

**Questionnaire on the Term “Quality of Patents” and Cooperation between
Patent
Offices in Search and Examination**

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The answers to this questionnaire have been provided on behalf of:

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Q1. Various aspects may be relevant to the concept of “quality of patents”. It may relate to, for example, quality of patent procedures and management in the office, quality of search and examination, quality of granted patents or quality of a patent system. In addition, the expression “quality of patents” may be understood differently depending on the perspectives of various stakeholders, for example, the perspectives of a patent office, an applicant etc.

How does your office understand the term “quality of patents”?

According to the yearly business plan of the Patent department of NIPO quality is define as follow:

The results we deliver to our customers are to be accurate, in accordance with regulations and delivered on time in order to meet our customers need for predictability. Our decisions must be consistent and as far as possible harmonized with European practice. We should ensure good contact and dialogue with our customers, accommodate their wishes as far as possible and provide efficient feedback and processing.

NIPO has as a strategic decision to strengthen the value of our customer`s patent applications by improving the quality of the content as well as the examination process.

Q2. What types of cooperation with other patent offices does your office have with respect to search and examination?

Those types of cooperation may include, for example, access to documents/databases of other offices, use of search and examination work products, expertise and resources available in other offices, collaborative search and examination, outsourcing search and examination etc.

NIPO is a party to Nordic Patent Institute (NPI) together with the Danish Patent and Trademark Office and the Icelandic Patent Office. NPI is an International Searching Authority and International Preliminary Examining Authority. The NPI members are aiming to have common procedure in order to be harmonised. Previously we performed a peer- review cross

border with the other NPI members, in all ISR and WO. Today the peer-review is carried out within the offices due to practical reasons.

NPI also take part in a harmonization exercises together with EPO. EPO selects applications within all technical field whereas a search and examination is carried out in parallel in EPO and NPI. The results are analysed in order to find improvements in our search and examination procedure.

Q3. When performing prior art search, patent examiners prepare search strategies and queries (for example, indications of databases and publications, classification codes, search terms and key words used) to find relevant prior art.

Does your office share (for example, via an official website), or exchange, such search strategies and queries with other collaborating offices?

NPI as an ISA provide a search-history to WIPO/IB for publishing on Patentscope in all ISR and WO applications.

Q4. In order to facilitate the cooperation, what kinds of platforms and tools to share information on search and examination are available in your office? Such platforms and tools include, for example, WIPO CASE, databases allowing other offices to retrieve information and external databases used to retrieve information.

- (i) Platforms and tools provided by your office
- (ii) Platforms and tools used by your office

NIPO is transferring data to EPO via FTP in XML format ST 36.

Q5. What are the impacts of such cooperation in the area of search and examination to your office? If your office has different types of cooperation and each type of cooperation has different impacts, please indicate them separately.

Through the NPI cooperation and the harmonising exercises with EPO we do enhance our work methodology and experience.

Q6. What kinds of capacity building are required for different types of cooperation between patent offices in search and examination? Please indicate any specific capacity building needs to conduct such cooperation successfully.

In this context, the capacity building is understood to refer to various activities and trainings that support development of knowledge and skills of office employees for effective cooperation between offices in search and examination.

Efficient exchange and standardization of information regarding the examination processes will contribute to improve the quality and level of harmonization between the different patent offices.

Training courses on search and examination, eventually with a final exam, carried out between patent offices could be another mean to ensure quality. Training material could be shared among the patent offices and common learning material could be developed.

End of Questionnaire