



Patent Office
Republic of Latvia

2024 PUBLIC

REPORT

Riga
2025

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List of abbreviations

Library	Patent Office Library
EC	European Commission
EPO	European Patent Office
ME	Ministry of Economics
EU	European Union
EUIPN	European Union Intellectual Property Network
EUIPO	European Union Intellectual Property Office
ĢIN	Ģeogrāfiskās izcelsmes norāde
GI	Geographical indications
ICT	Information and communication technologies
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
IT	Information technology
JAL	Junior Achievement Latvia Association
MC	Ministry of Culture
QMS	Quality Management System
LaiPA	Association of Latvian Performers and Producers
LIAA	Investment and Development Agency of Latvia

List of abbreviations

CM	Cabinet of Ministers
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
Nordic Baltic	Nordic-Baltic cooperation
Observatory	EUIPO European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SPC	Supplementary Protection Certificate
PCT	Patent Cooperation Treaty
IPBA	Industrial Property Board of Appeal
SE	Student enterprise
Strategy	Patent Office Operational Strategy 2022–2026
MJ	Ministry of Justice
TTO	Technology Transfer Office
SRS	State Revenue Service
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organisation

Foreword

Dear readers of the Patent Office's annual report,

Every patent, industrial design or trademark comes from an idea that deserves protection and recognition. The primary role of the Patent Office is to provide legal protection for these ideas in Latvia, but we are also responsible for raising awareness about the importance of intellectual property for society and the economy as a whole. Therefore, we are pleased to share the 2024 Annual Report of the Patent Office, which serves as a bridge between our work and society – offering the opportunity to learn in detail about the work done in the past year, the results achieved, and our plans for the future. Not only does it contain facts and figures, but it also tells the story of development, cooperation and sustainable growth.

The reporting year has been marked by a series of events and processes that have been significant both for the Patent Office as an industrial property institution and for the industrial property system as a whole, both nationally and internationally.

Two WIPO Diplomatic Conferences in 2024 would be highlights on the international level. The first was held in May and focused on the adoption of the 27th WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge. The Treaty establishes a requirement to disclose the origin or source of genetic resources or traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources in patent applications. In November 2024, the Diplomatic Conference adopted the so-called Riyadh Design Law Treaty, together with its implementation rules and resolutions complementing the Treaty. The Treaty aligns, streamlines, and simplifies applications. The Memorandum of Understanding signed during the WIPO General Assembly was also of great significance to the Patent Office, as it allows the publication of judgments and related information on WIPO-Lex.

Important work has been done on protection of industrial designs within the EU territory – new legislation came into force at the end of 2024 to modernise and strengthen the industrial design system and to simplify and align protection of industrial design across the EU. With the development of different technologies, industrial designs are also being adapted to the latest trends, so the new framework offers the protection of industrial design that is fit for the age of digital design and technology, including 3D printing.



In 2024, work continued in preparation for the new regime for the unitary registration of geographical indications for craft and industrial products in the EU, and in Latvia the Patent Office will be the responsible institution for examining applications for registration. I believe that Latvian craftsmen and manufacturers will appreciate the opportunity to protect their products internationally, while at the same time raising awareness of Latvia internationally.

The DesignEuropa Awards ceremony by EUIPO in Riga on 25 September was an emotional and uplifting event, where the employees of the Patent Office were part of the organising team. The event drew the attention of the entire Europe to Riga as a design centre and was also a great opportunity to highlight the creative potential and design excellence of Latvia, while motivating Latvian industrial designers to strive for international recognition.

We have also been actively working throughout 2024 to ensure a speedy return to the renovated premises on Citadeles iela. We recognise the importance of employee wellbeing and a suitable working environment, so we have made every effort to ensure that the renovated premises meet the highest standards of a modern working environment and customer service. For our employees, the workplace is where most of the day is spent and we believe it should be motivating, comfortable and inspiring.

This report and the results achieved were only possible thanks to the greatest asset of the office, so I wish to express our gratitude to the “heart and soul” of the Patent Office – the employees. Your professionalism and dedication not only maintain a stable and efficient industrial property registration process, but also play a vital role in its ongoing development and ability to meet future challenges. Your contribution goes far beyond your daily duties. You are the driving force behind the changes that are shaping and improving the intellectual property system in Latvia, supporting innovation and creativity. You educate the public with your knowledge, represent our country internationally and ensure that the industrial property environment in Latvia is modern and efficient. Together, we form a united and strong team, which strengthens the protection of intellectual property and contributes to the development of Latvia with its energy and vision.

Agris Batalauskis



director

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. LEGAL STATUS OF THE OFFICE

The Patent Office is a direct administrative institution under the supervision of the Minister of Justice, established in 1992 and operating in accordance with the Law on Industrial Property Institutions and Procedures, Cabinet Regulation No. 720 of 15 December 2015 “By-laws of the Patent Office”, as well as other laws and regulations.

The Patent Office is headed by the Director of the Patent Office. The Director determines the structure of the Patent Office, as well as the functions and subordination of each unit.

Structure chart of the Patent Office

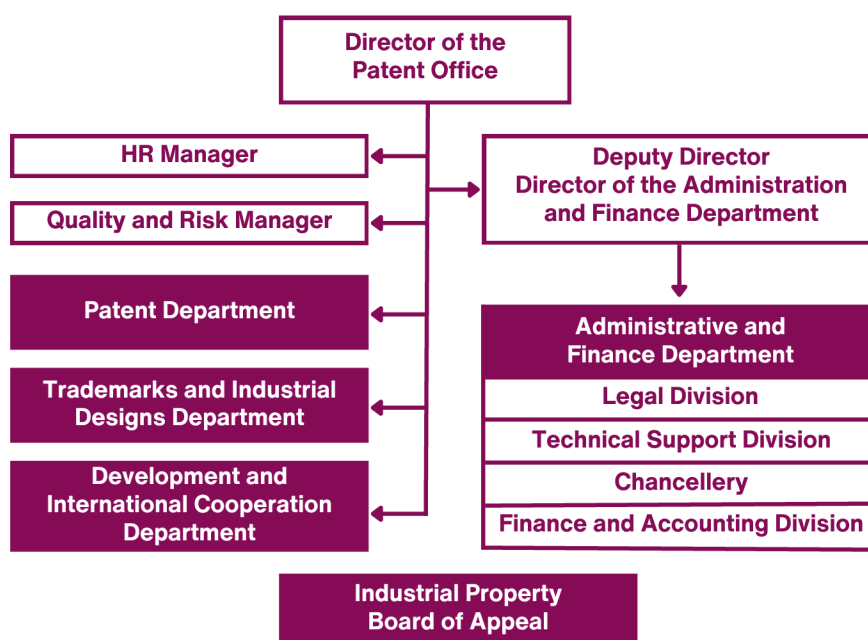


Figure 1

Under the direct authority of the Director of the Patent Office are:

- Deputy Director/Director of Administrative and Finance Department, under whose direct authority operates the Administrative and Finance Department;
- Patent Department;
- Trademarks and Industrial Designs Department;
- Development and International Cooperation Department;
- Quality and Risk Manager;
- HR Manager.

1.2. FUNCTIONS AND TASKS

The aim of the Patent Office is to implement the state policy in the field of legal protection of industrial property, in particular inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and topographies of semiconductor products.

The Patent Office has the following functions:

- Registering industrial property objects – patents for inventions (including SPCs for medicinal products and plant protection products), trademarks, industrial designs, and topographies of semiconductor products – and maintaining the corresponding registers;
- Promoting public understanding of protection of industrial property and strengthening its value in society and the country as a whole;
- Exercise the functions of the state industrial property institution as stipulated in international treaties binding on Latvia;
- Providing information services in the field of protection of industrial property rights and creating a specialised information collection.

To ensure the performance of its functions, the Patent Office:

- Receives and examines applications from legal and natural persons for the legal protection of inventions, trademarks, industrial designs, and topographies of semiconductor products;
- Maintains the Patent Register (which also includes SPCs for medicinal products and plant protection products), the Trademark Register, the Industrial Design Register, and the Register of Topographies of Semiconductor Products;
- Compiles and publishes the Official Gazette of the Patent Office and provides access to the public database;
- Informs the public, organises events and training courses to promote public understanding of the benefits of protection of intellectual property;
- Takes measures to strengthen the value of industrial property;
- Maintains and updates the industrial property information collection and creates online and local information resources;
- Organises the qualifying examination for professional patent attorneys and maintains their register;
- Ensures the fulfilment of international treaties binding on Latvia and represents, in accordance with its competence, the Republic of Latvia in international organisations and events;

- Participates in the development of draft laws and regulations and evaluates draft laws and regulations prepared by other institutions, in accordance with its competence;
- Provides fee-based services and performs other tasks specified in laws and regulations.

The Patent Office manages the organisational and administrative functions of the IPBA.

1.3 OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The Patent Office carries out its activities in accordance with the Strategy approved in 2022, a medium-term planning and management document that outlines the strategic vision and sets the main goals and objectives of the institution for the next five years. The Strategy defines the development priorities of the Patent Office, the directions of activity and their strategic goals, as well as tasks, achievable results and performance indicators. All employees of the Patent Office are involved in achieving these goals.

Mission

The mission of the Patent Office is to be a centre of support and competence in the field of industrial property law – to provide modern and accessible services, to enable the protection of newly created intellectual property, to implement national and international policies, as well as to educate the public in the field of intellectual property, creating a supportive environment for innovation in the national economy.

Vision

The Patent Office is an innovative, collaborative, and well-known intellectual property institution in Latvia and worldwide, contributing to shaping the business environment as a key player in a knowledge-based and innovation-driven economy.

VALUES



Professionalism

The professionalism of motivated employees is one of the main values of the institution, enabling it to deliver quality services in line with industry development and trends, fulfil the functions of the institution, and achieve common goals through cohesive teamwork.



Our customers

Every customer is valuable and given special attention and care. We are committed to continuously learning about the needs of our customers and improving our services accordingly to achieve better results together.



Development and innovation

We strive to use the latest technologies and innovations. To dynamically and flexibly adapt to changes and challenges, we continuously review, improve and digitise our processes.



Collaboration

We achieve more by working with intellectual property organisations in Latvia and around the world.



Table 1 Key Performance Indicators in the Patent Office's Strategy.

Activity results:				
Result	Performance indicator	Numerical values for the performance indicator		
		2021. (factual)	2024. (factual)	2026. (planned)
1 Reliable, accessible and easy-to-use industrial property data ¹	1.1 Number of visits to the Patent Office website (number of unique visits per year)	178 365	583 527	↑ 290 000
	1.2 Number of database visits to the Patent Office website (number of unique visits per year):			
	■ trademarks databases	14 663	80 613	↑ 18 000
	■ inventions databases	2 939	8 863	↑ 3 200
	■ industrial design databases	902	3 777	↑ 1 100
2 Efficient processes for registering industrial property rights have been provided	2.1 Number of services provided electronically by the Patent Office in relation to the total number of services provided, %	76% ²	70% ³	↑ increasing by 80%

¹ Outcome of the Operational Strategy 2022–2026 of the Ministry of Justice on Commercial Law Policy

² Service performance indicators of the Patent Office, 2021:

<https://www.lrpv.gov.lv/lv/media/3977/download>

	2.2 The QMS of the Patent Office complies with the requirements of the international standard ISO 9001:2015 and no non-conformities have been identified in the certification and monitoring audits of the QMS (number of non-conformities in the external audit report of the QMS)	0	0	0
Range of services available has been expanded	3.1 Number of alternative dispute resolution modules available on the website of the Patent Office	-	-	3
	3.2 Online advice is provided, customer satisfaction with advice received, %	-	provided	provided
4 The needs of the customers of the Patent Office have been identified and existing services have been	4 Satisfaction with the quality of services received in industrial property registration and post-registration procedures (number of customers completely and mostly satisfied compared to the number of customers surveyed, %)	92% ⁴	94%	↑ increasing
5 Public awareness events have been organised	5.1 Public information events (number per year)	29	74	↑ increasing

³ Number of services provided electronically (including telephone consultations) compared to all services is 93%

⁴ Service performance indicators of the Patent Office, 2021:
<https://www.lrpv.gov.lv/lv/media/3977/download>

	5.2 Satisfaction with the quality of the events attended (number of satisfied visitors compared to the number of respondents, %)	92%	95%	remains at the current level
6. Understanding of intellectual property among Latvian entrepreneurs	6 Latvian entrepreneurs rate their knowledge of industrial property protection as very good, rather good or average (% of respondents)	28% ⁵	31% ⁶	↑ increasing
7 Children and young people are knowledgeable about industrial property rights	7.1 Number of children and young people taking part in events	2 670	2 762	remains at the current level
	7.2 Children and young people rate their knowledge of industrial property as very good or average (% of respondents)	-	53% ⁷	70%
8. Involvement of Patent Office's employees in initiatives of international organisations has been ensured	8.1 Patent Office is represented in working groups or standing committees at WIPO, EPO, EUIPO, Nordic Baltic (number per year)	36	46	↑ increasing
	Active bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding with national patent offices (number)	-	1	5

⁵ November 2019 survey "Entrepreneurs' communication, awareness and views on protection of industrial property" conducted by the Patent Office in cooperation with the public opinion research centre SKDS

⁶ 2024 survey 'Understanding of industrial property rights among entrepreneurs' by the Patent Office and the public opinion research centre SKDS

⁷ 2023 survey

9 A sustainable and professional workforce has been ensured	9 Employee turnover (% compared to total number of employees)	12%	12%	↓ decreasing
10 Improved working environment	10.1 Renovation and modernisation of the Patent Office's building (Citadeles iela 7/70)	-	under renovation	ensured
	10.2 Workplaces have been located into the same building	-	Raiņa bulvāris 15	ensured
	10.3 Increase in employee satisfaction with the working environment according to a survey	-	very good 32%, good 55%, almost good 13%	↑ increasing

1.4 PRIORITIES FOR THE REPORTING YEAR

In 2024, the following priorities of the Patent Office were implemented within the **MJ work plan**:

- Amendments to the Trademark Law and the Law on Industrial Property Institutions and Procedures were made, clarifying the information to be disclosed about the trademark applicant/owner, providing for the possibility to restrict the availability of public information, and ensuring the adoption of the requirements of the Regulation on the protection of GIs for craft and industrial products.

The following activities were implemented as a priority within the work plan of the Patent Office:

Changes to the laws and regulations

- -Amendments to the Patent Law were submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers and the Saeima for approval, and the Law entered into force on 20 May 2024.
- Draft amendments to Cabinet Regulation No. 224 of 1 April 2008 “Regulations Regarding Patents and Patent Applications” were prepared according to the shortcomings identified in practice and the amendments to the Patent Law. The amendments entered into force on 3 October 2024.

Changes to the Internal Rules of the Patent Office

- Following the recommendations of the internal audit of the Ministry of Justice, a new Code of Ethics was issued on 3 April 2024.
- The procurement planning and organisation procedure were updated with the issuance of new rules on 10 April 2024 entitled “Procurement Provisions”.
- Employee selection procedure was updated and converted into Human Resources Management Rules. New rules were issued on 15 July 2024.

Improvements to the Information and Communication Technology systems and e-services of the Patent Office

- Under the procurement contract, some of the planned improvements to the ICT systems were made, improving their stability reducing system failures and unforeseen errors.
- The EUIPO project ECP2 Decision Desktop was fully implemented, facilitating the daily work of experts in decision-making.
- Work has been started on the ECP3: Emerging Technologies – Tier 2 Blockchain project, which will ensure the correctness of the information displayed in TMview and DesignView, including national certification information.
- Installation of the Statistics Module under the ECP 2: Back Office – Release 4 Reporting and Statistics Module project was completed, which will enable the retrieval of different cross-sections of information from the Trademarks and Industrial Designs system.
- Business analysis completed under the ECP 2: Front Office – User Area project, which will provide customers with a more intuitive, efficient and transparent interface to the external portal of the Trademarks and Industrial Designs system.
- Work has started on the migration of the ICT infrastructure from the MJ data centre to the infrastructure of the SJSC Latvia State Radio and Television Centre within the framework of the single service centre.

Quality management

- -In 2024, the QMS of the Patent Office was recertified for three years (more on the audit results in the Quality and Risk Management section).

Public education and raising awareness of the protection of intellectual property rights

- Training was provided for intellectual property professionals. More information on the training in “Promoting awareness of industrial property protection” section.
- A regular Library’s accreditation took place in October 2024. Based on the conclusion of the Expert Commission on Library Accreditation, it was granted the status of local significance and accredited for the following five years.
- The annual anti-counterfeiting campaign and “Creative Intellectual” competition for schoolchildren were held. Please also see 2.2.4 Raising awareness of industrial property protection.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE RESULTS IN 2024

2.1 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

In accordance with Section 41, Paragraph one of the Law on Budget and Financial Management and the Cabinet Regulation No. 641 of 3 October 2023 “On Approval of the Patent Office’s Budget for 2024”, the approved revenue for the Patent Office in 2024 amounts to EUR 4 375 961 and the approved expenditure to EUR 5 506 089.

During the reporting period, EUR 4 539 574 of expenditure were recorded:

- Remuneration, mandatory state social insurance contributions, benefits and compensation amounting to EUR 2 090 690;
- Goods and services amounting to EUR 814 238;
- Capital expenditure amounting to EUR 13 657;
- Expenditure in the framework of international cooperation amounting to EUR 1 388 529;
- Transfers for maintenance expenditure amounting to EUR 232 460.

Table 2 Approved financial resources and their use in 2023, 2024 for the Patent Office

No.	Financial indicators	2023 (actual performance) EUR	2024	
			Annual plan with changes EUR	Actual performance EUR
1	Resources to cover expenditure (total)	4 989 066	4 375 961	4 462 900
1.1	Charged services and other own revenue	4 989 066	4 375 961	4 462 900
2	Expenditure (total)	4 650 497	5 506 089	4 539 574
2.1	Maintenance expenditure	4 645 938	5 486 689	4 525 917
2.1.1	Current expenditure	2 988 038	3 838 939	2 904 928

2.1.2	Current payments to the EU budget and international cooperation	1 421 863	1 396 000	1 388 529
2.1.3	Transfers of maintenance expenditure	236 037	251 750	232 460
2.2	Capital expenditure	4 559	19 400	13 657
3	Increase (-) or decrease (+) in changes in cash balances of charged services and other own revenue	-338 569	-1 130 128	-76 674

2.2 SERVICES PROVIDED

The Patent Office provides fee-based services in accordance with the price list approved by Cabinet Regulation No. 723 of 12 December 2015 “Price List of Fee-Based Services of the Patent Office”, while the IPBA provides fee-based services in accordance with the price list approved by Cabinet Regulation No. 732 of 15 December 2015 “Price List of Paid Services of the Industrial Property Board of Appeal”.

In accordance with the procedure established by Regulation No. 399 of 4 July 2017 “Procedures for Accounting, Quality Control and Provision of State Administration Services”, information on 38 services provided by the Patent Office and four services provided by the IPBA was published on the website of the Patent Office and on the Portal of State Administration Services; 17 of these services are available online on the website of the Patent Office. Service performance indicators for previous years, including 2024, are published on the [website](#) of the Patent Office.

As of 2024, Latvia has launched a reform of the service environment improvement in state administration, and a new approach to public service management has been developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development. The reform foresees the introduction of an “owner’s approach” to service delivery and management, which requires state administration institutions, including the Patent Office, to focus on service improvement and development to raise the satisfaction of service recipients. In 2024, the Patent Office provided 3088 consultations on intellectual property rights protection, including 229 consultations on the EUIPO SME Fund, mainly to Latvian entrepreneurs and patent attorneys. The consultations were mainly provided by telephone – 80%, 11% via electronic channels (e-mail), three trademark searches and two industrial design searches were conducted. In 2024, the Library provided a total of 124 consultations on protection of industrial property issues, 6% of them via electronic channels.

The Patent Office maintains the Trademark Register, the Industrial Design Register, the Patent Register (which also includes SPCs for medicinal products and plant protection products), and the Register of Topographies of Semiconductor Products. Register entries are official records.

The register entries and the information provided for by the laws and regulations on industrial property, which relate to the registration of industrial property objects, are published in the official publication of the Patent Office “Inventions, Trademarks and Industrial Designs”, which is published once a month. All issues of the publication are available in PDF format on the [“Official Gazette”](#) section of the Patent Office website.

A customer survey on the services provided in 2024 for registration and post-registration of industrial property objects was sent to 478 customers. Approximately one sixth or 16% of the respondents (80 persons) completed the survey and gave their opinion. Summarising the responses of the customers, it can be concluded that 94% of all survey participants are fully and mainly satisfied with the work of the Patent Office in the area of registration of trademarks and industrial designs, as well as granting of patents.

2.2.1 Patents

In 2024, the Patent Office received 87 national patent applications for the protection of inventions, which is 39% less than in 2023, when 143 patent applications were received. Of the patent applications received in 2024, 84 were from Latvian applicants and three from applicants with foreign addresses.

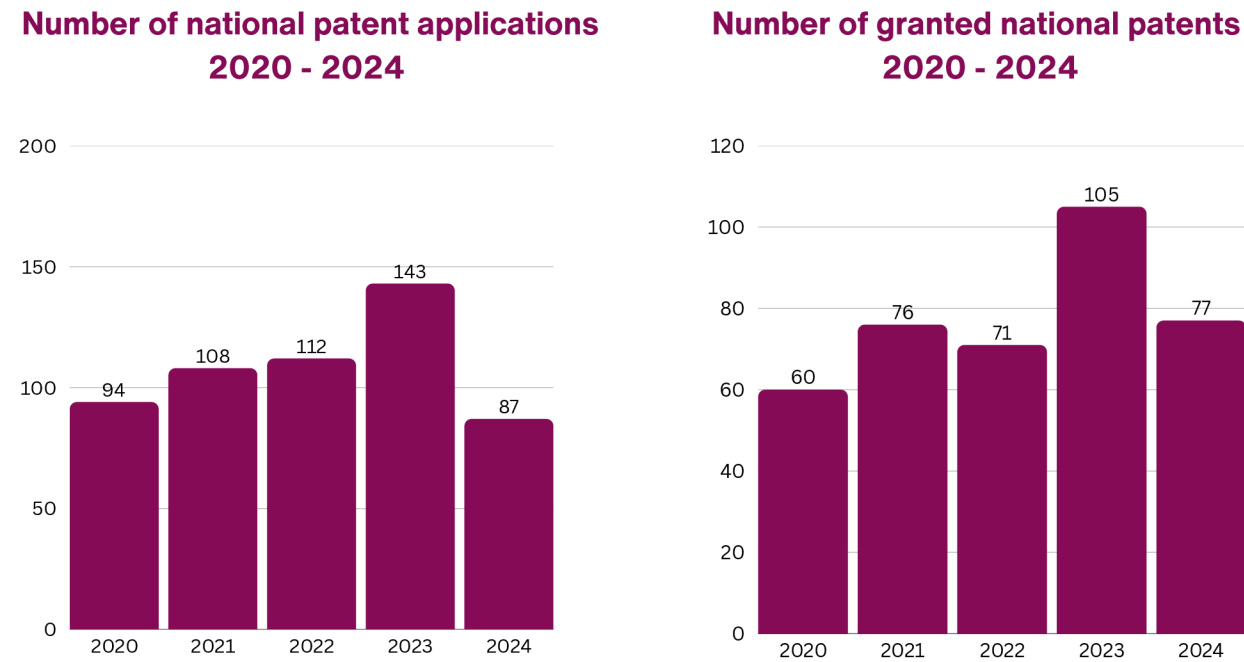


Figure 2

Breakdown of patent applications submitted by type of applicant:

- 28 applications were received from Latvian universities/institutes;
- SMEs – 26 applications;
- 30 applications were received from individual applicants.

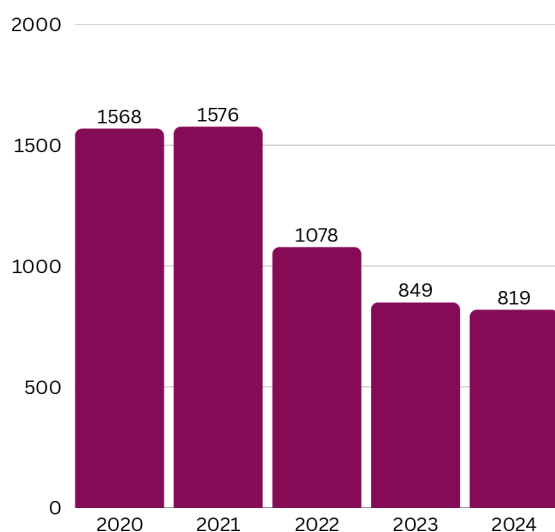
Compared to 2023, there is a significant drop in patent application activity by universities and institutes, from 75 applications in 2023 to 28 applications in 2024.

A positive trend is the increasing number of patent applications submitted online via an e-service (58 applications) or other electronic submission method (22 applications), with only six applications submitted to the Patent Office in person in paper format.

The examinations conducted in the reporting year resulted in publication of 106 national patent applications in the Official Gazette of the Patent Office, 27 of which were published on an accelerated basis (before the 18-month deadline set by the Patent Law) at the request of the applicants. A total of 77 Latvian patents were granted, published in the Official Gazette, and issued to their respective owners over the year; of these, 74 were granted to owners from Latvia, and one each to owners with registered addresses in Germany, France and Russia. Together with the publication in the Official Gazette, up-to-date information and individual case documents (e.g. description of the invention, claims, drawings) are made available in the public Latvian patent database.

In 2024, the Patent Office received 819 translations of European patent claims for the validation in and extension to Latvia of European patents granted by the EPO, and as a result of the examinations carried out, information on 773 European patents validated in/extended to Latvia was published in the Official Gazette of the Patent Office in 2024, at the same time ensuring the availability of up-to-date information and translations of patent claims in Latvian also in the public Latvian patent database.

**Number of European patents
applied for validation
in Latvia 2020 - 2024**



**Number of publications of
European patents validated
in Latvia 2020 - 2024**

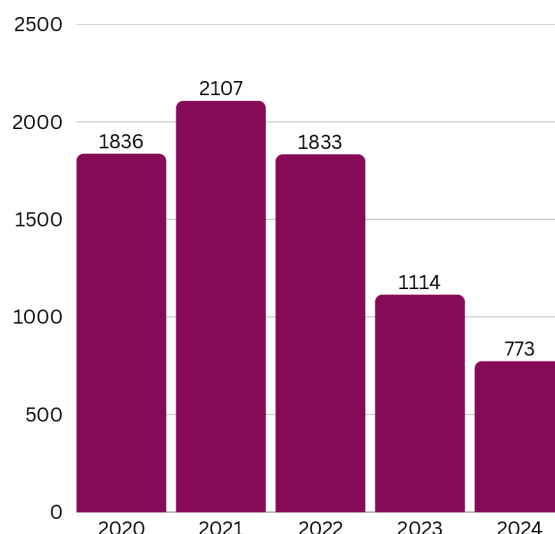


Figure 3

In 2024, 42 SPC applications were received, an increase of 38% compared to 2023, when 26 SPC applications were received. During the reporting year, 25 SPCs were granted.

At the end of 2024, the following patents were in force in Latvia:

- 442 national (Latvian) patents;
- 10 051 European patents;
- It should be noted that European patents with unitary effect (i.e. unitary European patents) are also valid in Latvia and, according to the EPO data, 45 086 European patents have been registered with unitary effect status by the end of 2024, thus all of them are also in force in Latvia during their term of validity.

The following amendments and annotations were made in the Patent Register in 2024:

- 146 changes of patent owners and 12 changes of SPC owners were registered;
- changes in personal data were registered for 103 patents and 17 SPCs;
- three licence agreements and one commercial pledge were recorded.

During the reporting year, the Patent Office in cooperation with the EPO , continued, with the aim of improving the quality of national patents, to implement the project on the provision of patent searches for Latvian patent applicants, under which they can obtain a patent search and an opinion from an EPO examiner free of charge. Additionally, support is provided for the submission of an international patent application (PCT) and for the substantive examination of a European patent. In 2024, 45 patent search requests were received, 35 patent applications were sent to the EPO for patent searching, whereas reports and written opinions were received from the EPO on 37 patent applications. During the reporting year, 17 PCT applications were submitted to the Patent Office as a receiving office and six PCT application fee refunds were made.

2.2.2 Trademarks

The Latvian Patent Office received 1919 trademark applications in 2024. Of these, 62%, or 1185, were applications submitted in the national procedure. Compared to 2023, the total number of trademark applications decreased by almost 2% in 2024.

Of the total number of national applications, 76% were submitted through the e-application system and 33% were examined under the accelerated trademark application examination procedure without additional fees (providing for a decision on the registration of the trademark within 15 working days if the application meets certain requirements).

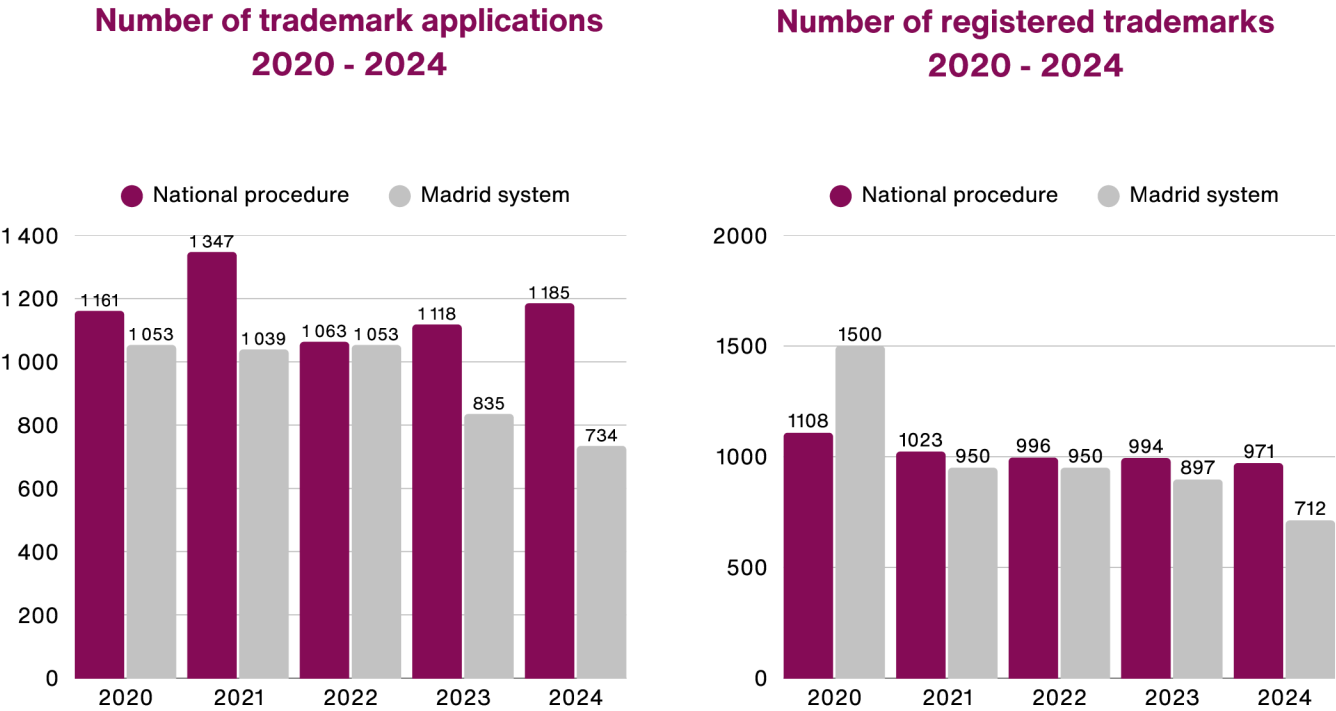


Figure 4

In 2024, a total of 1683 trademarks were registered. 971 trademarks were registered under the national procedure and 712 trademarks were registered under the Madrid System. The number of trademarks registered in 2024 constitutes 89% of the number of trademarks registered in the previous year (1891 trademarks were granted registration in 2023).

A steady increase was observed in the last few years in the number of trademark applications submitted to the EUIPO from Latvia. In 2024, 503 EU trademark applications were submitted to the EUIPO from Latvia, and 399 trademarks were registered (compared to 340 applications and 287 registrations in 2021, 358 applications and 318 registrations in 2022, 447 applications and 368 registrations in 2023).

In the reporting year, 33 applications for conversion of an EU trademark into a trademark application in Latvia were received. In comparison, there were 37 such applications in 2022, and 24 in 2023.

In 2024, 67 international trademark applications and 13 extensions were received from Latvia.

In 2024, the Trademark Register recorded 1101 trademark registration renewals and the following number and types of amendments:

- Rights in rem distraint – 10
- Licence – 28
- Change of proprietor's name – 92
- Change of proprietor's address – 226
- Rights in rem civil – 83
- Withdrawal of registration – 12
- Declaration of invalidity – 13
- Amendments to the list of goods – 25
- Change of proprietor – 190
- Change of representative – 195
- Exclusion from the register – 1579
- Change of elements of a mark – 5
- Corrections – 7.

According to Section 11, Paragraph one of the Law on International Sanctions and National Sanctions of the Republic of Latvia, financial and civil sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council Resolutions and sanctions imposed by EU regulations are binding and directly applicable in Latvia. The Patent Office, as a competent institution, takes all necessary steps to ensure the implementation of international and national sanctions. In 2024, the Patent Office took one decision to suspend the registration of a trademark due to the sanctions imposed on the applicant.

2.2.3 Industrial designs

In 2024, 30 industrial design applications were received, a decrease of 21% compared to the previous year (38 applications in 2023). 29 applications were of Latvian origin. In total, 52 industrial designs were covered by applications, a 19% decrease compared to 2023 (64 designs in 2023). It should be noted that 103 designs submitted by Latvian applicants were registered at the EUIPO in 2024.

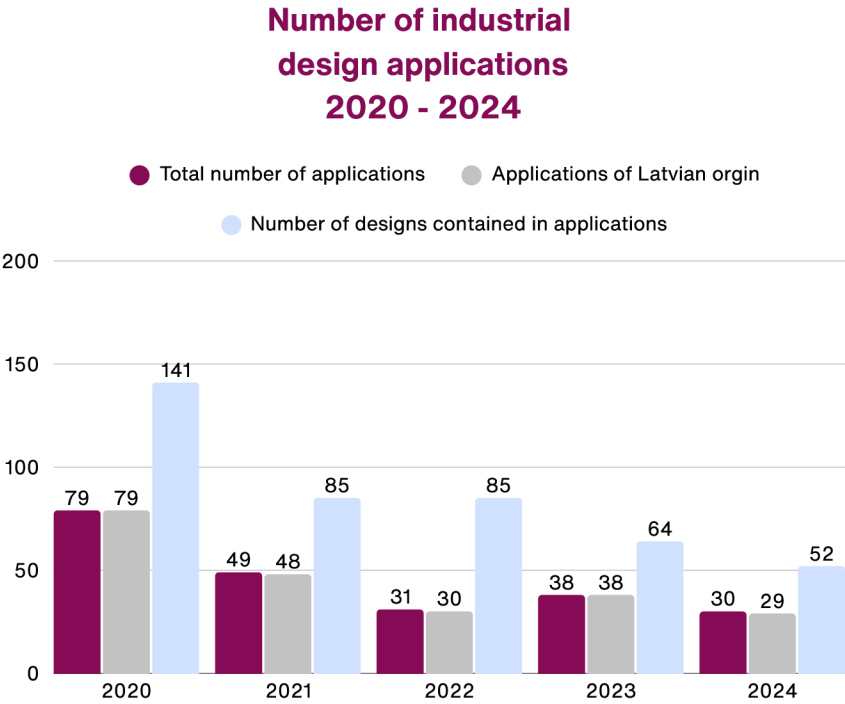


Figure 5

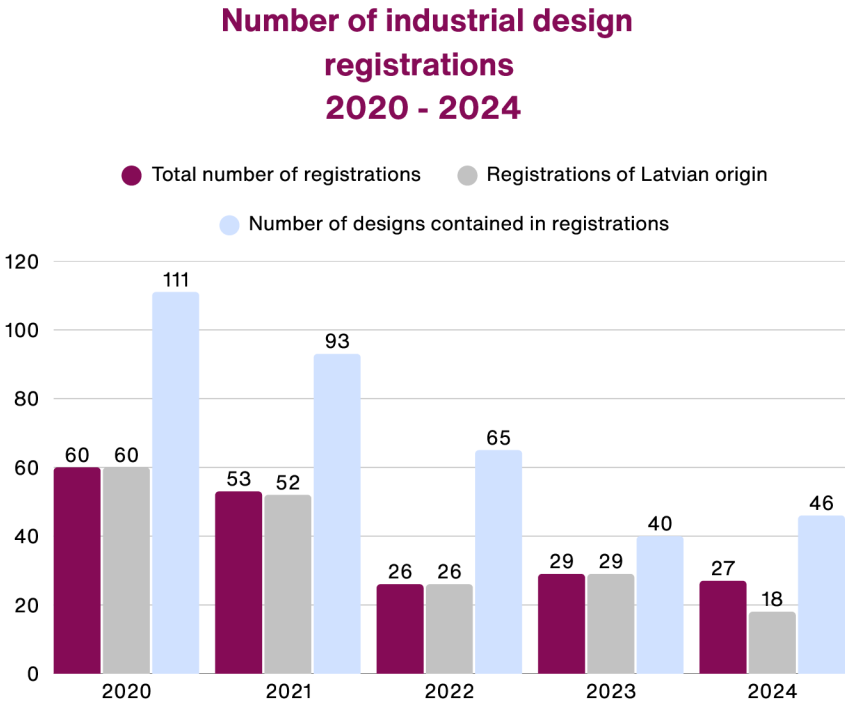


Figure 6

As a result of the examinations conducted, 27 industrial design registration certificates were issued, and 46 industrial designs were registered with the national procedure in 2024.

The duration of the national registration procedure for industrial designs remained at the level of previous years, and it was two months in 2024.

Under the international procedure (according to the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement), in 2024, the examination was carried out for 18 registrations designated to Latvia, which included 38 industrial designs.

In 2024, changes in industrial design registrations were most frequently made in the following areas:

- 17% – logos, stickers, graphic motifs for printing, design elements;
- 17% – various types of furniture;
- 10% – board game sets (boards, playing cards and miniatures), development toys for children.

In 2024, five amendments were made in the Industrial Designs Register to change the data of the representative of the proprietor of the industrial design and 18 design registrations were renewed.

2.2.4 Raising awareness of industrial property protection

To strengthen the system of intellectual property protection in Latvia, the task of the Patent Office is to raise public awareness of intellectual property protection, registration and the rights of intellectual property holders. The Development and International Cooperation Department is responsible for these functions at the Patent Office and implements activities in cooperation with other departments of the Office, as well as with other state institutions, local and international organisations.

In 2024, the Development and International Cooperation Department organised and participated in 74 events, with a total of 7 610 participants, with lectures on the protection of intellectual property rights and the financing available for it. The events were attended by SMEs, representatives of technology transfer contact points, students, teachers, scientists, professional patent attorneys, judges, customs officials, general education school teachers and pupils, SE representatives, and other interested parties. The results of the participant satisfaction surveys show that 95% of the respondents were satisfied with the events.

The Patent Office cooperated with a wide range of Latvian organisations in educational and awareness-raising events on protection of industrial property during the reporting year. Cooperation was strengthened with JAL, Latvian Design Centre, Latvian Designers' Society, Association of Patent Attorneys of Latvia, LaIPA, Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, BT1 Exhibition Centre, Latvia Technological Centre,

Zemgale Region Human Resource and Competences Development Centre, Association of Accountants of Latvia, Riga Neighbourhood Association, Latvian Rural Forum, Latvian educational institutions, municipalities, Kuldīga Digital Innovation Centre, and other institutions and organisations. In addition, cooperation was implemented with state administration institutions – the MJ, SRS National Customs Board, Supreme Court, Office of the Prosecutor General, CM, Consumer Rights Protection Centre, Latvian National Centre for Culture, LIAA, and others.

The Patent Office created and published several informative videos. The development of informative and attractive materials in video format provides an easy-to-understand way to inform about the intellectual property field, targeting such audiences as SMEs, young people, scientists, as well as the Latvian public in general. In 2024, a total of four informative videos were created on the following topics :

- “When design becomes industrial design” and “Your trademark – your identity”;
- “From Idea to Protection. Entrepreneur Experience Stories. Festival Straume” and “From Idea to Protection. Entrepreneur Experience Stories. Knop Knop”.

The total amount of video views on the social networks of the Patent Office exceeded 74 000.

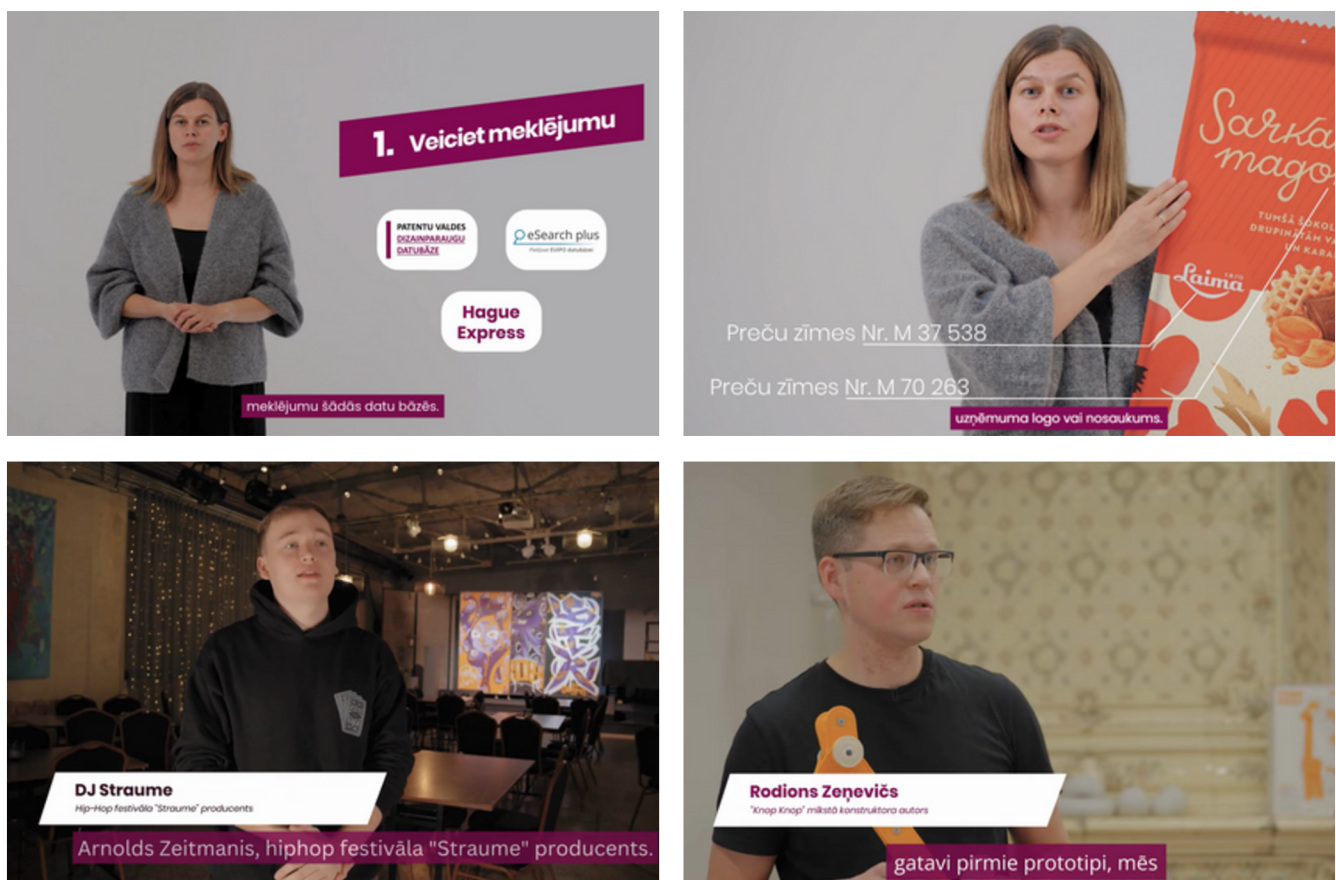


Figure 7

Participation in events

In the past year, the Patent Office participated in six international exhibitions: Riga Food, Tech Industry, Furniture & Design Isle, Riga COMM, Baltic Beauty and MINOX 2024 in Jelgava. The events were attended by people from different sectors, so it was a good opportunity to raise awareness of protection of intellectual property issues as widely as possible. During these exhibitions, visitors had the opportunity to receive expert advice from the Patent Office on the protection of industrial property rights.



Figure 8

To reach the widest possible public, for whom it is important to know about the protection of their intellectual property, the Patent Office started cooperation with organisations representing the creative industries, both by concluding memoranda of cooperation and by participating in events organised by them. The memoranda of cooperation were concluded with the Latvian Design Centre and LaIPA.

In the first half of the year, the Patent Office participated in the evaluation of the candidates for the Latvian Design Award organised by the Latvian Design Centre. To raise design professionals' awareness of intellectual property protection and to support a sustainable development of the Latvian design industry, the Patent Office presented a special award. The aim of the award is to promote the use of design in both business and the public sector, thereby strengthening cooperation between these sectors and encouraging the commercialisation of innovative solutions. The first award of the Patent Office went to designer Aldis Kalniņš for his electric scooter Bee Electric.

In September, a memorandum of cooperation was signed with the music industry organisations – LaIPA, the Copyright and Communication Consulting Agency/ Latvian Authors Association and CM on mutual cooperation and participation in promoting the development of the music industry and in organising the GAMMA (Highest Contemporary Music Award of the Year) award. The Patent Office was also involved in the nomination of candidates for the award, as well as in the evaluation of candidates for other award categories.



Figure 9

In November, representatives of the Patent Office participated in a seminar “When Creativity Meets the Law”. It was organised for the creative industries by LalPA, Music Latvia and the Latvian Advertising Association , where they outlined certain aspects of the trademark use.

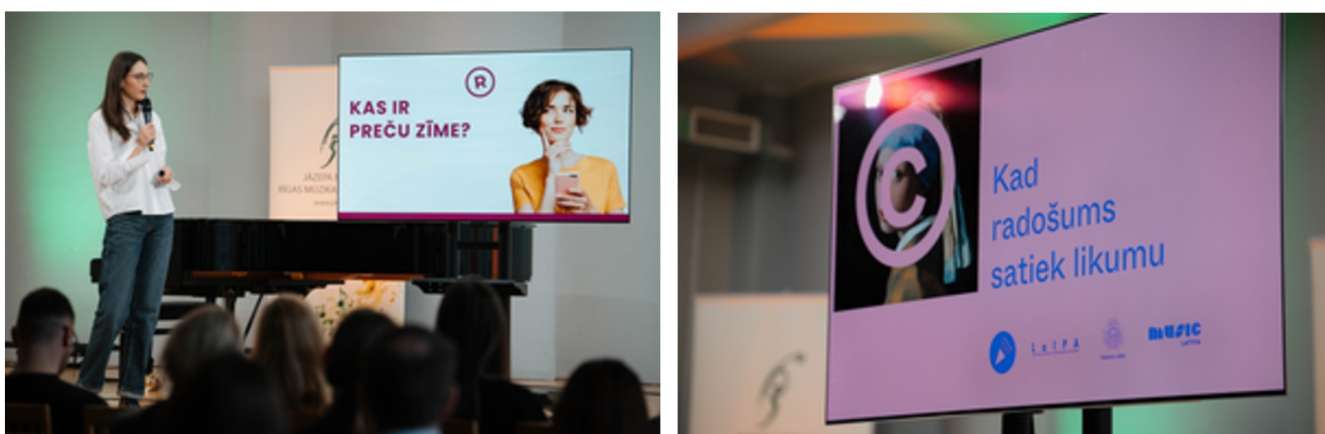


Figure 10

Contribution to the education of students and young people

Understanding the value of intellectual property fosters youth creativity, innovation and interest in entrepreneurship. The Patent Office is aware of the importance of explaining intellectual property to children and young people at school and therefore carries out educational work on intellectual property, especially on industrial property, for this target group.

To enhance teachers' and students' understanding - of industrial property rights, the importance of their protection and the possibility to integrate this knowledge into the teaching process, the Patent Office continued its cooperation with JAL. Participating in various JAL events, the Patent Office was particularly active at the traditional SE fair “Cits bazars”, which takes place in spring and winter.

At these events, the Patent Office was represented by its information stand, where both students and visitors to the Domina Shopping centre could receive advice on intellectual property protection issues. The Patent Office also participated in the jury panel evaluating the activities of SEs and awarded prizes in the category “Knowledge-based SE product/service” in primary and secondary school groups.

During the year, the Patent Office participated in six events organised by JAL, contributing to them with its information stands and by participating in the jury, as well as by conducting lectures and masterclasses. During these activities, more than 270 SEs, including teachers, were informed on intellectual property rights issues.



Figure 11

In September and October 2024, the Patent Office organised the “Creative Intellectual” competition for Latvian pupils for the sixth year in a row. The competition was open to students of grades 5 to 12 in general, vocational and special education, and their main challenge was to come up with an original solution to educate their peers about intellectual property. The competition was organised by the Patent Office in cooperation with the National Centre for Education, CM, JAL and LaIPA.

In 2024, the Patent Office continued its cooperation with LaIPA to provide information on the registration and protection of intellectual property as widely as possible. At the beginning of the year, a mini hackathon for university students was co-organised, where ten teams of students presented their innovative ideas for real-life intellectual property situations.



Figure 12

Annual seminars for professionals

To strengthen the knowledge of intellectual property protection and to present the latest developments in the field, the Patent Office regularly organises trainings for specific target groups, inviting both Latvian and foreign, including international, experts in intellectual property and related fields.

On 3 and 4 September 2024, the Patent Office in cooperation with WIPO, EUIPO and EPO organised an annual regional judges' seminar on protection of intellectual property in Jūrmala. The two-day seminar offered judges a broad and detailed insight into various court decisions on intellectual property disputes, including trademarks, industrial designs, inventions and copyrights. Attention was also paid to the decisions of the boards of appeal of intellectual property offices in out-of-court disputes concerning industrial property rights. The seminar was attended by judges from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Poland, as well as a number of other internationally renowned intellectual property law experts (68 participants in total).

On 29 and 30 October, for the eighth consecutive year, the Patent Office, with the support of EUIPO and in cooperation with the SRS National Customs Board, organised an annual international seminar on "Effective Methods of Protection of Intellectual Property 2024" for customs and other state administration officials.



Figure 13

Participants of the seminar were introduced to the objectives and activities of the EUIPO Observatory, whose main objective is to promote public confidence in and respect for intellectual property. The results of surveys on the purchasing patterns of EU citizens in relation to counterfeits were presented. In the expert discussion on “Protection of Intellectual Property. Challenges and Solutions”, experts from law enforcement authorities and intellectual property institutions and organisations discussed the challenges, current problems and possible solutions of combatting the spread of counterfeiting. A total of 151 participants attended the seminar.

In 2024, a seminar organised by the Patent Office and the EUIPO Boards of Appeal took place, where industry professionals gained a detailed insight into the most recent decisions of the Boards of Appeal in industrial property disputes, as well as discussed the aspects of specific decisions. The seminar brought together representatives of law firms as well as experts from the judiciary.

Cooperation with entrepreneurs

Intellectual property rights play an important role in protecting and stimulating innovation. The protection of intellectual property rights plays a key role in supporting innovation across Europe, as a knowledge-driven economy is vital for the EU Member States to remain competitive in the global market. Acknowledging the significance of intellectual property for business growth, the Patent Office has enhanced its collaboration with entrepreneurs, their representative bodies, and the broader innovation ecosystem since 2022. In 2024, the Patent Office also took part in events aimed at entrepreneurs, highlighting the advantages of registered intellectual property and its importance for enhancing competitiveness. Regular seminars for entrepreneurs are held in collaboration with regional business associations and incubators.

From July 2022 to December 2024, an EUIPO designated expert worked at the Patent Office and provided substantial support in public education, particularly addressing entrepreneurs and raising awareness of the importance of intellectual property protection.

However, as of December 2024, support from EUIPO for this position was discontinued, which affects the activities planned by the Patent Office for 2025, in particular regarding targeted communication with entrepreneurs.

To further identify and compare entrepreneurs' awareness of intellectual property issues, SIA Research Centre SKDS carried out, at the request of the Patent Office, a study on "Entrepreneurs' experience, awareness of and views on industrial property protection". The data obtained from the survey allows for the comparison of entrepreneurs' attitudes and knowledge with the results of the surveys conducted in 2022 and 2019.

The survey results show that entrepreneurs' awareness of the benefits of industrial property registration increased in Latvia over the last two years. There was both an increase in confidence in specific advantages of registering industrial property and a general improvement in the level of knowledge about what industrial property is and how it can strengthen the competitiveness of a company.

EUIPO SME Fund activity The Ideas Powered for Business

SMEs are key drivers of innovation and the economy, contributing to employment and regional development. While SMEs often create new solutions, they often lack the resources to protect intellectual property. Providing financial support in this field is strategically vital, as it enhances the competitiveness of SMEs in both local and global markets.

The EUIPO SME Fund "The Ideas Powered for business" closed its fourth year of operation with a significant number of applications from entrepreneurs – a total of 378 applications from Latvian SMEs in 2024, a 24% increase compared to the previous year. In 2024, Latvian companies applied for a total of 520 services, 91 more than in 2023.

In Latvia, the most active requests for support from the SME Fund were for the registration of trademarks and industrial designs – 327 requests, EU trademarks being the most actively registered. The second most requested support was for intellectual property pre-diagnostic services, with 149 SMEs' requests for IP SCAN services and 31 SMEs' requests for IP Scan Enforcement services. 13 requests were registered for financial support for patent registration. Latvian companies are still not applying for support related to plant variety protection.

EUIPO Network of Authenticities activities

To raise regional residents' awareness of the value of intellectual property, including industrial property, and the negative impact of counterfeiting, as well as to promote a change in public attitudes towards the distribution and acquisition of counterfeits, the Patent Office in cooperation with the EUIPO implemented various activities in Liepāja and Daugavpils within the framework of the project "European Network of Authenticities".



Figure 14

In Liepāja, the Patent Office participated in the Līva Village Festival and the Sea Festival with an information stand and organised an educational workshop at the Liepāja Youth House. In Daugavpils, educational events took place at the City Festival and the Night of Scientists at the University of Daugavpils, and a design competition was organised with a screen-printing workshop for students of the University of Daugavpils.

On 27 September, the Daugavpils City Municipal Police hosted a discussion organised by the Patent Office, the aim of which was to identify the importance of intellectual property protection and anti-counterfeiting processes. Representatives of the Municipal Police, the State Police, the SRS National Customs Board and the Prosecution Office participated in the meeting and discussed the progress made and possible improvements in their operational processes.

Competitions and campaigns organised by the Patent Office

Highlighting the importance of intellectual property for business, the Patent Office took a decision in 2024 to merge the two awards Trademark of the Year and Visionary into a single statute with a common identity and title – Intellectual Property Awards. The draft regulations were agreed with the State Heraldry Commission in December 2024 and subsequently with the MJ.

The procedure for the Trademark of the Year award was also changed, establishing winners in two rounds of judging. In the first round, a total of 32 nominees in the categories Trademark of the Year for Latvia and Trademark of the Year for the European Union are selected quarterly throughout the year by the experts of the Patent Office and further evaluated by a jury of the Patent Office and external experts, selecting one winner in each category.

To educate the public about the negative effects of counterfeit goods on health, life, the economy and the environment, and to encourage them to choose genuine products, the Patent Office organises an annual anti-counterfeiting campaign. On 12 June 2024, the launch of the anti-counterfeiting campaign “Counterfeit – great package?” took place in Riga, at the Environmental Education Concept Site “Šūna”, where everyone could see counterfeit goods and get advice on the signs of counterfeiting and the consequences of buying counterfeit goods. Also, visitors could participate in a large-format memory game, which was an attractive way to learn about the negative impact of counterfeiting in various areas. Following the launch of the campaign, the Patent Office continued to raise public awareness of intellectual property protection through various activities in traditional media and social media during the following period.



2.2.5 Building a specialised information collection

In 2024, the Library was accredited for the next five years as a library of local significance. An electronic catalogue is being created in the library information system ALISE, which is available to users on the website of the Patent Office. The library collection includes Latvian and foreign publications in the field of intellectual and industrial property. In 2024, the collection was supplemented by 73 copies, and on 31 December the collection comprised 3049 copies. The collection contains publications in both paper and electronic formats.

Using the library collection as well as other sources, an analytical bibliographical database “Protection of Industrial and Intellectual Property” is created, which is also available on the website of the Patent Office and includes information on publications from Latvian and foreign newspapers, magazines and books on professional issues and experience in the field of intellectual property protection. As of 31 December 2024, a total of 17 570 entries were registered in the database. The Library also contributes to the joint catalogue of Latvian -higher educational institutions and special libraries.

A survey on satisfaction with the services provided was sent to library users. Out of 24 respondents, 14 gave their answers. The results of the survey show that 100% of the respondents are fully satisfied with the responsiveness and professionalism of the employees of the Library, whereas access to information and resources was rated as very good by 93% of the users.

2.2.6 Representation

Entrepreneurs, designers, inventors and anyone interested can turn to a professional patent attorney who provides services in the field of industrial property and handles procedures at the Patent Office. The list of professional patent attorneys is available on the website of the Patent Office. The Patent Office maintains the list of professional patent attorneys and organises qualifying examinations for professional patent attorneys in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 146 of 8 March 2016, “Regulations Regarding the List of Professional Patent Attorneys, Procedures for the Maintenance Thereof, and Procedures for the Qualification Examination of Professional Patent Attorneys”. In 2024, as in previous years, the exam was held twice and was taken by two candidates. One candidate passed the qualifying examination.

In 2024, 90 amendments were made to the list of professional patent attorneys and one certificate of recognition of a professional qualification of a professional patent attorney in other Member States of the European Economic Area was issued.

2.2.7 Industrial Property Board of Appeal

Out-of-court disputes arising out of the registration and post-registration procedures of industrial property objects are handled by the IPBA.

- One notice of appeal was submitted against a decision of the Patent Office refusing registration of a trademark;
- One notice of appeal was submitted against a decision of the Patent Office refusing the renewal of the right to maintain a European patent in force in Latvia;
- All 46 notices of opposition were submitted to trademark registrations; 2.7% of trademark registrations were contested in opposition proceedings.

In 2024, the IPBA received 11 notices for revocation of a trademark registration and five notices for a declaration of invalidity of a trademark registration.

During the reporting year, 33 notices of opposition, all of them to trademark registrations, were examined on their merits. 24 of them were fully satisfied, four were partially satisfied, and five were rejected. 26 opposition proceedings were terminated in 2024. Six notices of appeal were examined and all of them were rejected. One notice of revocation was examined and satisfied. Two notices of invalidation of trademark registration were examined, one of which was rejected and the other satisfied.

In 2024, the average time for the examination of trademark opposition and invalidity cases (time from receipt of the application to sending of the written decision) decreased to 224 days for those cases which were examined on their merits and where there was neither the suspension of proceedings, nor a postponement of the examination of a case or any extension of terms initiated by the parties to the proceedings. Given the procedural rules for inter partes proceedings laid down in the Law on Industrial Property Institutions and Procedures, this is very close to the minimum possible.

In 2024, persons applied to court in relation to the IPBA's decisions in five trademark opposition cases. In 2024, the judgment was delivered in one case – the Riga City Court ruled on the case of two SPCs in the same way as the IPBA, rejecting the claim of the applicant for recognition of the SPCs for medicines as registrable in the territory of the Republic of Latvia.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The Patent Office performs the duties arising for the Republic of Latvia as an EU Member State from its international obligations in the field of industrial property protection, represents the Republic of Latvia at international institutions and events, and develops bilateral cooperation with foreign and international organisations. The Patent Office encourages and supports the participation of its employees in international events as experts and lecturers, thus sharing their knowledge and experience.

During the reporting year, the Office continued to strengthen its role at the international level. It was represented in 46 working groups and standing committees, including the Baltic and Nordic cooperation formats, as well as WIPO, EPO and EUIPO.

2.5.1 Bilateral, Baltic Nordic cooperation

The aim of the Patent Office is to develop bilateral cooperation with intellectual property offices of other countries, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, experience and views on industrial property issues. Therefore, on 7 March 2024, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed with the Slovenian Intellectual Property Office, providing for the exchange of experience, knowledge and best practices between the Latvian and Slovenian intellectual property offices in their daily activities, raising awareness among the public, including young audiences, of industrial property and the importance of its protection.

In the framework of the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Project, exchange visits to the Finnish and Danish offices were carried out in 2024.



Figure 16

On 5 and 6 December 2024, a meeting of the intellectual property offices of the three Baltic states took place in Riga, during which initiatives and joint activities to strengthen the intellectual property system in the Baltic region and in each individual country were discussed at the management and experts' level.



Figure 17

The issues discussed included improving the service to customers, promoting their visibility and accessibility, so that the intellectual property office would be the first place to turn to for industrial property registration issues. Cooperation between the Baltic and Scandinavian countries takes place through annual meetings and working groups of representatives of the Baltic and Nordic institutions. Representatives of the institutions meet once a year, which provides an opportunity to discuss current issues and identify trends in the region. Cooperation between Baltic and Nordic institutions also continues on a daily basis, addressing various issues within the field.

2.5.2 World Intellectual Property Organisation

During the reporting period, the Patent Office continued to implement various activities co-financed by WIPO. Their description can be found in the “Promoting awareness of industrial property protection” section of the Public Report.

In 2024, two WIPO Diplomatic Conferences were held – one in May and one in November, where Latvia was represented by the Deputy Director of the Patent Office, Director of the Administrative and Finance Department, E. Rēķis. On 24 May 2024, at the close of the WIPO Diplomatic Conference, the WIPO Member States adopted a landmark international legal instrument concerning intellectual property, genetic resources, and associated traditional knowledge. This is the first WIPO treaty to include clauses on the interaction between intellectual property, genetic resources and traditional knowledge. The WIPO Diplomatic Conference, held from 11 to 22 November 2024 in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, negotiated a comprehensive design protection treaty aimed at simplifying the procedure for designers around the world to protect their industrial designs. Ē. Rēķis was elected Vice-President of the Credentials Committee.

In July 2024, WIPO held its annual General Assembly session in Geneva, where Latvia was represented by A. Batalauskis, Director of the Patent Office, and L. Lārmane, Director of the Patent Department of the Patent Office. During the General Assembly, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with WIPO to promote cooperation in the field of intellectual property: access to the WIPO database was established, enabling the Patent Office to upload judgments and information related to WIPO-Lex judgments to the database from the end of 2024.



In autumn 2024, the Patent Office in cooperation with WIPO made it possible for anyone interested to take the six-week distance learning course in Latvian “General Course on Intellectual Property” (DL-101LV) free of charge. There was a high level of interest in this session, with 111 people initially registering for the course and 69 participants from various educational institutions, businesses, and state institutions taking the final exam. At the end of the course, 65 certificates were issued and the participant satisfaction rate was 87%.

The Patent Office continued its cooperation with WIPO and the TTOs of the Baltic States by jointly establishing the Baltic Technology Transfer Offices Network. In May 2024, the WIPO programme “WIPO Mentorship for Spin-offs of the Baltic States” was launched in Riga with the aim to train experts from the Baltic Technology Transfer Offices to support science-intensive companies.



Figure 19

2.5.3 European Patent Office

In May 2024, the EPO Strategic Plan 2028 – SP2028 – was approved and the Patent Office participated in its development with proposals. The new plan continues the path towards sustainable action, by integrating it into each of the five priorities set out in SP2028 – employees, technology, high quality products and services, partnerships and financial sustainability.

Within the framework of the cooperation agreement with the EPO on patent searches, the Patent Office continued to offer and provide Latvian patent applicants with the possibility to obtain patent searches and written opinions on the patentability of their inventions from EPO examiners.

A number of European projects are being implemented in cooperation with the EPO, including the EPO's Pan-European Seal Young Professionals Programme.

In cooperation with the EPO, work was carried out on projects to develop and improve the Patent Information System. During the reporting year, the Patent Department represented Latvia in the EPO Convergence Working Group on "Practice as regards re-establishment of rights" to develop recommendations for the implementation of uniform practices in the Member States of the European Patent Organisation.

The Director of the Patent Office, A. Batalauskis, was elected to the Administrative Council of the EPO on 20 March 2024 and his term of office is set until 26 June 2027.

2.5.4 European Union Intellectual Property Office

At the end of May, the EUIPO Member States gathered for their annual meeting to discuss the preliminary draft of the EUIPO Strategic Plan 2030. The Patent Office was represented at the meeting by A. Batalauskis, Director of the Patent Office and L. Daugavvanaga, Director of the Trademarks and Industrial Designs Department.

The Patent Office experts participated in the development of the EUIPO Strategic Plan 2030, which was adopted in November 2024. It outlines a proactive approach to meet rapidly changing demands and includes adaptation to global change, support for green innovation, and digital and inclusive access to intellectual property resources. By focusing on sustainability, inclusion, and technological progress, EUIPO strives to empower all innovators to succeed in an increasingly dynamic global economy.

On 8 December 2024, new industrial design legislation aimed at modernising and harmonising design protection in the EU came into force throughout the EU. Adapted to the digital age, including 3D printing, it simplifies registration procedures and introduces a "repair clause" to promote competition in the spare parts market. The Member States have 36 months (until 9 December 2027) to implement the Directive in their laws and regulations. The Community industrial design will be called the EU industrial design.

On 25 September 2024, the DesignEuropa Awards 2024 took place in Riga, a major event for the industrial design sector. The event was organised by EUIPO in cooperation with the Patent Office and brought together more than 300 representatives of the intellectual property and industrial design sectors, including foreign guests, in Riga, thus raising the international profile of Riga and Latvia.

The Director of the Patent Office participated in the jury. The Executive Director of the EUIPO, João Negrao, was also in Riga. During his visit, J. Negrao met with the management and experts of the Patent Office, Minister of Justice Inese Lībiņa-Egnere, gave a lecture to students of the Latvian Academy of Culture and visited the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design.



Figure 20

The Patent Office has joined the EUIPO initiative on strengthening cooperation between the Intellectual Property and Innovation Office of Ukraine and EU Member States – Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Poland. The initiative aims to support the efforts of Ukraine to become a member of the EUIPN. The Patent Office also continues to participate in the EUIPO Convergence Programme, which aims to achieve common positions in areas where intellectual property authorities have different practices.

In 2024, the Patent Office continued to actively participate in Observatory initiatives by participating in working group meetings, providing data on Latvian research, and informing the public about research published by the Observatory and the data it collects, with several of the activities undertaken by the Patent Office having evolved from Observatory initiatives. The most recent publications are available on the website of the Patent Office.

2.5.5 European Commission

In cooperation with MJ, the Patent Department represented Latvia and provided opinions at the EC Working Groups on Intellectual Property in the field of patents, where work on the proposal of several European Parliament and Council Regulations is underway: on the unitary PAS for medicinal products and the unitary PAS for plant protection products, recast versions of Regulations No. 469/2009 and No. 1610/96, as well as the Regulation on compulsory licensing for crisis management.

The Trademarks and Industrial Designs Department of the Patent Office represented Latvia in the EC Committee on GIs for Handicraft and Industrial Products and in the Working Group of Intellectual Property Experts on GIs. During the working group and committee work, the Patent Office experts commented on the development of the delegating and implementing acts of Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as well as provided views on the public awareness campaign organised by the EC on the GI registration system for craft and industrial products.

In 2024, active work was carried out together with OECD representatives to continue the implementation of the Technical Assistance Instrument project “Building a more effective and efficient market surveillance and intellectual property system for Latvia” funded by the EC Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM). In 2024, two OECD visits took place, during which meetings were held with universities and technology transfer centres, the ME, the MC, the LIAA, SME representatives, patent attorneys, representatives of the State Police and the SRS National Customs Board, among other stakeholders. After these visits, OECD experts continued developing the report and recommendations aimed at strengthening intellectual property system in Latvia.



21.attēls

2.4 QUALITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Since 2018, the QMS of the Patent Office has been certified as compliant with the requirements of the international standard ISO 9001:2015.

In autumn 2024, the audit company DNV Latvia SIA conducted a recertification audit of the management system, during which no non-conformities were identified. During the audit, the customer orientation of the institution was selected as a key area. In the field of customer service, the Patent Office received the highest rating, reflecting a strong level of internal control. The audit praised the implementation of the Customer Service Manual, which contains complete information for communicating with customers, and the Customer Service Guidelines. The customer consultation record table, which is supplemented by a customer evaluation of the quality of the consultation, as well as the possibility to electronically book a consultation with the experts of the Patent Office on the website of the Patent Office were also positively assessed.

The certificate of compliance with ISO 9001:2015 was renewed for a further three-year period for the certification of the QMS of the Patent Office:

- Provision of registration and post-registration procedures for industrial property objects and maintenance of the relevant registers;
- Information provision on and awareness-raising of intellectual property rights issues;
- Organisation of the qualifying examination for professional patent attorneys and maintenance of the register.

In addition to the QMS, the Patent Office also implemented risk management, which focuses on identifying and reducing risks to an acceptable level, exploiting potential opportunities and promoting good governance principles to ensure that the objectives of the Patent Office are achieved. Risk management is essential as it helps not only to identify and mitigate potential threats, but also to seize opportunities that can contribute to the growth and development of the institution. Effective risk management ensures stability, reliability and sustainability, which is the basis for successful and accountable governance.

During the reporting year, the Risk Management Manual of the Patent Office was updated to clarify the procedures for the identification, analysis and assessment of corruption, fraud and conflict of interest risks, as well as the identification of positions exposed to corruption risks.

In 2024, the Patent Office had 64 positions. On 31 December 2024, the actual number of employees of the Office was 59. During the year, seven employees terminated their employment with the Office and four new employees joined. Employee turnover was 12%.

**Breakdown of employees by gender
2022–2024 (end of year)**

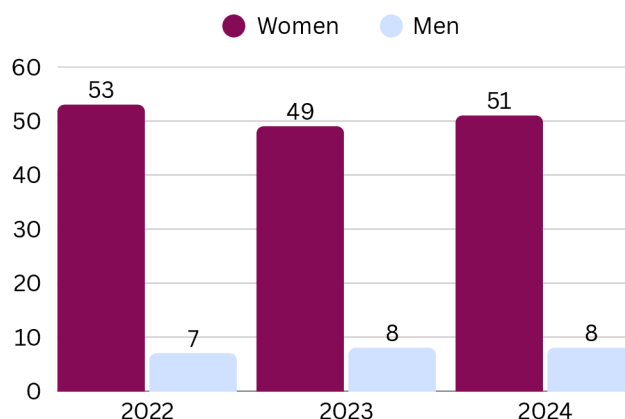


Figure 22

In 2024, 86% of all employees at the Patent Office were female and 14% were male. The average age of the employees – 46.5 years. In the reporting year, 10% of all employees were aged 20–29, 28% were aged 30–39, 10% were aged 40–49, 22% were aged 50–59, 25% were aged 60–69, and the smallest share of employees – 5% – was aged over 70.

**Breakdown of employees by age group
2022–2024 (end of year)**

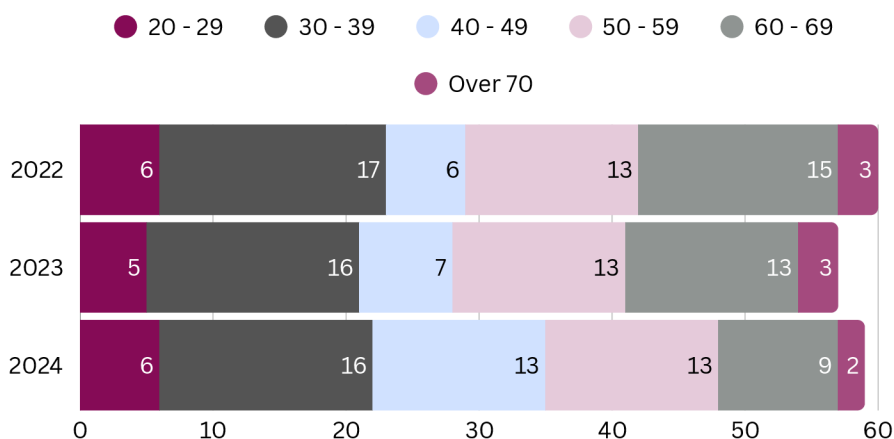


Figure 23

The Patent Office is operated by a well-educated, professional and competent workforce – 54 or 92% of the employees have a higher education degree, 36 have a master's degree and three have a doctor's degree.

Education of employees

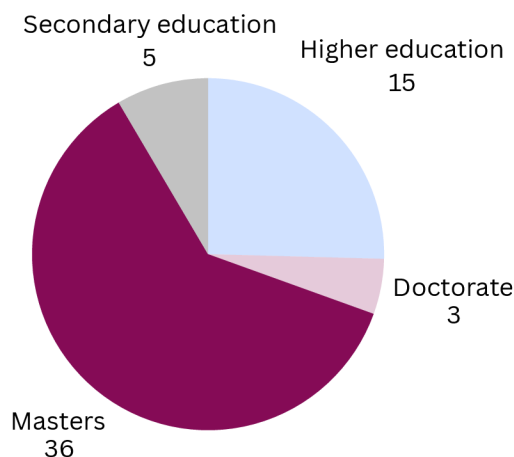


Figure 24

In 2024, the MJ awarded the II degree Certificate of Recognition and the “silver” feather for significant contribution to the development of the MJ, the justice system and the Latvian legal system and for promoting international cooperation in the field of justice to:

- Director of the Development and International Cooperation Department I. Grava;
- Deputy Director of the Development and International Cooperation Department T. Vētra.

MJ Honorary Diploma for Honest Work, Exemplary and Selfless Performance of Duties was awarded to:

- L. Daugavvanaga, Director of the Trademarks and Industrial Designs Department;
- E. Gaile, Senior Officer of the Development and International Cooperation Department;
- M. Vilciņa, Project Manager of the Development and International Cooperation Department;
- M. Sileniece, Financier of the Finance and Accounting Division, Administrative and Finance Department.

A. Batalauskis, Director of the Patent Office, received a Certificate of Recognition of the Cabinet of Ministers for his contribution to the development of the industrial property system and promotion of the international image of Latvia.

I. Gruntiņa, Senior Officer of the Development and International Cooperation Department, received an Honorary Certificate from the World Customs Organisation for her contribution to cooperation with the SRS National Customs Board.



Figure 25

A survey was sent to the employees of the Patent Office to gather their views on the implemented changes in the office, working conditions, communication and cooperation in 2024. 38 employees participated in the survey, and the majority gave a positive assessment of working at the Patent Office, as well as most would recommend it as a good place to work.

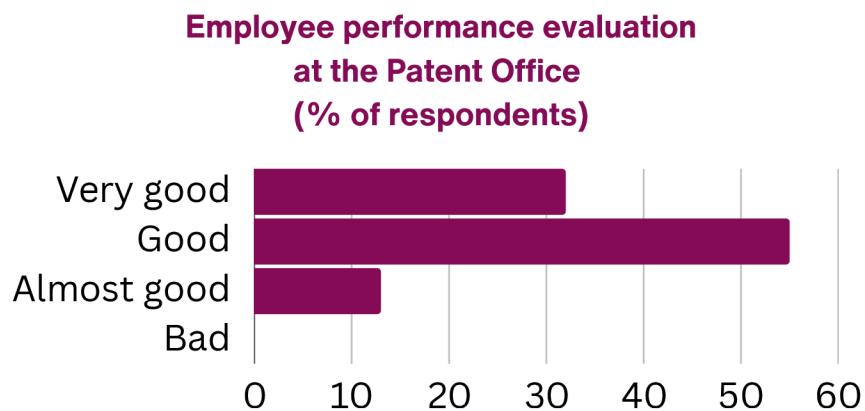


Figure 26



COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The task of the Patent Office is to inform the public on issues related to the protection of intellectual property rights (it organises conferences, seminars, trainings, participates in exhibitions and other activities, participates in the preparation of information materials). To ensure that communication with the defined target audiences and the public as a whole is targeted, coordinated and measurable, the Patent Office Communication Strategy 2024–2026 was approved in 2024, as was the External Communication Plan 2024.

One of the external communication tasks of the Patent Office is to educate and raise public awareness of the importance of registering industrial property rights, the negative consequences of copyright infringement, and the consequences of the sale and supply of counterfeit goods. The Development and International Cooperation Department is involved in this task, and it also involves specialists from other departments of the Patent Office in its activities. Activities included an anti-counterfeiting campaign, competitions for school and university students, lectures and seminars, and participation in events organised by partners. Please also see 2.2.4. Promoting awareness of industrial property protection.

4.1 COMMUNICATION IN THE MEDIA

Regarding the latest developments in the protection of industrial property rights in 2024, the website of the Patent Office published 131 news items in Latvian and 57 news items in English, while the events section featured information on 77 events. The number of unique visits to the website of the Patent Office in the reporting year was 583 527, which is a significant increase (49.2%) compared to 2023, when the number of unique visits was 391 030. To inform the media about the news of the Patent Office, 30 press releases were sent out in 2024.

Social media allows you to effectively share information and news with a large number of people at the same time, as well as to communicate directly and quickly, and to provide feedback. Therefore, the Patent Office actively uses social media platforms to inform its followers about the activities and news of the Office in the field of intellectual property, as well as to educate people about this field.

To communicate with the public, the Patent Office maintains and regularly updates six social media accounts – X, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram and Threads. These accounts regularly publish information on the latest research, events and other news related to the protection of intellectual property, in particular industrial property rights, in Latvia and worldwide, including reactions to various current events related to the protection of intellectual property. According to the data for 2024, the Patent Office account on platform X had 1739 followers (1763 in 2023),

Facebook – 1966 (1431 in 2023) followers, Youtube – 182 (151 in 2023), LinkedIn – 750 (367 in 2023) followers, Instagram – 496 followers (289 in 2023) and Threads – 94 followers. The presence of the Patent Office on social networks has increased significantly. All platforms have seen an increase in the number of followers, which is a sign of growing public interest and engagement. One of the most significant growths was seen on LinkedIn, where the number of followers nearly doubled, rising from 367 to 750. The number of followers on Facebook has also grown rapidly, reaching almost 2000 active followers by the beginning of 2025. Similarly, other platforms – YouTube and Instagram – are also showing steady growth of followers.

These indicators demonstrate a targeted effort to improve visibility and communication in the digital environment. The only platform showing a decline in followers is X, which can be explained by the overall relevance of the platform in public opinion, having lost a large number of active users in recent years. We can also highlight the Threads platform, where the number of followers grew to 94 in less than half a year, as the audience also actively participates in the discussions organised by the Patent Office and engages in answering various topical questions.

In addition to social media, traditional media continues to play an important role in informing the public and the Patent Office continues to use this opportunity every year to reach as wide and diverse an audience as possible, both to inform about its activities and to educate about protection of intellectual property. Given the responsiveness and accessibility of online media, the highest number of news items was also covered in 2024, with a total of 147 publications mentioning the Office (139 in 2023). In radio and television broadcasts, the Patent Office was mentioned in 17 and four stories respectively. Publicity in regional media also increased, with 15 publications (12 in 2023), while publications in national newspapers remained at the 2023 level – four.



Media coverage of Patent Office's news

Table 3

Type of media	2023 (publications or features)	2024 (publications or features)	Topics of interest to the media
Online media	139	147	Research/survey results, counterfeiting trends, statistics, student competitions
Radio	14	17	
TV	13	9	
Regional press	12	15	
National newspapers	4	4	
Magazines	10	8	

The External Communication Plan 2024 was executed, achieving the planned targets. The volume of public relations activities in specific periods for each activity is not precisely predictable, given that it is also influenced by other developments.



Figure 27

EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2025

The Patent Office will continue its work in accordance with the functions and tasks set out in the Regulations, implementing them within the planned funding, and in accordance with the approved operational strategy for 2022–2026, the work plans of MJ and the Patent Office.

In 2025, the work plan of the MJ includes the following priority task for the Patent Office:

- -Prepare an assessment of the intellectual property protection and management system – submit a report to the Secretary of State on the results of the EC Structural Reform Support DG Technical Support Instrument project No. 23LV12.

Priority activities for the Patent Office Work Plan 2025

Planned changes to regulatory documents:

- Prepare amendments to the Law on Industrial Property Institutions and Procedures;
- Prepare amendments to the Trademark Law;
- Prepare draft regulation “Regulations Regarding the List of Professional Patent Attorneys, Procedures for the Maintenance thereof, and Procedures for the Qualification Examination of Professional Patent Attorneys”;
- Prepare draft regulation “Price List of Fee-Based Services of the Patent Office”;
- Prepare amendments to the Cabinet Regulation No. 720 of 15 December 2015 “By-laws of the Patent Office”;
- Prepare amendments to the Cabinet Regulation No. 266 of 27 April 2021 “Regulations Regarding Trademark Applications, Transfer of Rights and Licensing”.

Planned changes to the Internal Rules of the Patent Office:

- Prepare the Statutes of the Library;
- Approve the organising procedure for events;
- Prepare rules for the Organisation of the Qualification Examination for Professional Patent Attorneys and for the Maintenance of the List of Professional Patent Attorneys;
- Prepare rules for the Quality Assurance and Control of Experts’ Work;
- Update the rules for the organisation of Official Travels;
- Update the Rules of Procedure, the Rules for the Circulation of Electronically Signed Documents and the Procedure for Responding to an Electronic Submission not Signed with an e-Signature;
- Update the Inventory Rules;
- Update the Property Management Rules.

Improvements to the Information and Communication Technology systems and e-services of the Patent Office:

- Complete the migration of information systems to the infrastructure of the SJSC Latvia State Radio and Television Centre within the framework of the single service centre;
- Implement the system development plan of the Patent Office for the maintenance and development of information systems;
- Implement the services provided by the Single Service Centre for State Administration at the Patent Office;
- Update the wording of the TMclass database of goods and services in Latvian;
- Launch the activities of the Service Environment Improvement Plan 2024-2027;
- Implement functional improvements to the public database to facilitate the retrieval of information;
- Launch the EUIPO ECP 2: Front Office 3.0 upgrade project by improving the external interface of the trademark and industrial design information systems (Front Office);
- Complete the implementation of the *EUIPO ECP 3: Emerging Technologies – Tier 2 Blockchain* project;
- Complete the configuration of the ECP 2: Back Office – Release 4 Reporting and Statistics Module to fully use the tool in daily work;
- Fully implement the EPO Data Quality project and join the Federal Register.

Quality management:

- -Maintain and improve the QMS in accordance with ISO 9001:2015.

Public education and awareness-raising on the protection of intellectual property rights:

- Organise an international conference dedicated to the 105th anniversary of the Patent Office and the Intellectual Property Awards Ceremony;
- Provide training for intellectual property professionals;
- Organise the Visionary and Trademark of the Year 2024 committees;
- Organise and implement the annual anti-counterfeiting campaign;
- Organise a competition for students from general, vocational and special education institutions;
- Participate in awareness-raising activities on intellectual property protection organised by cooperation organisations and institutions.

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