

PREFACE

A few decades ago it would have been impossible to believe that copyright would affect so many different aspects of everyday life and trade. Nowadays, it is almost common sense. Copyright has developed into a significant tool for culture, knowledge, creativity, technology and so on. It suffices for one to note the variety of stakeholders involved in this area, such as authors, broadcasters, film producers, musicians, software developers, search engines, enterprises that use music, internet service providers, libraries – just to name a few – in order to realize why legislative and akin developments in the area have accelerated during the last decades and why this trend is continuing. At EU level we almost had a directive per year over the last years (Term Directive, Orphan Works Directive and the Collective Rights Management Directive) and at the international level almost a Treaty every year (ACTA, the Beijing Treaty and the Marrakesh Treaty). The Court of Justice of the European Union has also been very active. At the same time lots of controversial issues (such as private levies, copyright infringements on the Internet, limitations and exceptions, a potential broadcasters' treaty and so on) remain on the table. This legislative evolution has been unprecedented and has also provoked a number of reactions. In this light we felt that a commentary of EU copyright law that would take into consideration the latest developments in the area, as well as the policies and politics behind them, was needed. Traditional (and less traditional) legal norms had to be approached in the light of these new developments in an attempt to map the area with a fresh insight, directed at the way ahead.

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