

## **The European patent application**

**Through the European Patent Office, you can obtain patent protection in all member states of the European Patent Convention, including Switzerland, with a single application.**

### **Application**

You can download the application for a European patent (EP) in German, French or English at the European Patent Office (EPO). If you or your company are domiciled in Switzerland or Liechtenstein, you can submit it to us.

From the application to the grant of the patent, you obtain provisional patent protection in all member and associated states of the European Patent Convention (EPC). You can find an overview of these states on the EPO website.

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### **Examination and grant**

The EPO checks whether your invention is novel and inventive with the help of a search on the state of the art (also known as prior art). The results are, however, without guarantee: in centralised opposition or court proceedings, others can still challenge the novelty and inventive step of the invention.

The competence of the EPO ends with the grant of the patent and the expiry of the opposition period. The European patent has legal effect in the designated contracting states and is treated as a nationally granted patent.

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### **Fees**

Until the grant of the patent, fees are payable to the EPO for the application, search, designation and examination as well as renewal fees from the third year. The grant of the patent is also subject to fees.

Following the grant of the patent, you pay national renewal fees in those countries in which you want to keep the patent in force.

### **Costs and fees**

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**Advantages of a European patent application**

- > The central granting procedure saves time and effort.
- > Through a single application, you obtain provisional protection in most European countries. Renewal fees are only due after the patent has been granted.
- > Your invention will be examined for novelty and inventive step before the patent is granted.

**Disadvantages of a European patent application**

- > The costs for a European patent mostly exceeds the costs for a national or a few national patent application and grant procedures.
- > If a European patent is revoked in centralised opposition proceedings, patent protection is then lost in all contracting states.
- > Italian isn't an official language for the patent application procedure.

Further information on the European patent available on the EPO's website

**DOCUMENTS & LINKS**

[!\[\]\(a870788d6ed9b8fd294b7654a8c8526b\_img.jpg\) European Patent Office](#)

[!\[\]\(de95854c7ee024cfadc48187bbb781b2\_img.jpg\) European Patent Convention](#)

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