
[IP enforcement: asserting your rights](#)

Intellectual property (IP) can be protected by, among others, IP rights or titles, such as trade marks or patents. Such titles are usually thought to confer negative rights, which means the right to exclude others from using or commercialising, for example, an invention protected under a patent.

This process of not allowing others to use or commercialise protected IP is known as enforcement of rights, which can be done through civil, administrative and penal measures aimed at preventing the unauthorised use of intellectual property, sanctioning such use and providing remedies to right holders for the damage caused by such unauthorised use.

This Fact Sheet illustrates the importance of IP enforcement for businesses and research organisations while providing an overview of the main enforcement actions, together with the latest developments and initiatives of the European Commission in the field.

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