



CECIMO's reply to the Intellectual property action plan consultation

Intellectual property right (IPR) plays a key role for businesses innovation, competitiveness as well as protects those knowledge-based assets which are essential for European companies' investments. CECIMO believes that IPR should be part of all industrial policy discussion, comprising manufacturing innovation and competitiveness.

To ensure global manufacturing leadership, the European Union should implement a harmonized IPR strategy for its upcoming trade agreements and strive to establish stronger and more effective World Trade Organisation-level IPR protection rules.

Machine tools manufacturers, like any other manufacturing sector, would benefit from policy initiatives that aim to create a modern and balanced system of IPR, which not only guarantees innovators their due reward but also stimulates a competitive market.

In the field of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), there is a need to coordinate Member States' approaches and their national policies to identify specific issues and build a common policy framework that can then be used and transposed at the international level.

For additive manufacturing (also known as 3D printing), CECIMO believes that the current law is effectively regulating this technology. This statement was also supported by the results of the study recently published by the European Commission (*The Intellectual Property implications of the development of industrial 3D printing* dating from May 2020) which confirms that the current regulatory framework properly covers the 3D printing value chain (for example. materials, hardware, and design data). The 3D printing technology can offer different solutions to many sectors (minimizing waste, reducing CO2 emission and enabling efficient supply chains) and we believe that additional actions of a regulatory nature would at this stage of development negatively impact the innovation potential of this sector.

Different measures have been developed by the industry to protect the product and IPR owner. For example, a QR code fused into a part of the product, allowing a smartphone to scan the code and receive information online, or embedded technology allowing for the application of restrictions on the type of 3D printer that can be used to generate a part of a given digital file.

CECIMO welcomes the initiative and believes that any specific action on this topic should be preceded by dedicated stakeholders' consultations and analysis intended to assess the costs and benefits for European innovative business ecosystem.