



## **The European Patent Organisation**

The European Patent Organisation is an intergovernmental organisation set up pursuant to the European Patent Convention (EPC) which entered into force in 1977. The objectives of the EPC are to strengthen the cooperation between European States with respect to protection of inventions and to create a single procedure for the granting of patents in the member states. At present it has 38 Member States (this number may change; the full updated list of EPO member states can be found on the EPO website (<http://www.epo.org/about-us/epo/member-states.html>)).

## **The European Patent Office**

The executive body of the European Patent Organisation is the European Patent Office (EPO) which is charged with the searching and examination of European patent applications and the granting of European patents for inventions, on the basis of a centralised procedure. The mission of the EPO is to support innovation, competitiveness and economic growth across Europe through a commitment to high quality and efficient services delivered under the EPC. By filing a single application in one of the three official languages (English, French and German) it is possible to obtain patent protection in some or all of the EPC contracting states. The EPO employs approximately 7000 staff at EPO headquarters in Munich, a branch at The Hague/Rijswijk (NL) and sub-offices in Berlin and Vienna (the number of staff members indicated may change). It is a self-financing institution.

URL: [www.epo.org](http://www.epo.org)

Address / contact details can also be found on the EPO website (<http://www.epo.org/contact.html>)

## **Procurement of Goods / Works / Services**

As an independent intergovernmental organisation the European Patent Organisation does not fall under the scope of national or EU legislation on public procurement. It strictly follows the procurement rules laid down in its Financial Regulations and implementing provisions. These provide that goods, works or services are acquired by competition whenever possible, the award being made either on a discretionary basis taking account of a variety of factors (best value for money) or on the basis of price alone. The European Patent Organisation publishes its open invitations to tender in the Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Communities (online version Tenders Electronic Daily) and on its website (<http://www.epo.org/about-us/tenders.html>).