



Empirical Evidence for Policy in Telecommunication, Copyright & Broadcasting
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Abstract

This dissertation contains nine articles with an empirical focus in copyright, telecommunication, and broadcasting. These articles address different research questions and employ a variety of methodological approaches. They all share an economic foundation and the aim to contribute to evidence based policymaking in the field of information law.

Topics covered range from the welfare effects of illegal downloading, to those of public television; from the effectiveness of blocking access to The Pirate Bay to stop consumers from illegal downloading, to the effect of adequate legal online services on illegal downloading; from fixed price regulation for e-books, to text and video relay services to enable the hearing impaired to use telephony services; from the valuation of commercial radio licenses, to setting renewal fees for telecommunication spectrum based on an auction.

Using these nine articles as case studies, the role and impact of economic evidence for policymaking in the field of information law is investigated. It is concluded that this role is positive rather than normative: legal or social norms maintain the upper hand as guiding principles for policy, more than the economic goal of welfare maximization. However, this does not by any means render economic analysis useless. Increasingly, politicians, judges and stakeholders require economic analysis and economic evidence to make informed decisions about new policy measures, to make optimal decisions within existing legal boundaries and to fathom the consequences of proposed legal interventions. Without empirical evidence they may simply assume the effects of a policy measure as an article of faith.

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