National seminar for Patent Attorneys, organized by the EU project

Patent Attorneys met on 8 February at a national seminar organized by the EU Project "Support to Enforcement of the Intellectual Property Rights" in cooperation with AGEPI. The event discussed the current system of patent attorneys, reviewed a draft Code of Ethics and exchanged best practices in the field.

"*The rules of a Code of Ethics for patent attorneys will support the attorney's performance of his professional mission, which must be based on competence, honesty, morality and, most importantly, integrity. As a result, this document will guarantee qualified assistance to those interested in intellectual property services and consult*", declared Andrei Popa, Deputy General Director of AGEPI, at the opening of the event.

"*The institution of patent attorneys in Europe plays a substantial role in promoting intellectual property rights, education of these rights and legislation, representing an important element of a modern society. I wish that the attorneys of the Republic of Moldova have the same standards of activity*", said Yuriy Kapitsa, expert of the EU project.

The seminar included a presentation of the German and English patent attorneys system, the profile of attorneys in Germany and the UK, the ethics issues applied at European level, as well as the pitfalls faced by professionals in the field. The presentation was made by Prof. Heinz Goddar, European and German Patent and Trade Mark Attorney and expert of the project "Support to Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights".

"*Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is a kind of fence that protects the will of its creator. In this respect, intellectual property professionals need to have the capacity to understand technical innovations, understand IPR as business tools, show professional ethics, and learn English well in order to act internationally”*, said Heinz Goddar.

An important topic approached at the workshop was the one related to the draft of the Deontological Code for Patent Attorneys and its implementation. According to the document, the attorney shall benefit from independence in his activity and must be free from any influence that might result from his/her own interests or those of third parties for whom he/she has been employed. Also, the authorized agent must demonstrate moral integrity, honesty, probity, fairness, sincerity and confidentiality to his client, characteristics that motivate the client's decision to employ him.

"*Taking into account that AGEPI monitors the work of patent attorneys and the fact that many EU countries have the experience of developing and applying Codes of Ethics and patent attorneys, as well as in order to increase their professionalism, is imperative to develop a Code of Ethics in this field and subsequently a mechanism for its implementation”*, considers Diana Stici, Head of the Legal Department of AGEPI.

And Iulian Iorga, patent attorney and national expert considers: "*Several legal provisions in Moldova do not contain clear rules on the conduct of attorneys. In this respect, the Code of Ethics for patent attorneys will expand and explain the principles of conduct of common situations in the daily work of these professionals. And these principles will be accountable to attorneys on the one hand and customers on the other*".

Seminar participants suggested several proposals for improving the draft Code of Ethics and identified the current needs for improving the Regulation on the work of patent attorneys in Moldova.

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The professional activity of the authorized attorneys consists in the representation of natural and

legal persons under the terms provided by the mandate contract or other contract with analogous content and/or by legal power of attorney of representation and in providing the necessary assistance in the field of protection of intellectual property objects (geographical indications, appellations of origin, traditional specialties guaranteed, trademarks, inventions, industrial designs, plant varieties, topographies of integrated circuits).

According to the National Register of Authorized Attorneys in Intellectual Property, there are currently 142 authorized attorneys in intellectual property registered in the Republic of Moldova. Of these, 14 suspended their activity for various reasons, and five patent attorneys completed their activity.

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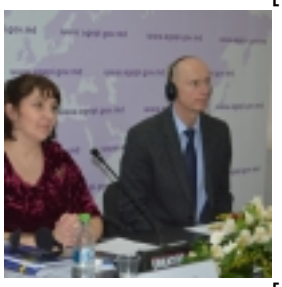

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