



Europäisches  
Patentamt  
European  
Patent Office  
Office européen  
des brevets

# European Patent Office

## Annual results press conference

Brussels, 3 March 2016

QUALITY  
EFFICIENCY  
APPLICATIONS  
TECHNOLOGY TRENDS  
GRANTS  
INDICATORS  
**ANNUAL RESULTS 2015**

# Patent protection in up to 42 countries

**European Patent Organisation**  
**Founded in 1973**  
**Some 650 million inhabitants**

**European member states (38)**

**European extension states (2)**

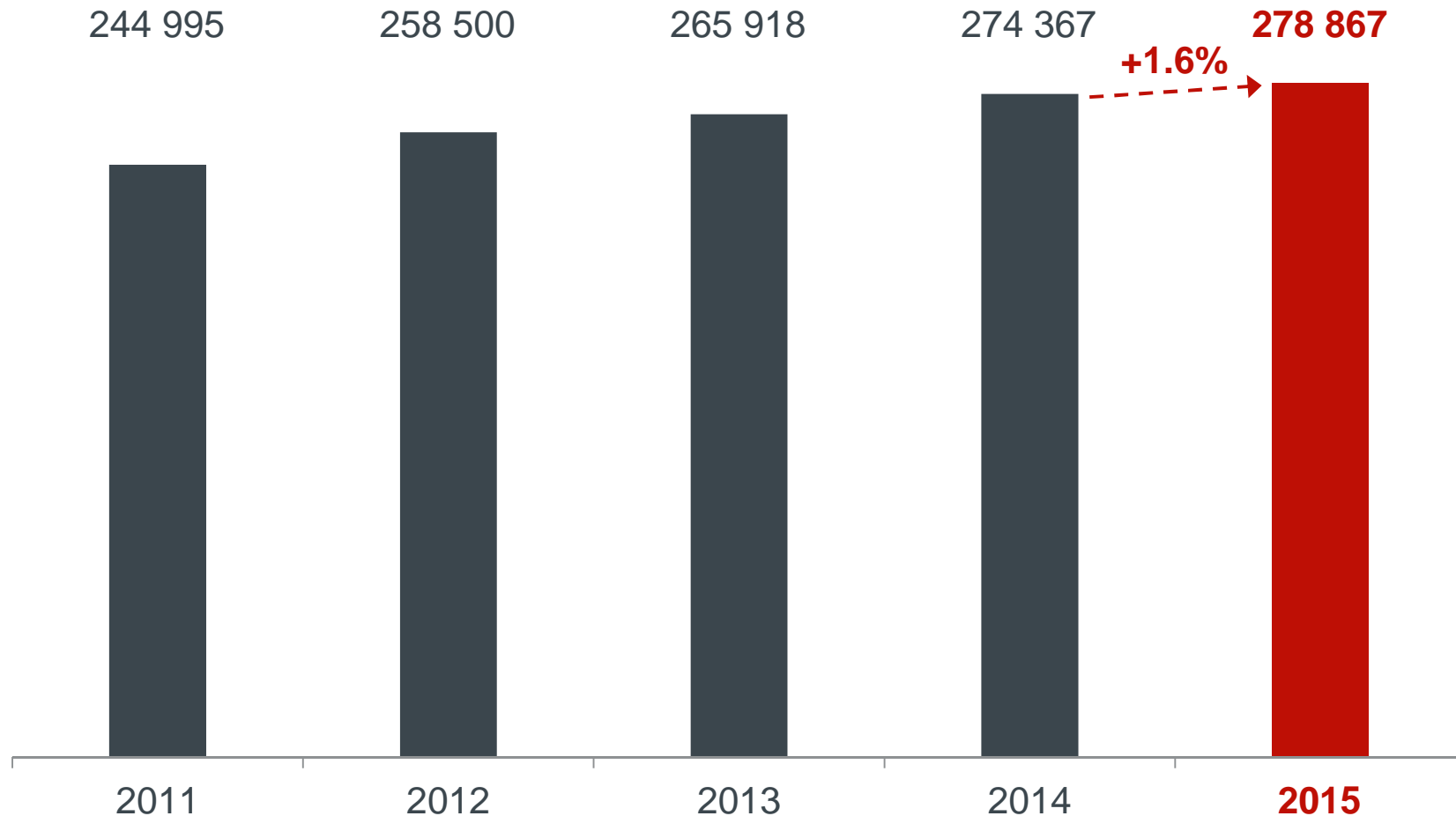
**Validation states (2)**  
**Republic of Moldova**  
**Morocco**



## Key facts: the EPO at a glance

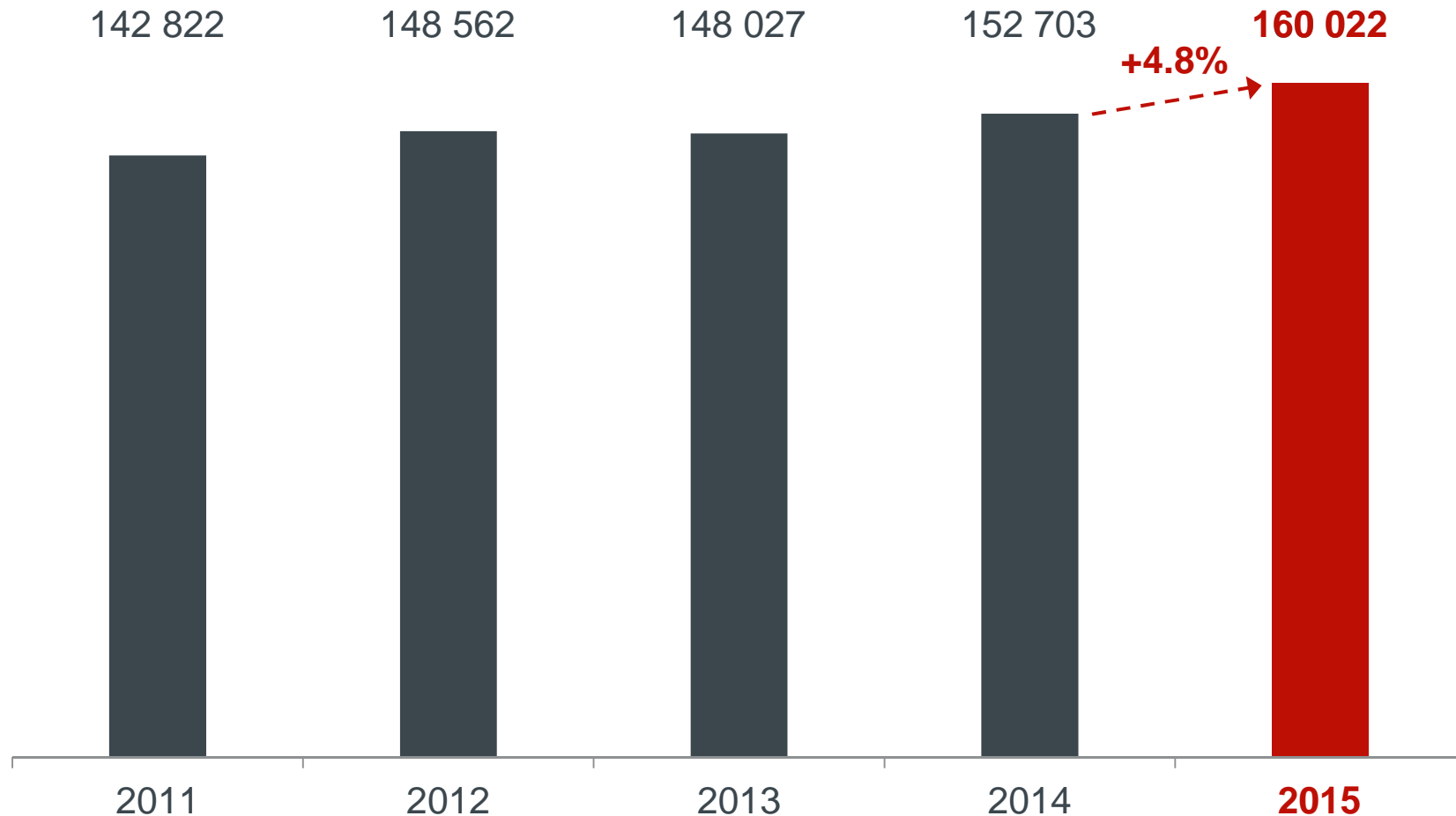
- § **Second largest** intergovernmental institution in Europe
- § **Global player** and voice of Europe in patents
- § **7000** employees, of which around **4200 highly qualified examiners**
- § **Self-financing**: budget of EUR 2bn without any public funding
- § Will be in charge of **granting and administering the unitary patent**
- § **High-quality European patents (ISO 9001 certification)** are drivers of innovation and secure the competitiveness of the European economy

## Growth of European patent filings\*



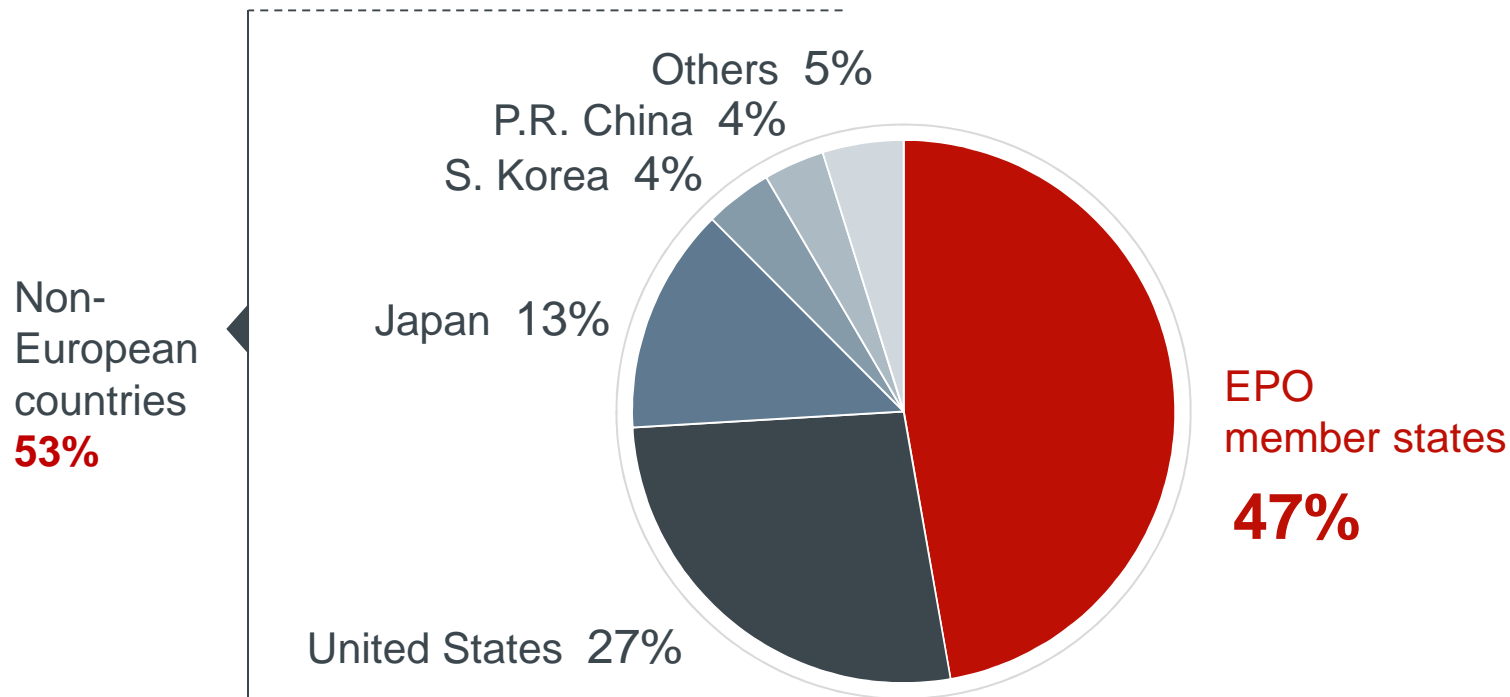
\* **Filings** are a preliminary patent application activity indicating the potential interest of innovating businesses from all over the world in the European technology market. Filings refer to direct European patent applications filed at the EPO under the European Patent Convention, plus international patent applications filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

## Growth of European patent applications\*



\* **Applications** are the files for which applicants have decided to request a European patent from the EPO. They are a direct measure of the explicit interest of innovating firms to assert their patent rights on the European technology market. Applications refer to direct European patent applications filed at the EPO under the European Patent Convention, plus international Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) filings which entered the European regional phase (becoming a European application) in the year under review.

## 47% of the patent applications originate from EPO member states

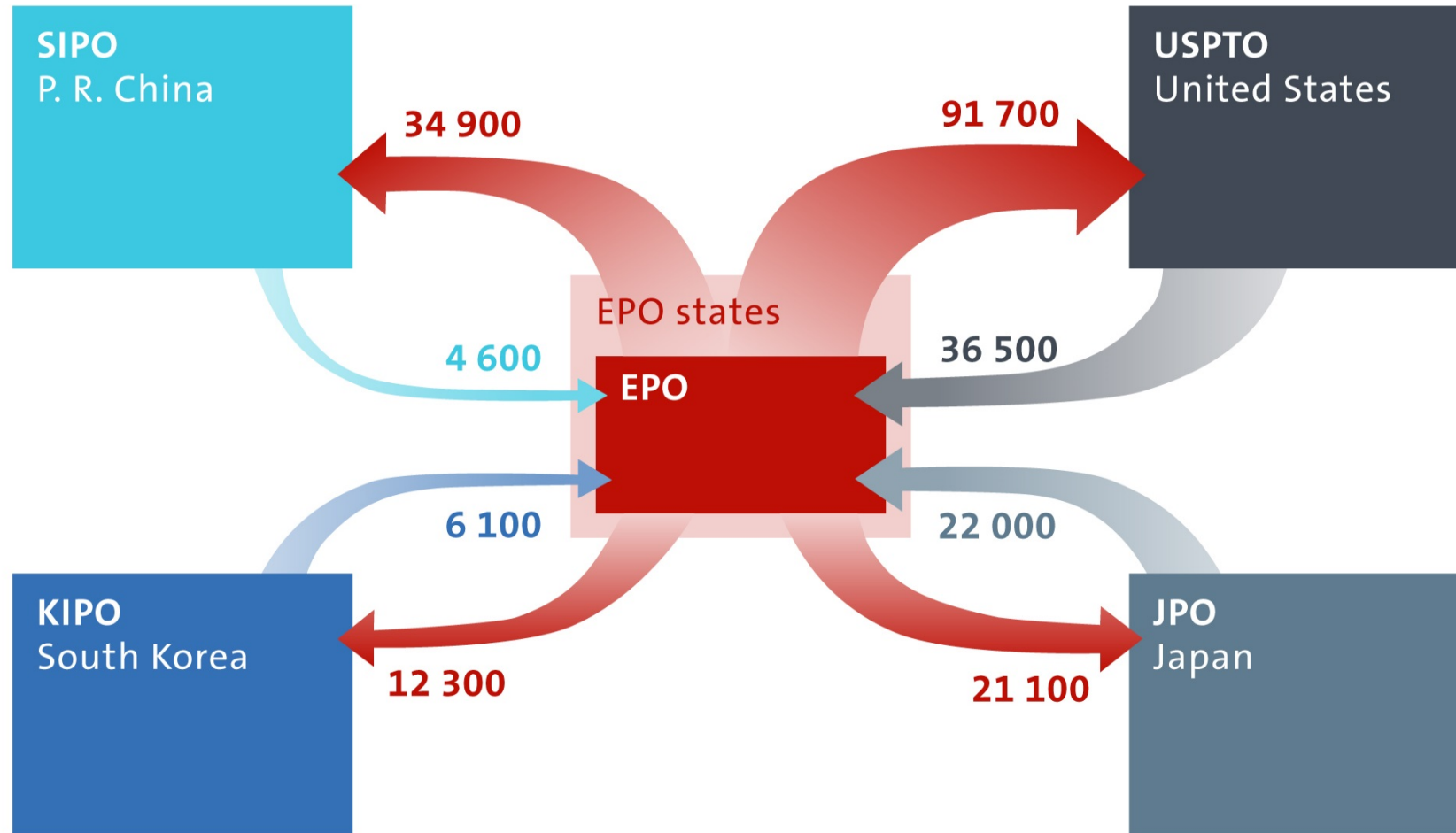


### Notes:

- § Analysis based on European patent applications (direct European patent applications filed at the EPO under the European Patent Convention, plus international Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) filings which entered the European regional phase (becoming a European application) in the year under review).
- § Applications are allocated to the country of residence of the first-name applicant
- § EPO: the 38 member states of the European Patent Organisation, including EU28



# Flow of patent applications between EPO and IP5 countries (2014)



## Notes:

§ Analysis based on applications received by the five largest patent offices (IP5 offices) in 2014.

§ Source of the data: IP5 Statistics Report 2014 – [fiveipoffices.org](http://fiveipoffices.org)

§ EPO states are the 38 member states of the European Patent Organisation, including all 28 EU countries

# Top countries for European patent applications\*

## TOP 10

	2015 shares	2015 Applications	Change Applications
1 United States	26.7%	42 692	16.4%
2 Germany	15.5%	24 820	-3.2%
3 Japan	13.4%	21 426	-3.1%
4 France	6.7%	10 781	1.6%
5 Netherlands	4.4%	7 100	3.3%
6 Switzerland	4.4%	7 088	2.6%
7 S. Korea	4.0%	6 411	4.0%
8 P.R. China	3.6%	5 721	22.2%
9 United Kingdom	3.1%	5 037	5.7%
10 Italy	2.5%	3 979	9.0%

\* **Applications** refer to direct European patent applications filed at the EPO under the European Patent Convention, plus international Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) filings which entered the European regional phase (becoming a European application) in the year under review.



# Countries driving growth

## Growth champions



P.R. China	+ 22.2%
United States	+ 16.4%

## Countries with significant growth rate



Italy	+ 9.0%
Belgium	+ 5.9%
United Kingdom	+ 5.7%
S. Korea	+ 4.0%
Spain	+ 3.8%
Netherlands	+ 3.3%
Switzerland	+ 2.6%

## Growth from lower volume countries



Czech Republic	+ 27.5%
Portugal	+ 21.2%
Poland	+ 17.8%
Turkey	+ 10.9%
Israel	+ 5.0%

## Stable applications



France	+ 1.6%
Austria	+ 1.4%
Sweden	- 0.9%

## Declining applications



Denmark	- 2.7%
Japan	- 3.1%
Germany	- 3.2%
Canada	- 3.7%
Finland	- 8.3%

Note: Based on European patent applications filed with the EPO (direct European patent applications filed at the EPO under the European Patent Convention, plus international Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) filings which entered the European regional phase (becoming a European application) in the year under review).

# European applications\* per million inhabitants: European countries dominate

## TOP20

	2015
1 Switzerland	873
2 Netherlands	419
3 Sweden	392
4 Finland	365
5 Denmark	346
6 Germany	307
7 Austria	230
8 Belgium	180
9 Japan	169
10 France	162

	2015
11 Israel	137
12 United States	133
13 S. Korea	130
14 Ireland	119
15 Norway	98
16 United Kingdom	79
17 Singapore	69
18 Italy	64
19 Slovenia	59
20 Chinese Taipei	54

◀ EU average 132

\* **Applications** refer to direct European patent applications filed at the EPO under the European Patent Convention, plus international Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) filings which entered the European regional phase (becoming a European application) in the year under review.

# Leading fields of technology – global

## TOP 10

		2015	Change	
1	Medical technology	12 474	11.0%	↗
2	Digital communication	10 762	3.2%	↗
3	Computer technology	10 549	7.8%	↗
4	Electrical machinery, apparatus, energy	10 198	- 1.8%	↘
5	Transport	7 802	- 1.6%	↘
6	Measurement	7 727	8.0%	↗
7	Organic fine chemistry	6 414	2.1%	↗
8	Engines, pumps, turbines	6 374	17.9%	↗
9	Biotechnology	6 048	5.1%	↗
10	Pharmaceuticals	5 884	9.6%	↗

Note: Based on European patent applications filed with the EPO (direct European patent applications filed at the EPO under the European Patent Convention, plus international Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) filings which entered the European regional phase (becoming a European application) in the year under review).

# Top EPO applicants 2015

TOP 10

		2015	Change	
1	Philips	2 402	3.7%	↗
2	Samsung	2 366	- 6.9%	↘
3	LG	2 091	27.7%	↗
4	Huawei	1 953	22.1%	↗
5	Siemens	1 894	- 11.2%	↘
6	United Technologies	1 869	110.0%	↗
7	Qualcomm	1 705	16.9%	↗
8	Robert Bosch	1 493	3.8%	↗
9	BASF	1 384	- 9.5%	↘
10	General Electric	1 316	57.0%	↗

● EPO member states
 ● United States
 ● S. Korea
 ● P.R. China

Note: Based on European patent applications filed with the EPO (direct European patent applications filed at the EPO under the EPC, plus international PCT filings which entered the European regional phase (becoming a European application) in the year under review).

# The need for reforms

Increasing number of applications

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More **complex** applications

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Growing **amount of prior art** especially from Asian countries

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**Competitive** environment

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High expectations of users in terms of **cost and timeliness**



**The need for reforms that address these challenges  
of the modern IP system**

# The focus of the reforms

Increase our **quality**

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Increase **efficiency**

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Improve **timeliness**

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Control **costs**

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Modernise the **legal and social framework**



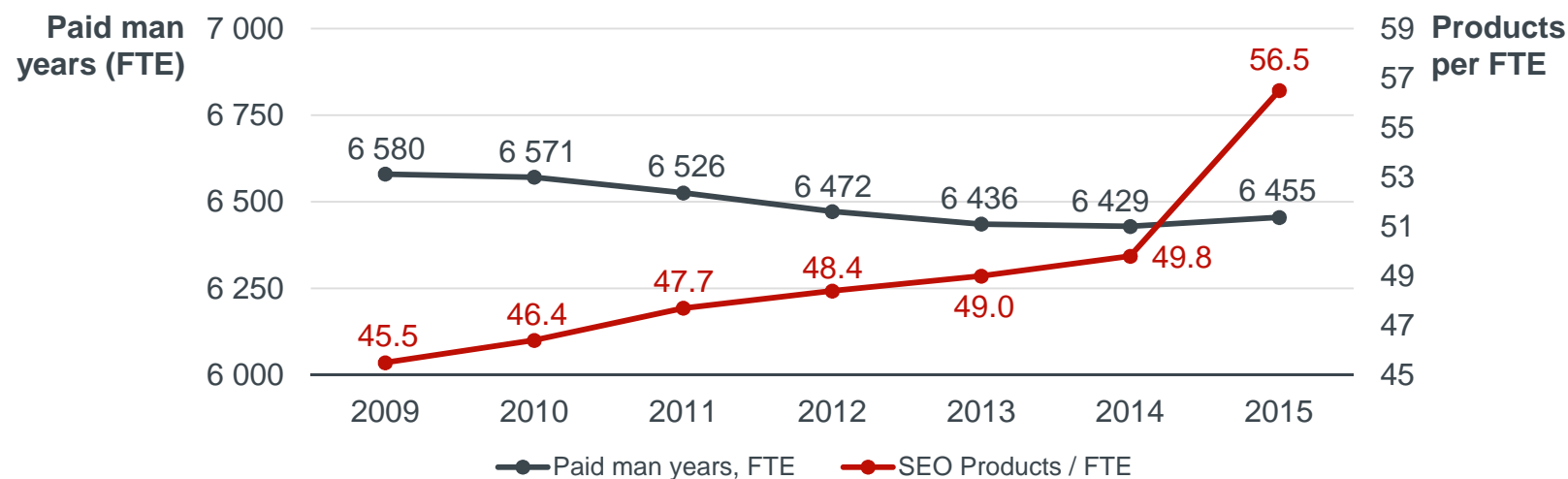
**All designed for the EPO to be both  
business-friendly and fit for the future**

# Reforms started to pay off in 2015 – I

## Record increases in **production**

	2015	2015 vs. 2014
<b>Production</b>	<b>365 000</b>	<b>+ 14%</b>
Searches / Examinations / Oppositions		
<b>Patents granted and published</b>	<b>68 400</b>	<b>+ 6%</b>

## Record increases in **productivity**





## Reforms started to pay off in 2015 – II

### Reduction of backlogs

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- § Backlog in patent searches **decreased by 66%**  
(from 35.000 to 12.000)
- § Backlog will have **fully disappeared by July 2016**
- § Timely processing of all incoming applications

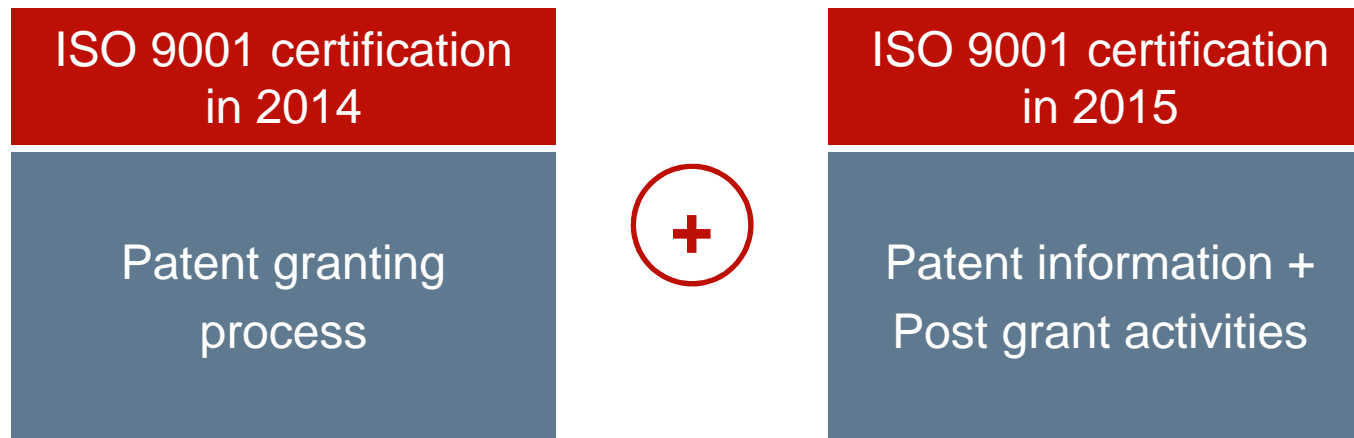
### Staff benefiting from reforms

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- § Successful implementation of performance-based career system
- § **70% of staff were rewarded in 2015** (step advancements, promotions, and functional allowances)
- § Supplementary performance bonus
- § Spending on rewards **increased by 22%**
- § Further financing of long-term liabilities

# Quality – a core value of the EPO

§ ISO 9001 certification for entire patent granting process



§ First of the largest patent offices to be fully ISO certified

§ 2015 IAM survey ranked EPO as the best the five largest patent offices for quality

## 2016: a year of consolidation of the reforms

- § Enhancing **timeliness** of the patent examination process
- § Commitment to **excellence in quality**
- § **Social and financial studies** by independent consultants
- § **Social conference** planned for autumn 2016 to discuss results
- § Renewed social dialogue through **recognition of Trade Unions**

# Main features of the unitary patent

- § **Quality:** A **European patent**, granted by the EPO under the EPC
- § **Flexibility:** An **additional option for patent owners**, alongside the existing European and national patent systems
- § **Simplicity:** **Unitary effect** extends to the 26 EU member states currently participating, **in one single administrative step by the EPO**
- § **Cost reduction:** Access to **strong and large geographical protection** with a reduction of **up to 70%\***
- § **Legal certainty:** **Uniform litigation system through the Unified Patent Court**

\* in comparison with a corresponding European patent validated in the same member states

# The EPO is ready to deliver the unitary patent

## EPO preparations

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• **Completed**

§ Adoption of EPO's proposal on **renewal fees**

§ Breakthrough in December 2015 – adoption of complete secondary legal framework, including: **implementing rules, budgetary and financial rules, the level and distribution of the renewal fees.**

## Member States preparations

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• **Ongoing**

§ Ongoing ratifications of UPC agreement by participating Member States

§ 9/13 of the necessary states have ratified so far

§ **5 to 6 states, including, UK and DE, have planned to ratify in 2016**

## Conclusion: the EPO in 2015

- Ü 2015 was a **positive year** for the EPO
- Ü **Reforms** are proving to have been **successful**
- Ü **Increasing quality and productivity** – hand in hand
- Ü **International influence** has increased
- Ü The European patent **continues to expand**
- Ü The **unitary patent is ready** for launch



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**Thank you for your attention**  
**[www.epo.org](http://www.epo.org)**

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