

FÉDÉRATION DES BARREAUX D'EUROPE • IP LAW COMMISSION

The FBE at the EUIPO Ideas Powered for Business Network Event

Alicante, 7–8 October 2026

EVENT

Ideas Powered for Business (IPFB) Network event

HOST

European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)

DATE AND VENUE

7–8 October 2026, Alicante

FBE REPRESENTATIVE

Izabela Konopacka, President of the FBE IP Law Commission



Participants of the IPFB Network event at the EUIPO, Alicante, 7–8 October 2026

01 PARTICIPATION AND THE ROLE OF THE IP LAW COMMISSION

On 7 and 8 October 2026, the FBE was represented by Izabela Konopacka, President of the FBE IP Law Commission, at the network event of the Ideas Powered for Business (IPFB) Network, hosted by the European Union Intellectual Property Office in Alicante.

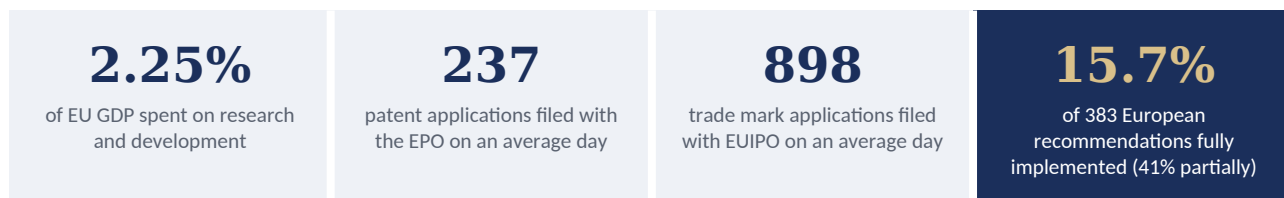
The IPFB Network brings together European organisations working with small and medium-sized enterprises: SME and craft associations, chambers of commerce, accountants, investors, innovation agencies and EU bodies such as the EIT and EISMEA. The FBE takes part as a voice of the legal profession in Europe. It is one of only two organisations of the legal profession, together with the CCBE, that have signed a cooperation agreement with EUIPO. This gives the European bars a direct say in a forum where the Office discusses with stakeholders how SMEs obtain, use and enforce their intellectual property rights.

Maintaining and developing this relationship with EUIPO and the IPFB Network is one of the core tasks of the FBE IP Law Commission. The Commission follows the Network's work on a continuous basis and brings to it the perspective of practitioners who advise SMEs on IP matters every day.

02 PROGRAMME AND SUBSTANCE OF THE DISCUSSIONS

The event was organised around a review of the Network's work so far and its priorities for 2027 and beyond. The organisers set three objectives: to assess the actions taken to date and their actual impact, to define priorities for the coming months in light of the EU policy and legislative agenda, and to produce concrete proposals through an open exchange among the partners.

The opening session placed the debate in a broader European context, with particular attention to the gap between policy and practice.



Figures quoted in the opening session

The message was clear. Recommendations bring value to businesses only once they are translated into clear, predictable legal rules and applied in practice. The implementation of IP rights, and the legal certainty that SMEs need in order to rely on them, ran through the whole day.

The programme combined keynotes, including one by Viorel Peca (EISMEA) and one by Inge Buffolo (EUIPO) on the Network's impact, with first-hand accounts from entrepreneurs. The SMEs' reality check by Ana Beik of Golden Owl and the talk by the founders of Fych Technologies showed how young companies actually encounter IP: often late, with limited resources, and with considerable uncertainty about which rights to secure and where.

The central part of the day was a ProAction Café, a workshop format in which participants worked in four thematic roundtables and then presented the actions they had agreed on:

- IP-backed finance
- sustainability and the circular economy
- new focus areas for the Network to boost EU competitiveness
- inclusiveness and diversity.

The format made the discussion considerably more concrete and interactive than a traditional panel would have allowed.

03 INCLUSIVENESS AND DIVERSITY ROUNDTABLE

The President of the FBE IP Law Commission took part in the roundtable on inclusiveness and diversity, moderated by Caroline Hetterschijt (EUIPO), with Viorel Peca (EIC) as rapporteur and Golden Owl as the participating SME.

The discussion concerned access to the IP system in the broadest sense. The participants considered how to reach entrepreneurs who are under-represented among IP users, including women founders, very small companies and businesses in regions with weaker support structures, and how the Network's tools can be made easier to find and use.

Inclusiveness in IP is largely a question of timely access to legal advice.

From the perspective of legal practice, this is the key point. Many SMEs seek advice only once a conflict has arisen: when a sign turns out to be already registered, when a design has been copied, or when it emerges that rights to a solution remain with an external developer. At that stage the options are narrower and more expensive. Early, accessible advice on the choice of protection, on territorial scope and on securing ownership in contracts is often what determines whether an SME can rely on its IP at all. This is where the legal profession contributes most, and why its presence in this discussion matters.

04 CLOSING REMARKS

The Alicante meeting was a substantive and well-prepared exchange. It confirmed that the voice of the legal profession is relevant to EUIPO's work with SMEs and that it is important for the FBE to take part in these discussions. The FBE IP Law Commission will continue to follow the work of the IPFB Network.

Izabela Konopacka

President, FBE IP Law Commission