

Illegal TV streaming sites cost European economies over 3 billion euros: Report

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17.1 million persons (aged 16-74) use Illicit IPTV in Europe. This represents 4.5% of European population.



5.9 million young persons (aged 16-24) use Illicit IPTV. This represents 11.8% of young European population.



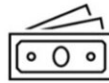
1.06 billion



Illicit Revenue generated by copyright-infringing IPTV providers



3.21 billion



Losses in Revenue suffered by legal Pay-TV providers

Credit: *Illicit IPTV in Europe, an AAPA Economic Report (2022).*

A new study by Bournemouth University estimates that TV companies in

Europe lost €3.21 billion in 2021 because of people using illegal streaming sites to watch TV. The researchers also estimate that the illegal providers made €1.06 billion from Europe in the same year—almost a fifth of which came from the UK.

The study was commissioned by the Audiovisual Anti-Piracy Alliance (AAPA) trade body which represents providers of internet protocol television (IPTV). The figures relate to the 27 EU countries and the UK.

Any lost revenues by legitimate TV providers have the potential to affect their customers in the form of higher subscription prices, or through lower investment in new content and services. Countries' economies can also be affected by lost tax income.

Professor Dinusha Mendis, Director of Bournemouth University's Centre for Intellectual Property Policy and Management, who led the project said, "This report directly sheds light on the level of financial loss that is incurred at all levels, as a result of criminal networks facilitating access to unauthorized content, signaling that more needs to be done to tackle illegal IPTV in Europe and UK."

"It raises awareness of this issue, and we hope that it will lead to [policy makers](#), [law enforcement](#) and industry taking action to tackle piracy going forward."

The report estimates that over seventeen million people in the 28 countries accessed pirate streaming sites in 2021, around 4.5% of the countries' populations. Nearly a third of those were aged sixteen to twenty-four. The UK and Ireland were amongst the countries with the highest percentage of their populations watching TV illegally—with 6.6% and 7.2% respectively. The Netherlands had the highest percentage.

The UK generated the most revenue for the illegal industry with €194.6 million—nearly a fifth of the total estimated revenue across all countries.

In 2019, Professor Mendis was part of the team that carried out a study on behalf of the EU Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) into the scale of the illegal market; this new research goes further by exploring the cost to the legal industry and the number of young people who watch pirate content.

Economist Dr. Antanina Garanasvili of Gobelin House, who worked on the Report said, "As an economist it is important to bring this problem to the forefront as much as possible. By introducing the additional metric, it was possible to quantify the number of young users who access illicit IPTV, thereby demonstrating the size of this problem at the moment."

The new report notes that piracy can be driven by overall perception and a 2020 report by the EUIPO found that more than a quarter of Europeans thought it was acceptable to watch pirated online content—young people were particularly more likely to have a tolerant attitude.

Sheila Cassells, Executive Vice-President of AAPA, wrote in the report, "Illicit IPTV is a relatively recent phenomenon in the realm of digital piracy. Several factors contribute to its proliferation, including the low entry barriers for pirate services and the high rewards with limited risk of enforcement. Technical and legislative challenges make fighting this form of piracy difficult."

The researchers also noted that their study only looked at one method of accessing pirated content. Social media platforms and apps also provide access to content so the overall figures are likely to be higher.

The share of population using illicit IPTV is estimated based on the population watching Internet streamed television provided by Eurostat (dataset on internet activities). The potential losses in revenue incurred by legitimate AV service providers are estimated based on the number of households that use illicit IPTV services.

These numbers were estimated by identifying the share of users who are willing to pay for IPTV subscriptions (based on data supplied by AAPA members) and also by estimating the number of legal Pay-TV providers (based on data obtained from European Audiovisual Observatory).

More information: Report: [cdn.website-editor.net/s/e5010 ...
TV_Report_2022-2.pdf](https://cdn.website-editor.net/s/e5010...TV_Report_2022-2.pdf)

Provided by Bournemouth University

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