

the right to authorize and/or prohibit the rental and lending of their copyrighted works for commercial purposes. While four member states currently grant rental rights (France, UK, Spain and Portugal), the creation of a single market in sound recordings, and the necessity of combatting piracy, require that such rights be extended throughout the Community.

Expected in the near future are proposals for directives dealing with home copying and the duration of copyright protection. The Commission has recognized the importance of dealing with the matter of private/home copying of sound and audio-visual works by calling for a directive that would harmonize national systems of remuneration. For instance, some member states currently have systems whereby levies are placed on blank tapes in order to compensate copyright holders. Progress in this area will be slow, however, given the divergence of views among member states on whether an obligatory levy should be imposed at the Community level. As for the duration of copyright protection, the Berne and Rome conventions merely set out minimum periods of protection for right holders: 50 years for copyright; 20 years for neighbouring rights. Consequently, the protection currently available for rights holders in the EC varies from zero to 75 years. The Commission is planning a directive aimed at creating uniformity in the duration of copyright protection for all rights holders.

Other activities in the Commission's work program will address the question of computer databases, and the rights of authors. Under authors' rights, a study has been undertaken concerning reprography - the photocopying of protected works. Further studies on the resale rights of authors, and on the moral rights of authors concerning the integrity of their work (eg. colourization of black and white films) are also proposed as a precursor to possible Community legislation. The Commission also plans to prepare an inventory of the intellectual property provisions of third countries with a view to identifying the effects on EC persons.

Geographical Indications

At present, there is no uniform regime in the EC for the protection of geographical indications, including appellations of origin. In preparation for the single market, the EC Commission presented, in December 1990, a proposed regulation on food quality standards which would include a detailed scheme of protection for geographic indications and geographic designations throughout the Community. To be a protected geographic indication (PGI) or a protected designation of origin (PDO), the group of producers seeking protection must