



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 18 March 2020
(OR. en)

6895/20

PI 22

NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations

Subject: Croatian Presidency conference 'Intellectual Property for the European Union in a World of Challenges' (Zagreb, 19-20 February 2020)
- Summary report

Delegations will find attached, for information, a Presidency summary report of the expert conference 'Intellectual Property for the European Union in a World of Challenges' that was organised by the Croatian Presidency in Zagreb on 19-20 February 2020.

The full proceedings of the conference, including video recordings of the speakers' interventions, are available on the conference website (http://www.dziv.hr/en/eu2020hr/ip_conf/).

This report was supposed to be shared orally with delegations at the Council Working Party of 9 March 2020; due to the cancellation of that meeting, the information is provided in writing.

**‘INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION
IN A WORLD OF CHALLENGES’**

Expert Conference, Zagreb, 19-20 February 2020

1. This Presidency conference was organised by the State Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Croatia, in cooperation with the following partners: the European Commission; the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO); the European Patent Office (EPO) and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).
2. The conference was opened by the Director General of the State Intellectual Property Office, Ms Ljiljana Kuterovac. In her introductory speech, Ms Kuterovac stressed that technological and societal developments are taking place today at an unprecedented pace. This demands continuous adjustment of the intellectual property system, to ensure that it is still fit for purpose. In particular, the fourth industrial revolution and the new digital age pose new challenges to society and economy; this calls for a renewed reflection on the European and global intellectual property system.
3. The need for a holistic approach to intellectual property policy, integrated into wider industrial, cultural and educational policies, was reflected by the attendance and keynote speeches of three Croatian government ministers: Mr Darko Horvat, Minister of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts; Ms Nina Obuljen Koržinek, Minister of Culture; and Ms Blaženka Divjak, Minister of Science and Education.
4. In addition, on the opening day of the conference, several other keynote speakers from European and international institutions shared their valuable insights on the development of the intellectual property system in this fast changing world. These included Ms Amaryllis Verhoeven, Head of Unit for Intellectual Property on behalf of the European Commission, Mr Christian Archambeau, Executive Director of the EUIPO, Mr Francis Gurry, Director General of WIPO via video message and Mr Antonio Campinos, President of the EPO.

5. The aim of the conference was to instigate discussions on the challenges that intellectual property (IP) is facing, in order to identify the direction that further activities in the development of the intellectual property system at the EU level should take. The discussions were based on the commonly shared understanding that the intellectual property system has to be robust and adequate in order to effectively contribute to the wider objectives of the EU in the new institutional and strategic cycle, especially in relation to: the Single Market, innovation and competitiveness in the EU economy, the new Industrial Strategy, the digital Single Market, the data economy and the Green Deal.
6. Against this backdrop, the Conference focused on two overarching umbrella themes: **1) Global and Single Market Challenges and Opportunities**, and **2) Digital Economy Challenges and Opportunities**, under which many important issues were addressed.
7. Under the **first theme**, special attention was given, firstly, to small and medium sized enterprises (*Think Small First*) – on finding more effective approaches to (existing) supporting activities intended to improve the use and management of IP by SMEs, as this would lead to an enhancement of their growth potential and competitiveness. Thereafter, the challenges of the 4th industrial revolution in the field of patent and design protection were discussed, as well as the possibilities for IP to contribute to the goals of the European Green Deal (*Think Big and Think Green*). In parallel with the conference, the European Commission published its ‘European Digital Strategy’.
8. Under the **second theme**, it was firstly discussed whether it is time for a new data ‘governance’, and what issues the European data economy is facing today (*Dial D for Data*). Then, in the field of copyright infrastructure (*Dial C for Copyright Data*), experiences from different countries and from different stakeholders were shared. Speakers pointed to the obstacles they were facing, informed about examples of successful solutions that have been employed, and shared ideas for further steps. On the basis of that introduction to the subject, a panel discussion focused on what would be the best direction to take in the further development of copyright infrastructure.

9. The conference ended with a spotlight on trade secret protection in the digital economy (*Dial 007 for Trade Secrets*), where both European challenges were tackled and also the global dimension of this topic.
 10. Many eminent experts in the field of intellectual property coming from academic circles, national, EU and international IP offices and institutions, as well as entrepreneurs, contributed to the success of the conference by sharing their knowledge, experience and ideas.
 11. Video broadcast of both days of the conference, all presentations, the conference programme and photos are available on the following link: http://www.dziv.hr/en/eu2020hr/ip_conf/
-