Often referred to as "PATLIB centres", there are over 300 patent information centres spread across the EPO’s member states.

PATLIB centres provide local access to patent information and related issues. They are familiar with the local industrial, economic and business landscape, and provide valuable services to entrepreneurs, SMEs, individual inventors and students.

Many of the people who work at PATLIB centres are experienced patent search experts. They may also offer other patent information services. These can include:

- technology and competitor watches
- patent statistics
- patent valuations/audits
- advice on patent strategy
- guidance on commercialisation/technology transfer.

Many of the people who work at PATLIB centres are experienced patent search experts. They may also offer other patent information services. These can include:

PATLIB centres can also provide practical assistance on other intellectual property rights, such as trade marks, copyrights, designs and utility models.

The size and range of services on offer varies from PATLIB centre to PATLIB centre. Some focus more on giving advice, while others offer patent search services, some even going as far as in-depth patent analytics. Many have excellent
online information about intellectual property rights such as weekly newsletters or educational videos for entrepreneurs and SMEs. You can find out more by consulting the PATLIB directory on the EPO website. From the EPO’s perspective, the PATLIB centres play a crucial role in ensuring that innovative people across Europe can find sound advice on patents and patent information at local level. The centres operate in a network which receives technical support from the EPO (search tools for each member and a platform for all members to communicate with each other). The annual PATLIB conference is an opportunity for members of the PATLIB community to meet each other face to face and to share their experiences. PATLIB 2016 took place in Helsinki at the beginning of May. See page 3 for a report.

In order to enhance PATLIB centres’ service portfolios, the EPO supports activities aimed at re-orienting the centres from being patent information suppliers to becoming innovation support entities. During a recent pilot project, staff from the PATLIBs learned how to perform better analysis of clients’ inventions and technical concepts, to translate them into search strategies and to present the search results in a detailed report understandable to non-patent experts. Based on the experience gained during the pilot project, the EPO now offers PATLIB staff an online course on the business use of patents. The course, which is already booked out for 2016, will facilitate the training of a broader group of PATLIB centres and national offices than was possible in the past.

Again based on the experience gained in the pilot project, members of the PATLIB network now all have access to their own exclusive discussion forum. They use it to share information, experience and materials with each other and with the EPO’s experts.

Measures such as the pilot project help create a level playing field for innovators and establish an environment where they can get the support they need on all matters relating to intellectual property.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of PATLIB centres in member states with at least three PATLIB centres</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>Austria</td>
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<td>Slovak Republic</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
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<td>Estonia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
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<td>Latvia</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A new look
Timed for launch at the PATLIB2016 conference, the PATLIB network has a new visual design. The design is an abstract representation of a network, with overlapping squares in many colours, including the EPO’s corporate colours grey and red, to symbolise the wide diversity constituted by the PATLIB network.

Keep an eye out for the new PATLIB visual design at a PATLIB centre near you.
PATLIB centres: helping to spread patent information across Europe

You could almost think of them as the EPO’s regional ambassadors: the 330 patent information centres located throughout our member states or "PATLIBs" for short.

The Office supports this network of local centres, co-ordinating its efforts in this area with the national offices of the member states. Each of the centres provides advice and expertise on IP-related matters.

Every year since 1990 the EPO has staged a "PATLIB Conference" for the network, and this year it took place in Helsinki on 3 and 4 May (see below for a report on the event).

It is important that people involved in the innovation process use patent information. Patent information can provide the inspiration to solve complex technical problems. It can also help you to avoid costly mistakes, such as infringing someone else’s intellectual property rights. PATLIB centres play a role in making sure that no matter where you are in Europe, someone is available to give you advice on patents in your own language and on the basis of local knowledge.

I’m very pleased that the EPO is able to support the PATLIB network, and I am convinced that the PATLIB conference is an event that helps PATLIB centres to achieve their goals.

Richard Flammer
Principal Director Patent Information and European Patent Academy

Networking for the benefit of patent information users ...

... at the PATLIB2016 conference in Helsinki on 3 and 4 May

– How can we improve the services we provide for our various client groups?

– How can we use digital media and communication to provide the customer with IP information?

– How can we get younger people interested in IP matters?

These were questions raised, discussed and answered at this year’s PATLIB Conference in Helsinki, where over 200 experts from the European PATLIB network gathered.

A preparatory committee, composed of representatives from different European regions, had put together a programme of plenary and breakout sessions based on proposals received from members of the network.

Speakers from the PATLIB network reported on successful projects they had initiated and implemented in their centres. Topics ranged from a quick guide for inventors, to an IP finance toolkit, through to the concept of "Lean Start-up", designed to develop customer-focused PATLIB services. One session was dedicated to IP information in the healthcare sector and how PATLIBs could raise awareness, support researchers and medical professionals and help bring products to the market.

Several discussion rounds addressed improvements to the working environment for PATLIBs. Enhancing quality and visibility of patent information centres via co-operation agreements with national offices and through intelligent partnerships with other IP stakeholders were all topics that led to a lively exchange of views.

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EPO President Battistelli speaking at the opening of PATLIB2016

The most important aspect of "PATLIB2016 – A networking event" was, however, NETWORKING for the benefit of patent information users. As one participant put it, "I had a great time (and learned a lot) and made many new contacts with whom it would be good to collaborate in future."

The full programme and all presentations held at the conference are publicly accessible on the EPO’s website at www.epo.org/patlib.
Espacenet – what people are asking

Espacenet users put many different questions to the EPO’s Patent Information User Support team. Some of them come up more often than others. The most frequently asked ones at the moment are shown below.

Question 1
Since updating my browser to Chrome, I receive the error message "The page does not load" when trying to access Espacenet. What am I doing wrong?

Answer 1
The EPO has reported this issue to Google Chrome. In the meantime, you can use the following workaround:

Google Chrome only fails when opening Espacenet if your browser is zoomed to 125%. To overcome this, simply zoom out the browser to 100% or 110%.

In some cases users are unable to change the zoom in the conventional way, but holding down CTRL+R for reload and quickly pressing the minus key on the numeric keyboard while Espacenet is loading is often successful. If this does not work, close the Espacenet tab, load it in a new tab and try the CTRL+R and the minus key again.

Question 2
I used to be able to see “more than 100 000 results found in the Worldwide database for...” but now it says 10 000. Why?

Answer 2
To enable full-text searching in Espacenet and to ensure that the servers are not overloaded, it was decided to limit searches to the first 10 000 results, although there has been no change to the number of documents displayed (500).

To search within larger amounts of data, we suggest you use date ranges or combine an applicant’s name with date ranges.

Question 3
I recently read that Espacenet is now available in a secure environment, yet I have to type https:// every time I want to open Espacenet. Is this normal?

Answer 3
Espacenet does not open the secure interface by default at present. If you want to work in a secure environment, you can enter the secure URL and bookmark it, avoiding the need to retype it each time you open Espacenet.

For more help and handy hints on using Espacenet, have a look at the online forum at www.epo.org/forums.
Many patent searchers analyse forward citations as a technique for retrieving potentially relevant documents in state-of-the-art and other patent searches.

Forward citations can, however, also provide interesting information about how technologies overlap with other technical fields, based on the assumption that if a technology from one field is cited in another, it must somehow be relevant for the second field.

One example of where a technology spreads into another field is the appearance of developments in the space-flight sector in everyday life. Another is the application of therapeutically active chemical compounds to treat diseases other than the ones for which they were intended.

The chart shows an example from the aerospace sector. It is based on data from the EPO’s PATSTAT product line and presents the number of patent documents (grouped into patent families) which cite patent documents from the field of rotorcrafts and rotors. These forward citations are grouped in the chart according to the technical fields they are classified in (IPC subclass level; horizontal axis) and their earliest filing year (vertical axis).

At first sight, rotorcrafts and rotors seem to be very focused technologies, as shown by the "hotspot" marked as "B27C", which is the classification for rotorcraft and rotors. However, if you look more closely you will notice other zones of the chart which, if not hotspots, can certainly be called "warm spots". The area marked, for example, covers steam turbines, wind turbines and pumping technologies.

The analysis of forward citations can be applied to all technical fields and is not a purely academic exercise. It can also be helpful in the everyday life of patent information practitioners. For example, you could use it to identify candidates for technical fields and markets where a company could consider using or marketing a given technology beyond its usual area.
New Features

Improved patent monitoring for GPI users

Global Patent Index (GPI) now offers much greater flexibility in terms of patent monitoring.

A new search criterion, DFE (date of first exchange), allows users to retrieve patent documents that appeared for the first time in the database on a specific date. DFE can be combined with any other search criteria.

For example,

**DFE = 201604 and IPC = A47J37/10**

retrieves all documents bearing the IPC symbol A47J37/10 added in April 2016.

In the old version, new documents could only be retrieved on a weekly basis, using the search query: WBIB=YES combined with STA=C. Although useful as a way of retrieving published documents entered for the first time in the database, i.e. not the amended ones (for example, those re-entered in the database because an abstract was added, a CPC symbol was allocated, etc.), this query only retrieved documents from the current week.

When using classification symbols such as CPC codes for patent monitoring, one should take into account that they are at times assigned post-publication and that some countries assign them several months after publication, depending on the technical domain.

Another new feature in GPI is the WITH operator. It enables more accurate searches than the AND operator as it retrieves documents with search terms that are present in the same field of information (see Table 1).

The WITH operator allows you, for example, to retrieve oppositions (event code EVC = 26) filed against granted EP patents with a legal event triggered in March 2016 (event date EVD = 201603) – see Table 2, patent documents having a search report that cites your patent as particularly relevant (category X) (e.g. CPSR= EP2816123 WITH CCAT=X) or patent documents in a specific technological domain – as soon as they have been assigned a specific classification symbol (e.g. CPC= Y02E001050 WITH CPCAD=201601).

| Table 1: Examples of searches where the WITH operator gives more accurate results |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| **Search area** | **Combinable criteria** |
| priority | country code, number, kind code, date |
| applicant | applicant name, country of residence |
| inventor | inventor name, country of residence |
| citation | patent publication number or NPL text, citation category, cited applicant |
| legal status | legal status event code, event date, event text |
| classification | classification symbol, assignment date |

For more details and examples of the new features, please have a look at the GPI user manual at www.epo.org/gpi.

| Table 2: WITH and AND operators |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| **Publication 1** | **Publication 2** |
| 2016-03-11 | TRANSFER OF RIGHTS OF AN EP PUBLICATION |
| 2013-10-23 | OPPOSITION FILED |
| ✔ | ✔ |
| Publication 1 | ✔ |
| ✔ | ✔ |
EPO board of appeal decisions now searchable via the EU's e-Justice Portal

Decisions of the EPO's boards of appeal are now available for search on the EU’s e-Justice portal, along with other case law from a number of EU member states. This new service means that you can search for a particular topic and bring together the case law on that topic from combined sources in a single search.

To access the e-Justice Portal’s case law search interface, just go to https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_ecli_search_engine-430-en.do.

ECLI – European case law identifier

One fundamental part of the new case law database is the concept of the European case law identifier, or “ECLI” for short. Each item of case law in the database is assigned one of these.

The ECLIs represent a means to standardise case law identification and references in the EU. Currently ten member states are participating in this initiative, plus the European Court of Justice and the EPO.

In terms of EPO data, each decision in the entire collection of the EPO boards of appeal has been assigned an ECLI. Since ECLIs are unique identifiers, you can use them to reference decisions of the EPO’s boards of appeal and as a search term in the board of appeal decisions database on the EPO website.

Example of an ECLI for an EPO board of appeal decision

**EP:BA:2002:D000300.20020503**

EP = European Patent Office
BA = Boards of appeal of the European Patent Office
2002 = year in which the decision was rendered (example)
D000300 = D0003/00 (decision case number)
20020503 = 2002.05.03 (date of the decision)

Further details on the structure of the ECLI are available on the e-Justice Portal1.
LEGAL STATUS DATA

Status identifiers: what are they and what purpose do they serve?

This article describes the status data – or "status identifiers" – displayed in relation to European patent applications and granted patents in the European Patent Register. These identifiers indicate at a glance the most recent event in the life of a patent document.

There are two routes to a European patent: Euro-direct, where the provisions of the European Patent Convention (EPC) apply to the entire grant procedure; and Euro-PCT, where the provisions of the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) apply during the initial international phase, while the provisions of the EPC apply in the subsequent regional phase before the EPO as the elected Office.

The EPO records each step of the patent application and grant procedure in the European Patent Register: for every published European patent application, the published patent documents and official communications are made available. Not only that: the Register also contains information on things like the payment of fees and changes in an application’s legal status. This can help users of patent information to determine the latest status of a particular patent application or granted European patent, although it can be difficult to do this quickly owing to the volume of data available.

This is where one of the Register’s special features comes into its own: in the section About this file, you can see what exactly the latest status is, e.g. whether a patent application has been published, whether a patent has been granted, what the outcome of opposition proceedings was or whether a patent has been revoked (see Table 1).

We will show you ways of using this status data in a forthcoming issue of Patent Information News.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Latest stage reached in the proceedings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Patent revoked by proprietor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Patent limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Patent maintained in amended form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Patent revoked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Opposition rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Opposition procedure closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No opposition filed within time limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Patent granted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Application withdrawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Application deemed to be withdrawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Application refused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Grant of patent intended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Proceedings _closed_apn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Examination in progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Examination requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Application requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>International application published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is more than just a help when assessing the relevance of selected patent applications and granted patents: it also forms the basis of statistical analyses of technical fields and patent portfolio valuations. That is why the EPO also publishes the status identifier in its PATSTAT Register, part of the PATSTAT product family.
Key IP5 statistical indicators

To meet users’ needs for early statistics, the IP5 offices published an infographic with key IP5 statistical indicators for 2015 at the end of March 2016. The infographic contains preliminary data showing overall trends at IP5 level in 2015. This will be followed up with the full annual IP5 Statistics Report in the last quarter of 2016.

More information: www.fiveipoffices.org/statistics.html

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**European patent publications January – June 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weekly average 2016</th>
<th>Total Jan-June 2016</th>
<th>Change vs. 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EP-A documents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP-A1</td>
<td>1 313</td>
<td>34 129</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP-A2</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>2 652</td>
<td>–26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total EP-A1 + A2</td>
<td>11 415</td>
<td>36 781</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage EP-A1 of total A1+A2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP-A3</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>6 034</td>
<td>–22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EP-B documents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP-B1+B2</td>
<td>1 745</td>
<td>45 373</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
East meets West in Vienna: global patent information family reunion

April at the EPO in Vienna is traditionally associated with a unique gathering of patent information experts, known as the East meets West forum. On 21 and 22 April 2016, in line with that tradition, the forum – renowned for the diversity of its participating nations – again hosted more than 100 patent information professionals from 25 countries.

During the plenary session, the Japan Patent Office (JPO) provided information on the opposition possibilities introduced in 2015. Third parties now have two options to challenge a granted patent in Japan, either by opposition or a trial for invalidation. According to the speaker, a major reason for the introduction of the opposition system was the decrease in the number of invalidation requests over the last few years, resulting in weak patents which were not challenged by the public. The newly-introduced opposition system should provide a simpler, cheaper and faster way to contest a granted patent.

To meet user demand, the JPO has started to provide human translations of trial and appeal decisions in English. Furthermore, full-text data for patent documents published before 1992 will gradually be provided to the public free of charge. Full-text data for JP-A publications from 1971-1993 is already available in the JPO’s J-PlatPat database, and more data will be produced in the near future.

The Chinese Patent Office (SIPO) gave an overview of the fourth revision process of patent law in China, which is currently under way, eight years after the last substantial revision. Major aims are to strengthen patent protection, e.g. by introducing heavier sanctions, and to promote patent utilisation, e.g. by refining provisions on employee inventions.

The revision will also expand the scope of design protection and extend its duration from 10 to 15 years, and introduce changes to the re-examination and invalidation procedures.

Concluding the presentations made by the “big three”, the Korean Patent Office (KIPO) introduced its new patent information dissemination strategies based on the government’s open data policy. KIPO provides patent information services as “linked open data” by connecting patent data in its KIPRIS/KIPRIS Plus databases to information from other sources.

The Eurasian Patent Office (EAPO) provided details on its products and services, and introduced some of EAPO’s projects such as Russian→English machine translation and human-assisted machine translation for applications.

A speaker from the Indian Patent Office explained new functions of the public InPASS database, in particular for full-text searches, as well as the new format for application numbers introduced in early 2016.

Round-table discussions gave participants an opportunity for in-depth exchanges of views on subjects such as patent information from Latin America, trends in Asia with regard to patents and money, or strategies for challenging patents in Asia. Last but not least, parallel sessions on the challenges of name searching and big data in the area of Asian patent information concluded the forum, and provided input from both data providers and end users.

In their feedback, delegates said that the forum provided a unique networking platform, enabling professionals to gather the latest information. This consistency in quality was possible, as Principal Director Richard Flammer put it, “thanks to valuable input from stakeholders and co-operation partners”.

At the close of the forum, there was a tribute to Günther Vacek, the “Father of East meets West” in the form of an address by Yukio Takahashi of the Japan Patent Information Organization (Japio). When INPADOC was taken over by the EPO in 1991, Mr Vacek was in charge of Japanese patent information services. Since then patent information had moved from the paper age into the electronic age. Mr Takahashi said that we had come a long way and were today providing electronic data at marginal costs, enabling anyone to use remarkably advanced patent information services. Mr Vacek, who will retire at the end of 2016, has witnessed dramatic changes in patent information services across the world, as noted by Peter Kallas, speaking on behalf of the Patent Documentation Group. “Thanks to Mr Vacek’s work spanning several decades, the East will always find a home in Vienna,” he said.

The next East meets West forum will take place in Vienna on 6 to 7 April 2017. This year’s presentations and further information are available at www.epo.org/emw2016.
**News from Asia**

**JPO now provides full-text data prior to 1992**

On 1 March 2016, the Japan Patent Office (JPO) announced that it was starting to provide full-text data for patent documents published before 1992. The full-text data for JP-A publications from 1971 to 1993 has already been produced. Data for other document types is still being processed and will be provided in the future.

The data is accessible free of charge via the J-PlatPat database: www.j-platpat.inpit.go.jp/web/all/top/BTmTopEnglishPage. Users who go via the English version of J-PlatPat can produce an English machine translation by clicking the Detail tab in the bibliographic data. The full-text data itself can only be retrieved via the Japanese interface.

**TIPO offers open data for patents and trade marks**

According to official notices, the Taiwan Intellectual Property Office (TIPO) is now offering open-data compilations of its patents and trade marks on its website. Related data, such as legal status information, dual filing cases, etc., is also available. You can retrieve the data free of charge via a public platform (Chinese only): https://tiponet.tipo.gov.tw/Gazette/OpenData/OD/OD01.aspx. The platform is synchronised with the latest updates of TIPO’s patent and trade mark gazette.

**Comprehensive amendment of the Korean trade mark examination system**

The Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) recently revised several aspects of its examination system for trade marks in order to improve the process for applicants. The main changes are greater scope with regard to amendments to product classes and more time allowed for submitting statements of opinion (previously two months and now four months, calculated from the date of receipt of the Office’s communication).

For further information, please refer to KIPO News of 23 February 2016 (in Korean only): www.kipo.go.kr.

**New English website for the GCC Patent Office**

Recently, the Patent Office of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC Patent Office) launched a new version of its English website: www.gccpo.org/DefaultEn.aspx. In addition to a patent search system, the website includes basic information on how to file a patent application, a fee schedule, statistics and links to the Patent Gazettes.

**Final version of Guidelines for Examination of CRIs released in India**

After taking into consideration suggestions and observations made by stakeholders, the Indian Patent Office (IPO) has published the final version of its Guidelines for Examination of Computer Related Inventions (CRIs). The guidelines should facilitate the uniform and consistent examination of CRI patent applications.

They are available in English as a PDF file on the IPO’s website: www.ipindia.nic.in/iponew/GuidelinesExamination_CRI_19February2016.pdf

**Changes to fees and fee payments at the JPO**

On 1 April 2016, a revised fee schedule entered into force at the JPO. For patent-related fees (application fees, requests, renewal fees, etc.), there has been a reduction of around 6 to 7%. For trade marks, the fees were lowered by about 20%. A comparison of the old and new fee schedules can be found on the JPO’s English website: www.jpo.go.jp/tetuzuki_e/ryoukin_e/revision_fee_2015.htm

For more news from Asia, see the Updates section on the EPO website at www.epo.org/asia.
Accessing patent information published in Russia – Part 1: Eurasian Patent Office

This is the first part of a two-part series for Patent Information News looking at patent information from Russia. Today’s article examines publications and procedures at the Eurasian Patent Office. The second article in the series will concentrate on non-subscription databases made available by the Federal Institute for Industrial Property Rights, the body responsible for publishing Rospatent’s patent documentation.

As the largest country in the world, the Russian Federation is of great interest to foreign investors including European companies. It is essential to have a thorough knowledge of the information resources available in Russia if you wish to patent inventions in this country.

This article will look at the Eurasian patent system and the free information resources of the Eurasian Patent Office (EAPO).

Eurasian Patent Office (EAPO) and Eurasian Patent Convention

The Eurasian Patent Convention was signed in Moscow on 9 September 1994 and entered into force on 12 August 1995. The Eurasian Patent Office, located in Moscow, opened its doors in 1996. It accepts patent applications and is the granting authority for Eurasian patents. Currently, there are eight contracting states to the Eurasian Patent Convention: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The Republic of Moldova withdrew from the Eurasian Patent Convention on 26 April 2012. EAPO patent applications and EAPO granted patents filed prior to this withdrawal are still valid and recognised by the Republic of Moldova.

EAPO patent grant procedure

In many respects, the EAPO’s patent grant procedure is very similar to the EPO’s one. You have to file Eurasian patent applications with the EAPO; however for certain contracting states such as Russia, you have to file first with the national office. Under the Eurasian Patent Convention, applicants not resident in one of the member states have to be represented by a Eurasian patent attorney. The application can be filed in any language and must be followed by the Russian translation, Russian being the EAPO’s official and procedural language. The period for filing an opposition against a Eurasian patent is six months from the publication of the granted patent.

Early publication is available as a means of obtaining early provisional protection, but there is currently no system of accelerated examination at the EAPO.

The Eurasian application covers all the contracting states and upon grant, the Eurasian patent has unitary effect without the need for validation in the member states or translation into any of the national languages. Patent owners pay renewal fees for each contracting state direct to the EAPO, which then distributes the incoming fees among the member countries.

Facts and figures

Between 1996 and the end of 2015, approximately 43,700 Eurasian applications were filed and 22,700 Eurasian patents were granted at the EAPO.

Document kind codes and numbering system

The EAPO’s publication kind codes (A1, A2, A3, A8, A9, B1, B2, B3, B8, B9) are identical to those used by the EPO. Unlike at the EPO, however, the published patent application is not assigned a new publication number and is published with the original application number in combination with the kind code.

The application numbers consist of nine digits. The first four digits represent the year in which the application was filed and the last five digits represent the serial number. The first digit of the serial number indicates the filing procedure, see Table 1.

Table 1: Significance of the 5th digit of the application number

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<th>Digit</th>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>paper filing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ADEPT e-filing (filing system decommissioned in 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>EAPO-ONLINE e-filing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers used for granted patents consist of six digits and are assigned sequentially.
The EAPO’s patent information resources
Espacenet provides extensive coverage of EAPO patent data. In addition, the Eurasian Espacenet server (ea.espacenet.com) offers a complete collection of all Eurasian applications and patents for inventions since 1996. The collection of B publications can be searched in Russian full text. For B publications, the bibliographic data, abstracts and names can also be searched in English.

The EAPO’s official patent information resources include its official Gazette, publication server, patent register and the Eurasian Patent Information Retrieval System (EAPATIS). The EAPO’s home page and the database entry points are available in English. However, at deeper website levels, the pages are in Russian only.

The Eurasian Patent Gazette contains the bibliographic data and abstracts/claims of official publications and corrections to publications. Furthermore, notices such as restoration of previously withdrawn applications are published in the gazette together with a list of legal codes matched with the corresponding application or patent number.

For legal information on all granted Eurasian patents, the Eurasian patent register is the right database to visit. Post-grant legal status data is also displayed here, including information on limitation procedures, patent extension certificates, changes of patent representative or changes in proprietor data. In the case of patents revoked in part in an individual contracting state, the EAPO does not publish a new patent document. New claims are published for the country concerned together with a revocation announcement (see, for example, patent number EA 003144 B1).

Renewal-fee payment information from each contracting state is also available. The EAPO allows a six-month grace period for missed renewal fee payments and restoration requests can be filed up to three years after the payment due date.

The EAPO offers no online file inspection for Eurasian applications. Detailed information on the procedural status of patent applications is available only to the applicants and not to third parties.

The Official Publication Server of the EAPO offers advanced search options with various search criteria. The search form and the information you retrieve is only available in Russian.

For legal information on all granted Eurasian patents, the Eurasian patent register is the right database to visit. Post-grant legal status data is also displayed here, including information on limitation procedures, patent extension certificates, changes of patent representative or changes in proprietor data. In the case of patents revoked in part in an individual contracting state, the EAPO does not publish a new patent document. New claims are published for the country concerned together with a revocation announcement (see, for example, patent number EA 003144 B1).

The Eurasian Patent Information System (EAPATIS) was launched in 2000 and now contains more than 60 million patent documents. It contains a full collection of the EAPO’s patent applications in Russian, English translations of the EAPO’s B publications and Rospatent’s documents from 1924. It also contains documents from the EPO, USPTO, Rospatent, other countries included in the PCT minimum documentation, documents published by the EAPO itself and documentation from the post-Soviet Union’s Commonwealth of Independent States. Detailed information on coverage is available on the EAPO’s website.

Two of EAPATIS’ databases (Eurasian patents database and the CISPATENT database) can be accessed free of charge in guest mode. In guest mode you can also perform a number search in the remaining 24 databases. There are several search options such as field and number search or query builder allowing for full-text search with stemming in Russian and English, proximity and truncation operators along with many other advanced features.
COUNTRY FOCUS

The EAPO’s future plans in the area of patent information

In a presentation at the EAPO’s annual East meets West forum in Vienna, Andrey Sekretov of the EAPO discussed the Office’s future plans in the area of patent information. The EAPO was considering, he said, offering the backfile data as a raw data product and discontinuing subscriptions to optical disk products. It was also looking into using its machine translation system to translate more publications from Russian into English and vice versa (e.g. data on A publications). In the area of legal status codes, the EAPO will introduce new event codes for the expiry of the term of validity of a Eurasian patent and for information on franchise agreements. More detailed information will also be added to the validity table in the patent register.

Contact

For more information on this topic, please contact the EAPO’s Asian Patent Information Services at asiainfo@epo.org.

EUROPEAN PATENT REGISTER

The Netherlands and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia join the Federated Register service

More good news: the ten states already participating in the Federated Register service (see Patent Information News 1/2016) were joined by two further countries in May, namely the Netherlands and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This will allow easy access to reliable and up-to-date bibliographic and legal status information on European patents validated in those two states.

Launched on April 2015 with three countries, the Federated Register service has grown to twelve participating states: Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Switzerland.

Available within the European Patent Register (www.epo.org/register), the Federated Register allows you to retrieve the status of a granted European patent once it has entered the “national phase” in these twelve countries and view them all together in a table.

Information on the content provided by each national patent office currently integrated into the Federated Register is available on the EPO website.

Ultimately, it is the goal of the Federated Register to offer access to the status of a granted European patent across all the designated states, as well as extension and validation states. Patent Information News will keep you posted as more countries join.

The Federated Register is part of the European Patent Register, available at www.epo.org/register.

1 www.epo.org/searching-for-patents/legal/register/documentation/federated-register.html
Patent information webinars – don't miss them!

The EPO’s free webinars are a way to stay up to date with the latest patent information news from the EPO without leaving your desk. There are some twenty of these events per year, each lasting about an hour.

Meet the user support team
The Patent Information User Support team’s webinar sessions are THE place to discuss frequently asked questions on the EPO’s patent information products and services. The team is more than happy to answer questions sent to them prior to the webinar (patentinformation@epo.org) or asked live on the day.

Seminar on Patent Searching, 19-22 September, Vienna
The comprehensive four-day Seminar on Patent Searching (SPS) will, again, take place in September 2016 at the EPO’s premises in Vienna and is being targeted specifically at participants from the private sector, attorneys, universities, etc. The SPS will offer everything a newcomer needs to know to get off to a good start in patent searching, including an insight into more advanced products and topics.

Free patent information webinars in 2016

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<td>Newsflash</td>
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A new online course from the EPO will be of interest to anyone keen to learn about patentability searches.

New online course on patentability searching

The new course covers:
- Preparing the search, including how to set up a search table
- Performing the search
- Assessing the results of the search

To try out the new course, just go to https://e-courses.epo.org and type “Searching prior art based on patent applications” in the Search courses field.

This is where users learn where to find specific support materials to help them make better use of patent information from the EPO.

Webinars on special topics
There are also specific webinars on specialist topics for a whole range of target groups. In the second half of 2016, there will be sessions on patent families, legal status and patent information essentials.

For more details of these and other events, see www.epo.org/pi-training or contact Patent Information Training at pitraining@epo.org.

More information and registration: www.epo.org/search-events.

Programme available, registration open

Taking place at the Novotel Madrid Center from 8 to 10 November, this year’s EPO Patent Information Conference is again likely to be the biggest gathering of patent information specialists in Europe.

The programme includes
– the latest developments in European patent information
– sessions on patent monitoring, citations and full-text searching, freedom-to-operate searches and much more
– a look at patent information from Spain and Latin America
– discussion rounds for in-depth dialogue on specific issues
– training on 7 and 10 November on topics such as obtaining legal status information from the EPO, news from Asia, patent analytics and patent families
– the usual presentations with practical tips from experienced searchers.

Above all, the EPO Patent Information Conference is a meeting place, an event where patent searchers, patent office staff, and commercial patent information providers get together to exchange views and experiences.

To find out more, and to register for the event, please go to www.epo.org/pi-conference.

Online training on Cooperative Patent Classification

The EPO and USPTO have put together a number of training modules on the Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC) scheme, and have recently added complementary material on “combination sets”.

More information: www.cooperativepatentclassification.org/Training.html

ESPACENET and INPADOC are registered trade marks.