

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

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ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS ON CITATION PRACTICES RELATING TO PATENT INFORMATION

Document prepared by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

1. The Secretariat analyzed the results of the survey on citation practices in intellectual property (IP) offices and presents its findings for consideration. In light of this analysis, the Secretariat proposes to create a new Task to prepare a proposal for a necessary revision to WIPO Standard ST.14 and to re-establish the ST.14 Task Force to deal with the new Task.

BACKGROUND

2. At the thirteenth session of the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS), the Part 7 Task Force presented a revised survey questionnaire on the citation practices of IP offices, with the aim of updating Part 7.9 of the WIPO Handbook on Intellectual Property Information and Documentation (see document CWS/13/5). The CWS reviewed and revised the draft questionnaire by incorporating editorial updates, clarifying some questions, and introducing a new Section 8, which addresses the citation of machine-translated documents (see [CWS/13/5-ANNEXII-REV.](#)).

3. At the same session, the CWS approved the revised survey questionnaire and requested that the Secretariat issue a circular inviting IP offices to respond to the survey, and subsequently update Part 7.9 of the WIPO Handbook based on the survey results. (See paragraphs 30 and 40 of document [CWS/13/33](#)).

SURVEY RESULTS

4. In March 2026, the Secretariat issued circular [C.CWS.205](#), inviting IP offices to participate in the *Survey Concerning Citation Practices in Intellectual Property Offices*. The survey was conducted from March to June 2026.

5. Fifty-five Offices or Organizations responded to the survey, comprising 51 Offices from the following Member States: Australia (AU), Austria (AT), Belarus (BY), Belgium (BE), Brazil (BR), Bulgaria (BG), Canada (CA), Chile (CL), China (CN), Croatia (HR), Cuba (CU), Czechia (CZ), Denmark (DK), Egypt (EG), Estonia (EE), Finland (FI), France (FR), Georgia (GE), Germany (DE), Hungary (HU), India (IN), Ireland (IE), Israel (IL), Japan (JP), Kenya (KE), Liberia (LR), Lithuania (LT), Madagascar (MG), Mexico (MX), New Zealand (NZ), Norway (NO), Paraguay (PY), Peru (PE), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Republic of Korea (KR), Republic of Moldova (MD), Russian Federation (RU), Saudi Arabia (SA), Serbia (RS), Singapore (SG), Slovakia (SK), Slovenia (SI), South Africa (ZA), Spain (ES), Sweden (SE), Switzerland (CH), Thailand (TH), Türkiye (TR), United Kingdom (GB) and the United States of America (US); and the four following Organizations: Eurasian Patent Organization (EA), European Patent Office (EP), International Bureau of WIPO (IB) and Community Plant Variety Office of the European Union (QZ).

6. At the time of preparing this document, the Secretariat is preparing the collated results and individual responses for this survey for publication in the Part 7.9 of the WIPO Handbook.

SURVEY ANALYSIS

7. The Secretariat provides below the analysis of the survey responses received for consideration by the CWS.

Citation reference availability

8. Regarding the publication of citation references, 48 out of 55 respondents (87.3 per cent) indicated that they publish citation references associated with their patent documents, while 7 respondents (12.7 per cent) indicated that they do not. Figure 1 presents these results.

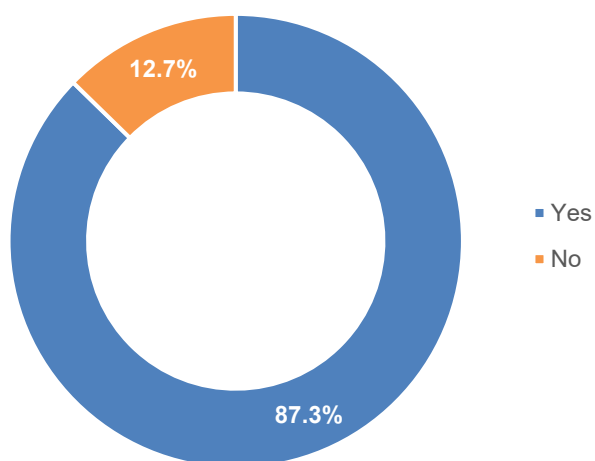


Figure 1: Publication of citation references

9. Of the Offices publishing citation references, 41 respondents (74.5 per cent) confirmed that citation references are fully available to the public, while 11 respondents (20 per cent) reported that availability is limited, most commonly restricted to applicants, available only upon request, or limited to particular stages of the application life cycle (for example, availability for patent applications but not for utility models, or vice versa). The remaining 3 respondents (5.5 per cent) reported that citation references are not available at all. Figure 2 presents these results.

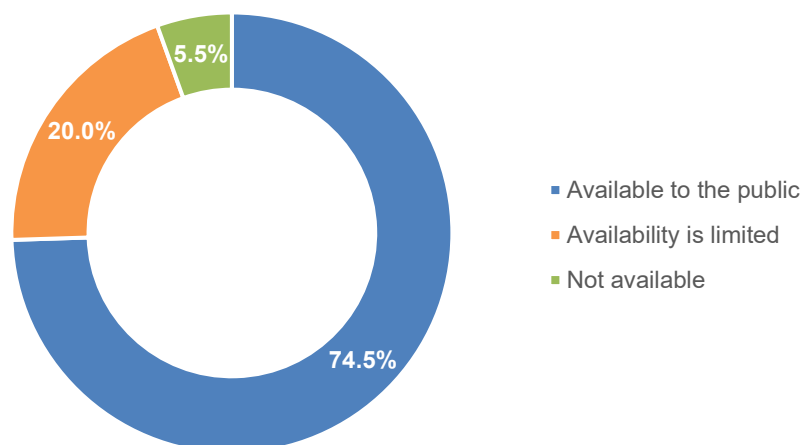


Figure 2: Public availability of published citation references

10. Citation references were reported to be most frequently found within substantive search and/or examination reports (42 respondents), followed by the patent description (28 respondents), bibliographic data (25 respondents), and preliminary search reports (18 respondents). A smaller number of respondents identified other locations, including third-party observations and applicant responses to duty-of-disclosure requirements. This distribution indicates that citation information is generated extensively during the examination search report but is not always made available as part of bibliographic information on the front page of a patent publication. Figure 3 presents these results.

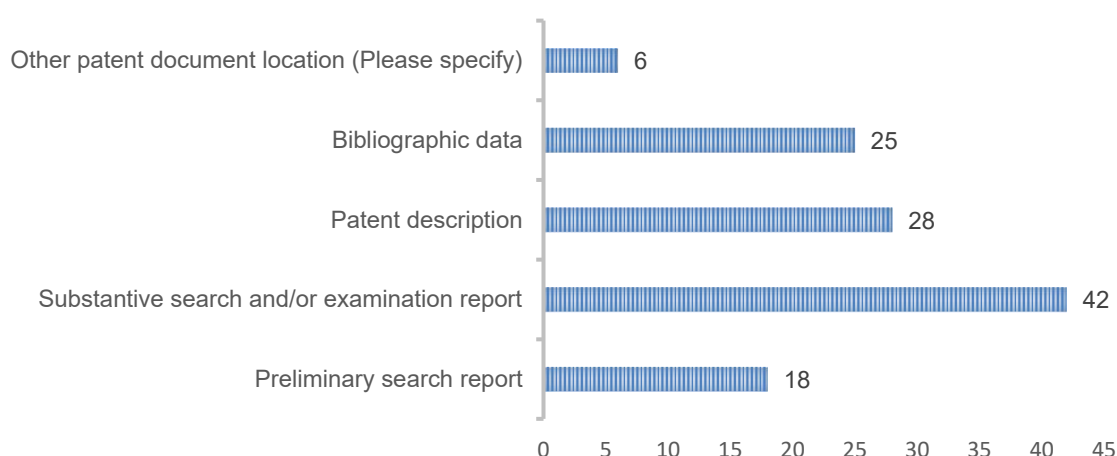


Figure 3: Locations of citation references within patent documents

11. When citation references do appear on the front page of the patent publication, 40 per cent of respondents confirmed that these are included under INID code (56), while 29.1 per cent of respondents indicated this is not applicable to their practice and a further 29.1 per cent of respondents indicated that citation references are not included under this INID code. While 1 respondent (1.8 per cent) indicated that INID code (56) is not always included.

12. For Offices publishing citation references in locations outside the patent document itself, the electronic dossier or file wrapper were applicable for 20 respondents, followed by internet-based summary information (11 respondents) and separate documents such as dedicated search reports (10 respondents). Several respondents also referenced external tools, including national or regional patent databases, as locations where citation references may additionally be consulted.

13. The responses indicate that hyperlinks are not yet a standard feature of online citation services among the surveyed Offices. Only 14 respondents reported that their Office includes hyperlinks, compared with 20 respondents that do not. A further 21 respondents considered the question not applicable, representing the largest response category. Taken together, these results show that direct hyperlinking is available in only a minority of Offices and that considerable differences remain in how citation references are presented and accessed online. The detailed comments confirm that, where hyperlinks are provided, they are generally integrated into established patent information platforms and may lead directly to patent literature, non-patent literature or related records. However, implementation is uneven: some Offices provide links only in specific reports or databases, some include URLs without making them routinely clickable, and others restrict citation information to e-dossiers, paper records or users with authorized access. The findings therefore point to a need for greater consistency in hyperlink practices to improve direct access to cited material and enhance the usability of citation information for the public.

14. The responses to the survey show that forward-citation information is not widely provided by the surveyed Offices. Only 10 respondents (18.2 per cent) indicated that they inform users about patent documents citing the document being viewed, while 36 respondents (65.5 per cent) do not provide this information and nine respondents (16.4 per cent) considered the question not applicable. These findings indicate that, although forward citations can support prior-art tracking and analysis of the subsequent influence of a patent document, this functionality remains available in only a limited number of Offices. Only 13 respondents (23.6 per cent) reported providing such hyperlinks to the cited documents, in the case of forward citation whereas 42 respondents (76.4 per cent) do not. This suggests that, internationally, the citation network available to the public remains largely unidirectional, tracing backward from a given document to its cited prior art, but rarely forward from a document to the documents that later cited it.

15. A substantial majority of respondents, 35 (63.6 per cent), reported full compliance with WIPO Standard ST.14, while 11 (20.0 per cent) reported partial compliance and 9 (16.4 per cent) reported no compliance. Figure 4 presents these results. Further, the comments provided in the responses indicate that partial compliance generally stems from specific, limited gaps rather than a broad departure from the Standard. The most common compliance involves applying WIPO Standard ST.14 to citations referenced within International Search Reports (ISRs). Other respondents reported omitting specific elements, such as certain paragraph, components, category codes, or applicant name fields, while otherwise complying with WIPO Standard ST.14, or having citation practices that are functionally similar to WIPO Standard ST.14.

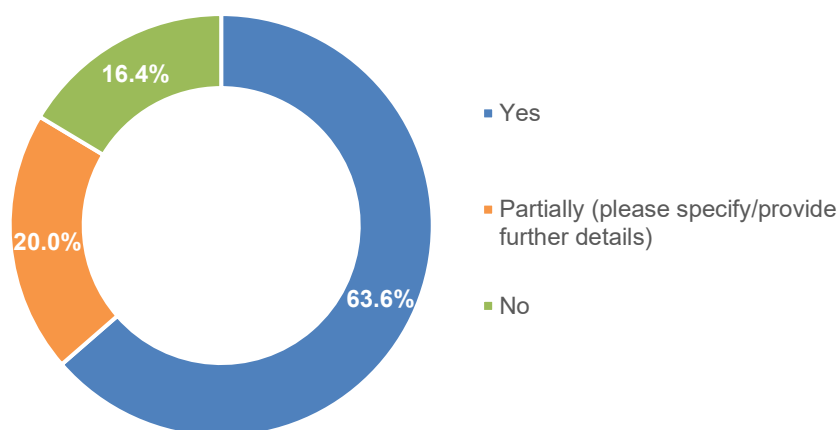


Figure 4: Compliance with WIPO Standard ST.14

16. Among the 35 respondents reporting full compliance, some comments indicate that adherence is mandatory under local rules, while others note strict compliance with specific elements only, such as category indicators and bibliographic identification, or the implementation of select WIPO Standard ST.14 citation formats without extending to all formats covered by the Standard. This suggests that the distinction between "full" and "partial" compliance is not always clear-cut, and that a closer look at specific data elements may reveal more variation in practice than the headline figures suggest.

17. Only 34.5 per cent of respondents indicated that they provide the general public with information about who suggested or decided upon the inclusion of a given citation reference (for example, distinguishing citations suggested by the applicant from those identified by an examiner). Figure 5 presents these results. Where such information is provided, it is most frequently found within the substantive search and/or examination report (16 respondents). Beyond the substantive search and/or examination report, citation reference information was also found on the front page of the patent document (6 respondents) and within the preliminary search report (6 respondents), while a smaller number of respondents reported that such information could be found elsewhere within the patent document, though not on the front page (4 respondents), or through other resources entirely (4 respondents).

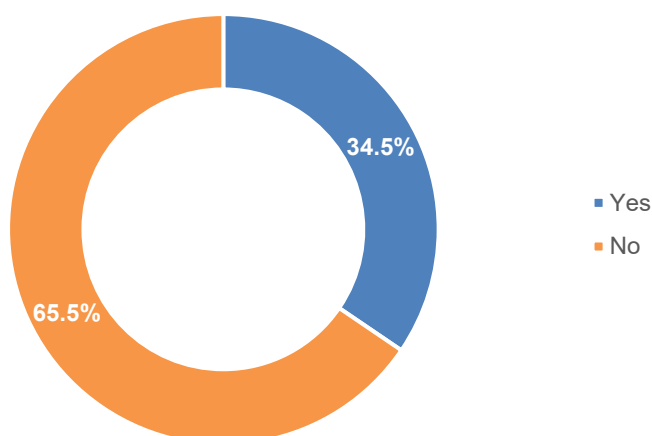
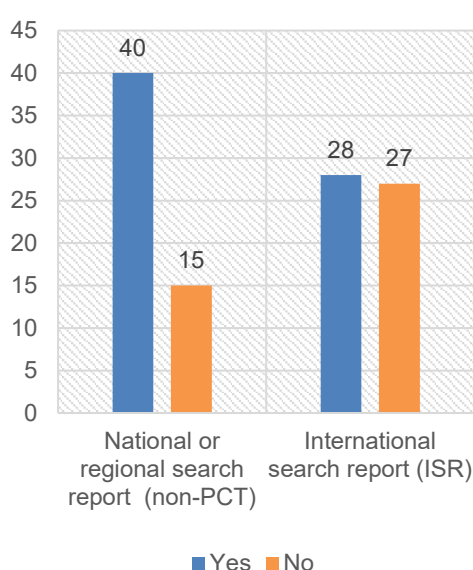
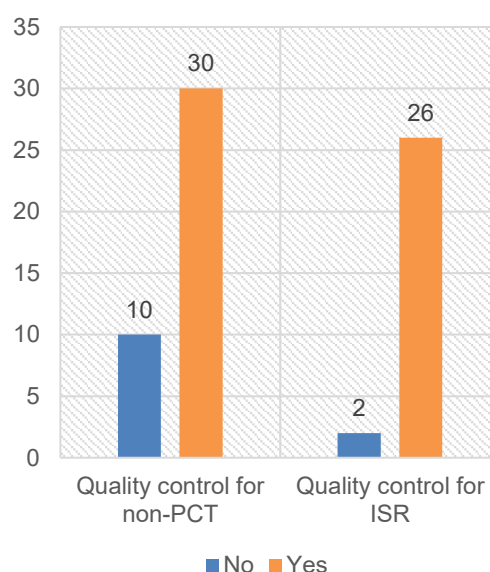


Figure 5: Availability of information on the source of citation references

Search report information

18. With regard to the preparation of ISRs as a PCT International Searching Authority (ISA), 28 respondents (50.9 per cent) indicated that they serve as an ISA, while 27 respondents (49.1 per cent) indicated that they do not. As regards office-specific national or regional search reports, 40 respondents (73 per cent) prepare them while 15 respondents (27 per cent) do not. Figure 6 presents these results. Among those preparing ISRs, 26 of the 28 participating ISAs (93 per cent) maintain quality control over citation references while 2 respondents (7 per cent) do not. Among Offices preparing specific national or regional search reports, quality control practices concerning citation references were reported by the clear majority, with 30 respondents confirming the existence of formal quality control mechanisms, compared to 10 respondents indicating no such controls were in place. Figure 7 presents these results. The results indicate that, irrespective of whether a search report is prepared as an ISR under the PCT or as a national/regional search report, the majority of Offices that prepare such search reports have implemented formal quality control processes for citation references.

**Figure 6: Preparation of Search Reports****Figure 7: Quality control of citation references**

19. Regarding the inclusion of online URLs in citations on ISRs, 7 of the 28 participating ISAs always include them, 4 never do, and 17 do so sometimes, most commonly when citing non-patent literature. For office-specific national or regional search reports the corresponding figures are 16 always including them, 5 never do, and 19 sometimes. As to unique document identifiers on ISRs, 13 respondents always use them, 4 never do, and 11 sometimes; for national reports the figures are 15 always, 13 never, and 12 sometimes.

20. Among the unique document identifiers used, the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) was the most common, indicated by 23 respondents for ISRs and 25 respondents for national reports, followed by ISBN and ISSN, indicated by 21 and 22 respondents respectively. Offices reported that differences between the provision of ISR and other search report citations are generally minor, relating to language, date formats, and the inclusion of patent family or classification information.

Management of Citation References

21. Regarding the tagging of citation references, 7 respondents (12.7 per cent) currently add tags; 42 respondents (76.4 per cent) do not; and 6 respondents (10.9 per cent) intend to do so in the future. Among these 6 respondents, 3 indicated a target timeframe of 2027–2028, 1 respondent intends to add tags within three years, and the remaining 2 respondents have no concrete plans in place. As regard to the question if Offices have a centralized database containing citation reference identification data elements, 16 respondents (29.1 per cent) maintain one; 37 respondents (67.3 per cent) do not; and 2 respondents (3.6 per cent) intend to establish one in the future. Figure 8 presents these results.

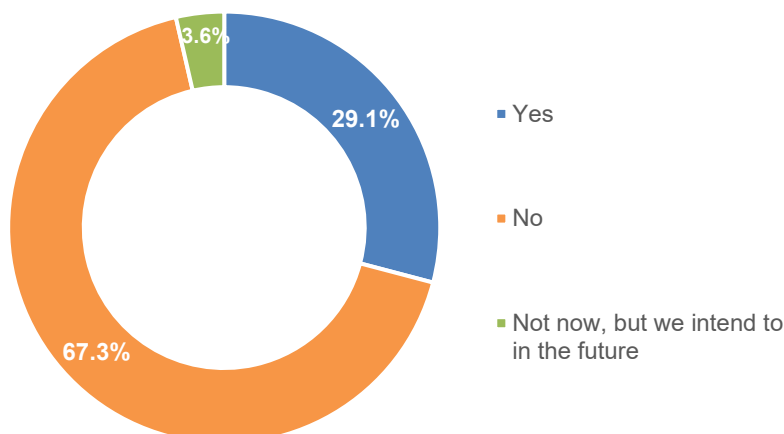


Figure 8: Centralized database containing citation reference identification

22. Among Offices that maintain a centralized database of citation reference identification data, the structures vary considerably. Some Offices use WIPO Standard ST.36 as an interchange format, others use relational databases (in some cases combined with WIPO Standard ST.36 for data exchange purposes), and at least 1 respondent operates a proprietary internal master database format that is fed by data flows converted from WIPO Standards ST.36, ST.96, or proprietary non-patent literature formats. Of the Offices maintaining such centralized database, only 13 respondents confirmed that the information contained within it is both technically and legally exchangeable with other Offices, representing a significant limitation on the international interoperability of citation data.

23. Consistent with this finding, only 32.7 per cent of respondents confirmed that citation references are searchable by the general public, meaning that a user can search for the text of the data elements identifying the cited document or passage. A further 10.9 per cent indicated that such searchability is available only in limited circumstances (for example, for patent citations only, or for descriptions but not for examination reports or third-party submissions), while the majority, 56.4 per cent, indicated that citation references are not searchable by the public at all.

Authentic Source of Published Patent Documents

24. Regarding the authentic legal rendition (authoritative source) of published patent applications and granted patents, the large majority of respondents identified a website as an authoritative source (48 respondents for patent applications and 47 respondents for granted patents). Nevertheless, paper remains the authentic legal rendition in a significant minority of jurisdictions (19 respondents for applications and 20 respondents for granted patents). A smaller number of respondents additionally identified SFTP bulk publication services (11 respondents for applications and 10 respondents for granted patents) and application programming interfaces (APIs) (5 respondents for applications and 7 respondents for granted patents) as authoritative sources.

25. Where there is a preference for a particular file format (reported by 54.5 per cent of respondents), PDF format was the most preferred (27 respondents), followed by XML (13 respondents), with paper, HTML, TIFF image, and JSON formats used by smaller numbers of respondents. This confirms that, despite growing investment in structured XML data, the image-based PDF format remains the dominant format for externally providing the authentic legal rendition of a patent document.

26. As regards to the question whether the Offices are using commercial providers for publishing patent documents, the majority of respondents (87.3 per cent, 48 respondents) reported that they do not use commercial providers for publishing patent documents, relying instead on in-house systems and resources. Only 7 respondents (12.7 per cent) indicated using commercial providers, with the specific arrangements varying considerably among them. Reported uses of external vendors included generating XML files from PDFs that had not undergone optical character recognition (OCR) and therefore did not contain machine-readable text, engaging commercial platforms for broader publishing functions, supplementing national search tools with commercial services for publishing accepted applications and granted patents, and development services for gazette publication systems.

Availability of Location Identifiers

27. Regarding text-based identifiers, page numbers unsurprisingly emerged as the most widely used location identifier, present in published documents of 47 respondents (85.5 per cent), reflecting their long-standing role as a universal and straightforward referencing mechanism. Paragraph numbers (26 respondents) and line numbers (27 respondents) were also commonly used. Column numbers, by contrast, were reported by only 9 Offices. Figure 9 presents these results. Notably, several respondents explained that certain identifiers exist only in XML data and are absent from PDF renditions, reinforcing the earlier finding that XML and PDF formats often diverge in their level of structural granularity, with XML offering richer machine-readable location markers, not always reflected in the externally published legal document.

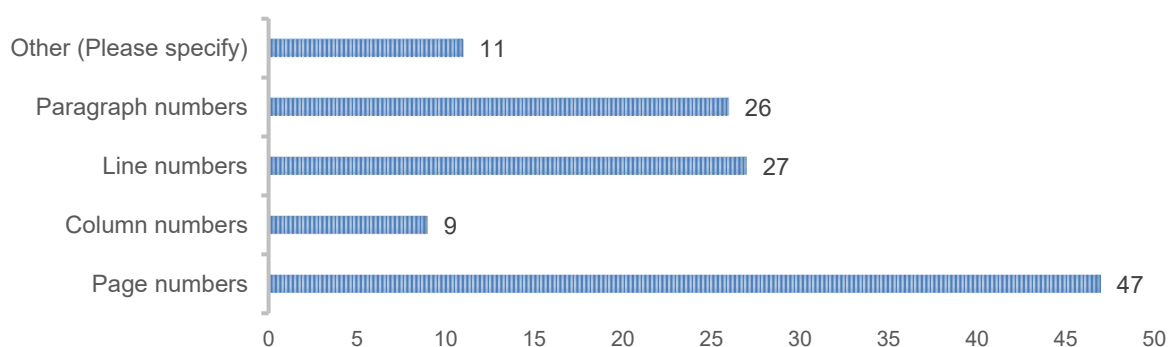


Figure 9: Use of text-based location identifiers in published patent documents

28. With respect to non-textual elements occur within the description part of the published patent document, image/figure numbers were nearly universal (44 respondents), followed by tables (40 respondents) and gene sequences (36 respondents), indicating that these are treated as standard, predicted components of a patent description across most jurisdictions. Mathematical formulas (30 respondents) and chemical formula numbers (33 respondents) were also widely supported. Identifiers for computer programs (12 respondents) and video timestamps via minutes/seconds (13 respondents) were markedly less common, reflecting the comparatively rare occurrence of such content within patent descriptions rather than a lack of technical capability to reference them. Webpage identifiers (URL with heading/section reference) were reported by 22 respondents, an interesting finding given that most searches for documents are located online; several respondents noted, however, that the presence of such identifiers depends entirely on applicant citation practices rather than any office-imposed practice. Figure 10 presents these results.

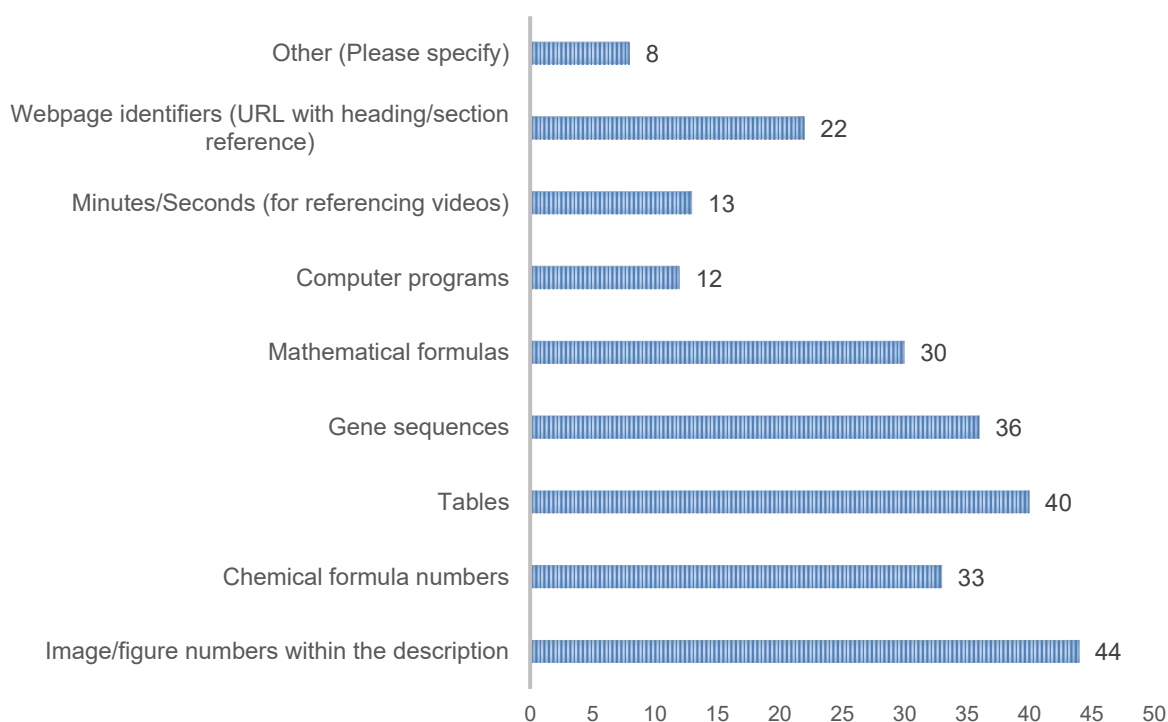


Figure 10: Use of identifiers for non-textual elements in patent descriptions

Paragraph number details

29. Paragraph numbering is used by 25 respondents (45.5 per cent), while a majority (54.5 per cent) do not implement this feature. Where paragraph numbers are used, they are mainly generated by the applicant or inventor (17 respondents) rather than by the Office itself (4 respondents) or an external publisher (4 respondents), indicating that paragraph numbering is generally treated as part of the applicant's drafting responsibility rather than an office-controlled formatting standard. Several respondents noted that numbering is instead generated automatically through IT systems or document conversion tools, reflecting a growing trend toward automating this task during document processing rather than relying on manual insertion.

30. The process of recreating paragraph numbers after amendment also varies significantly across Offices. 13 respondents renumber paragraphs specifically when amendments occur, while 9 respondents recreate numbering entirely during the publication process itself. This divergence highlights two fundamentally different points: some Offices treat paragraph numbering as a dynamic feature updated throughout prosecution, while others apply it only

once, at the point of formal publication. Similarly, when addressing how amended paragraphs are treated, responses were highly fragmented, with renumbering of subsequent paragraphs (10 respondents) being the most common approach, followed by less structured methods such as inserting sub-numbered paragraphs (e.g., 0008A) or incorporating amended text into existing paragraphs.

31. A substantial number of respondents (12) provided distinct "Other" responses, underscoring the lack of harmonized international practice and confirming that responsibility for maintaining numbering consistency after amendment typically rests with the applicant, with Offices playing a largely passive or supervisory role.

32. Regarding the treatment of long paragraphs, the near-unanimous response was that no special treatment is applied, with multiple respondents explicitly confirming there is no restriction on paragraph length or word count. The sole notable exception was one Office's practice of numbering every fifth line, an approach that appears to be an isolated deviation from otherwise consistent international practice from survey respondents. This finding suggests that, unlike page or line-based identifiers, paragraph numbering is treated as a flexible, content-driven feature without formal length constraints, in keeping with its applicant-driven origin.

Citing Documents Based on Machine Translations

33. About half of respondents, 52.7 per cent, indicated that they currently permit the citation of machine-translated documents in search or examination reports, while 34.5 per cent do not permit this practice, and the remainder, 12.7 per cent, described their individual solutions, such as machine-translated documents can be accepted only as complement to the original document or they can be used just for informational purpose that can support understanding but are not considered authoritative legal sources. Figure 11 presents these results.

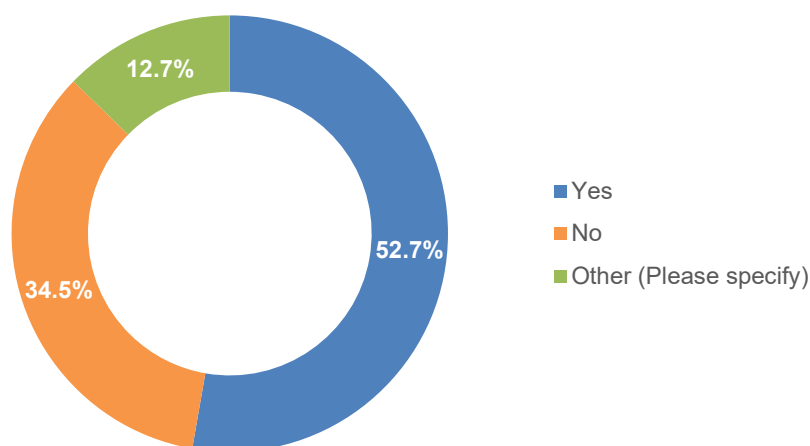


Figure 11: Citing of machine-translated documents in search or examination reports

34. Where a document is cited without paragraph numbering, the survey revealed a wide range of approaches to identifying the relevant passage within the machine translation, including reference to page and line numbers, section or subsection headings, figure numbers, claim numbers, or, in some cases, citation of the document in its entirety without pointing a specific passage. Several respondents described the practice of first attempting to identify the relevant passage in the original-language document and referring to the machine translation only as a supplementary aid, reflecting a preference for the original document as the authoritative reference point wherever possible.

35. Regarding the applicant access to the cited machine translated documents, 10 respondents indicated that the cited machine translation is sent directly to the applicant, and 2 respondents indicated that it is uploaded to an electronic file accessible through an online register. However, 7 respondents indicated that the exact machine translation used is not currently shared with the applicant at all, and a further 18 respondents described other, more limited arrangements, such as sharing the translation only upon request or relying on the applicant's ability to independently access the same translation tool used by the examiner (for example, where both rely on the same publicly available search platform). Figure 12 presents these results.

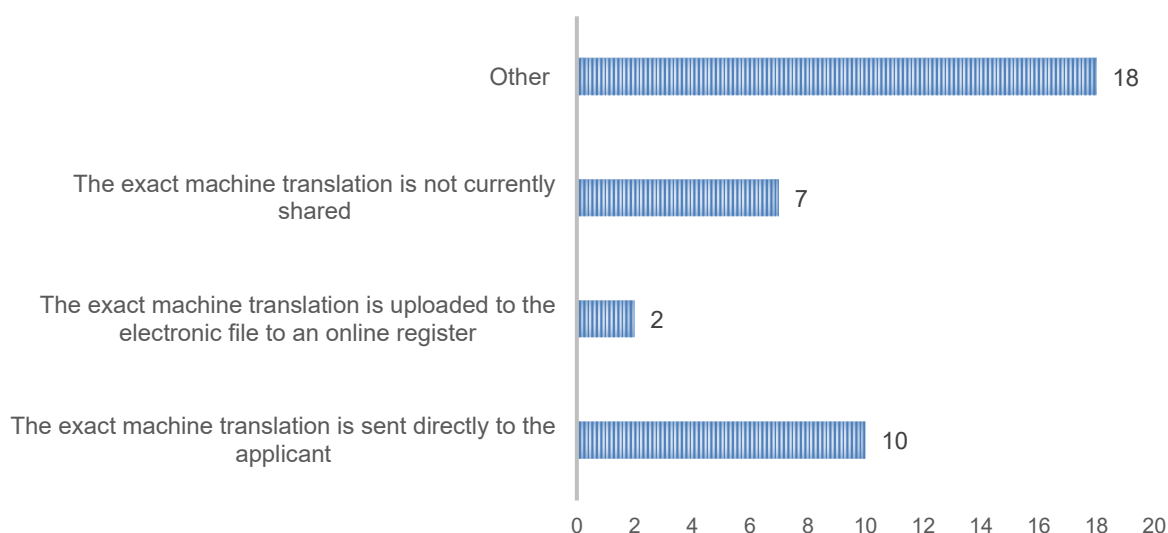


Figure 12: Applicant access to cited machine-translated documents

36. Regarding the storing of machine translated documents used by examiners, the majority of respondents (28 of 36, 77.8 per cent) confirmed that they retain such translations in some form, though practices diverge sharply on accessibility. Only a small number of Offices make these translations publicly available, while the majority restrict access for internal use only. A smaller group of respondents reported not recording machine translations at all. This pattern suggests that while most Offices recognize the need to preserve the exact machine translation cited during examinations, there remains considerable reluctance to make this translation publicly available. This is likely due to concerns about translation quality, liability, or the informal status of machine translations as a search tool rather than an authoritative document.

37. On the question of citation format, a clear majority of respondents (27 of 36, 75 per cent) reported having no preferred format for referencing machine translations in search or examination reports, indicating that this remains a largely unstandardized area of practice. Among the smaller number of Offices that do have a preferred approach, methods varied from formal citation standards aligned with existing WIPO conventions, to simple contextual notes such as "see machine translation", to paragraph-based referencing keyed to the original document's numbering. Notably, 1 respondent indicated it is considering a shift toward citing the machine-translated text directly rather than referencing the original document's structure, which may signal an emerging trend toward greater transparency in how machine-translated evidence is presented to applicants. Figure 13 presents these results.

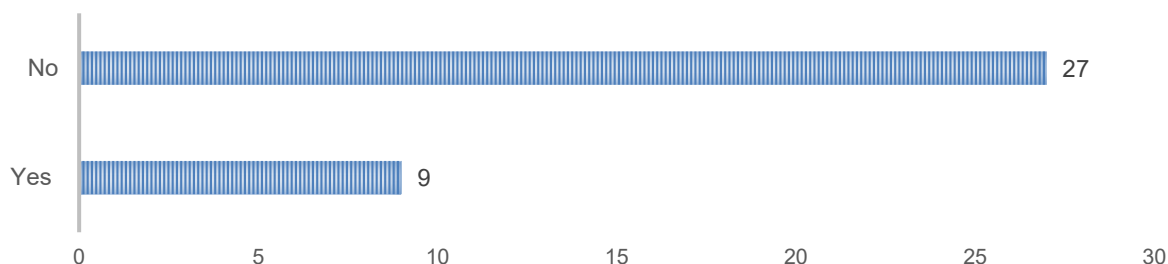


Figure 13: Preferred citation formats for machine-translated documents

38. Disputes over the relevance of machine-translation-based citations appear to be rare, with only 4 respondents reporting such cases, while the vast majority encountered none. Where disputes did arise, they typically focused on translation accuracy and the possibility of affecting substantive assessment of a patent application.

39. Building on the divided views regarding citation practices, a majority of respondents (22 of 36, 61.1 per cent) supported the introduction of a standardized method for referencing the machine translation engine and translation date in international search reports. A notable minority (12 respondents, one-third of respondents) opposed such standardization.

40. In a related question, support for revising WIPO Standard ST.14 specifically to address machine translation citation had a stronger response, with two-thirds of respondents (24 of 36) favoring such a revision, while 10 respondents opposed it and 2 provided conditional responses. The high level of support for revision of the WIPO Standard ST.14 suggests that Offices may be more comfortable with formalizing citation guidance through an existing, recognized WIPO Standard rather than introducing an entirely new requirement. Notably, 1 respondent's suggestion that any revision take the form of non-binding recommendations with illustrative examples, rather than a mandatory rule. Figure 14 presents these results.

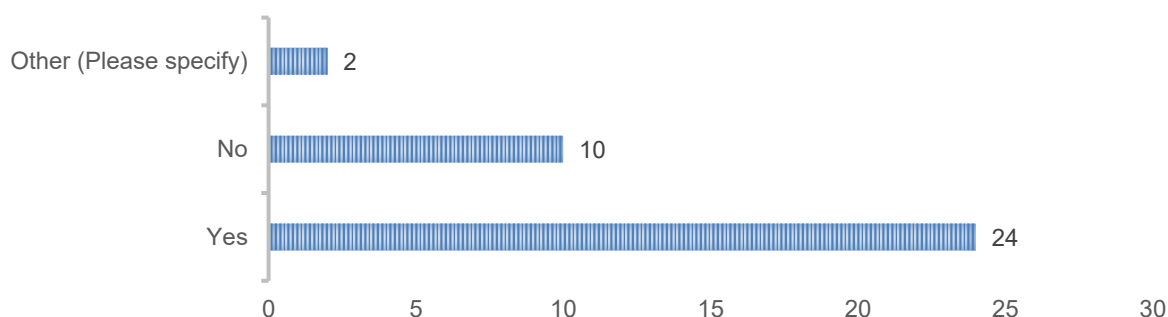


Figure 14: Revising WIPO Standard ST.14

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

41. The survey analysis indicates that, although citation reference data are widely generated during examination processes, they remain largely unstructured, decentralized and not publicly searchable in machine-readable form across most respondent Offices. The Secretariat therefore proposes further work to promote the use of structured citation data formats and to explore, among interested Offices, the feasibility of expanding public searchability of citation references.

42. Furthermore, given the strong majority of respondent Offices supporting the revision of WIPO Standard ST.14 to include recommendations on citing machine-translated documents, and the majority supporting a standardized approach to identifying the machine translation engine and date of translation in international search reports, the Secretariat proposes that this matter be prioritized in the revision of WIPO Standard ST.14.

43. In order to achieve this objective, the Secretariat proposes to add a new Task, i.e., Task No. 68, to the CWS work program, with the following description:

“Ensure the necessary revisions and updates to WIPO Standard ST.14, and support the implementation of this Standard.”

44. The Secretariat proposes to reactivate the ST.14 Task Force to deal with Task No. 68. The ST.14 Task Force was discontinued at the reconvened fourth session of the CWS in 2016 as the revision of WIPO Standard ST.14 was approved at the same session (see paragraph 44 of document [CWS/4BIS/16](#)).

45. In accordance with the organizational matters and special rules of procedure of the CWS, a project brief outlining the background, objectives and expected benefits is appended to this document as an Annex.

46. If the CWS approves reactivating the ST.14 Task Force, it is invited to nominate a Task Force Leader and request the Task Force to present a proposal for the revision of WIPO Standard ST.14 at its fifteenth session. Subsequently, it is proposed that the CWS request the Secretariat to issue a circular inviting its Members and Observers to nominate subject matter experts, preferably with experience in patent examination.

47. *The CWS is invited to:*

(a) note the content of this document;

(b) consider and approve the survey analysis as captured by paragraphs 7 to 40 and approve their publication in the WIPO Handbook;

(c) consider and approve the creation of Task No. 68 in the CWS work program, as referred to in paragraph 43 above;

(d) consider and approve the proposed description of Task No. 68, as set out in paragraph 43 above;

(e) consider and approve the reactivation of the ST.14 Task Force, nominate its Task Force Leader and assign Task No. 68 to it, as referred to in paragraphs 44 and 46 above; and

(f) request the Secretariat to issue a circular inviting Members and Observers to nominate subject matter experts to join the ST.14 Task Force, as referred to in paragraph 46 above.

[Annex follows]

PROJECT TASK CREATION: REVISION OF WIPO STANDARD ST.14

Document prepared by the International Bureau

BACKGROUND

1. WIPO Standard ST.14 provides a set of recommendations for presentation of references cited during patent search and examination. It supports the consistent recording of patent and non-patent literature, identifies where cited references should appear in patent documents or search reports, and defines category codes indicating their relevance to the claimed invention. The Standard therefore facilitates clearer citation practices and more consistent access to prior-art information across intellectual property (IP) offices. The latest version of WIPO Standard ST.14 was published and came into force in May 2016.

2. In October 2024, at the PCT Meeting of International Authorities (MIA) Quality Subgroup meeting, participants discussed the citation of documents based on machine translations. They agreed that there should be harmonization regarding how these documents are cited and raised several issues to be resolved, including whether a copy of the translation should be kept and how to identify the relevant portion of a translated document. One solution discussed was to revise WIPO Standard ST.14 and provide a series of recommendations for resolve these problems (see paragraphs 30 to 32 of document PCT/MIA/31/11).

3. To gather information on current citation practices by Offices, the Secretariat circulated a survey to CWS Members in March 2026 through circular C.CWS 205. The survey found considerable variation in how Offices create, present, exchange and publish citation information including those translated by the machine translation tools. As reported in document CWS/14/20, most responding patent Offices implement WIPO Standard ST.14 as far as possible. The majority of the responded also supported revising the WIPO Standard ST.14 to establish consistent requirements for citing machine-translated documents, including the translation engine used and the date of translation.

PROBLEMS TO BE ADDRESSED

4. As technology is developing, so are the types of documents that can be referenced by a patent examiner during a prior art search. In order for WIPO Standard ST.14 to remain relevant, it is necessary to consider how to cite new types of documents, in particular non-patent literature (NPL). Below are some examples of NPL documents that cannot currently be captured under WIPO Standard ST.14 include:

- (a) Online marketplaces, for example Amazon or Alibaba;
- (b) Social media, for example Tik-Tok or LinkedIn; and
- (c) Online chat forums, for example Do It Yourself (DIY) campervan/camper trailer builds forums.

5. Another issue to be addressed is the citation of machine-translated documents. Translation results may vary depending on machine translation tools used and the date of translation. However, copies of translations are not consistently retained, no common IT system links translations to their original documents and citing specific passages from machine-translated documents in a standardized manner remains difficult.

6. In addition, as WIPO Standard ST.14 was originally drafted at a time when locating documents through online searches was uncommon, citing a patent document found electronically, as is now the case for most documents, requires revision of several sections of the Standard to ensure compliance. The Secretariat, therefore, proposes improving the

readability of the Standard through a number of editorial revisions, including the introduction of headings and the replacement of outdated examples.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

7. To address the issues outlined above, it is proposed that a new Task be created under CWS work program and the ST.14 Task Force be reactivated. It is also proposed that the ST.14 Task Force discuss Offices' various practices and prepare a proposed revisions to WIPO Standard ST.14 for consideration by the CWS.

OBJECTIVE OF THE PROPOSAL

8. The objective of creating the new Task and reactivating the ST.14 Task Force, is to achieve the following:

- (a) Improve the clarity of WIPO Standard ST.14 as needed;
- (b) Expand the scope of the Standard to include recommendations on citing non-written disclosures and machine-translated documents;
- (c) Update the examples in WIPO Standard ST.14 to cover common types of documents cited in patent search reports; and
- (d) Support Offices in implementing the Standard.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

9. Adding the new Task to the CWS work program and reactivating the ST.14 Task Force would allow the expertise of patent examiners in Offices to identify together the types of documents currently cited in patent search reports provided by Offices. This work would also help re-engage Offices, particularly those that do not currently implement WIPO Standard ST.14. A revised Standard would provide clear, up-to-date guidance reflecting current technologies and best practices; improve transparency in the use of machine-translated documents; facilitate access to citation information; and promote greater consistency among Offices.

COST ESTIMATES

10. No separate budget allocation is anticipated, provided that the work is conducted through electronic collaboration and virtual meetings. Secretariat expenditure for coordination, document preparation, review, translation and publication would be absorbed within existing resources.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENT

11. The work would require Secretariat staff time for coordination, substantive and editorial support, meeting administration, translation and publication. The CWS Members and Observers would be invited to nominate experts with relevant experience in patent examination, patent information and citation practices. Participating Offices and Organizations would bear the costs of their experts' participation

RISKS

12. The principal risks are insufficient expert participation, divergence among national, regional and PCT practices and different machine translation technologies used. These risks would be mitigated through broad expert participation, a clearly defined scope and coordination within the Task Force and the CWS.