



How to use the advanced search interface for board of appeal decisions

User manual

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1. Getting started

To search for a document, type search terms into the search box and press the Enter key or click the Search button. A results page appears with a list of decisions that are related to your search terms, with the most relevant search results appearing at the top of the page.



Three quarters of your search terms must match for a result to be returned. You may, but do not have to use “AND” or “NOT” between search terms. “OR” and “NEAR” logic is not supported.

If you are interested in one or more specific metadata fields, use the search boxes in the “Search decisions by...” menu on the left. Note that when you use these search boxes, the search will only cover the search boxes in which you have filled out a value.

Filter options 0

Search decisions by... —

Case number i

IPC [Look up a class](#) i

Application number i

Applicant/proprietor i

Application title i

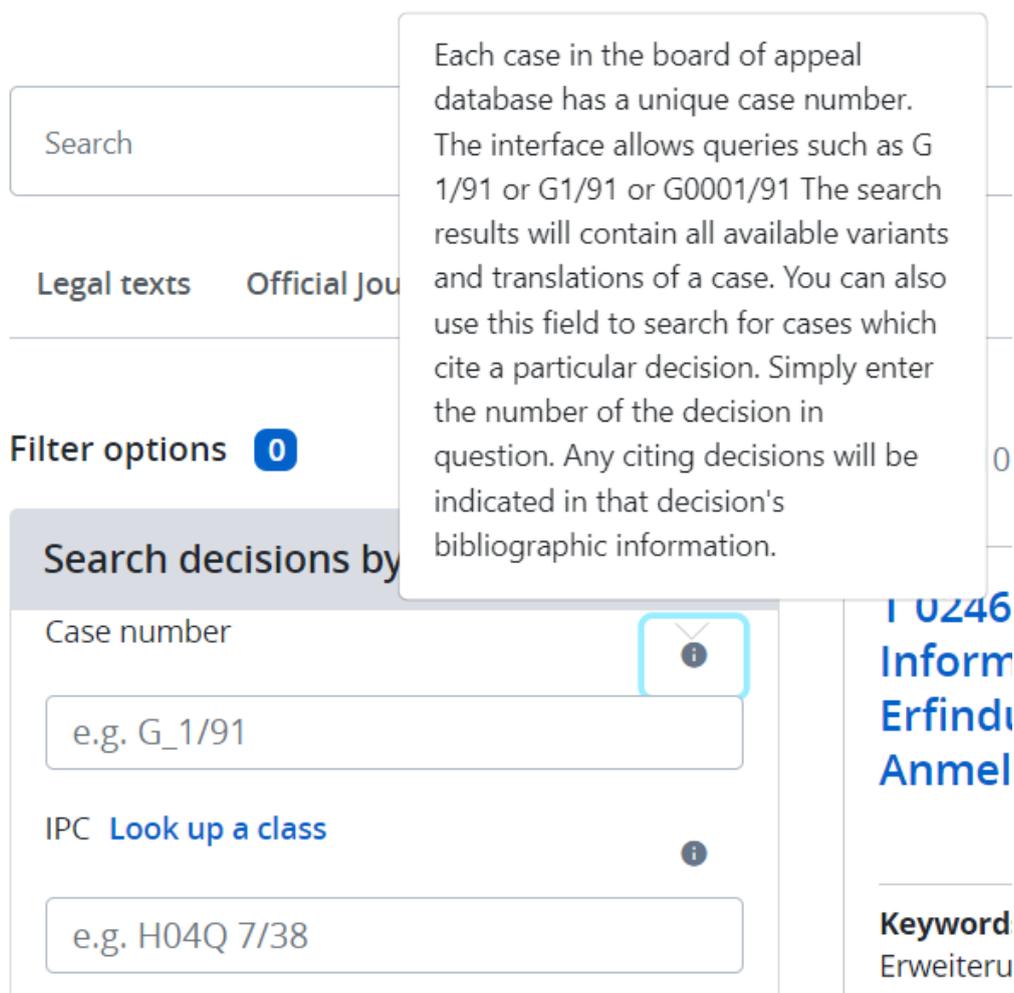
Opponent i

2. Tooltips

Wherever appropriate, we have included tooltips to explain how to use a search field or a checkbox.

Just click on the “i” icon . For example, the tooltip for the search field "Case number" looks like this:

We found 10000 results for



The screenshot shows a search interface with a search bar at the top containing the text "Search". Below the search bar are two tabs: "Legal texts" and "Official Jou". Underneath is a "Filter options" section with a blue circle containing the number "0". The main section is titled "Search decisions by" and contains two input fields. The first field is labeled "Case number" and has a tooltip box open above it. The tooltip text reads: "Each case in the board of appeal database has a unique case number. The interface allows queries such as G 1/91 or G1/91 or G0001/91 The search results will contain all available variants and translations of a case. You can also use this field to search for cases which cite a particular decision. Simply enter the number of the decision in question. Any citing decisions will be indicated in that decision's bibliographic information." The input field contains the text "e.g. G_1/91". The second field is labeled "IPC" and has a link "Look up a class" next to it. It contains the text "e.g. H04Q 7/38". To the right of the search fields, there is a vertical list of results, with the top one being "I 0246 Inform Erfind Anmel" and "Keyword Erweiteru" below it.

3. Search term examples

The search engine is not case-sensitive (i.e. it does not distinguish between lower case h and upper case H). The following example shows how an IPC code should be entered:

IPC [Look up a class](#) 

H04Q 7/38

4. Capitalisation

Searches are not case-sensitive. All letters, regardless of how you enter them, are handled as lower case. For example, searches for "European Patent Convention", "European patent convention" and "european patent convention" return the same results.

5. Spelling

The collection contains documents in three languages: English, French and German. The search engine tries to help you for words with diacritics, suggesting queries you're after as you type, based on decisions it knows contain the word you typed so far. For example, it will suggest "Partikelgröße" when you type "partikelgr".

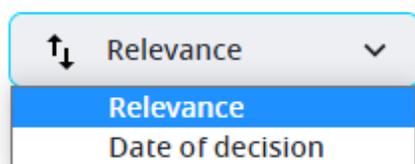
We found 335 results for partikelgr



Additionally, spelling mistakes will be accepted. For words between 3 and 5 characters, up to one character will be 'corrected'. For words longer than 5 characters, up to two characters will be 'corrected'. For instance, 'helli' will match 'hello', and 'particnz' will match 'particle'.

6. Date sorting

By default, search results are sorted by relevance, with the most relevant result appearing at the top of the page. If you want to sort the documents by date instead, click the "Relevance" dropdown menu and select "Date of decision". The most recent decision then appears at the top of the page. Results that do not contain dates are displayed at the end and are sorted by relevance.



7. Widening your search

In the trade-off between recall and precision, the search is designed to have good recall. Each additional search term that causes a new match will return more results. Accordingly, adding more search terms may return more results.

Queries with fewer than three terms may also return fewer results: queries with three or fewer terms require all terms to match, then three-quarters of the terms must match.

Examples:

- catalyst zinc (87 results) → All terms must match, including non-exact matching
- catalyst AND zinc 81 → The AND operator enforces that both terms must match, and also enforces exact matching of the search terms only, resulting in 6 fewer results than if the AND was omitted.

8. Refining your search

To search for an exact phrase, you can put it in double quotation marks. Additionally, you can use the AND operator to find only results that contain word A AND word B. For instance:

We found 188 results for Irrecevabilité AND recours



9. Excluding words

If your search term has more than one meaning, you can focus your search by placing a NOT in front of words related to the meaning you want to avoid. A search for "water NOT communication NOT purification" will exclude documents containing the words "communication" and "purification".

10. Phrase searches

You can search for an exact phrase or name by enclosing it in double quotation marks. The search engine then only returns documents that include the exact phrase or name you entered.

11. Proximity searches

The NEAR operator is not supported.

12. Wildcards

Wildcards are not supported, but you can have a look at the "Spelling" section above.

13. Searching for specific case types

By default, all the available board of appeal case types are selected and will be part of the search results matching your query. These case types are:

- G: Enlarged Board of Appeal
- T: Technical boards of appeal
- J: Legal Board of Appeal
- W: PCT protest cases
- R: Petitions for review under Art. 112a
- D: Disciplinary Board of Appeal

Decision type —

[Select All](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	T: Technical board of appeal	41233
<input type="checkbox"/>	J: Legal Board of Appeal	1237
<input type="checkbox"/>	W: PCT protest cases	701
<input type="checkbox"/>	D: Disciplinary Board of Appeal	553
<input type="checkbox"/>	G: Enlarged Board of Appeal	295
<input type="checkbox"/>	R: Petitions for review under Art. 112a	170

The numbers on the right stand for the number of decisions of this case type matching your search terms. If you would like to limit your search to only certain case types, simply tick the relevant boxes in the “Decision type” filter.

14. Limiting a search to specific technical boards

To restrict your search to specific technical boards, click on the expand icon (see screenshot below) and select the boards you are interested in.

The numbers on the right stand for the number of decisions per board matching your search terms.

Technical boards of appeal	
Select All	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2: Mechanics	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2.01	3347
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2.02	2331
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2.03	2180
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2.04	2283
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2.05	1601
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2.06	1442
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2.07	1378
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.2.08	979
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3: Chemistry	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.01	2621
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.02	1902
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.03	1690
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.04	1261
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.05	1298
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.06	1330
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.07	1047
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.08	780
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.09	972
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.3.10	899
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.4: Physics	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.4.01	2040
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.4.02	1943
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.4.03	1315
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5: Electricity	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5.01	1965
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5.02	1703
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5.03	1139
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5.04	672
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5.05	869
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5.06	529
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5.07	399

15. Searching in a time range

If you want to run your query within a certain time window, you can use one of the predefined options or define the time range yourself using the date pickers. The following example would show only those documents that match your search query AND have been published on the website in the past 7 days. If you want to see all documents published in a certain time window, you can leave the search field empty, choose the time range and then click on the search button. You can filter on either a “Date of decision” or “Publication date” time range, or both.

Date of decision

From



to



Publication date

Last week

Last month

Last year

At any time

From



to



16. Language of proceedings and publishing/distribution information

Using these functions, you can limit your search results to:

1. only cases that had either English, or French, or German as the language of proceedings
2. only cases that have been distributed to board members and/or chairs or published in the EPO's Official Journal

Language of proceedings		—
<input type="checkbox"/>	English	29018
<input type="checkbox"/>	German	12174
<input type="checkbox"/>	French	3032

Publishing and distribution		—
Select All		
<input type="checkbox"/>	No distribution (D)	21759
<input type="checkbox"/>	Distributed to board chairmen (C)	14132
<input type="checkbox"/>	Published in the EPO's Official Journal (A)	1651
<input type="checkbox"/>	Distributed to board chairmen and members (B)	1095

17. Logic of full text search

A full text search is in place for the BoA decisions, covering the following fields:

- Applicant name
- Application number
- Application title
- Board
- Case number

- Catchword headnote
- Cited decisions
- Distribution
- Case law ID
- Headword
- IPC class
- Keywords
- Opponent name
- Order
- Reasons
- Relevant legal provisions
- Relevant legal provisions (EPC article)
- Relevant legal provisions (EPC rule)
- Summary
- Title

In order to provide the best search experience, there are three options for the query:

a. **Use only the main search box.**

In this case all mentioned fields are searched, but the case number gets a higher weight in the query.

b. **Use both the main search box and one or more of the filters in the "Search decisions by.." menu.**

In this case, all mentioned fields are searched, but the fields for which a value was provided in the Search decisions by.." filters get a higher weight in the query.

c. **Use only one or more filter in the "Search decisions by.." menu.**

In this case, only the fields for which a value was provided in the corresponding "Search decisions by.." search box are searched. So, this is not a full text search.

18. Showing metadata in search results

By default, your search results will not show all the metadata of the decisions. If you prefer to read your search result list with more metadata, select the "Expanded search results" option.

Expanded search results

19. Using the Clear function to start a new search

You can reset any selected filters by clicking on the "Reset filters" button. The search term will hereby not be cleared.

✕ Reset filters

20. Highlighting of search results

Wherever your search terms match with indexed words, the match will be highlighted. N.B.: results may be returned that do not show highlighting. In such a case, a match was found with a searched metadata field that is not displayed.

J 0005/79 (1. Si la restitutio in integrum a été accordée au demandeur avant la publication de la demande de brevet européen pour laquelle la perte du **droit** de priorité résultant de l'inobservation du délai de seize mois prescrit pour le dé

Keywords

Droits de poursuite de l'exploitation

Date of decision 17.01.1980

 Decision inFR

21. Subscribing to an RSS feed

You can subscribe to an RSS feed to stay informed about decisions matching your search criteria. To subscribe, first perform your search, selecting all filters you find relevant. Subsequently, click the “RSS feed for these search criteria” link underneath the filters.

 [RSS feed for these search criteria](#)

A new browser tab with XML will open. Copy the URL of that tab and add it in your RSS reader. In this feed, 100 decisions are included, that match your criteria. The decisions are sorted by date descending. If a new decision matching your criteria is published, you will be notified in your RSS reader.

22. More than 10 000 documents in search results

The search tool used on this site generates - based on your search query - a result list that contains a maximum of 10 000 documents which are considered the most relevant.

The search result list shows the most relevant documents by default, but you can change the sorting from "relevancy" to "date". However, if you change the sorting criteria, it is applied to the 10 000 documents already in the result list. In other words: "sort by date" only re-sorts the initial set of "relevant documents" using the "Date of decision" and lists them in a different order. No newer or older documents are added.

The algorithm that determines the relevance of a document takes into account how often and where a given document is linked within the corpus of indexed documents. More recent documents may be linked less often than older documents, and may consequently be deemed less relevant by the search engine than older, heavily linked documents.

For these reasons we suggest you create search queries that deliver search results containing less than 10 000 documents. Setting up search profiles per language or limiting searches to particular time periods could help to keep the number of search results manageable.