



Open Source Observatory Policy Factsheet

France

1 General Information

France shows a high level of efforts regarding the use of open source software in public administrations at all levels of governance. The main coordinator of these efforts is Etalab's Free software unit. There are many initiatives at local and regional levels as local governments and administrative bodies heavily rely on the use of open source. France's open Source work is also represented internationally through the "Software Heritage" project, the "European Initiative for Digital Commons" and the "BlueHats" group.

2 Actors

POLICY MAKERS

Etalab's Free Software Unit, a department of DINUM, is responsible for open source policy and leads the Free Software and Digital Commons Action Plan, both were created in 2021. Etalab has also contributed to the Digital Republic Bill (Loi pour une République Numérique), which created the 'open by default' principle within the government by specifying which licences can be used for administrative documents.

STRATEGIC PLAYER

The Free Software Council: As part of its free and open source software mission, in 2022 DINUM formed a council whose membership combines public agents from administrations committed to the use and development of free software as well as representatives of associations and foundations which in turn represent citizens, local authorities and companies. It is a space for DINUM and members to share expertise which can later support DINUM in formulating its strategies.

3 Policy and Legal Framework

Open Source Software and Digital Commons Action Plan (2021)

The plan was conceived by the Ministry of Transformation and the Public Service following the circular of April 2021. This plan is led by the newly created free software unit and aims at fostering the opening of source code in public administrations.

Declaration calling for a European Initiative for Digital Common (2022)

French Presidency of the Council of the EU called for a renewed effort on the support of open source software and digital commons. It also announced the establishment of a working group of European Member States to discuss how to support digital commons.



4 Open Source Software Initiatives

Report "For a public policy on data, algorithms and source code"

Commissioned by the Prime Minister, this report was compiled by the member of parliament Eric Bothorel. The report is an extensive analysis on openness in public policy and, among others, it recommends the creation of an OSPO (Open Source Programme Office) in DINUM.

Label Territoire Numérique Libre

Free Digital Territory Label rewards cities and public bodies that pursue the use of free and open source collaborative solutions for their administration. This ADULLACT's initiative recognises five different levels of open source integration and is based on the administration's pooling of resources, use of public money, accessibility of the solutions and participation in the open source ecosystem.

BlueHats community

DINUM formed the "BlueHats" Free Software community to raise awareness of OSS solutions across the French public administration. It is composed of open source users from the administration. The team organised several trainings for ministries and public agencies.

Interdepartmental open source software platform (SILL)

A free software catalogue for public administrations originally maintained by a group of public servants using open source, it is now being hosted and maintained by Etalab's Free Software Unit. The catalogue is maintained collaboratively with the SILL referents.