



KOREAN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE

## Outsourcing of Searches and Examination Efficiency

June 2010



**Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO)**

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# 1. Outsourcing of Prior Art Searches

## ● Purpose

- ✓ To reduce the workload
- ✓ To improve the quality of examinations

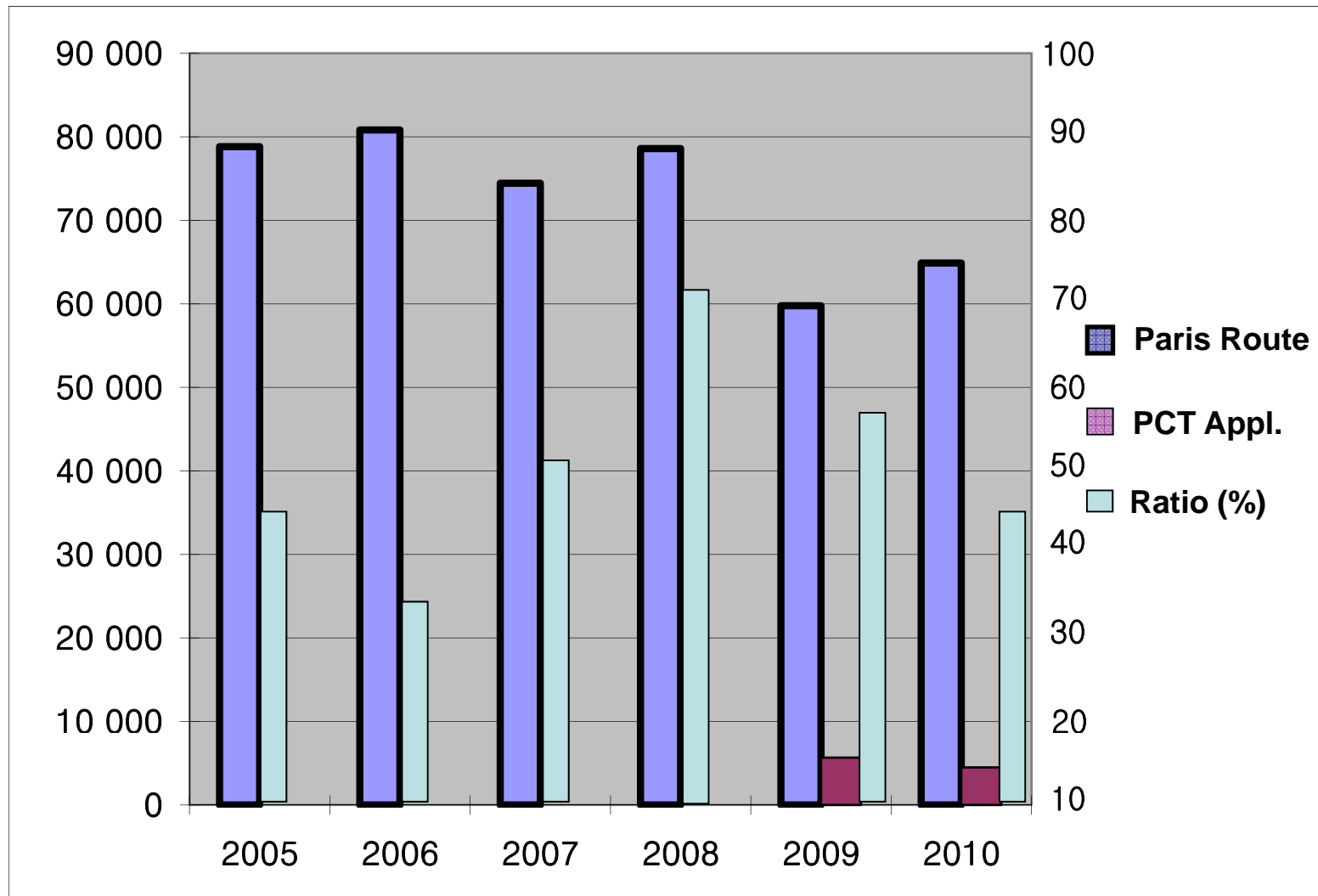
## ● History

- ✓ 1996: started
- ✓ 2005: competitive system for contracted companies

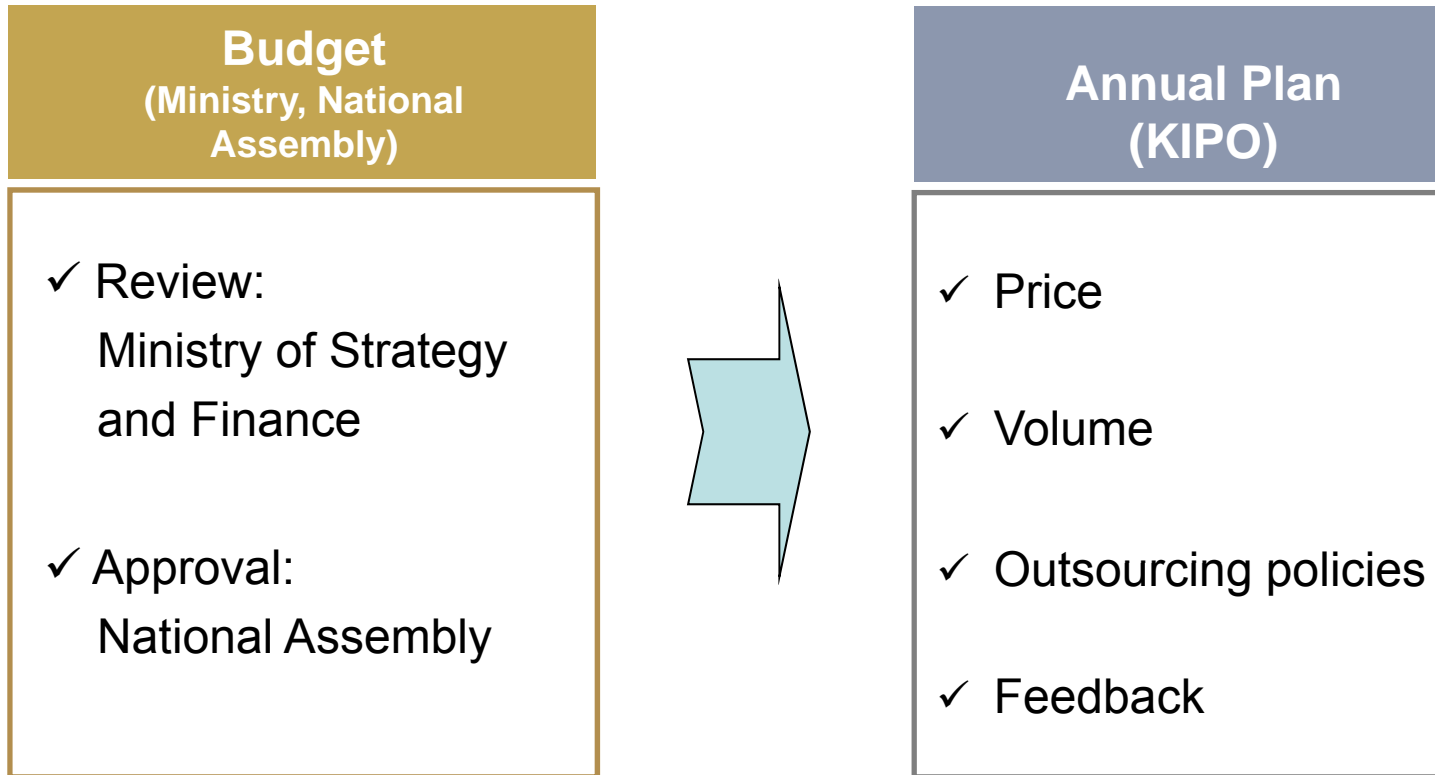
## ● Three contracted companies

- ✓ One major company (KIPI)  
2005 (93%) → 2006 (91%) → 2007 (89%) → 2008 (80%) → 2009 (82%)
- ✓ Two minor companies (WIPS and IP Solution)

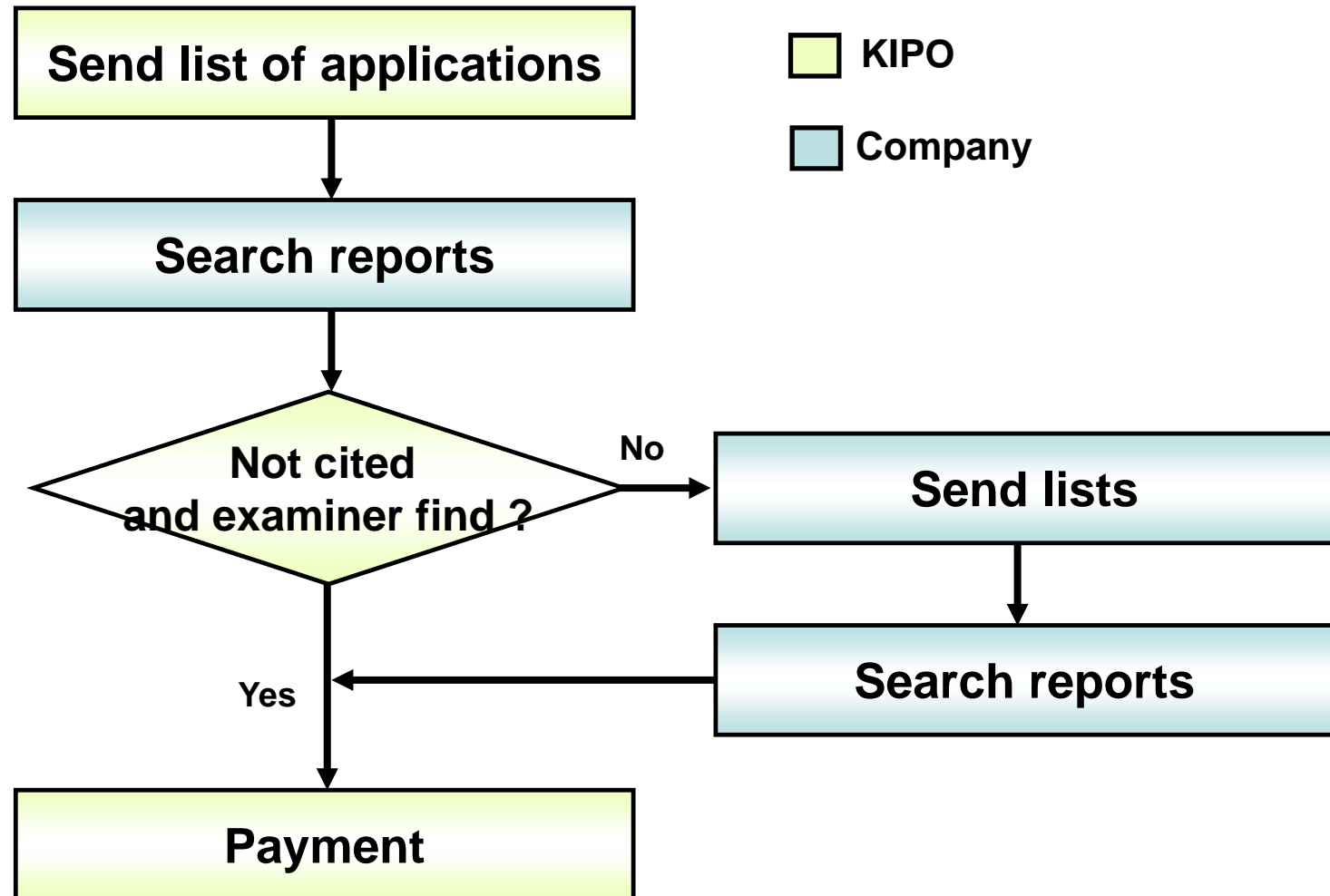
## 2. Statistics



### 3. Budget and Annual Plan



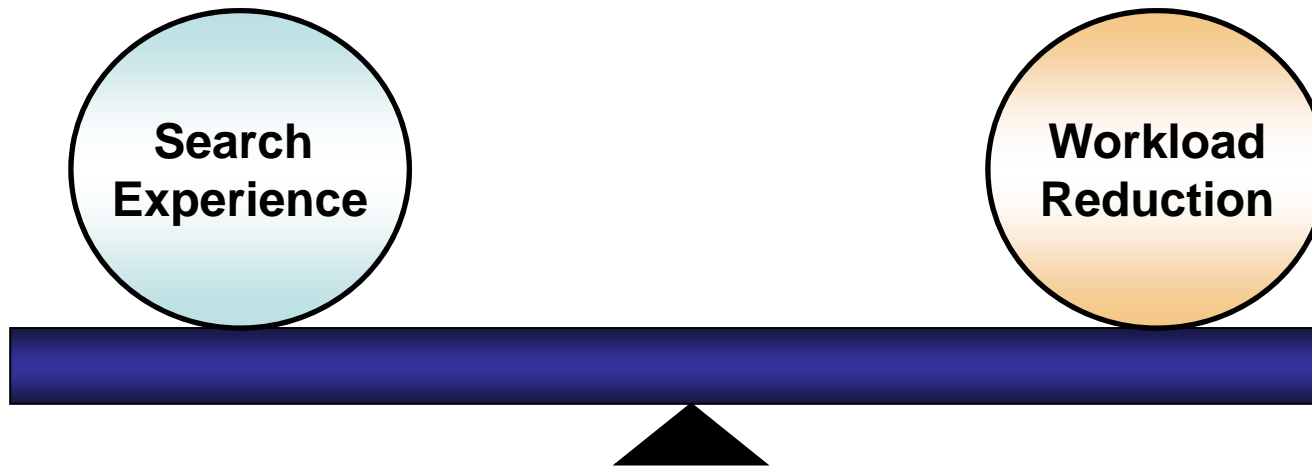
## 4. Outsourcing Mechanism



## 5. Allocation Factors

### ● Examiners search skills

- ✓ Balance between search experience and workload reduction



### ● Cost comparison

- ✓ Cost by examiners vs. cost by outside searchers
- ✓ Key factor of effectiveness: number of cited references per office action

## 6. KIPO Policies

### ● Competitiveness in quality

- ✓ Volume of outsourcing vs. search quality of each company
  
- ✓ Key element: Average Annual Quality Score (AAQS) of previous year
  - Each examiner evaluates outsourced applications (100 basic points)
  - Penalty points: no or partial citation of search results (poor search)
  - Bonus points: citation of non-patent literature (good search)
  
- ✓ Penalty system depending on search quality
  - AAQS > average of three company's AAQS: search additional 50% of the number of poor searches
  - < AAQS: search additional 25%

## 6. *KIPO Policies*

### ● **Capacity building of outside searchers**

- ✓ E-learning course for searchers
- ✓ Taking search course for examiners

### ● **Designated inside searchers**

- ✓ search supporting staffs for examiners

### ● **Improvement of the search system**

- ✓ Faster, more accurate search system
- ✓ Improved foreign language translation service



***Thank you !***

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