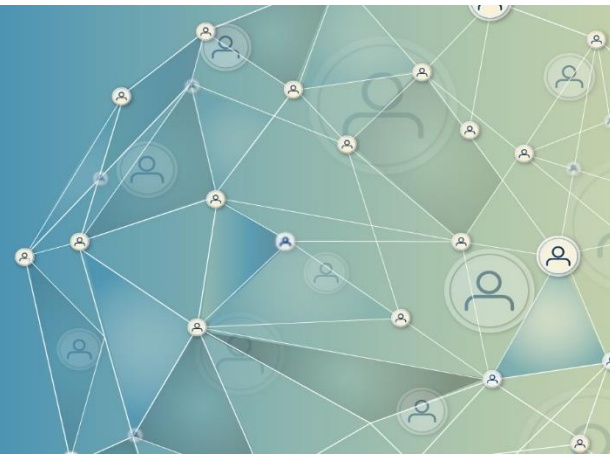


Network Event

28 & 29 April 2025 EUIPO, Alicante



IP Driving European Competitiveness

The [below referenced] Members of the EUIPO's Ideas Powered for Business Network, a diverse and experienced network of innovation and business support actors, gathered for their Annual Network Event at the EUIPO in Alicante on 29th of April, under the theme "IP Driving European Competitiveness", inspired by the European Commission's Competitiveness Compass, and agree on the following conclusions:

- As highlighted by the Draghi and Letta reports, closing the innovation gap with other economic powers, such as the US and China, is imperative also in order to achieve a more competitive, resilient, and strategically autonomous Europe. This requires a fundamental reform of the innovation lifecycle in Europe – from making it easier for researchers to commercialise their ideas, to mobilise joint public investment in breakthrough technologies, and removing barriers to scale up for innovative companies
- The Competitiveness Compass¹ rightly highlights the need to support EU researchers and enterprises in bringing innovation to the market. This ambition must be reflected in key EU policy initiatives.
- Tackling the underutilisation of Intellectual Property ("IP") is essential to unlocking innovation, attracting investment, and strengthening Europe's competitiveness and strategic autonomy.
- Studies conducted by the EUIPO (as listed in the Annex) consistently demonstrate the strong positive correlation between IP use and the performance of start-ups, scale-ups, SMEs and other economic actors. IP also plays a vital role in enabling access to venture capital.
- To address the above-mentioned challenges and overcome existing barriers, actions intended to boost IP protection, commercialisation and enforcement must be promoted and consistently integrated into key policy initiatives supporting the implementation of the Competitiveness Compass. These include the Start-up and Scale-up Strategy, the Innovation Act, the Single Market Strategy, and the Competitiveness Fund.
- In particular, the following actions are proposed:
 - Facilitate access to the IP system for startups, scaleups and SMEs. Promote inclusive access to IP support schemes, with specific efforts to close gender and demographic gaps in IP use.
 - Close the IP skills gap by embedding IP education and awareness into various programmes and platforms - including trade fairs and associations - for entrepreneurs, startups, SMEs, RTOs, TTOs, as well as advisors such as accountants and key stakeholders of the business support ecosystem. Enhance business resilience by ensuring that IP strategies support long-term sustainability and adaptability in a changing innovation landscape. Develop IP guidance and tools for collaborative, open innovation settings to balance openness with appropriate protection and commercialisation.
 - Enhance IP enforcement to safeguard innovation and creativity, through services such as "IP scan enforcement", digital tools like the IP Enforcement Portal, ADR and mediation mechanisms. Protect EU design and innovation from unfair international competition.
 - Support IP commercialisation to bring innovation to market, including support for RTOs and TTOs on licencing strategies, IP portfolio management, and spin-off creation. Ensure IP frameworks evolve in response to emerging technologies (e.g. AI, green tech, biotech, etc.), supporting faster protection and ethical commercialisation pathways.
 - Foster access to finance through IP, by (a) developing standardised IP valuation methodologies and guidelines to aid financial entities in assessing IP portfolios;(b) providing training to create a pool of IP

¹ COM (2025) 30 final. More at: https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness_en.

- valuation experts and other financial actors and (c) exploring European IP investment platforms that connect businesses and capital providers.
 - Develop a secondary market platform for IP to allow owners to monetise their assets by selling or licensing them.
 - Envisage IP-related expenditures, including IP rights registration and commercialisation costs, as eligible costs in all EU financing programs designed to promote innovation and competitiveness.
 - Design EU-level financial support schemes for IP services, co-funded by the EUIPO and the EU budget. These schemes should include the reimbursement of IP registration costs and funding for activities related to IP commercialisation and valorisation.
 - Support the creation of EU and national guarantee instruments to leverage IP rights in the form of thematic products with a high coverage rate to provide financial security and mitigating the risk associated with IP transactions. Guarantees could enhance the credibility and monetisation of IP assets, making them more attractive to investors and lenders.
 - Develop a uniform and standardised methodology and associated tools that enable a qualitative evaluation of the IP rights – adapted to products and services, key industry sectors, and the various stages of a company's lifecycle.
 - Simplify the fragmented IP support landscape. The EUIPO, in close cooperation with national IP offices and the members of the Ideas Powered for Business Network is well-positioned to contribute to a more coherent and complete services landscape to help startups, scaleups and SMEs to exploit their IP rights as business assets and thrive.
 - Establish common EU indicators to monitor IP's impact on innovation performance, scale-up success and competitiveness across sectors.
- The below referenced members of the Ideas Powered for Business Network firmly believe that now is both a timely and essential moment to present these conclusions to the European Commission, offering them as a meaningful contribution to the ongoing efforts to shape initiatives that will help the EU reach the ambitious goals outlined in the Competitiveness Compass. Representing a diverse and dynamic array of actors across the innovation and business support ecosystem, the network stands united in its readiness to act—each member committed to making a difference within their own field. The network is willing to assist the European Commission and the EUIPO in further analysing barriers and enablers to unlock the full potential of Europe's business support and innovation ecosystem and provide a forum to discuss findings, exchange ideas, and share best practices with EU policy makers.

LIST OF SIGNATORIES AND ABOUT THE ASSOCIATIONS


The Ideas Powered for business (IPFB) network is a diverse network of European organisations that work to support SMEs through various means, including advocacy, funding, business development, and the promotion of innovation and IP.

Collectively, these associations form a robust and interconnected ecosystem that significantly impacts the EU's SME landscape. Their coordinated efforts amplify their individual contributions, fostering an environment where SMEs can innovate, grow, and compete effectively.

	<p>Accountancy Europe unites 49 professional organisations from 35 countries that represent 1 million qualified accountants, auditors and advisors. As Accountancy Europe, we translate professional accountant's daily experience from across Europe to inform the European policy debate. Accountancy Europe is in the EU Transparency Register (No 4713568401-18)</p> <p>For more information please contact: Johan Barros, Head of Advocacy and Policy; johan@accountancyeurope.eu</p>
	<p>Eurochambres – the association of European chambers of commerce and industry – represents more than 20 million businesses through its members and a network of 1700 regional and local chambers across Europe. Eurochambres is the leading voice for the broad business community at EU level, building on chambers' strong connections with the grass roots economy and their hands-on support to entrepreneurs. Chambers' member businesses – over 93% of which are SMEs – employ over 120 million people.</p>

	<p>For more information please contact: Giacomo Fersini, Senior Economic Policy Advisor, fersini@eurochambres.eu</p>
	<p>Eurojuris International is network of European and international lawyers mainly focused in Europe with more than 5000 lawyers and 600 law firms. Eurojuris International is proud to be a member of the Ideas Powered for Business Network to facilitate the growth and strength of SMEs all over Europe</p> <p>For more information please contact: Stefan Daubner, President, president@eurojuris.net</p>
	<p>The European Association of Development Agencies (EURADA) gathers people working on economic development through a large network of 59 members throughout 16 countries in the European Union and beyond. Based in Brussels, EURADA fosters collaboration among practitioners in regional economic development, serving as a hub to connect our members with other regional development agencies, business partners and European authorities.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Theo Föllings, President, theo.follings@oostnl.nl Giacomo Frisanco, Communication, Policy and Membership Manager, giacomo.frisanco@eurada.org</p>
	<p>The European Association of Guarantee Institutions (AECM) is a member-based non-profit international association, founded in 1992 to represent its members towards EU institutions, to facilitate the knowledge exchange between its members and to promote the guarantee instrument.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Simon Thibaud, Policy Officer, simon.thibaud@aecm.eu Katrin Sturm, Secretary General, katrin.sturm@aecm.eu</p>
	<p>The European Business Angels Network is the pan-European representative for the early-stage investor community gathering over 100 member organizations in more than 50 countries today. Established in 1999 by a group of pioneer angel networks in Europe with the collaboration of the European Commission and EURADA, EBAN represents a sector estimated to invest 11.4 billion Euros a year and playing a vital role in Europe's future, notably in the funding of SMEs. EBAN fuels Europe's growth through the creation of wealth and jobs. EBAN is a non for-profit association gathering business angel networks and other early stage investor groups from Europe and beyond.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Jacopo Losso, Director General, director@eban.org</p>
	<p>EBN (European Business and Innovation Centre Network) is a notfor-profit that serves a pan-European, global community of entrepreneurship support organisations using innovative business as a driver for regional (economic, sustainable, and social) development. EBN' s initiatives include EU BIC certification, development and distribution of quality business support programmes, facilitation and initiation of project collaborations, global networking, and advocacy for excellent innovation support actors like the EU BICs.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Bram Pauwels, Chief Strategy Officer, Bram.Pauwels@ebn.eu</p>

	<p>The European Crowdfunding Network (EUROCROWD) is an independent network organisation aiming to support and promote crowdfunding as an alternative funding mechanism for small and medium-sized enterprises and innovative projects. EUROCROWD promotes and supports the development of Crowdfunding mechanisms as a viable funding source to European entrepreneurs and funders.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Oliver Gajda, Executive Director, oliver.gajda@eurocrowd.org</p>
	<p>The European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME is the European umbrella organisation uniting in Nov 2021, 25 national or sectoral pan-European SME associations with only voluntarily associated companies, having members in all EU Member States and beyond, representing over 2.1 Million companies and more than 20 million employees.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Stefan Moritz, Secretary General, stefan.moritz@cea-pme.com</p>
	<p>The European Federation of Accountants and Auditors for small and medium-sized enterprises (EFAA for SMEs) is an umbrella organisation for national accountants and auditors' organisations whose individual members provide professional services primarily to SMEs within the European Union and Europe as a whole. It was founded in 1994.</p> <p>EFAA for SMEs has 15 members throughout Europe representing over 400,000 accountants, auditors and tax advisors.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Salvador Marin, EFAA for SMEs President, secretariat@efaa.com</p>
	<p>EFIC is the European Furniture Industries Confederation, representing over 70% of the total turnover of the European Furniture Industries, a sector employing 1 million people in about 120.000 enterprises across the EU and generating a turnover of over 100 billion Euros.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Edi Snaidero, President, info@efic.eu</p>
	<p>The European Major Exhibition Centres Association (EMECA) unites 25 leading exhibition venues in Europe, many of which are also exhibition and event organisers. Europe hosts the large majority of the leading international shows for each sector. EMECA Members are convinced of the active role they play in bringing together the international trading community. The EMECA exhibition centres strive to provide exhibitors and visitors with an excellent infrastructure and first-class information networks. In Europe they play an active part in the development of local trade. The EMECA venues host and organise almost 2,000 exhibitions a year with roughly 400,000 exhibitors and 38,5 million visitors on a gross rented display area of 38 million square meters. EMECA Members have become renowned exhibition organisers in key growth regions outside of Europe.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Barbara Weizsaecker, Secretary General, barbara.weizsaecker@emeca.eu</p>
	<p>The European Registry for Internet Domains (EURid) is the registry manager of the .eu, .eu (Cyrillic script) and .eu (Greek script) country code top-level domain names by appointment of the European Commission, a role fulfilled since 2003. EURid envisions a secure, trusted, and multilingual online environment that supports the European Digital Single Market by providing a safe and reliable top-level domain.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Hans Seeuws, Business Operations Manager, Hans.Seeuws@eurid.eu</p>

	<p>The European Startup Network is an international non-profit organization acting as an umbrella for national startup associations from across Europe. ESN was founded in 2016 and is based in Brussels, Belgium. ESN's mission is to make Europe the powerhouse for innovative entrepreneurship.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Clark Parsons, CEO, clark.parsons@europeanstartupnetwork.eu</p>
	<p>Early Warning Europe is a network aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and supporting the growth of SMEs across Europe. Its key mission is to help companies in distress through early intervention, offering guidance to prevent bankruptcies, protect jobs, and provide business owners with a second chance. Originating in 2016 under the EU's COSME programme, the initiative successfully established early warning mechanisms in several countries and built a growing expert and partner network across Europe.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Morten Møller, Secretary-General, mmo@earlywarningeurope.eu,</p>
	<p>The Fédération des Barreaux d'Europe (FBE) – the Federation of European Bars – is an international non-governmental organization representing over 220 member Bars and more than 1 million lawyers across Europe. Founded in 1992, the FBE fosters dialogue and cooperation among European lawyers and bar associations, supports the legal profession in adapting to new technologies, and promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion within the legal community.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Izabela Konopacka, President of the FBE IP Law Commission, izabela.konopacka@kslegal.eu</p>
	<p>The International Network for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises – INSME is a legally recognized not-for-profit association working under the auspices of the OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The Association gathers at international level private and private organisations involved in the development and implementation of policies and programs in support of SMEs and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Giovanni Zazzerini, Secretary General, zazzerini@insme.org</p>
	<p>SMEunited, formerly known as UEAPME, is the association of crafts and SMEs in Europe with around 65 member organisations from over 30 European countries. SMEunited is a recognised employers' organisation and European Social Partner and acts on behalf of crafts and SMEs in the European Social Dialogue and in discussions with the EU institutions.</p> <p>We represent national cross-sectoral Craft and SME federations, European SME branch organisations and associate members. We speak on behalf of the 25,8 million SMEs in Europe which employ almost 88,7 million people. We are a non-profit seeking and non-partisan organisation.</p> <p>For more information please contact: Sophia Zakari, Director Enterprise Policy & Legal Affairs, S.Zakari@smeunited.eu</p>
	<p>UFI is the global trade association of the world's tradeshow organisers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations, and selected partners of the exhibition industry. UFI's main goal is to represent, promote and support the business interests of its members and the exhibition industry. UFI directly represents more than 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally and also works closely with over 75 national and regional association members. More than 900 member organisations in 90 countries and regions worldwide are</p>

	<p>presently signed up as members. Over 900 international trade fairs proudly bear the UFI-approved label, a quality guarantee for visitors and exhibitors alike. UFI members continue to provide the international business community with a unique marketing media aimed at developing outstanding face-to-face business opportunities.</p>
	<p>For more information please contact: Peirui Tan, Programme Manager for Advocacy and Alliances advocacy@ufi.org</p>

ANNEX List of Studies

- [EUIPO/EPO. 2025. Intellectual property rights and firm performance in the European Union. Firm-level analysis report.](#)[EUIPO/EPO. 2019. High-growth firms and intellectual property rights. IPR profile of high-potential SMEs in Europe.](#)
- [EUIPO/EPO. 2023. Patents, trade marks and startup finance.](#)
- [EUIPO/InvestEurope. 2024. Protecting European Innovation: Private Equity's Role in European Intellectual Property Rights.](#)
- [EUIPO/EPO. 2023. Patents, trade marks and startup finance.](#)