

## Online piracy slows down, but Europeans still access pirate content 6 times a month

- Despite a temporary increase during the first months of the pandemic, overall piracy declined by 34 % in 2020
- The most frequently pirated content is TV, followed by film and music
- Access to pirated content in the EU halved between 2017 and 2020, with differences among Member States
- Streaming is the most used access method

An EUIPO report published today, [‘Online Copyright Infringement in the European Union, 2017-2020’](#), revealed that digital piracy, as measured by the average number of monthly accesses per internet user to infringing websites, **declined by 34 % in 2020** compared to the previous year.

The decrease in piracy occurred for all types of content. Film piracy declined by 51 %, music piracy by 41 % and TV piracy by 27 %. **Television** is the most frequently pirated type of content, accounting for 70 % of accesses to infringing websites in 2020, followed by film (20 %) and music (10 %).

The report confirms the downward trend in piracy also found in the previous study from 2019. Overall, piracy in Europe decreased by 11 % in 2017, by 20 % in 2018, by 6 % in 2019, and by 34 % in 2020.

The study also highlights that there was a **temporary spike in film piracy** during March and April 2020, coinciding with the COVID-19 lockdown in several EU countries. However, the increase was reversed once the lockdown ended and piracy gradually decreased during the summer and autumn of 2020.

The **availability of legal offers** and **citizens’ awareness** of those offers were found to have an impact on the reduction of piracy. This confirms the usefulness of initiatives such as the EUIPO’s [agorateka](#) programme (the European online content portal) and its awareness-raising efforts.

Despite the positive figures, piracy remains a significant problem throughout the EU, with differences among Member States. The average internet user in the EU **accessed copyright-infringing content 5.9 times per month** in 2020. Latvian users accessed such sites twice as often, almost 14 times per month, while Polish users did so less than 4 times per month.



The most frequently used method to access pirated content is **streaming**. More than 80 % of the total piracy in the EU in 2020 was via streaming. The music, TV and film industries are undergoing rapid changes, with an increase in internet-based streaming services.

Among the factors that could influence consumption of pirated content within the EU, the report points out that the level of income per capita and the extent of income inequality may have an impact. Also, the general attitude of citizens towards piracy and infringement of intellectual property rights have an influence on the consumption of pirated content.

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

*Widespread internet access across Europe is a blessing for citizens' access to cultural content. Unfortunately, it also makes copyright infringement easier. Piracy, and the associated loss of revenue it brings, is a serious concern and represents a direct threat to the creative industries. Despite the positive and continuous decline in the consumption of pirated content shown in the study, there is still much work to do to tackle the infringement of intellectual property rights online. At the EUIPO we will continue raising awareness and providing evidence for decision-makers as they develop new policies and solutions in this area.*

## NOTE TO EDITORS

The report 'Online copyright infringement in the European Union' examines the consumption of copyright-infringing content in the EU Member States and the UK, using a variety of desktop and mobile access methods, including streaming, downloading, torrents and ripping software. The analysis is based on a rich dataset focused on access to websites offering pirated music, film and TV programmes, from January 2017 to December 2020. The data includes more than 240 000 aggregates for a total of 133 billion accesses. This report builds on a [previous study](#) published in 2019, which also found a declining piracy trend.

## 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 the European Union trade mark (EUTM) and the registered Community design (RCD), both of which provide intellectual property protection in all EU Member States. The EUIPO also carries out cooperation activities with the national and regional intellectual property offices of the EU.

The [European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights](#) was established in 2009 to support the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights and to help combat the growing threat of intellectual property infringement in Europe. It was transferred to the EUIPO on 5 June 2012 by Regulation (EU) No 386/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

## Media contact





**EUIPO Communication Service**

Tel.: +34 653 674 113

[press@euipo.europa.eu](mailto:press@euipo.europa.eu)

