



CPVO

Community Plant Variety Office

Newsletter

Issue 13, Summer 2017

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The first months of the year have proved to be quite eventful at the CPVO. First of all, it is my pleasure to congratulate Mr Francesco Mattina, who

was appointed Vice President of the CPVO by the Council with effect from 16 July 2017. [Mr Mattina](#) has vast experience in the area of intellectual property; he previously worked in law firms and at the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and during the last 4 years has served as the Head of the Legal Unit at the CPVO.

A less positive event, in my personal opinion, is that the United Kingdom formally took the initiative to withdraw from the EU. Breeders from both sides of the Channel have benefited from PVP protection granted by the CPVO, something that now seems likely to come to an end. The CPVO has this year been preoccupied

with dealing with the consequences of Brexit and information on the steps taken so far is available on the [CPVO website](#). We are in close contact with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety in order to keep abreast of any news on the negotiations between the EU and the UK that may have an impact on CPVO activities and on the EU's PVP system.

There are nevertheless many positive things happening at the CPVO and I invite you to read all about our ongoing activities in this 13th edition of the Newsletter.

*Martin Ekvad
President of the CPVO*

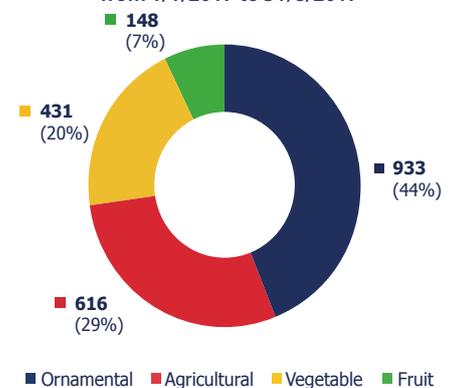
> GENERAL NEWS

Non-uniform trends in application numbers

During the first 8 months of the year, the CPVO received in total 2 128 applications for Community plant variety rights, 17 fewer than in the same period of 2016. The trend is not the same for all crop sectors: for agricultural varieties, the Office received 616 applications (2016: 668; - 7.78 %). The decline is even sharper for vegetable varieties, with 431

applications (2016: 486; - 11.32 %). By contrast, the Office saw an increase in the ornamental and fruit sectors: for ornamental varieties, 933 new applications were recorded (2016: 848; + 10.02 %) and for fruit varieties, 148 applications were received (2016: 109; + 35.78 %). More statistics are available on the [CPVO website](#).

Share in application numbers per crop sector from 1/1/2017 to 31/8/2017



Administrative Council meeting, Angers, France (March 2017)

Cooperation between CPVO and EUIPO

The CPVO and the [EUIPO](#) are looking to develop areas of enhanced cooperation. In this framework, the AC members unanimously adopted a decision whereby the EUIPO will be invited as observer to its meetings on a reciprocity basis. The decision has been communicated to the EUIPO accordingly and the AC members are expecting the adoption of a similar decision by the EUIPO Administrative Board for the CPVO to be invited to the EUIPO Management Board meetings.

Cooperation between CPVO and EPO

The Administrative Council (AC) members took note of the update on the cooperation between the CPVO and the European Patent Office ([EPO](#)). In particular, a joint public conference planned to take place in Brussels on 29 November 2017 will address the Council's common position on the Commission notice and its implementation by the EPO.



European Parliament workshop, 4 May 2017

The European Parliament organised a workshop on 4 May 2017 to discuss the oversight and resources of fully self-financed agencies and invited the CPVO, as a fee-receiving agency, to present its views. The CPVO (President Martin Ekvad) outlined a number of important issues for the European Parliament to take into consideration.

Firstly, he explained the importance of a fee-financed agency such as the CPVO remaining independent and close

to its customers (the breeders). Such independence has allowed the CPVO to develop a strong reputation in industry and also to attract and retain high-quality staff. It was also pointed out that with very limited staff and as one of the smallest agencies in the EU, the CPVO manages the largest system of its kind in the world. The key focus of the CPVO, beyond meeting regulatory requirements incumbent on all agencies, is to provide an effective, efficient and economical system of plant

breeders' rights. Martin Ekvad considered that the model of the CPVO as an agency which is financially independent, and overseen by the European Court of Auditors, is one which works very well and is appreciated by its key stakeholders.

These [messages](#) were well received by the European Parliament, which also invited the CPVO to make an annual presentation at the time of budgetary hearings with a view to further enhancing the transparency of the system.

Bilateral meetings with examination offices

In order to maintain efficient and productive cooperation with all the examination offices, the CPVO organises bilateral meetings with some of them every year on a regular basis. The President usually attends, together with the Head of the Technical Unit and/or a technical expert of the CPVO. In 2017 such meetings were held with GEVES (France), Bundessortenamt (Germany), CREA-SCS (Italy), Tystofte Foundation (Denmark), Jordbruksverket (Sweden) and APHA and NIAB (United Kingdom). Further

visits are scheduled with Naktuinbouw (Netherlands) and OEVV (Spain) later this year.

Experience has shown that these meetings offer an excellent opportunity to analysis cooperation and to address good and less good aspects of working together with the aim of identifying ways to further improve. In the 2017 round of meetings more general topics like the cost of DUS examination, R & D projects and Brexit-related matters were also discussed.



Workshop at the company KWS, July 2017

The President of the CPVO participated in a workshop organised by the breeding company KWS — 'IP and new breeding techniques on genome editing' — in Einbeck, Germany (5 July 2017). KWS is developing a vision of how to deal with intellectual property rights in relation to new breeding techniques (NBT).

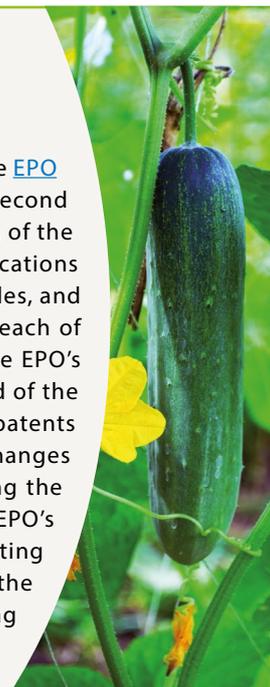
Discussions included issues such as whether to strengthen PVP by partially limiting the breeders' exemption and if it would be worthwhile developing some sort of licensing platform for the NBT technologies and traits providing access under fair conditions. Martin Ekvad made a presentation highlighting the fact that

in the short term DUS testing will not be affected by NBT and one major challenge would actually be to detect if NBTs have been used when breeding a variety. Other participants were German farmers and breeders as well as a representative from the European Commission.

Focus on...

Cooperation with the European Patent Office

Following the signature of the Administrative Arrangement on 11 February 2016 between the CPVO and the [EPO](#) and its implementation plan, a first joint workshop took place in Angers on 21 and 22 September 2016. A second workshop took place on 30 March 2017 at the EPO. The second workshop aimed at a better understanding of the practices implemented at the EPO and the CPVO. In the morning sessions, examiners explained how applications are processed, providing specific insights into pre-grant and post-grant procedures, with practical examples, and into how to deal with sensitive cases. In the afternoon sessions, examiners worked together in groups, each of them dealing with a concrete example of a patent 'life of a file'. Specific search strategies applied by the EPO's examiners and databases were presented to the CPVO's examiners. During the wrap-up session at the end of the workshop, the EPO delivered a presentation on recent statistics, with special reference to applications/patents in the biotech area. When drawing the conclusions, some concrete proposals were made for future exchanges such as the setting up of a joint EPO-CPVO working group with the task of evaluating and implementing the most feasible option to make available relevant CPVO data in a searchable format to the EPO. Moreover, EPO's examiners have been invited to attend the CPVO's crop sector expert meetings as well as the annual meeting the CPVO organises with its examination offices. In return, CPVO experts may participate in some of the courses offered by the European Patent Academy. Finally, a [joint CPVO-EPO conference](#) with title 'Supporting innovation in the plant sector' will take place in Brussels on 29 November 2017.



> INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

UPOV week in Geneva, CH (3-7 April 2017) UPOV

The CPVO attended the UPOV (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants) meetings as member of the EU delegation. The UPOV Council adopted new explanatory notes on propagating material under the UPOV Convention as well as a revised version of the existing explanatory notes on essentially derived varieties under the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention. The Council also decided to organise a single

set of UPOV sessions in the future. As a consequence, all UPOV meetings will be concentrated in the autumn from 2018 onwards. It was furthermore concluded that the BMT (Working Group on Biochemical and Molecular Techniques) should be held on an annual basis. The Council also nominated new chairpersons for the Technical Working Parties and Jean Maison, Deputy Head of the Technical Unit in the CPVO, will be the Chair of the

TWF (Technical Working Parties for Fruit Crops) for the period 2018-2020.

The Technical Committee considered a long list of items and held discussion sessions on the 'use of disease and insect resistances in DUS examination', 'the management of reference collections' and 'minimum distances between varieties'. The various presentations on these topics are available on the [UPOV website](#).

Canada

In April 2017, the President of the CPVO was welcomed to the Canadian PVP Office in Ottawa by the Head of the Office, Mr Anthony Parker. Mr Parker and his team made an impressive presentation on how the Canadian PVP system went from the UPOV 1978 to 1991 UPOV Convention — a journey that took 10 years of consultation and negotiations between stakeholders and the government. The length of this process shows that adopting legislation

in the area of PVP is a sensitive matter. Martin Ekvad was impressed by how structured the process had been and realised that stakeholders' input was crucial in order to achieve a balanced result. 2017 marks the 150th birthday of Canada and the Canadian PVP Office is therefore organising two UPOV meetings in September, the TWF and TWO, where the CPVO will be present.

Martin Ekvad was also invited to the

Ciopora Annual General Meeting in Toronto to give a presentation on ongoing CPVO activities. Other presentations were given on PVP developments in various parts of the world in general as well as some specific presentations focusing on the protection of mutants and genetically modified organisms from a US perspective and the legal aspects of the importation of plants into the United States based on US plant patent law.

China

20 years of the Chinese PVP

In April 2017, the CPVO participated in a series of events in China, including a seminar organised to celebrate 20 years of the Chinese PVP system. The seminar included presentations from various representatives of the Chinese Development Centre of Science and Technology (DCST) and State Forestry Administration (SFA), as well as the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), UPOV, Argentinian, Canadian, New Zealand and US PVR Offices. Attendants came mainly from the Chinese public sector. The presentations from the Chinese authorities focused on the achievements in terms of PVR in recent years, highlighting the strong growth in numbers of applications. The Chinese announced that all fees paid by breeders in the application procedure will be abandoned which may further increase the number of applications and, as far as we know, make China the first UPOV member to provide PVP for free.

IP Key project for China accession to UPOV

The results of a project financed by the European Commission and the EUIPO, the 'IP Key feasibility study on China's accession to UPOV 1991 Act', were also presented in April 2017 in China. The feasibility study was based on a fact-finding mission to the CPVO, UPOV and a roundtable discussion in Brussels with various EU stakeholders such as breeders and farmers in 2016. The meeting was chaired by former CPVO President Bart Kiewiet, who had been appointed to the project as an EU expert. The Chinese said that UPOV Act of 1991 provides many advantages and stated that steps will be taken to propose changes that would align the Chinese legislation more closely with it. However, further studies would be needed in the area of farm saved seeds and essentially derived varieties before changes could be proposed. There will be a new [IP Key](#) project addressing PVP in China and the CPVO will again be involved in this work which is yet to be defined in detail.

Technical cooperation with Chinese PVP authorities

The CPVO is discussing a more structural technical cooperation with the DCST and SFA for the years to come. The Chinese authorities are interested in receiving training in DUS testing from DUS experts in EU Member States and the setting-up of a quality audit system in China. The CPVO would like to share its experiences in providing an efficient and transparent application procedure with the aim making it easier for EU breeders to apply for protection in China. Matters relating to enforcement and concerning the UPOV Act of 1991 are also important and we aim to include that in the cooperation. A meeting will take place in China in November 2017 to conclude the discussions and to sign an administrative arrangement.



Mexico

In August 2017, the President of the CPVO gave a presentation on the EU PVP system to a Mexican delegation in the framework of a workshop organised by the Netherlands. The

programme included meetings with the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, the Vice-Secretary General of UPOV and representatives of the Dutch plant breeding industry. The Mexican

delegation announced that a process has been initiated to join UPOV 1991. The CPVO offered to assist in sharing experiences from having run a UPOV 1991 system for more than two decades.

Thailand

In August 2017, the CPVO received a delegation from Thailand led by Dr Waraporn Prompoj, Deputy-Director General at the Ministry of

Agriculture and Cooperatives. Thailand has a PVP system but is not yet member of the UPOV Convention. During the meeting, the CPVO

offered to host staff from the Thai PVP Office in 2018 in order to train them in how the CPVO application process works in practise.

> LEGAL AFFAIRS

Decisions reached by the Board of Appeal of the CPVO (BoA) and judgments by the Court of Justice of the EU (the full texts are available in [the PVR case-law database](#))

Interim decision in the case of 'Gala Perathoner' of 18 April 2017

Baumschulgengesellschaft GRIBA Landwirtschaftliche Gesellschaft lodged an appeal relating to its EU Plant Variety Right Application No 2009/0353, Variety denomination 'Gala Perathoner', species: *Malus domestica Borkh*, against the CPVO decision No R 1415 of 21 March 2016 to refuse its application. It also requested a complementary examination of the candidate variety in a location where the climatic conditions are closest to that of the region of origin of the candidate variety. The BoA ordered a stay of the appeal proceedings until the General Court has rendered its decision in Case T-177/16 (MEMA/CPVO).

Judgment in Joined Cases T-425/15, T-426/15 and T-428/15 of 4 May 2017

By judgment of 4 May 2017, the General Court has dismissed the three actions of Mr Schröder in Joined Cases T-425, T-426 and T-428/15 as unfounded. In this respect, the alleged impartiality of the BoA was rejected. The Court also concluded that the CPVO acted correctly in asking for a technical verification which led to the conclusion that the variety 'Seimora' was uniform. On the alleged contradiction of reasons, the Court concluded that this is ineffective as the annulment of the decision could only lead to the adoption of the same decision based on the same arguments. The Court also rejected the plea that the CPVR was granted to a person who was not entitled to it. The appeal was rejected in its totality.

Judgment in Case C-625/15 P of 8 June 2017

By judgment of 8 June 2017, the Court of Justice has annulled the judgment of the General Court in the 'Gala Schnitzer' case. The Court has confirmed the broad discretion of the Office in carrying out its functions especially as regards the verification of distinctness. It has also confirmed the power of the President of the CPVO to insert, in respect of a variety, additional characteristics found during the examination and decisive for assessing distinctness but not referred to in the technical questionnaire or in the applicable protocols or guidelines. The Court of Justice, however, concluded that the Board of Appeal, before annulling the decisions granting a CPVR, should have first remitted the case to the competent body of the CPVO pursuant to Article 72 of the Basic Regulation in order to possess all the relevant elements for the assessment of the validity of the CPVR granted. Consequently, the decisions of the Board of Appeal have been annulled.

Judgment in Case T-767/14 of 13 July 2017

By judgment of 13 July 2017, the General Court has dismissed in its entirety the action of Boomkwekerij Van Rijn de Bruyn BV seeking annulment of the decision of the Board of Appeal of the CPVO of 2 July 2014 concerning the grant of a Community plant variety right for the 'Oksana' variety (Case A007/2013). As regards the second plea in law referring to the infringement of Article 10 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94, the Court considers that the applicant must adduce evidence and facts of sufficient substance to raise serious doubts as to the legality of the Board of Appeal's decision regarding the specific technical or scientific complexity of the examinations made by the BoA. As regards the first complaint of the applicant, the Court found that the BoA concluded without any error that the candidate variety and the variety 'Nojabrskaja' were identical on the ground of the conclusion of the Bundessortenamt, the two letters from the breeder of 8 August 2008 and the applicant's letter of 10 December 2007 to a nursery established in Germany selling trees bearing the name 'Nojabrskaja'. That letter confirms that the applicant itself considers that the variety 'Nojabrskaja' was a plant material belonging to the candidate variety. Concerning the second complaint of the applicant, the Court considers that, regarding the invoices submitted by the objectors dated from 2000 to 2003 and the two sworn statements of 16 April 2008 sent by the intervener (Artevos GmbH), the candidate variety had previously been sold to third parties and commercially exploited. Also, the applicant did not produce any evidence to support the existence of an exclusive right of disposal allegedly held by the breeder over the candidate variety. In this way, the evidence produced by the applicant was not sufficient to cast serious doubt as to the legality of the contested decision. The General Court concluded that the BoA was fully entitled to conclude that the candidate variety was not new within the meaning of Article 10 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94, dismissed the appeals and ordered the applicant to bear the costs.



Result of the EIPIN Innovation Society Doctorate call of interest

The CPVO is a partner organisation of the EIPIN-Innovation Society joint doctorate funded by the European Commission under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, the International Training Networks (ITN) and the European Joint Doctorates (EJD) scheme. The coordinator of the project is the University of Maastricht (Netherlands). Other participants are the University of Strasbourg (France), Universidad de Alicante (Spain), Universitaet Augsburg (Germany) and Queen Mary University of London (United Kingdom).

The programme aims to award a joint or double doctoral degree to 15 doctorates by 'early stage researchers' (ESRs). The kick-off meeting of the project took place on 16 March 2017 in Brussels. Furthermore, on 15-17 May 2017, the CPVO took part in the selection committee organised at the University of Alicante. The CPVO will provide an internship to the selected ESR, who will conduct a research project in the field of PVRs for a period of 3 months.



First request for a compulsory licence

On 16 March 2017, the CPVO received an application for a compulsory licence agreement concerning EU PVR No 35825, 'BEN STARAV' of the *Ribes nigrum* L. species (CPVO file no 2009/1980), within the framework of Article 29 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94. The applicant for the compulsory licence specialises in the processing of fruit including blackcurrants and the application is the first for a compulsory licence ever received by the Office. The CPVO will take a decision after hearing the opinion of the Administrative Council. According to Article 29(1) of the aforementioned regulation, compulsory licences shall be granted only on grounds of public interest.

> TECHNICAL NEWS

Working Group on Revision of variety denomination guidelines

The Administrative Council adopted in 2004 the guidelines on Article 63 of the Basic Regulation and took note of their explanatory notes developed by the Office (latest version dated November 2012). Due to a rise in the number of proposals, the CPVO is often confronted with an increasing number of situations where the document does not provide clear guidance. The Office feels that the current guidelines and their explanatory notes need to be further elaborated to address such situations.

The AC approved in November 2015 the creation of an ad hoc working group to discuss and comment on a draft proposal prepared by the CPVO. The group met twice in 2016 with representatives from Member States, the Commission, the AC observers, KAVB and the Royal Horticultural Society.

Some stakeholders suggested that the Office is becoming stricter, although this does not seem to be confirmed by statistics. The group agreed that a denomination's proposal should not be

necessarily acceptable and that there is a need to interpret clearly the legal basis.

The group also met in June 2017 in Paris and commented on a new version of the guidelines proposed by the CPVO on the basis of previous feedback. Further reactions to the Office's proposal, especially from breeders, were expected at the beginning of September. At the time of writing, the intention was to prepare a final version for approval by the CPVO Administrative Council in March 2018.

Commission/CPVO variety database project

The European Commission and the CPVO are running a project to investigate the possibilities to develop a single contribution for the purpose of implementing the marketing directives on plant reproductive material on the one hand and updating the CPVO Variety Finder on the other hand.

A working group was established for this purpose, with the following mandate:

- (a) to elaborate the requirements for a single EU IT system (including database) on plant varieties;
- (b) to produce recommendations as to the content and functionalities of this IT system, taking into consideration the relevant legal requirements, the necessity to inform the public and the requirements of various stakeholders;

(c) to monitor and follow up the implementation of the system.

This working group met in Brussels in March 2017 and commented on the functionalities of the new system.

The Commission and the CPVO launched in July 2017 a large consultation involving members of the Commission Standing Committee on the seed sector, members of the CPVO Administrative Council, CPVO Technical Liaison Officers and contributors to the Common Catalogues and Variety Finder. Comments on proposals for functionalities and for the future information available in this database could be made until the end of September 2017. Stakeholders will be kept informed on the outcome of this consultation and its follow-up.



Crop experts meetings

Fruit experts meeting, Huelva, Spain (7 and 8 March 2017)

Thanks to an invitation by the Spanish plant variety rights authorities, the CPVO held its annual meeting with the EU fruit experts at the testing station in Huelva in March. The discussions focused on challenges in the DUS testing of fruit varieties such as mutation groups of apple varieties, a project to reduce the number of growing cycles, the requirements of plant health

certificates, the status of reserve plants and some research and development programmes on, for example, the use of molecular techniques or the use of common databases. The meeting also provided an occasion to discuss the assessment of strawberry characteristics with the aim of further harmonisation as part of an ongoing ring test between several examination offices.

Ornamental experts meeting, Angers, France (27 and 28 June 2017)

In June, the CPVO held its annual meeting with the EU ornamental crop experts in Angers. The main focus of the meeting was on the preparation of technical protocols for the DUS examination of varieties of

Abelia, *Aglaonema*, *Cordyline*, *Freesia*, *Lavandula* and *Salvia*. These protocols will be presented to the CPVO Administrative Council for adoption in October 2017.



Hydrangea Open Day, Angers, France (28 June 2017)

On 28 June 2017, the CPVO held an Open Day for breeders of *Hydrangea* varieties at the GEVES testing station of Brion, near Angers, in cooperation with GEVES and the Bundessortenamt. The meeting - followed by an on-site visit - was attended by 12 European *Hydrangea* breeders. The purpose of the event was to familiarise the participants with the conduct of the DUS technical examination in general and the particularities related to *Hydrangea* varieties. Breeders were also informed on the ongoing revision of the test guidelines in the UPOV working group, to which they provided valuable suggestions. The examiners and the CPVO received much appreciated feedback on their work.

Participation in UPOV technical working parties

UPOV TWA in Hannover, Germany, June 2017

The 46th Technical Working Party for Agricultural Crops took place in June in Hannover, Germany. **Technical protocols:** the group managed to finalise discussions on the technical protocols for barley, field bean and cotton. **Technical visit:** the TWA visited the Bundessortenamt's trial station, Scharnhorst, to look at and discuss characteristics of field bean and red clover. Discussions on red clover, quinoa, soya bean, oats and rice will be continued at the next TWA in May 2018 which will take place in Kenya. **Other subjects:** the uniformity assessment by off-types on more than one growing cycle,

the duration of DUS tests and the use of disease-resistance characteristics in DUS examination were also discussed. UPOV presented the electronic application forms and informed the participants that in the future, the BMT (Working Party on Biomolecular Techniques) will be held annually, instead of every 18 months, and will be held back to back with the Technical Working Party on Automation and Computer Programs (TWC) since both working parties have issues in common, i.e. the building of databases with molecular data.

UPOV TWV in Leiden, Netherlands, July 2017

The 51st Technical Working Party for Vegetable Crops took place in July in Leiden, the Netherlands. **Technical protocols:** the group managed to finalise discussions on the **technical protocols** for agarics (for which the CPVO was the leading expert), brown mustard, broccoli and pepino, as well as partial revisions to artichoke, pea, pepper spinach, tomato and tomato rootstock. **Technical visit:** the TWV visited the Naktuinbouw trial station at Roelofarendsveen to look at and discuss characteristics of several vegetable crops. Discussions on fennel, Swiss chard, turnip and

watercress will be continued at the next TWV in September 2018 which will take place in China. **Other subjects:** were also discussed the uniformity assessment by off-types on more than one growing cycle, the duration of DUS tests and the procedure and timing for the partial revision of test guidelines, which is particularly pertinent to the vegetable sector. A very interesting visit was also made to the breeding and seed processing facilities of Bejo Zaden BV.

Meeting with the EPPO on phytosanitary aspects, June 2017

The technical examination of varieties requires that plant material from all over the world is delivered to the testing stations. The CPVO is often confronted with questions from breeders concerning the phytosanitary requirements the material is subject to. In addition to the phytosanitary regulations, the examination offices specify lists of quality organisms which may affect the outcome of the assessment of varieties and hence the material should be free from. It has been noted that the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) provides comprehensive information on phytosanitary aspects.

To learn more about EPPO, the CPVO invited Mr Martin Ward, the Director General of the EPPO, who kindly accepted to visit the CPVO. On 29 June 2017, Mr Ward gave a presentation on the EPPO, its way of functioning and its different activities as regards phytosanitary measures. As a follow-up, the EPPO and the CPVO will further explore possibilities of cooperation. In particular, the CPVO will reflect on how the information provided by the EPPO could be of help for breeders when delivering plant material for DUS testing.



RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT projects

> The CPVO IMODDUS group has considered a number of project proposals. Out of those, a proposal on the 'Integration of molecular data into DUS testing in Durum wheat' is currently being examined by the R & D advisory group. A proposal for 'The development of a harmonised and validated SNP marker set for roses' has been discussed by the crop sector expert group and finally a proposal for 'The creation of a joint EU database with DNA data of tomato' will be considered by the vegetable experts in September 2017. A further project, which is not within the scope of the IMODDUS group, has been proposed and aims at setting up a database with descriptions and photos of melon varieties of common knowledge. This proposal is also currently being considered by the R & D advisory group.

> The ongoing project 'Test of the potential use of SNPs markers on oilseed rape varieties' is in the process of being finalised and the project report is expected during autumn 2017. This project is coordinated by GEVES with APHA and NIAB (United Kingdom), BSA (Germany), Coboru (Poland), the Department of Variety Testing (Denmark), INIA (Spain), UKSUP (Slovakia), UKZUZ (Czech Republic) and the European Seed Association (ESA) as project partners. It aims to examine the potential use of SNP markers as a tool for the management of the OSR reference collection.

> Within a case study on minimum distances between vegetatively reproduced ornamental and fruit varieties the concern, as expressed by Ciopora, that the 'distance' between varieties is getting too small and thus the plant breeders' right is becoming weaker, was examined. For that purpose, Ciopora proposed the re-examination, on the basis of amended ('mock') protocols for three species (apple, rose and pelargonium), the last 50 CPVO-protected varieties. The amended protocols contained fewer characteristics or fewer states of expression of certain characteristics to be considered in the

DUS procedure. The re-examination was done as a 'paper exercise' by the examination offices that originally tested these varieties (Bundessortenamt, GEVES, Naktuinbouw, NIAB and UKZUZ) in order to study the possible effect of these mock protocols. The final report of this project has been provided to the CPVO in July 2017. The parties to the project agreed that the results of the study showed that the mock protocols, as drafted for the study, would not be appropriate to use for DUS test purposes. The results and the eventual consequences will now be considered by the CPVO and relevant crop sector expert groups.

> The strawberry ring test is a project which started in 2016 and is expected to be finalised in 2019. The purpose is the harmonisation of the implementation of the protocol for strawberry. The outcome of such ring tests will also be valuable for aggregating comparable descriptions in a common database like GEMMA. A review of the characteristics of the current protocol will also be made. The project is coordinated by the CPVO and all entrusted examination offices for strawberries. The Bundessortenamt (Germany), COBORU (Poland), DGAV (Portugal) and OEVV (Spain), as well as Ciopora, are partners.

> Harmores 3 is a project in the vegetable sector which aims at harmonising resistance tests and proposing harmonised protocols to be included in the CPVO technical protocols. The project covers seven vegetable diseases and is coordinated by GEVES, with the results expected to be available in November 2019.

> Potatoes III is a follow-up project and aims at continuing the work to set up an EU database for potato. It is coordinated by the Bundessortenamt. This project should result in a functioning database including morphological descriptions, DNA profiles and light sprout pictures of a maximum number of varieties of potatoes and should serve all entrusted examination offices for potatoes. Results are expected in April 2018.

CPVO agenda

- > **4 October 2017**
Administrative Council meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- > **17-18 October 2017**
Agricultural experts meetings, Angers, France
- > **29 November 2017**
EPO/CPVO Seminar on supporting innovation in the plant sector, Brussels, Belgium
- > **5-6 December 2017**
21st annual meeting with the EOs, Angers, France
- > **20-21 March 2018**
Administrative Council meeting, Angers, France

Participation in forthcoming events

- > **11 to 15 September 2017**
UPOV TWO, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
- > **18 to 22 September 2017**
UPOV TWF, Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada
- > **26 to 28 September 2017**
OAPI seminar on PVP system, Dakar, Senegal
- > **28 September 2017**
"Modern biotechnologies in agriculture" conference, EU Commission, Brussels
- > **8 to 10 October 2017**
ESA annual meeting, Riga, Latvia
- > **23 to 27 October 2017**
UPOV week of meetings, Geneva, Switzerland
- > **6 to 10 November 2017**
UPOV BMT, La Rochelle, France
- > **13 to 17 November 2017**
UPOV TWC, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- > **30 November and 1 December 2017**
PVP Forum, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
- > **16 to 18 January 2018**
SIVAL, Angers, France
- > **23 to 26 January 2018**
IPM, Essen, Germany
- > **19 February to 11 March 2018**
Made in Angers, France

> TO BE NOTED

The European Union is only 60 years young!

Sixty years ago in Rome, the foundations were laid for the Europe that we know today, ushering in the longest period of peace in written history in Europe. On 25 March 1957, six countries (Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) signed the Treaty of Rome, creating the European Economic Community — the forerunner of the European Union. On this anniversary, Europe looks back with pride and looks forward with hope. Over 60 years we have built a Union that promotes peaceful cooperation, respect of human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality and solidarity among European nations and

peoples. Spring 2017, which marks [60 years](#) since this treaty was signed, was the occasion for the EU institutions to reflect not only on the future of the European Union but also on its past achievements. The CPVO, as part of the [EU agencies network](#), participated as much as possible in the promotion of this anniversary. Here is a [video](#) celebrating this important milestone. You may also have a look back at some of the [milestones](#) that have shaped today's Europe. Today 45 EU agencies and undertakings are working for you and looking forward to the next 60 years!



> HUMAN RESOURCES NEWS

Welcome to ...



The CPVO welcomed Mr Yohann Larouelle of French nationality on 1 June. He has joined the IT Service of the Administration Unit for a period of 3 years as database administrator. *'Glad to be here, thank you all for your warm welcome.'* The CPVO wishes him the best of luck and success in his new job.

Goodbye to...

> Miss Morgane Verdure of French nationality who completed a 2.5 month traineeship in the Legal Unit as part of her university studies.

'Doing an internship at the CPVO was for me a discovery given that I just finished my second year of law studies and thus I had

never studied intellectual property, even less PVR. Nevertheless, I hope to have succeeded in integrating the requested skills and knowledge in order to be useful for the Office. I also want to thank all the members of the CPVO for their warm welcome and kindness without which it would not be as simple.'

> Mr Dario Evangelista of Italian nationality who completed a 5 month traineeship in the Registry.

'During these first 3 months of experience as a trainee in the Registry of the CPVO Technical Unit, I had the possibility to verify the importance and the beauty of working in a multicultural and international work environment. I am so happy and proud to be part of the team of Technical Unit because I work in a context where it's the right mix between high professionalism and strong interest, as my colleagues always

show in their work. After 5 months of this amazing experience, obviously, I can say that traineeship in the CPVO is really special for my growth [from] every point of view and I want - as I do daily - to enjoy each moment of this adventure, because time flies too fast and I want to live in the best possible way this unforgettable opportunity that I had. Thank you CPVO !'

The CPVO thanks them for their valuable work and wishes them the best of luck and success in their careers.

PUBLICATION

Annual report 2016

The English and the French versions of the CPVO annual report for 2016 are available in PDF and HTML format on the [CPVO website](#). To get a printed version of the CPVO annual report free of charge, please go to the [EU Bookshop website](#). The annex to the Annual report 2016, which is only published electronically, is also available on the [CPVO website](#).



Traineeship recruitment procedure

As part of the 2017 traineeship procedure, the CPVO hosted three trainees from 1 March until 31 August 2017 and will host a further four traineeships from 1 September 2017 until 28 February 2018. Advertisements for the next traineeship period starting on 1 March 2018 has just been published on the [CPVO website](#) : one is for the Administration Unit and the other one is for Data Protection. For further information on traineeships, please contact : traineeships@cpvo.europa.eu

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