

Associations of representatives (Q&A document)

1. **How can an association of representatives verify that it complies with the minimum requirement of having two linked, registered and valid association members, and that these members have each already obtained individual ID numbers from the Office assigned to the association's address?**

The Office's database of representatives is accessible online in eSearch plus: <https://euipo.europa.eu/eSearch/>

In the 'Advanced Search' option, select the fourth tab 'Representatives' (see image):



First, search for the association. You can do this by selecting either 'Representative ID number' or 'Representative name'. If searching by name, the 'type' = 'Association' may also be selected.

Once found, selecting the detailed information of the association (the name is linked in the search result), there will be up to three tabs with information as follows (see example):



The presence of these tabs will depend on there being 'trade marks', 'designs' or 'associates' linked to the association. For example, if the association does not have any 'trade mark' files (as it only has 'Designs'), the first tab will not be visible.

The tab 'Associates' will identify, by name and individual ID, all of the valid linked association members.

2. **The 'associates' linked to the association ID are not complete or are outdated, how can this be updated?**

If the information visible in the Office's database of representatives is not complete, the association must send in a formal request to update the membership, identifying any members that need removing or any personal details that need updating.

However, if the request is to remove a member from an association, a follow-up address or contact details for this representative should be provided, where available, as the address and contact details of the association will be deleted from this representative's individual ID.

Prior to removing an association member, the association must also verify if any files assigned to this person's individual ID should be transferred to the association ID.

3. There are ‘associates’ missing that should be linked to the association ID, how can this be updated?

As explained in the Office’s Guidelines ([Part A, General rules, Section 5, Professional representation, paragraph 3.4.3](#)), any legal practitioners or professional representatives that wish to be linked to an association must have already obtained an individual ID number from the Office at the address of the association.

Consequently:

- where the missing associate already has an individual ID, the Office must be informed that this person wishes to be linked to the association (the address of the representative must be the same as the address of the association).
- where the missing associate does not yet have an individual ID number, they must take the necessary steps to obtain one.

The requirements to obtain an ID as a ‘legal practitioner’ are explained in the Office’s Guidelines ([Part A, General rules, Section 5, Professional representation, paragraph 2.2](#)) and as a ‘professional representative’ in [Part A, General rules, Section 5, Professional representation, paragraph 2.3](#).

Any individual ID must be requested, granted and linked to the association ID in order to be considered a valid association member.

4. It appears that there are insufficient ‘associates’ linked to the association ID, how can this be?

When searching for the association in the Office’s database of representatives (see reply to question 1), it may be that the tab for ‘Associates’ is either not visible or does not contain the minimum requirement of at least two linked associates.

Scenario 1: where the tab only indicates (1) (see example), this means that there is only **one** linked associate:



Scenario 2: where the tab is not visible (see example), this means that there are currently **no** linked associates:



In both scenarios, the association ID no longer complies with the requirements of having at least two linked, registered and valid association members and as a consequence, the association ID is likely to be invalidated by the Office where the deficiency is identified and not overcome.

If an association ID is invalidated:

- in 'scenario 1', any files assigned to this existing association ID will be moved to the individual ID of the only existing member of the association;
- in 'scenario 2', as there is no registered association member, the files cannot be reassigned and the association ID will be removed from the file.

The above is a result of the Office's previous practice. There are still associations of representatives that were granted a valid association ID in the years before this new requirement came into force that have not yet informed the Office of their association members individual IDs, or have not yet requested an ID to be assigned to the representatives in question.