

# Eurojust Raises Awareness of Advertising-Funded Digital Piracy



Cornelia Riehle

## News

On 27 October 2023, Eurojust published a [flyer](#) with information on the phenomena of using advertising to fund websites and mobile apps offering pirated content. It appears that a significant amount of advertising on piracy sites and apps comes from legitimate brands and is placed by legitimate advertising companies. Although it is done unknowingly most of the time, the premium and legal advertising generates real income for criminals. According to a [study](#) on “Online advertising on IPR-Infringing Websites and Apps” commissioned by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), ad profiles of 5758 illegal and high-risk IPR-infringing websites and apps monitored between January and September 2021 generated €969.8 million in advertising revenue. Types of advertising range from branded advertising and sponsored content to fraudulent and malicious advertising.

Efforts to stand against this development include the 2018 [Memorandum of Understanding on Online Advertising and Intellectual Property Rights](#). The MoU is a voluntary agreement facilitated by the European Commission to limit advertising on websites and mobile applications that infringe copyrights or help disseminate counterfeit goods. To date, it has been signed by 30 actors involved in buying, selling, facilitating, and placing advertising. The [evaluation report](#) on the functioning of the MoU, published in August 2020, showed that the MoU has already created awareness among brands that their ads may end up on IPR-infringing websites.

### AUTHOR

**Cornelia Riehle**

Deputy Head of Section  
Academy of European Law

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