



INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY OFFICE
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



Hungarian Intellectual
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PATENT OFFICE OF THE
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INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY OFFICE
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Signing of the Agreement on the Visegrad Patent Institute – an important milestone in V4 cooperation

Today's signing ceremony of the Agreement on the Visegrad Patent Institute was held in the Palugay Palace in Bratislava. The ceremony was attended by Mr Ľuboš Knoth, President of the Industrial Property Office of the Slovak Republic (IPO SR), Mr Josef Kratochvíl, President of the Industrial Property Office of the Czech Republic (IPO ČR), Mr Miklós Bendzsel, President of the Hungarian Intellectual Property Office (HIPO) and Mrs Alicja Adamczak, President of the Patent Office of the Republic of Poland (UPRP).

The Agreement on the Visegrad Patent Institute is a significant result of cooperation between national industrial property offices of the Visegrad Group countries. The signing of the Agreement has been preceded by several rounds of expert discussions on the Draft Agreement during which the wording of all Articles have been discussed and finally approved.

The Proposal for the conclusion of the Agreement on the Visegrad Patent Institute was approved by the Hungarian Government on December 5, 2014 (Government Decision no. 1713/2014), by the Slovak Government on December 10, 2014 (Resolution no. 626/2014), by the Czech Government on January 28, 2015 (Government Resolution no.63/2015) and by the Polish Government on February 24, 2015.

Establishment of the Visegrad Patent Institute (VPI) is an important contribution to the efforts of the respective patent offices to foster innovation and creativity and to promote economic growth and competitiveness in the Central and Eastern European region. Applicants from the Visegrad Four countries will find it easier and cheaper to protect their innovations internationally. These are the advantages of the quadripartite agreement on the Visegrad Patent Institute (VPI).

The Institute will act as the International Searching Authority (ISA) and International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)¹, which is essential in obtaining international protection for inventions. The VPI will use the existing capacity of national patent offices appropriately. For applicants from the Visegrad countries, namely Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, it will provide a search report and a preliminary opinion on the possibility to obtain a patent for their invention. The VPI will provide its services also to applicants from certain neighbouring countries if those Receiving Offices appoint the VPI as a usable ISA and IPEA.

¹ Patent Cooperation Treaty plays a key role in obtaining patent protection abroad, especially if such protection is required simultaneously in several countries. A single international patent application rather than multiple individual national or regional patent applications ensures the priority right and the opportunity to apply for patent protection in all 148 PCT Contracting States.

The big advantage for applicants will be the ability to communicate in their native tongue. It is expected to reduce costs associated with fees for PCT applications by 25% for business and 37% for individuals, which should contribute to an increase in the number of international patent applications from the Visegrad Group countries. The Central and Eastern European small and medium-sized enterprises, universities, research organizations and other users of the patent system will be offered a favorable and efficient option for obtaining patent protection internationally. This will facilitate easier access to the system established under the Patent Cooperation Treaty.

The Agreement on the Visegrad Patent Institute is an important step towards improving services for innovators interested in obtaining international patent protection. VPI will start its functioning as International Searching and International Preliminary Examining Authority after appointment by the Assembly of the International Patent Cooperation Union presumably in 2016.

Bratislava, 26 February 2015

