

# Report of the PCC

G. Checchacci (IT), Chair

At the beginning of this strange year 2020, the new Council of **epi** has been elected. Unfortunately, for the reasons we all know very well, this new Council could only “meet” online, and it cannot be excluded that this format will have to be repeated in the future. Nevertheless, whatever the format of the meetings, the Council is active and will continue to be active, addressing the tasks that it is expected to address.

Among these, an important step is the election of the members of the various committees (except the Disciplinary Committee, already elected), during an autumn meeting of the Council. The committees are an essential part of the activity of **epi**, and are open to all **epi** members, on a voluntary basis. Right in these weeks, the nomination process is open and **epi** members can present their nomination to any of the committees, in view of the election.

This suggests spending few words about PCC, the committee I have had the honour to chair for five years, in order to give an idea of what an **epi** member can expect if elected in PCC.

Like for any committees, **epi** members can find the official definition of the activity of PCC in the Terms of Reference<sup>1</sup>.

In a nutshell, PCC assists **epi** bodies (the President, the Secretary General, the Presidium, the Board, the Council, other committees and ultimately individual **epi** members as well) for any issues relating to conduct, obviously with the exception of formal disciplinary proceedings.

Thus, in the recent years PCC has provided advices to **epi** members who were in doubt about the admissibility of some actions they intended to perform, thus helping them in avoiding behaviours that may have infringed the Code of Conduct.

PCC has prepared and presented to the Council a proposal for amending the Code of Conduct in view of the possible entry into force of the UPC agreement. Unfortunately, the project needed also an amendment to the Regulation on Discipline, which can be amended only by the Administrative Council of the European Patent

Organization. Thus, although the whole project is ready, it is still stuck outside **epi**, despite **epi**'s efforts at any level.

PCC has also studied some specific issues in the Code of Conduct and has almost completed a proposal for amendments to improve easy and smooth application of the Code of Conduct. Once finalised, the proposal will be presented to the Council for adoption.

Besides, a restricted Working Group within PCC has assisted the Presidium in conduct matters, providing opinions and support as requested.

In the next three-year term, PCC will of course continue all these activities, as a whole committee and/or in Working Groups. In particular, the revisions of the Code of Conduct (the one related to UPC and the one related to some specific issues) should be hopefully concluded. In the meantime, other issues will have to be considered for possible amendments.

Besides, PCC will have to give attention (if not priority) to an important project defined in principle already years ago but still to be implemented: to have an instrument to spread among all **epi** members the knowledge of the advices given to individual members who filed their requests. Also, PCC should try to implement -in cooperation with PEC (Professional Education Committee)- some kind of training in deontology matters, again to improve the knowledge of the Code of Conduct among **epi** members.

And other challenging projects are just waiting for the new PCC.

All of this requires energies. Present PCC has invested a lot of energy in defining and pursuing these plans. Next PCC will have to invest even more energy, to complete these plans and to define others.

Three years ago, not all EPC member states were able to have candidates for PCC, and some countries had no members in PCC. I sincerely hope this will not happen this year too: the contribution by all countries is important to ensure that PCC can benefit from all the different national experiences.

<sup>1</sup> <https://patentepi.org/r/info-2003-05>