

The trade in counterfeit and pirated goods is a major challenge in an innovation-driven global economy. Organised crime groups play an increasingly important role in these activities and benefit significantly from counterfeiting and piracy.

The trade in fake goods is booming, and is hitting the sales and profits of the firms affected by it. It impacts governments, business in general, and consumers. It cuts revenues and reduces economic well-being, health, safety and security.

COUNTERFEIT GOODS

The aim is:

- To disrupt the organised criminal groups (OCGs) involved in the production and distribution of counterfeit and substandard goods.

This crime represents as much as 2.5 % of world trade, or USD 461 billion. Thus, rights holders, governments and the formal economy as a whole are suffering huge losses each year, while the criminal networks that are behind the trade profit enormously.

The situation in the EU is even worse: counterfeited and pirated products account for about 5 % of imports to the EU. Thus the relative impact of counterfeiting is twice as high for the developed economies of the EU as it is for the world as a whole.

But the damage goes beyond the immediate impact of one and another loss. Counterfeiting and piracy are a threat to sustainable business models based on intellectual property and patenting, because they also discourage innovation and work against the economic growth that is based in it.

Scope of the problem

Counterfeit products range from high-end consumer luxury goods such as watches, perfumes or leather goods, to business-to-business products such as machines, chemicals or spare parts, to common consumer products such as toys, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and foodstuffs. In fact, any IP-protected product can be counterfeited.

Some counterfeit products, such as pharmaceuticals, spare parts and toys, are of low quality, and thus create significant health and safety threats.

A range of responses

Europol works with national law-enforcement agencies, and with partner organisations such as the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EU IPO) to counter this crime.

OPERATIONS

Europol regularly supports operations to thwart counterfeiting, seize fake goods, shut down websites selling them, and arrest members of the criminal networks involved. Three examples will serve to illustrate the range and scope of these operations:

- The [In Our Sites](#) operation has shut down almost a thousand websites selling merchandise online to consumers. The operation involved law enforcement agencies from within and outside the EU, and from North and South America, and East and Southeast Asia.
- Europol has supported the Interpol-led [Pangea IX](#)—an international operation targeting the illicit online sale of medicines and medical devices which involved some 193 police, customs and health regulatory authorities from 103 countries.
- Operation [OPSON](#) has brought together a number of public- and private-sector agencies to address the threat from food and beverage counterfeiting and fraud. The operation, led by Europol and Interpol, has had a number of successes, including the seizure of more than 10 000 tonnes and a million litres of hazardous fake food and drink in operations that spanned 57 countries.

NUMBER OF ITEMS FOUND: 145

SEARCH



TYPE

Article/Story, Event, How-To Guide, Landing Page, Multimedia, News/Press Release, Operation, Page, Publication/Document



TARGET GROUP



SEARCH

CLEAR ALL

01
Sep
2014



INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST FAKE MEDICINES

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

20
Jun
2014



188 INTERNET DOMAIN NAMES SEIZED FOR SELLING COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

22
May
2014



THOUSANDS OF ILLICIT ONLINE PHARMACIES SHUT DOWN IN THE LARGEST-EVER GLOBAL OPERATION TARGETING FAKE MEDICINES

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

13
Feb
2014



THOUSANDS OF TONNES OF FAKE FOOD AND DRINK SEIZED IN INTERPOL-EUROPOL OPERATION

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

22
Jan
2014



COUNTERFEIT EURO PRINT SHOP BUSTED IN SPAIN

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

17
Jan
2014



TWO TURKISH NATIONALS ARRESTED FOR SMUGGLING COUNTERFEIT CANCER DRUGS

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

02
Dec
2013



690 INTERNET DOMAIN NAMES SEIZED BECAUSE OF FRAUDULENT PRACTICES

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

04
Nov
2013



FIGHTING FAKE DOMESTIC APPLIANCES AND AUTOMOTIVE PARTS

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

17
Oct
2013



ACTION DAY AGAINST INTERNATIONAL WINE COUNTERFEITING NETWORK

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

26
Jun
2013



328 INTERNET DOMAINS SELLING COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS TARGETED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

19
Jun
2013



COUNTERFEIT EURO PRINT SHOP BUSTED IN AUSTRIA

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

27
Mar
2013



ILLEGAL EURO PRINT-SHOP DISMANTLED IN CROATIA

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

◀ FIRST

◀ PREVIOUS

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5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

NEXT ▶

LAST ▶