

IPG - Newsletter 99/07

Year 2000 presentation of the INPADOC files becomes operational 1999-04-19

All of the year 2000 projects in the European Patent Office are centrally coordinated. For the implementation of the century part of the year, provisions have been taken to retain the harmonisation between the different standardisation rules.

The conversion is completed now and will go into production on 19 April 1999. For data exchange purposes onwards, old and new formats will be maintained in parallel for a period of approximately 6 months. The Vienna based online system and the SDI (watch) service will produce only the new date and number formats from 19 April 1999 onwards.

The concept is: dates are expanded from 6 to 8 characters, publication numbers from 8 to 10 characters, application and priority numbers from 12 to 16 characters. This happens by prefixing the century part of the date to the currently used 6 digits date.

The format changes apply for PRS and IFD likewise. The general structure of the files will not be changed in the first instance.

- Country by country definition for Y2K number formats:

Concerning document number formats, we have 3 active (A-documents for AT, AU, DK) and 4 sleeping series (A documents MW, YU, ZM, ZA) that require changes from filing date 1.1.2000 onwards:

up to filing date 31.12.1999 we will keep the format nnnn/yy,

for filing 1.1.2000 onwards we change the format to ccynnnnn (9 digits) for all of them.

Publication numbers of the structure yyn(3-6) shall keep this format for 1999, and shall be changed to ccyn(3-6) from 2000 onwards.

Publication numbers with embedded year indications (e.g. Germany) shall be treated as they are supplied by the national office, i.e. no change for DE.

For application numbers and priority application numbers there are two types of formats: those repeating the year in the number field and those not repeating it

1st case example FR: yy yynnnnn to be changed to
 ccyy yynnnnn until 1999 and to
 ccyy ccyynnnnn from 2000 (filing date) onwards.

Collections with embedded year (e.g. DE and EP) shall be treated as they are supplied by the Office: e.g. EP 00201234 shall be formatted
 2000 00201234 without the cc prefix in the number part.

2nd case example AT: yy nnnnn to be changed to
 ccyy nnnnn until 1999 and beyond 2000,
 i.e. no format change with year 2000.

Examples for publication numbers (8 -> 10 digits):

attention: for AT 1234/2000 the concept has been changed in comparison with the first communication of the table

example	old format	new format
AT 300.000 B	__300000	____300000
AT 1234/98 A	__123498	____123498
AT 1234/2000 A	not possible	_200001234
GB 9812345 A0	_9812345	____9812345
GB 200012345 A0	not possible	_200012345
IT 98FI1234 A1	98301234	FI__981234
IT 2000MI1234 U0	not possible	MI20001234

Examples for application/priority numbers (12 -> 16 digits):

attention: for GB 199912345 the concept has been changed in comparison with the first communication of the table

example	old format	new format
WO/RU98/00012	98RU_9800012	1998RU__9800012
AT 1234/98 A	98_____1234	1998_____1234
AT 1234/2000 A	not possible	2000_____1234
GB 199912345 A0	99__9912345	1999__9912345
GB 200012345 A0	not possible	2000__200012345
IT 98FI1234 A1	98FI__1234	1998FI_____1234
IT 2000MI1234 U0	not possible	2000MI_____1234

Principal Directorate 5.4 Patent Information
Development