

EPO accepts color drawings in patent applications

Starting October 1, 2025, the European Patent Office (EPO) will allow **European patent application figures to be in color or grayscale**, as long as the application is submitted electronically and meets a series of requirements.

This is an important and long-awaited change that relaxes the previous requirement: European patent applications could only include black and white drawings.

Color drawings in patent applications

Specifically, the new regulations state that “when submitted **electronically, drawings** may also be in color or grayscale, with durable lines, strokes, or areas that are uniform in thickness and well defined. They must also have a high level of contrast and be suitable for viewing at a resolution of 300 dpi.”

However, in practice, this decision **only affects applications filed with the EPO**, so it is important to note that:

1. Currently, **certain Patent Offices do not accept color figures** (or they do accept them, but only in specific situations), so it is essential to see how this new development unfolds in practice and what decisions these Offices take in the future.

2. International patent applications filed under the **PCT** (Patent Cooperation Treaty) **must also include black and white line drawings**.

In short, this is a new development that will benefit applicants when the details of the figure can be better shown in color, **but special attention will have to be paid to what other Offices require when filing applications in multiple jurisdictions** and to what these adopt in the future taking into account the decision approved by the EPO in this area.

In conclusion, the entry into force of this new development will allow the use of color in drawings, but it will have to be treated in a personalized fashion in order to evaluate pros and cons on a case-by-case basis.

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