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FLOSSWORLD

**Free/Libre and Open Source Software:
Worldwide Impact Study**



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2

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REPORT

SECOND FLOSSWORLD WORKSHOP FOR EAST EUROPE REGION

30 and 31 March, Sofia, Bulgaria

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1. Attendees

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2. Workshop agenda

30 March, Friday	
10:00 - 10:45	Introduction 1. Introduction of the agenda and the workshop 2. Brief info on the FlossWorld project and the surveys execution – <i>Ruediger Glott (MERIT), Jorge Martin (FUNDECYT)</i> 3. Objectives of the workshop <i>Julia Velkova (ISOC.BG), Ruediger Glott (MERIT), Jorge Martin (FUNDECYT)</i>
10:45 - 11:45	Overview of the conclusions from the first Flossworld workshop <i>Julia Velkova, with the participation of Marcell Mars (MI2), Ivana Fastic-Pajk(CARNET) and Filip Stojanovski (Metamorphosis Foundation)</i>
11:45 – 12:45	Overview of the Flossworld survey results <i>Ruediger Glott</i>
12:45 – 13:30	Discussion and debate <i>Moderators: Julia Velkova, Jorge Martin, Ruediger Glott</i>
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 16:30	Presentations and discussion on the policies related to FLOSS in the Balkans region - changes since last year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation on the policy in Croatia (Marcell Mars & Ivana Fastic-Pajk) - Presentation on the policy in Macedonia

	<p>(Filip Stojanovski and Jordanka Petrussevska)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation on the policy in Bulgaria (to be confirmed) - Questions and answers, discussion
16:30	Closing of the first day
31 March (Saturday)	
10:30 - 13:30	<p>Presentations and discussions on International cooperation, projects and synergy between companies, government and the community. Evolution of the FLOSS community and further projects</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OpenTTT project (Todor Yalamov, to be confirmed) - OpenTC project (Technical University of Sofia) - Current status, evolution and problems in front of the Bulgarian Free Software Community - Mircho Mirev (Linux for Bulgarians) <p>Moderator: Julia Velkova</p>
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 16:30	<p>Education and FLOSS – presentation and discussions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. eLearning system in the Technical University of Sofia (Venci Trifonov, Technical University of Sofia) 2. SELF project (Dessi Pefeva, Internet Society Bulgaria) 3. Q&A, discussions, further directions
16:30 – 16:45	Closing and next steps

3. Report

In difference with the first FlossWorld workshop in Sofia, this time there was more local (Bulgarian) participation and less international. International participants from the Balkans region were from Croatia and Macedonia.

March, the 30th

POLICIES REGARDING FLOSS IN THE SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN REGION

Julia Velkova, ISOC (Bulgaria)

At the beginning Julia started to present the workshop. She made a brief overview of the results from the first FlossWorld regional workshop in Sofia. She presented also the main objectives of the second FlossWorld workshop which had to focus mainly on drawing out recommendations for the policy making on FLOSS in South Eastern Europe.

Ruediger Glott, MERIT, (Netherlands)

As a representative of the project coordinator – MERIT – Ruediger Glott presented the results from the FlossWorld surveys.

Issues and topics of interest.

- Survey results: The representatives from the public administration were concerned about the data in the sense of its representativeness.
- Survey results: The mostly discussed issue was that the data is such because the respondents are, in their majority, interested or involved somehow in FLOSS.
- Floss in education: There is the following contradiction: the students in the technical and It subjects usually write their graduation thesis on FLOSS or using FLOSS, but in fact it is not studied almost at all in the Higher Educational Institutes.
- The concept of “No free lunch” is better accepted in the developers communities and

- more appreciated for self realisation.
- It was demonstrated big interest in the gender and demographic issues. A topic of big discussion was the relation between the age of the people from the FLOSS community and their attitude towards women. It was confirmed that the community is mainly based on “male culture” and the growth of the community is due to its low average age. Usually, people have more attitude to learn new things at earlier age and this explains the movement which average age is 27-29 years
- According to the survey results, in India and Bulgaria, almost all skills can be learned better in the FLOSS community.
- A regional specific can be considered that in Croatia and Bulgaria the lack of formal education compensates with the practical skills.

Recommendations

- The issue looks to be about the money and the Total Cost of Ownership – for servers, not for desktops.
- The companies could pay more attention on the gender issues and consider the age of the people from the community.
- HEI institutions should pay more attention to FLOSS as many of the IT students graduate with thesis based on FLOSS and also practical skills are well evaluated – such a program could raise the efficiency and the image of the HEI.
- Focus again on the cost issue.
- The participants in the workshop considered to be useful the expansion of the project in order to get more representative data so that it could be used in front of policy makers.

Marcell Mars, MI2, Croatia

Situation in Croatia

He covered the major changes regarding FLOSS which happened in Croatia in the year between the first and the second FlossWorld workshops.

Regarding the overall situation in Croatia – Marcell mentioned the existence of many problems with privatisation and dependency of the tourism, but nevertheless, Croatia has a relatively high GDP. Croatia has big market of laptops, comparing to another countries.

As in most of the South East European countries, BSA is active to take care about licenses and statistics about piracy.

FLOSS is used in Croatia in academic networks, kernel Debian distributions, kernel resources, but not on desktop.

However, few months after the first FlossWorld workshop in Sofia (March 2006) the situation changed and there is better position to negotiate with Microsoft. Also, there are lobbies inside EU.

Five linux magazines in Croatia.

Issues and topics of interest.

- A document recommending the usage of open source software and open standards has been adopted by the government, but nothing was applied in practice.
- The document about e-administration in Croatia has been adopted with no transparency.
- Croatian community participates in hackers conferences and are organising local conferences – Ubuntu conference, Hulk conference Croatia Linux group.
- Municipalities in Croatia can not move to open source, because of absence of any technical people there – all IT people are concentrated in Zagreb, and the municipalities, if accept FLOSS, would be in rare cases, only on servers.
- TREND: There are not enough money in science, so the students in the hi-tech universities work with the teachers and after that start working for proprietary companies because the money is there.
- There are differences between the the Western and Eastern concept of “free” - for the West, the freedom is related to licenses and legal framework, but for the East – the software was also free, it should be free by default.
- The Croatian community currently counts around 100 people.

Outcomes from the discussion:

- The community in Bulgaria is going down and is splitting if comparing the trends and visitors of the last yearly organised “OpenFests” - FLOSS festivals.
- Talking about the reasons – the open culture is very active but in conflict with the open source community.
- Legal problems with the internet and filtering of content by ISPs in Bulgaria, covered under the hat of “fight against piracy”.

Recommendations

- For the legal documents to have any effect, they have to be applied in practice, so the recommendation is to think of doing the things in the real life and not only on paper.

Filip Stojanovski and Jordanka Petrushevska, Metamorphosis Foundation, Macedonia.

Situation in Macedonia.

As the Metamorphosis Foundation from Macedonia took part in the first FlossWorld event in Sofia, they also focused on the major changes regarding the policy and FLOSS in Macedonia in the last year.

As in all Balkan (SEE) countries, strategic partnerships between the government and Microsoft are fact.

At local level, similar to Croatia, most of the municipalities don't have ICT departments. The “Metamorphosis Foundation” is one of the major Macedonian organisations to engage in FOSS advocacy and awareness raising. In this relation, the organisation produced 5000 copies of FLOSS CD entitled “Get your job done” with Openoffice.org, Mozilla Firefox and Thunderbird.

Similarly to the UNDP pilot project which took place in Bulgaria for introducing FOSS at

municipality level for better e-government service, a UNDP project is now executed in Macedonia. In it, 3 municipalities are participating and the work is focused on capacity building and e-services development. The municipalities migrate to FOSS.

Recommendations and next steps:

- More capacity building is foreseen through:
 - Training of trainers (Metamorphosis with Linux Professional Institute); making a network of FOSS tech. support points; training of the public; publishing activities.
 - Making an Ubuntu tutorial (UNDP)
 - Further FOSS development and localization

Issues:

- Translation of Microsoft to Macedonian with a plugin that doesn't work fine.
- No specific policy by the government for the locales.
- Talking about translations, it was created a multidisciplinary group with languages experts but no standards.

Todor Yalamov, Applied Research and Communications Fund (Bulgaria)

Situation in Bulgaria

According to study made by the ARC Fund regarding the FLOSS usage in businesses: 2.6 % of Pc's run on GNU/Linux

The organisation supports FLOSS. Brokerage between firms with IT needs (and its identification) could be effectively met through FLOSS applications and developers via OPEN TTT Project: www.openttt.eu

According to recent research made by the ARC Fund, companies and businesses which use FLOSS are more innovative than those which do not [Innovation.BG 2007 report, <http://www.arc.online.bg/artShow.php?id=8338>]

Problems with migration.

FLOSS and public policies.

Summarizing: municipalities, universities and NGO's take lead in FLOSS implementation.

GENERAL Recommendations and issues

- FLOSS remains unclear item for the policy makers. It still needs raising more awareness among the policy makers, but not at ideological but more practical and concrete level. The policy makers need also more documents and recommendations coming but authored by known authorities.
- Interoperability is an issue in front of the Bulgarian government, but the people involved in the decision making are not very familiar with other things except the ideology behind FLOSS so more work in this regard could be done.
- In the SEE region as a whole – almost every country has documents and laws about FLOSS, but almost 0 % implementation. So, focus should be made on this, and the “EU” is still a key word to make things happen.

March, the 31th

FLOSS IN EDUCATION AND IN THE COMMUNITIES

Ivan Evgeniev (TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOFIA), OPEN TC Project

Open_Tc Open trusted computing www.opentc.net

- The project which was presented is an important technical project about Open trusted computing. Works with 7 industries partners, 3 SME, 13 Universities and research institutes from 12 countries and has 17.1 MEuro budget.
- The Technical University of Sofia participates in this project and its main goal is standardization of APIs, modules, etc. The role of the Technical University of Sofia is to do validation and verification of virtual layers.
- How to implement a new idea. Prepare low level of hardware and then install the software, if OSS is going to share market with Microsoft this point is very important.
- The project is oriented to prepare something for customers in a box.
- Russia (from St.Petersburg) is working on the kernel and the project will prepare documentation about this.

ISSUES

- The quality of the applications is at students level – no strategy for problem handling, how to implement new ideas
- No model to operate with standards
- FLOSS poses the problem with students with no experience at higher level management and strategic/long-term management and planning.
- Also, the transparency of the presented project is doubtful.

Ventzislav Trifonov, Technical University of Sofia

He presented an integrated system for e-management of the higher education institution.

The main features it provides are:

- e-learning system
- content management system
- Statistical tool
- Staff portfolio

The system is made using Debian GNU/Linux and the LAMP approach.

The two main problems with the e-learning in HEI seem to be:

- the knowledge itself
- how to evaluate its quality

Issues:

- Many materials are available online, but nobody has the time to read all documents. Solution: clear measurement of quality.
- Problem: how to estimate the quality of the materials? Solutions: 1) Hire an expert

which is impossible with the materials and 2) collect statistical data and put evaluation marks.

- Measure the quality of education with both the evaluation of teachers and students.
- Problem with the teachers is that they do not believe in the electronic system, therefore do not want to use it.
- Another problem is the lack of clear idea on the license policy for the software released from the University. What is more, even the presenter and the teachers do not realize the importance of focusing also on licenses.

Recommendation:

- Raise awareness and improve understanding among HEIs regarding importance of licensing policy

Mircho Mirev, Leader of the Bulgarian FLOSS portal and community website “Linux for Bulgarians”

He spoke about the Bulgarian FLOSS community, its development and problems.

In summary:

- the community portal “Linux for Bulgarians” exists for 7 years and currently has about 5000 unique hits per day.
- There are people acting as promoters in schools and universities.

Issues:

- How to move to the next level – having developed a good infrastructure and human capacity but no clear vision on the possibilities for self sustainability through funding.
- What is the measure of success of a FLOSS community?
- In Croatia the problem of the community is how to get the same dynamics as 2 years ago and work is done mainly among “amateurs”
- In Bulgaria there is a need to change the priority of the work done by the FLOSS community because it became more mature.

Recommendations

- It appeared that the Bulgarian community is the major and more developed in the Balkans/SEE region so it appeared the idea of cooperation between the communities.
- A first activity in this step may be the visitation of people from the Bulgarian in the hackers camp organized by MI2 in Croatia.
- Do meetings and talks between community representatives from different Balkan countries about the further process of development and evolution, as well as, knowledge exchange.
- Issue of the “what kind of future can be *promised* to the community” was discussed and consensus was reached around the idea that nothing should be promised to nobody.

Blagovest Petrov, student from primary school

He is a 14 years old student who presented a project about GNU/Linux distribution for the Bulgarian schools. The distribution is developed by him and by two friends of him (13 and 18 years old) and is based on Edubuntu.

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding governments:

- the governments are still resistant to FLOSS but there is a change in the attitude from absolutely negative to curious and negotiable. However, in order to have any success, recommendations, surveys and data has to come from renown authorities or organisations and not by the FLOSS community members or projects.
- Many legal documents are adopted regarding the usage of open standards and FLOSS, but nothing is done in practice so the recommendation is to focus on happening the things in the reality.

Regarding HEIs:

- Pay attention to the license policies
- Pay attention to the fact that FLOSS is not studied in the HEIs but the students graduate through it.

Regarding companies:

- Can consider better the gender issues and should maybe act as a bridge between the universities and the FLOSS communities in satisfying the market demand.

Regarding the FLOSS community:

- Cooperation among the Balkan communities can make them stronger and more dynamic and should be encouraged.
- Make an emphasis on international experience (from other FLOSS communities) on their growth and maturation stages. What is the process of evolution and life cycle of a FLOSS community?