

As of January 1, 2008, the geographical scope of the of international design registration system (also known as the Hague System) will be broadened, due to the accession of the European Community as one bloc, to the Geneva Act of the Hague Convention. From the beginning of 2008 therefore, simply with the filing of a single application, end users will have the ability to simultaneously opt for protection in all member-states of the International design registration system, as well as the 27 member states of the European Union (Community Design System).

With the inclusion of the European Community, which is the first inter-governmental organization to accede to the Hague System, the official total member states of the latter rises to 47 (although there is some overlap between EC members and previous Hague System members). The International design registrations' system will thus become much more attractive, convenient and cost effective to users.

Equally, it is expected that the creation of such an interface between the Community and the International design registration system will prove to be an affordable, convenient and efficient manner of handling industrial design registrations on a global level for the users of the Community Design System as well. Notably, in August 2007, the total number of registered and published Community designs exceeded 267.000 while the total number of international designs contained in the registered deposits, from 1928 until 2006, was close to 2 million.

The European Community's accession to International Design Registration system (based on the Geneva Act of the Hague Convention) follows the successful accession of the EC to the Madrid Protocol, for the International Trademark Registration system, in 2004.

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