CWS/ATR/PI/2016/PL

Annual Technical Report on Patent Information Activities in 2016 submitted by Patent Office of the Republic of Poland

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PATENT INFORMATION ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Outline of main policies and plans aimed at development of patent information activities and expected time frames for their realization

The Patent Office of the Republic of Poland aims at development of patent information activities within cooperation with PATLIB centres, European Patent Office, World Intellectual Property Organisation and the European Commission. Within the above mentioned cooperation the Office implements new services as well as adapts and improves the existing services and tools provided by national intellectual property offices.

Main policies and plans of the Office include among others activities aimed at supporting innovativeness of SMEs, commercialisation of intellectual property and development of entrepreneurship. Those activities are implemented by improving business skills in patent information usage, especially in creating strategies of enterprises, creating cooperation platform between business and scientific environment as well as platform for exchanging experience and knowledge.

New projects launched or resumed this year in the context of the policies and plans mentioned above, short description: aims, partners, tasks

In 2016 the Office in collaboration with WIPO continued implementation of a scientific-research project "Intellectual Property and Socio-Economic Development". The aim of the project is to analyse the relation between intellectual property in a given industry sector and socio-economic development of the country. The results of the project may have impact on more conscious development of national policy in the scope of intellectual property on both central and local level. Taking into account current trends in scientific and economic development in Poland, the health care sector is to be analysed. The methodology of research is based mainly on statistical and comparative analyses.

In 2016 the new project was launched, concerning development of Electronic Services Platform (PUEUP). The main object of the project is to deliver one platform to provide electronic services to customers.

In 2016 PPO was active in the field of e-administration services, taking part in the development of functionalities related to the use of governmental Electronic Platform of Public Administration Services (ePUAP). PPO has dealt with maintaining of the existing forms in terms of their functionality and reliability and has redefined the process of exchanging documents between ePUAP and Electronic Document Management system (EZD).

PPO has carried out the development of the Register Plus system. The scope of data presented has been extended for national, EP and SPC patents and utility models.

In 2016 PPO has prepared, tested and launched a new webservice to display bibliographic and legal status data relating to European patent documents in the PL post-grant phase in one consolidated view – Federated Register in EPO Register.

Under the Innovative Economy Programme project, the PPO has continued the development of main search engine of industrial property items, based on the SharePoint 2013.

The new search system Document Library UPRP platform has been made available to all interested parties. It has been prepared for full text search in the texts of descriptions and publications.

PPO has continued the development of an intranet platform on SharePoint 2013: new versions of personal pages, updating and ordering official documents, launching the search of documents and adding other new functionalities.

In 2016 in cooperation with WIPO an adaptation project of the system called IPCRMS was carried out to implement the centralized translation of International Patent Classification (IPC) into Polish.

PPO has maintained the searchable *Patent Attorneys and Applicants List*. Adjustments to the data structure and adaptation of the system to the current legislation were made.

Due to the requirements of the Patent Attorneys Act, patent attorneys and applicants data for the public courts have been made available in the system-to-system mode. For this purpose a comprehensive requirement analysis was carried out and a "list of patent attorneys and applicants" webservice service was implemented.

The PPO has joined the data providers group at DanePubliczne.gov.pl website and has implemented automatic mechanisms for public data publication processed by the Office, concerning industrial property protection, publications provided by the Office, information about patent attorneys, etc.

The adaptation works and implementation of the necessary changes in Publication's system were carried out due to the division of BUP into two separate publications for trademarks and inventions and utility models.

Main areas of patent information activities and related information and communication technology (ICT) practices which were in the focus of attention last year

The Register Plus software application for patents was further developed and enhanced in 2016. The quality of data was improved and a wider range of presented data was introduced.

As a continuation of work on the main search engine of industrial property items in the year 2016 there were introduced amendments requested by users, aimed at improving the functionality of the search engine. It is linked to other search systems, which are in the portfolio of the Office (Publication Server, Register Plus, etc.).

Statistics: changes in terms of application filings and grants with respect to previous year; trends or areas experiencing rapid changes

Filings to the Office are increasingly more often preceded by searches in the electronic collections than in the paper holdings.

In 2016, the PPO received 4,351 patent applications under the national procedure, out of which 4,256 were filed by domestic applicants and 95 by foreign applicants.

45 applications filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty entered the phase of examination carried out by the Office (so-called national phase).

Under the international procedure, as the receiving Office, the PPO received from domestic applicants 219 patent applications under the PCT procedure and 189 European patent applications with the aim of seeking protection abroad.

In 2016, PPO acting as the VPI/ISA prepared 18 International Search Reports and Written Opinions for domestic applicants indicating VPI as an International Authority. The Visegrad Patent Institute (VPI) is an intergovernmental organization for cooperation in the field of patents established by the four Visegrad countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Poland and the Slovak Republic (V4 countries). VPI was appointed as an International Searching Authority (ISA) and International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). The Visegrad Patent Institute started operation on July 1st 2016.

In 2016, the Office received from foreign applicants 57 applications for the grant of supplementary right of protection for medicinal products and plant protection products in order to protect rights under Supplementary Protection Certificate (SPC).

On 31 December 2016, 65,006 patents remained in force, out of which 46,019 were European patents.

Other matters and useful links (URLs): annual report of the Office, news page, statistics, etc.

Statistics are accessed at the following URLs:

http://www.uprp.pl (Annual Reports' box)

Detailed statistics may be bespoke provided (write to http://www.uprp.gov.pl/Text01,205,161,1,index,pl,text).

News page: http://www.uprp.pl/aktualnosci/Menu01,16,7,index,pl/

II. SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PATENT INFORMATION CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Information and support provided by the Office to applicants regarding filing on paper and/or e-filing (instructions, seminars, etc.) - URLs

The PPO information and support options in 2016 included:

1) Via website: http://www.uprp.pl/przedmioty-wlasnosci-przemyslowej/Menu02,12,4,index,pl/ (all information about patents, trademarks, designs, etc. and instructions e.g. "How to patent an invention or utility model to protect? ");

2) via telephone: (+48 22 579 05 55);

3) via e-mail: http://www.uprp.pl/Text01,205,161,1,index,pl,text/.

Management of the contacts in 2016 (phone + mail) was performed through a software:

1)   Personal contacts (CRM system);

2)   Within Register IP Info Center customer contacts (OSCC, CRM systems);

-      864 emails were received

-      26,639 calls were answered and performed (including the call back)

-      2,639 meetings took place with examiners and at the center of information

3)   Identification and differentiation of customers (OSCC, CRM systems);

4)   Carrying out customer satisfaction surveys (CRM system) - level of satisfaction 93 %;

5)   Analyses of the contacts (analyses, statistics - CRM, OSCC systems);

6)   Keeping records and transferring customer requests (satisfaction, complaints, suggestions for improvement) (TRX system).

The CRM system is shared between 11 departments in contact with the public. A change of version was introduced for :

- independent work with the contact, regardless of the fact who established the contact and possibility to change/edit the contact data;

- interfacing with other applications (Computer Telephony Integration, callback, meetings time and visits) to facilitate the customer relation management. Tool for measuring the customers' satisfaction.

In 2016, IP Info Center implemented a non-verbal communication system to improve information service for deaf and hard of hearing customers.

Availability of the application dossier in electronic form

Customers using the ePUAP have access to the application files sent by them electronically to the PPO.

Classification[1], preclassification[2] (if applicable), reclassification[3] activities; classification systems used (e.g., International Patent Classification (IPC)); matters concerning indexing of patent information

In 2016, the electronic 2016.01 version of the International Patent Classification was used at the PPO, while the 2017.01 version was being prepared to be launched in 2017.

Abstracting, reviewing, and translation of the information contained in patent documents

In 2016, Patent literature collection was enlarged by the 1,833 pdf files of European patent specifications, translated into Polish (available online).

Polish abstracts and their English equivalents are stored in the database, and thus are searched and accessible for further treatment.

The Office's abstracting services are handled by electronic means which aid to place the abstract deliveries in the in-house and external retrieval systems, like: Polish databases, Official Journal records, Espacenet (both collections - PL database and the Worldwide data base), etc.

Other activities

III. SOURCES OF PATENT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE OFFICE

Main types of publications of the Office (patent applications, full text, first pages, abstracts, bibliographic data, granted patents, etc.), medium (on paper, on CDs, online - URLs)

In 2016, the following publications (periodicals) were issued:

- "Biuletyn Urzdu Patentowego" (Bulletin of the Patent Office - bi-weekly) 26 numbers, i.e. 2,660 copies;

- "Wiadomoci Urzdu Patentowego" (Communications of the Patent Office - monthly) 12 numbers, i.e. 1,170 copies;

- 2015 Annual Report of the Patent Office of the Republic of Poland – 972 copies;

- Patent Specifications (type B1 documents) 3,730 titles - 58,876 copies;

- Protection Specifications of Utility Models 666 titles - 2,664 copies.

In 2016 the publications department started to prepare and make available in PDF format translations of the European Patents. 6,622 translations were published on the Office's Publication Server.

Most publications are available on the PPO's website: http://uprp.pl - and continue at http://portal.uprp.gov.pl (Online Services Portal)

Official Gazettes: main types of announcements, frequency of publication, medium (on paper, on CDs, online - URL), etc.

Announcements on patents and utility models are primarily published in the official gazettes on paper carrier: "Biuletyn Urzdu Patentowego" - Bulletin of the Patent Office (information on inventions and utility models applications) and in "Wiadomoci Urzdu Patentowego" - Communications of the Patent Office (information on granted patents and granted protection rights on utility models). Announcements containing ordinances of the President of the Patent Office, official announcements and communications are published in the Official Journal of the Patent Office. In 2016, 3,813 announcements on filed patent applications and 783 announcements on utility model applications were published in "Biuletyn Urzdu Patentowego" (Bulletin of the Patent Office) and 3,744 announcements on granted patents and 664 granted protection rights on utility models were published in "Wiadomoci Urzdu Patentowego" (Communications of the Patent Office).

All these publications are forthwith available free of charge in PDF format on the PPO's Online Services Portal http://portal.uprp.pl/wydawnictwa.html

Announcements regarding non-procedural matters, but coupled with the Office's activity like: general information on the PPO's tasks, references, organizational structure, HR matters are published on the Internet version of "Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej" which falls under the official PPO's website. Many non-regular, important announcements are immediately published within the content of the website.

Information products and patent document collections (coverage, medium, etc.) available to examiners, including external collections and databases

- IP information on patents and utility models: http://grab.uprp.pl;

- Publication Server - Polish patents (B), utility models (Y) and EP translations into Polish (T): http://pubserv.uprp.pl (user interface in 3 languages - PL, EN and FR);

- Espacenet – Worldwide patent and utility models data base containing PL collection (bibliographic data in English): Polish interface available on https://pl.espacenet.com/;

- Online Services Portal with access to patent gazettes, classifications, e-filings and patent attorney's directory: http://portal.uprp.gov.pl

- Register Plus with access to published Polish applications (Description, Claims, Figures and Search Report): http://regserv.uprp.gov.pl/register/regviewer

- EPOQUENet Suite;

- Science Direct (full-text scientific database) hosted by Elsevier;

- STN (the Scientific and Technical Information Network);

- ACS (the American Chemical Society) Journals;

- Springer Journals (accessed also via Epoquenet);

- IEEE (accessed also via Epoquenet) scientific and technical content published by the IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) and its publishing partners.

Information products and patent document collections (coverage, medium, etc.) available to external users, conditions of access (e.g., free of charge, subscription, etc.)

Patent literature collections are available in the PPO's reading room.

Copies of documents are available upon payment (price list available on the PPO website or on the spot) on the premises of the reading room or can be sent to external users by fax, electronic mail or traditional post.

Patent Office possesses collections of:

- 6.26 million patent documents on paper;

- over 36 million documents on CD-ROM.

Supplementary literature comprises:

- official bulletins of 42 patent offices;

- legal and methodology publications;

- general technical and specialised magazines.

PPO provides access to patent literature in the reading room where external users can also search free of charge in online databases and databases on CD and DVD. The latter include: bibliographic databases, databases of full text patent documents, thematic databases of patent and technical literature.

Information rendered available free of charge included:

- provision of 13,348 single Polish and foreign patent specifications;

- 1,020 volumes of books and magazines;

Information provided upon payment includes:

- bibliographic data of patent and utility model applications and granted exclusive rights.

Online sources of patent information and collections include:

- Online Services Portal with: IP information on industrial design, access to patent gazettes, classifications, e-filings and patent attorney's directory. Available at: http://portal.uprp.gov.pl. Free of charge;

- Espacenet – Worldwide patent and utility models data base containing PL collection (bibliographic data in English): Polish interface available on https://pl.espacenet.com/. Free of charge;

- Publication Server – a portal giving free, open, and wide access to patent information, with integrated facilities to search full texts of Polish patent specifications, Polish utility models, Polish industrial designs and translations into Polish language published by the European Patent Office patents which are valid in the territory of the Republic of Poland. Documents are disseminated in PDF format. Available at: http://pubserv.uprp.gov.pl/. Free of charge

- Register Plus available at: http://regserv.uprp.gov.pl/register/regviewer. Free of charge

Legal status information (kind of information, coverage, medium, etc.)

In order to make entries on the legal status of exclusive rights protected on the territory of Poland, the following registers are held: patent register, utility model register. Registers include information necessary to establish the subject and scope of protection (f. ex. date of filing, title), entity (or entities) entitled to rights concerning a given subject of protection (f. ex. holders, licensees, securities, seizure) and other useful information (f. ex. applications for revocation). Every person who submits relevant application and pays a fee to the account of the Office can obtain excerpts from the register.

Legal status information is also available in Register Plus at:

http://regserv.uprp.pl/register/regviewer

Other sources

IV. ICT SUPPORT TO SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PATENT INFORMATION CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Specific software tools supporting business procedures within the Office: general description, characteristics, advantages, possible improvements

EPOQUE Net is a professional patent information retrieval tool which supports the processes of search and patent granting. It consists of a bundle of search applications and tools and is accessible by Patent Office via the Patent secure network. EPOQUE Net is continuously improved by European Patent Office and distributed to National Offices. PPO uses 4.50 version, and it is planned to implement new versions in 2017.

Hardware used to supporting business processes of the Office

PPO uses thin clients, workstations and notebooks with *Microsoft Windows XP Professional*, *Microsoft Windows 7 Professional*, *Microsoft Windows 10*; multimedia tablets with *Apple iOS*, *Google Android* and *Microsoft Windows* 10 *Pro*; physical and virtual servers with *Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Standard & Enterprise*, *Microsoft Windows Server 2003 R2 Standard & Enterprise*, *Microsoft Windows Server 2008 Standard & Enterprise*, *Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2 Standard & Enterprise*, *Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2 Standard*, *SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 10/11/12*, *CentOS Linux 5/6/7*, *Oracle Linux 5/6/7*, *Debian GNU/Linux 6/7/8* and *Ubuntu Server LTS*; hypervisor servers with *VM ware vSphere* and *Microsoft Hyper-V Server 2012 R2*.

All of thin clients, workstations, notebooks and servers are secured by Symantec antivirus and Forcepoint antispam system.

All network connections are based on *Cisco*, *Forcepoint* and *Extreme Networks* equipment with 300 Mb/s access to the Internet. The availability of services published to the Internet is supported by the Barracuda Load Balancer cluster.

Server infrastructure for the Online Portal includes 9 application servers; 5 database servers; 15 storage spaces. TB build-up array; back-ups for HP Data Protector, Fujitsu FI-5900C scanner, 125 packages for the purposes of qualified signatures. On-Line Portal servers are supported by local UPSs and they are also hooked to Main power supply unit for the PPO.

Main IT infrastructure units are located in a secure server room equipped with fire alarm, CCTV system, redundant air-conditioning and technical floor.

Internal databases: coverage, updates, interlinks with external sources

Patent data are stored on the specialized, regularly updated internal databases, where image information and bibliographic details are held, for example:

- Soprano – system supporting the process of granting rights of protection for patents and utility models (national procedure, the SPC and the European patent validation procedure);

- databases supporting the process of publication of patents and utility models.

Most production databases are hosted by *Microsoft SQL Server 2012 Enterprise* and *MySQL Server 4/5/*, *PostgreSQL 9*

Establishment and maintenance of electronic search file: file building, updating, storage, documents from other offices included in the search file

EP data are stored and accessed via Soprano system.

Administrative management electronic systems (register, legal status, statistics, and administrative support)

Main administrative electronic system Soprano (work-flow) supports the process of granting rights of protection for patents and utility models (national procedure, the SPC and the European patent validation procedure). It is adopted to work together with ePhoenix which stores electronic case files and Electronic Document Management System (EZD) which facilitates processing of incoming and outgoing correspondence. External users have access to register and legal status information via Register Plus system. Settlement Module (MR) is used as a supplementary system for managing fees and payments.

Other matters

PPO has continued implementation of new Intranet site based on *Microsoft SharePoint Server 2013 Enterprise* software.

PPO maintained professional call center service based on *Unify OpenScape Contact Center Enterprise* software and new system of customer relationship management based on *Microsoft Dynamics CRM Server 365* software.

PPO has launched the registers containing lists of requests about public information and public information provided.

PPO has prepared a new version of the list of patent attorneys.

The leading office software used for word processing and spreadsheet is, *Microsoft Office 2007 Standard*, *Microsoft Office 2010 Standard & Professional Plus*, *Microsoft Office 2013 Standard & Professional Plus, Microsoft Office 2016 Standard & Professional Plus* and *Apache OpenOffice 4*.

V. PROMOTION ACTIVITIES AIMED TO SUPPORT USERS IN ACCESS AND EFFICIENT USE OF PATENT INFORMATION

Patent library: equipment, collection management, network of patent libraries in the country, cooperation with foreign patent libraries

Patent documentation on paper carrier is stored in the Office storage rooms on movable bookshelves, in numerical and class arrangements, and are grouped separately according to respective countries. Class collection is stored in special files, adjusted to this type of collection. Numerical collection is stored in bound volumes. The storage rooms meet all the requirements for collection's safety. Polish patent documents arranged according to the patent classification symbols are available in the Office's general reading room.

Collection of patent documents on CD-ROM and DVD is stored on special bookshelves adjusted to this type of collection. It is available in the reading room also to external users.

The Office's reading room is also equipped with computer stations where PPO employees and external users can retrieve patent information from internet databases.

Polish Patent Office cooperates with 26 PATLIB information centres, most of them located within libraries of schools of higher education. The centres provide patent information and consultancy and employ patent attorneys. They also conduct free of charge seminars and trainings for those interested in patent information.

Patent Office supplies the centres with patent literature and informational materials on paper and electronic carriers for further dissemination.

In 2016, the Office sent:

- 1 disc with full text of patent documentation;

- 37 discs with patent literature.

Decreasing number of discs sent to the centres results from the policy to post informational materials online rather than on disc and paper carrier.

Publications related to different business procedures and patent information sources available to users, for example, books, brochures, Internet publications, etc.

Within promotion of knowledge on industrial property the Patent Office issues various publications such as guides, informational-promotional brochures addressed to wide audience, among others to entrepreneurs, students, school youth. Those publications are available free of charge both in electronic version and PDF format as well as on paper on the premises of the Office.

Publication titles are as follows: Your world of intellectual property, What is intellectual property, Inventor's guide, Inventions in SMEs activity, Inventions and patents. Use the past to create future, Industrial protection in a nutshell, Inventions in your house, Patents (comic book).

Office's initiatives on providing foreign patent information in the local language(s) (e.g., machine translation tools, translation of abstracts)

In 2016 the PPO developed electronic versions of 1,833 European patent specifications translated into Polish, which are available on the Office's Publication Server in PDF format.

Cooperation with universities, research centers, technology and innovation support centers, etc.

The Patent Office collaborates with various institutions in the scope of promotion of knowledge on Intellectual Property (organisation of conferences, workshops, trainings, granting patronage of the PPO President over numerous initiatives etc.).

In 2016, the Office collaborated with the following entities, to name a few:

- collaboration with universities (Jagiellonian University in Kraków, University of Warsaw, Maria Curie-Skodowska University in Lublin, ód University of Technology, Kielce University of Technology, Warsaw University of Technology, Wrocaw University of Technology, AGH University of Science and Technology in Kraków, etc.);

- collaboration with science and business related institutions, including:, Association of Polish Inventors and Rationalisers, Polish Patent Attorney Chamber; National Information Processing Institute, National Chamber of Commerce, Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, Institute of Industrial Design, etc.;

- collaboration with governmental administration institutions: Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Regional Development.

Education and training: training courses, e-learning modules (URLs), seminars, exhibitions, etc.

In 2016, the PPO participated in trainings and conferences, both in-house and online, organised by the European Patent Office (71 participants). The events focused on issues, such as: EpoqueNet search, Patent searching, EPO Patent Information, Clarity and unity analysis of patent applications, Novelty and Inventive step, How to understand EPO Search Reports, Efficient dialog between patent examiners and patent attorneys, The European Patent System from filing to grant, Drafting search reports and written opinions, EPOQUE Net searches (advanced level) including search in non-patent-literature, Introduction to patent statistics and the PATSTAT product line, Patents in cosmetics, IP strategies and commercialisation, Opposition procedure at the EPO.

In 2016, within industrial property protection the PPO organised or participated in the following events:

- 21st Conference "Patent Information for Science and Industry. Tools and strategies of innovation management" in Warsaw;

- 12th International Symposium "Industrial Property in Innovative Economy. Start-ups in innovation world" held in Kraków;

- 35th Seminar for Patent Attorneys of Schools of Higher Education in Cedzyna;

- PPO competition for a poster, short film and media information in the scope of intellectual property protection;

- 10th International Warsaw Exhibition of Inventions IWIS;

- Workshop "Intellectual property in pharmaceutical-medical sector: Are we innovative?";

- Two seminars "From idea to commercialisation – build your protection strategy";

- 3rd edition of the competition Ambassador of School Innovation;

- 20th Scientific Picnic of the Polish Radio and Copernicus Science Centre;

- Ceremony of prize award in the 14th edition of the competition for the best artistic poster as well as post-doctoral, doctoral, master's and student's theses on the subject of intellectual property organized by the Patent Office;

In 2016 PPO maintained the Internet Educational Platform (http://ipe.uprp.gov.pl) which constitutes compendium of knowledge on intellectual property issues. The target group comprises enterprises (especially MSEs) business related institutions (including schools of higher education) and other entities.

- · The Knowledge Zone includes information, publications and other materials addressed both to entities with advanced knowledge on IP issues and those looking for basic information on IP protection, procedures and management.
- · Training Zone comprises e-learning course divided into 10 modules on intellectual property protection. Each module ends with a test to verify the acquired knowledge.

PPO has also maintained e-learning platform, IPPanorama, dedicated to broadening and promotion of knowledge about the protection of intellectual property. It is available at http://ippanorama.uprp.pl.

The Patent Information Center Forum has been prepared, a platform for exchanging experiences, knowledge, comments and opinions between Patent Information Centers and the Office.

In 2016 the PPO organised on its premises a series of advisory-informational meetings with renowned experts in the field of intellectual property, which gathered in total 450 guests.

Other activities

Nonverbal communication system was implemented in the form of online sign language translation service. The purpose of the project was removal of communication barriers in communication with people with hearing impairment.

VI. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF PATENT INFORMATION

International exchange and sharing of patent information in machine-readable form, e.g., priority documents, bibliographic data, abstracts, search reports, full text information

The Office provides several patent offices and organizations with its bibliographic data and abstracts in the flat text machine-readable format, and also xml format. Full-text information is provided in PDF fully searchable format. Electronic filings submitted to the PPO under EP and WO procedures are transferred to the EPO and WIPO respectively.

Participation in international or regional activities and projects related to patent information

In 2016 the PPO in co-operation with the European Patent Office signed the "Bilateral Co-operation Plan" (BCP) which is a co-operation agreement covering a number of projects planned for the years 2016-2018. The co-operation activities concern areas such as training, patent-related IT services and tools, patent information services and awareness and strengthening of the European Patent Network (EPN). In the IT field the projects deal with Federated Register, Espacenet New and Quality at Source.

Various activities to be implemented within the framework of the BCP are targeted at raising patent awareness among the users of the IP system, including the "Awareness of the European patent system" project supporting organisation of promotional and informational stands at international fairs, exhibitions and conferences and organisation of patent-related awareness and training events to promote the European patent system. The main objective of these activities is to enhance the patent knowledge of SMEs, industry and academic institutions and to increase their use of the European patent system.

Following the creation of the Visegrad Patent Institute (VIP), the PPO staff in cooperation with other national offices participated in the developing of website design
and necessary functionalities of application designated to handle the affairs of the Institute. As part of the work, the e-mail service for the Institute has been prepared and deployed via the Microsoft Exchange Server 2010 e-mail system, as well as procedures for handling mail accounts for the @ vpi.int domain have been developed.

Assistance to developing countries

n/a

Other activities

VII. OTHER RELATED MATTERS

1.Classification is allotting one or more classification symbols (e.g., IPC symbols) to a patent application, either before or during search and examination, which symbols are then published with the patent application.

2. Preclassification is allotting an initial broad classification symbol (e.g., IPC class or subclass, or administrative unit) to a patent application, using human or automated means for internal administrative purposes (e.g., routing an application to the appropriate examiner). Usually preclassification is applied by the administration of an office.

3. Reclassification is the reconsideration and usually the replacement of one or more previously allotted classification symbols to a patent document, following a revision and the entry into force of a new version of the Classification system (e.g., the IPC). The new symbols are available on patent databases.