**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Europeans access illegal content online 10 times each month**

* **Online piracy among European internet users holds steady compared to last year at 10 accesses every month, according to a recent EUIPO report**
* **TV content accounts for half of all illegal accesses – an average of 5 per month per internet user in the EU**
* **Illegal streaming sites grew, with a 10% increase in visits to pirated internet protocol television (IPTV) websites in 2023**

A report by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) revealed that digital piracy across the EU remains high but did not increase in 2023 at **10 accesses per internet user**. This trend is apparent across all online content categories, except for publications, where piracy decreased, and music, which increased compared to the beginning of 2023.

The EUIPO study ‘Online Copyright Infringement in the European Union: Films, Music, Publications, Software and TV, 2017-2023’ found that **TV content accounts for half of European internet users’ accesses to pirated content** (5 times per month).

In terms of overall piracy, internet users access illegal content at rates lower than the EU average in Austria (8.9), Spain (8.5), Poland (8.3), Romania (7.9), Germany (7.7) and Italy (7.3), according to the study.

**João Negrão**, Executive Director of the EUIPO, commented on the findings:

*The digital landscape is continuously evolving, and so are the patterns of online copyright infringement. Our latest study sheds light on the complexities of digital content consumption and the underlying factors that drive piracy. It is imperative to address the root causes of this behaviour, which often stem from a lack of access to affordable legal content and a need for greater public awareness about the consequences of piracy.*

Streaming is the most common method to access pirated content. In fact, an alarming trend has been observed in illegal streaming, with a 10% increase in visits to pirate internet protocol television (IPTV) registration websites in 2023. The study estimates that up to 1% of EU internet users could have subscribed to illegal IPTV services within just two years, not accounting for existing users who subscribed prior to 2022.

The EUIPO study also found a notable preference among internet users for accessing pirated music and publications via mobile devices. However, users are more likely to use their desktop computers to access illegal TV content.

Economic and social factors such as **income inequality, youth unemployment, and the proportion of young people in the population** have been identified as drivers of piracy. The study suggests that higher levels of income inequality and a larger youth population correlate with increased levels of piracy. Conversely, higher GDP per capita and increased awareness of legal content offerings are associated with lower piracy rates.

**TRENDS ACROSS CONTENT TYPES**

**Film piracy** saw a downturn to 0.71 accesses per user, predominantly via streaming, which constitutes 74% of such activity. Higher GDP per capita reduces film piracy, while a younger population and higher youth unemployment contribute to its increase. The findings indicated that increased awareness of legal offerings and more TV channels help lower piracy rates.

**Music piracy** slightly increased to 0.64 accesses per user, with ripping – or downloading streaming content – as the main method. Factors like inequality, youth demographics and attitudes towards piracy are linked to higher music piracy levels.

**Piracy of publications** remained steady at 2.7 accesses per user, with downloading as the leading method and **Manga** being the most pirated content, primarily on mobile devices. **Software piracy** grew by 6% (with 0.88 accesses per user/month), with **mobile games** as the top category.

For **live sporting events**, piracy has increased over the period 2021-2023 and closed last year at 0.56 accesses per user, exhibiting a complex relationship with GDP per capita. Social inequality and attitudes towards piracy are recurrent factors influencing piracy across content types.

**COMBATTING ONLINE PIRACY**

Copyright pirates have several methods to push unauthorised content online, including illegal subscription services and open internet streams fuelled by advertising revenue. These operators use sophisticated techniques to bypass detection, often leveraging legitimate content distribution services.

Across the EU, countries and affected parties are combatting live event piracy relying on regulations and technology to block illicit online services. The European Commission has adopted two recommendations: one on [combating online piracy of sports and other live events](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/recommendation-combating-online-piracy-sports-and-other-live-events), which established a network of dedicated national administrative authorities, and another to [combat counterfeiting](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_1551) through increased enforcement and awareness to which the EUIPO contributes through dissemination, implementation and monitoring efforts.

In addition, efforts to fight piracy include awareness so consumers can find legitimate digital content. The EUIPO’s [Agorateka](https://agorateka.eu/) is a tool that helps viewers identify legal offers for online content, including sporting events. As the new study shows, increased awareness of legal offers helps reduce piracy.

**ABOUT THE STUDY**

The study ‘Online Copyright Infringement in the European Union: Films, Music, Publications, Software and TV, 2017-2023’ measures piracy by tracking the number of times internet users age 15-74 access illegal content each month.

For more information on the study and to access the full report, please visit [Link to the full report].

**ABOUT THE EUIPO**

The [EU Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)](https://euipo.europa.eu/) is one of the largest decentralised agencies of the European Union, based in Alicante, Spain. In 2024, it was ranked as the [most innovative IP office in the world](https://www.worldtrademarkreview.com/article/euipo-ranked-worlds-most-innovative-ip-office-fifth-time) for the fifth time. Celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2024, the EUIPO has managed the registration of EU trade marks since 1994 and designs since 2003, both of which are intellectual property rights that cover the 27 Member States of the European Union. In 2023, the agency added another IP right, craft and industrial geographical indications, to its portfolio. The EUIPO also carries out cooperation activities at EU and international level to create a level playing field in the world of IP and hosts the [European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights](https://www.euipo.europa.eu/en/observatory).

**Media contact**

**EUIPO Communication Service**

+34 653 674 113

press@euipo.europa.eu