

# TEXTS DON'T GROW ON TREES

## Authors` Rights Awareness Campaign

File: Awareness Campaign\_synth061003  
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**Project:** TEXTS DON'T GROW ON TREES: the Authors` Rights Awareness Campaign:  
**Commissioned by:** European Writers` Congress



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**Date:** 3.10.2006  
**Version:** 1.0  
**Mode:** Synthesis

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# TEXTS DON'T GROW ON TREES

## The Authors' Rights Awareness Campaign

Synthesis

**Texts don't grow on trees. Nor do they in the internet. The Authors' Rights Awareness Campaign, initiated by the European Writers' Congress (EWC), the Federation of 55 writers' associations in 29 countries of Europe, representing some 54.000 individual authors and literary translators, aims to raise awareness on the necessity to provide creators with acknowledgement and respect which eventually means with an equitable economic remuneration. It is supported by Kopinor, the collecting society of Norway, by the The Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) and many professional authors' organisations all over Europe.**

### 1. Starting Point

The Authors' Rights' Awareness Campaign "Texts don't grow on trees" aims to raise awareness Europe wide on the necessity to provide creators respect, fair conditions and adequate economic rights. The EWC and his partners shall be introduced to the public as organisations which engage themselves for authors in Europe and the authors worldwide.

### 2. Vision / Scope of the Campaign

The campaign covers a time span of 2 years. It starts in autumn 2006 and ends in autumn 2008. Highlight of the campaign will be the co-operation with WALTIC 1 – the value of words (July 2008 in Stockholm, [www.congrex.se/waltic2008](http://www.congrex.se/waltic2008)).

The campaign serves the purpose to raise *public* awareness. It wants to reach the reading public in Europe. The first year of campaigning concentrates on the authors in Europe. The second year focusses on their readers.

The campaign also serves a political purpose. It fights for better conditions for authors being published on the internet. We are convinced the future challenges and dangers for author's rights are to be found in the digital world. Further we think that the best copy protection is not DRMS –not a machine - but people's conscience.

### 3. The Message to the Public

Texts don't grow on trees. - It is all about authors' rights. Respect the authors' position. Get to know their economical situation – also and particularly in the digital era. Become their partners.

### 4. Sharpening the Message

*It is all about authors' rights:*

- Moral rights
  - The author's exclusive right **to be identified as an author** (right of paternity)
  - The author's exclusive right **to object to modifications and other derogatory treatment of a work** (right of integrity)
  
- Economic rights
  - The author's exclusive right to authorise or prohibit direct or indirect, **temporary or permanent reproduction** of his work,
  - The author's exclusive right to authorise or prohibit **any communication to the public of his work**, including the making available to the public of works on demand
  - The author's exclusive right to authorise or prohibit **any form of distribution of his work to the public** by sale or otherwise, in respect of the original of the work or of copies thereof

### *Respect the authors' positions*

- Ascertain the moral rights, so that authors cannot be pressured into waiving them.
- Safeguard the right of fair remuneration that is proportionate with the economic rights of use that have been licensed.

### *Get to know their economical situation –particularly in the digital era*

- Functions such as linking and framing are very often relevant to the right of paternity and right of integrity for the authors, when their works are being used in a different context from the original one.
- Under the influence and power of the globalised multi-national corporations who control and own the media industries an individual author is largely powerless against such forces without supporting legislation.
- Some of the problems arise in particular with the imposition of buy-out contracts which deprive authors of their rights – often to avoid the statutory obligation of equitable remuneration or even fair compensation.
- The vast majority of writers are low-income earners, which, of course, the writers' organisations are sadly well aware of; but the rest of the world seems only to notice the spectacular income of the not too many exceptions.
- Many writers also have a self-employed status, which makes them very vulnerable when it comes to negotiating with the publishing companies.

## **5. The Core Elements**

The core elements of the campaign are “trans-border” elements. In order to reach most of the 29 European countries involved in an efficient way we are present there, where a) everybody has access and b) where representatives of these countries meet.

- a) Internet (creating a “helpdesk” and having our banner on numerous sites)
- b) International meetings like bookfairs, festivals, conferences, symposiums etc.

*Text don't grow on trees HELPDESK ([www.yourauthor.org](http://www.yourauthor.org))*

Web based tools will support the execution of the campaign: templates for campaigners and authors, easy emailing of content elements (viral marketing), donations, supporting the campaign and merchandise. It offers effective and accessible information related to administrative, legal and social aspects of authors in Europe. It will be launched in January 2007. Its media partner is [www.readme.cc](http://www.readme.cc), a reading promotion project supported by the EU.

*Messengers of the Campaign: the authors*

We are engaging authors who are ready to be messengers of the campaign and support it actively. But we also engage authors who support the campaign by “lending” us their faces, writing and speaking out on the topic. There are authors from all over Europe taking part.

*Important Events*

Our public campaign will be focussed on UNESCO World Book and Copyright Day (23<sup>rd</sup> April 2007 / 2008). The campaign will be a noticeable presence at European Events where writers and their works are being discussed. The campaign will also be present at WALTIC in Stockholm in July 2008 where authors and translators from across the globe will meet up with the aim of manifesting the power of words and defining the author's role in our time (see: [www.congrex.se/waltic2008](http://www.congrex.se/waltic2008)).

## **6. Language**

The working languages of the campaign is English. Nevertheless there will be information sheets and basic tools in many different languages from the beginning.

## **7. Project Structure**

### **Campaigning Team (Operational Level)**

Adi Blum (Switzerland), Peter Troxler (Netherlands)

### **Steering Group (Strategic Level)**

Graham Lester–George (Great Britain)

Anna Menyhért (Hungary)

Trond Andreassen (Norway)

### ***Authors' Rights Awareness Campaign Partners (as of 18 October 2006)***

Kopinor ([www.kopinor.no](http://www.kopinor.no))

The Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society ([www.alcs.co.uk](http://www.alcs.co.uk))

The Swedish Writers' Union / WALTIC 2008 ([www.congrex.se/waltic2008](http://www.congrex.se/waltic2008))

Turkish Writers Syndicate

Association of Writers' Organisations in Slovakia (AOSS)

Federation of Scriptwriters in Europe

Autoren und Autorinnen der Schweiz (AdS)

Society of Swedish Authors in Finland

Sociedade Portuguesa de Autores

The Society of Authors / UK

Swedish Association for Educational Writers

Vereniging van Schrijvers en Vertalers (VSenV) / NL

The Irish Playwrights and Screenwriters Guild

Interessengemeinschaft von Übersetzerinnen und Übersetzern literarischer und wissenschaftlicher Werke / Austria