

## EU Citizens value intellectual property, but justify infringements in certain cases

*96% of Europeans believe that Intellectual Property (IP) is important because it supports innovation and creativity by rewarding inventors, creators and artists for their work.*

*An EU-wide survey, of 26,500 people aged 15 and over, commissioned by the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM) acting through the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights, found that 86% agree that protecting IP contributes to improving the quality of products and services. And 69% of those questioned value IP because they believe it contributes to the creation of jobs and economic well-being. As a result, they condemn IP infringements.*

*However today's survey, the first of its kind in the EU, shows that at individual level, an average of 34% of Europeans think that buying counterfeit goods can be justified to save money. 38% say purchasing counterfeits can be justified as an act of protest against a market-driven economy. 22% think downloading is acceptable when there is no legal alternative and 42% of Europeans think this is acceptable for personal use.*

*These results are especially high for those aged between 15-24.*

*The difference between the two opinions can be explained, according to the survey, by the fact that many of those questioned believe that IP does not benefit them personally or that the IP system does not meet their expectations, in areas like price, availability, diversity or quality.*

*Today's study follows the release in September of a study carried out by OHIM and the European Patent Office showing that Intellectual Property Rights-intensive industries support around 76 million jobs in the EU, and generate 39% of all EU-wide economic activity.*

António Campinos, President of the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM) said: "With these studies we are now providing independent and reliable data, in line with the mission entrusted to us, on perceptions and behaviour of European citizens regarding intellectual property and its infringements. We will keep up this analysis, on a continuous basis, particularly for the internet generation".

*"As was recognised in the survey, IP is one of Europe's most valuable assets, but it is also regularly challenged. European citizens do not feel it is their responsibility to protect IP, especially when others do not share the same values and ensure the rules are respected or adapted to people's expectations. We trust these findings will support our collective efforts in the fight against IP infringements, in which everyone has a part to play".*

## NOTE TO EDITORS

The **European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights** was established in 2009 to support the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights and help combat the growing threat of IP infringements in Europe. It was transferred by Regulation on June 5, 2012, to the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM), which is the official trademarks and designs office of the European Union, headquartered in Alicante, Spain since 1994.

### The study is available at:

Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM):

[http://oami.europa.eu/ows/rw/pages/OBS/perception\\_awareness\\_behavior.en.do](http://oami.europa.eu/ows/rw/pages/OBS/perception_awareness_behavior.en.do)

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