

**DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
OF 13 DECEMBER 2017
AMENDING RULE 51 OF THE IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS
TO THE EUROPEAN PATENT CONVENTION**

(CA/D 13/17)

THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN PATENT ORGANISATION,

Having regard to the European Patent Convention (hereafter referred to as "EPC") and in particular Article 33(1)(c) thereof,

On a proposal from the President of the European Patent Office,

Having regard to the opinion of the Budget and Finance Committee,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE 1

The Implementing Regulations to the EPC shall be amended as follows:

Rule 51, paragraph 1, shall read as follows:

"(1) A renewal fee for the European patent application in respect of the coming year shall be due on the last day of the month containing the anniversary of the date of filing of the European patent application. The renewal fee in respect of the third year may not be validly paid more than six months before it falls due. All other renewal fees may not be validly paid more than three months before they fall due."

ARTICLE 2

Rule 51, paragraph 1, EPC as amended by Article 1 of this decision shall enter into force on 1 April 2018.

ARTICLE 3

Rule 51, paragraph 1, EPC as amended by Article 1 of this decision shall apply to any application for which the renewal fee is paid on or after 1 April 2018.

Done at Munich, 13 December 2017

For the Administrative Council

The Chairman

Christoph ERNST