

London Agreement entered into force on 1 May 2008

The London Agreement, which allows for reduced translation costs upon validation of a granted European patent in some national states, came into effect on 1 May 2008.

Therefore, any European patent having a grant date after 1 May 2008 will be able to benefit from these reduced translation costs if validating in the countries that have signed up.

How Does the London Agreement work?

Countries that have signed up to the agreement fall into two camps:

- a) countries having English, French or German as their official language (or one of their official languages) cannot demand a translation of the specification into any other language irrespective of language that the European Patent was prosecuted in. A translation of the claims into English, French or German can be required but this does not necessitate any additional translation since such claims translations are prepared as part of the European grant procedure.

Of the countries that have so far signed up, **France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Switzerland and the UK** fall into this group.

- b) countries not having English, French or German as one of their official languages can nominate English, French or German and it is necessary to file a translation into the nominated language when validating the Patent. These countries also have the power to call for a translation of the claims into their national language on validation.

Of the countries that have so far signed up **Croatia, Denmark, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Sweden** fall in this camp. Croatia, Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands and Sweden have nominated English as the language in which the patent must be supplied. Slovenia, Latvia and Lithuania have both opted to receive the description in any of English, French or German.

Other European countries, most notably **Italy and Spain**, have yet to ratify the London Agreement.

The countries that have not signed up to the London Agreement are listed below. We will update this list as and when any country ratifies the Agreement. However, at the present time, there is no indication that any country will do so in the near future.

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Spain and Turkey.

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