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01. Guidelines for Examination 2023 enter into force

**PDF VERSION IS
AVAILABLE IN "CLEAN
COPY" AND IN
VERSION SHOWING
ALL MODIFICATIONS**

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The EPC and PCT-EPO Guidelines 2023, published in preview mode a month ago, entered into force today, superseding the editions of March 2022.

*The new EPC and PCT-EPO Guidelines are published in the EPO's three official languages on the EPO website, where they can be downloaded free of charge in PDF format or accessed section-by-section in HTML format. The PDF version is available both as a "clean copy" and as a version showing all modifications. Within each section of the HTML version, what has changed in the new edition can be displayed by selecting the **Show modifications** box in the top right-hand corner.... [Read more](#)*

02. International Patent Applications Defy 2022 Challenges, Continue Upward Trend – WIPO

**ASIA REMAINED THE
DOMINANT SOURCE
OF INTERNATIONAL
PATENT
APPLICATIONS**

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GENEVA - Demand for patent protection continued to grow in 2022, with innovators in China, the United States, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Germany leading in filings under WIPO's Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) which simplifies the process of seeking patent protection in multiple countries, a press release stated by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

In 2022, PCT filings rose slightly by 0.3%, totaling 278,100 - the highest number ever recorded in a single year. India (+25.4%) and the Republic of Korea (+6.2%) saw sharp growth in PCT filings.

The overall modest growth rate reflects the challenging economic conditions prevailing in 2022. Notwithstanding these conditions, firms continued to invest in innovation and intellectual property....[Read more](#)

03. EPO and European Commission sign agreement on Unitary Patent

**EUROPEAN
COMMISSION TO
SHARE RELEVANT
DATA &
INFORMATION**

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EPO President António Campinos and European Commissioner for Internal Market Thierry Breton have signed a working arrangement on European patents with unitary effect, in accordance with the EU Regulation implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection (EU Regulation 1257/2012, Article 14). The arrangement relates to cooperation and exchange of views between the two institutions to maximise the benefits of the Unitary Patent system and promote its widespread use particularly among small and medium-sized enterprises. It additionally includes a provision for the EPO and European Commission to share relevant data and information, including insights from surveys....[Read more](#)

04. USPTO to Transition to Electronic Patent Grants

**ELECTRONIC PATENT
ISSUANCE WILL REDUCE
PENDENCY OF PATENT
APPLICATIONS**

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In a final rule published in the Federal Register (88 Fed. Reg. 12560) last week, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office announced that it will start issuing patents electronically under a new digital USPTO seal and bearing the digital signature of the USPTO Director beginning on Tuesday, April 18, 2023. The Office indicated that electronic patent issuance will reduce pendency of patent applications, foster a green economy by reducing paper waste, and permit issued patents to be viewed and printed by applicants and the public immediately upon issuance in Patent Center.

The Office noted that following a transition period, patents will no longer be issued on paper and will no longer be mailed to the correspondence address of record as part of the patent[Read more](#)

05. PTO Reduces Small and Micro-Entity Fees

**SMALL ENTITY &
MICRO-ENTITY FILING
FEE DISCOUNTS ARE
INCREASED**

The US Patent & Trademark Office (PTO) issued a final rule reducing certain patent fees for small and micro-entities on March 22, 2023. The Federal Register notice can be found [here](#). Small entity filing fee discounts are increased to 60% (from 50%) and micro-entity filing fee discounts are increased to 80% (from 75%). The fee reductions apply to PTO fees for filing, searching, examining, issuing, appealing and maintaining patent applications and patents.

The fee reductions were mandated by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (the Act), which included the Unleashing American Innovators Act of 2022. The Act was signed into law by President Biden on December 29, 2022. The new PTO fee schedule can be found...[Read more](#)

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06. TIPO's New Trademark Online Application System Launched

**SYSTEM OFFERS A
RANGE OF
FREQUENTLY-USED
APPLICATION FORMS**

TIPO launched the New Trademark Online Application System in 2022 to enhance the convenience of online trademark applications. The system offers a range of frequently-used application forms, such as those for graphic, color, sound, and three-dimensional trademarks, as well as certification marks. In addition, said system provides forms for various services, including amendments, withdrawals, divisions, pre-registration changes, registration renewals, etc.

As of December 2022, the new version of the system has achieved a utilization rate of 98.4%. The previous trademark online application system, launched in 2008, will remain closed indefinitely. For system-related assistance or suggestions.....[Read more](#)

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7. Hague System: Level of the Standard Designation Fee – Namibia

**THE APPLICATION OF
LEVEL THREE OF THE
STANDARD
DESIGNATION FEE WILL
TAKE EFFECT IN RESPECT
OF NAMIBIA ON APRIL
13, 2023.**

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Namibia has made the declaration that in connection with an international application in which Namibia is designated level three of the standard designation fee will be applied with effect on April 13, 2023.

Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs Level of the standard designation fee concerning international applications:

Namibia

1. On January 13, 2023, the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) received from the Business and Intellectual Property Authority (BIPA) of Namibia, a declaration for the application of level three.... [Read more](#)

8. USPTO's Council for Inclusive Innovation launches new initiative to expedite patent applications of first-time filers

**THIS NEW INITIATIVE
INDIVIDUALS OR SMALL
BUSINESSES
QUALIFYING AS A
"MICRO ENTITY"**

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WASHINGTON—To incentivize more innovation from communities all across America, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) today announced the Council for Inclusive Innovation (CI2) First-Time Filer Expedited Examination Pilot Program. The new initiative benefits individuals or small businesses qualifying as a "micro entity" who are first-time filers for patent rights, including those from groups that are underrepresented in the innovation space, by providing expedited initial feedback from the agency on their application, also known as "first office action." Read the full Federal Register Notice announcing the pilot program [Read more](#)

9. EAPO and CNIPA agreed on extension of PPH Program for indefinite period

**MOU ON THE PPH
PROGRAM BETWEEN
EAPO AND CNIPA,
WAS AGREED BY BOTH
THE OFFICES**

The Eurasian Patent Office (EAPO) and the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) agreed to continue cooperation on the Patent Prosecution Highway Pilot Program (PPH Program) for an indefinite time period starting April 1, 2023.

The decision to extend cooperation on the PPH Program, which was commenced on April 1, 2018 on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding on the PPH Program between EAPO and CNIPA, was agreed by the two Offices at the beginning of this year. Signing of the MOU on Extension is deemed to take place on the sidelines of the sixty-fourth series of meetings of Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO in July 2023, in Geneva, Switzerland..... [Read more](#)

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10. Publication of Japan-China-Korea Concordance List of Similar Group Codes (Corresponding to Nice Classification 12th edition, version 2023 (NCL12-2023))

**AIMS TO IMPROVE THE
PREDICTABILITY OF
EXAMINATION RESULTS,
BY ENCOURAGING USERS
WHO FILE TM
APPLICATIONS**

The Japan Patent Office (JPO), the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) and the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) are working on a cooperative project to compile concordance lists that indicate the corresponding relationships among the respective, similar group codes used for trademark examination at the JPO, the CNIPA and the KIPO, based on a trilateral agreement the three offices signed.

Similar group codes are the codes assigned to goods and services that are presumed to be similar to each other in trademark.....[Read more](#)

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11. [Madrid] Changes to the payment system for individual fees, and method for sending certified copies of registration decisions after April 1, 2023

**JPO HAS NOW
ADOPTED A PAYMENT
SYSTEM**

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In accordance with the revision of the Trademark Act, "1. Payment system for individual fees" and "2. Method of sending certified copies of registration decisions" will be changed as follows effective April 1, 2023.

The Japan Patent Office (JPO), as the designated contracting party, had adopted a payment system consisting of two-part individual fees in accordance with Rule 34(3)(a) of the Regulations under the Madrid Protocol. The JPO has now adopted a payment system wherein fees are only payable at the time of filing (a lump-sum payment system) by withdrawing the notification made under the rule, and amending the Trademark Act (Article 68-30, 68-19(1) and 68-35) [Read more](#)

12. Copyright Office Launches New Artificial Intelligence Initiative

**AI USERS, TO EXAMINE
THE ISSUES RAISED FOR
COPYRIGHT**

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Issue No. 1004 - March 16, 2023, the U.S. Copyright Office launches a new initiative to examine the copyright law and policy issues raised by artificial intelligence (AI), including the scope of copyright in works generated using AI tools and the use of copyrighted materials in AI training.

This initiative is in direct response to the recent striking advances in generative AI technologies and their rapidly growing use by individuals and businesses. The Copyright Office has received requests from Congress and members of the public, including creators and AI users, to examine the issues raised for copyright, and it is already receiving applications for registration....[Read more](#)

13. The heads of the intellectual property offices of the Baltic States, Poland and Ukraine have signed a letter of intent in Warsaw to support Ukraine's integration into the European intellectual property system

**IP OFFICES OF THE
BALTIC STATES &
POLAND TO PROMOTE
THE INTEGRATION OF
THE UKRAINIAN IP
FIELD INTO THE
COMMON EUROPEAN
SYSTEM**

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At the beginning of March, in Warsaw, the capital of Poland, a regional meeting of the heads of the intellectual property (IP) offices of the Baltic States and Poland was held, joined by the management of the Ukrainian National Office for Intellectual Property and Innovation, representatives of the European Union Intellectual Property Office and the European Patent Office. Latvia was represented by Agris Batalauskis, Director of the Patent Office. The central theme of the two-day meeting was support to Ukrainian colleagues, providing practical and informative assistance for a successful integration of Ukraine into the European IP system. The parties agreed on further steps to enhance cooperation and exchange of experience in education, communication, administrative, legal and procedural issues. The role of IP offices in complying with the sanctions imposed by the European Union (EU) on the aggressor state Russia was discussed[Read more](#)