

User satisfaction survey 2018 on search and examination services

Introduction

Every year, the European Patent Office (EPO) carries out user satisfaction surveys on its search and examination services. The surveys focus on a plurality of technical fields per year, enabling all fields to be surveyed within a three-year period. Around 2 000 to 3 000 interviews are conducted annually among randomly selected applicants and representatives. The surveys are run by a market research institute contracted by the Office and selected by open tender. For the period 2018-2020, the contractor is BERENT Deutschland GmbH.

Design of the survey 2018-2020

Methodology and sample:

- Telephone interviews are conducted with a representative sample of users of EPO search and examination services. This sample consists of randomly selected applicants (including in-house attorneys) and independent representatives who received a search report and a written opinion from the EPO in the last 12 months.
- Around 2 000 to 3 000 interviews are completed each year, giving a total of 6 000 to 9 000 interviews over a period of three years.

Questionnaire:

Respondents are asked about their general experiences of dealing with the EPO in the previous 12 months and about their experiences in relation to a specific application. This application will have been recently searched and belongs to the technical area being surveyed.

Interviews:

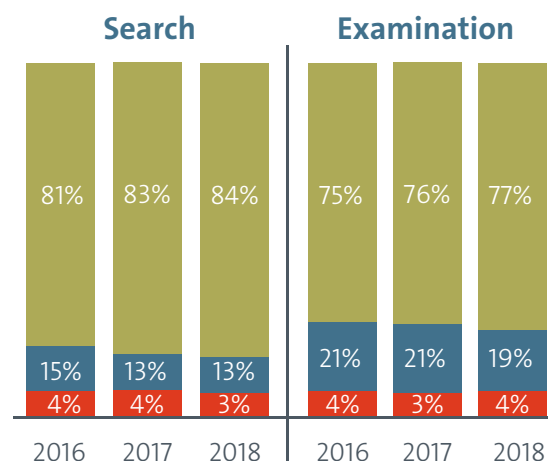
Interviews are conducted by phone using a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) system. Interviews can be in English, German, French, Japanese or Chinese. To ensure data protection, personal data is separated from respondent answers. Data is grouped and analysed on a purely statistical basis. Results are only available as aggregated statistics.

Latest results

- 84% of users are satisfied or very satisfied with the search services, whereas only 3% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

- When asked about the examination services, 77% of users said they are satisfied or very satisfied, with only 4% indicating they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.
- By combining and weighting search and examination, the overall results indicate a high level of satisfaction (81%) slightly higher than in the previous year.

User satisfaction



User satisfaction with search and examination (combined)

