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- [54] **POLYMERIC NETWORKS FROM WATER-SOLUBLE PREPOLYMERS**
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- [58] Field of Search 526/264, 330,
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

The present invention describes a water-soluble crosslinkable prepolymer that comprises, in the copolymer chain, units derived from the following monomeric structural units: a vinyl lactam (a), vinyl alcohol (b), optionally a lower alkanecarboxylic acid vinyl ester (c), a vinylic crosslinking agent (d) and optionally a vinylic photoinitiator (e); a process for the preparation of the novel prepolymers; crosslinked water-insoluble polymeric networks therefrom; hydrogels and moulded articles made from the crosslinked water-insoluble polymeric networks, especially contact lenses; and a process for the manufacture of hydrogels and finished contact lenses using the mentioned crosslinkable water-soluble prepolymers.

32 Claims, No Drawings