

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Six out of ten customs seizures of fake goods are found in small parcels**

- 63 % of all seizures of counterfeit and pirated goods by customs authorities are of small parcel shipments.
- Fake consumer goods like shoes, sunglasses and jewellery are most likely to be sent in small parcels.
- Over half of all global seizures of counterfeits sent by post contained just one item.

A new report out today reveals that more than 6 out of 10 customs seizures of counterfeit or pirated goods are of small parcels sent through postal or courier services.

The research, carried out by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), shows that, although large container shipments account for most counterfeit traffic in terms of volume and value, customs authorities are increasingly seizing small parcel shipments of counterfeit and pirated goods.

The report shows that these small shipments tend to be in packages of 10 or fewer items and that virtually all industry sectors use small shipments, albeit to different degrees.

Small shipments are particularly used for small consumer items. According to the study, of all the seized shipments of counterfeit goods, 84 % contained footwear, 77 % contained fake optical, photographic and medical equipment products (mostly sunglasses) and 63 % contained fake watches, leather articles (like belts), handbags and jewellery, all in small parcel form.

Over half of the global customs seizures of postal parcels contained just one item.

The Executive Director of the EUIPO, Christian Archambeau, said:

Our report tracks a growing, and worrying, phenomenon in counterfeit trade, in that small parcel shipments sent via post or courier services are harder for customs officials to track and seize. We hope that these findings will be of use to policymakers as they devise methods to combat counterfeiting. This being said, the bulk of counterfeit imports into the EU comes mainly via containers and other maritime shipments. Our earlier joint research with OECD has shown that 2.5 % of world trade — equivalent to EUR 338 billion per year and 5 % of EU imports — is of counterfeits.

The report highlights the challenges faced by customs authorities when tackling the problem of fake goods sent in small parcels. Normally, information such as ship manifests and the supporting role of customs brokers are absent in small volume trade. Therefore, data from



postal services and express companies could constitute a valuable enforcement resource if they were made available to customs authorities.

The analysis in the report relies on two types of data: information on the trade in counterfeit goods, based on customs data on seizures of counterfeit goods obtained from the World Customs Organization, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union, and the US Customs and Border Protection Agency (CBP), and statistics from the Universal Postal Union and from Eurostat, illustrating the international trade in small parcels.

## NOTE TO EDITORS

Today's report, released through the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights, is the fifth in a series of studies on the international trade in counterfeit and pirated goods produced by the EUIPO and the OECD. The first, ['Mapping the Economic Impact'](#), showed that international trade in counterfeit and pirated products represents up to 2.5 % of world trade (EUR 338 billion), or up to 5 % of all EU imports (EUR 85 billion). The second study, ['Mapping the Real Routes of Trade in Fake Goods'](#), tracked the routes used by counterfeit and pirated goods around the world, from their provenance economies through transit points to their final destinations. The third study highlighted the role of [free trade zones](#) in facilitating the trade in counterfeit goods, while the [fourth study](#) analysed the factors that make some countries more likely than others to be the sources of counterfeit goods.

## ABOUT THE EUIPO

The European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) is a decentralised agency of the EU, based in Alicante, Spain. It manages the registration of European Union trade marks (EUTM) and registered Community designs (RCD), both of which provide intellectual property protection in all 28 EU Member States. It also organises cooperative activities with the national and regional EU IP offices.

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