**Free and Open Technologies:
A Policy Update from the
European Union**

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AGENDA

- Explain OFE and FSFE and where we work together

- Why open standards and Free/open source Software are not only different, but are perceived differently in Europe

- The key influencers in Europe and their initiatives

- Major milestones in past

- Examples from Europe

- Key initiatives and status report today

- Opportunities

- Threats

- Actions

FSFE and OFE – An Introduction

- FSFE
- Free Software for a free society
- Independent sister organisation of FSF US
- Giving Free Software a voice in policy at EU and UN level, plus community and legal issues
- OFE
- "Open, competitive choice in the ICT market"
- Not-for-profit, independent, suppliers and community
- Partnerships across Europe (inc FSFE)
- Started out with focus on accelerating OSS in business
- Moved to Open Standards and Brussels as base

OPEN STANDARDS OR FREE/OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE

- Not either/or, but AND
- Use varies widely across different European countries
- FS/OSS needs open standards in order to thrive
- Emphasis is on "open standards" for interoperability, and
- FS/OSS for shareability, reuse, etc.
- Key issues: competition, choice, freedom

THE KEY BODIES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

- European Council – Council of Ministers from member State Governments who approve strategy and legislation

- European Parliament – Voting chamber who can demand and approve initiatives and legislation

- European Commission – body of officials who undertake the bulk work, made up of a series of Directorates under policy of a Commissioner

- Member State Governments (27), and their own officials, and parliaments

- And they are all independent!

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- DG INFSO
- The lead ICT unit and responsibility for the Digital Agenda
- Research, technology, security, communications …
- DG Enterprise
- Reform of the European Standardisation Policy
- ICT standardisation separated out
- DG Competition
- Anti-trust (Microsoft case highest profile)
- Competition rulings
- DIGIT
- Internal ICT and IDABC/ISA

MAJOR MILESTONES FROM THE PAST

- European Interoperability Framework V1
- Example used around the world
- Strong definition of an Open Standard incl. "royalty free"
- Limited use to pan European projects but influence much greater
- Individual Government Policies
- Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, UK, …
- Examples
- Andalucia, Munich, French Gendarmerie, Vienna …

OPPORTUNITIES

- EIF v2
- Formally recognised via a Communication
- Compatible NIFs across whole of Europe
- Common Use of open standards
- Reform of ICT standardisation
- Recognition of fora/consortia
- Recognition of IPR differences, inc royalty free and ex ante
- Digital Agenda
- A single focus with the EC
- "Practice what we promote"
- Public Sector Procurement practice

THREATS

- EIF v2
- Heavily lobbied against, leaked versions of rewrite deleted all value, support for open standards
- "Promote what we practice"
- Eight member states have co-signed letter of objection
- Reform of ICT standardisation
- Lobbying by SDOs to protect status quo
- IPR? Protect of term "standard"
- Digital Agenda
- Loss of term "open standard"
- Internal competition
- Public Sector Procurement practice

ACTIONS

- Maintain a coordinated program across Europe
- BUT in particular,
- Focus on Open Standards,
- Not just as a term but what it delivers,
- Achieve a clear definition
- Incorporation in all EC and Member State policies
- Achieve greater USE of FS/OSS
- Deliver a strong voice

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