

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

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WIPO ST.37 AND AUTHORITY FILE PORTAL

Document prepared by the International Bureau

SUMMARY

1. WIPO Standard ST.37-compliant authority files provided by Offices are published on the Authority File Portal. There are currently 35 Offices or Organizations who provide authority files to the International Bureau for publication as part of the Portal. International Searching Authorities designated by the International Bureau and other Offices who will be contributing patent documents to the PCT Minimum Documentation inventory will need to provide a WIPO ST.37-compliant authority file from January 1, 2026. It is expected that this will result in an increase in the number of authority files available on the Portal.

BACKGROUND

2. WIPO Standard ST.37 provides a set of recommendations regarding the basic elements and allowable formats for a patent authority file. It was first adopted in 2017 at the fifth session of the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) (see paragraph 60 of document CWS/5/22). For details regarding the latest revision to WIPO ST.37 proposed at the current session, see CWS/13/17.

3. Following the adoption of the Standard, the International Bureau proposed a portal to publish authority files which had been submitted by Offices (see paragraphs 8 to 9 and Annex to document CWS/6/18). The Authority File Portal was launched in April 2019, with 18 IP Offices providing their WIPO ST.37 compliant-authority files (see paragraphs 7 to 8 of document CWS/7/16). The Authority File Portal can be accessed at:
https://www.wipo.int/en/web/standards/authority_file .

4. Each year, in February, the Secretariat formally requests updates to authority files, or the provision of new authority files, by issuing a CWS circular. Offices should provide at least an

annual update to their patent authority file. At each session of the CWS, the International Bureau presents an update on the status of the Authority File Portal.

5. The PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force, which manages the inventory considered to comprise the PCT Minimum Documentation, agreed that all Offices or Organizations which contribute to the PCT Minimum Documentation provide a WIPO ST.37-compliant authority file when the new PCT Regulations come into force on January 1, 2026 (see paragraph 14 and the Appendix of document PCT/MIA/30/2). It is expected that this will increase the number of authority files that could be available as part of the Authority File Portal, particularly in March 2026, which is the first update after the new Regulations come into force. For details relating to the proposed update to Part 4 of the WIPO Handbook on Intellectual Property Information and Documentation, see document CWS/13/25.

AUTHORITY FILE PORTAL

6. To date, a total of 35 authority files are available as part of the Authority File Portal. The Office indicated with an asterisk (*) is a new addition in 2025:

- Austria (AT);
- Australia (AU);
- Bulgaria (BG);
- Brazil (BR);
- Canada (CA);
- China (CN);
- Czech Republic (CZ);
- Germany (DE);
- Eurasian Patent Organization (EA);
- European Patent Office (EP);
- Spain (ES);
- Finland (FI);
- France (FR);
- United Kingdom (GB);
- Croatia (HR);
- Ireland (IE)*;
- Israel (IL);
- Italy (IT);
- Japan (JP);
- Republic of Korea (KR);
- Lithuania (LT);
- Monaco (MC);
- Moldova (MD);
- Norway (NO);
- Poland (PL);
- Serbia (RS);
- Russian Federation (RU);
- Saudi Arabia (SA);
- Sweden (SE);
- Slovakia (SK);
- Ukraine (UA);
- United States of America (US);
- International Bureau of WIPO (WO); and
- Yugoslavia (YU)

7. The PCT International Searching Authorities, and other Offices or Organizations who will be contributing patent documents to the PCT Minimum Documentation are invited to provide the International Bureau their WIPO ST.37-compliant authority files.

WIPO ST.37 IMPLEMENTATION

8. One of the key messages for Offices and Organizations who are implementing WIPO ST.37 is that the authority file should be considered a “gold standard”. In other words, the authority file produced by an Office should detail all the patent documents that have been published by that Office and users of the authority file can then validate their own patent collections using this list. Offices should not be relying on exports from a single database and should instead consider digitizing their patent gazettes to determine the comprehensive list of published patent documents.

9. A set of guidelines is published alongside the Authority File Portal which provides additional guidance for Offices who are generating WIPO ST.37-compliant authority files. The guidance provided here is based on commonly asked questions posed to the International Bureau and the responses provided to Offices. The Authority File Portal guidelines are published on the WIPO website at: <https://www.wipo.int/en/web/standards/authority-file-guidelines> .

FUTURE WORK

10. Currently, within the WIPO Authority File Portal, each authority has a row in a table consisting of 5 columns:

- WIPO ST.3 code identifying the relevant authority;
- URL to where the authority file is published;
- URL to where the definition file is published;
- Data coverage for the authority file; and
- Remarks relating to the updates to the authority file, etc.

11. Several issues have been noted with this simple presentation of authority file information, including the inability to retrieve only part of an authority file, for example within a particular date range. With the passage of time, authority files are becoming larger and larger and in certain instances the entire authority file is not required for validation purposes. Other issues include the fact that this information is provided in a static table and only updated by the International Bureau twice a year meaning this information is quickly out of date.

12. The International Bureau is collaborating with the Authority File Task Force to determine what improvements could be made to the Authority File Portal. Some of the following suggestions include:

- A separate page to be provided for each IP Office;
- Each IP Office publishing multiple authority files within their row;
- A date filter to be provided which allows selection of authority file data for only a certain date period; and
- Links directing users to Office APIs which provide authority file data.

13. Two Offices, Austria and Poland, already provide their authority file data via an API request, although it is the response for a particular date range which is published on the WIPO Authority File Portal, as an XML instance.

14. The International Bureau invites Offices to provide their feedback on any of the suggestions indicated above, or alternatively to contact the International Bureau with alternatives.

15. *The CWS is invited to:*

(a) note the contents of the present document;

(b) encourage its Members to provide the International Bureau with any WIPO ST.37-compliant authority files generated by Offices, as indicated in paragraph 7 above; and

(c) encourage its Members to contact the International Bureau with any suggestions regarding improvements to the Authority File Portal, as indicated in paragraph 14.

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