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**Hundreds of '.fi' domain names under investigation by FICORA
Finland - Hogan Lovells International LLP**

Typosquatting

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FICORA, the Finnish registry, has announced that it was examining "hundreds of deliberately misspelled '.fi' domain names" covering Finnish companies and services.

FICORA is apparently investigating some 886 '.fi' domain names which were registered to a Finnish registrant via a Maltese registrar. FICORA has contacted the Finnish registrant in question, as well as the Maltese registrar, in order to clarify the situation. Whilst FICORA is undertaking its investigations, it has suspended the registrar's right to register any new '.fi' domain names.

The misspelling of domain names, commonly referred to as 'typosquatting', is a practice of registering domain names that are common errors made by internet users when typing a domain name into a web browser. The difference between a misspelled domain name and a brand name, business name or trademark is often difficult to detect on first inspection. However, typosquatting is used in an attempt to:

- attract internet traffic and capitalise on pay-per-click advertising;
- entice unknowing customers into purchasing unauthorised or counterfeit products; and
- in some instances, obtain personal and financial data via phishing.

Only time will tell whether FICORA is able to establish whether or not any of the 886 domain names under investigation should be revoked, and what consequences - if any - such findings will have on the registrant and registrar in question. However, it should be underlined that it is very rare for a registry to intervene in this manner, seemingly upon its own initiative. Most registries prefer to argue that they are merely acting as impartial service providers in order to minimise any risk that they will be pursued by aggrieved trademark holders as a result of infringement of their IP rights by cybersquatters.

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