

Abstract

The title of this diploma thesis: *Copyright protection of computer programs*

The general purpose of this thesis is to describe the most important aspects of the legal protection of computer programs, particularly the aspects of copyright protection. In this thesis I describe the form in which a computer program is protected, the activities that are permitted by law in relation to a computer program and what activities constitute an unauthorised interference with author's rights.

In addition to the copyright regime I also briefly described patent protection of computer programs, since it recently was subject to heated discussions in Europe and we can anticipate further development in this matter in the future, especially with regard to the decision-making practice of the European Patent Office and possible legislative establishment of patent protection of software at EU level.

I have analyzed the above mentioned aspects under the Czech law (in close relation to the law of EU) but also under the law of the USA. Therefore, another aim of this thesis was to compare the legal protection of software in the USA and in the Czech Republic (EU respectively).

Finally, this thesis also describes the issue called „software piracy“, i.e. illegal distribution and use of computer programs. More specifically, I describe what falls under the term „software piracy“, its economical impact and legal responsibility of the persons involved in the software piracy.