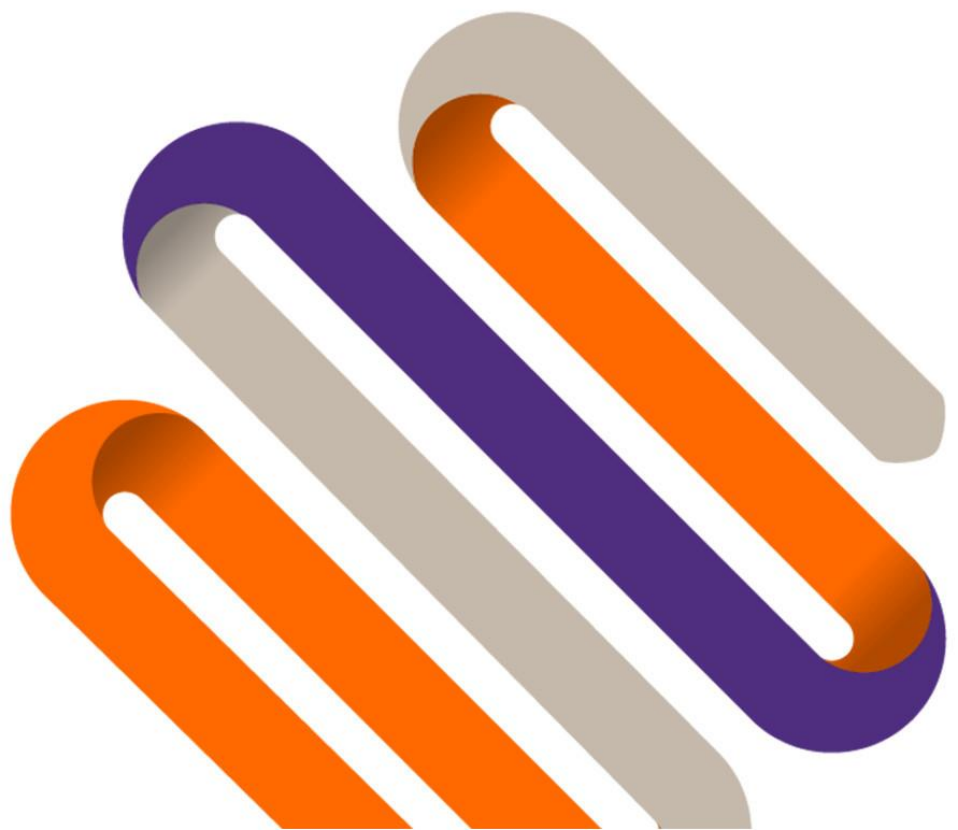




Two Years On: Online Piracy Trends Worsen Despite the European Commission's Recommendation

September 2025

Version 3 – previous report 'The European Commission Recommendation on combatting online piracy of live events has limited impact after 17 months' was published in February 2025



Two Years On: Online Piracy Trends Worsen Despite the European Commission's Recommendation

In May 2023, the European Commission published a Recommendation on combatting online piracy of sports and other live events. This non-legislative act encouraged member states and all relevant stakeholders to take appropriate measures against the unauthorised retransmission of live events, while guaranteeing the necessary safeguards to protect fundamental rights.

In 2024, at least 10.8 million takedown notices relating to unauthorised retransmission of live events were submitted to intermediaries. As of 30 June 2025 i.e end of H1 2025, this increased to 26.2 million reflecting an increase of 142% over the 18-month period. 89% of these notices did not result in suspension of unauthorised transmissions. Most intermediaries take limited prompt action, with only 6% of infringements acted upon within 30 minutes and 21% taking over 120 minutes for action, with the remaining having no observable action.

Dedicated Server Providers (DSPs) accounted for 46% of notices submitted across 2024 - 91% of these notices were not suspended. In contrast, only 2% of notices submitted to Online Platforms were not suspended.

Overall, there were no marginal improvements in KPIs throughout 2024 and the first half of 2025, highlighting the limited effectiveness of the Recommendation in addressing a significant piracy issue, where mitigation efforts continue to have limited impact.

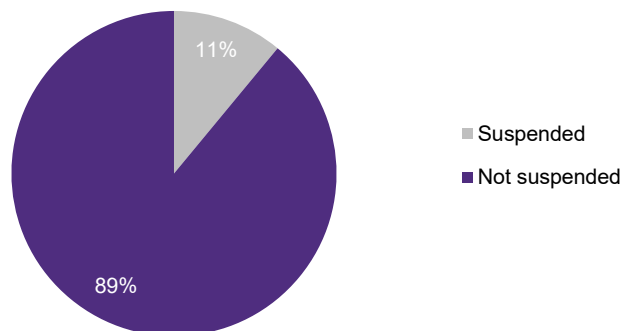
Since the findings are based on data from only a few major stakeholders, the full extent of online piracy issues is expected to be much larger.

Grant Thornton's findings

The third edition of Grant Thornton's analysis, created in partnership with the Live Content Coalition, analyses the data submitted by **10** providers for the whole of 2024 and H1 2025 ("the period"). In general, it finds that intermediaries continue to show low responsiveness to notices with only a small proportion of takedown notices leading to suspensions. The key findings for the period are as follows:

- **26.2 million** takedown notices relating to unauthorised retransmission of live events were submitted to intermediaries
 - **11%** of these notices resulted in suspension of the unauthorised retransmissions. Further, it is also noted that this metric worsened from H2 2024 (**19%**) to H1 2025 (**5%**).
 - The remaining **89%** of these notices did not lead to suspension. This has increased overall from H2 2024 (**81%**).
- Notices were submitted to intermediaries (either DSPs, Online Platforms or Other Hosting Providers)
 - **49%** of notices were submitted to all Other Hosting Providers of streaming services ("Others").
 - **46%** of notices were submitted to DSPs.
 - **5%** of notices were submitted to Online Platforms.
- Most intermediaries take limited prompt action, with only **8%** of infringements being taken down during the event. However, it is also noted that, for **57%** of infringements, no observable action was taken, or no information was provided.

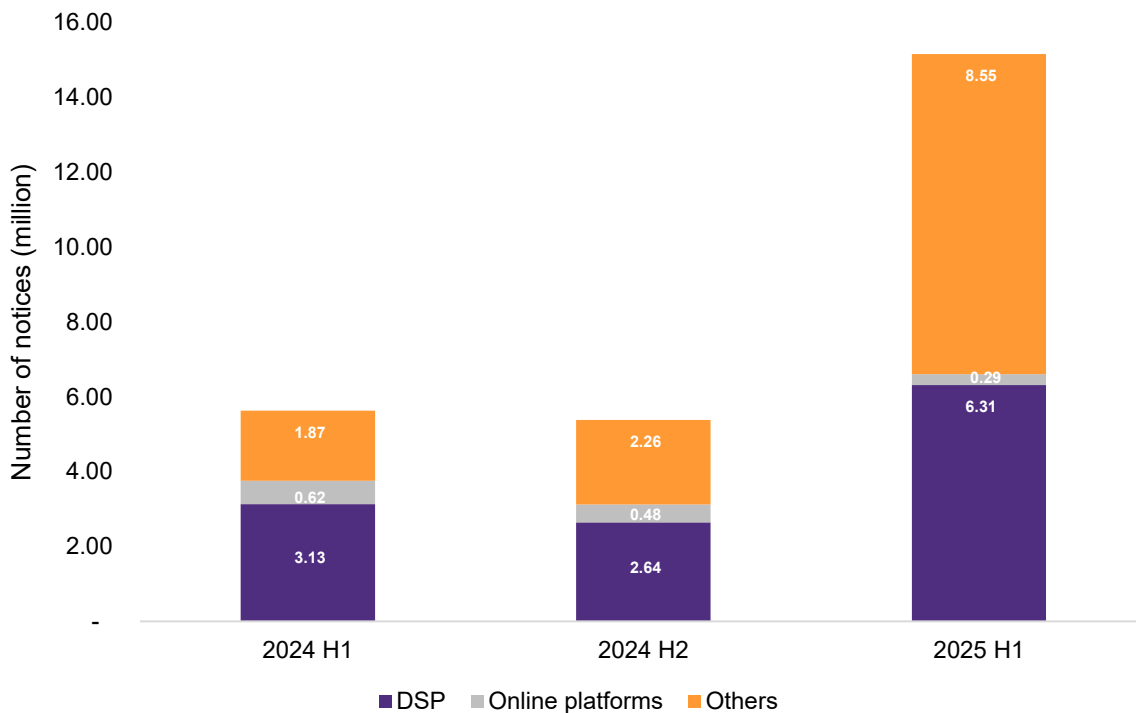
Outcomes of takedown notices during the period



**Note: Notices not suspended include those that were acknowledged by the intermediaries but did not result in suspension*

- The data shows that piracy remains a major issue, with a significant increase in the number of notices submitted to intermediaries from **5.4 million** in H2 2024 to **15.1 million** in H1 2025.
- As noted in the pie chart above, only **11%** of the notices sent during the period resulted in a suspension. This has deteriorated since H2 2024 wherein **19%** of the notices sent resulted in a suspension.

Number of notices per 6-month period by type of intermediary



Within this suspension data the level of cooperation among intermediaries during the period was:

- **22%** of intermediaries ignored all notices.
- **12%** of intermediaries actioned all notices (i.e. all notices led to suspension).

Additionally, since the findings are based on data from only a few major stakeholders, the full extent of online piracy issues is expected to be much larger.

Infringement reactions

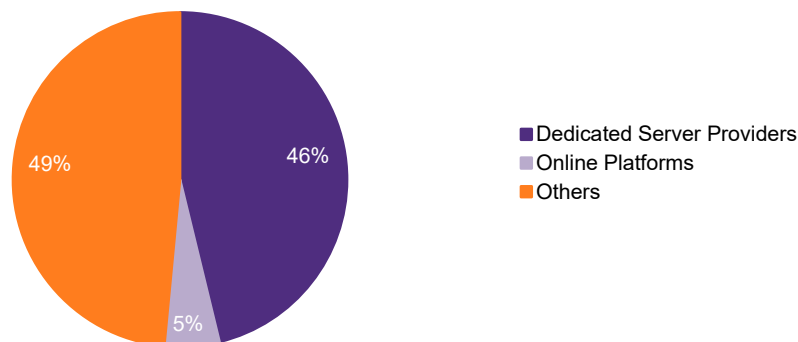
Infringements refer to the detection of unauthorised transmissions for which notices are sent. From the data provided, further insights into unauthorised transmissions can be observed. Grant Thornton's analysis of this data finds variations in the time taken to react to notices from different intermediaries.

The data indicates that in many instances, infringements often reoccur within a day of the retransmission being suspended. This is especially high for Online Platforms that display a reoccurrence rate of **90%** within the day. While Online Platforms demonstrate notably higher suspension rates, the effectiveness is undermined by the comparatively elevated re-infringement levels. While DSPs exhibit a significantly lower reoccurrence rate of just **2%**, this advantage is offset by their relatively low takedown rate during live events at **9%**.

Additionally, most intermediaries take limited prompt action, with only **6%** of infringements acted upon within 30 minutes and **21%** taking over 120 minutes for action. There is also an increase in the number of notices sent to Other Hosting Providers with location masking functions such as Cloudflare.

Notices by intermediary types for the period

The data below indicates that overall, there is considerable room for improvement in the effectiveness at removing illegal retransmissions during events.

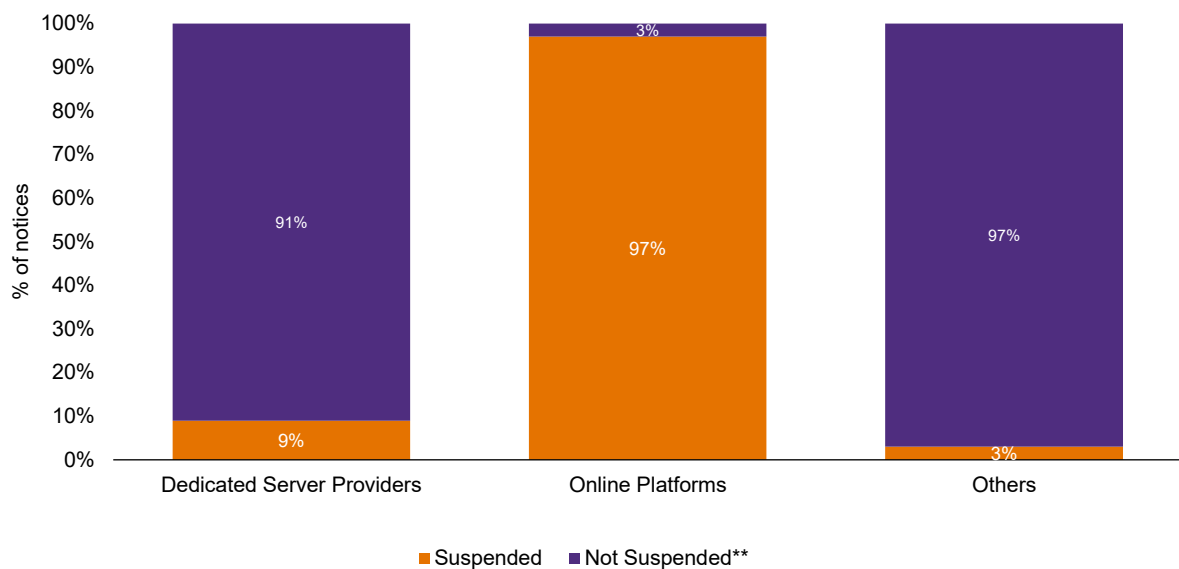


- Other Hosting Providers received the most number of notices at **49%** followed by DSPs at **46%**.
- Suspensions by Other Hosting Providers account for **1.6%** of all notices issued.
- Suspensions by DSPs account for **4.2%** of all notices issued.
- Suspensions by Online Platforms account for **5.2%** of all notices issued.

Dedicated Server Providers (DSP)

- From 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2025, DSPs account for a total of **12 million** notices per year, making up **46%** of the total notices sent. Notices were sent to **959** DSPs on average each quarter in the period under consideration. Further, notices sent in H1 2025 (**6.3m**) have more than doubled since H1 2024 (**3.1m**).
- In 2025, there has been an increase in notices submitted to Other Hosting Providers such as Cloudflare. Cloudflare can be used to mask the final hosting DSPs to circumvent antipiracy measures.

Outcomes of notices by intermediary types during the period under consideration



**Some columns may not add up to 100% due to rounding*

*** Note: Notices not suspended include those that were acknowledged by the intermediaries but did not result in suspension*

Cooperation agreements

Cooperation agreements form a relatively small portion of the overall piracy issues representing **5%** of the total notices issued during the period. This is made up of **4%** of total notices resulting in suspension and **1%** of total notices not resulting in suspension. It is noted that Online Platforms are more likely to have a cooperation agreement. However, the impact is limited as notices to Online Platforms make up only a small portion of the total notices sent and have a high reoccurrence rate of unauthorised retransmissions. Additionally, the reluctance from some platforms to sign cooperation agreements creates more challenges.

None of the participating providers have been awarded the Trusted Flagger status, despite their efforts to secure it. This is a measure created by the Digital Services Act (“DSA”) to improve cooperation with platforms.

Conclusion

At this stage, the European Commission's Recommendation has been published for over two years. In November 2025, the Commission will evaluate the impact of the recommendation, taking into consideration the insights provided by the EUIPO Observatory.

This report represents the third edition of reporting on the key trends. During the period of analysis, there has been a negative trend in key metrics such as an increase in the number of notices issued and a decrease in the percentage of those resulting in suspension. This suggests that, despite the European Commission's Recommendation, the issue of online piracy continues to escalate, while progress in the effectiveness of mitigation efforts remains limited.

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The data provided

The EUIPO is supporting the European Commission in monitoring the effects of the Recommendation by gathering data from national authorities, rights holders and several intermediary services. Data has been shared for 2024 and H1 2025 from **10** rights holders (including major sports leagues and broadcasters) with Grant Thornton. We were provided with the data that was also shared with the EUIPO, and this covers 2024 and H1 2025, and underpins the analysis and insights included in this document.

The European Commission's Recommendation

The Recommendation highlights that:

- The unauthorised retransmissions of live events have a significant impact on the revenues of rightsholders such as event organisers and broadcasters. The development of technology and infrastructure has made it increasingly difficult for member states to manage its impact on the economy and the community.
- The transmission and retransmission of these events require significant investment and contribute to economic growth and job creation. The lost revenue from the unauthorised retransmission of these events has a substantial impact throughout the value chain.
- To monitor these risks, the Recommendation requires the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) to assess its impact using specific KPIs derived from data collected from various stakeholders, including sports rights owners and broadcasters.
- Grant Thornton has been given exclusive access to data supporting this by the Live Content Coalition (LCC), a group of representatives of leading European live content producers, broadcasters, and exhibitors.

Glossary

H1 2024 – Q1 2024 and Q2 2024.

H2 2024 – Q3 2024 and Q4 2024.

H1 2025 - Q1 2025 and Q2 2025.

Intermediary - a third-party entity that acts as a facilitator in addressing instances of content piracy. Intermediaries receive and process requests, such as take-down notices, from media rightsholders regarding unauthorised distribution of copyrighted materials.

Takedown notice - a formal request submitted by a copyright holder to an intermediary or online service provider, requesting the removal or disabling of infringing content from a website or online platform due to copyright infringement.

Infringement - detection of an unauthorised transmission for which notices are sent.

Dedicated Server Provider (DSP) - a company or organisation that offers dedicated server hosting services, including server hardware, network infrastructure, and management for hosting websites, applications, and data.

Online platform - a digital service that connects two or more groups of users, such as businesses or individuals, for social or commercial purposes. These may include social media, online marketplaces, app stores, etc.

Others - all other hosts of streaming services such as proxy servers and cloud-based platforms (e.g. Cloudflare).

Trusted flagger status – Organisations that are formally recognised as trusted for identifying and reporting illegal content, are called Trusted Flaggers.

Co-operation agreement – Agreement between holders of rights and providers of hosting services supporting prompt submission of notices and suspension of unauthorised retransmissions.

Notices being addressed - Number of notices for each type of intermediary for which the notifiers are getting a specific answer or counter notice.

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About the Live Content Coalition

The Live Content Coalition is a group of representatives of leading European live content producers, broadcasters, and exhibitors. As representatives of live events, including sports, music concerts and festivals, broadcast television and video on demand services, and tickets sellers, we are all united in the fight to stop piracy.



Grant Thornton

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