

London Agreement enters into force

On May 1st, 2008 London Agreement, concerning the the translations of a European Patent after the grant, will become effective in the following states: Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland and United Kingdom. Swden is planning to ratify the Agreement soo, so as to partecipate to this group from the beginning.

Considering that the publication of a European Patent comprises the claims translated into the three Official language of the European Patent Convention, all the States having at least one language in common with the EPO Official Languages (France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Switzerland , United Kingdom) are going to dispense the Patentees with any translation. However, a local domicile may be still required to make a granted patent effective.

Then, in Croatia, Denmark, Iceland and Netherlands the translation of the claims in the local language is still required, together with the description in English. Latvia and Slovenia require only the translation of the claims in their local language. This second track States may promote the use of English as language for European Patents also for Applicants having Franch and/or German as native language.

This remarkable novelty implies a significant reduction in the overall costs involved in a European patent procedure. At the moment, it is not clear if further Countries are considering to join this agreement, but many of them may be tempted to agree, in order to increase the number of patents validated for those Countries, thus starting to receive a greater amount of annuity fees.