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## What is the Unified Patent Court (UPC)?

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The Unified Patent Court (UPC) will be a court common to the Contracting Member States and thus part of their judicial system. It will have exclusive competence in respect of European patents and European patents with unitary effect. The exclusive competence is however subject to [exceptions during the transitional period](#). The UPC's rulings will have effect in the territory of those Contracting Member States having ratified the UPC Agreement at the given time. The UPC will not have any competence with regard to national patents.

The UPC Agreement is open to accession by any Member State of the European Union. The Agreement is not open to states outside of the European Union. Up to date, all European Union Member States except Spain and Poland have signed the Agreement.

## Where will the UPC be located?

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The UPC will consist of a Court of First Instance, a Court of Appeal and a Registry. The Court of First Instance will have a central division as well as local and regional divisions. The central division will be seated in Paris, with sections in London and Munich.

Every Contracting Member State may set up a local division or together with one or more other Contracting Member States a regional division of the Court of First Instance. The Contracting Member States shall designate the seat of such local and regional divisions. The Court of Appeal will have its seat in Luxembourg. The Registry will be set up at the seat of the Court of Appeal.

In addition a patent mediation and arbitration centre with seats in Ljubljana and Lisbon and a training framework for judges with facilities in Budapest shall be established.

## Who will be the judges on the UPC?

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There will be both legally qualified judges and technically qualified judges. The judges must be nationals of a Contracting Member State, ensure the highest standards of competence, have proven experience in the field of patent litigation and good command of at least one official language of the European Patent Office (EPO).

Legally qualified judges shall possess the qualifications required for appointment to judicial offices in a Contracting Member State and technically qualified judges shall have a university degree and proven expertise in a field of technology as well as proven knowledge of civil law and procedure relevant to patent litigation. Any panel of the UPC shall have a multinational composition.

## How will the judges be appointed?

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Candidates can apply directly to the UPC. The Advisory Committee of the UPC will establish a list of the most suitable candidates to be appointed as judges of the Court. On the basis of that list, the Administrative Committee of the UPC shall appoint the judges of the Court acting by common accord.

The Advisory Committee will consist of patent judges and practitioners in patent law and patent litigation with the highest recognized competence. The Administrative Committee will be composed of one representative of each Contracting Member State.