

# Trade Digest

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## Thailand Joins the Madrid Protocol

On 7 August 2017, Miss Wiboonlasana Ruamraksa, the Permanent Secretary of Thailand's Ministry of Commerce, delivered the instrument of accession to the Madrid Protocol with the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO.) Starting from the 7th of November 2017 when the accession takes effect, Thai nationals need only submit a single application to register trademark(s) in several countries which are member states of the Madrid System.

The Madrid System is a platform of international trademark registration centralized at the WIPO. While a normal process of multi-country trademark registrations would involve a considerable amount of paperwork in a possibly non-standardized language as well as interaction with local intellectual property offices, the Madrid system standardizes the application form and reproduction specifications. In addition, WIPO acts as an intermediary between applicants and local intellectual property offices in relaying communications and decisions regarding the trademarks being considered for registration. Nationals or domiciles of a member state, or those with an effective industrial or commercial establishment in a member state, are eligible to use it.

Thailand's accession to the Protocol brings the total number of participating countries to 115. This list already includes 6 ASEAN Member States, which are Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam. Moving forward, the Madrid Protocol will allow Thai businesses to register trademarks abroad in a more facilitated manner, enabling Thai brands to receive more legal protection. Foreign entities will also be able to register trademarks in Thailand using the Madrid system.

The benefit of this system extends beyond a simplified and streamlined process of intellectual property registration. The Madrid Protocol also stipulates time limits on which an intellectual property office must respond to the applicant with a decision on the granting of protection. This condition may encourage intellectual property offices around the world to improve their internal process, hence ensuring faster consideration of trademark applications.

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If you have any comments or questions regarding Trade Digest or any matters discussed herein, or if you are interested in finding out more about Bolliger & Company (Thailand) services, please contact any of the persons below:

Rachda Chiasakul | Partner and Managing Director  
Rachda.C@bolliger-company.com

Sarut Wittayarungruang Sri | Director  
Sarut.W@bolliger-company.com

Tel. +66 (0) 2 230 6399  
Fax. +66 (0) 2 230 6333

[www.bolliger-company.com](http://www.bolliger-company.com)

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