# **EPO-CNIPA Joint Communiqué:**

**Headline: Applicants in China may continue to designate EPO as their ISA**

Nationals and residents of the People’s Republic of China will continue to have the option to select the EPO as their International Searching Authority (ISA) for international patent applications filed in English under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) until 30 November 2026. This follows the success of the pilot scheme first started in December 2020, which is being extended for a further three years as mutually agreed between the European Patent Office (EPO) and the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA).

This extension enables nationals and residents of the People’s Republic of China to continue to obtain international searches and written opinions from the EPO, supporting their strategic objectives when considering patent protection in Europe. By using the EPO as their ISA, applicants can speed up the European patent grant process and save even more prosecution time if they request early entry into the European phase. Furthermore, they can save costs as neither a supplementary European search nor a translation of the PCT application would be required and the examination fee payable on entry into the European phase would be reduced by 75% when requesting international preliminary examination under PCT Chapter II with the EPO.

The decision to extend the scheme follows the pilot's favourable evaluation by applicants, including enterprises, universities, research institutes, and private individuals. The capacity of the pilot remains set at 3,000 applications per year.

CNIPA Commissioner Dr Shen Changyu commented:

“The success of the pilot is another milestone in EPO-CNIPA comprehensive strategic cooperation. Over the past three years, the widely-praised pilot has benefited more than 420 innovation entities. We welcome its extension and expect that it will provide greater convenience to Chinese users applying for IP and seeking patent protection in Europe.”

EPO President António Campinos emphasised the significance of the pilot’s extension, stating: "This milestone underscores the trust and value placed in the EPO's international search services. We are pleased to support the innovators who are nationals and residents of the People’s Republic of China, seeking patent protection in Europe’s technology markets. This extension provides better planning security for the applicants who will continue to enjoy the benefits of examination before the EPO. It fosters innovation and economic growth in Europe and China, and strengthens our strategic partnership with CNIPA."

**Further Information**

* [Frequently asked questions](https://www.epo.org/service-support/faq/own-file/cnipa-epo-pilot.html) (FAQs) about the pilot (EPO website)
* [How to accelerate the Euro-PCT procedure](https://www.epo.org/applying/international/accelerating-application.html) (EPO website)
* [More information about international applications at the EPO](https://www.epo.org/applying/international.html)
* Guidance for applicants (CNIPA official website in Chinese)
* Chinese version of the EPO-CNIPA Joint Communiqué