

ECID Sub-regional capacity-building event on the commercialization and enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPRs) in Southeast Europe

(a) Achieving balanced economic growth is a key priority for the countries of Southeast Europe. To achieve this goal, they need capacity development, and support for the formulation of policies, legislation and regulations. The priorities include improving the conditions for foreign direct investment, promoting entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprises development, and encouraging innovation. Modern innovation processes are increasingly international. In order to raise their innovative capacity and to maximize the benefits of international knowledge and technology transfer, the countries of Southeast Europe need to create legal and policy frameworks that enable their own research organizations and companies to become a part of international open innovation processes. (b) A balanced system of reliable, affordable IPRs is a key component of successful innovation policies. There is a particular need for capacity building which focuses on international cooperation in IPR policies because of the increasingly international nature of the innovation process. This poses specific challenges for IPR policies and for IPR management at the level of research organizations and innovative companies. At the same time, the international trade in counterfeit and pirated goods has been increasing, and Southeast Europe is a significant source and also a destination of IPR infringing products, as well as an important transit route of such products to European Union markets. There is therefore a need to build capacity on enforcing IPRs, and particularly on regional cooperation in halting international IPR infringement. Capacity to enforce IPRs is an important complement to the capacity to use IPRs for innovation.

(c) The UNECE Economic Cooperation and Integration Division, within the program of work of the UNECE Team of Specialists on Intellectual Property, in cooperation with the Serbian Intellectual Property Office and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, and with the participation of the World Intellectual Property Organization at expert level (d) organized a sub-regional capacity-building event on the commercialization and enforcement of IPRs in Southeast Europe for (e) government ministries, intellectual property offices, public research organizations, law enforcement agencies, and the business community from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

(f) Participants learned new skills and good international practices for their work, exchanged information with their peers and established new professional contacts. The results of an evaluation questionnaire distributed at the event indicate that 77 percent of respondents rated the event as very useful or extremely useful (98 percent rated the event as “useful” or better). (g) A number of participants expressed demand for UNECE to organize and support follow-on activities in their respective countries and stated that they will apply the knowledge gained at the event in their respective organizations. Several multinational companies agreed to expand their cooperation with national customs authorities in the enforcement of IPRs at the border.

(h) The presentations and rapporteur summaries will be available at www.unece.org/ceci/. The report of the event will be submitted to the next session of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration on 29 November-2 December 2011 as an official UN document.

Thematic focus	Venue	Date	Total participants
ECID	Belgrade, Serbia	12 -13 April 2011	70