows there is very little backlog or delay being experienced by users of the Business & Property Courts, including those who use the Commercial Court.</p> <p>Judges will decide whether a hearing is necessary and if so, whether it will take place fully or partly remotely. Arrangements have been put in place to use telephone, video and other technology to continue as many hearings as possible remotely. Guidance from the courts is published when required. This way of working will continue during the third lockdown which is currently underway.</p> <p>Any changes to individual hearings will be communicated directly to those affected, usually by email and/or phone.</p> <p>The Supreme Court building closed on 23 March 2020 and is now conducting hearings entirely via video conferencing facilities. More information as to papers for filing, time limits, applications for extensions</p>	<p>HMCTS: Remote hearings during coronavirus outbreak</p> <p>HMCTS: Guidance for court and tribunal users during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak</p> <p>Supreme Court: Building closure</p> <p>Supreme Court: Registry Update PD 51Y</p> <p>PD 51ZA</p> <p>HMCTS Daily Operational Summary</p> <p>Supreme Court: Arrangements during the coronavirus pandemic</p> <p>118th Practice Direction (PD) Update</p>

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	<p>Nonetheless, the IPO has encouraged customers to continue to work to existing deadlines if possible. Interrupted days have been introduced as a safety net where the normal course of business is not possible.</p> <p>Hearings will operate online and via Skype and telephone and no physical hearings will be booked or take place until 1st June 2020 (subject to review).</p> <p>The office is unable to process paper forms, faxes and paper correspondence and no documents can be filed by hand. The UKIPO has requested that all rights holders and IP professionals continue to file as normal using their online services and communicate digitally whenever possible. For services that are not available online, an email address has been set up called paperformcontingency@ipo.gov.uk which can be used instead of faxing or posting documents.</p> <p>The UKIPO is no longer processing documents by fax and the posting out of documents and notifications has been suspended.</p> <p>Further information on alterations to services for patents, trade marks and designs can be found on the IPO website.</p>		<p>of time, orders and costs can be found on the Supreme Court website.</p> <p>The High Court is covering work according to the High Court Contingency Plan and Court of Appeal Civil Division is covering work according to the RCJ Court of Appeal Civil urgent business priorities. More detailed guidance can be found on the HMCTS Operational Summary website page.</p> <p>The coronavirus bill published by the Department of Health and Social Care expands the availability of video and audio link in court proceedings. Skype for Business and Cloud Video Platform are being used for remote hearings.</p> <p>New Practice Directions have been introduced. PD 51Y deals with public access to court hearings that are conducted remotely. PD 51ZA dealt with the extension of time limits (enabling parties to agree to extensions of time, without applying to the court, of 56 days in certain circumstances). PD 51ZA has not been extended. It ceased to have effect on 30 October 2020.</p> <p>Latest update 11.01.2021</p>	

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