

Notes on "European patent with unitary effect – Authorisation" (EPA/EPO/OEB Form 7003)

I. General instructions

These notes explain how to complete EPA/EPO/OEB Form 7003.

The provisions of the European Patent Convention (EPC) governing representation apply *mutatis mutandis* to any proceedings relating to European patents with unitary effect (Rule 20(1) and (2)(l) of the Rules relating to Unitary Patent Protection (UPR)).

The use of this form is recommended for authorising representatives to act before the European Patent Office (EPO) in relation to European patents with unitary effect: **professional representatives** and **legal practitioners** under Article 134(1) and (8) EPC, **employees** under Article 133(3), first sentence, EPC and **associations of representatives** under Rule 152(11) EPC. If the person authorised (hereinafter: "**authorisee**") is an employee who is not a professional representative or a legal practitioner, the party giving the authorisation (hereinafter: "**authorisor**") must declare that the authorisee is their employee either on the authorisation form itself (in the authorisee field) or in a covering letter. As to the case referred to in Article 133(3), second sentence, EPC, no implementing regulation has been adopted as yet.

Professional representatives whose names appear on the list maintained by the EPO, and legal practitioners entitled to act as representatives under Rule 20(1) UPR in conjunction with Article 134(8) EPC, who identify themselves as such are required to file a signed authorisation only in the cases specified under Rule 20(2)(l) UPR in conjunction with Rule 152(1) EPC and Article 1 of the decision of the President of the EPO dated 8 July 2024 on the signing and filing of authorisations in proceedings under the Rules relating to Unitary Patent Protection (OJ EPO 2024, A76).

By contrast, employees who are representing a party under Article 133(3), first sentence, EPC but are neither professional representatives nor legal practitioners under Article 138(8) EPC must always file a signed authorisation or refer to a general authorisation already on file (Rule 20(2)(l) UPR in conjunction with Rule 152(1) EPC and Article 2 of the above-mentioned decision of the President of the EPO (OJ EPO 2024, A76)).

An authorisation may cover one or more European patents with unitary effect (Rule 20(2)(l) UPR in conjunction with Rule 152(2) EPC).

All decisions, summonses and communications will be sent to the appointed representative (Rule 20(2)(f) UPR in conjunction with Rule 130 EPC), except where employees (Rule 20(1) UPR in conjunction with Article 133(3) EPC) are authorised, in which case these documents will be sent to the proprietor.

An authorisation does not terminate vis-à-vis the EPO upon the death of an authorisor unless expressly provided otherwise on a separate sheet (Rule 20(2)(l) UPR in conjunction with Rule 152(9) EPC).

Please note that filing an authorisation is distinct from appointing a representative vis-à-vis the EPO for a specific case and therefore does not automatically imply the appointment of the authorised representative. Please therefore always provide an explicit appointment in addition to filing the authorisation.

Form 7003 is available on the EPO website (epo.org).

II. Filling in the form

The numbering below corresponds to the sections of Form 7003 "European patent with unitary effect – Authorisation".

1. Enter in the box the name and address of the **authorisor** and the state in which their residence or principal place of business is located, in the way specified under Rule 6(2)(a) UPR in conjunction with Rule 41(2)(c) EPC:

"Names of natural persons shall be indicated by the person's family name, followed by their given names. Names of legal persons, as well as of bodies equivalent to legal persons under the law governing them, shall be indicated by their official designations. Addresses shall be indicated in accordance with applicable customary requirements for prompt postal delivery and shall comprise all the relevant administrative units, including the house number, if any."

Where the authorisation is given by more than one party, the details for the additional authorisors **must be indicated on a separate sheet.**

2. Enter here the **authorisee's** name and the address of their place of business in the same way as specified in note 1 above. Please also specify here whether the authorisee is a professional representative, a legal practitioner, an employee or an association of representatives. If an association of representatives within the meaning of

Rule 20(2)(l) UPR in conjunction with Rule 152(11) EPC is authorised, the name and the registration number of the association must be given. Where the authorisation is given to more than one representative, the details for the additional authorisees **must be indicated on a separate sheet**.

3. Enter the number(s) of the European patent(s) with unitary effect.
4. An individual authorisation may cover more than one European patent with unitary effect and entitles a representative to take all procedural acts on behalf of the authorisor(s) with regard to those patents. However, the **powers** mentioned separately on the form (to receive payments and to issue a sub authorisation) must each be **expressly** granted by checking the applicable boxes.
5. The EPC provisions on authorisations also apply to **sub-authorisations** (Rule 20(1) and (2)(l) UPR in conjunction with Article 133(3), first sentence, and Rule 152 EPC).
6. A revocation does not extend to any general authorisation which may have been given.
7. Signature(s) of the authorisor(s). Authorisations may be authenticated by a handwritten signature, a facsimile signature, a text-string signature or a digital signature under the conditions specified by the EPO. See Article 3 of the above-mentioned decision of the President of the EPO (OJ EPO 2024, A76) and the notice from the European Patent Office dated 8 July 2024 concerning the signing and filing of authorisations (OJ EPO 2024, A77). Where the authorisation is signed on behalf of a legal person, **only such persons as are entitled to sign by law, by the legal person's articles of association or equivalent or by a special mandate may do so**. In all cases, an indication is to be given of the signatory's position within the legal entity entitling them to sign (e.g. president, director, company secretary; Geschäftsführer, Prokurist, Handlungsbevollmächtigter; président, directeur, fondé de pouvoir). Employees signing on behalf of a legal person must print their name and their position within the company. They must be entitled to sign legally binding acts by national law, by the legal entity's articles of association or equivalent, or by a special mandate. It lies within the responsibility of the authorisor to ensure that the signatory is duly entitled to sign the authorisation according to the national law applicable. The EPO reserves the right to request documentary proof of the signatory's authority to sign if the circumstances of a particular case necessitate this. **An authorisation bearing the signature of a person not entitled to sign will be treated as an unsigned authorisation.**