

# WIPO



SCIT/ATR/PI/2001/IE

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**WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION**  
GENEVA

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES**

**ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT**

**2001**

**ON PATENT INFORMATION ACTIVITIES<sup>1</sup>**

submitted by

**IRELAND**

An annual series of reports on the patent information activities  
of members of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies

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<sup>1</sup> – The term “patent” covers utility models and SPCs.  
– Information related to design patent activities reported by industrial property offices issuing design patents is included in the series of documents SCIT/ATR/ID.

## **ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT ON PATENT INFORMATION ACTIVITIES**

submitted by

**IRELAND**

### **I. Evolution of patent activities:**

In 2001 the Irish Office received 1,169 patent applications, an increase of 8% compared to 2000. 1019 of these applications i.e. 87% were received from applicants within the State and 322 claimed priority under the Paris Convention. The Patents Act, 1992 offers applicants the choice of a ten year (short-term) or twenty year (full-term) patent – in 2001 approximately 45% of applicants opted for the full-term patent.

The Office granted 551 patents, an increase of almost 21% over the figure for 2000.

The Office acts as a receiving office for European (EP) applications and also for applications filed under the Patent Co-operation Treaty (PCT). The number of EP applications filed in 2000 was 157, a reduction of 26% over the 2000 figure. The number of PCT applications filed fell slightly from 169 to 162 a decrease of 4% over the same period.

A total of 29 applications for Supplementary Protection Certificates were received in 2000 and 3 SPCs were granted.

### **II. Matters concerning the generation, reproduction, distribution and use of primary and secondary sources of patent information:**

The Office publishes the Patents Office Journal once a fortnight and this contains bibliographic information (applicant name, title of invention, date of filing, priority date where applicable and the application number) on new applications, published patent applications (i.e. 18 months after the priority date) and granted patents. The list of granted patents includes both those granted by our Office and those granted by the EPO having Ireland as a designated state.

Since 1995 the Office has begun to publish patent applications on a series of CD-ROMs, the ESPACE-IE series, in co-operation with the EPO and using the MIMOSA software. This series contains searchable bibliographic data and abstracts with the complete document available in facsimile format. At present the collection covers the years 1995 to 1999 inclusive and it is expected that the disks for 2000 and 2001 will be available before the end of 2002. All patent applications are also published in paper form.

Since June 2000 granted patent specifications are only published in pdf format on CD-ROM and are retrievable using the grant number.

The Office maintains an internal Patents database which contains all bibliographic data and legal status for Irish patents. The database can be searched free of charge by the public at our Information Centres in Kilkenny and Dublin.

III. Matters concerning abstracting, classifying, reclassifying and indexing of technical information contained in patent documents:

All abstracts are submitted in English by applicants are checked and modified if necessary by the patent examiners.

All patent applications are classified according to the latest edition of the IPC (Seventh Edition). No indexing schemes are used by the Office. At the present time no reclassification is performed when a new version of the IPC is published. All bibliographic data can be searched on the internal patents database but no full-text search facility exists.

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep:

Because of the small number of patent examiners the Office has contracted out the searching for national applications and no longer maintains a search file.

V. Activities in the field of computerized and other mechanized search systems:

The Office has a CD-ROM/DVD jukebox network with a capacity of 4400 disks and it contains the major collections of patent documents e.g EP-A, WORLD, GlobalPat, etc. These collections may be searched using the MIMOSA software and are also available to public visitors to the information centres in Kilkenny and Dublin. The patent examiners also have access via an ISDN line to the EPOQUE search and BNS document retrieval systems of the EPO.

The Office maintains an electronic Patents Register which contains all bibliographic data and legal status for Irish patents. The database can be searched free of charge by the public.

The Office uses the PTOLEMY administrative management system with the application server running under Microsoft Windows NT linked to a SQL database and client workstations running under Windows 98. The network uses Novell and TCP/IP.

VI. Administration of the industrial property office library and services available to the public (relating to facilities, e.g., for lodging applications, for assisting clients on searching procedures, for obtaining official publications and registry extracts):

The Office has two Information Centres, one at the headquarters in Kilkenny and the other in Dublin. The centre in Dublin also serves as a Receiving Office for applications. The centres provide general information concerning intellectual property rights to the public as well as dealing with specific queries. Workstations are available giving access to the Register of Patents, the Patents Public Search facility and the jukebox CD-ROM/DVD network. Paper copies of patent documents going back to 1920 for most major countries can be supplied on request.

The Office web-site is linked into the EPO esp@cenet search facility offering the possibility of accessing over 30 million documents online including Irish patent information.

VII. Matters concerning mutual exchange of patent documentation and information:

The Office supplies national bibliographic data in electronic format to the EPO for loading onto their EPOQUE database, for esp@cenet and for processing related to the production of the ESPACE-IE CD-ROM series.

The Office also provides electronic renewal fee and legal status information to the EPO for EP granted patents designating Ireland.

At the present time priority documents may be exchanged only in paper form. Similarly, there is no current provision for the electronic filing of applications, although an evaluation of the possible demand for such a facility is planned for next year.

VIII. Other relevant matters concerning education and training in, and promotion of, the use of patent information, including technical assistance to developing countries:

In 2001 the Office organised a number of internal training courses for staff on topics such as patentability and the use of online search tools. The Office also participated in the annual Young Scientist and Technology exhibition in January and shared a stand with the EPO at the Enterprise Ireland exhibition in September. The Office hosted the EPO PATLIB Conference in Dublin in May at which several patent examination staff gave presentations and seminars. Several presentations on patent-related topics were also given in Irish universities.

The Office hosted visitors from several other industrial property offices interested in our PTOLEMY administrative management system.

IX. Other relevant matters.

The Office has recently embarked on a number of e-commerce related projects of which the following are designed to enhance our provision of patent information :-

- (i) Publishing our fortnightly Journal in electronic form on our website.
- (ii) Making the Register of Patents available and fully searchable on the internet.

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