**PRESS RELEASE**

**Unitary Patent exceeds projections in its inaugural year:**

**SME uptake highlights key benefits**

* **Cheaper, simpler and providing uniform protection, the Unitary Patent system is proving to be a game changer to protect inventions in Europe**
* **Almost one in every four patents granted by the EPO has been converted into a Unitary Patent**
* **Patentees from Europe (39 EPO member states) had the highest uptake rate in its first year, followed by those from the US and China**

**Munich, 1 June 2024** – Since entering into force last June 2023, the [Unitary Patent system](https://www.epo.org/en/applying/european/unitary/unitary-patent?mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press), marking the creation of Europe’s technological single market, has already proven popular with patent owners. Almost **one in every four patents granted by the European Patent Office has been converted into a Unitary Patent** upon request by the proprietor, with the vast majority – around two-thirds – hailing from inside the EU. This translates into a 24% uptake rate in 2024 alone, with over 27 500 registrations for unitary effect in total since June 2023.

In its inaugural year, the Unitary Patent system has surpassed initial expectations. Particularly noteworthy is the **uptake rate of 35.5% Unitary Patents registered by SMEs among the European proprietors in 2023, showing their awareness of the benefits in terms of reduced costs, broader country coverage, and simplified procedures**. European patents serve as clear indicators of the value of inventions, boosting trust and solidity for attracting investors. Startups equipped with intellectual property rights are proven to be up to ten times more attractive to venture capital investment. The attractiveness of patents for investors will be significantly increased by the Unitary Patent due to its broader geographical coverage, its uniformity of protection and the increased legal security the Unified Patent Court will provide.

*“Some technology startups are pushing innovation beyond what we thought is possible”*, said EPO President António Campinos. *“At the European Patent Office, we want to be maximising the protection we afford them, whilst minimising the barriers and burdens they face, both in terms of costs and administration. The Unitary Patent is a huge step forward in both these aspects.”*

Demand for the Unitary Patent is strong, not only from the 17 EU Member States participating in the system, but from across Europe and the rest of the world. Patentees from Europe (39 EPO member states) had the highest share in the first year with 64.2% of all Unitary Patents registered, followed by those from the US (16.1%) and China (6.0%), Japan (3.8%) and Republic of Korea (3.3%).

In terms of technology fields, the Unitary Patent seems to be particularly attractive for medical technology, civil engineering, transportation, measurement, other specialised machines, handling, and pharmaceuticals. The top Unitary Patent requestors since June 2023 have been Johnson & Johnson, Siemens, Samsung, Qualcomm, and Ericsson.

**The EPO, a one-stop shop for owners of Unitary Patents**

The Unitary Patent system offers cost reductions, streamlined procedures, uniformity of protection, and increased legal security by providing inventors with a one-stop-shop for obtaining and maintaining patent protection, paying renewal fees and registering subsequent transactions such as licences. This avoids having to deal with a number of different national patent offices. In addition, the Unified Patent Court offers increased legal security by avoiding actions before different national courts with the risk of conflicting decisions.

**Further information**

* [Unitary Patent dashboard](https://www.epo.org/en/about-us/statistics/statistics-centre%22%20%5Cl%20%22/unitary-patent?mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press)
* [Unified Patent Court](https://www.unified-patent-court.org/en) (UPC)

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**About the EPO**

With 6 300 staff members, the [European Patent Office (EPO)](http://www.epo.org/) is one of the largest public service institutions in Europe. Headquartered in Munich with offices in Berlin, Brussels, The Hague and Vienna, the EPO was founded with the aim of strengthening co-operation on patents in Europe. Through the EPO's centralised patent granting procedure, inventors are able to obtain high-quality patent protection in up to 45 countries, covering a market of some 700 million people. The EPO is also the world's leading authority in patent information and patent searching.