



EU 2020 consultation: a new strategy to make the EU a smarter, greener social market

Contribution from the OW2 Consortium

15th January 2010

Dear President,
Dear Commissioners,

The OW2 Consortium welcomes the Commission's consultation on EU 2020. This open letter provides our perspective and recommendations for each of the three thematic objectives of the EU 2020 Strategy. They are based on our experience and the benefits our 1,200 members have achieved through collaborative and transparent practices.

In short, we urge the Commission to consider Free/Libre and Open Source Software (FLOSS) as a key enabler of the proposed EU 2020 Strategy.

First thematic objective: Creating value by basing growth on knowledge

The OW2 perspective: Free / Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS) is the result of collaboration between very diverse and heterogeneous stakeholders such as professional developers, researchers, software vendors as well as software users, and individuals.

FLOSS and the concept of open innovation upon which open source software and solutions thrive represent one of the most innovative approaches yet to knowledge creation. In this model, knowledge, know-how, tools and best practices can be developed, improved, adopted, exploited and deployed in a much faster, cheaper and easier manner than was previously possible.

This collaboration process based on openness has proven its efficiency in the software industry by producing highly valuable mission critical elements of today's ITC infrastructure from the internet to enterprise computing, from traditional IT systems to massive social networks. We can surely envision that the emerging internet of the future with its billions of users and its trillions of objects, will accelerate this trend.

Openness is being used as a matrix in many different domains such as research publication / journals with open access that is essential to science dissemination, peer review and progress, and also open science, open innovation and open education.

Recommendation #1: *Acknowledge the intrinsic value of FLOSS as a public knowledge asset (or as a 'knowledge commons'), and consider all means to ensure its sustainable development.*

Second thematic objective: Empowering people in inclusive societies

The OW2 perspective: OW2 agrees that supporting Free / Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS), which enables transparent, fair and sustainable access to the information society for everyone, is a step in guaranteeing the fundamental right of European Union citizens to digital inclusion.

The European Union is already investigating access to broadband technologies through initiatives such as the Beacon project (http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp6/ssp/beacon_en.htm) which will conclude in 2010. OW2 recommends that the European Commission also, in tandem, consider and evaluate how the adoption and promotion of FLOSS will greatly assist in enhancing digital inclusion.

Improving access to skills and services through the use of FLOSS, will give all European Citizens the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the European Union Knowledge Economy.

By promoting openness, collaboration and participation, the European Commission will have a simple, enthusiastic and modern message for the future of Europe and Europeans, for the scientific community, for innovative start-ups and, finally, for all young Europeans looking to participate in the knowledge markets and who will be able to find employment with these skills and share the passion and enthusiasm to contribute towards a common goal.

Recommendation #2: Leverage the education system to foster "Digital Citizenship" by promoting teaching of both IT, using FLOSS for exercises and contributions, and openness, exemplified by FLOSS collaborative and transparent practices.

Third thematic objective: Creating a competitive, connected and greener economy

The OW2 perspective: OW2 would like to ask the European Commission to consider the concept of a "European Union Common Cloud" (EUCC). The EUCC is an advanced digital infrastructure with innovative technologies providing privacy, security, resilience and semantic technologies.

OW2 believes such an ambitious infrastructure platform would guarantee the connectivity, ubiquity and availability of services required by Public Administrations, Governments, Citizens, Industry and Consumers to compete both in local and global markets.

"Cloud" infrastructures are green because they are optimised for just-enough computing needs i.e. services can be enabled and disabled and provided on-demand so as to control the amount of energy required to deploy infrastructure services.

In developing the EUCC, it is vital that the European Union recognize the many benefits as well as the inherent savings of a FLOSS procurement strategy fostering interoperability and open standards. Further more, this will nourish the rich, diverse and widely spread European FLOSS business ecosystem (software companies, system integrators, consultants, software-as-a-service providers, lawyers, hardware integrators, mobile device vendors, telcos, etc.) which makes Europe a unique stakeholder for innovation in this domain

Recommendation #3: European Commission to drive the establishment of a European Union Common Cloud: an advanced ubiquitous European Union digital infrastructure based on a FLOSS procurement strategy and leveraging the European FLOSS business ecosystem,

On behalf of the OW2 members we thank you for the opportunity to share our vision and we sincerely hope that the Commission will find our response a valuable contribution to the consultation process. We are and will remain a committed partner to the European Union and invite the Commission to call upon us should we be able to be of any further service.

OW2 Consortium
15th January 2010



Background: OW2

OW2 is an international open source community of industry and academic players dedicated to developing a code base of open source infrastructure software focusing on middleware and increasingly on generic applications. Established in 2007, OW2 has grown into a global community of 70 companies and academic organizations plus 1200 individual members working on over 80 open source projects. OW2 is currently developing its local chapters in China, Europe, Brazil and is preparing to set up its North America Local Chapter in 2010.

Fundamentally open source, open standards and interoperability are part of the DNA of OW2's ecosystem. Thanks to open standards, talented entrepreneurs can develop innovative and useful software on top of open platforms and open services. Thanks to open standards, brilliant researchers can develop new paradigms interacting openly with the findings of their peers. And moreover industry and universities can develop new projects which will benefit science, industry and society. Finally, thanks to open standards, we have been able to develop common projects and establish fruitful relationships with researchers, public administrations and entrepreneurs from China, Brazil, India and USA.

Similar to many other open source projects today OW2's software is used significantly in public administration, for example: SpagoBI in Italian Ministry of Health, eXo portal at Ministry of Finance in Belgium, PEtALS in French ACCOSS (Social Security), JOnAS in French Ministry of Interior and State of Geneva, BonitaSoft in Government of the Canary Islands.