



Europäisches  
Patentamt  
European  
Patent Office  
Office européen  
des brevets

# Highlights from the European Patent Office

IP5 Heads and IP5 Industry meeting  
New Orleans, 13 June 2018

Benoît Battistelli, President European Patent Office

# Main challenges for the EPO

**Consistent growth** in demand for patents

**Competitive** international environment

**Technically complex** applications

Users' expectations in terms of **costs and timeliness**

**Our strategic priorities**

+ **Increase quality**

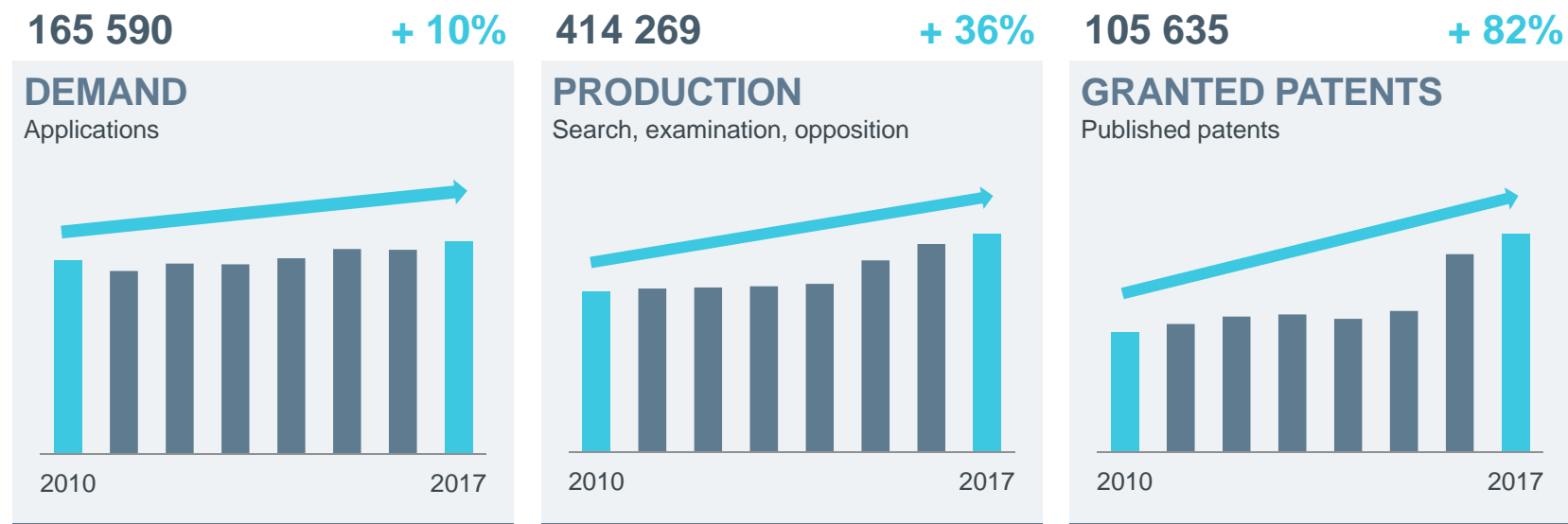
+ **Increase efficiency**

+ **Increase timeliness**

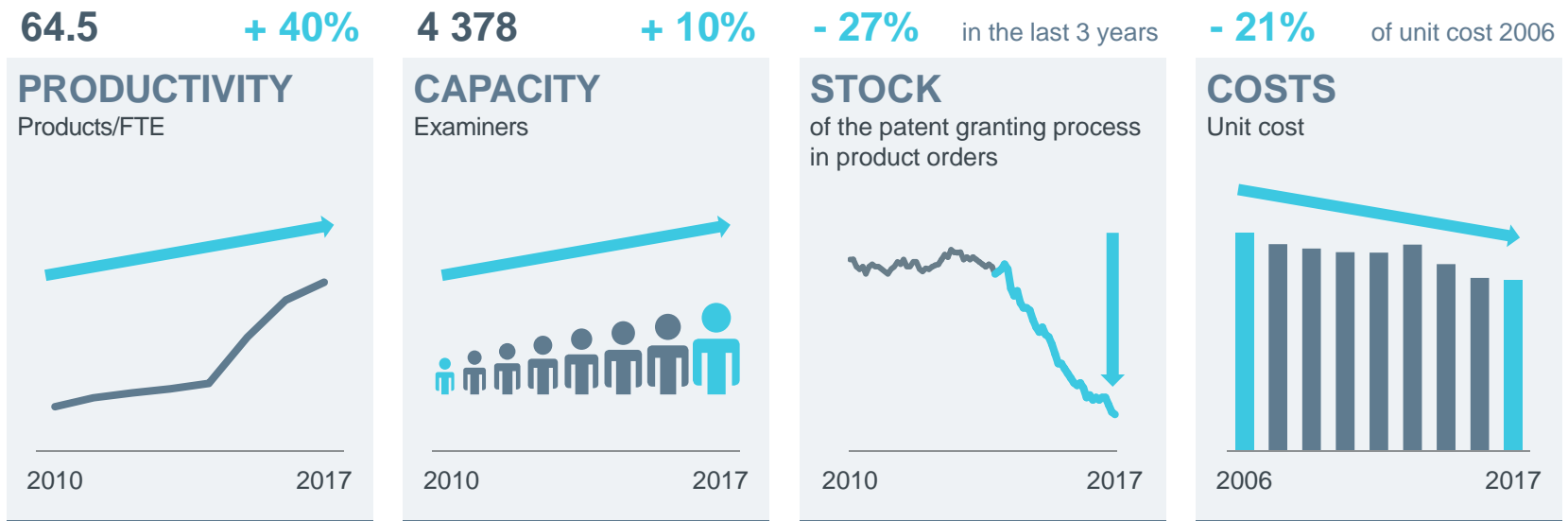
+ **Control costs**

+ **Raise profile of Europe worldwide**

# Result of the reforms 1: EPO is a more efficient office



## Result of the reforms 2: EPO is a more efficient office



# Reduction of costs enabling reduction of fees

**-20%**

## REDUCTION OF COSTS

Unit cost

4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of falling unit cost



**2017 = 78.1% of the unit cost**

## EPO performance allows for fee reductions

- EP Fees stable since 2010 (only slight inflation adjustment)
- PCT fees not increased since 2012 (not even for inflation)
- From 2018: PCT fees will be reduced by 5%

► It's estimated that the measures above will save our applicants a combined total of **25 million Euro next year**

# Quality is our first priority

## ISO 9001 CERTIFICATION



to safeguard the quality  
of our processes

Recertification in 2017

## CONSULTING WITH USERS



around the globe:  
“Partnership for Quality”  
meetings with users in  
Europe, US, Japan, China  
and Korea

## SACEPO SUB- GROUP ON QUALITY



created with the objective to  
set a permanent and high-  
level forum to discuss quality  
related matters with users

## RELIABLE MONITORING



**96%** of respondents  
are “very satisfied, satisfied,  
average satisfied” (EPO User  
Satisfaction Survey)

**Global  
benchmark  
for quality**

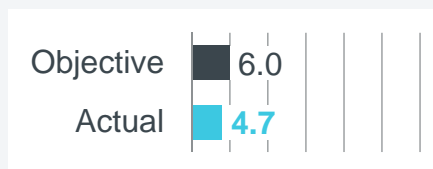
**EPO ranked  
best patent  
office in every  
IAM survey  
since 2010**

# Timeliness continuously in progress

## Search reports

Delivering search reports within **6 months** of receipt

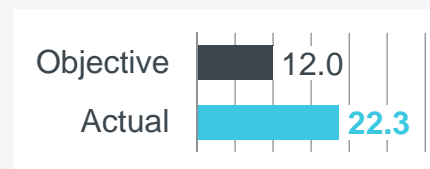
Actual<sup>1</sup> Search timeliness: **4.7 months**



## Examination time

Reducing examination times to just **12 months** on average by 2020

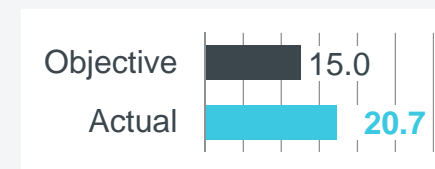
Actual<sup>1</sup> Examination timeliness: **22.3 months**



## Opposition time

Completing oppositions in **15 months** on average, while ensuring the parties are heard

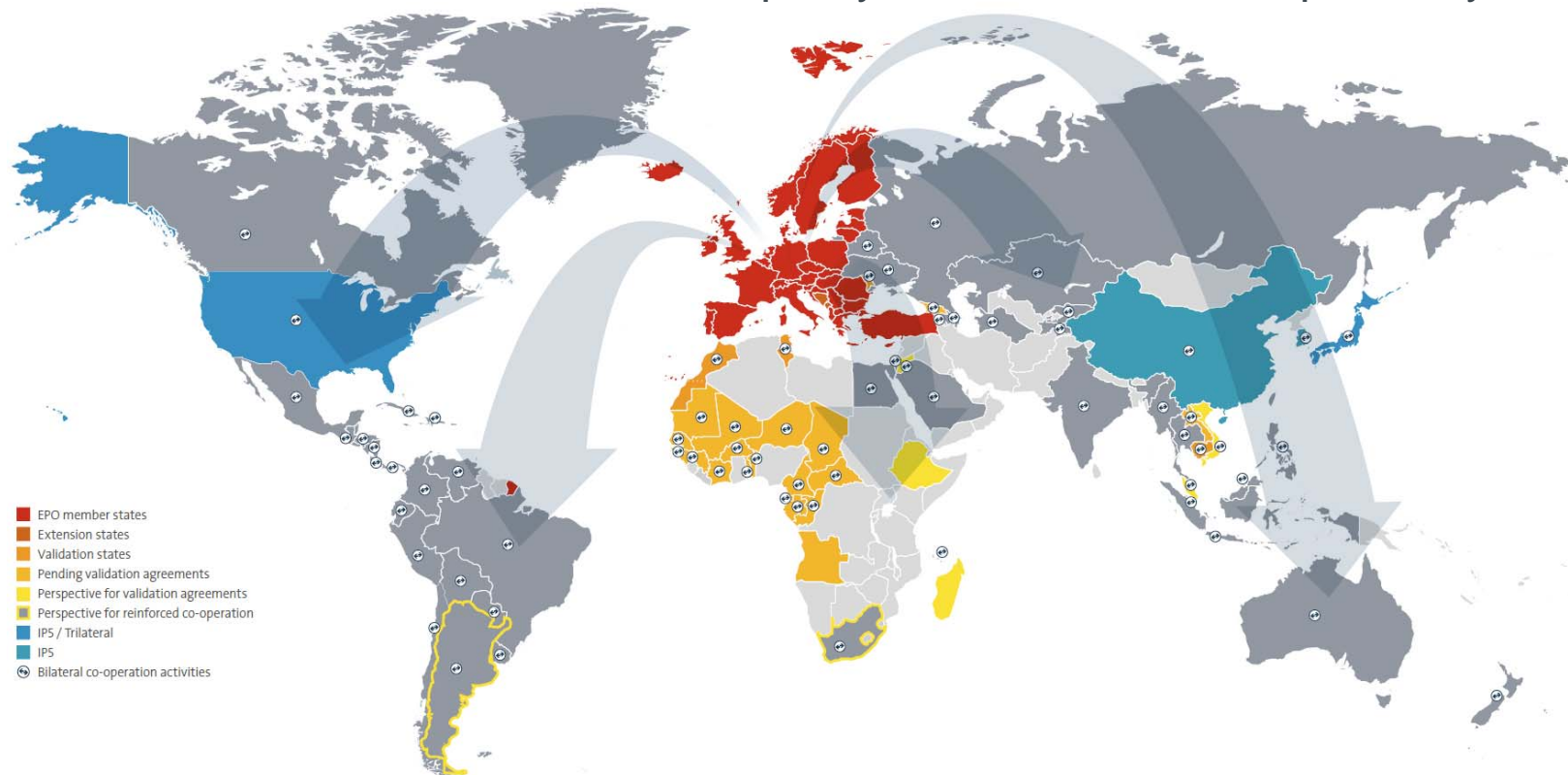
Actual<sup>1</sup> duration of oppositions: **20.7 months**



<sup>1</sup> Source: EPO data – April 2018

# Working with partners worldwide

for an efficient and quality-based international patent system





# Active role in international co-operation

## EPO initiatives

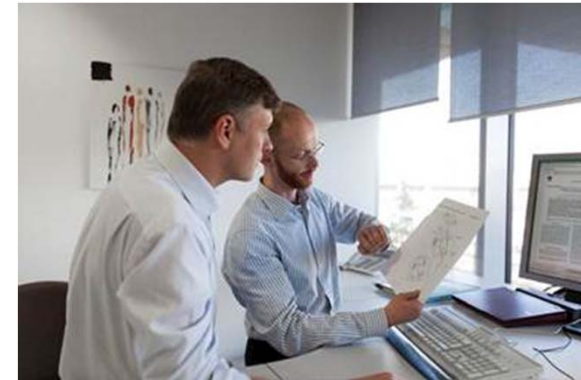
- ✓ CPC
- ✓ Patent Translate
- ✓ Global Dossier
- ✓ Common Citation Document Database (CCD)
- ✓ Enhanced sharing (PCT Collaborative Search & Examination)
- ✓ First PCT authority (34% of search reports, 64% International preliminary examination report)

## Strong support of industry involvement in IP5

- proactive steps in 2012 to involve representatives from industry in the IP5
- user-oriented focus to IP5 co-operation
- *Open dialogue with industry as a fundamental part of IP5 co-operation*

## EPO: a predictable approach to patenting software

- **Interdisciplinary** technical divisions of three examiners for each application
- **Annual improvements** to the CII content of the Guidelines for Examination
- Focus on **CII training** throughout the entire EPO operational area
- **Solid, predictable** 20 years practice in CII



## Conclusion: the EPO in 2018

- ✓ Demand is growing, reinforcing Europe's attractiveness as a leading innovation market
- ✓ Reforms have proven to be successful, increasing quality, efficiency and cost control
- ✓ An Influential Global Player
- ✓ 20 years CII solid practice, forming the basis for a sound patent system for AI and the Fourth Industrial Revolution



Europäisches  
Patentamt  
European  
Patent Office  
Office européen  
des brevets

**Thank you for your attention**

