

EPO - EP

Jurisdiction - General Information

The European Patent Organization (EPO) is an intergovernmental organization that was set up on October 7, 1977 based on the European Patent Convention (EPC) signed in Munich in 1973.

It provides member states with a unique procedure from application to grant, followed by a validation procedure in the designated countries.

The EPO currently has 39 member states, comprising all the member states of the European Union together with Albania, North Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and Montenegro. From June 2023 it is also possible to ask for the “Unitary effect” or “Unitary Patent” (UP) and obtain the protection in 17 member states of the European Union and it is expected that more EU Member States will ratify the UPC Agreement in the coming years.

European Patents can be also validated in other countries (Morocco, Republic of Moldova, Tunisia and Cambodia) or extended (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

The EPO may be a receiving office, a designated office and an elected office under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

More legal information about intellectual property-related laws and regulations of EPO can be found on [WIPO Lex](#).

Online Patent Register and Online Gazette

The EPO has an [Online Register](#) (European Patent Register) and an [Online Gazette](#) (European Patent Bulletin).

Features and search functionalities

The online patent register has an **English, French and German interface** (the three official EPO languages).

Through the patent register you can retrieve information on patents **PCT National Phase Entry, Fee Payment, Legal Status**, and access the **Dossier/File Wrapper Information** and the **Full Publications**.

The patent register can also be searched by **PCT Application/Publication Number, Applicant/Inventor Name**, and by **Priority Data**.

The Register Alert service allows monitoring changes to data in the European Patent Register. You can monitor up to 5,000 files of your choice and opt to receive an e-mail alert every time a change triggering a Register event occurs to one of your selected files.

It is also possible to get an overview of the legal status of an EP patent in most of the EPO member states in tabular form, where the data is fetched in real time from the respective national registers through the "Federated Register". In addition, the corresponding original records in the relevant national registers are accessible through a deep link via the country code of the respective member state. The coverage of national registers is continuously being extended.

The Global Dossier service gives access to the file wrappers of IP5 offices, PCT applications and beyond.

The online gazette is published weekly on Wednesday in English, French and German. The full collection since the first number of 1978 is available online in PDF format.

There is an online [EP Bulletin search tool](#), which offers free expert access to the bibliographic and procedural information on European patent applications and granted patents. The tool is available via the patent information services for expert user interface available at this [link](#), requiring a free registration. With EP Bulletin search you can perform and refine searches in English, French and German, choosing from more than 70 search criteria. The result list display and the download of the data can be customized. The data corresponding to the European Patent Register can be also acquired as a bulk data set ([link](#)) or accessed via a dedicated web service, OPS Register ([link](#)).

Additional Information

Particularities of patent protection given by EPO

Protection through Supplementary Protection Certificates (SPCs) is not available on the European level, but referral is made to the individual EPO member states for instruments of **Patent Term Extension** under national legislation.

Search tips

Information is available by clicking on the letter "i" beside each search field, while a general help can be accessed at this [link](#). Users can also find support in the Register Assistant (an e-learning module), in a pocket guide and in the European Patent Register Resource Book, all available under the "Getting started" tab on the Register's home page.