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Towards an improved regulatory framework of free software : protecting user freedoms in a world of software communities and eGovernments

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Krzysztof Siewicz Towards an Improved Regulatory Framework of Free Software

Information technologies support us in performing an increasing number of tasks. The support is delivered by a range of intelligent computer programs. A minimal requirement for a seamless cooperation between us and computer programs is that the programs work efficiently and properly. Therefore it is important to determine who controls the working of programs.

There are different approaches towards the notion of control. We highlight two of them. Under the Free Software approach, attempts are made to give the control to every user of a computer program. Thus, users of Free Software programs are granted with licenses to use, develop, and distribute these programs without restrictions. Conversely, under the proprietary approach the control is retained by certain individuals.

Both approaches have their followers and opponents. But for each approach the respective actors are aiming at bringing us closer to a world of seamless cooperation between humans and computer programs. In this book the position is taken that everyone should be allowed to choose an approach which they consider best for themselves. For this position it is necessary that both the Free Software approach and the proprietary approach are sufficiently protected by an adequate regulatory framework. We chose to study the protection of the Free Software approach, as it suffers from many material threats. The goal of the study is to develop an improved regulatory framework, which would provide adequate protection for the Free Software approach.

Dit is een boek in de Meijers-reeks. De reeks valt onder verantwoordelijkheid van de Graduate School of Legal Studies van de Faculteit der Rechtsgeleerdheid, Universiteit Leiden. Dit boek maakt deel uit van het onderzoeksprogramma Securing the Rule of Law in a World of Multilevel Jurisdiction.



Towards an Improved Regulatory Framework of Free Software

Protecting user freedoms in a world of
software communities and eGovernments

Krzysztof Siewicz