

CWS/ATR/PI/2019/JP

Annual Technical Report on Patent Information Activities in 2019 submitted by Japan

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

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

The outline of main policies and plans of patent information activities have officially been announced in the following report.

"Toward further utilization of patent information" Report, submitted by the subcommittee on dissemination and utilization of patent information consisting of patent information experts, appointed under the Intellectual Property Committee under Industrial Structure Council, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, in May 2016.

The future direction of the official patent information provision service operated by the JPO and the National Center for Industrial Property Information and Training (INPIT) has been summarized as below.

The JPO and the INPIT should continuously improve the infrastructure of patent information provision service to broadly disseminate the patent information with the efforts to provide the world's utmost quality service for the users in Japan with full considerations of the trends of globalization, advancement of IT, approaches to the related services by foreign IP offices and private business operators, and requests from users in Japan including small and medium-sized companies and individuals.

The following policies are mentioned in the report with the said fundamental concept.

- (i) Improving accessibility to foreign patent documents by using machine translation to Japanese.
- (ii) Provision of One Portal Dossier (OPD) service, which is to offer overseas dossier information collectively.
- (iii) Improving accessibility to unified database, which is internal and external to the JPO, through basic functions.
- (iv) Provision of the service to share Japan's world's fastest and utmost quality examination results.
- (v) External provision of substantive examinations/ appeal examinations related information regarding Design and Trademark.

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

Concerning the above (i), the JPO started Foreign Patent Information Service (FOPISER) which enables users to retrieve overseas patent information obtained by data exchange with foreign IP offices in Japanese by means of machine translation in August 2015 and the number of foreign countries which have agreed to provide their patent information is increasing accordingly. For details, see 3. (4) a-4).

Concerning the above (ii), the JPO started service to integrally provide documents (dossier information) concerning domestic and overseas patent application/examination from July 2016 on the Japan Platform for Patent Information (J-PlatPat). For more information about this, see (2) a-2)

Concerning the above (iii), since March 2018, search functions of the Japan Platform for Patent Information (J-PlatPat) were harmonized with those of the existing patent examination systems and its database functions have been significantly enhanced. Due to this, combination search by patent classifications and key words, proximity search, text search in English for patent gazettes overseas were added, and expanded range of target periods for text search of domestic publications and expanded upper limit on the number of indicated search results were realized. In May 2019, some functions were improved such as an improvement in the time lag of the update for examination and trial status information, and an expansion of the provided document coverage and search subjects, etc. Further, since March 2020, the JPO has made functional improvements such as batch download of multiple publication documents in PDF, addition of a narrow-down retrieval search function based on the date of trial decision search, etc.

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

Toward the realization of "the world's utmost quality service to provide patent information," in order to discuss how the measures for disseminating and utilizing patent information should be, the subcommittee on dissemination and utilization of patent information consisting of patent information experts was appointed under the Intellectual Property Committee under Industrial Structure Council, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry in July 2015. The result of the study was summarized as a report, "Toward further utilization of patent information" in May 2016. Based on the report, activities were promoted.

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

a) Patent

In 2019, the number of applications was 307,969 (down 1.8% from the previous year) and the number of registrations was 179,910 (down 7.5% from the previous year).

b) Utility model

In 2019, the number of applications was 5,241 (down 2.7% from the previous year) and the number of registrations was 5,033 (down 5.1% from the previous year).

In 2018, the number of patent applications in the following technical fields recorded significant increase from the previous year.

"A24 TOBACCO; CIGARS; CIGARETTES; SIMULATED SMOKING DEVICES; SMOKERS' REQUISITES" (up 48.8% from the previous year)
"E03 WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE" (up 16.4% from the previous year)

Also, in 2018, the number of patent applications in the following technical fields recorded significant decrease from the previous year.

"F23 COMBUSTION APPARATUS; COMBUSTION PROCESSES" (down 20.4% from the previous year)

"H03 BASIC ELECTRONIC CIRCUITRY" (down 17.3% from the previous year)

Note: IPC classes with 500 or more applications in 2018 were examined.

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

(Annual Report in Japanese) <https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/nenji/index.html>

(Status Report in Japanese and English) <https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/statusreport/index.html>

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

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

a) Paper-based application

The INPIT provides the free consultation service on the procedures for industrial property rights at the Consultation Desk on the second floor of the JPO office building.

Moreover, the portal site for consultation and support on intellectual property is available at:

<https://faq.inpit.go.jp/>

b) Electronic application

The e-filing software allows users to conduct administrative procedures, such as the filing of applications for patents, utility models, industrial designs and trademarks, and PCT-RO international application, appealing for trials and payment of the annual fees, and receipt of documents dispatched from the JPO, on-line. The software may be downloaded for free.

<https://www.jpo.go.jp/system/process/shutugan/pcinfo/index.html>

(2) Availability of the application dossier in electronic form

a) Search for Examination Document Information, One Portal Dossier

a-1) Search for Examination Document Information

J-PlatPat allows users to search various domestic examination documents such as notifications of reasons for refusal, written opinions and written amendments issued in July 2003 onwards by specifying document numbers such as application number and publication number. It is possible to search for patent examination-related documents issued from December 1990 and trial documents from January 2000.

a-2) Search for One Portal Dossier

Since July 2016, users have been able to integrally search for Dossier Information (information relating application/examination of the patent family) using the J-PlatPat by specifying document numbers of the corresponding countries including JPO patent application numbers. In March 2017, the JPO started providing enriched citation (information such as categories and quotations at the time of citation by an examiner) in One Portal Dossier provided by J-PlatPat. As of August 2020, Dossier Information has expanded with the information from the Offices of Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and WIPO (PCT International Application) from its initial information from IP5 Offices.

b) On-line reference

The software for electronic application allows users to request or refer to application documents and registers from computers from their home or office, and to make a request for issuing certifications on-line.

See 2. (1) b) for the software for electronic application.

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

In 2019, as the patent documents that were assigned FI and IPC, the JPO issued about 220,000 for publication of patent application, about 40,000 for publication of Japanese translation of PCT international application, about 25,000 for re-publication of PCT international publication, about 180,000 for publication of Patent, and about 5,000 for publication of registered utility model. Further, the JPO sent their delegates to IPC-related WIPO meetings, along with participating in the activities for the revision of the IPC.

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

a) Reviewing of the abstract

Although the abstract is prepared by the applicant, the JPO reviews whether the content of the abstract is appropriate, and if it is found inappropriate, the abstract is modified by the office ex officio so as to be able to get the picture of the invention or utility model quickly and accurately only from the abstract.

b) Translation

1) English Abstracts of Publication of Unexamined Patent Application in Japan (PAJ)

PAJ consists of abstracts and typical drawings of published unexamined patent applications. The PAJ is currently sent to 67 foreign patent offices and public institutions. In addition, the J-PlatPat provides the services for retrieving the PAJ through text searching. The PAJ is also provided to commercial patent information providers in Japan for free via the bulk data download service in the J-PlatPat.

2) Foreign patent documents
See 5. (3).

(5) Other activities

Nothing in particular

3. SOURCES OF PATENT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE OFFICE

(1) 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)

The JPO published the following official gazettes via the Internet in 2019:

- Publication of Patent Application
- Publication of Japanese Translation of PCT International Application
- Publication of Registered Utility Model
- Publication of Patent
- Publication of Decision on Appeal/Trial in Patent

The following is the URL of published gazettes provided through the Internet.

URL: <https://www.publication.jpo.go.jp/>

The Patent and Utility Model Gazettes contains mixed-mode type data, composed of text data and image data, thus text search using text data is also available.

Further, Published Unexamined Patent Applications enable a search using document numbers, IPC, etc.

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

Nothing in particular

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

a) Internal databases

See 4. (3) and (4).

b) Commercial databases

AACR Publications, ACM DL, ACS Publications, Annual Reviews, APS Journals, Chemical Documents Library, CHEMnetBASE, CiNii, CODE V, Colour Index, Derwent Innovation, Electrochemical Society (ECS Digital Library), GeneCards, Ichushi WEB, IEEE Xplore, INTERGLAD, Japio-GPG/FX, JDream III, JJAP, Journal of Technical Disclosure WEB, J-STAGE, LiqCryst, Medical Online, Mintel GNPD, [Nature.com](https://www.nature.com/), NIKKEI Telecom, OSA Publishing, Oxford Journals, Phrama Business, RSC Publishing, Science, Science Direct, Scitation, Scopus, SPIE Digital Library, SpringerLink, STN, Wiley On-line Library

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

a) Providing patent information via the Internet

a-1) Providing official gazettes via the Internet.

See 3.(1).

a-2) J-PlatPat

The JPO started to provide the Industrial Property Digital Library (IPDL) service through the Internet in March 1999. This service has enabled users to search patent information by using document numbers and classifications as search keys. This service was transferred to the INPIT as of October 2004, and has been operated by the INPIT since then.

In order to meet advancing and diversifying user needs for patent information, the INPIT renovated the IPDL and started providing the J-PlatPat in March 2015, a new service to provide patent information via user-friendly interface. The J-PlatPat currently stores about 130 million cases of patent information and can be searched by document numbers, various classifications, keywords, etc. In addition, all functions are also available in English.

(URL) <https://www.j-platpat.inpit.go.jp/>

a-3) Chinese and Korean Gazette Translation and Search System

In January 2015, the JPO built the "Chinese and Korean Gazette Translation and Search System" which enables users to search machine translated full-text data (machine translation into Japanese) of Chinese/Korean patent/utility model documents by using Japanese text and made it available to examiners and the general users. Full texts (machine translation into Japanese) of Chinese Published Unexamined Patent Applications (CN-A), Chinese patent gazettes (CN-B and CN-C), Chinese Published registered utility model applications (CN-U and CN-Y), Korean Published Unexamined Patent Applications (KR-A), Korean patent gazettes (KR-B), Korean Published Unexamined Utility Model Applications (KR-U), and Korean Published registered utility model applications (KR-Y) published from 2003 onwards can be searched in Japanese. As of the end of March 2018, about 20 million patent/utility model documents are stored in the system. This service ended at the end of June 2019 because full-text machine translations are searchable on the J-PlatPat since May 2019.

a-4) FOPISE

In August 2015, the JPO launched the FOPISE, a search service to promptly provide the general users with patent information obtained from foreign IP Offices by data exchange between foreign IP Offices. Patent/utility model documents of Russia, Taiwan, Australia, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand which are not available for a search on the J-PlatPat, are available for simplified search by using document numbers and English key words via Japanese user interface.

b) Providing JPO data

The following types of data is currently provided to commercial providers in Japan by bulk data download service on the J-PlatPat.

b-1) New Standardized Data

This data is the JPO's bibliographical and status information converted and processed into TSV format for better usability for external users. The data has been provided since May 2019.

b-2) Proceeding Standardized data

This data is the JPO's bibliographical and status information converted and processed into XML format, etc. for better usability for external users. As of August 2020, the data up to September 2019 has been provided.

b-3) PAJ

See 2.(4)b)

b-4) Japanese abstracts of European and U.S. patent data

Japanese abstracts of U.S. patent descriptions, U.S. patent descriptions of unexamined patent applications, and European descriptions of unexamined patent applications prepared by translators by comprehending scope of claims and contents of the descriptions/drawings and by summarizing contents of the inventions.

b-5) Japanese abstracts of Chinese patent documents()

Three types of data manually translated in Japanese are as below:

- Abstracts of Chinese Published Unexamined Patent Applications published between 2010 and 2015.
- Excerpts of a part of Chinese Patent gazettes with the purpose of complementing machine translation. The material is extracted from claims, descriptions, etc., which are necessary to comprehend the contents of inventions.
- Full-text data of a part of Chinese Published Unexamined Patent Applications and Chinese Patent gazettes which were cited in the international search report.

The abstracts are no longer produced after the end of March 2019.

b-6) Machine-translated text data of Chinese-Korean documents

Machine-translated full-text data of Chinese and Korean patent documents provided on the "Chinese and Korean Gazette Translation and Search System".

Chinese Published Unexamined Patent Applications, Chinese patent gazettes, Chinese Published registered utility model applications, Korean Published Unexamined Patent Applications, Korean patent gazettes, Korean Published Unexamined Utility Model Applications, and Korean Published registered utility model applications published from 2003 onwards are subject to this machine translation.

c) Reference to Official Gazettes on Patent

The INPIT has 37 access devices, including sophisticated information browsing terminals, which are available in the Official Gazettes Reading Room on the second floor of the JPO office building. This allows free public access to "a search service for patent gazettes," the J-PlatPat Service, gazettes on CD-ROM/DVD-ROM, etc.

d) Reference to examination and trial documents

The INPIT is collecting various technical documents (books, etc.), which are used in the examinations and trials by the JPO, widely from within and outside Japan and is making them available to the public.

e) Provision of Licensable Patent Information

In order to ensure a smooth transfer of patents owned by companies, universities and public research institutes and prepared for rights transfers or licenses (licensable patents) and to promote their commercialization, the INPIT built a database of licensable patents, and made them available to the public on-line as the Patent Licensing Information Database.

The number of licensable patents registered in the Patent Licensing Information Database is estimated to be approximately 28,000 patents as of the end of July 2020.

In addition, in response to the spread of COVID-19 infection, the patents related to COVID-19 infection control measures have been registered in the Patent Licensing Information Database. The registration of the patents related to COVID-19 infection control will be continuously promoted in order to accelerate the open innovation that contributes to COVID-19 infection control.

<https://plidb.inpit.go.jp/>

f) Provision of Research Tool Patent Information

In order to promote use of research tool patents in a life science field, the INPIT has computerized information on the research tool patents owned by universities and public research institutes, enterprises, etc. and their license terms, and provides the information in "Research Tool Patent Database".

The number of registrations in Research Tool Patent Database is about 350 as of the end of July 2020.

<https://plidb.inpit.go.jp/research/home>

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

Legal status information of applications filed in January 1964 onwards can be searched on the J-PlatPat by using document numbers such as application numbers, publication numbers and registration numbers. In addition, Alert Service to notify of the status information update of designated applications is also available.

(6) Other sources

Nothing in particular

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

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

The JPO has been using an electronic application system, file wrapper system and peripheral examination assistance system since 1990. These systems improve the efficiency of administrative works by computerizing application filing, formality/substantive examinations, dispatch, registration, gazette publications, and requesting for inspection of files, requesting for certification.

In addition, an applicant can file a patent application or a utility model application via on-line from a personal computer. In October 2005, in addition to the conventional electronic applications through ISDN lines, the acceptance of electronic applications utilizing the Internet, as well as 24 hours a day, 365 days a year full-time acceptance of all electronic applications was introduced. Furthermore, in January 2007, the PCT international application via the internet was introduced.

In 2019, the ratios of on-line electronic filing was 98.6% for patent and utility model, 99.5% for appeals, 99.9% for the national procedures of a PCT internal application, and 99.4% for PCT international application.

(2) Hardware used to supporting business processes of the Office

Servers, network devices, PCs for business use etc.

(3) Internal databases: coverage, updates, interlinks with external sources

a) Patent and Utility Model Search System

In December 1999, a patent and utility model search system, based on a distributed computing system, was put into operation. This system integrated not only the conventional F-term search system and a system to search computer-software related non-patent literature (CS literature), but also a foreign patent document search system using International Patent Classification (IPC) and patent classifications of overseas Offices such as Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC). In addition, non-patent literature in a wide range of technical fields has been made searchable on the integrated system since 2009. Multiple search keys, such as F-term, FI, keyword, CS term, IPC and CPC, can be inputted simultaneously; thus an examination environment, enabling a seamless search of various documents, such as domestic patents, foreign patents, non-patents, was created.

A full text search function in Japanese and English has been actualized by using text data of domestic and foreign patent publications accumulated by adopting a paperless system.

b) Search System for Appeal/Trial and Court Decisions (J-term search system)

Appeal/trial and court decisions are accumulated in the form of electronic data with a search index, called "J-term," and searching and screening for the appropriate appeal/trial and court decisions are conducted by using "J-term."

In addition, a full-text search service is available for appeal/trial and court decisions issued after January 2000.

c) DNA Search System

This is a system introduced in January 1998 for searching gene-related information, and enables a homology search, which searches for a sequence utilizing homology in respect of nucleotide sequences and amino acid sequences, and a keyword search, which utilizes bibliographic data.

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

a) File building and updating

The search files used by the examiner are prepared in association with FI, F-term, etc. Additionally, such search files are continuously renewed so that they are up-to-date.

b) Storage, including mass storage media

The search indices file used by the examiner is stored in an electronic form on RAID. In addition, document index information is stored on memory.

c) Documentation from other offices maintained and/or considered part of the available search file

The text data and the image data of the EPO, USPTO, WIPO, CNIPA and KIPO, as well as the image data of major European countries are stored, and searches of CPC, IPC, etc. are available.

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

See 4. (1)

(6) Other matters

Nothing in particular

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

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

a) Operation of the JPO Library, collection and management of materials

a-1) Operation of the JPO Library

The JPO Library, as a branch library of the National Diet Library, is located on the first basement of the JPO office building, and is operated in the following manner.

1. Users

- JPO staff and general users

2. Open

- 9:30 to 17:30

a-2) Collection of materials

The following are collected: Materials concerning IP right legislation and the peripheral laws inside and outside of Japan, related materials necessary for understanding IP rights, related materials necessary for study of IP rights, and reference materials for general administration.

As of the end of 2019, the library contains about 37,100 volumes.

a-3) Preservation methods of materials

The books are labeled and stored with a storage number and classification data, and the bibliographic information is inputted in the library system constructing a database for the books.

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

a) J-PlatPat

The INPIT compiles an instruction brochure/manual for how to operate and utilize various search services provided by the J-PlatPat.

URL https://www.inpit.go.jp/j-platpat_info/reference/index.html

b) e-filing

Useful information on e-filing including how to fill out application forms and FAQs is provided at the "E-filing software support website".

URL <http://www.pcinfo.jpo.go.jp/site/>

See 3. (4) for information products available to external users.

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

a) Japanese Abstracts of European and U.S. patent data

The INPIT creates Japanese Abstracts of European and U.S. patent data (See 3. (4) b-4)) and makes the data available for search and display by the J-PlatPat.

b) Chinese and Korean Gazette Translation and Search System

See 3.(4)a-3) This service ended at the end of June 2019 because full-text machine translations were searchable on the J-PlatPat after May 2019.

c) FOPISE

See 3. (4)a-4).

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

Patent information is as important as journal information for researches conducted at universities, etc. In addition, patent information has a characteristic as public goods, since it is widely disclosed and contributes to the development of science and technology. The JPO has provided the Official Gazette Fixed-address Service which allows users such as universities to directly access data contained in Gazettes on the J-PlatPat with the aim of supporting R&D by universities.

In response to a growing need for machine translation of foreign patent documents, the JPO and the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT) cooperate with each other to improve the accuracy and promote utilization of machine translation of Chinese, Korean, English etc.

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

a) J-PlatPat etc. training seminars

Training seminars of the J-PlatPat were held by the INPIT for beginners of industrial property right search from individuals and SMEs (25 times in 16 major cities nationwide in FY2019).

The organization also held information sessions of the J-PlatPat by request from universities and enterprises (2 times in FY2019).

b) Search expert training seminars

The INPIT held the following trainings.

- Training for Developing Searchers

The INPIT offers statutory training for those who wish to become "searchers" (staff that conduct the preparatory search business for prior art document searches outsourced by the JPO) in registered search organizations. (Article 37 of the Act on the Special Provisions to the Procedure, etc. Concerning Industrial Property Right) (four times).

- Training seminar for Search Experts [patent]

This training seminar is for those who have sufficient knowledge in the Patent Act. The seminar aims at developing human resources who contribute to the rationalization of filing applications and making requests for substantive examination by further improving their capabilities of conducting prior art searches. (twice)

- Training seminar for Patent Search Practice

This training seminar aims at developing human resources who can determine patentability based on the Examination Guidelines for Patent, which is required before filing patent applications and after acquiring patents and/or enforcing patent rights, and/or conduct patent searches in an efficient manner accurately. (once)

(6) Other activities

Nothing in particular

6. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF PATENT INFORMATION

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

a) The Five IP Offices (IP5) data exchange and bilateral data exchange

The JPO periodically provides the Five IP Offices (IP5) with bibliographic data of patent/utility model gazettes, concordance data of patent document numbers, PAJ data, F-term inventories, PMGS data, and IPC files. In addition, JPO exchanges data between IP Offices other than the IP5.

b) Trilateral exchange of DNA sequence data

The JPO has sent the DNA sequence data, about 3,600 in 2019, published in the publications of patent applications, etc. to the National Institute of Genetics, an intermediary for the trilateral data exchange.

c) Sending Official Gazette on DVD-ROM to overseas

In 2015, the JPO exchanged official gazettes, etc. with 56 organizations (including international organizations) in 53 nations, out of which the JPO sent DVD-ROM "Japanese Patent and Registered Utility Model Specifications" to 28 organizations. The JPO also sent DVD-ROM "Published unexamined Patent applications" to 26 organizations.

The JPO discontinued sending official gazettes on DVD-ROM overseas in March 2015 and is currently providing the data on line.

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

a) Dossier Information Mutual Reference System

The JPO as a lead Office promotes the One Portal Dossier (OPD), a system to integrally acquire and display information relating to applications and examinations (dossier information) concerning a set of the patent family filed in the IP5 Offices. Examiners of the IP5 Offices mutually have accessed dossier information of the IP5 Offices using this system since July 2013.

In March 2014, the JPO, through collaboration with the WIPO, established a linkage between the OPD and the WIPO-CASE, a dossier access system developed by the WIPO, to enable WIPO-CASE participating offices to refer to OPD's dossier information.

The IP5 Offices have advanced cooperation so as to further expand service of the OPD developed for examiners and to allow general users around the world to receive the service alike. The JPO started service of providing the public with the OPD service at the J-PlatPat in July 2016.

b) PI Policies

At the Heads Meeting of IP5 Offices (EPO, JPO, KIPO, CNIPA and USPTO) held in June 2013, the IP5 Offices agreed on the policies prescribing the scope of and conditions for data on Patent Gazettes exchanged among the IP5 Offices. Specifically, the policies prescribe 1) the basic principle that the patent offices shall provide patent information at marginal costs or for free and 2) the scope of and conditions for use of data on Gazettes exchanged for free among patent offices. In response to this agreement, patent information which shall be subject to exchange under the agreement and the timing to implement this data exchange were discussed. In June 2014, the IP5 Offices agreed on action plans for the policies.

c) Authority File

The authority file is a list of document numbers of Gazettes issued by each patent office including the IP5 in compliance with WIPO Standard ST. 37. Each office periodically updates and provides authority files. Authority files of each office are available on WIPO authority file portal site https://www.wipo.int/standards/en/authority_file.html, and authority files of JPO is provided on its website (<https://www.jpo.go.jp/e/system/laws/koho/internet/authorityfile.html>).

(3) Assistance to developing countries

a) Activities/cooperation through voluntary contributions (Funds-in-Trust) for WIPO

a-1) Infrastructure building project for work sharing

Functional improvement of WIPO-CASE, Maintenance and function maintenance of a linkage between the WIPO-CASE and OPD

a-2) Workshop on utilization of the WIPO-CASE, etc.

This Workshop was held in the Philippines and India in FY 2019, and lectures were held to learn how to use WIPO-CASE, to know information that can be referred to by the system and to deepen awareness of the importance and effectiveness of work sharing in patent examination, and to promote its use and utilization. At the workshop, significance of work sharing in patent examination and how to read major documents at each examination stage were explained. Attendees actively asked questions about how to obtain and utilize Dossier information, how to search documents, Patent system in Japan and so on.

a-3) ASEAN Patentscope

"ASEAN Patentscope", which is an online platform to access patent information of ASEAN countries, was released in FY 2017. In FY 2018, Lao PDR newly became an information providing office, and all Patent information from 9 countries except Myanmar can be referred to collectively.

a-4) Development support of IT system for developing countries
The JPO supports system development of WIPO-IPAS.

a-5) Digitization support

In FY2019, the digitization project was implemented in Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Uganda, Eswatini (former Swaziland), Botswana, Madagascar, Malawi, Zambia and OAPI, the Regional IP Office for Africa. The Philippines project was completed.

a-6) IT Personnel Development Workshop

In August 2019, a workshop for African countries for OAPI and ARIPO members and other countries was held in Tanzania. The online tools and services provided by WIPO were introduced, and explanations and discussions were also carried out on the preconditions that the IP offices should consider in advance to realize the digitization of IP offices' operation using these tools and services. In October, a workshop for 10 ASEAN countries was held in Vietnam and the development status and specific functions of IT systems provided by WIPO such as the ASEAN Patentscope and WIPO-IPAS were introduced for the purpose of promoting the implementation and functional improvement of IT systems in each IP office. Furthermore, as part of the support for the establishment of the Myanmar Intellectual Property Office, workshops for introducing online services were held three times in total, and experiences of the implementation of IT systems in the IP offices of neighboring countries were shared with the Myanmar side.

(4) Other activities

Nothing in particular

7. 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.