



## **Internal Oversight Division**

Reference: EVAL 2019-05

## **Evaluation Report**

Evaluation of Program 32, The Lisbon System

March 9, 2020



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# Program 32 - Lisbon System - Evaluation



Program 32 scope of work falls mainly under two categories:

Technical assistance:

Providing services to member states under capacity building, promotional activities and advisory services.

Lisbon Register:

The Program maintains the registry, processes diverse requests for registrations and develops the IT side of the registry.

## Some findings:



75% of technical assistance focuses on promotion activities



The Register requires manual steps for each part of the registration



There is a need for a stronger focus on activities to direct users of the system



Different systems are used for each different step in the Register



Budget has remained constant since the creation of the Program



Only 5% of the current biennium budget has been allocated to develop the IT side of the Register

## What are we recommending?



Redefine the way the Program prioritizes and carries out promotion activities including technical assistance activities.



Capture the depth of progress by using working level indicators. Review budgetary and HR allocations on the grounds of increase in activities, demands and ratification of the Geneva Act.



Develop an all-encompassing IT system with one IT owner as a fit for purpose tool.

**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GI</b>	Geographical Indications
<b>IP</b>	Intellectual Property
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>LDC</b>	Least Developed Countries
<b>WIPO</b>	World Intellectual Property Organization

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Lisbon System facilitates the protection of appellations of origin and their international registration under the Lisbon Agreement, which was adopted in 1958 and revised at Stockholm in 1967 (1967 Act). It entered into force on September 25, 1966, and it is administered by the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), which keeps the International Register of Appellations of Origin and publishes a [bulletin](#) entitled “Appellations of origin”. Currently, 30 countries are contracting parties to the Lisbon Agreement.
2. Between March 2009 and May 2015, the Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System, established by the Assembly of the Lisbon Union in September 2008, was engaged in a full review of the Lisbon Agreement. This review resulted in the revision of the Agreement with the adoption, on May 20, 2015, of the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications. The deposit of the fifth instrument of accession in November 2019 enabled the entry into force of the Geneva Act on February 26, 2020.
3. Over the years, the Lisbon System has undergone numerous strategic transformations. The Lisbon System is since the 2016/17 biennium under a specific Program (Program 32), which contributes to the achievement of Strategic Goal II, as shown in the WIPO’s results-based framework for the 2018/19 biennium.
4. **The evaluation found that** Program 32 is relevant to the work of the Organization; Program’s activities are defined and carried out under the framework of different organizational documents such as assemblies’ documents, an agreement (and subsequent revisions) and regulations. The work of Program 32 has focused on promotion activities (75 per cent) followed by capacity building and advisory services. Evidence from mission reports has highlighted the need for the Program to focus its efforts on direct users of the System, as for example producers and cooperatives. This will allow the Program to render support in identifying and developing possible Geographical Indications (GIs), while promoting use of the System by producers. Those reports underlined also that promotion activities have pointed out the possibility to protect GIs through different legal means at the national and international levels.
5. **Program 32 manages a registry that** requires manual operation in each of the steps of the recording and notification process for each kind of transactions. Different IT sub-systems and tools (software) are used for each step of the recording and notification process, with different IT teams managing each part. The way the recording and notification process is currently designed and managed from both the Program 32 and the Information Technology (IT) side leaves the Organization open to risks, which could be avoided at a low cost by updating the process with improved IT systems and tools.
6. **Program 32’s budget** has remained constant for biennium 2016/17 and 2018/19. Allocations have focused on activities related to promotion activities and technical assistance and personnel resources. Only 5 per cent of the current biennium budget is allocated to develop the functionality of the Register. The need to develop and improve the Register is highlighted in both the performance indicators and implementation strategies, nonetheless, financial resources have not been sufficiently allocated to deal with the increased need to update the IT system. Financial and human resources have to expand to meet an increase in expected demands for assistance by WIPO members and transactions under the Lisbon Register with the entry into force of the Geneva Act. Nonetheless, financial resources have stayed the same level even with the substantial increase yearly in the activities carried out by

the Program, as a consequence of the requests for technical assistance by WIPO members interested to adhere to the Geneva Act.

7. **Program 32 performance indicators** are reporting at the organizational level. However, using three strategic indicators to report the full progress of the program, to some extent limits the possibility to report important intermediate results that the program has attained in several domains.

8. Based on the above findings and conclusions, the evaluation recommends the following:

### **Recommendations**

1. With the increase in the number of activities and the recent entry into force of the Geneva Act, Program 32 needs to redefine the Program prioritization and implementation of promotion activities, including technical assistance activities, with:
  - (a) A more structured work plan to manage ad hoc requests and to enhance the effectiveness of the available human and financial resources;
  - (b) Reassessment of budgetary and human resource requirements to meet the expected increase of demands from Member States for assistance and registrations.
2. Program 32 should define working level performance indicators that capture the depth of the progress accomplished by the activities carried out under promotion and related technical assistance.
3. The International Register for the Lisbon System should be updated in terms of software and management by:
  - (a) Developing a restructured IT system with one IT owner, as a fit for purpose software tool for the whole registration process minimizing/eliminating manual steps and overrides of data, providing solutions to all technical issues;
  - (b) Providing required budgetary resources to implement the restructured IT System.