



Update on the Confederacy of European Patent Information User Groups (CEPIUG)



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ABSTRACT

The Confederacy of European Patent Information User Groups (CEPIUG) was founded in 2008 to promote the sharing of experiences and expertise in patent searching across Europe.

CEPIUG currently comprises patent information user groups from eight different European countries and is open to new members. Besides the exchange of information, CEPIUG also seeks to promote the coordination of European efforts in the fields of education and training of new entrants into the profession of patent searching, as well as seeking to establish a suitable certification scheme for patent information professionals.

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1. Introduction

The purpose and activities of CEPIUG were first described in the article "Patent Information User Groups in Europe join together: Foundation of the Confederacy of European Patent Information User Groups (CEPIUG)" [1].

Since that time significant changes have occurred within the organization and an update is provided here in this article.

2. History

Over the last 57 years, Europe has been fertile ground for the creation of patent information user groups, starting with foundation of the Patent Documentation Group (PDG) in 1957 [2] by thirteen European chemical and petrochemical companies, as a work group seeking to promote the effective and efficient use of patent information. PDG continues to this day, with 39 multinational companies from eight different countries across a range of

different technologies and is a highly respected body in the field of patent information.

In parallel to the PDG, national patent information user groups started to appearing the past 35 years:

- WON (Werkgemeinschaft Octrooinformatie Nederland) in 1977 in the Netherlands [3];
- PATMG (Patent and Trademark Group) in 1978 in the United Kingdom;
- CFIB (Club Français d'Information Brevet) in 1988 in France [4];
- BPIP (British Patent Information Professionals, originally the Derwent UK Users Group) in 1990 in the United Kingdom;
- AGM (Arbeitsgruppe Elektronische Medien in der Patent-information) in Germany (establishment date unknown);
- PIF (Patent Information Forum) in 2002 in Denmark;
- AIDB (Associazione Italiana Documentalisti Brevettuali) in 2004 in Italy [5];
- SIPIG (Swedish IP Information Group) in 2008 in Sweden.

Some of these associations (for example the CFIB and BPIP) were initially created with a focus on the information provided by Derwent (now Thomson Reuters), one of the principal patent information providers during this time, to act as a forum for sharing information and feedback to help develop services.

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¹ All are CEPIUG board members.

Around 2005–2006, CFIB opened its membership to French speaking patent information users, regardless of whether they were located in France or another country such as Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland or Canada where French is one of the official national languages. The association was renamed “Club Francophone d’Information Brevet”. Still later, in 2009, CFIB was substantially reorganized and internal structures were created with a board, working groups and so on.

The major difference between these national associations and the Patent Documentation Group (PDG) lies in the membership which is most often open to any patent information specialists for the former, while it is restricted to corporate members in the latter.

The Confederacy of European Patent Information User Groups was created in 2008 with the core mission to facilitate the communication and exchange of information and experiences between the existing national level patent information user groups.

Most recently, the BEPIUG (the Belgian Patent Information User Group) was created in 2010 and also became a CEPIUG member.

2.1. Mission

As described on its website (<http://www.cepiug.org>) CEPIUG’s aim “is to be a platform for cooperation for the Patent Information User Groups in Europe. Focus of the Confederacy is to subjects that are relevant to all member User Groups”.

Hence, the CEPIUG role emphasizes on the importance of interaction and dialog between the different user groups as well as giving the profession a common identity. This also contributes to a better impact and use of resources by having CEPIUG working on matters of importance for all users rather than having them being resolved by each group separately.

3. Members

Table 1 below, “CEPIUG’s members”, summarizes the list of actual national members of the confederacy. It also provides information about their geographical scope and their average number of individual members.

4. Board & status

CEPIUG’s founders and the initial board consisted of:

Aalt van de Kuilen (WON) – first President of the Confederacy from 2008 to early 2014 - **Anne-Gaëlle Darmont (CFIB)** as board

member, **Michele Fattori (AIDB)** as Vice President and **Gerben Gieling (WON)** as Secretary.

They were soon joined by **Bob Stembridge (PATMG)** who took over on the role of Secretary from Gerben Gieling.

Members of the board are proposed by the national associations. CEPIUG aims to have two physical meetings every year for nomination and election of board members and consideration of other matters.

Participation on the board is limited in time as per CEPIUG’s statutes:

“Board members are elected for a time period of three years; each year at least one of the Board members resigns. Board members preferably resign according to their seniority in the Board. Board members can be consecutively re-elected once. After one possible re-election a minimum period of one year is respected before a person could be elected again as Board member.”

After **Aalt van de Kuilen** left the board in March 2014, the new board consists of:

Linus Wretblad (SIPIG) – President, **Frederic Baudour (CFIB)** – Vice-President, **Bob Stembridge (PATMG)** – Secretary, **Guido Moradei (AIDB)** and **Klaus Gundertofte (PIF)**, both as counselors.

5. Accomplishments

5.1. Platform for communication

The confederacy has been meeting two times a year in parallel with two of the major patent information conferences in Europe, the IPI-Confex [6] and EPOPIC [7] (European Patent Office Patent Information Conference).

These opportunities have been used specifically to:

- share information between the different national associations: who has been doing what over the last six months or last year
- communicate about current working group projects, e.g. certification and formation (see below)
- exchange experiences from tests with and experiences with tool providers, other issues or topics brought to the attention of the confederation.

5.2. Certification

Since shortly after its conception, CEPIUG has been supporting the patent information certification project [8]. This is because information specialists as well as companies with registered IP rights have observed that:

Table 1
CEPIUG membership statistics and details as of January 2015.

Name	Country	Website	Average number of members
BPIP – British Patent Information Professionals	United Kingdom	None	50
BEPIUG – Belgian Patent Information User Group	Belgium	http://www.bepiug.org/	65
PIF – Patent Information Forum	Denmark	http://piforum.mono.net	80
SIPIG – Swedish IP Information Group	Sweden	None	60
WON – Werkgeenschap Octrooiinformation Nederland	Netherlands	http://www.won-nl.org	90
AGM – Arbeitsgruppe Elektronische Medien in der Patentinformation	Germany	http://www.dgd.de/agm.aspx	Unknown
AIDB – Associazione Italiana Documentalisti Brevettuali	Italy	http://www.aidb.it	128
CFIB – Club Francophone d’Information Brevet	France and French speaking (Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg)	http://www.lecfib.org	136
PATMG – Patent & Trademark Group	United Kingdom	http://www.cilip.org.uk/about/special-interest-groups/patent-and-trademark-group	200

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