

On 14 October 2024, the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) met in Tokyo, Japan, for their 42nd Trilateral Conference. A session of the meeting was attended by the associations of Trilateral Industry (IT3), namely Business Europe (BE), the Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA), the American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA) and the Intellectual Property Owners association (IPO). The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) participated in the meeting in an observer capacity.

The focus of this 42nd annual meeting was United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 9, "Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation."

In the morning session, the Trilateral Offices had a conversation with IT3 and WIPO on how to enhance the strategic use of IP for business growth. All enterprises can benefit from integrating an IP management strategy into their business plans from the very beginning. This may include analysing technology trends, reviewing competitors' IP portfolios, and assessing the value of their own IP assets. The IT3 presented success stories and discussed how these stories can be shared with the public. The Offices gave their feedback to the IT3 and highlighted their initiatives to support enterprises in developing IP strategies which align with their business management.

The Trilateral Offices also updated the IT3 on their internal use of AI, in particular for their internal management, examination practices, and production of statistics. The Trilateral Offices explained their respective policies governing internal AI utilization, including technical training to help examiners better understand AI.

In the afternoon, the Trilateral Offices and WIPO continued the discussion relating to SDG9 focusing on patent quality. All participants acknowledged high-quality patents as the basis for strategic IP management. The Offices exchanged information on their respective initiatives to grant high-quality patents and promoted a mutual understanding of what a high-quality patent is and the role of the Offices' in granting high quality patents.

The Trilateral Offices also discussed the potential objective of the Trilateral Co-operation with a view to developing a work plan in the future.

The next Trilateral Conference will be held by the USPTO in 2025.