



Europäisches
Patentamt
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Patent Office
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des brevets



EUROPEAN
PATENT
CONVENTION

THE CONVERGENCE OF PRACTICE PROGRAMME: WHERE WE STAND AND OUTLOOK

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OBJECTIVES

Setting of common practices



**Reducing diverging practices
before NPOs & EPO**

Setting of common practices in identified areas where it could be expected that a more uniform approach would provide the most beneficial results for users and patent offices.

Common practices will be inspired either by the practice of national offices or the EPO and will be developed commonly through a mutual approximation of pre-existing divergent positions.

Reducing or possibly overcoming diverging practices before national patent offices and the EPO, which complicate the existing European patent system. Common practices lead in particular to cost savings, facilitates the access to patent protection and the mutual re-use of work and improve cost-effectiveness

FIRST CYCLE COMPLETED

Jan – Dec 2020



Jan 2021 – March 2022



Jan 2022 – March 2023



SECOND CYCLE 2023-2026

Jan 2023 – March 2024

Completed

Allowable features
in drawings (WG7)

Issuing and accepting electronic
priority documents (WG8)

Completed

Jan 2024 – March 2025

To come

Observations by
third parties (WG9)

Alignment of assignment
practice (WG10)

To come

Jan 2025 – March 2026

To come

Broad claims
(WG11)

Double patenting
(WG12)

To come

CURRENT WORK IN WORKING GROUPS 7 AND 8

Jan 2023	Feb 2023	April 2023	May 2023	July 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Feb 2024	March 2024
Working groups set up	Questionnaire on national practices sent to all participants	1st meeting of WG7 and WG8: Discussion of the questionnaire results	2nd meeting of WG7 and WG8: Substantive discussion of first proposals	3rd meeting of WG7 and WG8: Discussion of proposed draft common practice	4th meeting of WG7 and WG8: Discussion of draft common practice continued	31 October: 4th Virtual platform event 28 October SACEPO WP/R	Possible 5th meetings	Patent Law Committee (CPL)	Presentation of draft common practices to CPL and subsequent adoption by Administrative Council (subject to positive opinion of CPL)



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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