

Annual Report



2015:

9 prospective patent attorneys examined 7,789 new entries in the IP World

121,367 PATENTS IN EFFECT

765 registered designs

6,479 trademark searches

+ 5% AUSTRIAN INVENTIONS

6 million documents considered in search

inventing tomorrow today

More than 40,000 customer contacts—personally, by phone or e-mail

10,226 protected designs

5,742 registered trademarks

104 inventions filed by "patent king" AVL List

527 PCT applications Every other application resulted in a patent

104,505 trademarks in effect

More than 50% of all IP rights applied for online

3,195 inventions filed

For more data, facts and figures on the Austrian Patent Office: www.patentamt.at/Jahresbericht

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A first for Austria

On 9 November 2016, the Inventors' Day, Technology Minister Gerald Klug will present the Austrian National Patent Award for the first time. That is the highest state recognition for future-oriented Austrian inventions. Get more information now! www.patentamt.at/staatspreis

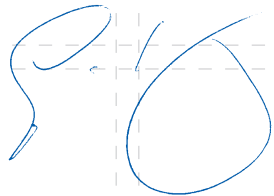
Forewords

Dear Reader,

In my capacity as Innovation Minister, I make sure that applied research and technology is placed on a sound footing and gets optimum support. To that effect, my Ministry annually invests half a billion euro into industry-oriented research and development. Furthermore, we provide a solid institutional framework. The Austrian Patent Office forms part of that framework. It is the centre for the protection of industrial property rights. Today, the competition between business locations is led mainly by know-how, expertise and innovative ideas. Especially in highly developed economies like Austria, the protection of those ideas is a prerequisite for successfully bringing our research results to the markets.

My Ministry and the entire federal government are firmly committed to creating an innovation-friendly culture in Austria. Services are a decisive factor in this respect. Thus, I am very pleased that the Austrian Patent Office presents a very comprehensive review of its services in this Annual Report. I can only fully endorse the motto "inventing tomorrow today" By investing in innovations today, we lay the foundations for tomorrow's positive economic development—in a country full of creative minds.

Enjoy reading!



Gerald Klug, Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology



Dear Reader,

Do you know the lady shown on the cover? If not, you certainly know her invention: In the 1940s, Hedy Lamarr obtained a patent for the "frequency hopping method" that forms the basis of technologies such as Bluetooth today (see page 4). She was an inspiring, highly intelligent person of many talents—on the day she was born, 9 November, we nowadays celebrate the Inventors' Day at present.

Many innovative minds share the fate of Hedy Lamarr: The people behind inventions are known all too seldom. This Annual Report puts some of them in the limelight. At the same time we begin to present some of the employees of the Patent Office. They stand as examples for our team of people who secure the value and permanency of your inventions. We work hard to improve our services continuously. This Annual Report gives some examples to illustrate what this means for this year.

In the beginning of November 2015, I had the pleasure to take over the management of the Austrian Patent Office. I very much enjoy cooperating with the national innovation and technology scene, i.e. enterprises, universities, research institutes, promotion agencies and many more. Day by day, I am able to see how ideas are flourishing for inventions, trademarks and designs.

I hope that our Annual Report provides good insights into our work!



Mariana Karepova, President of the Austrian Patent Office

The Faces behind Patents

Intelligent minds shape innovation—as inventors but also on the team of the Patent Office

A beautiful woman, a successful actress—that is one story about Hedy Lamarr. Like many artists, the daughter of Jewish parents, born in Vienna in 1914, left Europe to escape the Nazis. From the 1930s to the 1950s, she starred in several major Hollywood productions.

The second story is not about Hedy Lamarr but Hedwig Eva Maria Kiesler, which is her real name. This name is given on a patent she filed together with her co-inventor Georg Antheil in the USA in 1942. They developed a radio guidance system for torpedoes that was difficult to discover because it automatically changed frequencies and, as a result, was largely jam-proof.

The U.S. Navy never used this frequency hopping technology, and its breakthrough only came with modern mobile communication technology. Today, frequency hopping is applied, for example, to Bluetooth connections.

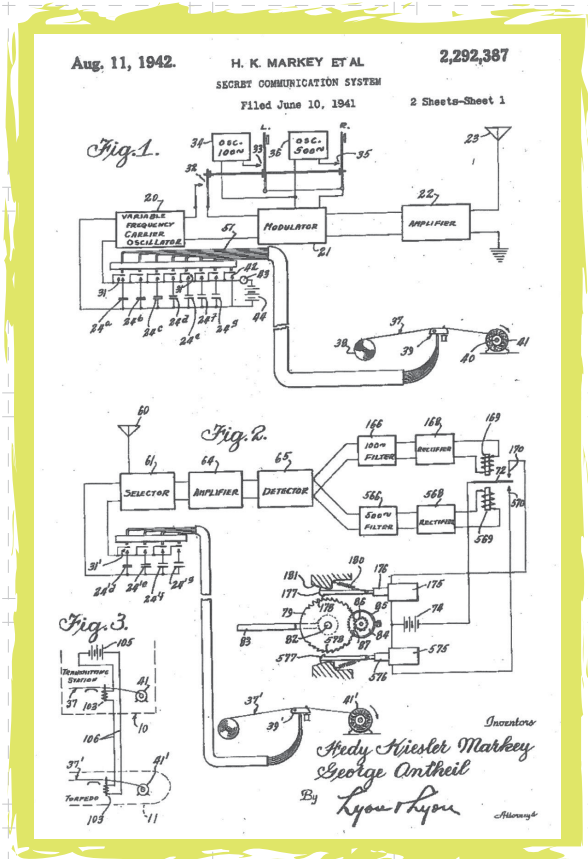
As a woman, Hedy Lamarr did not only stand out among patent applicants then—she would still do so today. The percentage of female applicants is in the one-digit range.

At the Austrian Patent Office, the situation is completely different: More than 40 percent of managers are female. And since November 2015, the Patent Office is headed by a female president for the first time in its history of more than one hundred years.

The Austrian Patent Office strives to encourage women to engage in research, for example, in presentations at schools and universities given by patent examiners. And Hedy Lamarr is honoured as a role model year by year. On 9 November, the day she was born, the Patent Office celebrates the Inventors' Day—and in addition, the Austrian National Patent Award of the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (bmvit) will be presented for the first time on this day in 2016!



Hedy Lamarr in the 1940s at the peak of her career as an actress. The cover of the Annual Report shows a painting of her by Nina Maron. The artist lives and works in Vienna. For further information, see: www.maron.cc





DIETMAR TRATTNER
*Vice-President,
Head of the Technology Division*

KATHARINA FASTENBAUER
*Head of Technology and PCT,
Deputy Head of the Technology Division*

MARIANA KAREPOVA
President

ANDREA SCHEICHL
*Vice-President,
Head of the Legal and
Support Division*

GERALD PILZ
*Head of Central Services,
Deputy Head of the Legal and
Support Division*

Many People, One Mission

The Austrian Patent Office focuses not only on the thematic expertise of its employees, but also on their linguistic diversity.

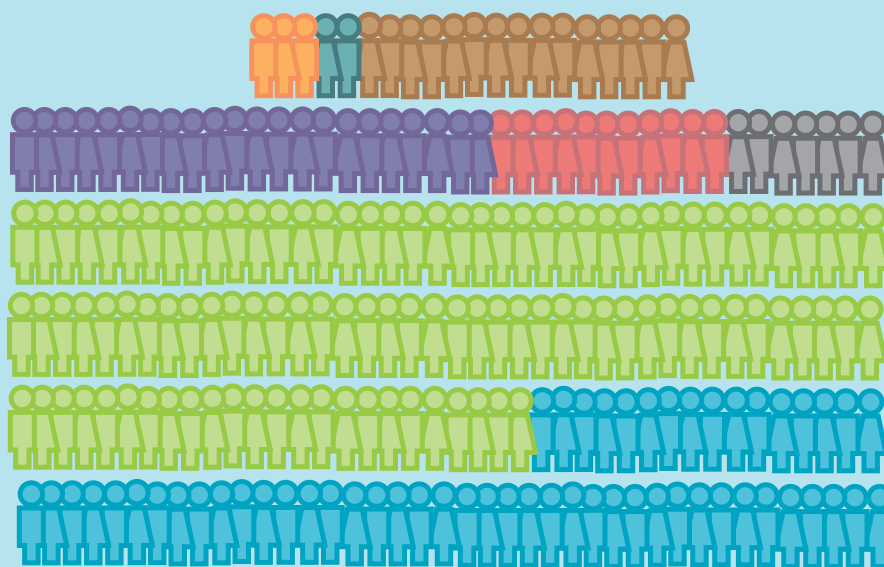
Support in English and *en français*

Research and development is an international activity. Hence, it has already been possible to submit applications in English and French to the Patent Office up to now.

Since 1 January 2016, non-German-speaking applicants also have the guarantee that they will receive search results as quickly as those who contact the Patent Office in the German language. Thus, they can better assess whether their invention has a chance to be patented—and whether costly translations are required at all.

Thereby, the Patent Office strengthens its role as a reliable partner for business and innovation.

Who We are



Board.....	3
Strategy.....	2
Communication and advice.....	15
Administration.....	22
IT.....	11
International affairs.....	7
Patents.....	104
Trademarks and designs.....	56
Total.....	220

As per February 2016, full-time equivalents

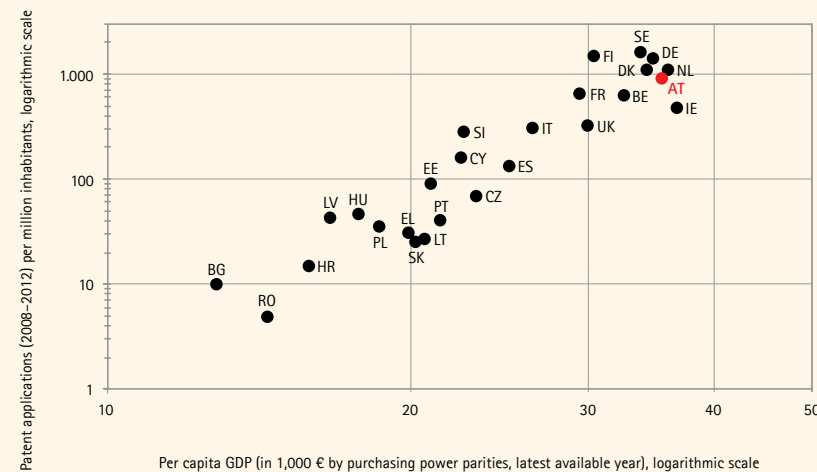
Patents decisive for economic success

Previous economic success factors—raw materials, favourable transport connections, low labour costs — become less and less important. The focus shifts to knowledge on how to produce goods or provide services. As a result, the subject of intellectual property increases in significance. Its protection is a location factor in highly developed economies. This conclusion is also drawn by the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO).

Current WIFO data show that more prosperous EU countries (in terms of per capita GDP) record considerably more patent applications than those with lower per capita incomes. Being one of the wealthiest EU countries, Austria holds the sixth rank for the number of patent applications. For better comparability, this ranking is based on applications filed with the European Patent Office (EPO).

Gratifyingly, almost half of all Austrian applicants registered by the EPO first file their inventions with the Austrian Patent Office. They rely on the expertise of our patent examiners and, thus, can better assess their chances to succeed in Europe.

Austria among top patent applicants



Source: PATSTAT (autumn 2015), World Bank, Eurostat, WIFO calculations

Insider



Christian Thalhammer
Patent examiner

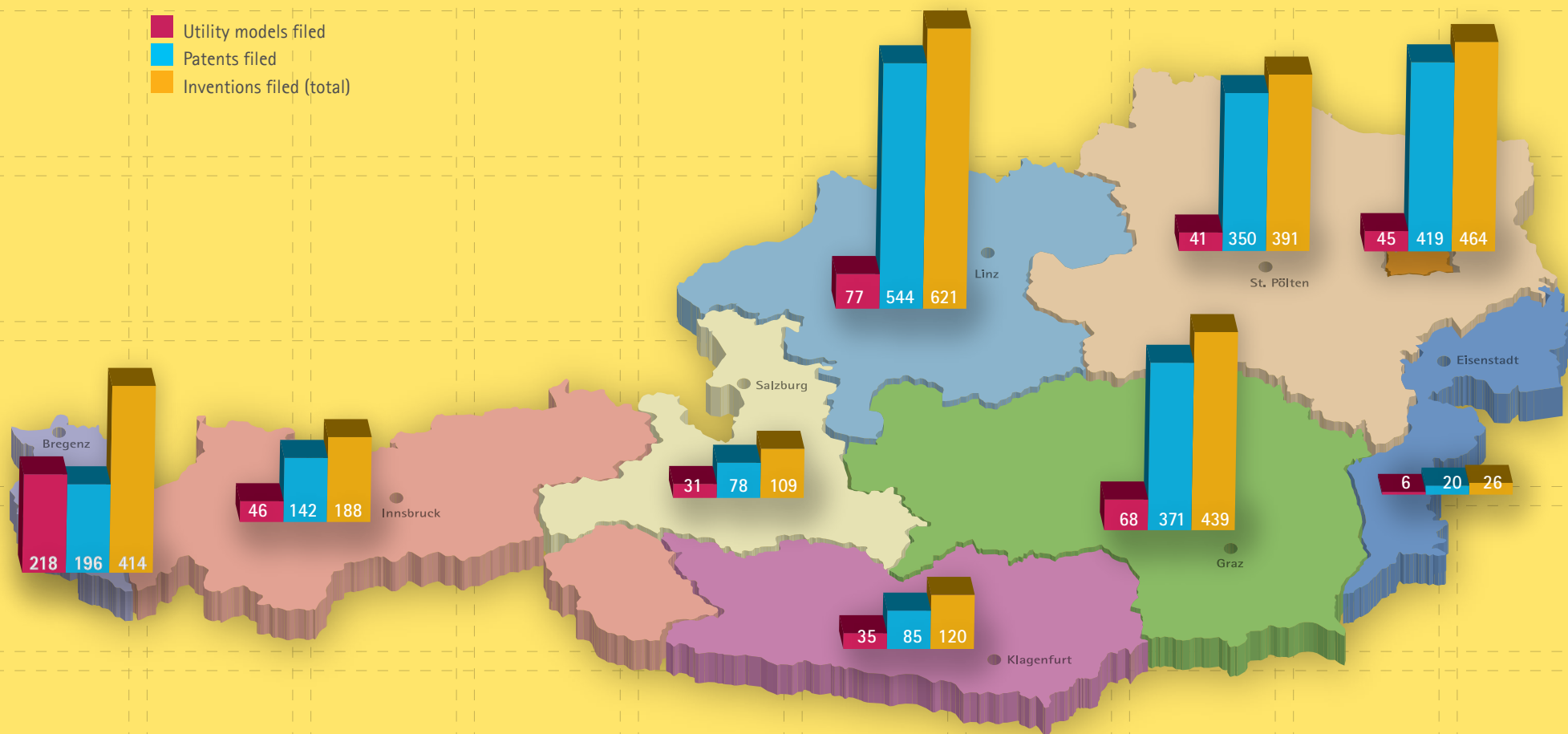
At a run towards patents

Large customers, such as AVL, Bosch and MAN, rely on the expertise of Christian Thalhammer. In the fields of combustion engines and gearboxes, he examines whether an invention is new worldwide. Besides, he excels in sports: his personal marathon record is 2:33:13. Apart from Viennese championship titles, he also won two bronze medals in Austrian championships.

The Innovativeness of Austrian Regions

Once again, most patent applications come from Upper Austria.

- Utility models filed
- Patents filed
- Inventions filed (total)



Upper Austria scores with technology frontrunners

In 2015, the Austrian Patent Office received 3,195 applications for inventions, out of which 2,772 were filed by Austrians. Once more, **Upper Austria** is number one with 621 applications submitted. Most of them relate to plastics processing procedures and plastics moulding machinery, with 18 inventions having been filed by the company Engel Austria alone. Other Upper Austrian enterprises, such as Fronius International, the technology leader in the market segment of arc welding technology, appreciate the expertise of the Patent Office, too, and also increasingly file their applications at the national level.

With 464 applications, **Vienna** ranks second and is active in the fields of human and veterinary medicine as well as hygiene on the one hand and in railway and bridge construction (Plasser & Theurer) as well as electric communications on the other hand. In the third place, **Styria** (thanks to AVL List, the leader of the company ranking, with a focus on measurement and testing technology) recorded significantly more applications (439) than in the previous year. **Vorarlberg** (414) saw an increase by more than 100 applications against 2014; here, the most important fields are electrical engineering and lighting (Tridonic and Zumtobel).

In spite of a rise in applications (391), **Lower Austria** fell to the fifth rank; in particular, Zizala Lichtsysteme scores in this region with headlamp systems for the automotive industry. The **Tyrol** follows with 188 applications, for example, in the field of gas engines and cogeneration plants (Jenbacher). Also on an upswing: with 120 applications (e.g. in the fields of furniture and household appliances), **Carinthia** overtook Salzburg. There, applicants focusing on sports equipment and games scored highest. **Salzburg** experienced a slight decline to 109 applications in comparison with the previous year, just like **Burgenland** with 26 applications (some of them in the electrotechnical field).

Vorarlberg leads by per capita applications

In an analysis of the per capita invention rate instead of the number of applications in absolute terms, the ranking of Austrian regions changes: Vorarlberg comes in first with 108 applications per 100,000 inhabitants in front of Upper Austria and Styria, followed by Vienna, the Tyrol, Lower Austria, Carinthia, Salzburg and Burgenland.



Heinz Hackl
Member of the Management Team of
Fronius International

"Protecting our key know-how"

Being the technology leader, we consider it essential to protect our key know-how. The Austrian Patent Office is a reliable partner to this end. A good example for our long-standing, successful cooperation is the worldwide protection of our innovative laser pin process that won an Inventum award in 2014. This process makes it possible to join metals and plastics.

How to Protect Your Intellectual Property

Ms. Cook sets up a meal delivery business. What should she bear in mind in doing so?

Trademark

Ms. Cook already registered the logo of Food.Cycle right when she established her company.



A trademark is a company identifier differentiating goods and services of different producers or providers. It helps consumers to orientate.



Apart from words and images, it is also possible to apply for trademark protection for three-dimensional objects, sounds and colours. With regard to verbal marks, however, it should be noted that the trademark must not describe the relevant product or service.

Design

As an eye-catching recognition feature for her delivery service, Ms. Cook created octagonal boxes. Of course, she also gave thought to the design of the website for ordering meals. She applied for design protection for both the boxes and the website.



A registered design protects the appearance—the visible characteristics—of a commercial product, whereas the idea behind the product, the invention, the production process or similar aspects are not covered.



Only new designs are eligible for protection. Thus, secrecy needs to be maintained until the application is filed, just like for patents.

Patent/utility model

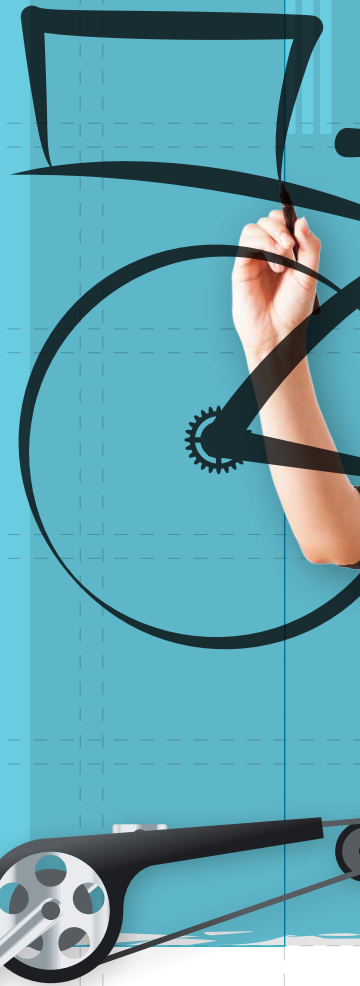
Together with Mr. Bolts, a local bicycle engineer, Ms. Cook designed an electric carrier bicycle specifically for delivery services. It is particularly manoeuvrable and still sturdy. Mr. Bolts and Ms. Cook wanted to obtain a patent for it. But there is one problem: imprudently, Mr. Bolts already put one detail—the innovative carrier—on display in his shop before the application was filed. Hence, this invention was already disclosed to the public and therefore the carrier was only eligible for protection as a utility model.



Patents and utility models protect new technical solutions that result from inventive efforts and can be applied commercially. In contrast to patents, utility models are not examined for novelty and inventiveness by the Patent Office. As a result, protection is conferred more quickly, while there is a higher risk that protection can be brought down.



In case an invention already becomes known before the application is filed, patent protection cannot be obtained anymore, but utility model protection is frequently still possible as publications issued not more than six months before the application are not considered in certain cases.





Trade secret

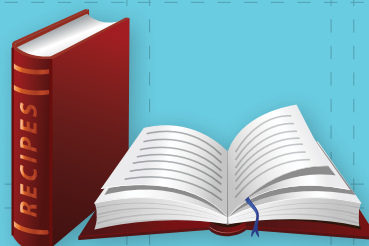
The dishes of Food.Cycle are prepared according to strictly secret recipes and are put together in the octagonal box. Ms. Cook keeps her recipe book in a special compartment in her kitchen.



The "protection" afforded by secrecy exclusively relies on preventing access to know-how by others.



Trade secrets should always be safeguarded by confidentiality agreements.



Designations of origin

Ms. Cook attaches great importance to using ingredients for her dishes that come from regional organic farmers. Thus, she prefers products coming with a protected designation of origin. As a result, the customers of Food.Cycle can be sure that they get high-quality products from controlled sources.



Designations indicating the provenance of products are used by many producers based in a certain region.



Designations of origin are not the "property" of individuals. They may be used by anybody producing the product in line with applicable specific requirements in the relevant region.



Get more information on these and further options for protection at www.patentamt.at, from the customer care centre at +43 (0)1 534 24 ext. 76 or info@patentamt.at

Achieving More Together

The Austrian Patent Office, aws and FFG support enterprises in protecting their ideas.

Practical help in the field of property rights

How do research-based enterprises that lack financial and human resources get patent know-how? This question stands behind a project currently developed by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) and the Patent Office. The new instrument of **Patent Cheques** is to deliver information on property rights as quickly as possible to enterprises—especially SMEs and start-ups—that apply for research funding. How can they bring their own innovations to patent readiness? In which fields of their research project do patents already exist?

Thereby, FFG and the Patent Office jointly contribute to preventing duplication of development efforts. This helps companies save time and money and, last but not least, raises efficiency in the allocation of research promotion funds. The **Patent Cheque** that comprises not only organisational support but also financial incentives is currently in the pilot phase and will be launched in 2016.



Klaus Pseiner
Managing Director of FFG

I am pleased that the Patent Cheque optimally combines the strengths of our two institutions. FFG supports the project by contributing its long-standing experience in research promotion, and the Patent Office offers enterprises its expertise in technical information and industrial property rights.

Edeltraud Stiftinger
Managing Director of aws

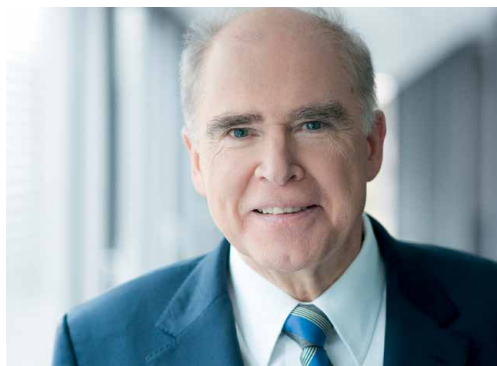
At aws, our objective is to ensure that SMEs effectively use the instruments available for protecting industrial property rights. 'discover.IP' equips companies with good tools for handling property rights and bringing protected innovations to the market. The positive feedback we get encourages us to continue on this path consistently.

Strategies preventing the loss of know-how

discover.IP delivers customised, personalised advice to enterprises. These services jointly provided by the Austrian Patent Office and the public promotional bank Austria Wirtschaftsservice (aws) mainly address technology-oriented small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Why is such advice needed? SMEs underestimate the risks resulting from the outflow of know-how that frequently endangers the survival of companies. First of all, the objective is to discover the untapped intellectual treasures hidden in many companies and then, help protect them. In this context, different options are discussed—from simple confidentiality to the use of patents.

These services are free of charge for enterprises having a staff of up to 49 persons; and within the framework of "**discover.IP for female entrepreneurs**", purely female teams may be deployed upon request. Since the launch of discover.IP in 2008, 420 companies—100 businesses in the previous year alone—benefited from these services. Moreover, the project gives rise to additional applications for intellectual property rights.



Prof. Helmut List, CEO of AVL List GmbH

"Searches are of utmost importance"

For many decades, the patent families of AVL have had their origins in Austria. The work of the Austrian Patent Office is an important factor in our patent strategy. Based on the first feedback from it, we can assess whether a relevant scope of protection can be achieved before high costs are incurred for subsequent procedures abroad. Therefore, the information contained in official notifications and, above all, the completeness of searches is of utmost importance for us. In this context, we consider the Patent Office to be an invaluable partner.

Invention ranking

Rank	Company	Patents granted
1	AVL List GmbH	88
2	Zumtobel Lighting GmbH	53
3	Tridonic GmbH & Co KG	46
4	Engel Austria GmbH	34
5	Metso Paper, Inc. Plasser & Theurer, Export von Bahnbaumaschinen Gesellschaft m.b.H.	26 26
6	Julius Blum GmbH	24
7	Trumpf Maschinen Austria GmbH & Co KG Zizala Lichtsysteme GmbH	23 23
8	Fronius International GmbH	19
9	Haas Food Equipment GmbH Siemens AG Österreich Vienna University of Technology	16 16 16
10	Erema Engineering Recycling Maschinen und Anlagen Gesellschaft m.b.H.	15

All good things...

...are worth waiting for. The Unitary Patent and the Unified Patent Court are to be launched in the beginning of 2017. We were pioneers: Austria was the first country in Europe to ratify the related agreement. In total, 13 ratifications are required. Four countries are still missing, including Germany and the United Kingdom (as per March 2016).

The Austrian Patent Office will set up a local division of the Unified Patent Court. This is in the interest of domestic users and has a positive impact on Austria as a location for innovation.

The Power of Trademarks

Fast registration, close observation: the Patent Office as a service centre for trademark owners

National trademark ranking

Rank	Company	Registrations
1	Österreichische Lotterien Gesellschaft m.b.H.	23
2	Red Bull GmbH	22
3	Ernst Eisinger	21
4	Brauerei Jos. Baumgartner GmbH Hofer Kommanditgesellschaft Wiberg Besitz GmbH	20 20 20
5	target group publishing gmbh	19
6	G.L. Pharma GmbH	18
7	Vienna Medical Chamber Casinos Austria Aktiengesellschaft	16 16
8	Saatbau Linz eGen	13
9	Fixinggroup GmbH	12
10	Wien Energie GmbH	11

International trademark ranking

International companies with Austrian trademarks

Rank	Company	Registrations
1	Société des Produits Nestlé S.A.	27
2	Jürgen Hemmersbach Novartis AG	15 15
3	CP Group GmbH	7

An eye on competitors

A good, clearly distinguishable trademark frequently is the key to success for enterprises. This trademark has to be protected in order to prevent that ideas are stolen.

This issue is addressed by a service offered by the Austrian Patent Office: trademark monitoring permits the identification of new trademarks that are identical or similar to existing ones. If there is a risk of confusion, the trademark owner can quickly initiate countermeasures. Within three months of publication, opposition can be filed against a new, mistakable trademark. The Patent Office performs monitoring searches on a monthly, quarterly or an-

nual basis—in line with the customers' wishes. Thereby, trademark owners can ensure that nobody steals their idea.

However, it has to be made sure that applicants themselves do not infringe trademark rights. Here, other services of the Patent Office provide help, i.e. the so-called trademark similarity search and the company name search that perform checks against existing trademarks. This may prevent wasted efforts. In other words, before companies invest money and creativity into trademark development, they can ensure that there will be no confusion with other trademarks.



Gebrüder Stitch
Michael Lanner, Moriz Piffl-Percevic

"Securing an exclusive space for one's own trademark"

For us, being entrepreneurs always means to create a consistent brand experience. It may well get complicated to secure an exclusive space for one's own trademark. Which comparable trademarks do exist? Are certain words actually protectable? For all those who—like us—are not rolling in money, the customer care centre of the Patent Office is a good contact point. Many people just go on working and believe that trademark protection is something for multinationals—and thereby put their work at risk. Those who do not think about protection act like a goldsmith who does not lock the door to his workshop.

The Fast Track to trademark registration

At present, around 60% of all trademark applications are filed online with the Austrian Patent Office. In comparison with paper-based submissions, this already speeds up procedures considerably. From the summer of 2016 on, even more time can be saved.

Fast Track can approximately halve the processing time previously needed. On average, the expected time savings will amount to two to three weeks. This requires, of course, active collaboration by applicants—without them, the procedure cannot be fast-tracked.

It is essential for applications that the correct terms for goods and services are selected from a database harmonised throughout Europe. Those terms have already been accepted by the European Intellectual Property Office and other intellectual property agencies in the EU.

Thereby, mistakes that may result from the use of non-standardised terminology can be avoided. The goods and services terms selected are harmonised, translated and accepted by the EU institutions.



Katrin Aichinger
Legal expert

International helper

Katrin Aichinger specialises in the international registration of trademarks and trademark law. Her customers come from all over the world. In her spare time, Katrin Aichinger also maintains multicultural contacts: she is committed to supporting refugees, above all by teaching German. In the association "Fremde werden Freunde" (strangers become friends) she helps migrants to learn the German language.

Partner for Science and Education

The Austrian Patent Office closely cooperates with universities and other research institutions.



Sabine Seidler, Rector of TU Wien

"The Patent Office—a reliable partner"

The Vienna University of Technology (TU Wien) is Austria's most successful university with regard to patents. And that is no coincidence: as a research university, we see a key task in using our findings to the benefit of society. Therefore, our focus is on research excellence rather than on the maximisation of financial success. Nevertheless, the successful exploitation of inventions requires that they are protected. In this respect, the Patent Office is a reliable partner for TU Wien and supports our development towards an entrepreneurial university.

Free searches for master theses and dissertations

How do today's students become tomorrow's inventors? How can education be linked with innovation? And how do you introduce young people to the subject of patents? The Austrian Patent Office addresses those questions by closely cooperating with universities, universities of applied sciences and higher secondary technical schools. To support research, it offers free searches for students writing their graduation papers at universities, universities of applied sciences and higher secondary technical schools.

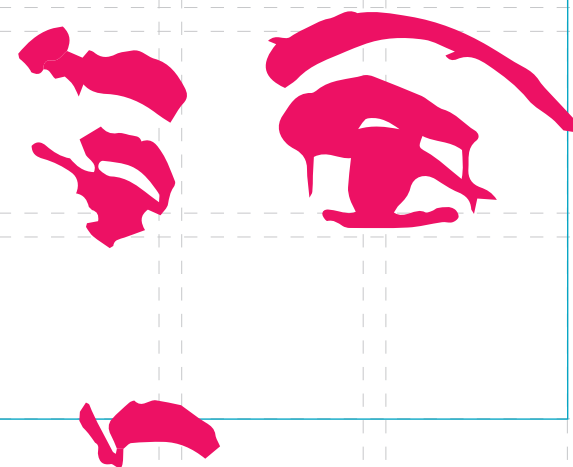
Students wishing to benefit from this offer only need a confirmation issued by the relevant institute or department stating that they need information for a dissertation or master's thesis—and, of course, they must supply a description of the technical aspect to be researched by the Patent Office.

Then, the experts identify the state of the art with regard to any issue in worldwide patent literature. The searches cover

patent publications in German, English and French all over the world. The publications of other countries, such as Russia, Japan or China, are accessible through English translations.

In offering these services, the Austrian Patent Office pursues two objectives: On the one hand, unnecessary work for solving problems already solved by others is to be avoided and the quality of papers increases when the knowledge contained in patent literature is taken into account. On the other hand, the future technology elite of Austria is to be familiarised with the literature type of patent documents.

When the theses or dissertations result in additional Austrian inventions, this doubles the pleasure for the Patent Office.





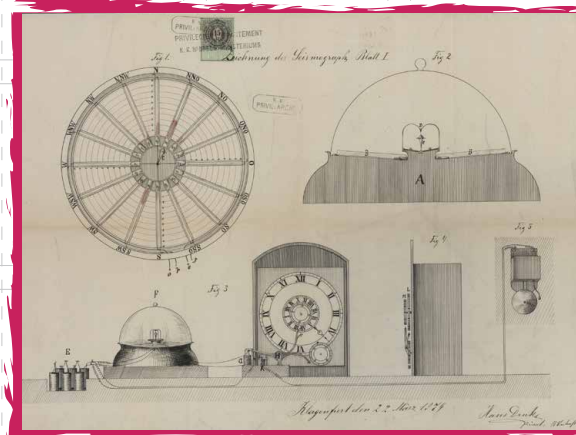
Ahmed Adel
TU Wien graduate and founder of Solabolic

"Essential for my company"

Easy and simple access to information is important especially when it comes to such a complex subject as industrial property rights. As a customer, I have had very positive experiences with the Patent Office. I was in contact with a very helpful patent examiner and also gained significant insights into international patent applications under the PCT and on how to act when IP rights are already protected at a seminar of the Patent Office. That was essential for my company.

Privileges—a treasure trove for research

Privileges are the predecessors of patents. The Patent Office has a large number of these historical documents. There, they are preserved for posterity and, at the same time, made accessible to researchers. Most of them date from the period 1852–1899, i.e. the times before the Patent Office was established. These valuable unique documents are interesting in terms of both patent and cultural history.



To conserve these outstanding cultural assets also for future generations, approximately 900,000 pages are scanned and entered into the Privileges Database. The library of the Patent Office almost completed the digitisation of these historical data and invites researchers to explore this treasure for science.



Hanno Biber
Institute for Corpus Linguistics and Text Technology, Austrian Academy of Sciences

"Big Data for Big Industries"

The texts held in the archives of the Patent Office are historical linguistic documents demonstrating innovation and scientific-economic progress. We analyse them in a linguistic, scientific-empirical research project.

The project is called "Big Data for Big Industries". Most of the historical linguistic evidence is already available in digital form, which permits the application of new methods.

Paving the Way to the Whole World

International agreements open up a fast track to international markets for Austrian companies.

International protection, custom-made

Let's go international! The Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) can prove useful when entering European and/or international markets. The Patent Office is proud to be a PCT authority, too. This benefits not only inventors intending to do business beyond Austria's borders but also those who "only" need the expertise of the Patent Office for the national protection of their inventions. The PCT status results in a higher quality of all patent searches in all technical fields.

PCT—How does it work?

Step 1: First filing with the Austrian Patent Office

Customers receive a preliminary search report (at a cost of approx. 340 euro). On this basis, they can consider whether it is worthwhile to invest around 3,000 euro in the international PCT process.

Step 2: Filing an international PCT application with the Austrian Patent Office

Within twelve months of the first filing, the international process is initiated by filing a PCT application with the Austrian Patent Office. Now, the applicant has the option to apply for national patents—in up to 148 contracting states.

Step 3: Bespoke protection in the countries of choice

Applicants can now make their decisions for the final and most expensive part of the procedure. In the third phase that starts after 30 months, they can specifically apply for patent protection in certain territories. Inventors gain one year and a half of additional time for better assessing which markets are interesting for them.

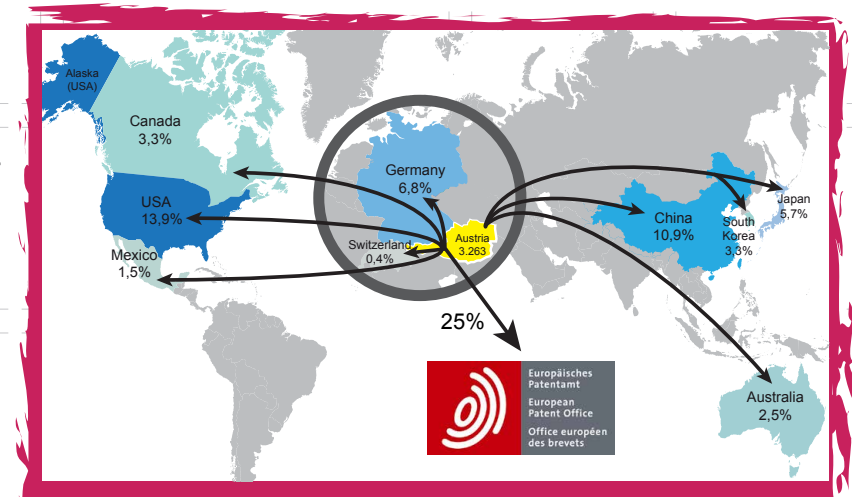
First filing inventions in Austria—claiming priority worldwide

Within one year of the first filing of an invention, a decision has to be made on international protection to claim priority from the first filing. Informed decision making saves time and money.

This is addressed by services of the Patent Office: For patent applications, it supplies a search report and an assessment of patentability that provides a sound basis for the further path to worldwide markets. This offering has been received very well:

The map below shows the percentage of first filings that are subsequently submitted to other patent offices based on the Austrian priority claim. One hundred applications made in Austria give rise to approximately another 70 applications worldwide. Taking into account that applications filed with the European Patent Office (EPO) result in bundles of patents providing protection in the markets of the 38 contracting states of the European Patent Convention, the total number of IP rights having their origin in Austria is even much higher.*

Where do Austrian companies go to after filing applications with the Austrian Patent Office?



* Source: Austrian Patent Office, PATSTAT (autumn 2015). The number of inventions filed (patents and utility models) relate to 2012 (most recent comparable data). The figures given for the Austrian Patent Office cover the entire volume of applications; the figures given for other offices were calculated on the basis of the number of applications with AT priority published by them.

Insider



Adolf Mehlmauer
Patent examiner and pilot

Aviation as a profession and hobby

For Adolf Mehlmauer, his hobby and profession are closely linked. At the Patent Office, he examines whether innovations filed in the fields of power electronics and aeronautics are patentable, and in his spare time, the graduated electrical engineer made his dream of flying come true. Moreover, he is also active in the education of students attending higher secondary technical schools.

In the fast lane to international patents

In the international competition of ideas it is frequently true that the early bird catches the worm. Those who quickly have their inventions registered have a decisive advantage in the market. The Austrian Patent Office therefore participates in the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH), an agreement between patent offices worldwide that makes accelerated procedures possible for applicants. After a positive assessment by the national patent office, foreign patent offices are obliged to speed up the processing of a patent application. This opportunity was already used approximately 88,000 times worldwide (as per July 2015). At present, 36 patent offices take part in the PPH.

Participation in the PPH is subject to strict criteria. After all, international partners must be able to rely on search results from Austria. The Austrian Patent Office is proud to form part of this network because this evidences its strong reputation. The Patent Prosecution Highway takes enterprises quickly to key markets, such as the USA, China and Korea, for which bilateral agreements are in place. In particular, when patent applications are filed in the USA, it frequently takes more than one year until the US agency takes the "first office action". This test of patience costs time and money. Thanks to the PPH, the waiting period is reduced to a few months.

New agreement with China

In early March 2016, the Austrian Patent Office renewed its PPH agreement with China for another two years. This opens up new opportunities for domestic inventors.

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