

Legal Status Categories in INPADOCDB and INPAFAMDB

FIZ Karlsruhe has introduced a set of 27 legal status categories to simplify legal status searches with the about 4,000 legal status codes. Any changes to the legal status codes are continuously monitored and new codes are captured in the relevant category.

22 Legal Status Categories are based on European Patent Office's specification:

Category	Text	Definition
CHG	Change of Owner, Inventor, Applicant	Change of applicant or owner, as well as changes of their names or/and addresses
CLA	Change, Removal or Addition of Classifications	Change, removal or addition of the IPC-classification of the patent or its application
COR	Correction, Amendment, Modification in Specification	Correction and amendments in the text of the patent specification. NOT INCLUDED: Changes in the Register or the bibliographic data or changes and deletions of former legal events.
DIV	Divisional and Additional Applications	Information that a division, addition etc. from the parent (original) patent can be found in this category.
ENP	Entry into National Phase	Entry of a patent from a regional patent office (EP, EA) into national phase; information that a translation was sent to a national office. Entry of PCT applications into regional or national phase.
ERR	Erratum	Correction or deletion of former legal events (sometimes also of events that were not part of original datasets)
EXA	Examination, Search Report	Procedural steps during the lifetime of the patent (search and examination) in patent offices. NOT INCLUDED: Time extension for special procedures, invalidations during examination procedure or time extensions.
EXP	Expiry	Patents or utility models became invalid when they reached their maximum lifetime. NOTE: Some patent offices classify this kind of invalidation as lapsed.
EXT	Time Extension	Time extensions for special procedures during examination as well as time extension for payment of fees or completion of specification.
FEE	Fee Payment	Fees that keep the patent or utility model valid have been paid. Confirmation that the patent or utility model was valid on a particular date
LAP	Lapse (Non-Payment of Fees)	Patents or utility models or their applications became invalid due to non-payment of the due fees. NOTE: After a lapse, patents can be validated (reinstated) by late fee payments.

LIC	Licensing	Offers to license patents or utility models; beginning or termination of a license; change of licensee, any known kind of exploitation rights by a third party
LIM	Nullification of Parts of Rights, Limitation	The validity of patents or utility models have been limited, e.g. exclusion of certain claims. Also patents that have been limited through the opposition procedure.
MIS	Miscellaneous or Ambiguous	Events that do not fall into any of the previously listed categories OR those that could be assigned to two or more categories AND other events when the category is unclear.
NEN	Non-entry into national phase (WO)	Non-entry events of PCT applications into regional or national phase.
NOP	No Opposition or Appeal	Decision whether opposition, appeal or nullity proceedings are refused or rejected.
ORE	Opposition, Reexamination, Appeal	Events in the opposition phase include filing, rejection, reexamination, proceedings, appeal to patent courts, etc. NOT INCLUDED: Decision of rejection or limitation of patents in the opposition phase.
PUB	New or Withdrawn Publication	Publication and republication of the patent text (if this publication is not included in the bibliographic data) as well as withdrawals of a former publication.
REI	Reinstatement or Restoration	Patents or utility models previously invalidated have become valid again (e.g. late payment of annual fees, etc.)
REP	Change of Representative	Announcement of the change of representative (agent), as well as changes of their names and/or addresses
SPC	Supplementary Protection Certificate, Term Extension	Application, grant, withdrawal, expiry, etc. for a prolonged industrial property right of a patent or of a product from a patent, i.e. all procedural steps of SPCs, incl. their invalidations.
WTH	Withdrawal, Refusal, etc.	Patents or utility models became invalid for reasons other than non-payment of the required fees or reaching the maximum lifetime. Codes indicating the invalidity after opposition procedure are also in this category. NOTE: It is possible that an invalid patent will be reinstated at a later stage (e.g. after a decision by the patent court)

Five legal status categories are derived from the bibliographic data. The categories GRA, PRE and UKN correspond to the status assigned to a publication, whereas APP und PRI correspond to the application and priority information.

GRA	Grant publication information
PRE	Pre-grant publication information
UKN	Unknown
APP	Patent application
PRI	Priority information

