

Germany challenges Google books settlement: minister

September 1 2009



Fair-goers check out the Google stand at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2007.

Germany on Tuesday said it opposed a legal settlement that would allow Google to digitise and sell millions of books online, arguing it violated international treaties on authors' rights.

Germany on Tuesday said it opposed a legal settlement that would allow Google to digitise and sell millions of books online, arguing it violated international treaties on authors' rights.

Justice Minister Brigitte Zypries told the Handelsblatt business daily in an interview to be published Wednesday that she had filed a 25-page legal brief with a court in New York that must give the settlement the green light.

"We hope that the court strikes down the approval of the settlement in

the class-action suit, or at least excludes our German authors and publishers from the so-called class so the settlement has no impact on them," Zypries said.

Google reached a class action settlement in October last year with the Authors Guild and the Association of American Publishers to a [copyright infringement](#) suit they filed against the Internet powerhouse in 2005.

Under the settlement, Google agreed to pay 125 million dollars to resolve outstanding claims and establish an independent "Book Rights Registry," which will provide revenue from sales and advertising to authors and publishers who agree to digitise their books.

The settlement still needs the approval of a US [District Court](#) judge, who is to hold a "fairness hearing" on the deal in New York on October 7.

The deadline for filing complaints is Friday.

Last week, industry giants Amazon, Microsoft and Yahoo! joined an alliance opposing the [legal settlement](#).

Zypries said ideally, German copyright holders should be able to decide for themselves whether Google may make their works available online.

She said the settlement violated international treaties such as the World International Property Organization Copyright Treaty adopted in Geneva in 1996, which stipulates that authors must be asked for permission before their works can be mass distributed elsewhere.

It also threatens initiatives such as the European online library Europeana which she said protected authors' rights.

And it undermines German authors' copyrights although she said [Google](#) had pledged to only make the books available online in the United States, Zypries told Handelsblatt.

"We all know that the Internet knows no borders," she said.

(c) 2009 AFP

Citation: Germany challenges Google books settlement: minister (2009, September 1) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-09-germany-google-settlement-minister.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.