

The European Commission and OSS

How does the European Commission support public administrations in their use of OSS?

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OSS at a European level

- European public administrations were among the early users of OSS (1990s). The European Commission took up the issue around 2000. Since then it initiates, sponsors and manages projects that further OSS, deal with the OSS usage and the benefits of using OSS for the Information Society at large.
- Back-up at the policy level came early, but varies in scope over the time and depending on the context.

Political Support by Europe Action Plan 2005

An Information Society for everyone:

... the Commission will issue an agreed **interoperability framework** to support the delivery of pan-European e-government services to citizens and enterprises ... It will ... recommend technical policies and specifications ... It will be based on **open standards** and encourage the use of **open source software**

**Turning the European Union into the strongest
IT-based economic area by 2010**

... more recent policy papers

- **i2010 Initiative:** A single European Information Space - "The Commission intends to use all its instruments to foster technologies that communicate, ..., promotion of open standards." → OSS is not an issue.
- **Communication on Interoperability for pan-European eGovernment Services** "standards, open specifications and open interfaces ..." → recommends OSS: "A wealth of open source software ..."
- **eGovernment Action Plan i2010** ... puts a strong emphasis on "sharing" eGovernment applications and experiences – and on essential infrastructure services that support working together across borders.

A strategic decision to promote OSS in Public Administrations

- **IDABC decision** (2005) called for the
 - The dissemination of Good Practice in OSS
 - The support of reuse and sharing of applications
- **The eGovernment Action Plan i2010** (2006) put a strong emphasis on "sharing" eGovernment applications and experiences across borders.
- The OSOR project was included in the **IDABC work programme** (2005-2009)

Our initial Objectives

- **Observatory** – aims to promote the spread of good practice in the use of Open Source Software by public administrations
- **Repository** – aims to encourage the sharing and thus re-use of publicly-financed Open Source Software developments and supports collaborative development of OSS applications and solutions
- **Information platform** – information dissemination creating awareness and knowledge on open source developments and communities
- **Promotion and hosting of OSS applications (including national repositories)** produced by public administrations

History of the project



- The EUPL is the first European Free/Open Source Software (F/OSS) licence.
- It has been created on the initiative of the European Commission.
- It is now approved by the European Commission in 22 linguistic versions.
- It can be used by anyone for software distribution

...but why create yet another OSS license?

- multilinguism: the Licence has equal legal value in many languages;
- the terminology regarding intellectual property rights is conformant with European law requirements ;
- US vs EU law concerning warranty:

We have a newborn...

We provide....

- **an Information platform**
 - Website delivering news around OSS
 - Guidelines and case studies on OSS
 - Interesting events
- **a Platform for uploading and downloading**
 - Registry and repository for download, integrated search in national forges
 - Processes for up-loading
- **a Platform for collaboration**
 - Supporting collaborative cross-border projects (technically and organisationally, providing advice in legal matters)
 - Provides visibility at EU level

We provided the infrastructure...

... But we need YOUR help to « feed » OSOR with promising projects

Getting to know your needs

Workshops → to identify the specific need of different OSS communities which are using OSOR

- GIS Workshop
- eID Workshop
- Municipalities Workshop
- More to come...

Future of OSOR workshop → to identify your requirements for the next generation of the OSOR Forge

Thank you for your attention!

- For further information on other projects related to OSS visit the IDABC website - ec.europa.eu/idabc/
- For information on OSOR.eu visit www.osor.eu