

# Annual Report 2007

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Benelux Office  
for Intellectual Property

Postal Address  
P.O. Box 90404  
NL-2509 LK The Hague

Address  
Bordewijkstraat 15  
NL-2591 XR The Hague

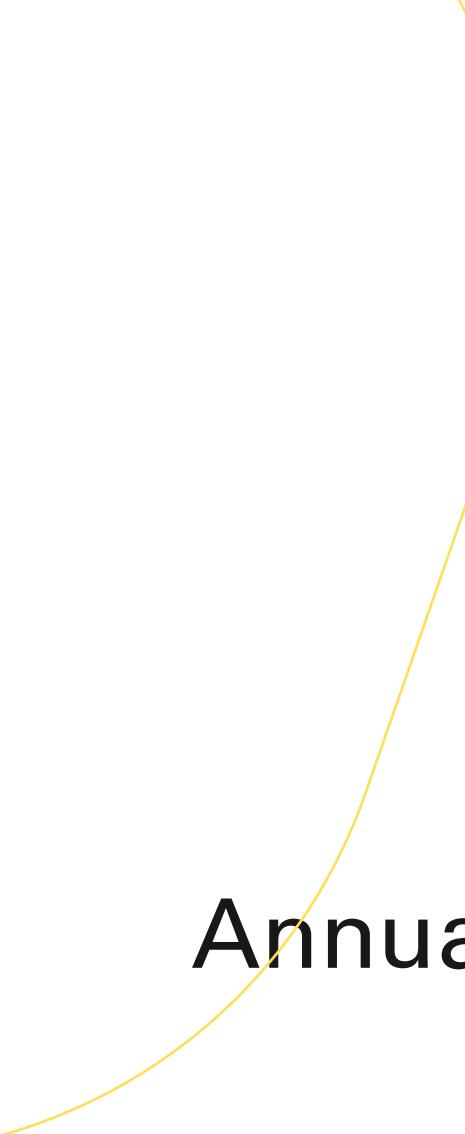
T +31 70 349 11 11  
F +31 70 347 57 08  
[info@boip.int](mailto:info@boip.int)  
[www.boip.int](http://www.boip.int)

Benelux Office for Intellectual Property



B E N E L U X  
O F F I C E F O R  
I N T E L L E C T U A L  
P R O P E R T Y

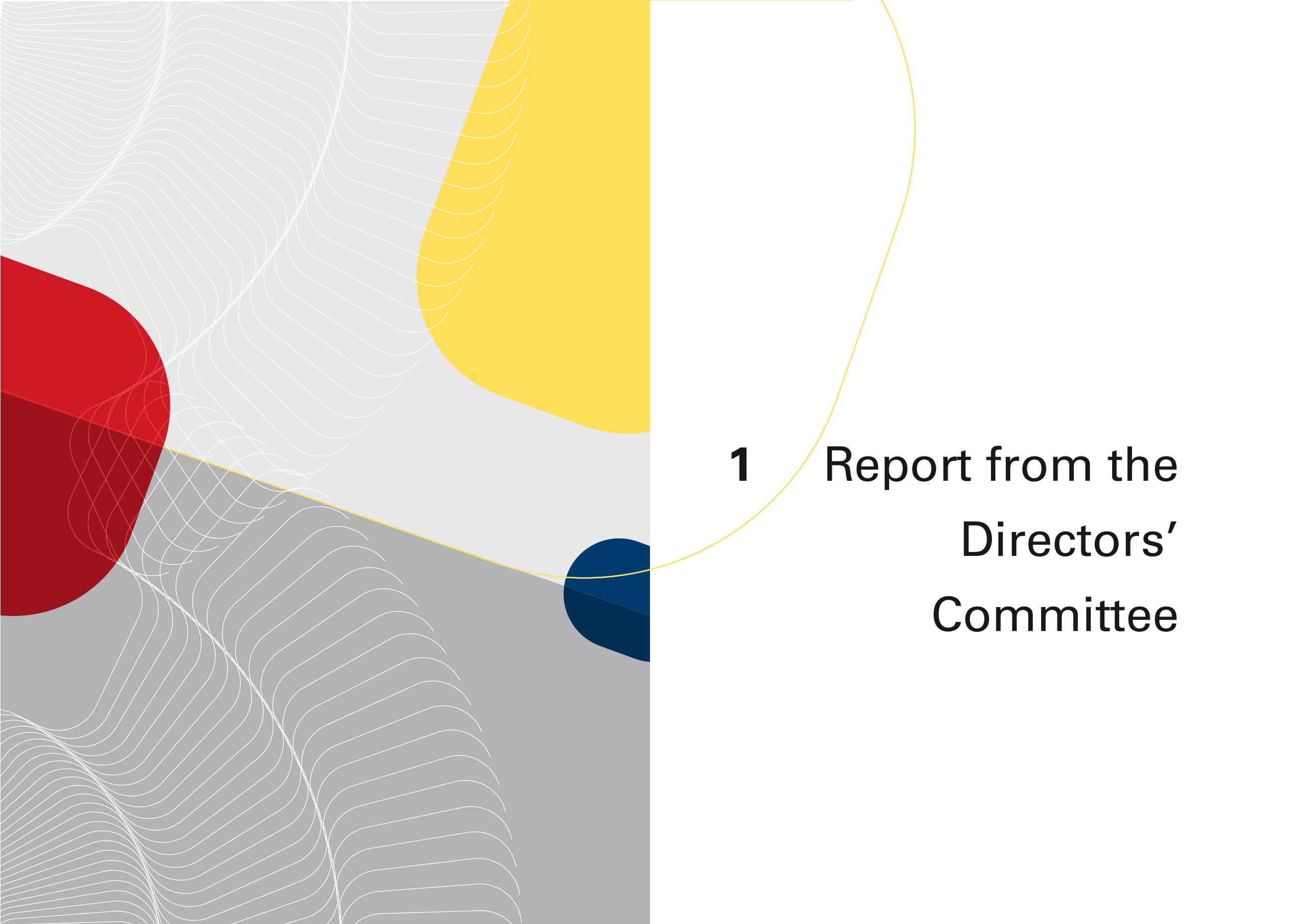
Doing business  
successfully starts  
with registration



# Annual Report 2007

# Index

<b>1</b>	<b>Report from the Directors' Committee</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Registration and legal affairs</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1	i-DEPOT	15
2.2	Trademarks, designs and ideas	15
2.3	Refusal on absolute grounds	16
2.4	Opposition	18
2.5	Reorganisation of the Registration and Legal Affairs departments	18
<b>3</b>	<b>Information and Promotion</b>	<b>21</b>
3.1	i-DEPOT	23
3.2	Advertising policy	23
3.3	Roadshows and presentations	24
3.4	Trade fairs	24
3.5	Reorganisation of the Service & Information department	25
<b>4</b>	<b>Management</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1	IT	29
4.2	Communication	30
4.3	Personnel and employment conditions	31
4.4	Management team	33
<b>5</b>	<b>Figures and statistics</b>	<b>37</b>
5.1	Financial report	38
5.2	Workforce data	45
5.3	Trademarks, designs and ideas	47
<b>6</b>	<b>Information and data</b>	<b>59</b>
6.1	Joint Management Bodies	60
6.2	National offices	65
	<b>Terms and definitions</b>	<b>67</b>



1 Report from the  
Directors'  
Committee

The Annual Report 2007 before you is a little different to what you are used to from us, as this report will restrict itself to figures and an account of our activities for the past year. This is because we have decided to invest in a corporate relations magazine that you will receive automatically in the autumn. The first edition of this magazine will be dedicated to all things innovative, and will focus on our place in the innovation chain and on our role in the world of intellectual property.

When I looked back on the year 2007 and re-read my foreword for the Annual Report 2006, I came to the conclusion that many of the comments I made for 2006 still hold true for 2007. I am referring in particular here to the very positive increase in the number of filings of trademarks, to the stable demand for design-related filings, to the spectacular increase in the number of i-DEPOTs, to the outstanding financial result achieved, and also to the fact that my colleagues are continuing to work hard to keep the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property on the cutting edge, so that it can continue to call itself one of the most efficient and effective agencies that the European Union has to offer. But that's not all...

It is our organisation's ambition in the coming years to become known and recognised throughout the Benelux region for the registration of intellectual property. Naturally, this also means raising our profile. In 2007, we commissioned a survey on our public profile, which also looked at Benelux businesses' awareness of the trademark and design registration processes and at whether they know where to go for their information and registration needs. The survey revealed that businesses are not always aware of the importance of registration and of the various registration options. In many cases, they do not know who to contact to register their intellectual property rights either. In the future, the BOIP will invest in further improving relations with its knowledge partners, to help it reach businesses owners better.

We will also focus more on the actual advice and information that we give to SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises). There is much demand for this service, especially from applicants who do not have an agent and who are now having to grapple with the more complex subjects themselves. This is due in part to the increased use of the Community Trade Mark, to the introduction of the official refusal and opposition procedures, and to the developments relating to the Madrid Agreement and Protocol. In 2008, the management and Joint Management Bodies will consider ways in which we can help SMEs and others in this respect.

In 2007, our entire organisation devoted much time and resources to the implementation of a new service, namely the online version of the i-DEPOT, which in the meantime has become an unprecedented success. We were

very honoured that Minister Van der Hoeven officially launched this service at the government offices in The Hague in November. Our new service means that since the end of 2007, companies can now record ideas online, as well as being able to use the traditional method of submitting an i-DEPOT envelope. We will continue to focus on developing our interactive services in the future. Our aim is to have the greatest possible degree of interactive communication with the customer during the registration process, making this process more transparent, more efficient and quicker.

Within our organisation, we are continually working on ways of improving our service to our customers. We have set up a special information centre whose task it is to answer as quickly as possible any query posed by the public at any time. The reorganisation of the management of our Registration and Legal Affairs department is almost complete. As part of this process, the work of the Opposition department has been divided up between the examiners and the lawyers, allowing any problems to be solved quickly and ensuring we make the very best use of our colleagues' many talents. Furthermore, a complaints procedure has now been implemented (for more details, see the About us section of our website) where applicants can register complaints - this will ensure that in future we can give such complaints the time and attention they deserve.

Even though we are taking on more and more tasks, the number of staff we have at our disposal has declined. This is primarily due to the increasing use of IT and automated processes, and also because our in-house organisation is organised according to the most up-to-date management principles. Finally, our highly motivated employees are closely involved and informed about the goings on at our Office. I am sad to say that two very talented people, namely the director Albert Snethlage and the Supervisory Board member Roland Charlier retired in 2007. I would like to thank them warmly for all their efforts and I hope that they still have many years before them in which to enjoy their well-earned retirement!

The rapid appointment of our new Deputy Director General, Mr. Hugues Derème, means that our Office has gained a new and great asset. He will be responsible for all intellectual property-related matters, which makes him the



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perfect contact person for the professional organisations. We are sure that they were very disappointed that our governments decided to drop the plans to set up a register of agents. However, a 'Benelux Committee for Intellectual Property' will soon be set up, which will advise the Director General on the performance of the organisation's tasks as set out in the Benelux Convention on Intellectual Property. We will endeavour to ensure that the various stakeholder organisations are given the best possible representation on this Committee.

In addition, the management will continue to work on maintaining the right balance between the national trademark systems in the European Union and the Community Trade Mark. The BOIP believes that the national offices must be placed in a strong position here. We need to do this in order to ensure that we can continue to offer SMEs a simple and inexpensive way of protecting their trademarks. We must also ensure that the Community Trade Mark is used to promote the internal market, not to protect it. The BOIP is not alone in this work: many other national offices are trying to counterbalance the OHIM's one-sided focus on reducing the tariffs for Community Trade Marks. Furthermore, the BOIP continues to work hard on its goal of ensuring that the national trademark offices get an appropriate fee for all the work caused by the introduction of the Community Trade Mark.

An important step was taken in 2007 with the signing of the headquarters agreement between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Benelux Organisation for Intellectual Property (BORGIP), which the BOIP is part of. This agreement regulates a number of matters between the international organisation BORGIP and the host country of the Netherlands regarding inviolability, privileges and immunities, employment and employees' rights of residence. In fact, it is the 'missing piece in the jigsaw' that means that the BOIP has now been definitively recognised as an international organisation. This means that we now enjoy equal status with that of the European Patent Office and that our organisation is now considered the equal of a diplomatic mission, with corresponding privileges and immunities. We have taken the opportunity afforded by this change in status to update our internal rules and regulations and to amend their content where necessary. The excellent cooperation with the staff representatives and the constructive attitude taken

by our personnel in respect of this large-scale operation gives us all great satisfaction.

Finally, I am delighted that new life has been breathed into the entity that is the Benelux region itself. Our organisation was mentioned by name in the Benelux Convention and the Benelux Court of Justice is being given new powers. Furthermore, the Benelux Interparliamentary Consultative Council has recommended that this Court be made a court of appeal for decisions made by our Office. However, we are still waiting on the official sanctioning of various texts that include provisions from the Benelux Convention on Intellectual Property. This would put an end to the increasing divergence between the Belgian and Dutch case law in the matter of refusal on absolute grounds, and is a move that is certainly in the interests of Benelux applicants.

There are a whole host of other projects on the go, such as a number of major IT projects and proposed amendments to the Benelux Convention on Intellectual Property, but details of these will have to wait until the Annual Report 2008!

Edmond Simon  
Director General



**2** Registration and  
legal affairs

Like all public institutions, the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) endeavours to provide users with the best possible service. The Registration and Legal Affairs departments help to achieve this goal through the best possible deployment of knowledge and skills in a working environment geared towards the customer. We carried out a reorganisation in 2007, in order to fine-tune our service to the changing needs of our customers. Furthermore, the launch of our online i-DEPOT service has had consequences for our organisation.

## 2.1 i-DEPOT

There is no statutory regime for the protection of ideas. However, this does not have to mean that a person can just start exploiting another person's idea. This would in fact be an unlawful act. In such a case, the i-DEPOT could provide you with the documentary proof of your idea that you need. Submitting an i-DEPOT means that in the event of a dispute the business(wo)man has a powerful tool in his or her hands that can be used to prove that a particular idea, concept or process was already in existence on a particular day.

The i-DEPOT is a legal setting that is not solely determined by legislation and regulations. The BOIP acts as contracting party here. It is a very different way of working to the one we are used to. It is in fact a contract that is entered into online. In 2007, our Legal Affairs department completed its work to ensure that the communications and actions performed by the BOIP via the Internet complied with the relevant requirements, including in respect of having appropriate terms and conditions for Internet users.

## 2.2 Trademarks, designs and ideas

In 2007, the BOIP received almost 24,700 filings for trademarks, a figure more than 9% lower than in 2006. This decline must be set against the sharp increase that we saw in particular in early 2006 in relation to the demand for the new .eu domain names. If this factor is disregarded, the number of filings rose slightly on the previous year. In the second half of 2007, this figure was more than 3% higher than for the same period of the previous year. This indicates a prudent level of growth and also confirms that more and more businesses in the Benelux region know how to get in touch with the BOIP.

The number of registered designs was about the same as in the previous year: 1063. This indicates an end to the slight upward trend we saw in 2006.

The number of i-DEPOTs rose spectacularly, almost doubling compared to 2006. In total, 1,287 i-DEPOT envelopes were sold (as opposed to 1040 in 2006). 136 i-DEPOTs were submitted via the internet. For more information, see page 47.

## **2.3 Refusal on absolute grounds**

As usual, the statistics for the refusal on absolute grounds (see page 52) do not include the figures for the past year but for the year before that. This is due to the deadlines for this procedure.

In 2006, the percentage of provisional refusals rose slightly compared to 2005. Over the past ten years, this percentage has remained fairly constant. The percentage of definitive refusals has risen sharply in recent years. This is due to the simplifications in procedure, such as the scrapping of the enforcement requirement and the mandatory power of attorney. This reduced the number of filings officially excluded from further processing and led to more provisionally refused filings being definitively refused in the end. It is worth noting that the percentage of provisional filing refusals is highest for filings that were submitted by the trademark proprietor himself (14.94%), whereas this percentage is significantly lower (at 7.08%) for those filings submitted by an agent. This is something that we need to keep stressing as part of our information services.

The number of appeals submitted after a refusal is as usual fairly low: 15. It is worth noting that once again the willingness to submit an appeal is greatest in Belgium. At the end of 2007, the website's list of appeals was updated to include useful search options that allow businesses and/or their agents to quickly determine whether a decision has been reached on a particular appeal.

In 2008, we plan to revise the guidelines for refusing a filing, although little guideline content will change. After all, the new case law that has been created since the most recent guidelines were published (in 2004) has not caused us to change our policy to any great extent.

**Submitting an i-DEPOT means that in the event of a dispute the business(wo)man has a powerful tool in his or her hands that can be used to prove that a particular idea, concept or process was already in existence on a particular day.**

## **2.4 Opposition**

For a number of years now, it has been possible to submit an opposition (i.e. an appeal) against a published trademark in the Benelux region. In 2007, the number of oppositions rose sharply, with the number of cases that are ready for a decision rising steadily too. Our Legal Affairs department is doing all it can to deal with the cases as quickly as possible and to ensure that people do not have to wait too long for a decision. Over the past year, 25 decisions were made. For details of the number of allowable, disallowed and partially allowed oppositions, see the statistics on page 54.

Appeals have been launched against two decisions made in 2007. The BOIP is awaiting rulings from the Court of Appeal in Brussels. The BOIP is actually a respondent in one of the appeals, even though this possibility is expressly excluded by the Convention.

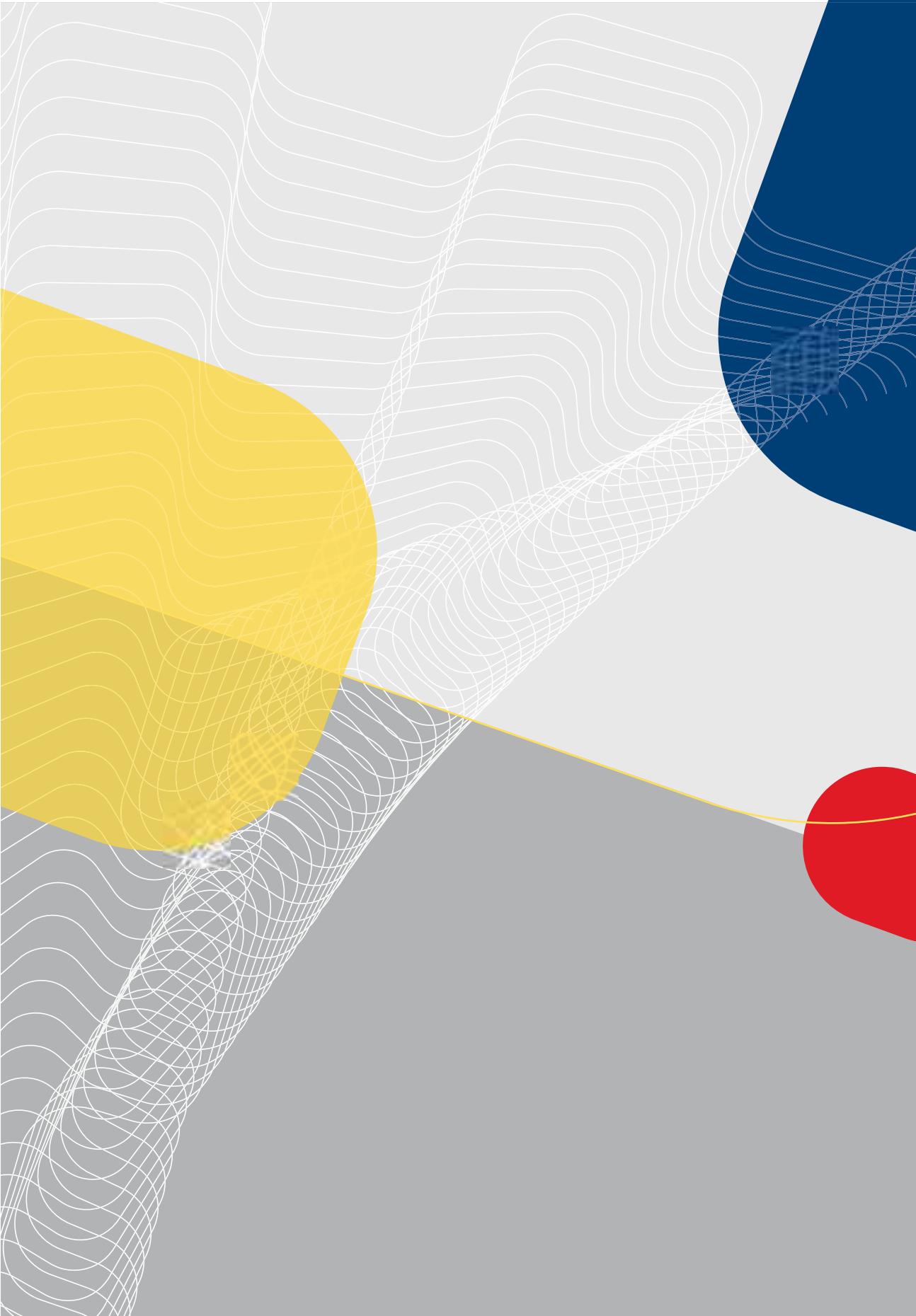
The BOIP has come to the conclusion that it is very important to have an appropriate and precisely defined classification. After all, the fact that some oppositions were partially allowed was due in part to the submission of oppositions that were directed against all goods, whereas the lists of goods for the defending trademarks were very broadly defined and thus remained in place for a number of very specific goods, given that no similarity could be assumed for these goods.

## **2.5 Reorganisation of the Registration and Legal Affairs departments**

While the registration of trademarks used to be a purely administrative matter, it has become necessary to assess the various aspects of the relevant processes. This assessment is performed in part by the Registration department. In 2007, the opposition work was brought together with the filing-related work, with the Opposition department being closed down. This underlined our policy of 'one file, one file manager'. Our examiners helped ensure a smooth interchange between the two processes.

The work involving legal matters, such as the drafting of opposition decisions, has been assigned to a new department, that of Legal Affairs. This department is staffed by lawyers who can also rotate and take on each other's tasks. The advantages of having such a structure is that the lawyers can be deployed in a flexible way and that the organisation is now less vulnerable to staff turnover. In the longer term, the BOIP wishes to use this new structure to ensure optimum collaboration between the Registration and Legal Affairs departments.

The new Information Centre has been placed with the Registration department, which supplies the staff for it too. They are very much 'at home' with the subject matter, which means that customers can get answers to their questions directly from the experts. The Information Centre now plays a key role in our organisation's efforts to be customer-driven.



3

Information  
and Promotion

In many cases, start-ups and other companies are unaware of the importance of registering their trademarks and designs or do not know who to contact in such matters. This is why the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) needs to raise its public profile. In this connection, the Information and Promotion department developed a number of programmes aimed at various target groups. This led to the implementation of programmes and campaigns that communicated a clear message about the importance of registration and about the various options available. In this connection, for the first time an advertising policy and a trade fair policy were developed and implemented.

### **3.1 i-DEPOT**

On 29 November 2007, the Netherlands Minister for Economic Affairs Maria van der Hoeven launched the online i-DEPOT in the presence of trademark and patent agents, important knowledge partners of the BOIP and a number of i-DEPOT proprietors. The Minister was given three i-DEPOT accounts for her to be presented to three innovative businesspeople. This was the start of the campaign called 'Ideas are valuable'.

The main target for the 'Ideas are valuable' campaign is the innovative business(wo)man. It aims to make businesspeople aware of the usefulness of the i-DEPOT as a tool that can be quickly and easily deployed to protect their ideas. The campaign primarily targeted the SME sector. We developed new promotional materials specially designed for this target group, such as folders and short information films, and our website was updated too. In the months that followed the campaign launch, we placed adverts in various target group magazines such as Vindingrijk, Technisch Weekblad and Industrieel Technisch Management. In addition, for the first time the BOIP utilised the available online marketing options of Google AdWords and bannerizing.

### **3.2 Advertising policy**

2007 saw the drafting of our first policy on advertising. This process involved mapping out the target groups that the BOIP wants to reach in the various countries and deciding on the best media to use for this. It was decided to approach three target groups, namely the SME sector, the start-up sector, and the creative business(wo)man. The adverts were designed to push home the message that it was important to register. After thorough research, we decided to advertise in such appropriate publications as Startersmagazine, Kamerkrant, New Business, Bizz, ZO-magazine, Union & Actions, Merkur and Vindingrijk. On top of this, every two weeks the BOIP publishes information on trademarks and designs in Union & Actions.

### **3.3 Roadshows and presentations**

A key feature of the implementation of these plans was the collaboration with our knowledge partners. This collaboration is producing more and more benefits, one being that the exchange of knowledge and the collaboration on event organisation is helping to spread our message even further.

In Flanders, the VLAO-Flanders Enterprise agency worked together with the BOIP and the (Belgian) Federal Economics Service to put on a roadshow about intellectual property. During a two-week period in February, presentations were put on in the provincial capitals for innovative businesspeople, which were very well-attended and met with great public interest. Their interest and involvement could also be seen from the many questions asked by the attendees.

Later that year, the BOIP put on five large-scale presentations in the Flemish provinces in connection with the agreement with Unizo, the Flemish organisation for the Self-Employed and SMEs. A further benefit from this activity was that it encouraged the VLAO to work with the BOIP on the development of a folder about intellectual property that targets businesspeople. In the autumn, UCM took the initiative to put on the same intellectual property roadshow in the Walloon province of Belgium, which was again very well-attended, especially at Louvain-la-Neuve. Our colleagues also put on presentations for innovative businesspeople at Design Innovation and Walloon Design.

In Luxembourg, the BOIP hosted a presentation at a meeting organised by the local Chamber of Commerce. We accepted an invitation from Syntens to collaborate on an intellectual property roadshow in the Netherlands. We are working with the Netherlands Patent Office and NewVenture on ways of helping to familiarise start-up businesses with the world of trademarks.

### **3.4 Trade fairs**

Our presence at trade fairs again targeted the SME sector. In the Netherlands, we took stands at Agrinova, Week van de Ondernemer and Holland Innovation. In Belgium, the BOIP had a representative on the Federal Economics Service stand at the trade fairs Salon de la PME et des entrepreneurs and Initiatives. In

Luxembourg, for the first time the BOIP had a presence at the Contacts trade fair. Start-up businesses were reached at special start-up events that were organised at various locations throughout the Benelux region.

### **3.5 Reorganisation of the Service & Information department**

A small-scale reorganisation of the Service & Information department was carried out in 2007 in order to improve its efficiency. The service activities such as searching and general (phone) helpdesk activities were given to the newly founded Information Centre, which is part of the Registration department. This move ensures that our services will remain customer-focussed and allows the department to concentrate on its information provision services and promotional activities. From now on, this department will be known as the Information and Promotion department. Specific tasks and responsibilities in this department have been assigned to particular people, which means that the employees can now do their work more efficiently and effectively.

The background features abstract organic shapes in red, white, grey, yellow, and blue. A large red shape is at the top left, followed by a white shape. Below them is a grey shape containing a yellow circle. To the right is a blue shape. The overall design is fluid and organic.

4

Management

The Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) wants to be an accessible and reliable partner that its customers can trust. This is why we are investing a lot of time and resources in ensuring optimum communication with our customers, as well as in modern techniques and technologies that will help us to streamline our procedures and work processes.

In 2007, we focussed on the changeover to portal technology and on the technical ramifications of the introduction of the online i-DEPOT. In the field of Personnel & Organisation, the headquarters agreement was signed with the BORGIP (the Benelux Organisation for Intellectual Property), and various types of internal rules and regulations were updated in the light of the Benelux Convention on Intellectual Property.

## 4.1 IT

The BOIP is working towards the integration of all its online services. In order to improve its interaction with its customers, the BOIP decided to implement a new IT platform called the IBM Websphere. High demands have been placed on this technology, both in terms of ease of use and reliability. The changeover from a traditional platform to IBM Websphere, which uses portal and process server technologies, is a demanding and challenging process that has naturally impacted on our work methods too.

The first application that is running under the new IT platform is that of the online i-DEPOT. The i-DEPOT is an application that allows a customer to record his or her ideas quickly and reliably and is a process that has been completely automated.

In order to get the online i-DEPOT up and running, it was necessary to re-organise a number of areas to prepare them for future developments. This includes the implementation of a financial interface, an electronic payments system and user management. The implemented infrastructure has already proved its worth. There are also plans to expand our interactive services further in the future. This will make the registration process more transparent, and even quicker and more efficient.

In addition to the work on the online i-DEPOT, we are working hard to automate the opposition process. The aim for the medium term is that a BOIP customer (i.e. an applicant or agent) will be able to intervene in the registration process easily and interactively. To do this, he will be given his own account so that he can access that information relevant to him. As a preparatory move, a user management concept has already been worked out for this.

We are also undertaking a lot of research on the trustworthiness and availability of the Internet. This is a very important issue, as it is the BOIP's main means of communication. In addition, most trademarks are filed and most ideas recorded via the Internet. This is why the servers needed for these processes have now been virtualised, which makes the systems less vulnerable to hardware problems and ensures the highest possible 'uptime'. In addition, servers have been clustered and Internet connections duplicated where necessary.

Another area in which the BOIP has invested a lot of work in 2007 is that of the project TM View. This is an ambitious European project that aims to make all trademarks that are valid in the European Union and that are registered in national, Community and international registers accessible via a single web-based application. By the end of the first phase, trademarks from the Benelux region, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Italy, Portugal, the Czech Republic and the OHIM and WIPO registers will be accessible from a single harmonised interface. This system is based on the XML standard for trademarks. This standard was developed at the BOIP's behest and last year was accepted as WIPO standard ST66. The TM View programme will get underway in 2008.

Our intense focus on the new IT platform and online i-DEPOT meant that the ongoing maintenance of existing applications had to be put on the back burner for a time. However, in 2008, we will devote more time to this maintenance programme before we initiate any major new project.

## 4.2 Communication

The i-DEPOT project meant that in 2007 a wide range of tasks and responsibilities were assigned to the Communication department. The changes to the technical environment, the legal criteria and the triple-language setting meant that we were faced with additional challenges. These challenges included the 'look and feel' of the new portal, the linkup of the portal to the existing online communication system, the development of computer screen texts for the i-DEPOT and the user management section, the editing of help texts, adjustments to the i-DEPOT information section of the website, the development of new products such as the i-DEPOT certificate and the CD-ROM for ordering reproductions.

Elsewhere, the Communication department has collaborated on the development of a new line of marketing communications in the Dutch, French and English languages that ties in with our corporate identity. Note too that it made a major contribution to the successful launch of the i-DEPOT on 17 November, by coordinating the necessary press and publicity and by produ-

cing a number of Dutch and French informative film clips that were shown at the launch. Please see pages 34 and 35 for an impression of the latest developments relating to the i-DEPOT.

## 4.3 Personnel and employment conditions

In order to make our work both of better quality and more enjoyable to do, the BOIP introduced a set of rules in 2007 that related to ideas management. In this way, the management wants to encourage employees to think about the BOIP's work processes and to improve the quality of our work and make it more enjoyable to perform. One of the reasons that we are doing this is that we believe that people can be incredibly creative and like to make a positive contribution. Note that here the term 'idea' refers to an original proposal worked out in detail in writing by one or more members of staff that can lead to the development of innovative services or products or to changes in working practices that allow the BOIP to operate more efficiently. It may also be a thought or opinion that proves of benefit to the organisation. The reward paid for such an idea can be anything up to 2,500 euros.

The efficiency gains and far-reaching automation of tasks has meant that some tasks no longer need to be performed. In 2007, this led to the laying-off of seven employees who had been with us for a long time. This painful process was conducted in a spirit of concord, which is a compliment to all those directly involved.

This year also saw the signing of the headquarters agreement between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the BORGIP, in line with the government position reached in 2005 on the recruitment and accommodation of international organisations. The agreement grants certain BOIP staff the same status as diplomatic officials. They enjoy certain privileges that are also accorded to staff of other international organisations that are established in the Netherlands. In addition, all staff members are granted job-related immunity.

Following on from the implementation of the new Convention, the in-house rules and regulations regarding the BOIP's Personnel Statute and Remunera-

tion Rules were updated in 2007. In this way, these rules and regulations were adapted to the legislation and case law relating to equal treatment. The fringe benefits were brought more into line with standard practice in central government and industry. The most important intrinsic changes relate to the introduction of care leave, the conditions for receiving an expatriation allowance, the formalisation of the Life-Course Scheme, the determination of the order in which people are laid off, and the adjustment of the benefit paid out over and above the statutory minimum unemployment benefit. Just as central government has done, we scrapped the LIFO principle (last in, first out) and replaced it with a new order of redundancy based on ability and importance to the organisation. The Office is advised by an external specialist in such matters. The previous adjustments made by the central government in respect of the extension of the duration of the benefit paid out over and above the statutory minimum and of the benefit amount itself were followed.

A further important change is that the board of the BOIP's pension fund foundation have decided to close down the pension fund. During 2008, the BOIP will switch over to a 'directly insured' scheme. The proposed closure is related to the new requirements imposed by the Pension Act of 7 December 2006 on the organisation and operation of a pension scheme foundation. This Act provides for the setting up of a responsible body and supervisory body as well as for the implementation of a complaints and disputes procedure. The Act also sets additional requirements relating to the quality and expertise of the officers and members of the supervisory body and also lays down all types of regulations relating to financial reporting, responsibility, self-assessment and planning. These stricter requirements will greatly increase the existing administrative burden. Another point is that it will now be very difficult to find officers who are willing and able to manage these ever more complex processes under the strict regime imposed by the new Act and under the supervision of various supervisory bodies.

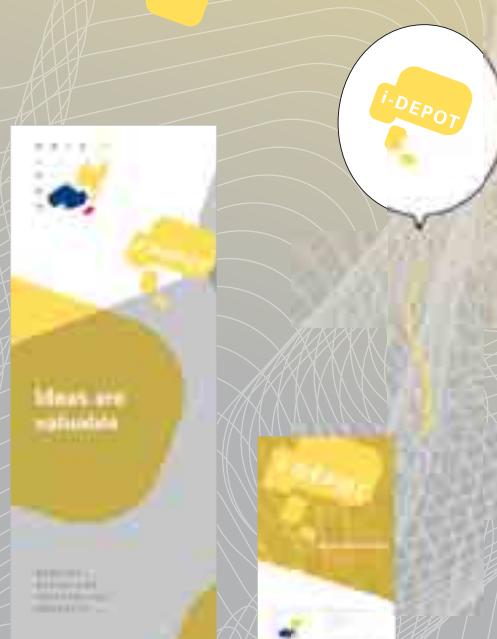
## 4.4 Management team

The day-to-day running of the BOIP is in the hands of the Directors' Committee, which is staffed by three directors. They participate in meetings of the Management Board, in which they have an advisory role. In April 2007, a management team (MT) consisting of the directors and the departmental heads of the departments Finance, IT, Registration, Personnel & Organisation, and Information & Promotion was set up to handle the coordination, control and guidance of the departments and of the in-house communication. The MT forms the backbone of a functional and efficient structure of consultation between the departments and the BOIP's management. The MT will be able to act decisively, will have short decision-making lines and will be deployed widely, especially to achieve practical, visible results.

Promotion material



i-DEPOT



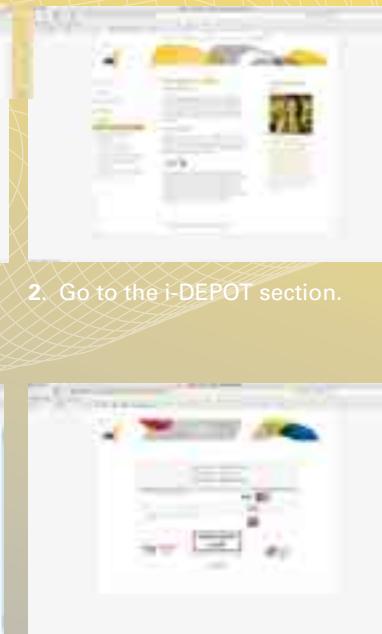
## Submitting an idea with the online i-DEPOT

Since November 2007 companies can record ideas online, as well as being able to use the traditional method of submitting an i-DEPOT envelope.

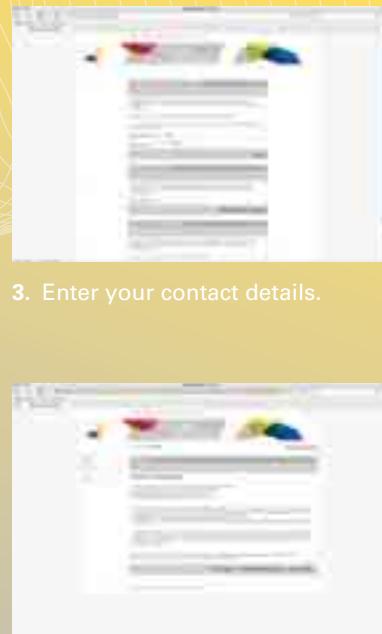
This is how the online i-DEPOT works



1. Log in to your account.



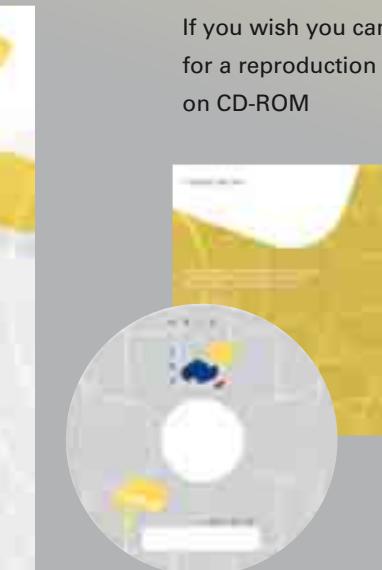
2. Go to the i-DEPOT section.



3. Enter your contact details.



4. Add a description of your concept or idea.



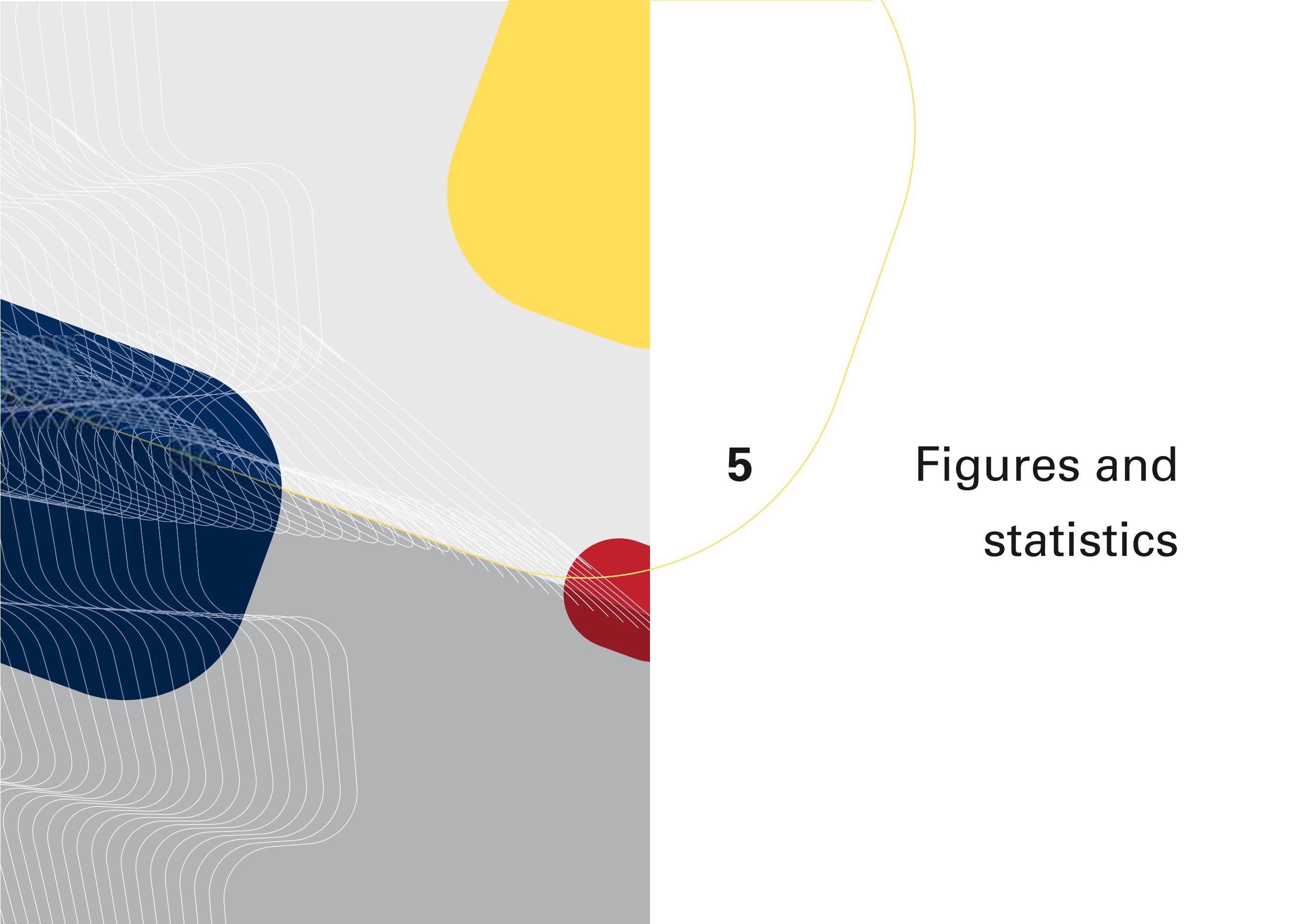
5. Pay. You will receive a confirmation email.



6. Download the i-DEPOT certificate.

If you wish you can also apply for a reproduction of your i-DEPOT on CD-ROM

Minister Van der Hoeven launched the online i-DEPOT on 29 November 2007

The background features a complex pattern of white wavy lines on a light gray background. Three large, semi-transparent circles are overlaid: a dark blue circle on the left, a yellow circle at the top center, and a red circle at the bottom center. A thin yellow curved line starts from the red circle, goes up and to the right, and ends near the yellow circle.

**5**

**Figures and  
statistics**

## 5.1 Financial report

### 5.1.1 Balance sheet as at 31 December 2007

<b>Assets</b>		<b>Liabilities</b>	
<i>in thousands of euros</i>	2007	<i>in thousands of euros</i>	2007
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>		<i>General reserve</i>	8,980
Industrial buildings and land	7,442	BOIP reserve fund	10,807
Automation	1,870	<b>Total equity</b>	<b>19,787</b>
Other fixed assets	154		
	9,466		
		<i>Provision</i>	
<i>Financial fixed assets</i>	8,074	Provision for reorganisation	492
		Provision for early retirement	59
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	<b>17,540</b>	Provision for large-scale maintenance	56
Accounts receivable	1,378	<i>Short-term debts</i>	
		Deferred income	4,962
<i>Liquid assets</i>		Other short-term debts	2,633
Cash in hand	7,290		
Deposits	1,781		
	9,071	<b>Total debt capital</b>	<b>8,202</b>
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>27,989</b>		
	25,299		25,299

## 5.1.2 Statement of income and expenditure

<i>in thousands of euros</i>	2007	2006
Revenue	14,221	17,568
<i>Operating expenses</i>		
Staff costs	10,495	9,699
Depreciation	756	942
Miscellaneous operating expenses	2,213	2,357
	13,464	12,998
<b>Operating result</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>4,570</b>
<i>Financial income and expenditure</i>		
Interest income	378	186
Exchange gains and losses and investment portfolio	174	54
	552	240
<b>Profit for the year</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>4,810</b>

## 5.1.3 Notes

Modernisation was carried out on many fronts in 2007. This has provided a good basis for dealing with the developments on the staffing and technical fronts and will ensure we will continue to have a solid financial framework.

The operating result in 2007 was satisfactory. For the fifth successive year, we achieved a profit for the year. Revenue fell to € 14,221,000 (2006: € 17,568,000), as it was no longer possible to benefit from non-recurring windfalls (work in progress, additional business from the .eu Internet domain name extension new at that time).

The profit for the year of € 1,309,000 is somewhat low compared to the figure for 2006 (€ 4,810,000) but from an operational point of view, 2007 was a better year. This is because when adjusted for non-recurring factors, the number of depots rose in 2007, as did the number of renewals and i-DEPOTs. The adjusted number of depots received and paid for was five percent higher than in 2006. This compensates for the fall in the number of accelerated searches and in the level of drawings-related and designs-related activity.

The number of applications for renewals rose by almost seven percent in 2007 to a record high of 13,303 renewals. Developments in the existing trademark portfolio had led to an increase of 3% being forecasted. This means that the percentage of renewals (for those trademarks that can be renewed) is on the rise again after a previous decline. It is estimated that 44 percent of the registrations up for renewal were actually renewed. The management is watching with great interest to see whether this increase in the renewal ratio happens again next year. When seen in combination with the (slowly) expanding trademark pool, this could mean that revenue from renewals rises more rapidly than inflation.

The opposition service experienced significant developments in 2007, with oppositions being submitted against 5.75 percent of the opposable trademarks for the whole of 2007, a figure that exceeded the 5 % opposition rate expected. Revenue rose from € 149,000 in 2006 to € 706,000 in 2007. Part of this increase (€ 185,000) was due to a new method of forming reserves, as the old method was very conservative indeed. In 2007, it was decided to account for half of the

fee (in this case € 200) for each outstanding opposition as income. The remaining reservation of € 575,000 is still more than enough to be able to complete all the outstanding oppositions.

Total revenue from the i-DEPOT almost doubled to € 104,000 (2006: € 55,000). The introduction late in the year of the online i-DEPOT meant that the latter could only make a modest contribution to this result up to now.

The initial reports for 2008 are fairly promising. As expected, the demand for paper envelopes has fallen sharply, with that for the online i-DEPOTs rising sharply. All in all, demand for the i-DEPOT is increasing.

In 2007, staff costs rose to € 10,495,000 (2006: € 9,699,000), mainly due to the pay rise granted following that awarded by central government. Another development is that the employer's contribution to healthcare costs has now been converted into gross wages. From 2008 onwards we will for the first time enjoy significant cost savings resulting from previous cost-cutting programmes. The departure of several colleagues in 2007 has not yet led to any significant reduction in wage costs, as most of these people left towards the end of the year.

Depreciation fell from € 942,000 to € 756,000 but this figure will rise again in 2008 due to investment in the automation of oppositions and in the online i-DEPOT. The BOIP sets great store by efficiency, which is why it will continue to invest in the coming years in the extensive automation of its services.

The miscellaneous expenses item, at € 2,213,000, was a few percent lower than in 2006 (€ 2,357,000), although there were special reasons for this: first, accommodation costs were affected by a non-recurring release amounting to € 127,000 in the provision for large-scale maintenance. The items in the provision that are eligible for capitalisation have been removed. In future, such items will be reported as investments.

The second special reason relates to the accountancy fees that are part of the automation costs. The introduction of portals, user management and the drive towards project-based working led to these costs reaching € 260,000 in 2007, a figure higher than the usual annual € 100,000 to € 150,000 figure for this item.

Finally, the legal expenses were greatly affected by the consultancy work needed in connection with the headquarters agreement entered into.

The ending of the OHIM source of revenue (2007: € 1,096,000) means that from mid-2008 onwards the service provided by the BOIP will no longer cover its own costs. For 2008, we expect to make an operating profit, assuming that any recession in the United States does not yet gain a foothold in the Benelux region. This means that the reserves, which at € 10.8 mln are already ample, will increase further in size.

We are expecting operating losses from 2009 onwards. This operating deficit will still remain modest in size in 2009, thanks to the cost-cutting measures implemented during the past few years. However, in the years after this, the deficit could increase as the result of inflation and agreed wage rises. Given the existing financial reserves, a loss in 2009 will not necessarily mean that we have to increase our tariffs immediately.

## Auditors' report

### Introduction

We have audited whether the accompanying abbreviated financial statements of the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property, The Hague, for the year 2007 have been derived consistently from the audited financial statements of the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property, for the year 2007. In our auditors' report dated 21 May 2008 we expressed an unqualified opinion on these financial statements. Management is responsible for the preparation of the abbreviated financial statements in accordance with the accounting policies as applied in the 2007 financial statements of the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these abbreviated financial statements.

**Scope**

We conducted our audit in accordance with Dutch law. This law requires that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance that the abbreviated financial statements have been derived consistently from the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

**Opinion**

In our opinion, these abbreviated financial statements have been derived consistently, in all material respects, from the financial statements.

**Emphasis of matter**

For a better understanding of the company's financial position and results and the scope of our audit, we emphasize that the abbreviated financial statements should be read in conjunction with the unabridged financial statements, from which the abbreviated financial statements were derived and our unqualified auditors' report thereon dated 21 May 2008. We emphasize that the financial statements 2007 and our auditors' report thereon are intended solely for specific users, participants in the Benelux convention for Intellectual Property and may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not qualified in respect of this matter.

The Hague, 13 June 2008  
PricewaterhouseCoopers Accountants N.V.

Original is signed by drs. A.E. Gerritsma RA

## 5.2 Workforce data

### 5.2.1 Size of workforce

As at 31 December 2007, the Office employed 93 persons. Four employees celebrated their 25th anniversary of service in 2007. Nine employees left our organisation in 2007, four of them in connection with the reorganisation. A lawyer was recruited for the Registration and Legal Affairs department.

	31-12-2007	31-12-2006
NL	70	77
B	20	21
L	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>101</b>

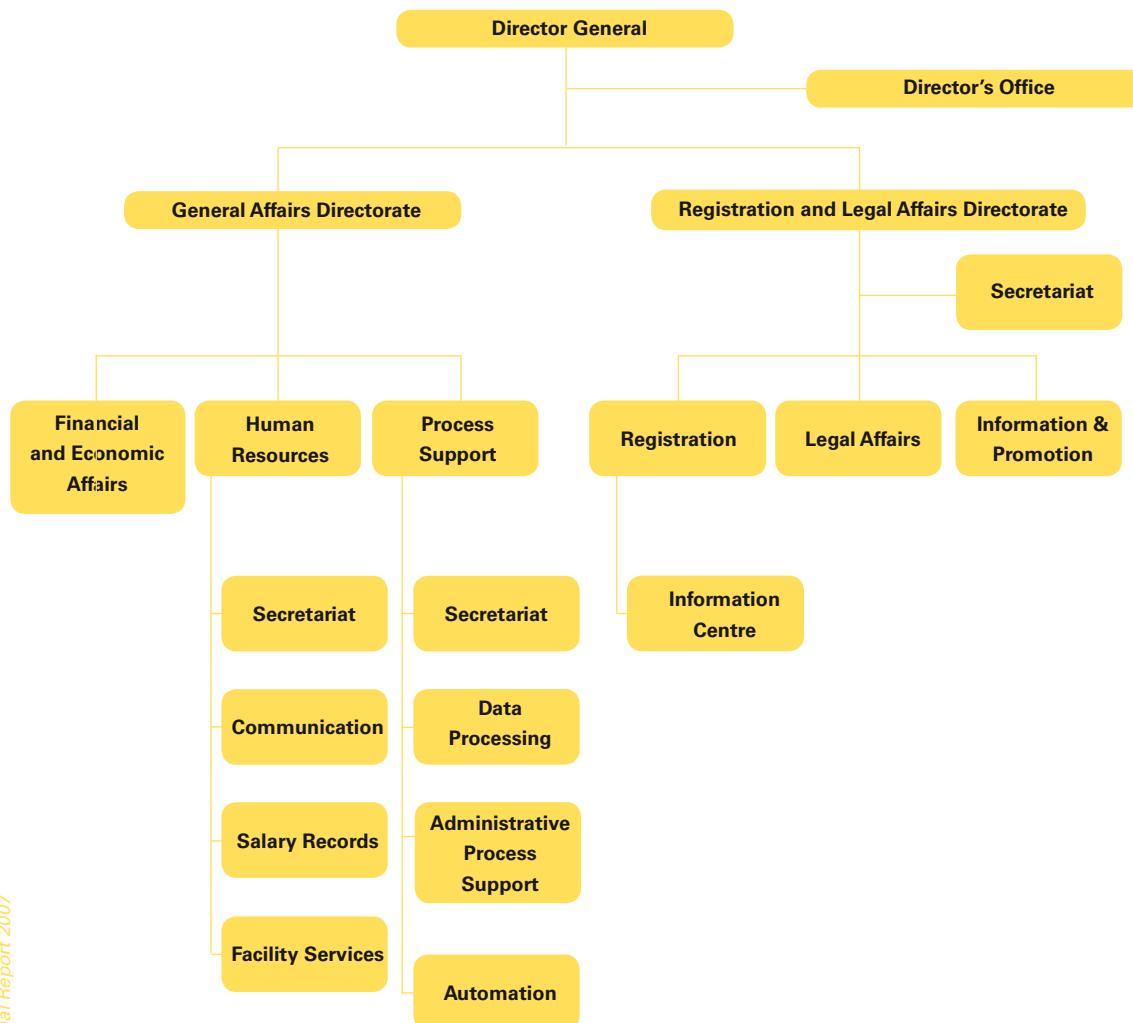
Male	Female
41	52

Full time	Part time
56	37

Years of service	Number of employees
0 tot 5	8
5 tot 10	26
10 tot 15	10
15 tot 20	25
20 tot 25	17
25 tot 30	5
30 tot 35	1
35 tot 40	1
	<b>93</b>

Age class	Number of employees
20 tot 25	0
25 tot 30	2
30 tot 35	3
35 tot 40	17
40 tot 45	26
45 tot 50	19
50 tot 55	18
55 tot 60	6
60 tot 65	2
	<b>93</b>

## 5.2.2 Organisational chart as at 31 December 2007



## 5.3 Trademarks, designs and ideas

### 5.3.1 Trademarks

#### 1 Searches

##### Benelux searches<sup>1</sup>

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Priority	2,495	3,959	3,697	5,805	
Standard	18,736	23,555	18,897	21,527	
Total	268	21,231	27,514	22,594	27,332

##### International searches<sup>2</sup>

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
	0	14,890	7,805	664	24,897

##### European searches

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
	89,085	71,431	87,576	60,142	41,050

1. Since 1 September 2006, the Benelux search is no longer compulsory.
2. The compulsory international search was abolished as of 1 September 2006.

## 2 Benelux filings

<b>Total</b>					
2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	
24,659	27,221	30,691	22,618	23,344	

<b>Submitted online</b>					
2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	
20,644	21,652	22,848	13,893	10,371	

<b>Collective trademarks</b>					
2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	
55	72	63	75	97	

**Benelux filings broken down by class**

	Aantal	%
01	629	0.89
02	310	0.44
03	1,245	1.76
04	261	0.37
05	1,627	2.30
06	735	1.04
07	608	0.86
08	321	0.45
09	4,575	6.46
10	518	0.73
11	983	1.39
12	722	1.02
13	36	0.05
14	746	1.05
15	61	0.09
16	4,140	5.85
17	417	0.59
18	1,174	1.66
19	873	1.23
20	1,091	1.54
21	687	0.97
22	167	0.24
23	80	0.11
24	798	1.13
25	2,780	3.93
26	187	0.26
27	231	0.33
28	1,281	1.81
29	1,564	2.21
30	1,884	2.66
31	1,064	1.50
32	888	1.25
33	538	0.76
34	184	0.26
35	10,099	14.27
36	3,156	4.46
37	2,067	2.92
38	2,209	3.12
39	1,461	2.06
40	689	0.97
41	7,125	10.07
42	5,127	7.24
43	1,695	2.40
44	1,755	2.48
45	1,980	2.80
	<b>70,768</b>	<b>100</b>

**Breakdown of Benelux filings by national office**

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Belgium	309	301	398	607	804
Luxembourg	0	0	25	37	47
BOIP	24,372	26,920	30,266	21,970	22,492
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,646</b>	<b>27,221</b>	<b>30,689</b>	<b>22,614</b>	<b>23,343</b>

**Benelux filings broken down by country of origin**

	2007	%	2006	%	2005	%	2004	%	2003	%
Benelux										
Netherlands	17,077	69.34	18,259	67.21	20,385	6.52	15,588	68.98	16,296	69.87
Belgium	5,321	21.61	5,168	19.02	5,707	18.62	4,768	21.10	4,945	21.20
Luxembourg	566	2.30	578	2.13	526	1.72	452	2.00	449	1.93
U.S.	414	1.68	814	3.00	859	2.80	688	3.04	497	2.13
Japan	58	0.24	74	0.27	70	0.23	79	0.35	100	0.43
Other EU	710	2.88	1,697	6.25	2,524	8.24	595	2.63	604	2.59
Other	482	1.96	579	2.13	574	1.87	428	1.89	433	1.86

**3 Priority registration processes****Monthly priority registration processes**

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
1	284	1,701	205	73	
2	323	1,263	234	110	
3	316	929	270	115	
4	241	868	278	183	
5	299	285	247	201	
6	266	280	331	179	
7	232	261	271	175	
8	239	239	411	208	
9	218	275	543	181	
10	239	329	812	240	1
11	272	301	2,833	196	1
12	176	274	3,939	252	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,105</b>	<b>7,005</b>	<b>10,374</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>3</b>

**4 Published trademarks****Number of trademarks published**

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Individual	20,107	34,488	19,874	19,009	23,714
Collective	45	79	59	88	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,152</b>	<b>34,567</b>	<b>19,933</b>	<b>19,097</b>	<b>23,809</b>

**5 Requests for renewal****Requests for renewal**

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Individual	13,248	12,424	13,215	12,710	12,079
Collective	54	33	60	42	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,302</b>	<b>12,457</b>	<b>13,275</b>	<b>12,752</b>	<b>12,127</b>

**6 International****International registrations applied for via the BOIP**

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Protocol	508	453	361	221	115
Agreement	581	654	783	758	832
Agr. + Prot.	1,438	1,503	1,398	1,385	1,307
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,531</b>	<b>2,615</b>	<b>2,563</b>	<b>2,577</b>	<b>2,343</b>

**International registrations valid in the Benelux region**

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,141</b>	<b>6,987</b>	<b>9,237</b>	<b>7,791</b>	<b>8,447</b>

## 7 Refusal on absolute grounds

### Refusal on absolute grounds - Statistics 2006<sup>1</sup>

	Number	Percentage	Total
<b>Benelux filings<sup>2</sup></b>			<b>25,754</b>
Filed by trademark proprietors	8,540	33.16%	
Filed by agents	17,214	66.84%	
		100%	
<b>Provisional refusals</b>			<b>2,494</b>
Full	2,438	9.47%	
Partial	56	0.22%	
		9.68%	
Filed by trademark proprietors <sup>3</sup>	1,276	14.94%	
Filed by agents <sup>3</sup>	1,218	7.8%	
Filings resulting in registration despite provisional refusal <sup>4</sup>	206	0.80%	
Filings withdrawn by request/cancelled priority registrations	352	1.37%	
Filings excluded from further processing	776	3.01%	
Objection period still underway (Regulation 1.15 Implementing Regulations)	8	0.03%	
<b>Final refusals</b>			<b>1,152</b>
Of which: cancelled priority registrations	423		
Full	1,132	4.40%	
Partial	20	0.08%	
		4.47%	
Filed by trademark proprietors <sup>3</sup>	554	6.49%	
Filed by agents <sup>3</sup>	598	3.47%	
No objection lodged	876		
Objection was lodged	276		
<b>Appeal lodged (Article 2.12 BCoIP)<sup>6</sup></b>			<b>15</b>
In Belgium	10		
In Netherlands	5		
In Luxembourg	0		

1 The statistics for 2007 are not yet available due to the deadlines specified for this procedure.

2 This is based on the number of filings received.

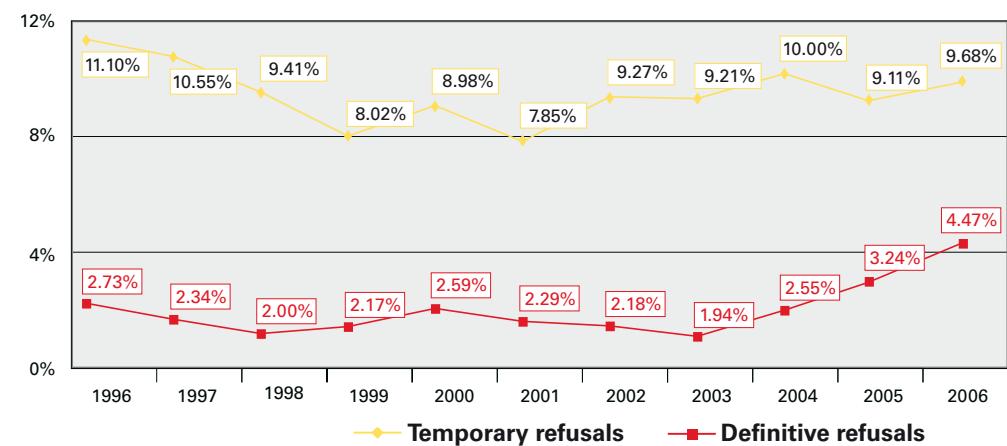
3 These percentages relate to the percentage of refusals calculated in respect of the number of filings filed by trademark proprietors/agents.

4 This usually relates to provisional refusals that have been revised after a response by the trademark proprietor/agent, for example if the filing is limited or if the establishment of a trademark is demonstrated.

5 The percentage of final refusals is higher than in previous years. This is due to several factors, including the fact that changes in the filing procedure have meant that fewer filings are being excluded from further processing.

6 In contrast to all other figures in this table, which have been calculated on the basis of the numbers as at the filing date in the year in question, the number of appeals has been calculated based on the date that the appeal was submitted.

### Development of refusals on absolute grounds versus number of filings



## 8 Oppositions

Number of oppositions		
	Number	Percentage
Allowable	1,303	98%
Disallowed	31	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,334</b>	
<i>Cancelled (2007) (allowable oppositions)</i>		
Total	501	38%
<i>Still under consideration</i>		
From 2007	802	62%
<i>Opposition filed against (allowable oppositions)</i>		
Benelux law	1,159	89%
International law	144	11%
<i>Preferred language (allowable oppositions)</i>		
Dutch	944	72%
French	326	25%
No preference	33	3%
Use of English	568	44%

## 5.3.2 Designs

Benelux filings					
2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
1,036	1,105	1,086	1,479	1,955	3,151

Breakdown of Benelux filings by national office					
2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Belgium	159	153	125	208	351
Luxembourg	1	2	6	10	9
Netherlands	867	950	955	1,261	1,595
					2,840

Number of designs published					
2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
894	1,010	1,238	2,013	2,074	2,764

Requests for renewal					
2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
1,875	1,869	1,930	1,755	1,700	1,614

### 5.3.3 Ideas

#### i-DEPOT envelopes

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Sold	1,287	1,040	746	627	742
Returned	1,423	742	498	470	457

#### Breakdown of i-DEPOT envelopes by country

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Belgium	646	409	343	302	280
Luxembourg	35	26	13	9	12
Netherlands	599	296	133	156	158
Other	7	11	9	3	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,287</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>457</b>

#### Online I-DEPOTS\*

	2007
Belgium	50
Netherlands	85
Luxembourg	1
Other	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>

\* launched mid-November 2007

The background features a complex, abstract design. On the left, there is a large red circle with a textured, pixelated pattern. Overlaid on it are several thin, white, wavy lines forming a grid-like structure. To the right of the red circle is a large yellow circle. Below the yellow circle is a smaller dark blue circle. A thick, yellow curved line starts from the bottom edge of the yellow circle and sweeps upwards and to the right, ending near the top edge of the slide. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

**6**

Information  
and data

## 6.1 Joint Management Bodies

### 6.1.1 Management Board

The Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) is part of the Benelux Organisation for Intellectual Property (BORGIP), an international organisation that is supervised by its Management Board. This Board is staffed by representatives of all three Benelux countries (one director and two deputy directors for each country). The chair(wo)man is chosen from the ranks of the directors and is elected for a period of three years. The working languages used by the Management Board are French and Dutch. The decisions of the Management Board are made unanimously.

#### Chairman

*Guus Broesterhuizen*

Director

Netherlands Patent Office (NL)

#### Directors

*Robert Geurts*

Director General

Federal Economics Service

Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Energy

Market Regularisation and Organisation Board

Intellectual Property Unit (B)

*Lex Kaufhold*

Board advisor 1st degree

Intellectual Property Directorate

Ministère de l'Economie et du Commerce Extérieur (L)

#### Deputy Directors

*Monique Petit*

Attaché

Federal Economics Service

Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Energy

Market Regularisation and Organisation Board

Intellectual Property Unit (B)

*Gunther Aelbrecht*

Attaché

Federal Economics Service

Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Energy

Market Regularisation and Organisation Board

Intellectual Property Unit (B)

*Claude Sahl*

Head of the Legislation Sector

Intellectual Property Directorate

Ministère de l'Economie et du Commerce Extérieur (L)

*Paul van Beukering*

Advisor on Industrial Property

Director of Innovation

Directorate General for Enterprise and Innovation

Ministry of Economic Affairs (NL)

*Derk-Jan de Groot*  
 Manager Patent Application Department  
 Netherlands Patent Office (NL)

## 6.1.2 Subbodies of the Management Board

The Management Board is supported by the Supervisory Board, COPERA and COREMO. COPERA is the Management Board's consultation committee for personnel matters. Its members are representatives of the Management Board, the personnel committee and the management. COREMO advises the Management Board on the BOIP's tasks and objectives as laid down by the Benelux Convention on Intellectual Property. COREMO is composed of representatives of the BOIP and the national offices.

**Supervisory Board**

**Chairman**

*Hans van der Valk*  
 Head of Management and Deputy Director  
 Financial and Economic Affairs Department  
 Ministry of Economic Affairs (NL)

*Pierre Thielen*  
 Observatoire de la Compétitivité  
 Direction Générale des Etudes Economiques  
 Ministère de l'Economie et du Commerce Extérieur (L)

*Edward Bruyère*  
 Attaché  
 Federal Economics Service  
 Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Energy  
 Budget and Management Control (B)

**COPERA**

**Chairwoman**

*Monique Petit*  
 Attaché  
 Federal Economics Service  
 Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Energy  
 Market Regularisation and Organisation Board (B)

*Derk-Jan de Groot*  
 Manager Patent Application Department  
 Netherlands Patent Office (NL)

*Lex Kaufhold*  
 Board advisor 1st degree  
 Intellectual Property Directorate  
 Ministère de l'Economie et du Commerce Extérieur (L)

**COREMO**

**Chairman**

*Claude Sahl*  
 Head of the Legislation Sector  
 Intellectual Property Directorate  
 Ministère de l'Economie et du Commerce Extérieur (L)

*Monique Petit*  
 Attaché  
 Federal Economics Service  
 Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Energy  
 Market Regularisation and Organisation Board  
 Intellectual Property Unit (B)

*Paul van Beukering*

Advisor on Industrial Property

Director of Innovation

Directorate General for Enterprise and Innovation

Ministry of Economic Affairs (NL)

*Loes van Ruiven-van Zuijdam*

Legal advisor

Netherlands Patent Office (NL)

### **6.1.3 Directors**

The day-to-day running of the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property, the most visible organ of the Benelux organisation, is in the hands of the Directors' Committee. The members of this Committee play an advisory role in the meetings of the Management Board that they attend. Between them, the directors represent all three nationalities. They are supported by the management team.

*Edmond Simon*

Director General (L)

*Dick Verschure*

Deputy Director General

General Affairs (NL)

*Hugues Derème*

Deputy Director General

Registration and Legal Affairs (B)

## **6.2 National offices**

Federal Economics Service

Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Energy

Intellectual Property Unit

North Gate III - Koning Albert II Laan 16

B-1000 Brussels

Belgium

Tel. + 32 2 277 52 97

Fax + 32 2 277 52 77

economie.fgov.be

Ministère de l'Economie et du Commerce Extérieur

Direction de la Propriété Intellectuelle

Boulevard Royal 19-21

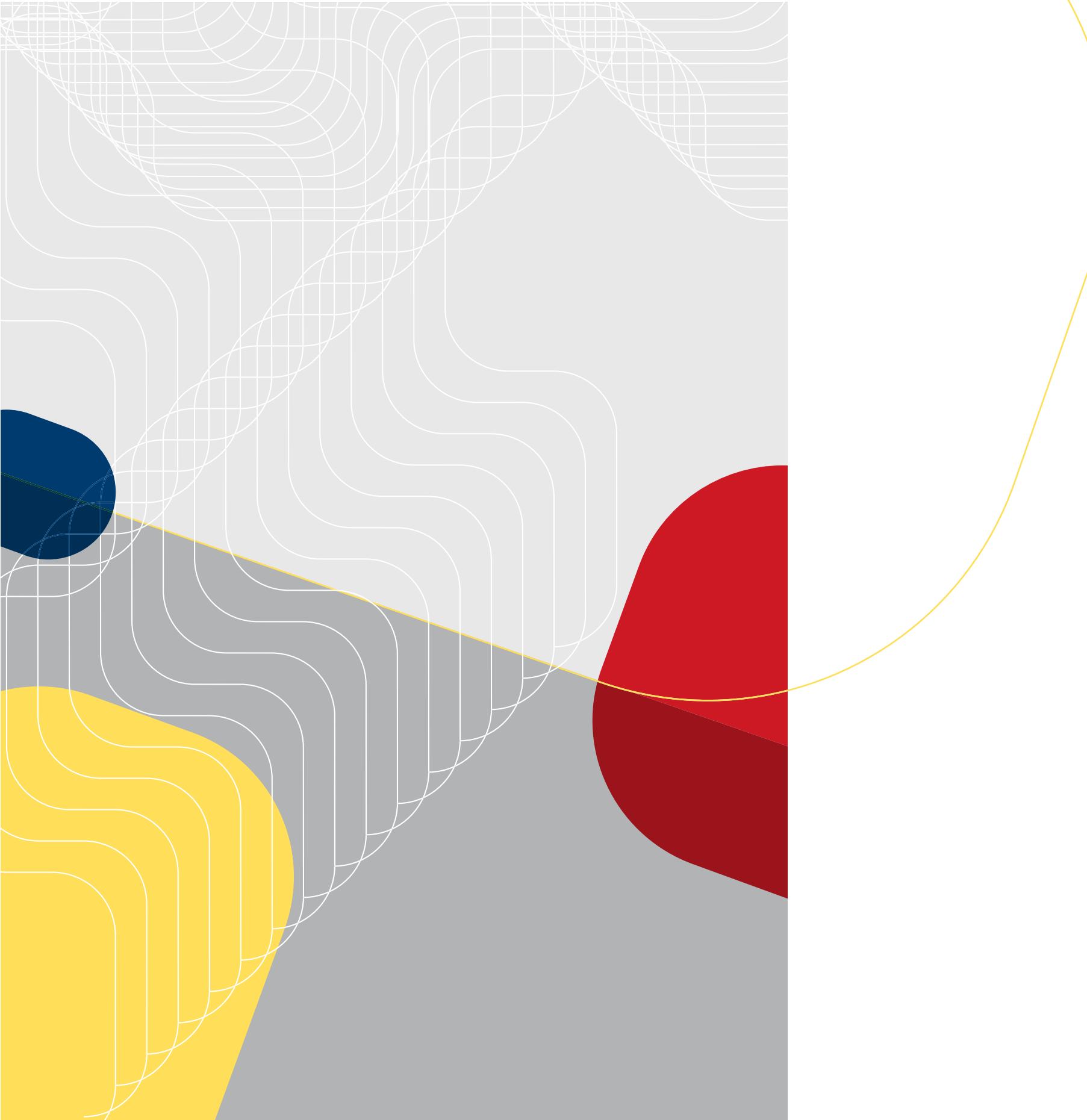
2449 Luxembourg

Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Tel. +352 478 41 87

Fax +352 22 26 60

www.eco.public.lu



The background features a complex abstract design. On the left, there is a large, semi-transparent yellow circle. Overlaid on it are several other circles in different colors: a dark blue circle at the top left, a grey circle below it, and a red circle on the right. These colored circles are surrounded by numerous thin, white, wavy lines that create a sense of depth and motion. The overall effect is organic and dynamic.

# Terms and definitions

#### **Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP)**

The Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) is the official institution in the Benelux region for the registration of trademarks and designs. In addition, the BOIP can record the creation date for ideas. The BOIP is the executive body of the Benelux Organisation for Intellectual Property (BORGIP). The BORGIP became the legal successor to the Benelux Trademarks Office and the Benelux Designs Office in September 2006.

#### **Benelux Organisation for Intellectual Property (BORGIP)**

The BOIP is part of the Benelux Organisation for Intellectual Property (BORGIP), an organisation with an international legal personality. Other organs of the BORGIP are the Committee of (Benelux) Ministers and the Management Board, which is comprised of representatives of the Benelux countries.

#### **Benelux Convention on Intellectual Property (BCIP)**

The Benelux Convention on Intellectual Property came into force on 1 September 2006. The Convention replaces previous conventions and treaties, uniform laws and amendment protocols relating to Benelux trademarks, drawings and designs.

#### **Community Trade Mark and Community design**

EC trademark or EC design: trademark or design filed with the OHIM in Alicante, Spain. A Community Trade Mark or Community design is protected in all countries of the EU.

#### **COPERA**

COPERA is the BOIP Management Board's consultation committee for personnel matters. Its members are representatives of the Management Board, the personnel committee and the management.

#### **COREMO**

COREMO advises the Management Board on the BOIP's tasks and objectives as prescribed by the Benelux Convention on Intellectual Property. COREMO is composed of representatives of the BOIP and the national offices.

#### **Federal Economics Service**

The Federal Economics Service Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Energy is a Belgian federal government agency that succeeded the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Its main task is to develop an effective Belgian economic policy by promoting the competitiveness of Belgian companies, by ensuring that a fair socio-economic equilibrium is maintained, by ensuring that the goods and services market conducts itself correctly, and by protecting the rights of consumers.

#### **Netherlands Patent Office**

Netherlands Patent Office, formerly known as De Octrooiraad, is an agency of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. The Netherlands Patent Office is an administrative law body of Dutch central government that is charged with the granting of patents.

#### **OHIM**

Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market: the Office of the European Union responsible for the registration of trademarks and designs.

**SME**

Small and medium-sized enterprises.

**UCM**

The Union des Classes Moyennes (Walloon province, Belgium) defends, represents and promotes the interests of the self-employed, traders, SME company heads and of persons practising professions.

**Unizo**

Flemish Organisation for the Self-Employed and SMEs (Flanders province, Belgium): defends, represents and promotes the interests of the self-employed, traders, SME company heads and of persons practising professions.

**VLAO**

The VLAO-Flanders Enterprise Agency is the Flemish government's information centre for businesses.

**WIPO**

WIPO, the World International Property Organization, is an international organisation dedicated to the protection of intellectual monopolies. WIPO is a specialist organisation of the United Nations. WIPO has 177 member states and administers 21 international treaties and conventions. Its headquarters are located in Geneva, Switzerland.

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Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP)  
Bordewijkstraat 15  
NL-2591 XR The Hague  
The Netherlands

T +31 70 349 11 11  
F +31 70 347 57 08  
E info@boip.int  
I [www.boip.int](http://www.boip.int)

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