



A REPORT ON THE REAL FAKE COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLS

Over the last decade, infringements of intellectual property rights (IPR) have risen to very dangerous and worrying dimensions, causing significant harm to European citizens and to the European economy. However, there are clear signs that European citizens are not fully aware of these dangers.

The Commission's Communication of September 2009 on 'Enhancing the Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights in the Internal Market'¹, launched the EU Observatory on Counterfeiting and Piracy, identified that a key pillar of any successful strategy to tackle IPR infringements is to explore how awareness and education about such infringements can be better promoted, particularly amongst young people. The conclusion of the subsequent discussions held, within the Observatory, was that new and innovative approaches may be needed, to improve on those that have traditionally been believed to be effective in this area.

On numerous occasions, Members of the European Parliament had expressed their interest in the Commission's work on counterfeiting and piracy and indicated a significant will to become involved. They showed an explicit interest in working with the Observatory and in being regularly informed about its progress.

In conjunction to the work being carried out by the Observatory, three MEPs (Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE, UK), Edit Herczog (S&D, HU) and Andreas Schwab (EPP, DE)) had decided to set up a Parliamentary Forum on 'Counterfeiting, Contraband and Organised Crime'. This Forum has as the key aim of spreading awareness about the problem of counterfeiting and piracy, amongst policy makers and citizens alike.

In view of the strong interests of both the Parliamentary Forum and the European Commission in raising awareness, it was decided to initiate a European-wide campaign to help redress the situation.

¹ COM(2009) 467 of 14.09.2009

As part of this campaign it was decided to design and instigate a competition, to involve European schools in helping to educate young Europeans about the growing threat of counterfeiting and piracy.

The project was aimed at school children aged between 10 and 15, who were asked to design a logo for the European Observatory on Counterfeiting and Piracy or to produce short films, stories, games, or other material, which would draw the attention of others to the specific impacts and dangers of this problem.

As a result, a competition entitled 'REAL Fake', was organised by the Parliamentary Forum. This competition was launched in March 2010 and was supported by the European Commission (Directorate General for Internal Market and Services (DG MARKT)), with special help of the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium.

Private sector stakeholders of the EU Observatory on Counterfeiting and Piracy offered sponsorship and prizes for the competition, and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) contributed a special medal for the winners together with distinctive diplomas for all successful entries. Furthermore, the Authentics Foundation provided essential support, by making vital information material available, in various form, including cartoons, in order to illustrate the relevant issues and to help schools to prepare their contributions.

The competition was launched on the DG MARKT website, which included important educational and background material. MEPs raised awareness by contacting schools in their constituencies and informing them about the competition. In addition, Commission Representations and press offices in every Member State distributed the same information through their communication channels.

The competition was open until June and as a result, hundreds of entries were received from students from 16 EU countries, and even a few from schools in Russia.

From the many contributions received, an evaluation team composed of Members of the European Parliament, representatives from the Commission services and private sector sponsors selected the six best entries and invited the schools concerned to attend an official awards ceremony at Brussels. The ceremony took place in the EU Parliament premises on 23 June, and was the highpoint of a week-long exhibition in the Parliament, aimed at raising awareness about the threat posed by counterfeit and pirated products.

The ceremony was attended by the Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, Mr. Michel Barnier, together with the President of the European Parliament, Mr. Jerzy Buzek, who congratulated the schools and commended them on the exceptional standards of their work. The speakers of the event included amongst others notable MEPs (Edith Herczog, Bill Newton Dunn and Andreas Schwab), fashion designer and former model Yasmine Le Bon, Vice President of Unifab Philippe Lacoste and French singer Alain Chamfort, awarded prizes to the winning students. All participants received diplomas signed by Commissioner Barnier and President Buzek.

Winners

The winners in the category for the best "Logo/Poster for the European Observatory on Counterfeiting and Piracy" were:

1st rank – 1st High School of Triandria (Greece);

2nd rank – I.E.S. Sabinar (Almería, Spain);

3rd rank – Gimnazjum z Oddziałami Integracyjnymi nr 4 im. Orła Białego w Słupsku (Poland).

The winners in the category for the best "Video" were:

1st rank – Vörösmarty Mihály Általános Iskola és Alapfokú Művészetoktatási Intézmény (Hungary);

2nd rank – Gymnázium Nymburk (Czech Republic);

3rd rank – Gimnazjum w Jasienicy (Poland).

The prizes awarded to the winners included computer equipment for the schools, and games consoles, games, fashion and sportswear and educational material for the children. More details on the prizes and their respective sponsors are available in Annex 1.

Alongside the official awards ceremony, a counterfeiting and piracy exposition was set up in the European Parliament. Its main objective was to inform the public about the wide range of counterfeit and pirated products that are nowadays available on the market. Many of these pose a serious risk to the health and safety of consumers, patients and citizens in general. The exhibition was aimed at fostering a better understanding of the problem and to open a wider debate on the issues. Various stakeholders set up stands and information points and provided practical examples. These are included in Annex 2.

The initiative has been very positively received, and a number of European schools have written to the Commission to express their appreciation and enjoyment at being involved in the project. In addition, many private sector stakeholders have confirmed their positive assessment of the competition.

In his speech at the event, Commissioner Barnier said: *"It is vitally important that we jointly develop initiatives such as this to help fight this damaging phenomenon. Raising awareness and educating young people about the dangers of buying and using fake products is crucial. This competition shows that messages about protecting and enforcing Intellectual Property Rights do not necessarily need to be repressive, and can actually be fun and engaging. In this way we can bring a closer understanding to a new generation of EU consumers."*

Several leading newspapers reported about the event (e.g. 'The Independent' (UK). Some links are displayed below and a list of newspapers and media references is included in Annex 3).

http://ec.europa.eu/news/business/100623_en.htm

<http://www.europolitics.info/social/real-fake-award-winners-named-art275848-23.html>

<http://euroalert.net/news.aspx?idn=10007>

<http://www.elalmeria.es/article/provincia/735705/municipio/muestra/europa/la/forma/denunciar/la/pirateria.html>

The competition showed that schools from all over Europe and even outside the European Union are willing to participate in such public awareness events. The children provided extraordinary entries, displaying real creativity and imagination. The private stakeholders also showed exceptional commitment and engagement by offering prizes and vital support. Furthermore, Members of the European Parliament actively supported the competition visiting schools and encouraging them to participate in the event. Finally, the media successfully publicised the event all over Europe.

In conclusion, it is felt that the success of the project can be regarded as a significant first step in achieving the Observatory's objectives in this important area. It also demonstrated that involving young people in a project such as this can be a catalyst for longer term public awareness campaigns and strategies. Importantly, a number of key lessons were learned, that can be used in future campaigns and events.

In follow up, members of the Observatory now need to consider how best to ensure that events such as this can be further developed and extended to different parts of the world, so that every year there is wider coverage and more participants become engaged.

PRIZES AWARDED AND SPONSORS

These were donated and presented by the following organisations:

SNB-REACT (European Anti-Counterfeiting Network)

ICCE (Imaging Consumables Coalition of Europe) / Epson

BSA (Business Software Alliance)

AIM (Association des Industries de Marque (European Brands Association))

ISFE (Interactive Software Federation of Europe)

ECPA (European Crop Protection Association) / CropLife International

Unifab (Union des Fabricants)

BASCAP (Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting & Piracy)

MPA (Motion Picture Association)

IFPI (International Federation of the Phonographic Industry)

SROC (Sports Rights Owners Coalition)

FESI (Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry)

FEP (Federation of European Publishers / Publishers associations of Greece, Hungary, Poland and Spain)

INTA (International Trademark Association)

Andema (Asociacion Nacional para la Defensa de la Marca)

The Authentics Association

ICMP (International Confederation of Music Publishers)

The British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium (secretariat and logistical arrangements for students to come to Brussels)

Lacoste

Microsoft

Epson

LVMH

BARRISOL

Coty Prestige

Tommy Hilfiger

EXHIBITIONS PARTICIPANTS

ANDREAS STIHL AG & Co

International Trademark Association (INTA)

The Authentics Foundation

UNIFAB

Comité Colbert

Toy Industries of Europe

IFPI

NOKIA

BEAMA – The Association for the British Electro-Technical Industry

Microsoft Corp

Symantec

Philip Morris International

UK Imperial Tobacco

DIHK (Association of German Chambers of Commerce)

European Crop Protection Association (ECPA)

General Motors

EPAL

ANDEMA

Thermo Fisher

Imaging Consumables Coalition of Europe (ICCE)

US Chambers of Commerce