



## **A REMARKABLE YEAR FOR THE EU UNITARY PATENT SYSTEM : ALMOST 30,000 PATENT REGISTRATIONS IN A YEAR**

The EU unitary patent system is built on two EU regulations and provides holders of EU unitary patents with protection across the participating EU member states on a one-stop-shop basis, thus facilitating the creation of an EU single market for patents. The new system's objective is to reduce administrative burden on protection innovation in the EU and to offer a streamlined, cost-effective patent application and review approach (in comparison to classic patent registration process in EU member states).

In addition to setting up the unitary patent scheme, the EU has as well established a Unified Patent Court, an enforcement agency whose main mission is focused on the resolution of patent-related disputes (having exclusive jurisdiction for unitary patent-related disputes and limited jurisdiction for non-unitary European patents) efficiently and at lower costs for the litigants. The mechanism officially came into force a year ago on 1 June 2023.

In an impressive debut year of activity, the unitary patent system has seen almost 30,000 unitary patents registered with the European Patent Office (EPO) across a number of industries (such as medical technology, civil engineering, and transport). These numbers translate into the fact that almost one in four granted European patents now apply across all participating EU Member States, a rate that is predicted to rise even further in the future. The new system has also sparked significant legal activity, with approximately 350 cases filed with the Unified Patent Court.



As of today, 17 EU member states (of which Luxembourg is of course part) are members of the unitary patent system, with Romania's accession becoming effective as from 1 September 2024. It is also hoped that non-participating EU member states join the system in the near future. All these advances are expected to further foster innovation across the EU, solidifying its position as one of the global leaders in intellectual property and technological development.

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