Ladies and gentlemen, díky a pánové,

Please allow me to welcome you all here on the grounds of the Industrial Property Office on behalf of Mr.Kratochvil, the president of this Office.

Before I wish you a wonderful workshop, I would like to briefly reflect on our Office’s main tasks of industrial property protection, as well as related efforts.

Long gone are the days when industrial property protection was, in a simplified fashion, understood by some as mainly the creation of exclusive rights and monopolies - as a barrier preventing the use of new ideas and progress. Today it should be clear to all that the real tasks for the industrial property protection system lie elsewhere:

- In support of business and competitiveness,
- in support for research and development and tools for transferring results into practice,
- in motivation to seek out innovation and new technologies, and
- in consumer protection and the proper functioning of a market environment.

What, then, is the mission of a modern patent and trademark office?
There are several: - making quality decisions in administrative proceedings on providing protection to inventions, utility models, industrial designs and trademarks, -keeping registries of these items of industrial property rights, and -resolving disputed cases and appeals.

Of course, aside from this, we are placing emphasis on increasing awareness of the benefits and optimal ways of using the industrial property protection system, and, what might be important for you in the context of this workshop, gaining and preparing the collection of world patent literature, and making accessible for public.

The Office launched operates an information portal on enforcement of intellectual property rights, fulfils its function as a specialized information centre and serves as a coordinator of the network of patent information centers.
I’d like to bring your attention to our free on-line databases for inventions, trademarks and industrial designs, submitted for the territory of the Czech Republic. Here you may obtain basic information on legal protection in a particular field, which I personally consider important for you.

You are going to cover IP Management at universities. Our contribution to the educational field has been holding workshops and seminars for Czech small and medium enterprises, research and development organizations, schools and technology centers, all that are done either independently or with domestic and international partners. We offer two-year specialized studies in the field of industrial property, and create and operate e-learning courses. Cooperation with universities is a tradition. We teach IP as a subject and we also provide ad hoc lectures and excursions.

One of the main tasks of this Office is to grant patents. Patent literature is an information source. So, please allow me now to enrich my contribution with a little statistics data.

The Industrial Property Office granted 687 patents in 2011, of which more than 47% went to domestic applicants, which is a 16% increase over 2010. The total number of patents valid in the Czech Republic at the end of 2011 came to more than 26 thousand. To protect their technical solutions, Czech applicants use the utility model more often than patent protection. Last year, the number of utility model applications reached 1,646 applications, which is the most in the last 10 years.

But back to our educational field: a third of granted patents and utility models fell within Universities and Scientific institutions.

Ladies and gentlemen, díky a pánově,

We are delighted to host this Expert Workshop especially the day before the World Intellectual Property Day which falls in tomorrow.
We sincerely wish a wonderful and fruitful day to everyone.
Thank you for your attention.