

TRILATERAL CONFERENCE Summary

On October 20-21, 2025, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) hosted the 43rd Trilateral Conference at its headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. This year's theme was "Strengthening the patent system by utilizing advanced information technology (IT) tools to create efficiencies and improve patent examination quality".

Day 1 opened with a meeting of the Heads of the Trilateral Offices – the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO) and the USPTO – together with representatives of the Industry Trilateral (IT3), comprising the American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA), the Intellectual Property Owners Association (IPO), BusinessEurope (BE), and the Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA). Officials from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) participated in an observer capacity.

Discussions first addressed patent application filing trends in Europe, Japan, and the United States, and their impact on examination and prosecution practices. Participants also shared views on challenges posed by the changing patent landscape and the use of artificial intelligence (AI)-based tools to mitigate those challenges and enhance examination efficiency and quality.

The agenda also featured an exchange on AI-related policies and patent law developments across the three offices, with each office providing updates on relevant regulatory changes, office policies, practices, or guidance. The IT3 then led an industry-focused expert panel that examined the impact of legal developments in critical and emerging technologies across the three jurisdictions.

Day 2 focused on a deeper exploration of AI-based tools. The Heads of Office, joined by WIPO officials, discussed current and future development plans for utilizing AI-tools, as well as opportunities for Trilateral collaboration to improve examination and promote legal certainty across jurisdictions. The offices agreed to establish a Trilateral AI Working Group that will collaborate on various topics including the development of a Trilateral AI Vision.

The conference concluded with an exchange on future areas of Trilateral cooperation that reflect the Offices' priorities, respond to stakeholder needs, and aim to deliver meaningful, tangible, and timely outcomes.

The EPO will host the 44th Trilateral Conference in Vienna, Austria.