



Promoting Intellectual Property Law Studies in the Mediterranean Region

Comparative Report on IP Law and Practice Needs in ENPI South region

by Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia

under the TEMPUS program IP-MED

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1. Foreword

Based on our initial meetings in February, 2014 in Amman, Jordan and subsequent discussions with our project partners in Palestine, a questionnaire was drafted by Tallinn University of Technology (TUT). The main aim of this questionnaire was to analyse the proposed IP-MED study program. The questionnaire was used to collect data and to assess the current situation at the ENPI South participating institutions, namely regarding human resources and training needs, infrastructure, curricula and course contents, ECTS allocation, local labour market needs, etc. All partners were requested to use this questionnaire to collect the necessary data within their institutions via personal interviews, internal questionnaires, etc. The due date for collection of this data was 30th April, 2014.

TUT received the above compiled data on 15th September, 2014 and based on the analysis of the same, the broad outlines and subsequently narrowed conclusions have been reached, as outlined in this report.

2. Data received and analysed

Data in the form of duly filled and returned questionnaires, some with supporting documents, has been received from:

- a. Information Technology Industry Development Agency, Egypt
- b. Helwan University, Egypt
- c. Mutah University, Jordan
- d. Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, Egypt
- e. Abu-Ghazaleh Intellectual Property, Palestine
- f. An Najah National University, Palestine
- g. Alquds University, Palestine
- h. Zarqa University, Jordan
- i. Miscellaneous reports from partners in Jordan

Most of the data received was concise and to the point. What was presented from the partners was an in-depth analysis of their local situation and needs. It is appreciated that the local partners, who are academic experts in their respective fields and countries took the time and effort to provide TUT with an insight into their local situation and unique, individual issues.

3. Introduction to IP in the Middle East

Based on the data received, it would be appropriate to briefly view the issue of intellectual property (IP) in the Middle East from the perspective of Egypt, Jordan and Palestine.

a. Egypt

Egypt is a member of most international treaties and agreements related to IP. As a course topic, IP is taught in educational institutions. IP professionals and academics have made great strides in the recent years. However, IP penetration and

awareness is not as highly developed as in the West and there is scope for improvement.

b. Jordan

Jordan is a member of most international treaties and agreements related to IP. IP is taught to students of law. IP rights are recognised in the Jordanian Constitution of 1952. IP awareness and implementation has been taken up by the State since the 1990s. There are plans to have a detailed IP policy in place. Several IP professionals and academics are present and working in Jordan. However, to further develop the local level of expertise in order to enable it to reach Western standards, there is need for more work.

c. Palestine

Palestine, due to its peculiar political situation and status, is not a member of any international treaties and agreements related to IP. The Palestinian territories, namely the West Bank and Gaza Strip have separate jurisdiction with regards to IP. Palestine presents a strange mix of Ottoman era and Jordanian laws, with influence from the Egyptian legal system as well. The Palestinian Trademark and Patent Laws of 1938 are adopted in Gaza Strip while the Jordanian laws are adopted in the West Bank. Development and implementation of IP is deemed important in Palestine, but has taken a back seat considering the current political necessities. IP is taught in local universities. Some IP professionals and academics are present and work in the West Bank, with close contacts with their Jordanian counterparts. However, IP penetration and awareness is still low and there is a need for special support to Palestinian institutions in this regard.

4. Local needs of Middle East Countries

Egypt, Jordan and Palestine do not have a sufficient number of academics, practitioners and professionals in the applied areas of IP. There is also a need to improve knowledge and awareness regarding IP in the various institutions and countries. Further, there is a critical lack of funding for research activities which could lead to creation of more IP in these countries. Most initiatives with regard to IP in these countries are driven by the public sector while the private sector is seriously lagging behind in terms of IP creation, implementation and protection. There is also a need for improved cooperation with Western experts, academics and professionals to improve the standards of IP in the Middle East. Therefore projects such as the present one are required to cover the needs and demands of the local market.

5. Special academic issues in the field of IP in the Middle East

There is an urgent need to develop a curriculum for Master's Programs in IP in the Middle East. Teaching material for such advanced and sophisticated law and technology based courses are in short supply in the Arab world. Advanced libraries are required in the Arab universities for enhancing research studies in IP. There is a need to use technologies and internet based interactive teaching systems in the Middle East based partner institutions to provide easy online digital access to the latest international information, knowledge and developments in the field of IP. Also required are training workshops and technical support for the development of advanced IP curricula. Academic support for the newly developed IP programs can be furthered by creating an exchange program in order to facilitate easier travel between Europe and the Middle East for faculty members from the respective partner institutions. There is also a need for enhanced exchange of information between faculty members of the Middle East partner universities and European universities.

6. Conclusion

In view of the above, it can be seen that there is a need for all partners of this project to work together to make this joint Master Degree program in Law and Technology a success, thereby satisfying the needs and requirements of Arab society in general and the Middle East Universities in particular.



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