

CWS/ATR/PI/2015/LT

Annual Technical Report on Patent Information Activities in 2015 submitted by the State Patent Bureau of Lithuania

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 State Patent Bureau of the Republic of Lithuania (SPB) aims at development of patent information activities within cooperation with World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and the European Patent Office (EPO). Within these cooperation links the SPB executes new projects as well as adapts and improves the existing services and tools.

Main plans and policies of the SPB include continuous seek to inform and educate the society about obtaining the protection of industrial property objects in Lithuania (inventions, trademarks, designs), the European Union, and the world.

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

in 2015 realising the need to expand special professional expertise in the sphere of patenting, and using the opportunities available in the framework of the multilateral cooperation program with the EOP Office, 9 employees of the State Patent Bureau attended 6 training courses held by the European Patent Academy in 2015, 15 employees of the SPB had the opportunity to perfect their foreign language skills.

In 2015 in cooperation with **Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology** (MITA), the agreement regarding searches between EPO and SPB was implemented. Under the agreement, Lithuanian entities are entitled to a discount for searches of national patent applications in EPO. In October 2015, the EPO Administration Office approved a higher discount for Lithuanian entities – it will be 75 percent as of 2016. In 2015, the bilateral cooperation plan between EPO and SPB was being successfully implemented.

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

In 2015 the software for filing national patent application data for performing searches with EPO was installed.

The software was developed and European patent classification in the database was upgraded.

By the project QaS (Quality at Source), SPB seeks to ensure that the users are presented with quality data and therefore, it strives to provide the information to the users from the data source directly. To this end, SPB developed the database of references, where all references mentioned in the Lithuanian patents starting with patent 3001 were entered. This database is updated every month and reference data is transferred to EPO.

Electronic reference data transmission software was improved so as to ensure that EPO receives the most comprehensive data about Lithuanian patents.

In order to verify the completeness and integrity of the data of various patent offices, the main world patent offices decided to exchange the lists of patents in their databases. To this end, SPB developed the software, which allows providing this information to interested parties on a regular basis.

The web service was developed, which allows presenting the data about the legal status of the European patents to the European Patent Federal Register. The online database of the European patents in the SPB website was supplemented by tax payment information and is automatically updated every day.

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

in 2015 the number of applications for national patents has decreased by 29 percent in comparison to 2014. Assessing the average level of patent applications in 2010-2014, the number of national patent applications received decreased by 8 percent in 2015. This number of applications could have been determined by several reasons: expiry of the opportunity to use the national Patent Cooperation Agreement in 2014 and the intensity of use of state financial support for patent projects by the applicants.

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

Statistics are accessed at the following URLs:

<http://www.vpb.lt/index.php?l=en&n=321>

Annual Report:

<http://www.vpb.lt/index.php?l=en&n=318>

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 SPB information options in 2015 include:

1. Via website: <http://www.vpb.lt/index.php?l=en&n=238>
2. Via telephone (+3705 278 0290)
3. via e-mai: info@vpb.gov.lt

Availability of the application dossier in electronic form

In 2015 communication with the applicants is maintained via the Electronic Applicant Service System (EPAS), where the documents to SPB are filed in electronic form only.

Classification¹, preclassification² (if applicable), reclassification³ activities; classification systems used (e.g., International Patent Classification (IPC)); matters concerning indexing of patent information

Applications are classified in accordance with the International Patent Classification, core level

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

Lithuanian language invention abstracts of patent applications and patents have been published as presented by applicants.

Other activities

N/A

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 the Official Gazette of the SPB there are published the most important bibliographic data (including patent classifications, excluding abstracts and figurative accessories) of the patent applications laid open to public inspection after the lapse of 18 months from the filing date and bibliographic data (including patent classification, abstracts and figurative accessories) of the granted patents.

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

SPB publish on its homepage Official Gazette (<http://www.vpb.lt/index.php?l=en&n=245>) on the 25th of every month. The official place for publication of the SPB Official Bulletin electronic version in PDF format as from 1 July 2009 the SPB web site (www.vpb.gov.lt).

In 2015 were announced the official statistics and 12 official bulletins (gazettes) of the SPB.

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

The website for the State Patent Bureau of Lithuania is available in English or Lithuanian (via the language options accessible in the upper right corner of the webpage). Through the English-language version of the homepage, users can access the following collections by selecting the "Databases" link below the menu option for each intellectual property type (except "Topographies," which does not have an accessible database):

- **Inventions**
 - *Database of the Patents of the Republic of Lithuania*
 - *Database of the European Patents entered into force in the Republic of Lithuania*
- **Design**
 - *Database of the Design of the Republic of Lithuania*
- **Trademarks**
 - *Database of the Trademarks of the Republic of Lithuania*

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

The SPB homepage with Rss-reader at <http://www.vpb.lt/index.php?l=EN>. The homepage enables access to patent, design, trademark registration information both in English and Lithuanian. It also contains all legal acts (all Lithuanian legal acts are in Lithuanian) and other legislation as well as material on legal protection of industrial property, relevant links, current news and the public databases of subjects for legal protection of the Lithuanian Patent Office, EPO, WIPO, OHIM.

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

Bibliographic, legal status data, abstracts in Lithuanian and English of Lithuanian patent applications and patents, extracted from SPB Common Software Database have been posted on EPO FTP sites prior to the actual publications date. Scanned Patent Specifications (B documents) SPB sent to Espacenet database. The bibliographic, legal status data on Lithuanian Patent Applications, PCT Applications, Lithuanian Patents and European Patents have been supplied to EPO to be included into INPADOC PFS, INPADOC PRS and Espacenet.

Other sources

n/a

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

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Hardware used to supporting business processes of the Office

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Internal databases: coverage, updates, interlinks with external sources

In 2015, SPB continued the development of information systems. The main task of the IT Division employees was to upgrade and maintain the systems and workstations and to ensure their operation.

Technical requirements for hardware and software purchased were prepared.

The new Online filing plug-in for online filing of translations of European patent definitions has been deployed in cooperation with the EPO

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

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

The SPB published on its homepage (<http://www.vpb.lt/en/>) the Official Bulletin Inventions, Designs, Trademarks and databases of Lithuanian Patents and European Patents entered into force in the Republic of Lithuania.

Other matters

N/A

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

Lithuanian Technical Library (LTL) is a library of national significance, which accumulates the collection maintenance of books, technical and economy periodic, documents on industrial property, company catalogues, normative and other documents.

The collection maintenance of printings is accumulated in accordance with the developing trends of economy, agriculture, industry and science.

State Patent Bureau of the Republic of Lithuania is a founder of Lithuanian Technical Library (since 1998). The Library is funded from the State budget. On 1 February 1999 the Library established a Patent Information Center, which is a deposit library of patent documents of Lithuania, foreign countries and international organizations.

LTL is a public library, available for all the citizens and legal entities of Lithuania and foreign countries. The Library performs the functions of the methodology center of technical libraries network, Interlibrary Exchange System (ILL) and International Interlibrary Exchange System (IILL).

The Library participates in the project of Integral Information System of the Libraries (LIBIS).

LTL is a member of Lithuanian Librarians' Association (LLA) and Lithuanian Research Library Consortium (LRLC).

There are a center, 17 departments and 10 reading-rooms in the Library. The Library numbers 113 employees (85 of them are the professional librarians). We have branches in Kaunas, Klaipda and Panevžys.

The Library provides fee-paying services for contracted legal entities (organizations).

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

As every year, the SPB prepared an annual review publication containing statistics for 2015 and 12 official bulletins of the SPB.

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

The SPB was also involved in the project of the EP Office and Google for the creation of an automatic patent documentation translation system. The main goal of the automatic translation technology project has been achieved: automatic translation pairs of the three official EP Office languages and all EU languages have been created. Four years since the start of the project, the Patent Translate service is now in operation, thanks to the joint effort of the European Patent Office (EP Office) and national patent offices. The tool covers all languages of the EP Office, including Lithuanian and Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Russian. Since the end of 2014 the main focus is on translation quality of each language.

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

- In 2015, SPB representatives moderated and spoke in many conferences and lectures: on 24 November, they moderated one of the parts of the seminar Intellectual Property and Its Significance in Creating a Competitive Knowledge Economy organised by the Ministry of Economy in cooperation with WIPO and spoke in the MITA information seminar Implementation of Cooperation in Search of National Patent Applications in Lithuania and the innovation forum Innovation Drift. On 5 November, SPB read a paper in the conference Innovative Business: Have All Opportunities Been Exhausted? in the KTU Santaka Valley and on 26 November, gave a lecture to the students of KTU in Technological Entrepreneurship.

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

- In 2015 the international conference Prospects of General Patent Protection held in Vilnius, the speakers of the European Patent Office, the European Union Commission, Lithuania, Latvia, and Hungary discussed the advantages and challenges of the new system and its effect on the businesses and scientific and academic communities of the country. The points of the discussion were the effects of the new system on improvement of the investment climate of Lithuania, increasing the competitiveness, and attracting large investors.

Other activities

N/A

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

In 2015 Project management, cooperation, and help service software Jira was purchased.

Technical specification of the patent administration system was prepared.

The function of issuing PDF documents signed by e-signature PDF-LT was introduced in the EPAS e-service system.

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

- From 2006, the European Patent Office has been organising the European Inventor awards, which is one of the most significant events promoting innovation and their protection in Europe. The organizers of the awards seek to find and evaluate the authors of inventions significant to the economy of public, who create innovation in their countries. With the purpose of ensuring wider recognition to Lithuanian inventors, in November, SPB nominated the Lithuanian inventor Prof. Arminas Ragauskas for the European Inventor 2016 awards.

Assistance to developing countries

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.