

**Verband Deutscher Drehbuchautoren e.V. /  
German Screenwriters' Guild**

**Report 2011/2012**



The Screenwriters' Guild of Germany was established more than 25 years ago.

**[www.drehbuchautoren.de](http://www.drehbuchautoren.de)**

## Copyright law

The Federal Ministry of Justice - despite repeated and urgent calls by means of politics and industry – has not pushed through a recent amendment to the copyright law even though it was announced two years ago. Probably in the next months the issue will be divided into several new bills, but unfortunately the underlying problems of the law are not addressed by the Ministry.

In the last two years the VDD met with several Members of the Federal Parliament (Bundestag) to talk about the position of creators, authors, and in particular screen writers. The awareness for the partly precarious situation, especially with regards to "technical errors" in the last amendment to the copyright law, has greatly increased.

Like everywhere in the world the discussion about intellectual property and the fair remuneration for writers and professional artists has increased. The VDD-screenwriters were one of the first groups to express themselves very strongly: 51 screenwriters from Germany's long-running cult detective show *Tatort* accused the "internet community" of attempting to insert a culture of "everything for free" into German law (more information:

<http://www.thelocal.de/society/20120511-42477.html>

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/german-pop-artist-debates-pirate-party-politician-about-file-sharing-a-828588.html>

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/authors-and-musicians-rebel-against-pirate-party-policies-in-germany-a-827877.html>).

Half a year later the VDD can state that the campaign was a success.

The desire to discuss these issues with authors has greatly increased, not only in the press, but very much so in politics. The VDD has entered into discussions with many politicians of many different parties, is invited to all relevant congresses and symposiums, and is included in the formation of the election program for the first concrete changes to the law (federal elections will be held in Germany in 2013). Many leading politicians recommend, that here would be a good opportunity for the implementation of a class action suit (as the VDD suggested!).

The VDD is also very much involved in the realignment of the successful project „Initiative Urheberrecht“ ([www.urheber.info](http://www.urheber.info)): besides issuing statements, the public and especially online public will be addressed with regards to the author. The initiative currently is composed of more than 30 guilds and unions.

## **Collective agreement negotiations**

The collective agreement negotiations with the public broadcaster ZDF, that were started years ago, were one of the main issues that the VDD had to deal with. In July an agreement was signed. The result is outlined in the attached **Report on TV and cinema practices in Germany**.

## **German State Aid Legislation**

The revision of the German State Aid Legislation (FFG) is on its way once again. The VDD has been, as reported, quite successful last time. This time the important lobbying-success has been, that it is quite likely that one representative of the guilds representing the "creative people" will be part of the presidium. The FFA has an annual budget of around € 76 million at its disposal (more information – also in English: [www.ffa.de](http://www.ffa.de)).

Katharina Uppenbrink

Berlin, November 2012