



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF INVENTORS' ASSOCIATIONS

Established in 1968 ♦ Members from 83 countries (2006)

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Patent policy for the European Union

There are five groups with decisive interest about patents:

Society as a whole, the inventor, the owner of patent rights, patent office, and patent attorneys.

The essential interests of these groups are:

- The interest of society is the provision of sufficient food, energy, and health for all.
- The interest of the inventor is creation itself.
- The interest of the owners of patent rights is profit.
- The interest of patent attorneys is profit.
- The interest of patent offices is revenues.

These interests can be met by the following means:

- Society needs inventions to satisfy needs
- Inventors need simple and cheap legal protection that ensures the realization of inventions.
- The interests of enterprise in addition to profit depends their size. Large enterprises, as owners of patent rights, aim at high-cost patents to bar competitors from entry. Small and medium sized enterprises desire low cost and simple protection
- National patent offices strive at high revenues and extended influence, with minimal responsibilities and workload.
- Patent attorneys desire a complicated and cumbersome patenting process that renders them inevitable.

A European patent that would cover the countries in the EU with one application, is not an interest shared by all of these groups.

- For the society an EU patent would be beneficial by speeding up innovation.
- For the inventor, and small and medium sized enterprises an EU patent would also be beneficial.
- Large enterprises and patent attorneys are not in favor of an EU patent, they support the present system.
- National patent offices are also not in favor of an EU patent.

In sum, we can state that an EU patent is in the interest of society, inventors, and small-medium sized enterprises. Large enterprises, patent attorneys, and national patent offices are not interested in an EU patent.

Suggestions of International Federation of Inventors Association - IFIA:

EU should be part of the European Patent Convention. According to this the European Patent Office should issue patents that cover all EU countries. EU should accept the London Agreement, aiming at the reduction of patenting costs.

The EU should support the creation of the European Patent Court.

The past leadership of EU was shaping the patent system according to the interests of large enterprises, patent attorneys, and national patent offices. They paid little attention to the interests of society, and the interest of inventors. As a result there was little increase in the competitiveness of EU regarding innovation. IFIA hopes the new EU patent policy will be better for the society, the inventors and small and medium sized enterprises.

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