

Work starts on one of the largest construction projects in the Netherlands

URL

<https://www.epo.org/news-events/news/2014/20140625.html>

Location

Home > News & events > News > 2014 > 20140625

25 June 2014

The EPO today began the construction of its new main building in Rijswijk, the Netherlands with a foundation-stone laying ceremony. Co-designed by architects Jean Nouvel (Paris) and Diederik Dam (Amsterdam), the new building will set a benchmark for sustainability and provide a flexible working environment of 80 000 square meters for the staff of the EPO.

Until its completion in 2017, it will be one of the biggest office



The Prime Minister of the Netherlands Mark Rutte and EPO President Benoît Battistelli jointly lay the foundation stone of the EPO's new main building in Rijswijk

construction sites in

the Netherlands. With a budget of some EUR 205 million, self financed by the EPO, the new building will also be the largest single investment by the EPO in the Netherlands in the office's 40-year history, replacing the existing 86m high tower which was opened in 1972.

EPO President Benoît Battistelli and the Prime Minister of the Netherlands Mark Rutte jointly laid the foundation stone of the new main building in the presence of the Mayor of Rijswijk M.J. Bezuijen, Ton Vaags, Chairman of the Board of the construction consortium New Main B.V., and architect Jean Nouvel.

"As an architectural landmark, the new main building will be the visual expression of our continued commitment to the Netherlands," said EPO President Benoît Battistelli during the ceremony. "It will also be a bold example of modern architecture, reflecting the EPO's mission to foster innovation, and illustrating the EPO's role at the heart of innovation in Europe."

"Our country has many knowledge-intensive companies, makes many patent applications and benefits from an efficient European market," Prime Minister Mark Rutte said. "We moved from fourth to third place on the list of most innovative European economies and last year the number of Dutch applications to the EPO rose 17 per cent, to over 7.500."

Online

➤ [Watch a video from the foundation stone laying ceremony](#)

[View photos from the stone-laying ceremony](#)

Strong historical roots in the Netherlands

The EPO has strong historical roots in the Netherlands. The EPO's forerunner organisation, the International Patent Institute (or IIB, which stands for Institut International des Brevets) was founded in Rijswijk in 1947 as the first central inter-governmental body providing patent search and documentation services in Europe. Its integration into the EPO in 1978 was a decisive step for the success of the newly-founded EPO: The knowledge and expertise of the 700 IIB staff members were instrumental in establishing the high-quality patenting process that European patents are recognised for today.

A strong focus on sustainability

The new building has become necessary as the present tower that was built from 1969 to 1972 has come to the end of its life.

The new building's design places a strong focus on sustainability. The builders aim to minimise its impact on the environment while ensuring very healthy, safe and comfortable indoor conditions for the staff. To ensure sustainability, criteria set by the Netherlands BREEAM-NL and the German BNB methods of environmental assessment are being applied.



The building's architect Jean Nouvel presents the project

EPO: Largest international organisation in the Netherlands

Today the EPO's Rijswijk branch with its nearly 2 700 employees, the majority of them highly-qualified engineers and scientists working as patent examiners in all fields of technology, is the largest international organisation in the Netherlands. The Office is also home to the world's largest collection of patent and technology literature, comprising more than 600 million records in over 120 databases.

The construction of a new main building for the EPO's site in The Hague which is spread across several buildings will bring further economic benefits to the region. With its gross floor area of over 80 000 sq. meters, it is one of the largest office construction projects under way in the Netherlands today. The project is expected to terminate in 2019 with the demolition of the old tower while the new building opens its doors for employees already in 2017.

An asset to the Dutch economy

The EPO contributes significantly to the Dutch economy, and especially to the province of Zuid-Holland. A study by Bureau Louter commissioned by the EPO, found that the EPO's presence in The Hague adds more than EUR 560 million per year to the Dutch economy and generates some 5 500 jobs. As a result, 8.5% of all jobs in Rijswijk alone are directly or indirectly related to the EPO.

Further information

New building in The Hague