The European Database Directive introduced a new protection regime for database producers in 1996. This was to complement the already existing copyright protection for collections. This new sui generis right offers protection to producers who undertake a substantial investment in the production of a database. Even though it resembles an intellectual property right, its rationale – preventing misappropriation of another’s investment – is related to the tenet of unfair competition.

The sui generis right is the main focus of this book. Its most important concepts are extensively discussed, such as the criterion of the substantial investment, the definition of the producer, and the scope of the sui generis right. Furthermore, consideration is given to the introduction of a compulsory licensing regime to ward off information monopolies. The book ends with a conclusion which contains proposals for a review of the Database Directive.

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