



The European Consumers' Organisation

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE
PRESS RELEASE

Contact: John Phelan: +32 (0) 2 789 24 01
Date: 17/09/2010
Reference: PR 017/2010

IPR Enforcement: European Parliament to overwrite users' fundamental rights?

The upcoming vote on MEP Gallo's report on online Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) enforcement represents a key stage in defining how users' fundamental rights are protected. It encourages the adoption of voluntary codes for copyright enforcement, including measures such as graduated response (cutting internet access after 3 breaches). It also calls for criminal sanctions against consumers.

BEUC, the European Consumers' Organisation warns policy makers that the report contradicts internet users' rights and calls on the European Parliament to reject its conclusions.

The European Parliament must adopt a fair and evidence-based approach of copyright enforcement which seeks to balance the interests of consumers and creators.

BEUC is very concerned that this balance is at risk from the outset with Wednesday's vote on the Gallo report. The report confuses counterfeiting of physical goods with non-commercial file-sharing and once again calls for the adoption of extra-judicial measures for copyright enforcement to the detriment of users' fundamental rights. Among its aims is to establish a private copyright police of the internet, where Internet Service Providers will be asked to cut the internet connection of a person suspected of having violated copyright.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, the European Consumers' Organisation said:

"Treating individual internet users as criminals would be both disproportionate and in violation of users' fundamental rights to a fair trial, confidentiality of communications and respect of their privacy. The draft report adopts a dogmatic approach that fails to address the real challenges in the digital environment. There is clearly a need for innovation and the creation of a viable online legal marketplace – consumers have shown their willingness to work with innovative and user-friendly legal business models.

"European internet users expect the EU to get away from old-fashioned legal thinking and to at last adopt rules which respond to the challenges of the digital age."

ENDS

BEUC, the European Consumers' Organisation
+32 (0)2 789 24 01 - press@beuc.eu

Want to know more about BEUC? Visit www.beuc.eu

 **[EC register for interest representatives: identification number 9505781573-45](#)** 