

EU TRADE MARK PROPOSALS ON COURSE FOR OCTOBER

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In a meeting with users, the European Commission has indicated it is flexible on some controversial points of the Max Planck study on trade marks in Europe and is set to make proposals in October

The hearing was organised by the Commission to gauge **reaction by users** of the Community trade mark system to the **recent trade mark study** by the Max Planck Institute.

Users have expressed concern at several proposals made by the study, including allowing a mark to be registered after a similar mark in a different part of the EU has not been used for 15 years.

But the user representatives at the hearing were encouraged, with the Commission emphasising the fact that this study is only one part of a wider consultation.

"The meeting went well and the Commission seemed very keen to listen to us," said Tove Graulund of MARQUES.

"There is also a lot of agreement between the associations. Our priorities are fairly similar. We all want to see improvements but not major changes."

Annick Mottet, president of ECTA, agreed: "On the biggest issues, such as genuine use, we were in agreement. We all think it is best to avoid references to political boundaries, for example.

"But there was disagreement understandably on some aspects, such as whether to change the arrangements on fees to avoid cluttering of the register."

Users also seemed confident that the 15-year proposal would not be followed through.

The Commission seemed determined to have its legislative proposals for a revised Regulation out in October, as it previously predicted.

In recent weeks there had been speculation that the date would be pushed back, probably as far as spring 2012.

The agenda of the hearing, available [here](#), makes clear the biggest concerns of users, with 10 questions listed beginning with genuine use, the distribution of renewal fees and shortening deadlines.

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