



EIP calls for vote against Brexit

EIP is supporting the Remain position in the EU referendum, warning that a UK exit from the EU will be bad for IP rights holders and the UK's creative and technological industries generally.

IP plays an important role to the UK economy. A 2013 study from the European Patent Office and the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market, quoted by the UK Government in its recent strategy for tackling intellectual property infringement for the next four years, indicated that up to 39% of GDP across the entire EU was derived in some way from IP intensive activities. Official government statistics from 2014 show that the UK's creative industries are now worth £71.4 billion per year to the UK economy. Figures released by the Chemical Industry Association indicate that the UK Chemical and Pharmaceutical industry contributes over £15bn to the UK's GDP. Tampering with the protection currently given to intellectual property poses a risk to these valuable creative and technological industries.

EIP has conducted an analysis of the issues at stake advising that there are substantial benefits for IP rights holders if the UK stays in the EU. Leaving the EU would however likely lead to an indefinite period of legal uncertainty, as well as a potential loss in the UK of trade mark and design rights currently held as EU registrations.

Furthermore, Brexit poses a threat to the introduction of the Unitary Patent and Unified Patent Court, a system which could cover 25 European countries and enable decisions on the infringement and/or validity of a patent to be determined on a pan-European basis.

The partners said in a statement: "We, the partners of EIP Europe LLP, have concluded that we cannot adopt a neutral position on the EU referendum.

“In our view, the benefits for IP rights holders that come with the UK’s membership of the European Union are substantial.

“The EU interventions and initiatives in intellectual property have not always been optimal, but overall offer more benefits than drawbacks. The creative and technological industries are best protected by the United Kingdom remaining in the European Union.
We support Remain.”

The referendum is being held on Thursday, 23 June to decide whether the United Kingdom should leave or remain part of the European Union.