

Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) **Committee for Technical Cooperation**

Thirty-Third Session
Geneva, February 2 to 6, 2026

EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT OF THE AUSTRIAN PATENT OFFICE AS AN INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AND PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY UNDER THE PCT

Document prepared by the International Bureau

1. All the existing International Authorities were appointed by the PCT Assembly for a period ending on December 31, 2027. Before the expiry of this period, the Assembly will need to decide on the extension of the appointment of each existing International Authority that wishes to seek an extension of its appointment, having first sought the advice of this Committee (see PCT Articles 16(3)(e) and 32(3)). Information concerning this process and the role of the Committee is set out in document PCT/CTC/33/INF/1.
2. On November 20, 2025, the Austrian Patent Office submitted its application for extension of appointment, which is reproduced in the Annex to this document.
3. *The Committee is invited to give its advice on this matter.*

[Annex follows]

APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT AS AN INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING
AND PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY UNDER THE PCT

1 – GENERAL

(a) Name of Office or intergovernmental organization:

Austrian Patent Office (APO)

(b) Name and contact details of official for any queries about this application:

Mr. Hannes RAUMAUF	hannes.raumauf@patentamt.at	+43 664 88279130
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**(c) Date on which application for extension of appointment was received by the
Director General:**

November 20, 2025

2 – MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR APPOINTMENT

In addition to the annual report on the quality management system by the Office or organization for 2025 (“the QMS Report” <https://www.wipo.int/en/web/pct-system/quality/authorities#AT>) produced in accordance with paragraphs 21.31 and 21.32 of the International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines (“the Guidelines”), the Authority submits the following information.

2.1 – SEARCH AND EXAMINATION CAPACITY

Rules 36.1(i) and 63.1(i): The national Office or intergovernmental organization must have at least 100 full-time employees with sufficient technical qualifications to carry out searches and examinations.

The QMS Report provides information from the Authority on the infrastructure in place to ensure a sufficient quantity of technically qualified staff under paragraph 21.15(i) of the Guidelines, and on the training and development programs for staff involved in the search and examination process under paragraph 21.15(vi). The Authority also includes the following information on numbers of employees qualified to carry out search and examination.

Employees qualified to carry out search and examination:

Technical field	Number (in full-time equivalent)	Average experience as examiners (years)	Breakdown of qualifications
Physics and Civil Engineering	26	16,9	6 PhD, 20 Master's Degree
Mechanical Engineering	26	18,8	8 PhD, 18 Master's Degree
Electrical Engineering and Information Technology	27	17,5	7 PhD, 20 Master's Degree
Chemistry/Bio	30	15,3	12 PhD, 18 Master's Degree
<i>Total</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>17,1</i>	<i>33 PhD, 76 Master's Degree</i>

Other information beyond the QMS Report and the above table (optional):

All patent examiners are required to be part of the panels in opposition and in invalidation proceedings against patents and utility models. This has a significantly positive effect on the understanding of patent assessment and the procedure during the search and examination activities.

Furthermore, a significant number of senior patent examiners serve as lay judges on the benches of the **Higher Regional Court of Vienna** and the **Austrian Supreme Civil and Criminal Court** in patent disputes. Two patent examiners even serve as technically qualified judges with the **Unified Patent Court**.

2.2 – MINIMUM DOCUMENTATION – MAKING AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTATION

Rules 36.1(ii) and 63.1(ii): That Office or organization must make available for consultation as part of the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34, in accordance with the requirements specified in the Administrative Instructions, any patent issued, and any patent application published, by it, and where applicable by its legal predecessor(s).

The requirements specified in the Administrative Instructions are set out in [Circular C. PCT 1672](#), dated June 19, 2024.

The making available for consultation as part of the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34 of the patents issued and patent applications published by the Office or, where applicable, the Offices that are members of the intergovernmental organization in accordance with the Understanding adopted by the PCT Assembly in paragraph 8 of document PCT/A/55/2, is reported as follows:

Either:

☒ The PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force has tested the availability of the patent documentation collections before November 1, 2025, and certifies that the requirements have been met. The extent and format of the documents that the Authority has made available for consultation has been published in the PCT Gazette on October 23, 2025 at: <https://www.wipo.int/documents/d/pct-system/docs-en-official-notices-officialnotices.pdf#page=177>.

Or:

☐ The Authority reports on the availability of its patent documentation collection as follows, including a timetable for when testing and full availability can be certified by the PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force. Please also provide details of your Authority File with any links, as appropriate.

2.3 – MINIMUM DOCUMENTATION – ACCESS

Rules 36.1(iii) and 63.1(iii): That Office or organization must have in its possession, or maintain access to at least the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34, for search purposes in accordance with the Administrative Instructions.

The QMS Report provides information from the Authority on the infrastructure in place to ensure that at least the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34 is available, accessible, properly arranged and maintained for search and examination purposes under paragraph 21.15(iv) of the Guidelines.

Other information beyond the QMS Report (optional):

All patent examiners have online access to APO's primary search tool ANSERA-based SEARCH (AbS), Chemical Abstracts Database via STN, WPI, and a plurality of other patent literature and non-patent literature databases.

2.4 – QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Rules 36.1(iv) and 63.1(iv): That Office or organization must have in place a quality management system and internal review arrangements in accordance with the common rules of international search,

The QMS Report provides information from the Authority on the quality management system in place under Chapter 21 of the Guidelines and includes a report under paragraph 21.09 of the internal review arrangements that are further described in paragraphs 21.27 to 21.30 of the Guidelines.

Other information beyond the QMS Report (optional):

ISO 9001/2015: 2nd Recertification in November 2025 - passed

ISO 27001: fully implemented and certified since 2024

3 – SCOPE OF OPERATION

(a) Current scope of operation

The receiving Offices for which the Office or intergovernmental organization is competent as an International Searching Authority and an International Preliminary Examining Authority, language(s) in which services are offered and other details of scope of operation are listed in the *PCT Applicant's Guide* at the following links: <https://pctlegal.wipo.int/eGuide/view-doc.xhtml?doc-code=AT&doc-lang=en#ISA> and <https://pctlegal.wipo.int/eGuide/view-doc.xhtml?doc-code=AT&doc-lang=en#IPEA>.

(b) Planned changes to scope of operation as an Authority, such as the receiving Offices for which the Authority is competent and languages offered (if any):

In recent years, we have concluded new agreements in relation to the functioning as an ISA and IPEA under the PCT with several offices (Cabo Verde, Mauritius, Nigeria). We also intend to conclude further agreements with interested offices in the future.

4 – OTHER

In 2024 and 2025, APO has significantly increased its training activity with countries for which it acts as ISA/IPEA. In September 2024 and in May 2025, delegations from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa, Mauritius, Cabo Verde and Trinidad & Tobago were welcomed to Vienna for a three- to five-day training with a focus on PCT and patent search and examination. In March 2025, delegates from APO travelled to Ghana, and to Lesotho in May of the same year. These exchanges were organized by WIPO and APO is eager to participate in more such exchange meetings in 2026 (already arranged). The participants greatly benefitted from APO's expertise as a Receiving Office and ISA/IPEA.