12/14/2023 Events

The European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) have joined forces to support the field of intellectual property in the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia. The collaboration was formalized through the signing of an agreement on 12 December 2023 by João Negrão, Executive Director of the EUIPO and Gert Jan Koopman, Director General of DG NEAR. The document aims to create a more favorable environment for innovation, creativity and economic expansion in these countries.

The agreement emphasizes upholding IP rights by strengthening legislation in this area, raising awareness about their benefits and supporting partner countries with EU accession ambitions.

Four main areas of cooperation have been identified: the enhancement of legal frameworks, supporting intellectual property institutions, networks and tools, cooperation in enforcement mechanisms and focus on the private sector, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the promotion of awareness surrounding IP matters.

This initiative aligns with the Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) for the Eastern Partnership which aims to support recovery and long-term resilience in the Eastern Partnership countries. By establishing a robust legal framework for intellectual property rights, the project aspires to encourage innovation, attract investment and stimulate healthy competition. The collaboration reflects a shared commitment between the European Commission, the EUIPO and the partner countries to build resilient and competitive economies.

The project is poised to play a critical role in supporting the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia in fulfilling their commitments under the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) signed with the EU. Furthermore, it aligns with the ambitions of these three countries to join the EU, by supporting legislative and regulatory alignment with the European acquis.

João Negrão, Executive Director of the EUIPO, emphasized the significance of the agreement, stating: "During my October visit to Kyiv, I restated the EUIPO's commitment to our neighboring partners the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia. Today's agreement will help strengthen the registration, protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights according to the commitments of the respective Association Agreements and in support of the accession process. It will boost trade between the EU and our neighbours, to the benefit of our businesses, citizens and economies. It will also support the efforts of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia to integrate into the EU intellectual property system and the EUIPN family where all European IP Offices work together."

Gert Jan Koopman, Director General of DG NEAR, said: "The project we are signing today with the EUIPO will be an important contribution to the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia's efforts on their path to EU accession. But more importantly, by supporting the establishment of strong intellectual property rights this project will contribute to improving the business environment and to enhancing economic growth. The EUIPO's expertise will be key in assisting our partner countries navigate the practical implications of their aspirations to join the EU in this important field."

Strengthening the IP framework in the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia

Supporting the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia in a Letter of Intent signed in July 2022 between DG NEAR and the EUIPO, the two parties expressed a shared commitment to deepen cooperation for the benefit of EU partner countries. The agreement establishes a four-year programme in Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, with a total co-financing of EUR 4 million from the Commission and the EUIPO. The three countries are partner countries of the EU within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and the Eastern Partnership Initiative. The ENP outlines the EU's main political priorities through enhancing the stabilization and resilience of neighboring countries.

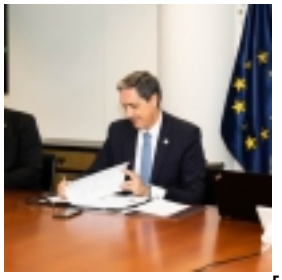
This collaboration reflects the European Union’s commitment to support partnerships with neighboring countries and facilitate their integration into European structures. The project offers the opportunity to strengthen intellectual property systems in the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia, thus promoting innovation, investment and economic development.

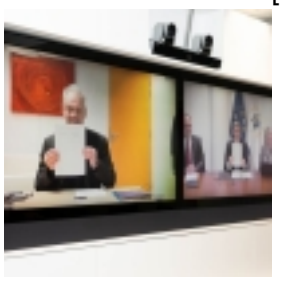
According to the recent Commission communication for a Growth Plan for the Western Balkans, this initiative is part of a wider effort to extend European benefits and standards to the wider Eastern European region.

It is important to emphasize that this collaboration not only strengthens the legislation and implementation of intellectual property rights, but also provides concrete support in promoting these aspects among the business environment and small and medium-sized enterprises. It will also raise awareness of the importance of respecting intellectual property rights and provide practical tools for their enforcement.

This collaboration represents a significant step for the Republic of Moldova in the direction of strengthening its intellectual property system and supporting its efforts to advance on the path of European integration.

The announcement is published on the EUIPO website: https://www.euipo.europa.eu/es/news/dg-near-and-euipo-collaborate-to-sup... [1]


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