

# Automating translation of a bestseller to spark children's interest in coding

**1 February 2026 · FOSDEM, Brussels**

Nico Rikken

· Coordinator Netherlands, Maintainer Ada & Zangemann automation

Matthias Kirschner

· President, Author Ada & Zangemann



**By 2048 young people love to  
tinker, experiment, and code with  
Free Software as the default**

From: Matthias Kirschner <mk@fsfe.org>  
Subject: Books explaining Free Software for Children  
To: [discussion@lists.fsfe.org](mailto:discussion@lists.fsfe.org)  
Date: Thu, 15 Jun 2017 07:25:43 +0000  
Message-Id: <1497511458.d3crmef4z5.mk@vita.none>

Hi there,

does anyone of you have good recommendations for books explaining Free Software topics, basics of computing, source code, etc. to children. I am interested in books for the age from 3 to 12. Also things which are slightly connected would be appreciated.

Best Regards,  
**Matthias**

--

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Registered at Amtsgericht Hamburg, VR 17030 | ([fsfe.org/join](https://fsfe.org/join))  
Contact ([fsfe.org/about/kirschner](https://fsfe.org/about/kirschner)) - Weblog ([k7r.eu/blog.html](https://k7r.eu/blog.html))



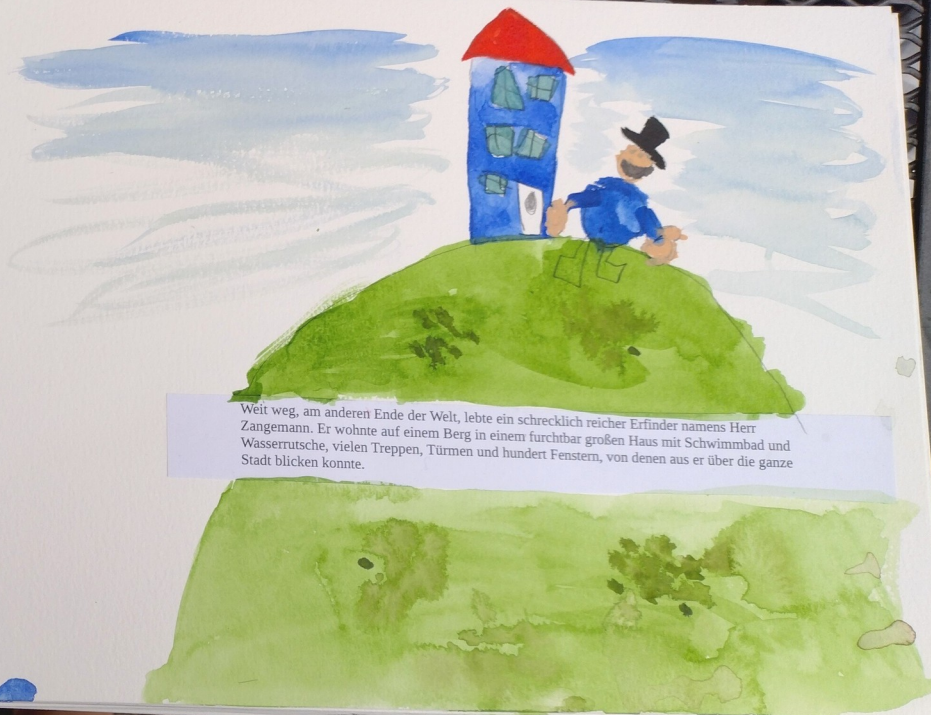
**Nothing → bedtime stories**







Es war einmal ein kleines Mädchen namens Ada. Sie war so arm, dass sie kein richtiges Haus hatte, sondern mit ihrer Mutter und ihrem Bruder in einer Hütte am Rande einer Schrotthalde lebte.



Weit weg, am anderen Ende der Welt, lebte ein schrecklich reicher Erfinder namens Herr Zangemann. Er wohnte auf einem Berg in einem furchtbar großen Haus mit Schwimmbad und Wasserrutsche, vielen Treppen, Türmen und hundert Fenstern, von denen aus er über die ganze Stadt blicken konnte.

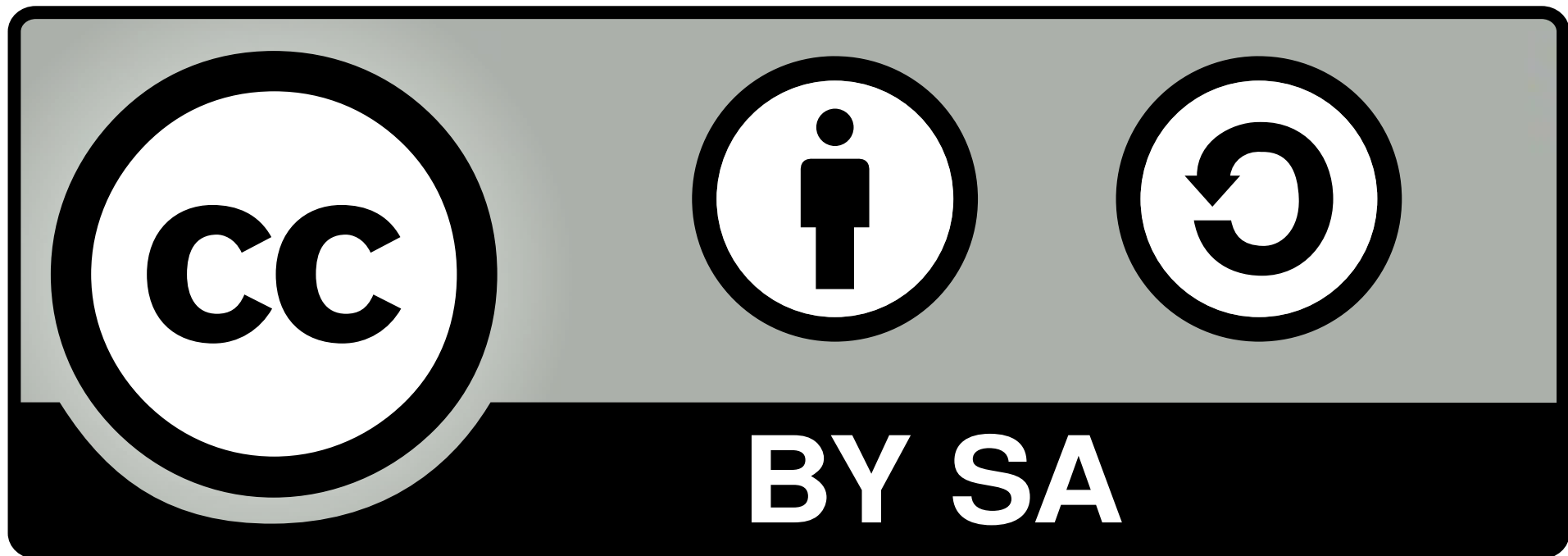


The background is a teal color. A white, swirling line connects various objects: a paintbrush and bucket in the top left, a pair of red pliers and a computer mouse at the top, a screwdriver and a power supply unit on the right, a power strip on the left, a keyboard at the bottom center, and a girl on a skateboard at the bottom right. In the center, a man in a purple shirt and blue pants is hanging upside down by his arms, which are crossed. A large orange 'X' is drawn over his torso.

# ADA & ZANGEMANN

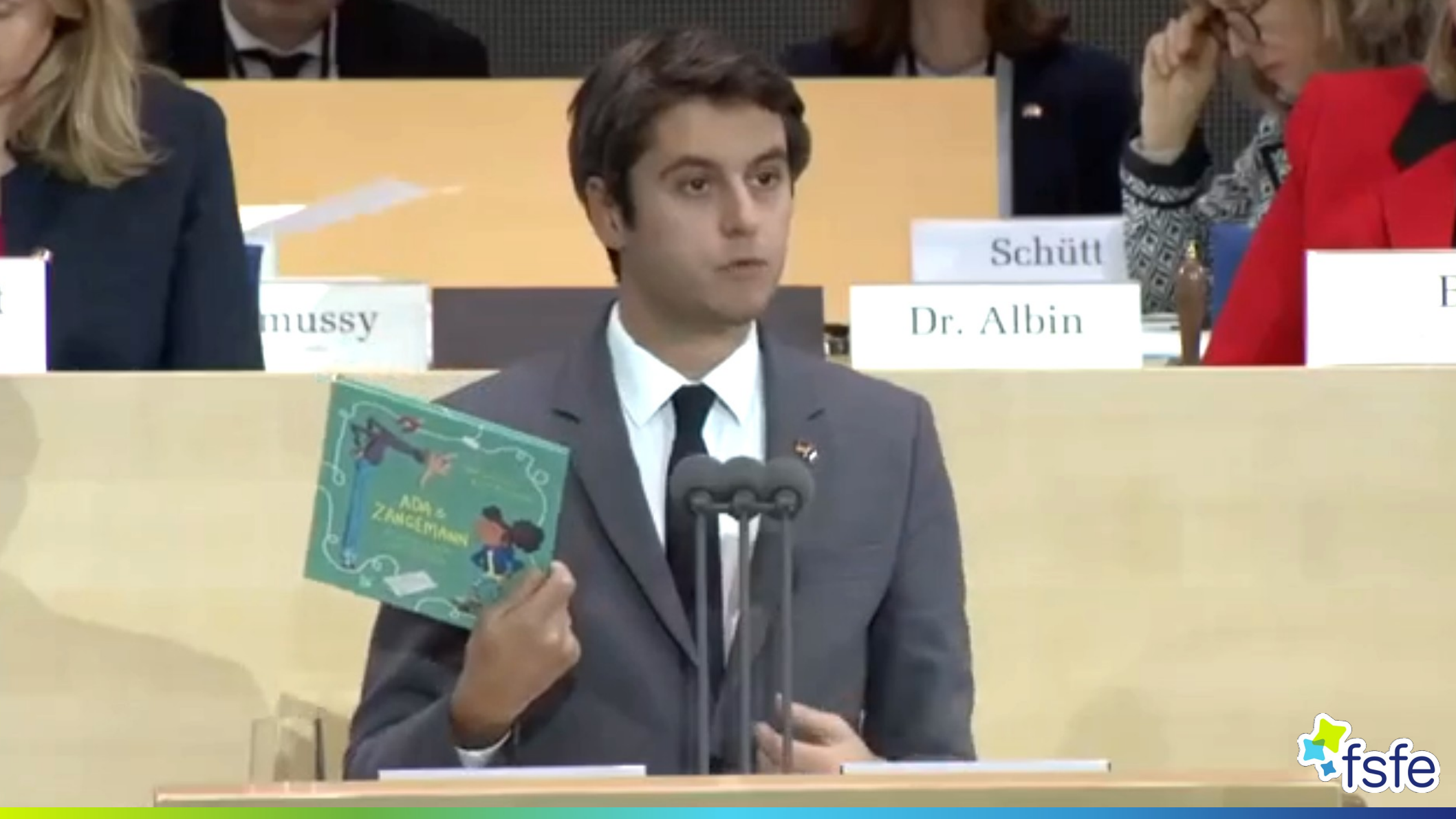
A Tale of  
Software, Skateboards, and  
Raspberry Ice Cream

Matthias Kirschner  
Sandra Brandstätter





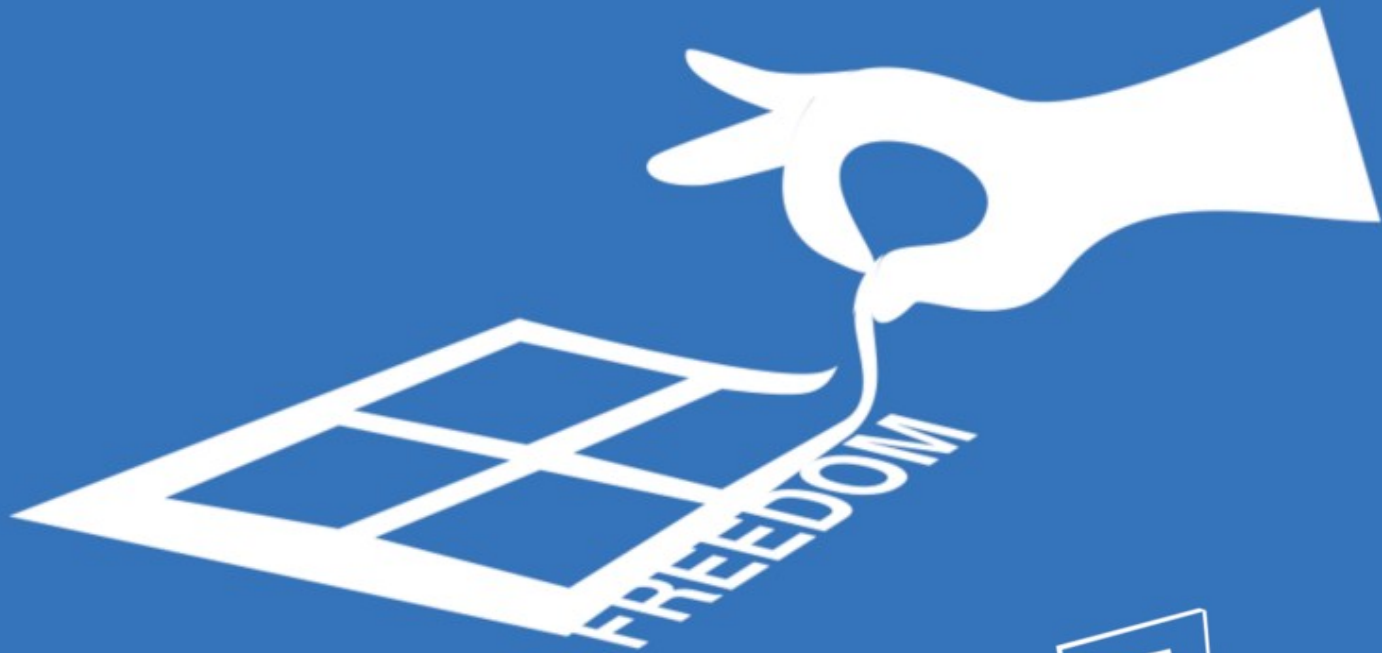












<https://refund4freedom.org>



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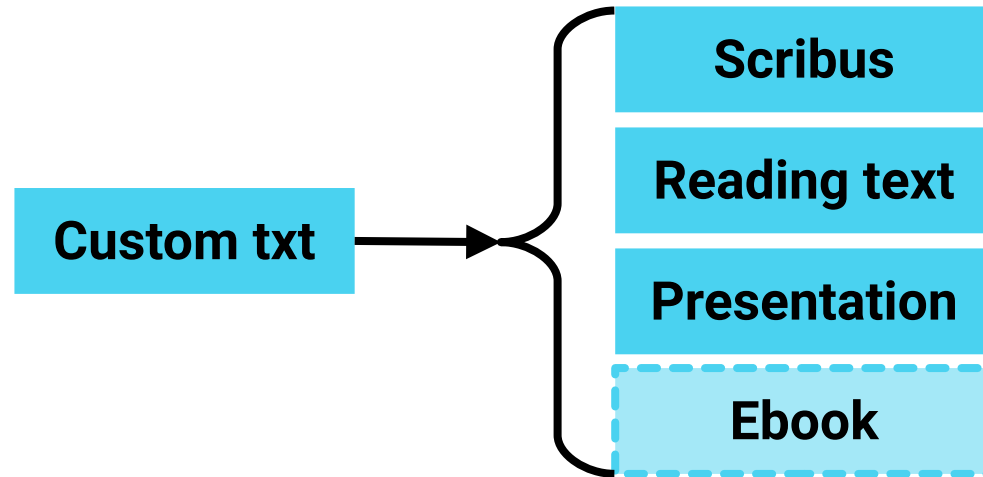








# One source, multiple output formats





# ADA & ZANGEMANN

A Tale of  
Software, Skateboards, and  
Raspberry Ice Cream



Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Ada. Her family was so poor that all their savings fit inside a cookie jar. They didn't have enough money to live in a proper home. Instead, Ada lived with her mother and her little brother, Alan, in a cabin near a junkyard on the edge of town.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

After a few days, the initial shock at Ada's school was forgotten. The skateboards still didn't go on the sidewalk, but apart from that, they still worked. And so now the children rode in circles around the playground and listened to soft music. Only a strange, pompous marching music continued to play at an unchanged volume, which the children found rather puzzling.



# Room for improvement

## What

- Automate as much as possible
- Reduce drawing by hand
- Translations via Weblate
- Support more output formats
  - Kamishibai, dual-language, webbook
- Wide programming language support
- Reuse existing tools
- Automatic flow of text around images
- Translation-specific image links

## How

- Split parsing and rendering
- Change to a standard source format
- Use fonts
- Adopt Weblate

# HOW STANDARDS PROLIFERATE:

(SEE: A/C CHARGERS, CHARACTER ENCODINGS, INSTANT MESSAGING, ETC.)



# DocBook XML modeling

## Basic structure

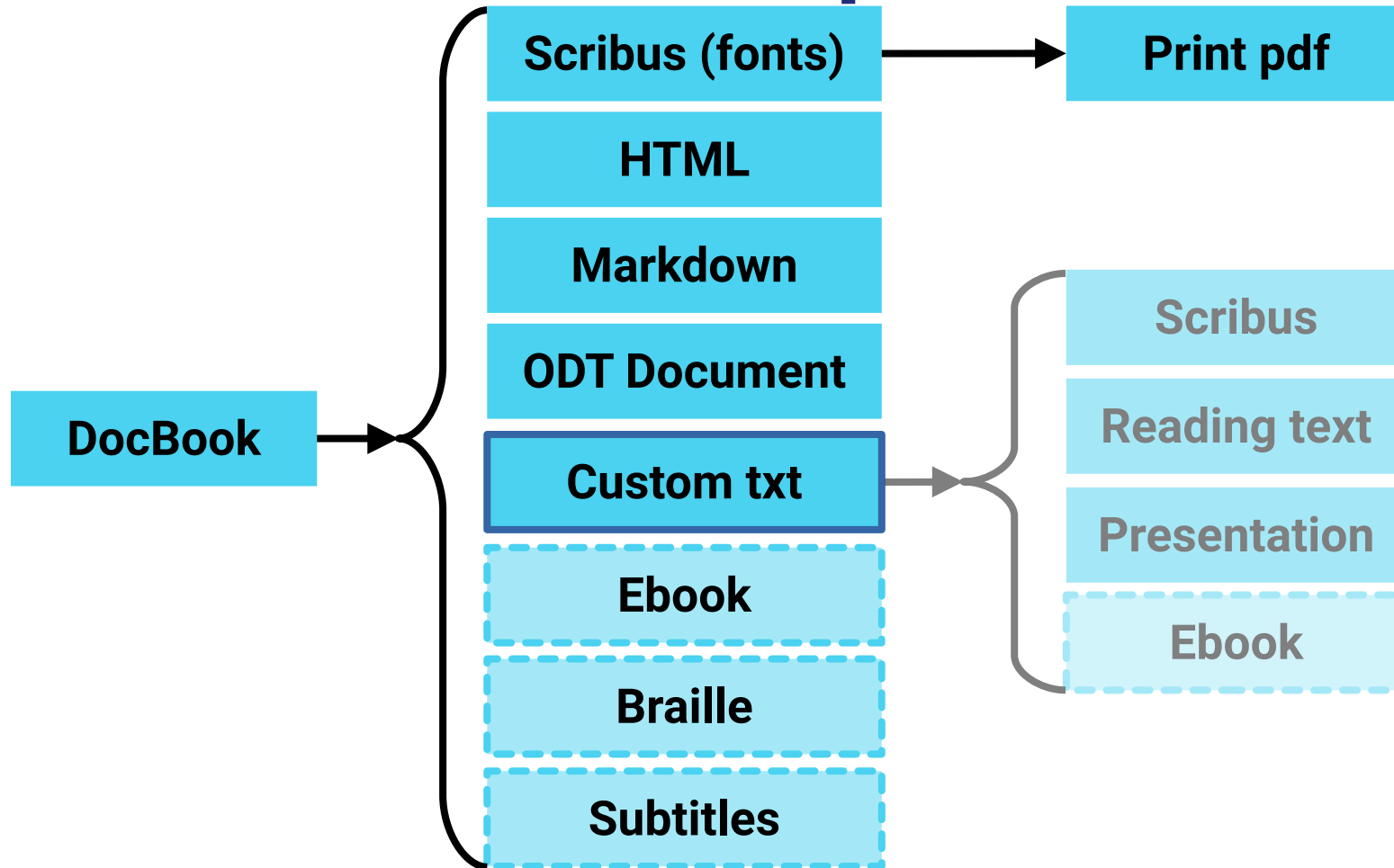
- Colophon
- Metadata (ISBN, author, etc.)
- Profiling for different output formats
- Anchors to mark slide transitions
- Alt-text for images

## Extensions

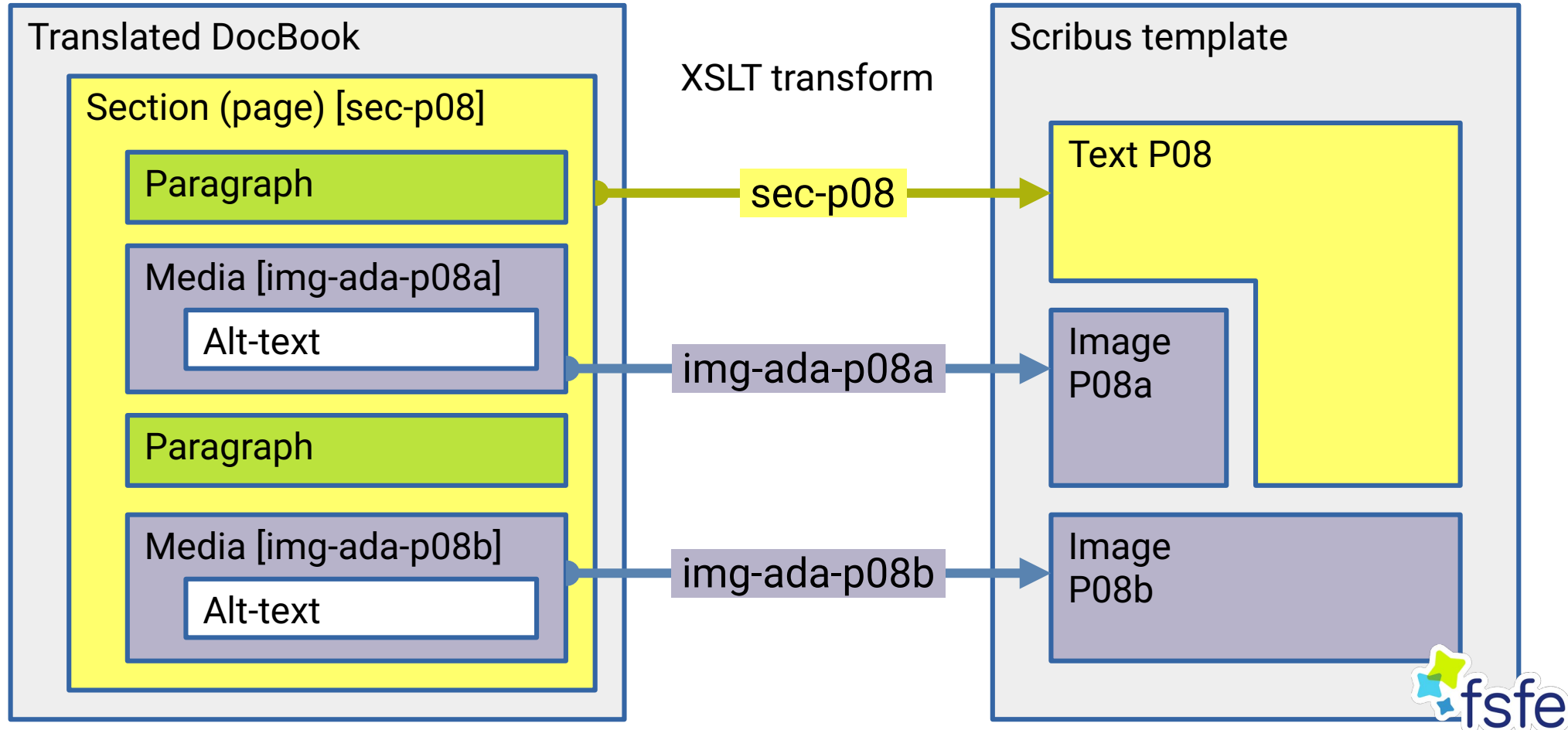
- ITS translation structure
- XML Ids for reference
- Dropcap information (images, color)



# Even more output formats



# Filling Scribus









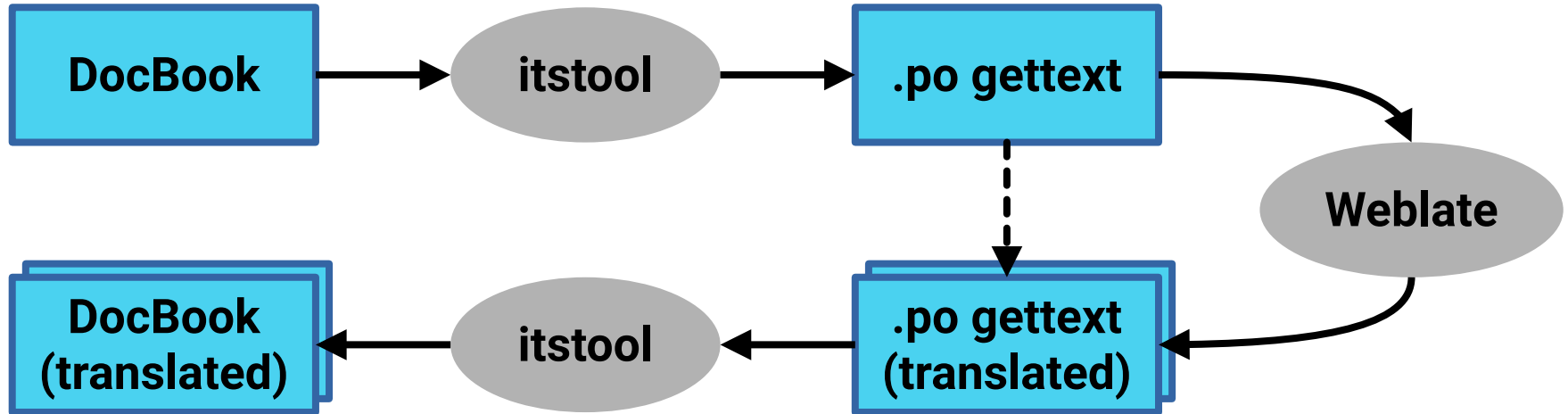


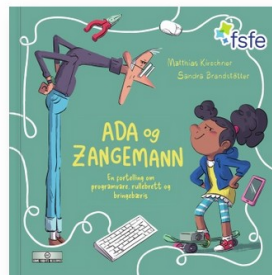
# Translations

Docbook XML

Gettext

Weblate





## Ada og Zangemann

En fortelling om programvare, rullebrett og bringebæris

By Matthias Kirschner Sandra Brandstätter

Paperback  
EUR 19.95

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Usually printed in 3 - 5 business days

Oppfinneren Zangemann er verdenskjent og uhorvelig rik. Både voksne og barn elsker hans fantastiske tekniske oppfinnelser. Men en dag er det et problem: barnas elektroniske rullebrett virker ikke lenger som de skal. Hva er det som skjer? Den nysgjerrige jenta Ada innser hva som foregår. Sammen med sine venner eksperimenterer hun med maskin- og programvare, og barna lager en plan: Zangemann kan ikke lenger være den eneste som kontrollerer dingsene!

En bok som vekker interessen for fikling og oppmuntrer til å forme teknologien.

### Details

Publication Date	20 Nov 2025
Language	Norwegian
ISBN	9788293828242
Category	Children's
Copyright	Creative Commons ShareAlike (CC BY-SA)
Contributors	Original author: Matthias Kirschner, Illustrated by: Sandra Brandstätter, Translated by: Petter Reinholdtsen, Translated by: Henrik G. Sund, Translated by: Hagen Echzell

### Specifications

Pages	56
Binding Type	Paperback Perfect Bound
Interior Color	Color
Dimensions	Square (8.5 x 8.5 in / 216 x 216 mm)

### Keywords

[programming](#) [right to repair](#) [source code](#) [free software](#) [tinkering](#)





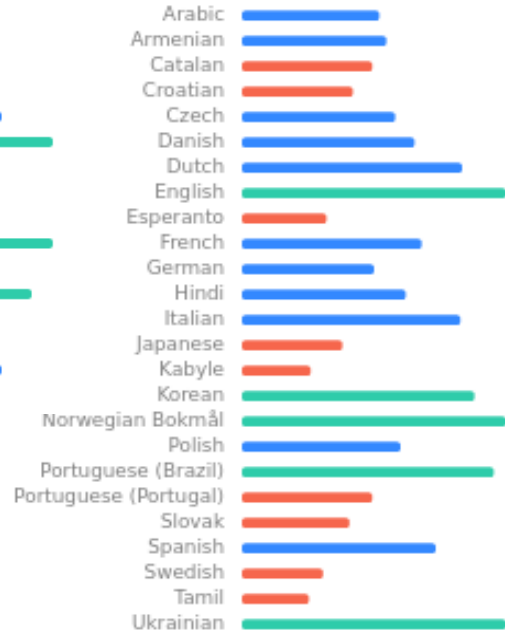
# Impact of Weblate

April '25



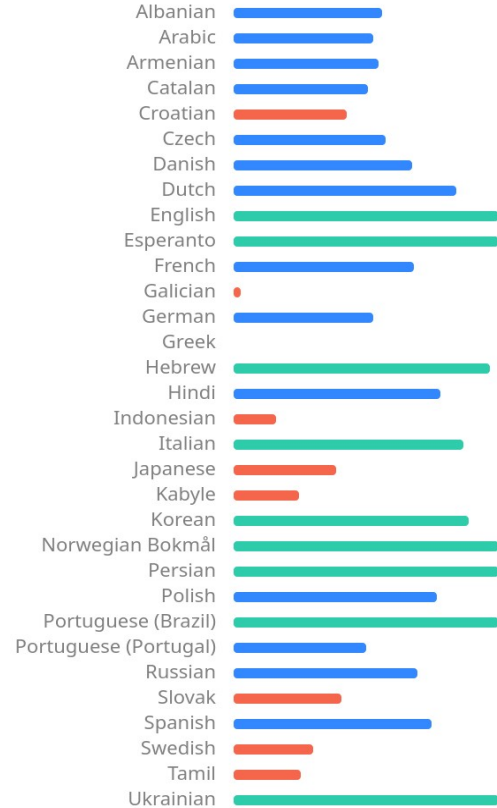
16

June '25



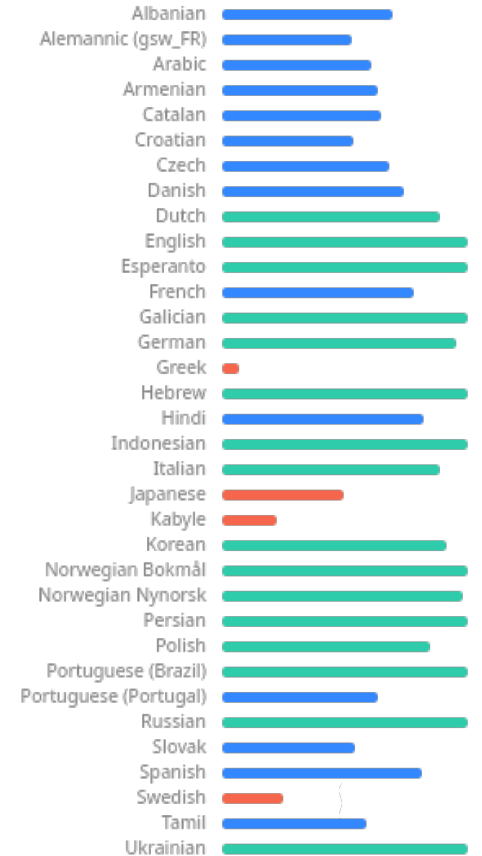
26

Nov '25



32

Jan '26



34





옛날에 에이다라는 이름의 작은 소녀가 살고 있었어요. 그녀의 가족은 너무 가난해서 전 재산이라곤 쿠키통안에 들어있는 돈이 전부였어요. 그래서 좋은 집을 사기에 충분한 돈이 없었지요. 그래서 에이다는 엄마와 남동생 앨런과 함께 도시 외곽에 있는 고물 수집장 옆의 낡은 오두막에서 살았어요.



# АДА I ЦАНГЕМАНН



Изобретатель Зангеманн всемирно известен и невероятно богат. Его потрясающие технические изобретения любят и взрослые, и дети. Но однажды возникает проблема: детские электронные скейтборды перестают нормально работать. Что ж происходит?







Ada racing with her electric skateboard for city sidewalks. Ada's skateboard is blue, with gray and pink wheels; the electronic part is placed above the skateboard (as opposed to Zangemann's skateboards where the electronic part is below). Ada is holding in both hands a remote control with a short antenna to maneuver it. Behind Ada are Marie and Toni who carry their own skateboards under their arms and look with amazement at Ada, who has shot past them and in front of them. Marie has dark long hair with two braids fastened with orange clips, yellow earrings, a fuchsia shirt with white sleeves with purple horizontal stripes, a white skirt, white and yellow sneakers, white socks, a white hat with yellow sides, and a light purple backpack. Marie has a blue artificial leg. Her skateboard is blue with yellow wheels. Toni has red hair closely trimmed on the sides. He is wearing a blue sweatshirt, dark green pants, and white shoes. He has a red backpack with white inserts and shoulder straps. One hand is next to his mouth...



Ada racing with her electric skateboard for city sidewalks. Ada's skateboard is blue, with gray and pink wheels; the electronic part is placed above the skateboard (as opposed to Zangemann's skateboards where the electronic part is below). Ada is holding in both hands a remote control with a short antenna to maneuver it. Behind Ada are Marie and Toni who carry their own skateboards under their arms and look with amazement at Ada, who has shot past them and in front of them. Marie has dark long hair with two braids fastened with orange clips, yellow earrings, a fuchsia shirt with white sleeves with purple horizontal stripes, a white skirt, white and yellow sneakers, white socks, a white hat with yellow sides, and a light purple backpack. **Marie has a blue artificial leg.** Her skateboard is blue with yellow wheels. Toni has red hair closely trimmed on the sides. He is wearing a blue sweatshirt, dark green pants, and white shoes. He has a red backpack with white inserts and shoulder straps. One hand is next to his mouth...

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**Nico Rikken**  
@nicorikken

Public, anyone can quote

English

What's on your mind?



500

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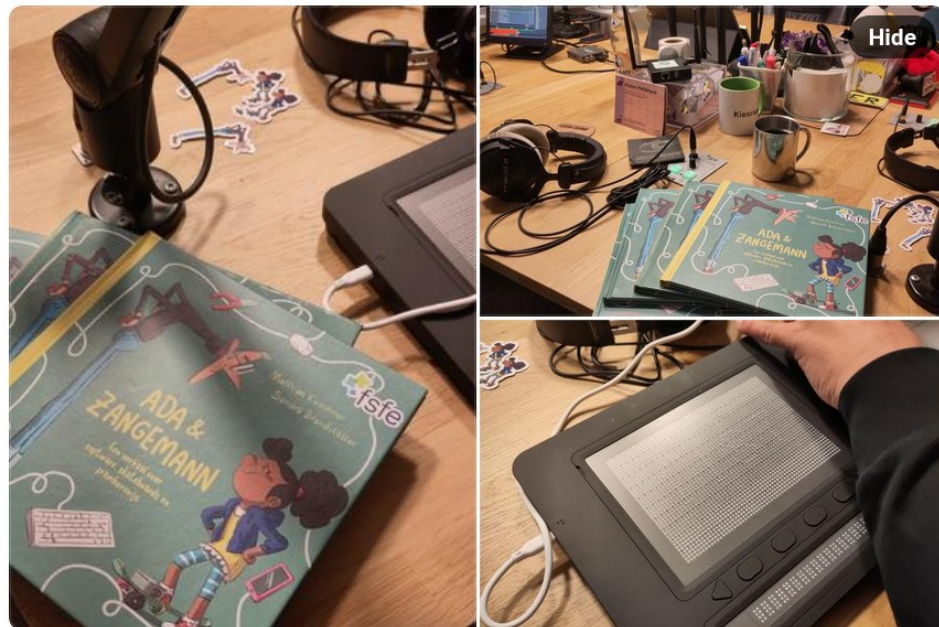
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**Nico Rikken**  
@nicorikken@mastodon.nl

Sneak preview van [@angrynerdspodcast](#) zodadelijk met Ada & #Zangemann

Translate



Jan 15, 2026, 07:00 PM · 🌐 · Mastodon for Android

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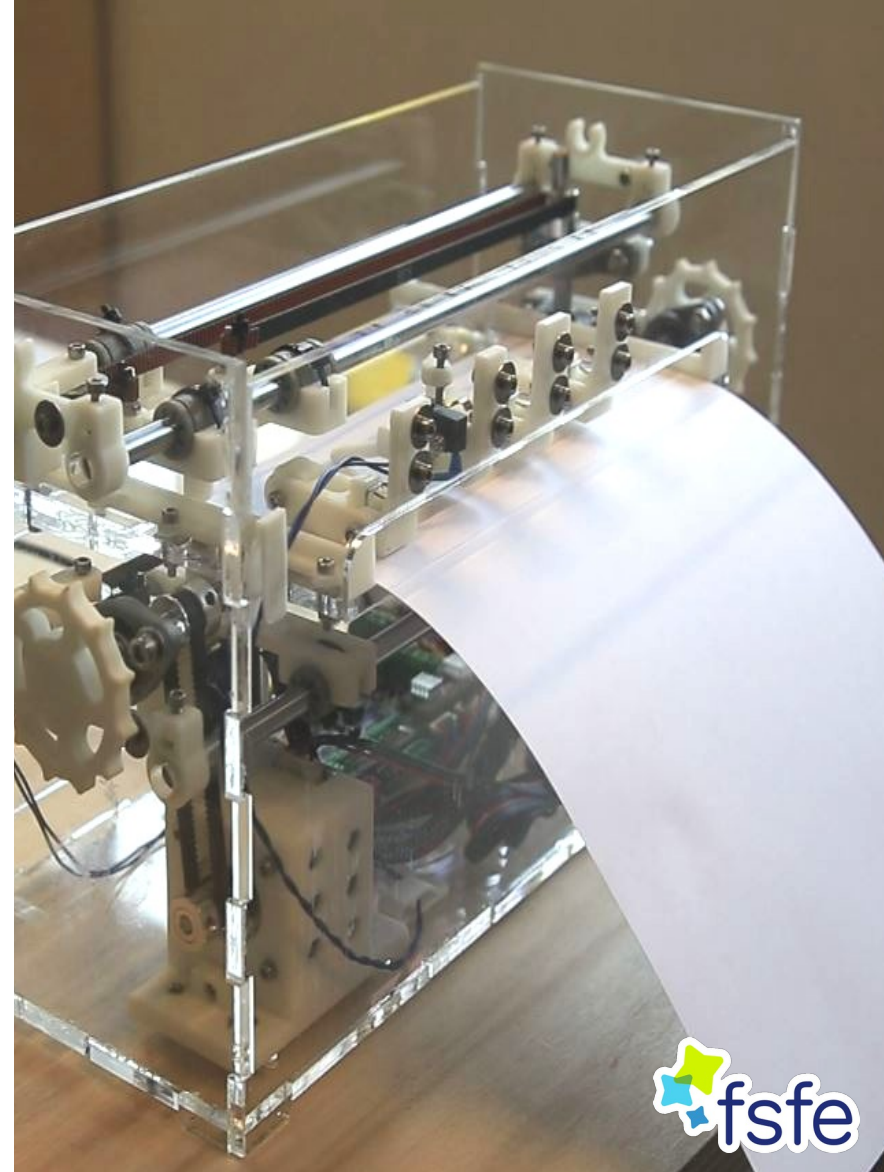
@ Private mentions

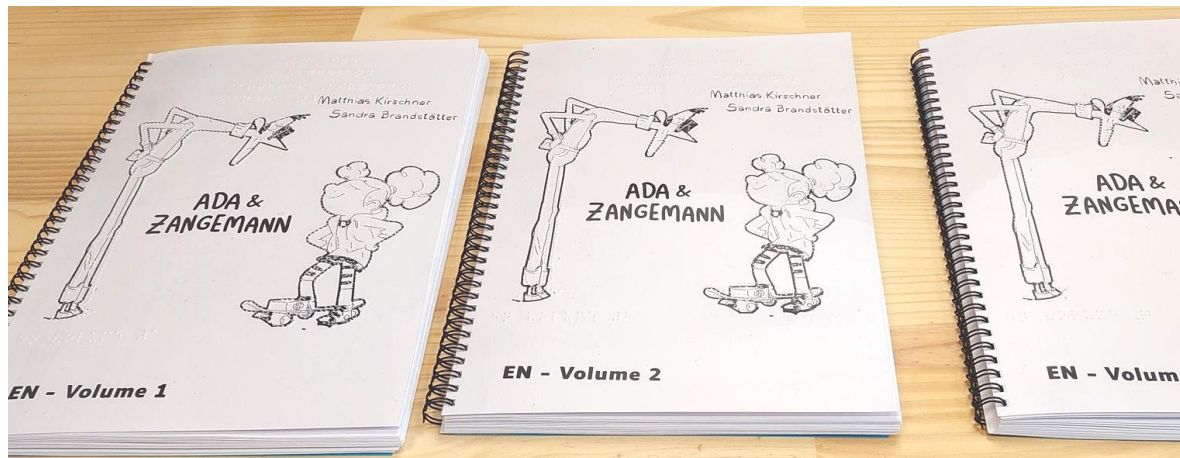
⚙ Preferences

⋮ More





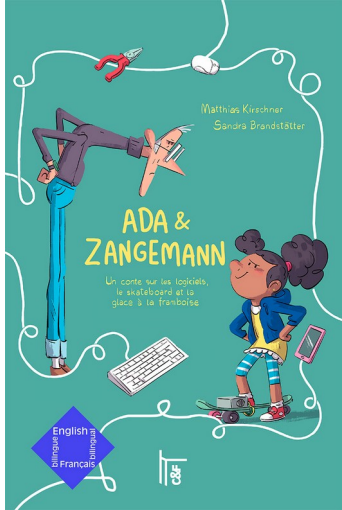












**E**s war einmal ein kleines Mädchen namens Ada. Ihre Familie war so arm, dass all ihr Ersparnis in eine Keksdose passte. Sie hatten kein Geld, um in einer richtigen Wohnung zu leben. Stattdessen wohnten Ada, ihre Mutter und ihr kleiner Bruder Alan in einer Hütte in der Nähe eines Schrottplatzes am Rande der Stadt.

Weit weg, am anderen Ende der Stadt, lebte ein berühmter Erfinder namens Zangemann. Der war unermesslich reich. Kein Papierblatt dieser Welt war groß genug, um seinen Kontostand mit all den Ziffern und Nullen darauf auszudrucken. Er wohnte in einem riesigen Haus mit Schwimmbad und Wasserrutsche, vielen Treppen, Türmen, Hunderten von Fenstern und so vielen Zimmern, dass er

**I**l était une fois une petite fille qui s'appelait Ada. Elle et sa famille étaient si pauvres que leurs économies tenaient dans une boîte à biscuits. Ils n'avaient pas assez d'argent pour vivre dans une vraie maison. Ainsi, Ada, sa mère et son petit frère Alan habitaient-ils une cabane à proximité d'une décharge à la périphérie de la ville.

Loin de là, à l'autre bout de la ville, vivait un célèbre inventeur du nom de Zangemann. Il était immensément riche. Aucune feuille de papier n'était assez grande pour y écrire tous les chiffres et les zéros de son compte en banque. Il habitait une immense maison avec piscine et toboggan aquatique, de nombreux escaliers, des tours, des centaines de fenêtres et tant de pièces que lui-même s'y perdait régulièrement. La propriété de Zangemann était construite au sommet de la montagne. De là-haut, il pouvait observer toute la ville.





Bienvenue sur « Ada & Zangemann à l'école », le site en construction de la communauté scolaire francophone dédié au livre Ada & Zangemann et à tous ses dérivés rendus possible par la licence libre. Nous invitons les enseignantes et enseignants à découvrir et s'approprier Ada & Zangemann pour en faire profiter leurs élèves, en classe comme à la maison. Car nous pensons que ce conte constitue une excellente médiation pour évoquer le numérique et ses enjeux dès le plus jeune âge.

### Lire en ligne

Lecture en ligne du livre, en français mais aussi en anglais et en allemand.

### Voir le film

La version film du livre, en français, anglais et allemand.

### Écouter

La version audio du livre au format Ogg Vorbis en français allemand anglais italien.

### Étudier

Ressources et dossiers pédagogiques pour préparer des activités avec les élèves.

### Lire en classe

La version diaporama, avec les images sans le texte, pour une lecture publique du livre.

### Jouer au jeu

Un jeu de plateau en cours de réalisation autour du livre.

<https://ada-zangemann.forge.apps.education.fr/>

# Upstream reporting

## Scribus

- RTL language support ⌚
- Dropcaps in text frame
- Equal page resize
- Script support for validation ⌚
- More control over word breaks
- Support multiple fonts per style ⌚
- Accessibility support (PDF/UA) ⌚

## Pandoc

- Literallayout is set as monospace ✓
- Last title element taken as book title ✓
- RTL output to ODT not working

## Weblate

- Extract flags from gettext comments

## Itstool

- No active maintainer

## Libxslt

- XSLT 2.0 or 3.0 are not supported ✗

























## LibreTranslate

- Support more languages

## SRT Equalizer

- Support additional quotation marks when splitting text ✓
- Provide srt-qualizer CLI command



- >  Drawing template
- >  LICENSES
- >  Presentations
- >  docbook
- ▼  docs
  -  README.md
  -  automation-design.md
  -  building.md
  -  docbook-implementation....
  -  docbook.md
  -  editions.md
  -  printing.md
  -  publishing.md
  -  readings-organisation.PT\_...
  -  readings-organisation.md
  -  start-translating.md
  -  terms.md
  -  text-based-format.md
  -  translating-illustrations.md
  -  translation-guidelines.md
  -  upstream-issues.md
- >  fonts
- >  illustrations
- >  movie

# Documentation

---

- [Terms](#)

## Book reading

---

- [Readings organisation](#), also in [Portuguese](#)

## Translation

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- [Start translating](#)
- [Translation guidelines](#)
- [Translating illustrations](#)

## Publication

---

- [Building](#)
- [Publishing](#)
- [Editions and notable differences](#)
- [Printing](#)

## Technical

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- [Automation design](#)
- [DocBook](#)
- [Upstream issues](#)
- [Text-based format \(deprecated\)](#)
- [DocBook implementation notes \(unstructured\)](#)

\$ make help  
**Usage:** make [target]

Tab completion is available to discover valid targets

Online documentation at <https://git.fsfe.org/FSFE/ada-zangemann/src/branch/main/docs>

### Languages:

en ar ca cs da de el eo es fa fr gl gsw\_FR he hi hr hy id it ja kab ko nb nl nn pl pt\_BR pt\_PT ru sk sq sv ta uk

### Build targets: (use 'all' language to build for all languages)

build/[lang].po	Merged gettext translation file
build/Ada_Zangemann-pure.[lang].dbk	Docbook without custom namespaces
build/Ada_Zangemann.[lang].txt	Plaintext
build/Ada_Zangemann-pandoc.[lang].[html md odt]	Output via Pandoc
build/Ada_Zangemann-pandoc-text-only.[lang].[html md odt]	Output without images via Pandoc
build/Ada_Zangemann-print-headings-text.[lang].[sla pdf]	Book inside via Scribus
build/Ada_Zangemann-coverhard-text.[lang].[sla pdf]	Hardcover cover via Scribus
build/Ada_Zangemann-coversoft-216x216x4_728x3_175-text.[lang].[sla pdf]	Softcover cover via Scribus
build/Ada_Zangemann-screen.[lang].[pdf mediumres.pdf lowres.pdf]	Pdf for screen viewing
build/Ada_Zangemann-screen-confidential.[lang].[pdf mediumres.pdf lowres.pdf]	Pdf for screen with watermark

### Initiate a new language:

build/[newlang].po

### Commands:

release	Key build targets for all languages
clean	Remove build output
status	Report of translations
check-obsolete	Find old translation strings still in the files

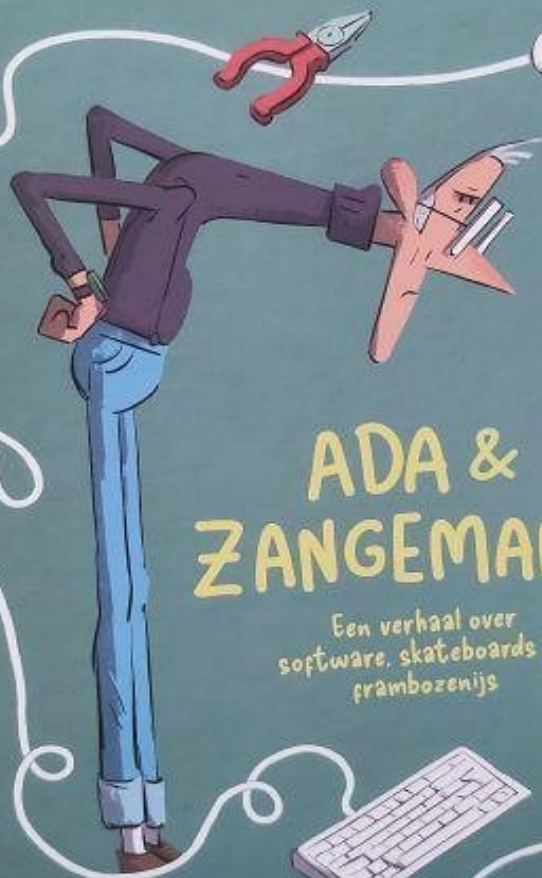




Matthias Kirschner  
Sandra Brandstätter

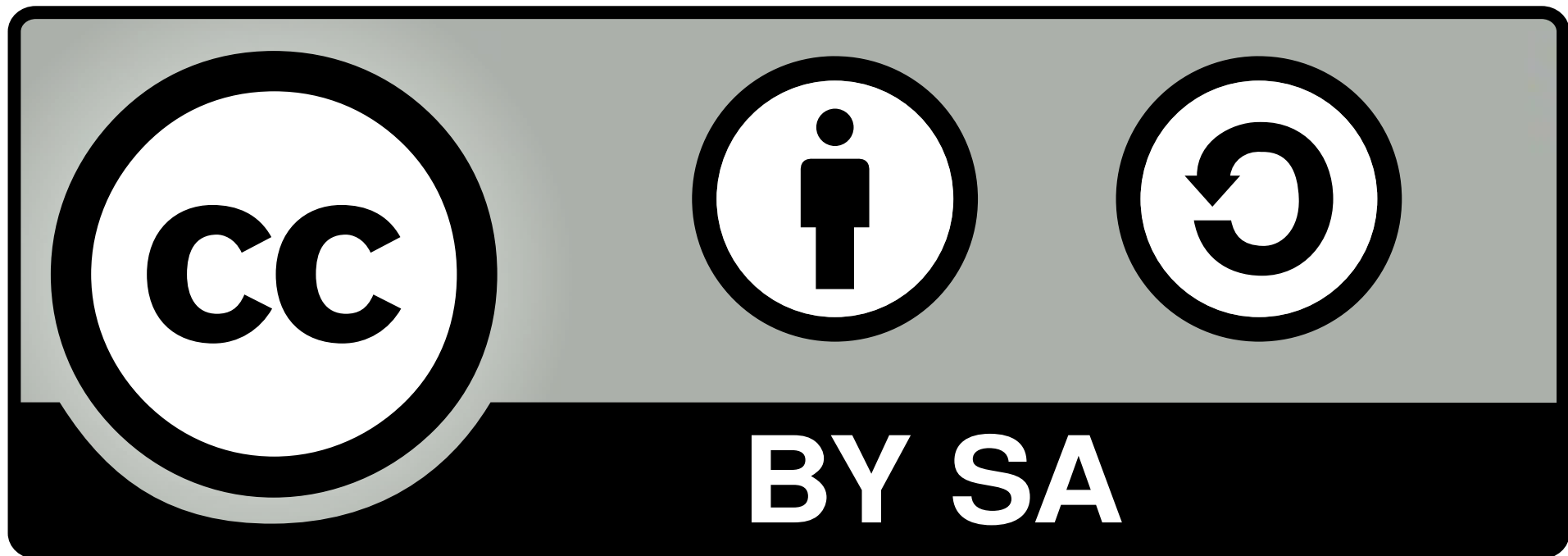
# ADA & ZANGEMANN

Een verhaal over  
software, skateboards en  
frambozenijs





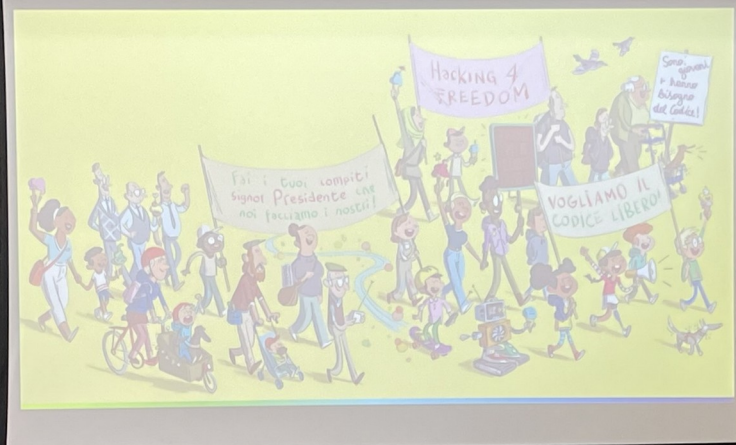
















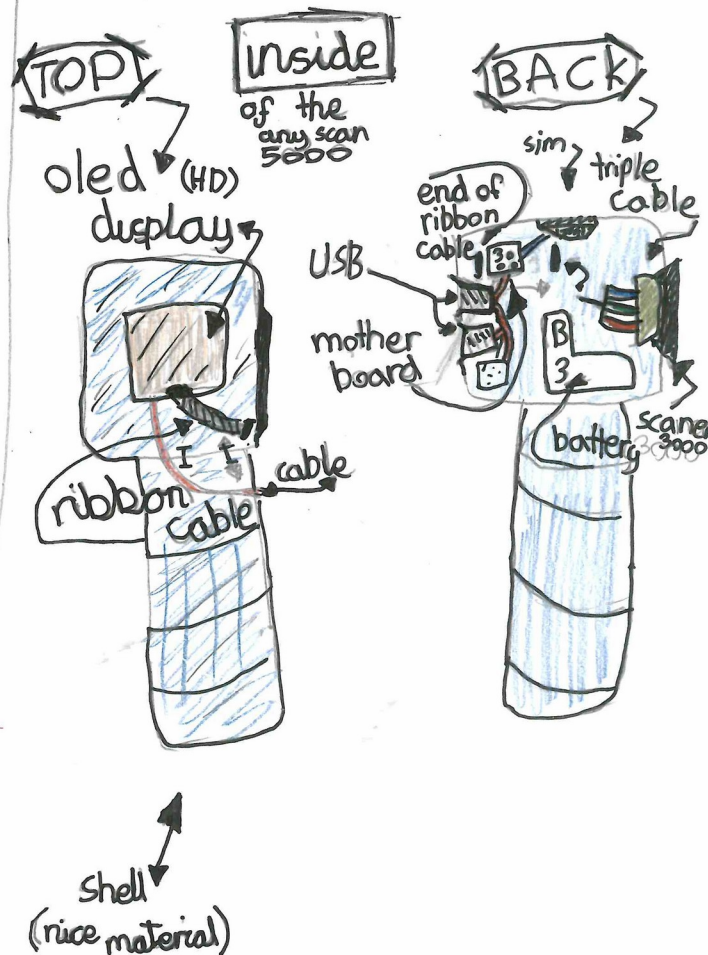
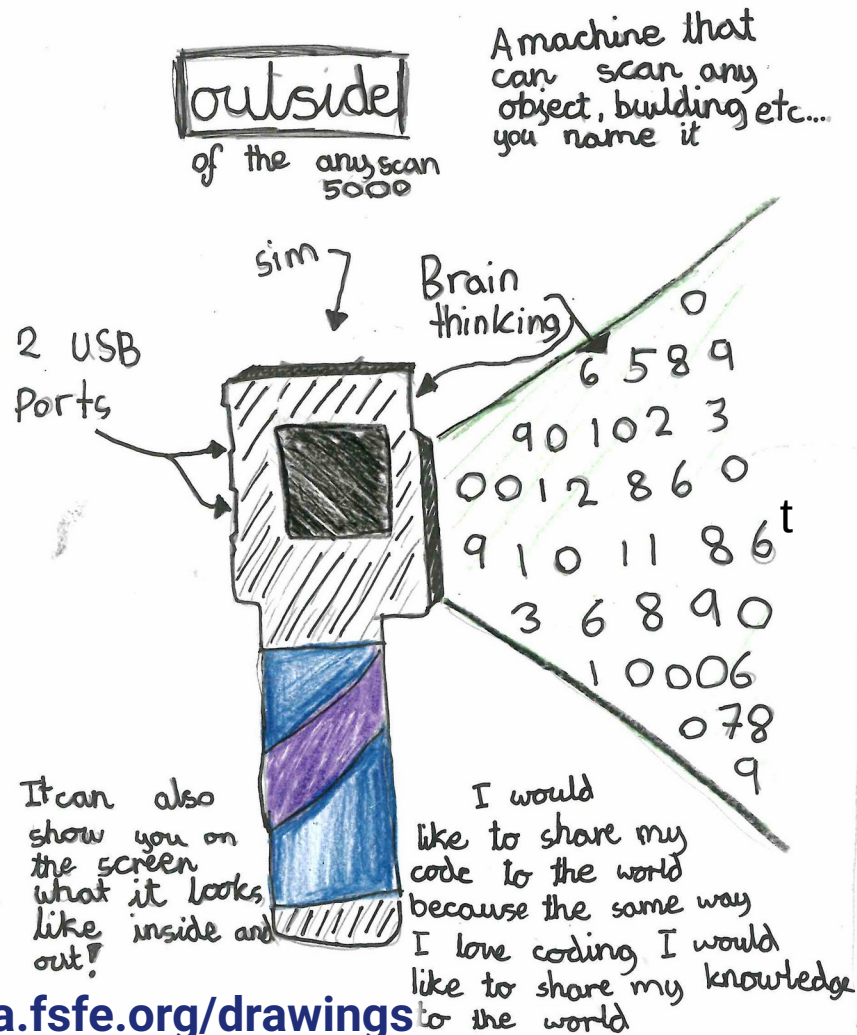
Dear Zangemann I used to like your invention  
infact I still like them but you are starting  
to use them in the wrong way. It's not fair  
that some people have to eat, drink and  
listen ~~the~~ music that they don't like. When  
you do that people can see you inside out  
how selfish you are. It's much better if you  
share your inventions ~~because~~ it doesn't  
mean they are stealing; it means they just  
are borrowing it, and making it better  
for people. So please share your Idias. It  
will make our planet much better

By Nikita





Jack .K








# New i18n editions ~3600€





# Index of /ada-zangemann/cinema

<a href="#">Name</a>	<a href="#">Last modified</a>	<a href="#">Size</a>	<a href="#">Description</a>
 <a href="#">Parent Directory</a>			-
 <a href="#">AdaZangemann_FTR-1_F_DA-XX_DK-NR_50_2K_FSFE_20241023_EFK_SMPTE_OV.zip</a>	2025-06-19 09:18	38G	
 <a href="#">AdaZangemann_FTR-1_F_EN-XX_UK-NR_50_2K_FSFE_20241023_EFK_SMPTE_OV.zip</a>	2025-12-02 11:52	38G	
 <a href="#">AdaZangemann_FTR-1_F_ES-XX_ES-NR_50_2K_FSFE_20241023_EFK_SMPTE_OV.zip</a>	2025-03-04 12:29	38G	
 <a href="#">AdaZangemann_FTR-1_F_FR-XX_FR-NR_50_2K_FSFE.zip</a>	2025-01-17 13:49	38G	
 <a href="#">AdaZangemann_FTR-2_F_DE-XX_DE-NR_50_2K_FSFE_20241129_EFK_SMPTE_OV.zip</a>	2024-11-29 15:31	37G	
 <a href="#">README.html</a>	2024-12-17 14:37	1.4K	

## Readme

We would like to thank the Lichtburg Essen for the creation of the DCPs files for the different languages.

"We took over the creation of the DCPs for the film 'Ada & Zangemann' free of charge. Since we only use Free Software in our creation process (Handbrake, Subtitle Edit, OpenShot Video Editor for pre-editing the material; DCP-o-matic on a powerful render server for the actual DCP creation; as well as Aurora Files, FileZilla Server and Client for the provision), we were very happy to support the FSFE in this way."

- Lichtburg Essen

*German*

"Die Erstellung der DCPs zum Film 'Ada & Zangemann' haben wir entgeltfrei übernommen. Da wir in unserem Erstell-Prozess ausschließlich Freie Software (Handbrake, Subtitle Edit, OpenShot Video Editor für die Vor-Bearbeitung des Materials; DCP-o-matic auf einem starken Render-Server für die eigentliche DCP-Erstellung; sowie Aurora Files, FileZilla Server und Client für die Bereitstellung) verwenden, haben wir auf diese Weise sehr gerne die FSFE unterstützt."

- Lichtburg Essen



# Become part of it...

- Read it to others: <https://git.fsfe.org/FSFE/ada-zangemann/src/branch/main/Presentations>
- Share your thoughts with others: <https://sharepic.fsfe.org/#ada>
- Gift the book to others
- Feel free to include the ebook and movies as example files in installations at schools, universities, etc.
- Organise screenings <https://ada.fsfe.org/movie>
- Translate it: <https://hosted.weblate.org/projects/fsfe/ada-zangemann/>
- Help with automation
- Become an FSFE supporter: <https://fsfe.org/support>
- ...

# Become an FSFE supporter!

For 25 years, FSFE contributors have participated at FOSDEM. Support our work for software freedom by helping us gain 25 new FSFE supporters at this year's FOSDEM!

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<https://fsfe.org/support>









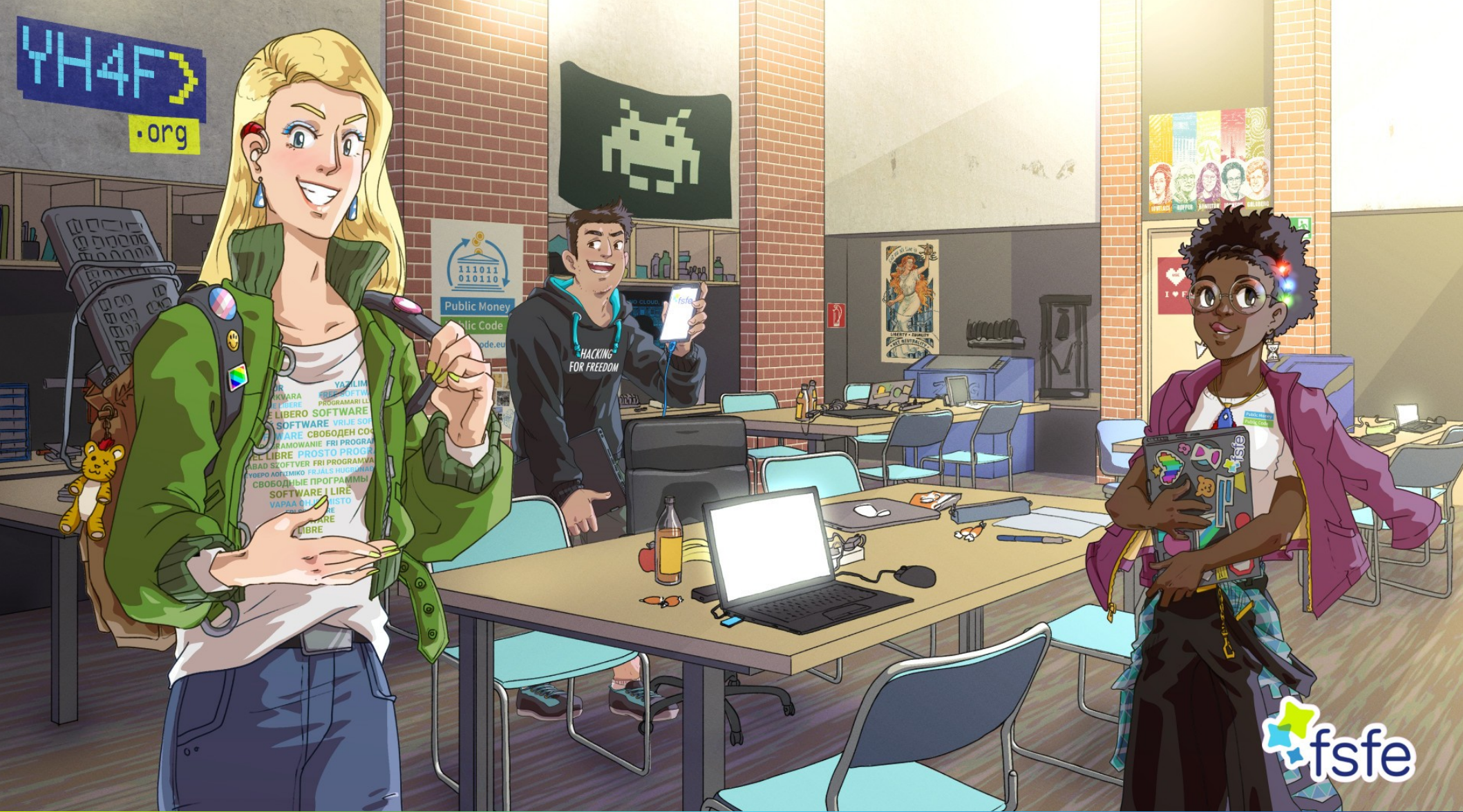
# Thank you for your contributions to software freedom! <3



The illustration depicts a large, diverse group of people celebrating software freedom. The crowd is composed of individuals of various ages, ethnicities, and abilities, all smiling and holding signs. The signs carry messages such as "Hacking 4 FREEDOM", "DO YOUR HOMEWORK Mr. President and we will do ours!", "THERE IS A CODE IN B", "DON'T WRECK OUR TECH!", and "They are young + need the Code!". The scene is festive, with confetti falling and a small robot on wheels. A dog is also present, and people are using various modes of transport like a bicycle, stroller, and skateboard. The background is a bright yellow with a blue sky and birds.

fsfe







WHAFS

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