

National prior rights within the meaning of Article 139(2) EPC are not a bar to the grant of a European patent in proceedings before the EPO. Therefore, the EPO is not required to search for and assess such rights (GL, H-III, 4.4). Applicants may, however, consider the procedural option under Rule 138 EPC in view of the effects of such rights in national proceedings and/or before the Unified Patent Court (Article 3 Regulation (EU) No 1257/2012). As a support service free of charge for the applicant in this context, the applicant is hereby offered non-binding information on a search for and prima facie relevance assessment of national prior rights by the examining division. It is the applicant's responsibility to assess such national prior rights and any use of the procedural option under Rule 138 EPC (GL, H-III, 4.4).

The applicant is informed that no prima facie relevant national prior rights were found.