Teaching Intellectual Property in Poland

Experiences from a post-communist country

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STATE OF PLAY

- Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act of 1994
- Industrial Property Act of 2000

High level of material protection, resulting both from requirements of international agreements such as TRIPS or WIPO Treaties and from obligations imposed by EU Directives

but there are still gaps as far as the formal proceedings are concerned – weak enforcement

STATE OF PLAY

- Earlier – there were legal instruments in force that dealt with protection of copyright, trademarks, patents, etc. but – actually this protection was to the large extent fictional

- Examples:
  - until mid-nineties it was a common practice to exchange films and software on so called weekend markets
  - there were hundreds of video-rental premises that offered illegal copies of films and thousands of resellers of illegal musical albums
  - one could buy any kind of software at a very reasonable price from an ad in a newspaper
  - in eighties Polish state radio station broadcast computer games, that could be recorded and later run on a personal computer

MAIN PROBLEMS

- disregard for IP - all of these practices resulted in a common conviction that IP is not protected and is and should be accessible for free and can be the subject of unfettered circulation.

  Such a belief is strong until the present day – hence the need for education in IP matters - the crucial role of universities
- universities' authorities for a long time were not convinced that education in IP is important
- not enough skilled teachers, in part due to the university's employment policy
- very poor library resources
- lack of students' awareness of importance of IP – do not express the need to learn

SOLUTIONS

On general level:

- Regulation of Ministry of Science and Higher Education on standards of education of 12 July 2007

  - compulsory introduction of IP component into all universities' curricula

SOLUTIONS

UNIVERSITY OF GDAŃSK:

- Largest in northern Poland, almost 30.000 students
- 11 Faculties: biology, chemistry, economics, geography, etc.
- Faculty of Law and Administration : over 5.600 students

SOLUTIONS

- facultative 30-hours course in IP – over 100 students each year
- diploma seminars in IP – over 40 students each year
- Postgraduate Programme in Intellectual Property Law and High Technology Law
- e-learning
- Baltic Festival of Science – open lectures for non-students
- networking and exchange of academic staff with foreign institutions (US, Europe), language is no longer the barrier,
- international conferences and seminars – scientific, educational, but also marketing value (eg. Gdańsk as the candidate for European Capital of Culture)

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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