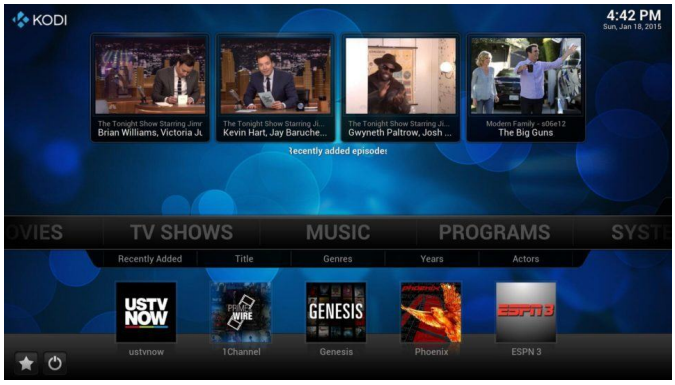
The European Court of Justice (ECJ) takes a further step against film and TV piracy as it declares STBs configured for easy streaming are against the law.



The ruling comes via decision taken in the Dutch district case against one Mr. Wullems, who used to sell multimedia players through the website Filmspeler.nl. The court decreed Wullems' actions as a "communication to the public" (a peculiar doctrine specific to European law) in breech of copyright law, and following the decision the sale of all such players is, essentially, illegal.

Filmspeler.nl sold Android-based STBs running a version of Kodi pre-loaded with plugins allowing for easy access to pirated streams. European law allows to the temporary reproduction of copyrighted work (which is what a stream technically does) but the court insists piracy-friendly boxes adversely affect the actual copyright holder, and thus go against the exemption.

It is important to note Kodi remains a netural and legal means for streaming and media library management-- it is Wullems' selling of the STBs for a prifit, with "full knowledge of the consequences of his cunduct" that met the ire of the ECJ. The case is still to waiting for the final verdict of the Dutch court, but the decision will likely affect all such cases across Europe.

Go ECJ Decision on Multimedia Players