

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION**

### **BioNTech SE v. Privacy Protection LTD**

### **Case No. D2026-0575**

#### **1. The Parties**

The Complainant is BioNTech SE, Germany, represented by MSA IP - Milojevic Sekulic & Associates, Serbia.

The Respondent is Privacy Protection LTD, United Kingdom.

#### **2. The Domain Names and Registrar**

The disputed domain names <biontechtrial.com>, and <biontechtrials.com> are registered with eNom, LLC (the “Registrar”).

#### **3. Procedural History**

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on February 11, 2026. On February 11, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain names. On February 12, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain names which differed from the named Respondent (Not Disclosed) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on February 14, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amended Complaint on February 18, 2026.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on February 24, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 16, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on March 17, 2026.

The Center appointed Meera Chature Sankhari as the sole panelist in this matter on March 25, 2026. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

#### **4. Factual Background**

The Complainant, BioNTech SE, founded in 2008, is a next generation biotechnology company pioneering the development of novel therapies for cancer and other serious diseases. The Complainant has strong global media presence because it is one of the few companies which have developed a vaccine in relation to COVID-19 infections. The Complainant is the owner of a number of trademarks for BIONTECH and its variations in a number of jurisdictions. These include BIONTECH (word) under European Union Registration No. 008964447 as on December 22, 2010 covering classes 1, 5, 42, and 44; BIONTECH (device) under International Registration No. 1478253 as on April 5, 2019 covering classes 1, 5, 42, and 44; and BIONTECH (word) under International Registration No. 1370266 as on July 10, 2017 covering classes 1, 5, 16, 31, 42, and 44. Further, the Complainant states to be the registrant of several domain names with the trademark BIONTECH, with the earliest domain name registration being <*biontech.com*>, dated May 29, 1998. The Complainant submits that their mark BIONTECH has gained a “well-known” status within a short period of time, especially on account of the fact that during the COVID-19 pandemic it had produced the COVID-19 vaccine along with the United States of America pharma company Pfizer.

The disputed domain names were both registered on January 29, 2026. The disputed domain names resolve to webpages with pay-per-click (“PPC”) links and the notification at the bottom of each webpage indicating that the owner is offering it for sale for an asking price of EUR 50,000.

#### **5. Parties’ Contentions**

##### **A. Complainant**

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain names.

Notably, the Complainant contends that the Respondent’s disputed domain names contain the confusingly similar and well-known mark BIONTECH of the Complainant. The Respondent has incorporated the Complainant’s trademark in its entirety as the Second-Level Domain (“SLD”) in combination with the generic terms “trial” and “trials”, within the generic Top-Level Domain (“gTLD”) “.com”. Each of the disputed domain names resolves to a page which includes PPC sponsored links, and the notification with the link at the bottom of the page that the owner is offering the domain name for sale for an asking price of EUR 50,000. The search of the disputed domain names through a platform for trading domain names at “www.sedo.com” shows that both of the disputed domain names are offered for sale at a price of at least EUR 50,000. When the Complainant came to know of the disputed domain names, both of them redirected to a domain name trading platform at “www.sedo.com”.

The Complainant, on February 3, 2026, sent a letter to the Respondent asking to cease the use of the disputed domain names, and transfer the same to the Complainant free of charge. However, the Respondent did not respond to the Complainant’s letters, while the contents of the webpages under the disputed domain names have changed.

The Complainant submits that several prior panels in domain name disputes have recognized well-known character of the BIONTECH trademark. The Respondent has incorporated the Complainant’s trademark in its disputed domain names along with generic words “trial” and “trials” and the “.com” gTLD. The additional term “trial” in singular and plural form within the disputed domain names is closely related to the Complainant’s field of business, as the Complainant operates in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical

industry, with a primary focus on the research, development, and commercialization of innovative medical therapies and vaccines, a core component of which is conducting clinical trials. It is contended that the use of the word “trial” in combination with the Complainant’s mark creates a strong and immediate association with the Complainant’s legitimate business activities. Thus, the disputed domain names create a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant’s BIONTECH mark and are confusingly similar to the mark.

It is submitted that the Respondent is neither commonly known by the trademark BIONTECH nor is it affiliated with the Complainant. The Respondent is not authorized or licensed to use the Complainant’s BIONTECH trademark, or to seek registration of any domain names incorporating such trademark. The Complainant has relied on decisions of previous UDRP panels where it was decided that in the absence of any license or permission from the Complainant to use a widely-known trademark, no actual or contemplated bona fide or legitimate use of the domain name could reasonably be claimed. Further, the information revealed by the Registrar mentions that the Respondent’s second address is “This Domain is for sale at [www.Sedo.com](http://www.Sedo.com)” and the username of the Respondent’s email address is “websiteprofit”. Thus, the Respondent has not demonstrated use of, or preparations to use, the disputed domain names in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services. The disputed domain names resolve to webpages that include sponsored links and are offered for sale. Accordingly, the Complainant submits that the Respondent has no intention to develop a legitimate activity through the disputed domain names and is trying to capitalize on the Complainant’s global fame through sale of disputed domain names incorporating the Complainant’s BIONTECH trademark.

The Complainant contends that it is implausible that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant when registering the disputed domain names. The Complainant is well known throughout the world, including in the United Kingdom, where the Respondent appears to be located. The Respondent deliberately chose the disputed domain names for sale, and to make a commercial gain and to disrupt the Complainant’s activity. The Complainant submits that a quick search for BIONTECH trademarks or a simple search via Google or any other search engine would have revealed the existence of the Complainant and its trademarks. The Complainant further submits that the Respondent registered the disputed domain names to prevent the Complainant from using its BIONTECH trademark in domain names, specially to prevent them from registering domain names corresponding to its company name in combination with the word “trial” or “trials” within the “.com” gTLD. Further, the Complainant alleges that the Respondent has merely used a double layer privacy protection service to shield its identity and to avoid being notified of the UDRP proceedings initiated against the Respondent.

## **B. Respondent**

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant’s contentions.

## **6. Discussion and Findings**

### **A. Identical or Confusingly Similar**

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant’s trademark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions (“[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)”), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1.

The Panel finds the mark is recognizable within the disputed domain names. Accordingly, the disputed domain names are confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

Although the addition of other terms here, “trial” and “trials” may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such terms does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain names and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.8.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

## **B. Rights or Legitimate Interests**

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult 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 (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant’s prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Panel considers that the composition of the disputed domain names carries a risk of implied affiliation with the Complainant. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.5.1. The Respondent’s use of the disputed domain names in connection with websites with PPC links indicates the Respondent’s intention to capitalize on the reputation and goodwill of the Complainant’s mark or otherwise mislead Internet users. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.9.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

## **C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith**

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

Considering the reputation of the Complainant’s mark, and the composition of the disputed domain names, the Panel finds that the Respondent knew or should have known of the Complainant’s mark, and registered the disputed domain names in bad faith.

In the present case, the Panel notes that the Respondent not only hid behind the privacy shield, but also registered the disputed domain names with the intent to gain unlawfully and to sell them at a profit. Each of the disputed domain names resolves to a webpage with PPC links, and a notice that the disputed domain name is offered for sale at a price of EUR 50,000 which is likely in excess of the Respondent’s documented out-of-pocket costs directly related to the disputed domain name.

Under the circumstances of this case, the Panel holds that the Respondent registered and is using the disputed domain names to intentionally attract for commercial gain, Internet users to its websites or other on-line location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant’s mark; and for the purpose of

selling the disputed domain names to the Complainant who is the owner of the trademark or to a competitor of the Complainant, for valuable consideration in excess of its documented out-of-pocket costs.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of the Policy.

## **7. Decision**

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain names <biontechtrial.com>, and <biontechtrials.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

*/Meera Chature Sankhari/*

**Meera Chature Sankhari**

Sole Panelist

Date: April 8, 2026