# Decision for dispute CAC-UDRP-106893

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| Case number | CAC-UDRP-106893 |
| Time of filing | 2024-09-26 13:17:16 |
| Domain names | INTESA-SANPAOLO-CLIENT.NET |

## Case administrator

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| Name | Olga Slanařová (Case admin) |

## Complainant

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| Organization | Intesa Sanpaolo S.p.A. |

## Complainant representative

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| Organization | Intesa Sanpaolo S.p.A. |

## Respondent

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| Name | David Vozilkin |

OTHER LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The Panel is not aware of any other legal proceedings which are pending or decided and which relate to the disputed domain name.

IDENTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

The Complainant is the owner of – among others - the international registration trademark INTESA SANPAOLO, no. 920896 registered since March 7, 2007, in classes 9, 16, 35, 36, 38, 41 & 42.

In addition, the Complainant owns numerous domain names comprising of or including the term INTESA SANPAOLO such as its official website <INTESASANPAOLO.COM>.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Complainant is the leading Italian banking group, established in 2007 through the merger of two leading banks Banca Intesa S.p.A. and Sanpaolo IMI S.p.A.

The Complainant is among the top banking groups in the euro zone, with a market capitalisation exceeding 68,8 billion euro, and the undisputed leader in Italy, in all business areas (retail, corporate and wealth management). Via a network of approximately 3,300 branches and with market share of more than 15% in most Italian regions, the Complainant offers its services to approximately 13,6 million customers.

The Complainant is the owner of the international trademark INTESA SANPAOLO since 2007.

The disputed domain name <INTESA-SANPAOLO-CLIENT.NET> was registered on June 17, 2024, by the Respondent David Vozilkin based in Switzerland and, according to evidence submitted with the Complaint, is blocked from resolving by threat detection software.

According to the Complainant's non-contested allegations, the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interest in respect of the disputed domain name, and he is not related in any way to the Complainant's business.

The Registrar of the disputed domain name confirmed that the Respondent is the current Registrant, and that English is the language of the registration agreement.

The facts asserted by the Complaint are not contested by the Respondent.

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PARTIES CONTENTIONS

NO ADMINISTRATIVELY COMPLIANT RESPONSE HAS BEEN FILED.

THE COMPLAINANT'S CONTENTIONS MAY BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

**First element: Confusingly similar to the protected mark**

The Complainant states that the disputed domain name <INTESA-SANPAOLO-CLIENT.NET> is identical or at least confusingly similar to its trademark INTESA SANPAOLO.

The Complainant asserts that the addition of the term "CLIENT" does not change the overall incorrect impression of being connected to the Complainant and it's INTESA SANPAOLO trademarks. Further, the addition of this term does not prevent the likelihood of confusion between the disputed domain name and the Complainant and its trademarks but rather the use of the term "CLIENT" is an obvious reference to the Complainant's customers.

**Second element: Rights or legitimate interest**

The Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant asserts that the Respondent has not been authorized or licensed to use the Complainant's trademark INTESA SANPAOLO in the disputed domain name.

The Complainant claims that the disputed domain name does not correspond to the Respondent's name, nor is Respondent commonly known as the disputed domain name

The Complainant asserts that there is no fair or non-commercial use in connection with the disputed domain name.

**Third element: The diisputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith**

The Complainant states that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its distinctive trademark INTESA SANPAOLO which is well known all around the world.

According to the Complainant, a basic Google search of the term "INTESA SANPAOLO" yields obvious references to the Complainant which raises an inference of knowledge of the Complainant on the part of the Respondent. In light of the distinctiveness of the Complainant's trademarks and reputation, the Complainant contends that it is reasonable to infer that the Respondent registered and used the disputed domain name with knowledge of the Complainant and its trademarks.

The Complainant asserts that there are circumstances indicating the Respondent registered the disputed domain name for the purpose of selling or otherwise transferring it to the Complainant or its competitor for valuable consideration in excess of out-of-pocket costs.

Further, the Complainant claims that the lack of active use of the disputed domain name is evidence of bad faith, because it is not possible to conceive of any plausible active purpose thereof that would not be infringing on the Complainant's rights.

Finally, the Complainant notes that the Complainant has previously been targeted for phishing attacks. Complainant is concerned that the Respondent may have registered the disputed domain name for a bad faith phishing purpose.

For these reasons, the Complainant concludes that the Respondent has registered and is using the disputed domain name in bad faith.

RESPONDENT

The Respondent did not reply to the Complaint.

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RIGHTS

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy).

NO RIGHTS OR LEGITIMATE INTERESTS

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown the Respondent to have no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy).

BAD FAITH

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy).

PROCEDURAL FACTORS

The Panel is satisfied that all procedural requirements under UDRP were met and there is no other reason why it would be inappropriate to provide a decision.

PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR THE DECISION

THREE ELEMENTS THE COMPLAINANT MUST ESTABLISH UNDER THE POLICY

According to Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant is required to prove each of the following three elements to obtain an order that a disputed domain name should be transferred or cancelled:

(i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights; and

(ii) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and

(iii) the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

The Panel has examined the evidence available to it and has come to the following conclusions concerning the satisfaction of the three elements of paragraph 4(a) of the Policy in these proceedings:

(A) THE COMPLAINANT'S RIGHTS AND CONFUSING SIMILARITY OF THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME TO THE COMPLAINANT'S RIGHTS

Sufficient evidence has been submitted by the Complainant of its trademark rights in the term INTESA SANPAOLO in several classes in numerous territories around the world. Such trademark rights were created and registered long prior to June 17, 2024, the creation date of the disputed domain name. A nationally or regionally registered trademark confers on its owner sufficient rights to satisfy the requirement of having trademark rights for the purposes of standing to file a UDRP case. Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Complainant possesses rights in its INTESA SANPAOLO trademark such that it has standing under the Policy.

UDRP panels have held that where the asserted trademark is recognizable within a disputed domain name, the addition of other terms (whether descriptive, geographical, pejorative, meaningless, or otherwise) does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy. See, e.g., LEGO Juris A/S v. DBA David Inc/ DomainsByProxy.com, Case No. D2011-1290 (WIPO, September 20, 2011) ("the mere addition of the words ‚Ninjago' and ‚Kai' is not sufficient to exclude the likelihood of confusion between the disputed domain name and the Complainant's trademark.").

In the present case, in assessing confusing similarity, the Panel finds the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark, because it incorporates the entirety of the INTESA SANPAOLO trademark, and differs from such mark merely by adding a hyphen between the "INTESA" and "SANPAOLO" and the related term "-CLIENT". These additions do not prevent a finding of confusing similarity in light of the prominence of the distinctive INTESA SANPAOLO mark within the disputed domain name.

The TLD – in this case ".net" - may usually be ignored for the purpose of determination of identity or confusing similarity between a domain name and the Complainant's trademark as it is technical requirement of registration (see paragraph 1.11.1 WIPO Overview 3.0).

Accordingly, the Panel concludes that the Complainant has satisfied the requirement under paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy and the

disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's mark.

(B) THE RESPONDENT'S LACK OF RIGHTS OR LEGITIMATE INTERESTS IN THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME

The second element of the Policy requires that the Complainant establishes that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The approach generally adopted by panels, when considering the second element, is that if a complainant makes out a prima facie case, the burden of proof shifts to the respondent to rebut it (see WIPO Overview 3.0., Paragraph 2.1). ("While the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the often impossible task of 'proving a negative', requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name. If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element."). However, the burden of proof still remains with the complainant to make out its prima facie case on a balance of probabilities. Moreover, the wording of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy requires a complainant to establish that the respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the domain name in issue. Simply establishing that the complainant also has rights in the domain name in issue is insufficient.

Paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy contemplates examining the available facts to determine whether a respondent has rights or legitimate interest in the domain name. Paragraph 4(c) sets out circumstances under which a respondent may demonstrate that it does have such rights or interests.

The first circumstance, under Paragraph 4(c)(i), is where "before any notice to you of the dispute, your use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the domain name or a name corresponding to the domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services". Here, there is no observable active website associated with the disputed website nor any evidence of demonstrable preparations to use it. Accordingly, the Panel finds no evidence of a bona fide offering or goods or services or demonstrable preparations to use per Policy 4(c)(i) and Respondent does not have rights or legitimate interests with respect to the disputed domain name thereunder.

The second circumstance, under Paragraph 4(c)(ii), concerns cases where the respondent is commonly known by the domain name. Here, according to the registrar verification, the Respondent's name is "David Vozilkin" – which has no similarity or connection to the disputed domain name. There is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name. As such, this second circumstance of legitimate rights or interests under the Policy is not applicable to the Respondent.

Regarding the third circumstance, under Paragraph 4(c)(iii) of the Policy, there is no evidence that the Respondent is making a legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the disputed domain name, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the Complainant's INTESA SANPAOLO trademark. According to the evidence submitted, there is no observable active website associated with the disputed domain name. As such, none of the accepted categories of fair use - such as news reporting, commentary, political speech, education etc. – are found to apply and thus the Panel does not find any legitimate non-commercial or fair use on the part of the Respondent.

As a final point on the second element, the Complaint states that the Respondent is not licensed, nor authorized to use the Complainant's INTESA SANPAOLO trademark in the disputed domain name.

Accordingly, the Complainant has sufficiently made out its prima-facie case on the second element of the Policy. Thus, the burden of proof is shifted to the Respondent to rebut the Complainant's case. Here, because the Respondent has not participated in these proceedings, there is no such rebuttal to consider, and the Complainant prevails.

(C) THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME HAS BEEN REGISTERED AND IS BEING USED IN BAD.

The third element requires the Complainant to show that the disputed domain name has been registered and used in bad faith under paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy. See, e.g. Hallmark Licensing, LLC v. EWebMall, Inc., WIPO Case No. D2015-2202 ("The standard of proof under the Policy is often expressed as the "balance of the probabilities" or "preponderance of the evidence" standard. Under this standard, an asserting party needs to establish that it is more likely than not that the claimed fact is true.").

Further, Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a non-exhaustive list of four circumstances, any one of which may be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith. The four specified circumstances are:

(i) circumstances indicating that the Respondent has registered or acquired the disputed domain name primarily for the purpose of selling, renting, or otherwise transferring the disputed domain name registration to the complainant who is the owner of the trademark or service mark or to a competitor of that complainant, for valuable consideration in excess of the Respondent's documented out-of-pocket costs directly related to the domain name; or

(ii) The Respondent has registered the domain name in order to prevent the owner of the trademark or service mark from reflecting the mark in a corresponding domain name, provided that the Respondent has engaged in a pattern of such conduct; or

(iii) The Respondent has registered the disputed domain name primarily for the purpose of disrupting the business of a competitor; or

(iv) by using the domain name, the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to the Respondent's website or other on-line location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark as to the source,

sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the Respondent's website or location or of a product.

There is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name and the Complainant confirms that the Respondent has not been authorized by the Complainant to use the Complainant's trademark(s) and/or register the disputed domain name. Nor is there any business or other association between the Complainant and the Respondent.

Panels have consistently found that the registration of a domain name that is confusingly similar to a famous or widely-known trademark by an unaffiliated entity can by itself create a presumption of bad faith (see Section 3.1.4 WIPO Overview 3.0). Here, there is persuasive evidence that the Complainant's trademark INTESA SANPAOLO has a strong reputation in the banking and finance industry. The Complainant was formed in 2007 through the merger of two leading Italian banking groups. The Complainant's substantial reputation in its sector is indicated by its more than 13 million customers, market leadership in Italy, and international reach. The Panel finds that because of the well-established status of the Complainant, it is more probable than not that the Respondent either knew, or should have known, that the disputed domain name would be confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademarks. Further, a prior panel in a case concerning a similar domain name, namely <INTESASANPAOLO-CLIENTI.NET>, found the trademark INTESA SANPAOLO to be distinctive. See Intesa Sanpaolo S.p.A. v. anza beni lanim, CAC Case No. 106773 ("the disputed domain name incorporates the Complainant's distinctive INTESA SANPAOLO trademark in its entirety and only adds a term which can be easily linked to the Complainant and its business"). The same logic applies in the present case because the distinctive nature of the Complainant's trademark INTESA SANPAOLO, coupled with the inclusion of the related term "-CLIENT", strongly indicates that the Respondent had the Complainant in mind at the time the disputed domain name was registered.

The apparently non-active use of the disputed domain name in this case satisfies the doctrine of passive holding as described in WIPO Case No. D2000-0003 Telstra Corporation Limited v. Nuclear Marshmallows considering all of the circumstances of the case because, relevantly, (i) the Complainant's trademark is distinctive and has a strong reputation in its sector, (ii) the Respondent failed to respond to these proceedings and thus has provided no evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use, (iii) it is impossible to conceive of any plausible actual or contemplated good faith use of the disputed domain name by the Respondent in this case.

As a final point, the Panel may take into consideration the Respondent's silence throughout these proceedings.

In light of the above analysis, the Panel concludes that the Complainant has made out its case that the disputed domain name was registered and are being used in bad faith, and thus has satisfied the requirements under paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy.

FOR ALL THE REASONS STATED ABOVE, THE COMPLAINT IS

Accepted

AND THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME(S) IS (ARE) TO BE

1. **INTESA-SANPAOLO-CLIENT.NET**: Transferred

## PANELLISTS

| Name | **Claire Kowarsky** |
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DATE OF PANEL DECISION 2024-10-25

Publish the Decision