

# ANNUAL REPORT



of the  
Visegrad Patent Institute

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Visegrad Patent Institute  
2024

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## DEAR READER,

Welcome to the 2024 Annual Report of the Visegrad Patent Institute.

The year 2024 was a very successful one for the Visegrad Patent Institute. Our continuous efforts to increase the number of incoming international applications under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and to launch services on a commercial basis began to bear spectacular results in 2024.

The number of international applications under the PCT increased significantly in 2024, reaching the third highest figure in the history of the Visegrad Patent Institute.

The Visegrad Patent Institute expanded its portfolio of PCT-regulated procedures with the introduction of the international-type search as of 1 January 2024. International-type searches can be requested in national proceedings in three of the four Contracting States of the Visegrad Patent Institute. In the case of the Polish and Slovak national procedure, this means either a patent application or a utility model application. In the case of the Hungarian national procedure, the international-type search is only

available during the national patent procedure.

2024 was the first full year of commercial search services, the Global Patent Search Services, launched in 2023. The Novelty Search and Novelty Search with Preliminary Patentability Report services were offered to all innovative actors worldwide, regardless of their nationality. Based on the experience gained and the feedback received from users during the first year of operation, the Visegrad Patent Institute will continue to fine-tune its commercial service portfolio in the coming years.

2024 was also a successful year in terms of raising awareness of the international patent system established by the PCT. To this end, in 2024 the Visegrad Patent Institute intensified its cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), by supporting WIPO in the seminar series "PCT for V4" organised in the V4 countries. The Director of the Visegrad Patent Institute participated as a speaker in the events held in Prague in the Czech Republic, in Bratislava and Banská Bystrica in Slovakia and in Rzeszów in Poland in 2024.

Relations with WIPO were also strengthened by the visit of Mr Daren Tang, Director General of WIPO, to Budapest on the occasion of the Hungarian EU Presidency Conference in October 2024. This occasion provided an opportunity for personal talks between the Director General and the Director of the Visegrad Patent Institute. The successful visit of Mr Daren Tang gives hope for future joint initiatives to increase support and awareness of IP, and in particular the PCT system, in the V4 region.

In the context of increasing patent awareness and improving the Visegrad Patent Institute's user-friendly operation, a two-year project supported by the Hungarian government through the National Research, Development and Innovation Office was successfully completed by the end of 2024. The project included a user-friendly update of the Visegrad Patent Institute's website, enabling applicants to file international search fee refund requests online without unnecessary administrative burden and paperwork. The Knowledge Hub page of the Visegrad Patent Institute website was updated with new case studies, focusing on the start-up community by sharing case studies of successful start-up companies, and a

short and concise guide to the PCT route was also published here. A new edition of the general brochure on the Visegrad Patent Institute was also produced to inform our potential users, as well as two additional brochures on the new services: international-type search and Global Patent Search Services. All new materials were made available for download from the Visegrad Patent Institute's website on the Knowledge Hub page.

All these achievements would not have been possible without the effective and smooth cooperation with the National IP Offices of the Contracting States, which also act as Branch Offices of the Visegrad Patent Institute.

I would like to express my gratitude to the management and all colleagues of the Industrial Property Office of the Czech Republic, the Hungarian Intellectual Property Office, the Patent Office of the Republic of Poland and the Industrial Property Office of the Slovak Republic for their excellent work, commitment and continuous support, which makes the functioning of the Visegrad Patent Institute possible.

I am pleased to share with you on the following pages the most important information about this particularly successful year for the Visegrad Patent Institute.

I would like to wish you a pleasant reading.

**Johanna Stadler**  
Director of the VPI

## INTRODUCTION

In its capacity as an International Searching Authority (ISA) and International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the Visegrad Patent Institute (VPI) carries out international search and international preliminary examination in accordance with the PCT, its Regulations and Administrative Instructions, and the provisions of the agreement with the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO IB). The VPI may also carry out supplementary international search, but no such request arrived during the year. The provision of international-type search (ITS) under the PCT by the VPI was launched on 1 January 2024. The necessary changes to internal processes and the website were successfully implemented in due time. This present annual report contains the detailed PCT related statistics for 2024.

In line with the decision of the Administrative Board, the VPI extended its service portfolio in 2023 to include two new commercial patent search services. The Global Patent Search Services (GPSS) pilot project, launched on 1 October 2023, provides

reliable information on patentability of an invention to all innovative actors worldwide, regardless of nationality. The two services, the Novelty Search Service (NSS) and the Novelty Search with Preliminary Patentability Report (NSPPR), ran for the first full year in 2024. During this first phase, the Hungarian Intellectual Property Office provided for the preparation of GPSS reports. On the basis of the experience gained, the VPI is reviewing its services in order to better meet the needs of its potential clients.

Based on customer feedback, a new “Fees and Refunds” page with all information on fees and refunds in one place and an online search fee refund request form were launched on the VPI website on 1 February 2024. The online search fee refund request form is an additional electronic tool of filing the request, in addition to the existing options such as e-mail or the ePCT electronic system.

The number of patent examiners employed by the national IP Offices of the Contracting States was in total 163 persons in 2024 (Patent Office of the Republic of Poland (PPO) 71, Hungarian Intellectual Property Office (HIPO) 39, Industrial Property Office

of the Czech Republic (IPO CZ) 28, Industrial Property Office of the Slovak Republic (IPO SR) 25. This number represents a moderate increase of close to 4% compared to the 157 examiners in 2023. The VPI Secretariat continued to operate with 2 employees.

Filing trends in 2024 were characterised by a slight increasing trend in case of applications arriving from three of the Contracting States. In contrast, applications of Hungarian origin experienced a massive increase, which was due to the successful readjustment of the national support system for IP activity, especially in the case of universities and higher education institutions.



1. FACTS AND FIGURES IN RESPECT OF THE VPI’S PCT WORK

The VPI carries out substantive PCT work as ISA and IPEA for applicants from the V4 and some neighbouring countries with a Memorandum of Understanding between their national IP office and the VPI (Lithuania and Serbia).

The VPI’s substantive work is performed by the Branch Offices (BOs) of the Contracting States (IPO CZ, HIPO, PPO, IPO SR), under the coordination of the Secretariat managed by the Director of the VPI.

1.1. THE VPI IN THE SYSTEM OF EUROPEAN PCT AUTHORITIES

The VPI's Contracting States are all members of the European Patent Convention, so their applicants can choose between the European Patent Office (EPO) and the VPI.

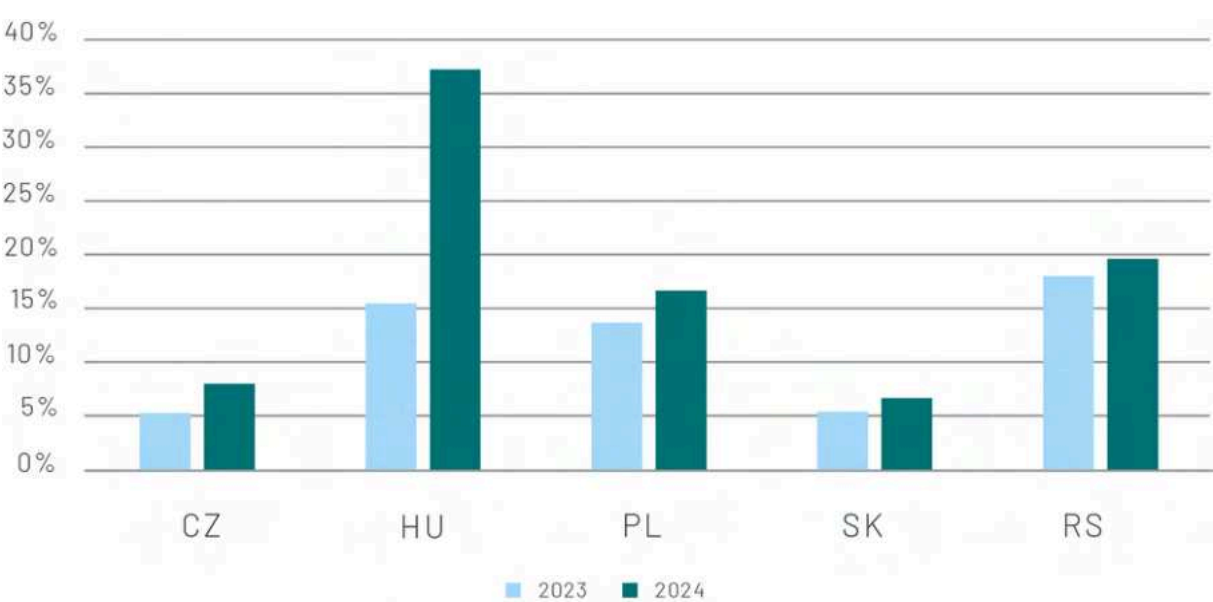
As in previous years, a much larger proportion of applicants from the V4 countries choose the EPO as their PCT authority. However, in 2024 there was a positive trend in the proportion of applicants choosing the VPI.

Country	Selected ISA 2023			Selected ISA 2024		
	EPO	VPI	VPI in %	EPO	VPI	VPI in %
CZ	166	9	5%	130	11	8%
HU	124	22	15%	106	61	37%
PL	318	49	13%	272	53	16%
SK	54	3	5%	43	3	7%
RS	28	6	18%	21	5	19%

Source: World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO) IP Statistics Data Centre

From 2021 to 2022, a trend of applicants moving towards the VPI was observed, and this positive trend returned in 2024 for all applicants, but it was really significant in the result achieved by Hungarian applicants. The VPI received 37% of all Hungarian PCT applications in 2024, which is an all-time record in the Institute's history.

Ratio of total number of applications choosing the VPI 2023-2024



Source: Based on the data of WIPO IP Statistics Data Centre.

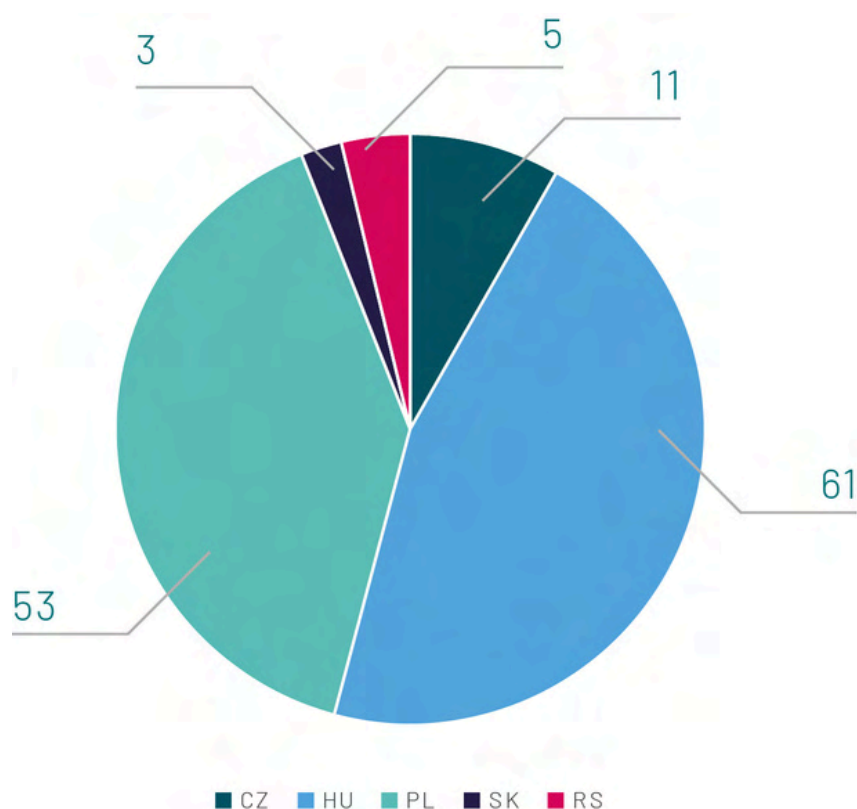
## 1.2. STATISTICS OF THE VPI'S ISA WORK

### 1.2.1. INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS (IAS) RECEIVED BY THE VPI

In 2024, the number of international applications increased significantly compared to 2023. The total number of IAs received by the VPI in 2024 was 133, which is a considerable increase compared to the 89 applications received in 2023.

IAs originated from the following countries:

*Number of international applications by country of origin 2024*

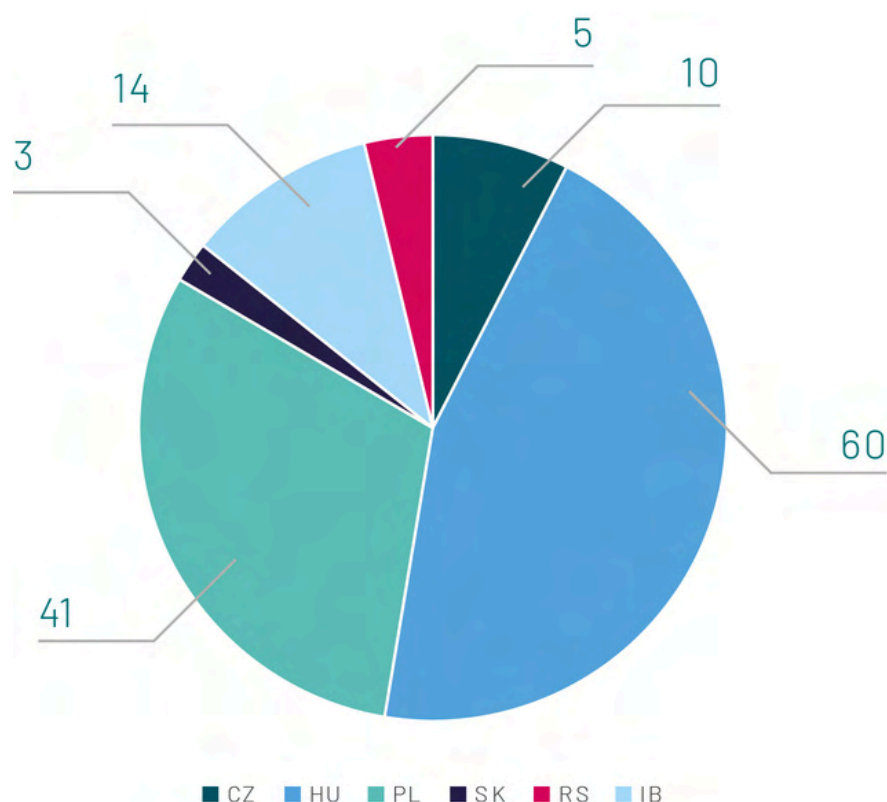


Source: VPI statistics

The year 2024 was characterised by a substantial increase of Hungarian applications. The increase in Hungarian applications was so strong that the number of Polish applications was overtaken by the Hungarian figures. This is an unprecedented development, as Polish applications had accounted for the bulk of the incoming workload of the VPI in each previous year.

IAs were received by the following Receiving Offices (ROs):

*Number of international applications by RO in 2024*

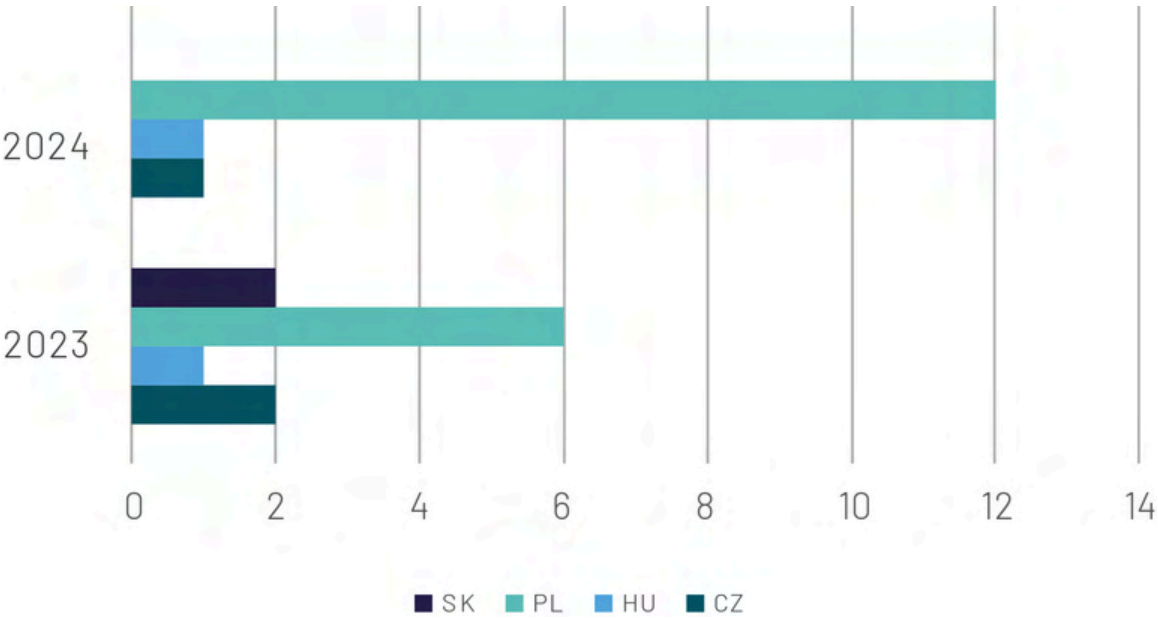


Source: VPI statistics

The trend among VPI applicants to file with national offices as ROs was even more pronounced in 2024. All national offices, with the exception of the Polish RO, were able to strengthen their position as ROs in 2024.

1.2.2. NUMBER OF IAS FILED DIRECTLY AT WIPO IB AS RO

Number of IAs filed at the WIPO IB as RO by country of origin 2023-2024



Source: VPI statistics

Filing through the WIPO IB is not typical for the applicants of the VPI. The ratio of applications filed at the WIPO IB somewhat decreased, and represented around 10% of the total number of applications received by the VPI in 2024.

The option to file at the WIPO IB was, similarly to previous years, most popular among Polish applicants. WIPO IB received more filings from Poland, and a higher proportion of Polish applicants chose WIPO IB as RO in 2024 than in the previous year.

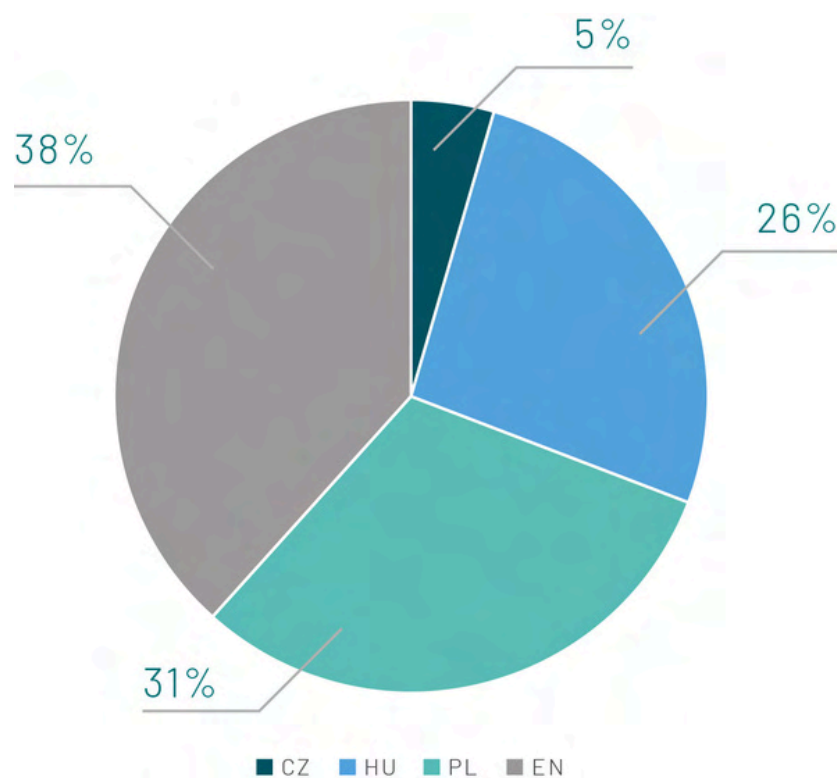
Slovak and Serbian applicants only used their national office as RO and Hungarian applicants also used their national office as RO more often in 2024.

1.2.3. LANGUAGES

An important advantage of the VPI as compared to the EPO is the possibility of a wider use of the national languages of the V4 countries.

The following languages were used when filing IAs in 2024:

Breakdown of IAs by languages in 2024



Source: VPI statistics

Percentage of English language IAs in relation to the total number of the IAs arriving from the respective countries was the following in 2024:

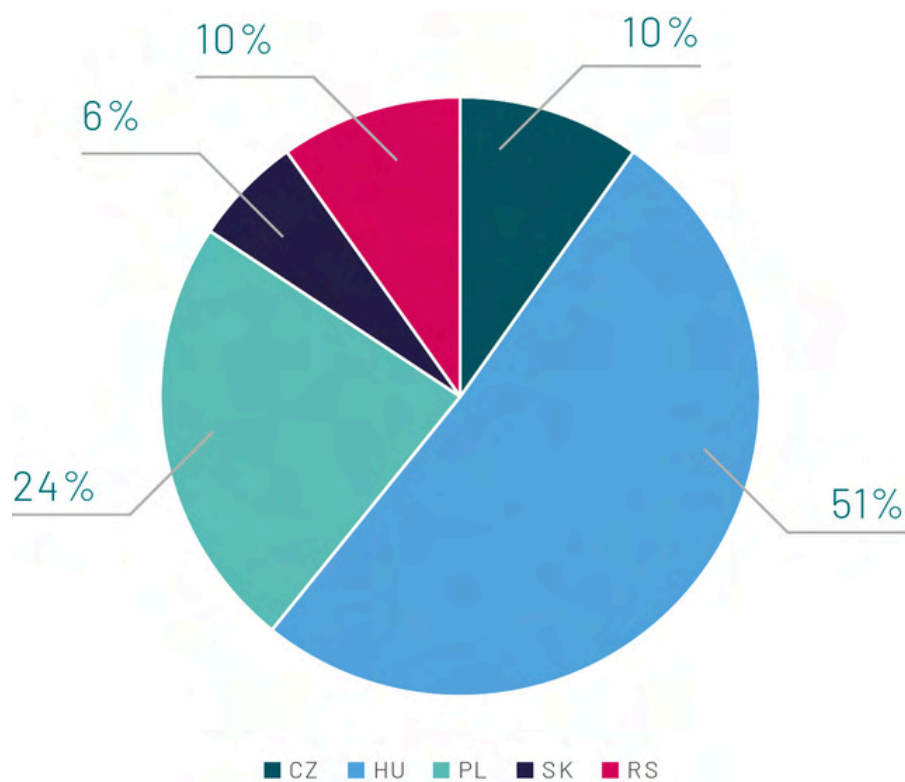
Country of origin	Ratio
CZ	45 %
HU	43 %
PL	23 %
SK	100 %
RS	100 %

Source: VPI statistics

Similar to last year, all IAs originating from Serbia arrived in English. All applications from Slovakia were also filed in English in 2024. Contrary to last year, Hungarian applicants showed a significant increase of using English. As in previous years, applicants from Poland took the most advantage of using their national language when filing IAs.

Looking closer at the total number of the English language applications, countries of origin are represented in the following chart:

Percentage of English language applications by country of origin in 2024



Source: VPI statistics

There was a trend for Hungarian applicants to use English to a greater extent each year than Polish applicants. As the number of applications of Hungarian origin increased significantly in 2024 and Hungarian applications accounted for the majority of applications received by the VPI in 2024, the proportion of English among the languages used also increased significantly.

#### 1.2.4. NATURE OF APPLICANTS

The composition of the nature of applicants remained proportionately roughly the same with some minor changes compared to last year. The ratio of companies went down to 46,1% from 52,8%, however, this represents over 23% more applications filed by companies in actual numbers than last year.

The ratio of applications filed by universities and higher education institutions grew by 23% (5,6% in 2023 and 6,9% in 2024), however, the actual number of applications quadrupled from 5 to 21 applications, which is a significant change. However, this change is only due to the high number of incoming applications from Hungary as 20 out of the 21 applications filed by universities or higher education institutes were filed by Hungarian applicants.

The ratio of research institutes did not change significantly in percentage, although the number of applications doubled.

The ratio of individual inventors remained also roughly the same, however, the actual number of individual inventors grew by about 40% as compared to last year.

#### *Nature of Applicants by Country of Origin*

2024							
Type of applicant	CZ	HU	PL	SK	RS	Total	%
Company	8	18	29	1	2	58	46.1%
Individual inventor	3	15	15	2	2	37	37.4%
University and higher education	0	20	1	0	0	21	6.9%
Research institute	0	8	8	0	1	17	9.6%
Total	11	61	53	3	5	133	100%

Source: VPI statistics



1.2.5. INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORTS

The main task of the BOs of the VPI is to issue international search reports. Last year’s data were as follows.

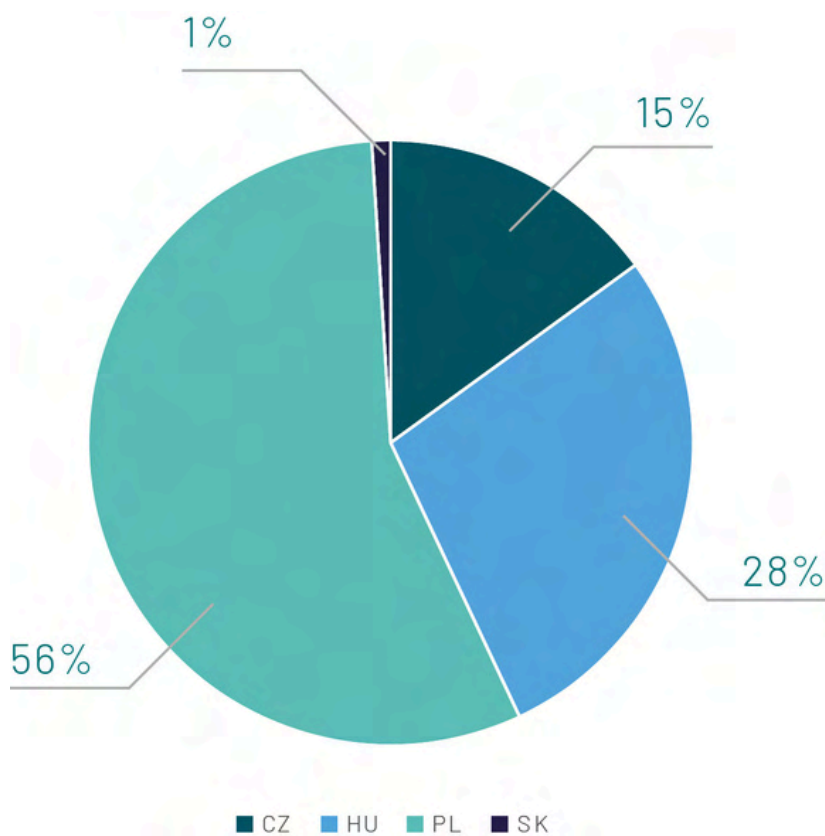
The higher number of international applications was also reflected in the higher number of ISRs completed. The number of ISRs grew at all BOs, except for the SK BO in 2024.

Number of international search reports (ISRs) issued by BOs

Banch Office	Number of ISRs in 2023	Number of ISRs in 2024
CZ	13	15
HU	17	28
PL	40	56
SK	4	1
Total	74	100

Source: VPI statistics

Breakdown of International Search Reports by Branch Offices in 2024



Source: VPI statistics

The share of ISRs prepared by both PL BO and HU BO increased slightly. However, PL BO's work still represented the highest proportion of all ISRs prepared in 2024. CZ BO's share decreased slightly; SK BO's share decreased significantly, but given the small numbers this decrease is not significant in terms of numbers.

#### *1.2.6. REFUND FOR APPLICANTS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH FEE*

Based on the use of earlier search results, the BOs issued PCT/ISA/213 forms allowing 40% refund of search fees in 83 cases out of the 100 ISRs prepared during the year. This represents 83% of ISRs, a significant increase from the 71% of the previous year.

The number of international search fee refunds paid by the VPI was 66 for international applications completed either during the year or in the previous 5 years.

The new rule of a time limit of 6 months to apply for the refund of the international search fee after the issue of the ISR was introduced from 1 January 2022. In order to be fully applicant friendly, the Secretariat issues a reminder on form PCT/ISA/224 two months before this

deadline, inviting the applicant to request the refund. In 2024, 5 such reminders were issued for applications filed in 2023 but finalised in 2024, and a further 10 for applications filed in 2024.

This ratio shows a further improvement in the more informed behaviour of applicants with regards to the refund of international search fee.

#### *1.2.7. STATISTICS OF SUPPLEMENTARY INTERNATIONAL SEARCHES*

No requests for supplementary international searches were received during the year.

#### *1.2.8. STATISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL-TYPE SEARCHES*

No requests for international-type search arrived in the year under review.

### 1.3. STATISTICS OF THE VPI'S IPEA WORK

#### 1.3.1 NUMBER OF DEMANDS FOR INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

The VPI received 4 demands for International Preliminary Examination in 2024. Although this figure is better than in 2023, the number of demands remains low.

#### 1.3.2 NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORTS (IPERS) COMPLETED BY BOS

The total number of IPERs completed in 2024 was 3. The PL BO completed 1 IPER, and the HU BO completed 2 IPERs.

### 1.4. TIMELINESS

#### 1.4.1. TIMELINESS IN TRANSMITTING INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORTS (ISRS)

The VPI has voluntarily introduced a shortened lead time for applications for which the priority date is to be taken into account when calculating the time limit for preparing the ISR. The internal time limit for completion of searches for such international applications has been reduced from 9 months set by the PCT to 8 months.

Where the time limit for issuing the ISR is to be calculated from the date of receipt of the search copy by the ISA, the VPI has voluntarily decided to issue the ISR one week earlier than the three months set by the PCT.

In 2024, VPI patent examiners continued to meet the deadlines set by the PCT, although the increased workload was reflected in the speed with which search reports were issued.

The proportion of search reports issued 4 weeks before the PCT deadline declined from 46% to 38% as compared to the previous year, and there was one search report issued after the deadline in 2024. However, 98% of ISRs were still issued at least one week before the PCT deadline, meaning that all but two reports were completed within the voluntary shortened lead time.

## ISA Timeliness in transmitting Search Reports

2024					
Weeks before / after due date	Q1 / 2024	Q2 / 2024	Q3 / 2024	Q4 / 2024	%
> 4 weeks	8	10	7	14	38%
3 weeks	3	3	2	4	12%
2 weeks	6	10	7	16	39%
1 week	0	2	2	4	8%
0 week	0	1	0	0	1%
+1 week [late]	0	0	0	0	0%
+2 weeks [late]	0	0	0	0	0%
+3 weeks [late]	0	0	1	0	1%
> +4 weeks [late]	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	17	26	19	38	100%

Source: WIPO ePCT

#### *1.4.2. TIMELINESS IN TRANSMITTING INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORTS (IPERS)*

In the year under review, all three international preliminary examination reports were completed before the PCT deadline.

## **2. OPERATION OF THE VPI**

### **2.1. USER-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES**

#### *2.1.1. HANDLING OF THE REQUESTS FOR INTERNATIONAL SEARCH FEE REFUND*

As detailed in point 1.2.6 above, and similarly to the previous years, the Secretariat continued its practice of issuing reminders on PCT/ISA/224 form two months before the deadline, inviting the applicant to request the refund of international search fee, in order to be fully applicant friendly. In 2024, 15 such reminders were issued; 5 for applications filed in 2023 but completed in 2024, and a further 10 for applications filed and completed in 2024.

#### *2.1.2. UPDATE OF THE VPI CUSTOMER SURVEY SYSTEM*

Listening to its users is very important to VPI, and this is built into all aspects

of its operations. To elicit user feedback, a user survey is sent out upon the completion of the international search in each case. However, the response rate has always been below the expectations. In order to improve client activity, the VPI Customer Survey System was redesigned in 2024.

To rationalise the work in respect of handling the survey, and to bring it closer to our users to increase the response rate, the VPI moved the survey to Google platform. The new survey is a short, one-minute, to-the-point type of questionnaire with a branded look that projects consistent image of the VPI. The management and tasks related to the survey were entirely taken over by the Secretariat of the VPI.

This user-friendly reform has already brought some results, but further efforts may be necessary to motivate users for more active feedback.

### **2.2. COMMUNICATION, MARKETING AND AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES**

The marketing and awareness raising activities of the VPI were conducted in line with the 2024 Marketing Plan that built on the VPI tools and channels

created during the previous years. The VPI has reached relevant target groups of researchers, patent attorneys, technology transfer professionals and other experts working in R&D related fields on Linked-in and Google through advertising.

A patent awareness project supported by the Hungarian Government, via the National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH) made it possible to carry out promotional and marketing activities, such as extensive promotion campaign on Linked-in and Google during the year for both the VPI and its services as well as the graphic work of the VPI Annual Report for 2023. The project was successfully concluded by 31 December 2024.

### 2.2.1 COMMUNICATION CHANNELS OF THE VPI

#### LINKED-IN

The Linked-in page remained the primary communication channel for the VPI when reaching the professional community in 2024 as well.

The Secretariat made a continuous effort throughout the year to build the network around the VPI on Linked-in. During 2024, the follower base of the

company page of the VPI grew significantly by 60%.

Several advertising campaigns took place in 2024 promoting the new services of the VPI (international-type search and GPSS), the outstanding lead time of the VPI,<sup>1</sup> the new case studies and other important developments during the year.

#### WEBSITE

The VPI website continued to function as the communication tool of the Institute along Linked-in. The website was updated on an ongoing basis with relevant news and also gained several new content items such as new case studies, brochures and guides. The new content can be accessed on the Knowledge hub page in all five languages.

In 2024, the VPI website also gained new user-friendly content and functions. A new page “Fees and refunds” was launched where all information about the VPI fees and refunds is available at one spot. Furthermore, the Fees and refunds page gained a new online search fee refund form.

The traffic to the website increased significantly both due to the new

1 - The VPI ranked 1st in timeliness in transmitting international search reports in 2023

content and to advertising campaigns that promoted the new services of the VPI. With that, the VPI website got an immense boost in its visibility and is being discovered and used by a growing professional community.

The content of the VPI website was updated and is being managed on an ongoing basis by the Secretariat.

### *BOS' COMMUNICATION CHANNELS*

In addition to its own channels, the VPI relies on the communication network of the BOs. With their help, information about the VPI regularly reached the target audience via the BOs Linked-in pages as well.

#### *2.2.2. PUBLICATIONS OF THE VPI*

##### *ANNUAL REPORT*

The VPI continued the tradition and issued its Annual Report for 2023 in 2024 complete with statistical information for the previous 5 years as well.

As in the previous years, the 2023 Annual Reports was also made available in a downloadable format on the Knowledge hub page of the VPI website. A limited number of copies were printed with the help of the HIPO.

New case studies were made available on the Knowledge hub page of the VPI website in 2024.

### *CASE STUDIES*

With the help of an external partner, the Polish Innovation Hub Foundation, two case studies were prepared on the experiences of Polish start-ups related to challenges of the PCT application process.

The third study, a short and concise guide about the PCT route, was written based on the presentation of Mr Zsolt Szentpéteri, delivered at the VPI on-line TTO conference in 2021.

The case studies were promoted in a Linked-in campaign with the aim to raise awareness about the PCT and the VPI.

### *BROCHURE AND LEAFLETS*

The general brochure on the VPI was outdated as for content and as for branding. Therefore, an update of the brochure took place with new wording and design.

Furthermore, two other leaflets were developed to promote the new services of the VPI, the international-type search and

the GPSS commercial search services.

All new collaterals are available for download from the VPI website on the Knowledge Hub page.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.3. QUALITY

After a successful internal audit in April, the external audit of the VPI's Quality Management System was successfully completed with SGS Hungária Kft. in July 2024.

The internal and external audit included the international-type search and the two GPSS services (NS and NSPPR) as well.

The audits did not detect any nonconformities.

SGS's Auditor renewed the certification and extended it to the new services of the VPI.

### 2.4. INTERNAL MEETINGS OF THE VPI

The Administrative Board (AB), the main governing and norm-setting body of the VPI held two in-person meetings in 2024. The 20th meeting was held in Munich on 26 June, while the 21st meeting was held in Munich on 9 December. The Presidency of the

AB was held by the Czech Republic and the meetings were chaired by Mr Josef Kratochvíl, President of the IPO CZ.

The Working Groups (WG) of the VPI held two on-line meetings. The 24th IT/Quality Management and 20th Technical Experts' joint WG meeting was hosted by PPO on 6 June 2024. The 25th IT/Quality Management and 21st Technical Experts' joint WG meeting was hosted by IPO CZ on 22 November 2024.

## 3. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE VPI

### 3.1. THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION (WIPO)

WIPO, as the administrator of the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the centre of international cooperation in the field of intellectual property, is one of the most important partner organisations of the VPI.

Cooperation with WIPO was intensified during the year. The VPI actively participated in the Rowing Seminar aimed at promoting the PCT system in the V4 countries.

The Director of the VPI met Mr Daren Tang, Director General of WIPO, in Budapest in October on the

2 - [Link to knowledge hub page \(https://vpi.int/en/09-knowledge-hub/\)](https://vpi.int/en/09-knowledge-hub/)



sidelines of the IP Conference held on the occasion of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Since the COVID pandemics, WIPO offers the possibility of remote participation in all meetings for reasons of efficiency and cost-effectiveness, and the Director of the VPI participates in these meetings remotely.

### 3.2. THE EUROPEAN PATENT ORGANISATION

The VPI actively took part in the Harmonisation Files project (HF project) conducted with the leadership of the EPO in 2024.

2024 was the first year in the HF project, where the new selection criteria for the files transmitted to the participating European PCT Authorities have been applied. In 2024, batches of selected files were not defined based on the IPC classes (technical fields) any more, but based on agreed topics. The topics for the 2024 HF project were the following: simulation and modelling, neutral network and training, conciseness/non-unity in mechanics. The VPI worked on 26 files received from the EPO.

Similar to the previous years, the VPI actively took part in the 22nd Permanent Committee on Harmonisation of Search Activities (PCHSA) meeting in October.

According to the decision of the Administrative Council (AC) of the EPO, the VPI has observer status in the AC meetings. The Director participated in all AC meetings online in 2024.

### 3.3. INTERNATIONAL VISEGRAD FUND

The cooperation between the two institutions of the Visegrad Countries, the International Visegrad Fund (IVF) and the VPI is based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2022.

The Director of the VPI met the new Executive Director, Ms Linda Kapustova Helbichova, and Deputy Executive Director, Ms Maja Wawrzyk of the IVF in Budapest in September.

### 3.4. BILATERAL RELATIONS

The Director of the VPI has strengthened the external bilateral relations of the VPI via personal meetings in 2024.

In June, the Director of the VPI met Director General Mr Marian Octavian Șerbănescu and Legal Director Mr Cătălin Nițu of the State Patent and Trademark Office of the Republic of Romania on the occasion of the Romanian delegation's visit to Budapest.

Also in June, the Director of the VPI conducted official talks with the President of Austrian Patent Office, Mr Stefan Harasek and his delegation on the occasion of the Austrian delegation's visit to Budapest.

Furthermore, the Director of the VPI conducted bilateral talks with the Director of the Intellectual Property Office of Serbia, Mr Vladimir Marić in Budapest, in October.

### 3.5. INTERNATIONAL EVENTS, CONFERENCES, MEETINGS

The Director actively participated in several events and conferences organised by the BOs or international partners in 2024:

- HIPO's Patent User Forum, in Budapest in February;
- HIPO's IP Day event, in Budapest in April;

- IPO CZ's International Conference "Protection of Intellectual Property in Europe", in Prague in September;
- PPO's International Conference on IP Strategy for SMEs in a Competitive Market, in Warsaw in September;
- HIPO's EU Presidency Conference "Intellectual Property in the Age of Artificial Intelligence" in Budapest in October;
- IP Crime conference, in Budapest in November;
- epi Conference on the Responsible Use of AI in Patent Granting Process and in the Work of Patent Attorney, in Budapest in November.

In cooperation with WIPO, PCT promotion events were organised in 2024 in the form of rowing seminars. The PCT for V4 events took place in the Czech Republic in June, in Slovakia in October and in Poland in November. The Director of the VPI introduced the VPI to the audiences in the form of informative presentations.

APPENDIX - FACTS AND FIGURES (2020-2024)

This appendix contains the statistical facts and figures of the operation of the Visegrad Patent Institute (VPI) for the past 5 years from 2020 to 2024. For further statistics, please refer to the VPI's earlier Annual Reports, which are available for download from the Knowledge Hub on the VPI website.<sup>3</sup>

1. NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS (IAS)

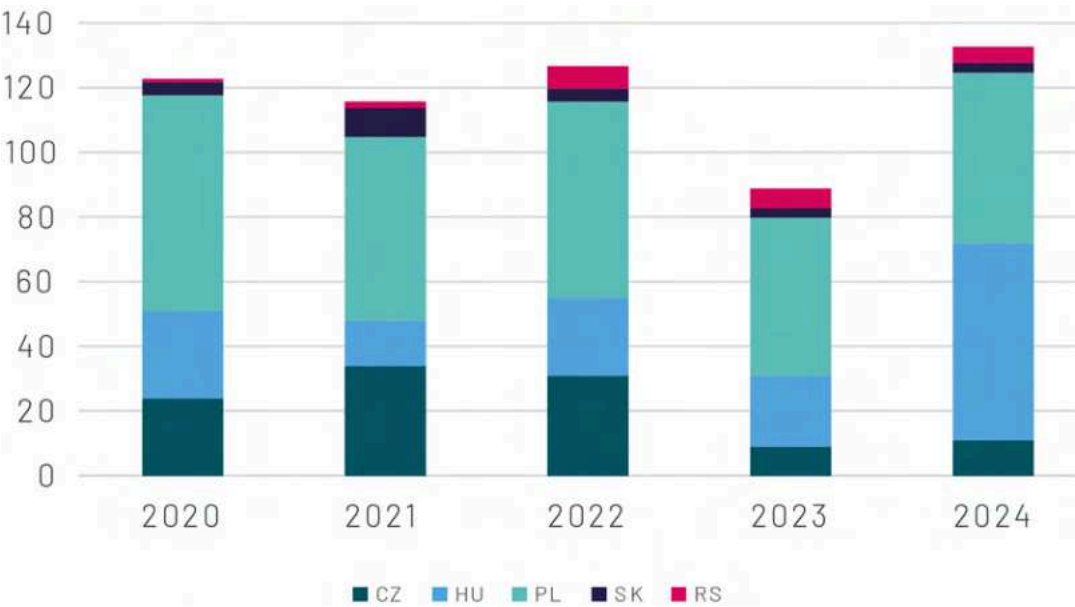
After a challenging year of 2023, the number of IAs originating from the V4 countries grew in 2024. This growth is

due to a significant increase in the number of IAs filed by Hungarian applicants.

In addition to the V4 countries, the VPI offers its services to the Serbian users based on the Memorandum of Understanding<sup>4</sup> (MoU) concluded with the Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Serbia in 2020. The number of incoming IAs from Serbia remained roughly the same.

No IAs arrived from Lithuania although an MoU was also concluded with the State Patent Bureau of the Republic of Lithuania in 2017.<sup>5</sup>

Number of IAs by country of origin (2020-2024)



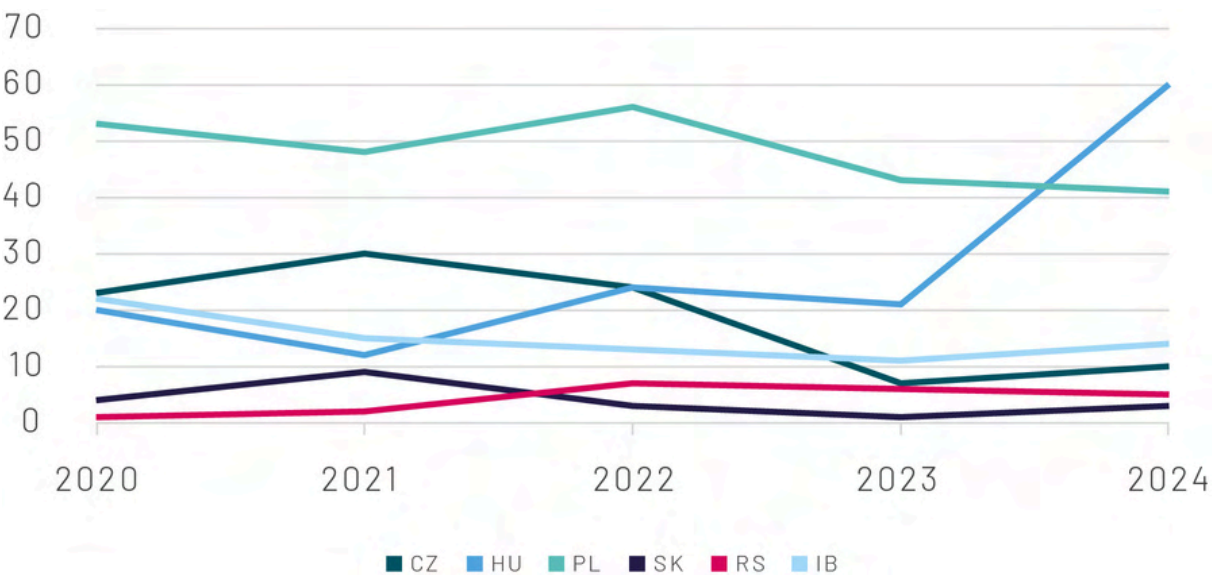
Source: WIPO ePCT

3 - [Link to knowledge hub page \(https://vpi.int/en/09-knowledge-hub/\)](https://vpi.int/en/09-knowledge-hub/)  
4 - The Memorandum of Understanding with the Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Serbia was concluded on 10 July 2020 and entered into force on 1 September 2020.  
5 - The Memorandum of Understanding with the State Patent Bureau of the Republic of Lithuania was concluded on 3 May 2017 and entered into force on 1 June 2017.

The majority of users of the VPI file their IAs with their national IP office as receiving office (RO) under the PCT. A strong tendency to use the national IP office as RO was observed among Hungarian applicants in 2024.

After the increase in the number of IAs filed with the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO IB) in 2020, a slight increase was again observed in 2024, but the number of IAs filed with the WIPO IB remained roughly the same.

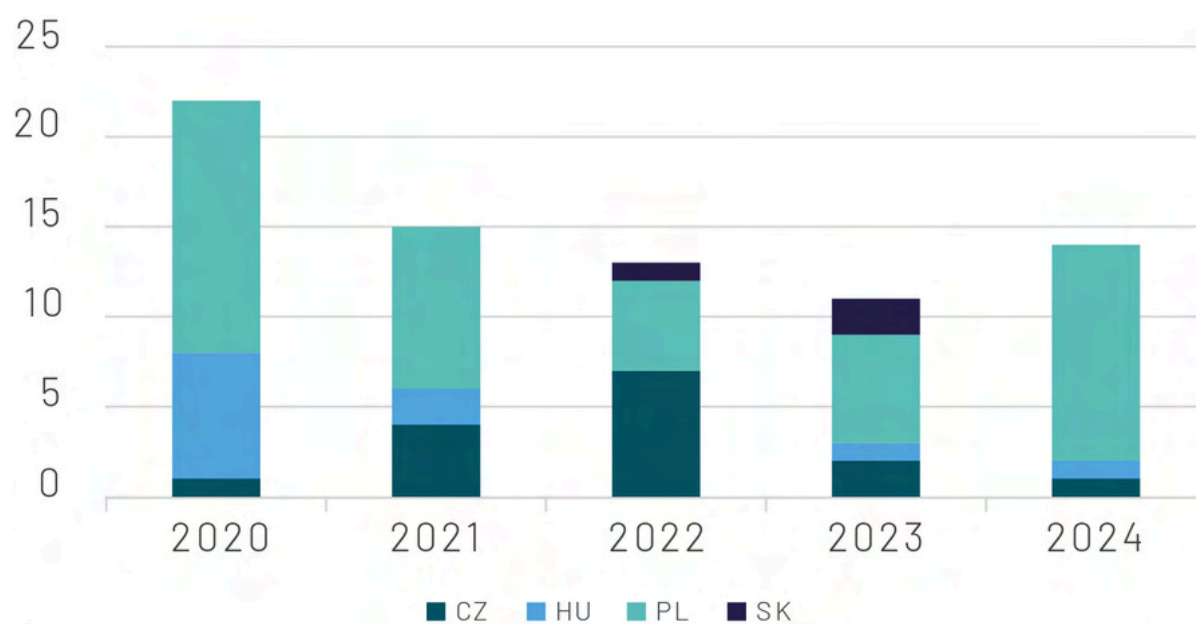
Number of IAs by ROs (2020-2024)



Source: VPI statistics

The IAs filed at the WIPO IB mainly originate from Polish applicants. No Slovak and an insignificant number of Hungarian and Czech applicants opted for the WIPO IB as RO in 2024.

*Number of IAs filed with WIPO IB as RO by country of origin (2020-2024)*



Source: VPI statistics

## 2. RATIO OF WITHDRAWN IAS

After a high withdrawal rate in 2023, the ratio of withdrawn IAs dropped to one-third of the previous year in 2024. This is an even more significant improvement considering the fact that the number of incoming IAs grew by close to 50% compared to last year.

## 3. USE OF LANGUAGES IN IAS

The use of the national languages of the Contracting States is an important advantage offered by the VPI that users take advantage of in their IAs.

Ratio of withdrawn IAs by country of origin (2020-2024)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
CZ	8%	3%	6%	33%	9%	12%
HU	21%	7%	0%	18%	8%	11%
PL	28%	19%	16%	8%	13%	17%
SK	25%	0%	25%	0%	0%	10%
RS	0%	0%	0%	33%	0%	7%
Average	16%	6%	9%	18%	6%	11%

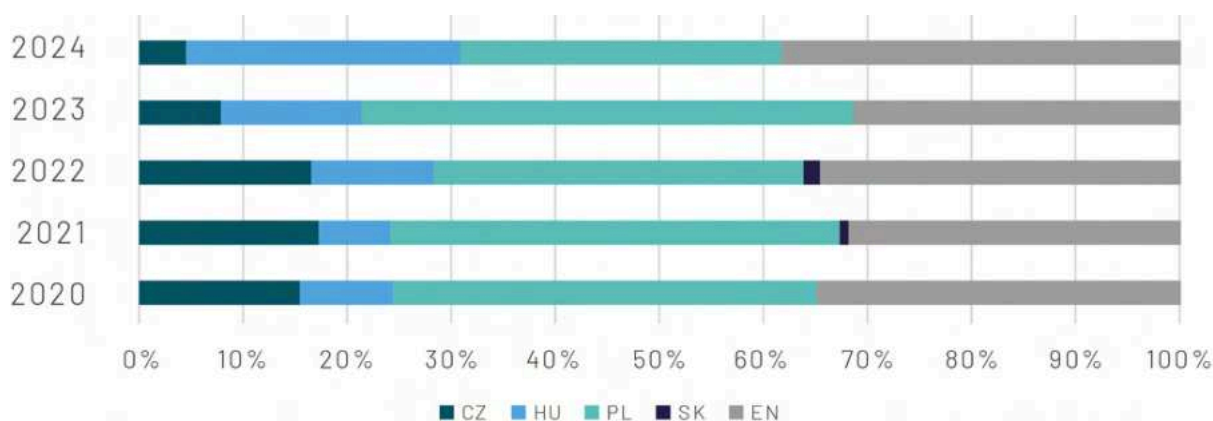
Source: VPI statistics

### 3.1. RATIO OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE VPI IN IAS

Although the number of IAs filed in English can vary considerably in relation to the total number of IAs filed, the ratio is usually stable. Applicants from Slovakia use English the most among the V4 countries. In the case of Serbia, users of the VPI can only use English.

The sharp increase in the number of IAs of Hungarian origin has led to an increase in the share of Hungarian and a parallel decrease in the share of Polish and Czech applicants in relation to the total number of IAs filed in 2024. This happened despite the fact that a higher number and so a higher ratio of Hungarian IAs were filed in English than in the previous year.

*Ratio of official languages of the VPI used in IAs (2020-2024)*



Source: VPI statistics

*Number of English-language IAs by country of origin (2020-2024)*



Source: VPI statistics

3.2. RATIO OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IAS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

There are significant differences between the ratio of applicants who choose English as the language of filing depending on the country of origin of the applicant.

If we disregard the Serbian applications which were all filed in English, and the Slovak applications whose low number does not provide a proper basis of comparison, the average ratio of applications filed in English, varied between 49% and 18% during the past 5 years.

4. WORK OF THE NATIONAL IP OFFICES OF THE CONTRACTING STATES AS BRANCH OFFICES (BOS) OF THE VPI

The work done by BOs, the production of international search reports (ISRs), and international preliminary examination reports (IPERs), closely follow the number of requests and demands received.

Ratio of English language IAs by country of origin (2020-2024)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
CZ	21%	41%	32%	22%	32%	30%
HU	57%	43%	54%	36%	54%	49%
PL	25%	12%	20%	14%	20%	18%
SK	100%	89%	50%	100%	50%	78%
RS	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: VPI statistics



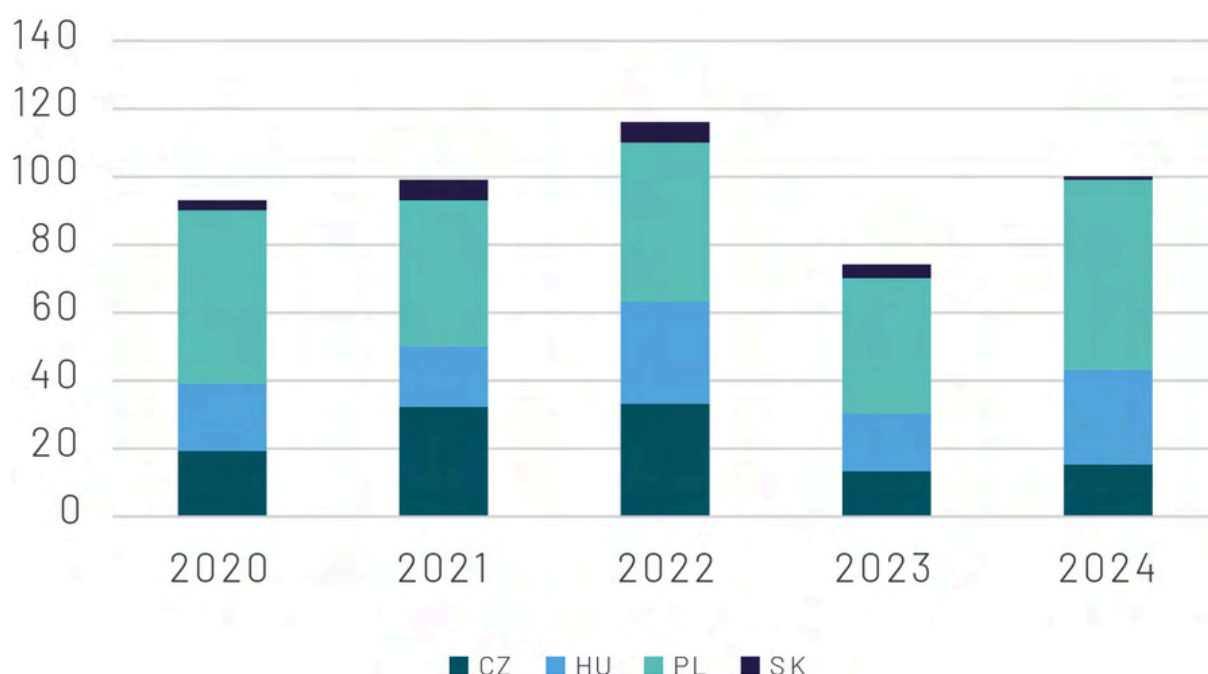
#### 4.1. WORK PERFORMED BY THE VPI AS INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

The bulk of the substantive work of the VPI is the preparation of ISRs under the PCT. BOs process the IAs arriving from their country of origin. The exception to this general rule is the case of IAs arriving from a neighbouring country based on an MoU. The international search work is then allocated in accordance with the availability of resources of the BOs in the technical field concerned.

The number of incoming IAs grew significantly in 2024 and it is also reflected in the increasing number of search reports issued by the BOs.

The trend that the number of Polish IAs is always significantly the highest changed in 2024. The number of Hungarian IAs surpassed the number of IAs of Polish origin. Nevertheless, as this turn happened only in Q4 of 2024, the search work in these IAs could not be completed by the end of 2024. Therefore, the effect of this change is not visible in the 2024 statistics. In 2024, as in previous years, the Polish BO dealt with the most IAs and issued the most ISRs.

*Number of ISRs issued by BOs (2020-2024)*



Source: VPI statistics

#### 4.2. WORK PERFORMED BY THE VPI AS INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

The number of demands received by the VPI is quite low, although it slightly increased in 2024. This is also reflected in the number of international preliminary examination reports (IPERs).

*Number of IPERs issued by BOs (2020-2024)*

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
CZ	0	1	0	0	0	1
HU	4	4	1	0	2	11
PL	1	0	0	1	1	3
SK	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	5	5	1	1	3	15

Source: VPI statistics

## 5. ORGANISATIONAL CHART OF THE VPI



\*The President of the AB is elected from the Members of the AB on a rotational basis.

\*\*The Director of the VPI is appointed by the AB.

\*\*\*The Quality Manager is appointed by the AB.

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## IMPRESSUM

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VPI, H-1081 Budapest  
II. János Pál pápa tér 7.  
Phone: +36 1 951 5770

Website: [www.vpi.int](http://www.vpi.int)

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