



DG DIGIT

Unit.D2 (Interoperability Unit)

# Open Source Software Country Intelligence Report South Korea 2021

This research was carried out for the ISA2 Programme by Wavestone’s European Services team. This report was enriched with the kind contribution of NIPA (National IT Industry Promotion Agency).



**Authors (연구저자)**

Vivien Devenyi (vivien.devenyi@wavestone.com)

Debora Di Giacomo (debora.digiacomio@wavestone.com)

Corinna Vetter

**Contact us (연락처)**



EU-OSOR@ec.europa.eu



<https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/open-source-observatory-osor>



@OSOReu

**Disclaimer**

The information and views set out in this study are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. This study has been carried out for information and consultation purposes only. It has not been adopted and should not be regarded as representative of the views of Commission staff. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on the European Commission’s behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© European Union, 2021



The reuse policy of the European Commission is implemented by the Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39). Except otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated. For any use or reproduction of photos or other material that is not owned by the EU, permission must be sought directly from the copyright holders.

*Updated in August 2021*

# Table of Contents

<b>SOUTH KOREA .....</b>	<b>3</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	3
ACTORS .....	3
POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK .....	5
OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE INITIATIVES .....	5

# South Korea

## Executive Summary

---

In South Korea, the Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT) is responsible for science and technology innovation policies and for the implementation of open source software (OSS) in public administration. In order to strengthen the competitiveness of the IT industry in Korea and to promote OSS use, MSIT has founded the National IT-Industry Promotion Agency (NIPA). NIPA supports the Korean IT industry through, for example, research and the organisation of international cooperation.

Part of the Software Promotion Act revised in 2020 and the OSS activation policy published in 2014 are major policies for the introduction and activation of OSS in the public sector in Korea.

The Open Source Software Promotion Team, a NIPA-led team, is responsible for the promotion of OSS in the country and heads many different activities such as operating the OSS centre Open Up and supports OSS developers, communities and corporations. It also hosts an annual conference and OSS Challenge, a competition centred on OSS.

## Actors

---

This section presents the policy makers who are active in digitalisation efforts and influence the status of open source in public sector, as well as the main strategic players that work together with the government at all levels to raise awareness on OSS.

### *Policy makers*

- The Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT)<sup>1</sup> is responsible for research and development, information and communication as well as science and technology innovation policies. Furthermore, MSIT is responsible for the IT infrastructure for the implementation of OSS in the Korean public administration.
- The National IT-Industry Promotion Agency (NIPA)<sup>2</sup>, together with MSIT, aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the IT industry in Korea by providing assistance. NIPA has a team dedicated to OSS promotion to support policy establishment, and strives to create an OSS ecosystem by supporting OSS developers, companies, and communities.
- The Software Policy & Research Institute (SPRI)<sup>3</sup> was established in 2014 for South Korean software policy research. OSS research is also included in the policy research being carried out.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.msit.go.kr/index.do>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nipa.kr/eng/contents.do?key=239>

<sup>3</sup> <https://spri.kr/>

### *Strategic players*

- The Open Source Software Promotion Team is a part of NIPA<sup>4</sup> and organises a support system for the open source developers and communities to provide support for open source education and community activities. The Team also helps by encouraging the competency and governance of the Korean open source industries as well as the public relations that concern the interest of open source in South Korea. The OSS Promotion Team also coordinates the following activities:
  - The Open Up - Open Software Support Centre<sup>5</sup> was founded in 2020 (by integrating the existing OSS Competency Plaza and Korea Open Source Software Developers Lab) and is a joint initiative by MSIT and NIPA. Open Up aims to support OSS developers, communities and companies using OSS solutions. In particular, the OSS Contribution Academy is helping developers to strengthen their OSS capabilities. Open Up also facilitates learning opportunities for the public sector and consults on how to introduce the use of OSS. The centre is also building-up expertise on licensing issues and encourages public organisations to switch to using open source. Finally, Open Up provides a dedicated space for OSS developers and the community, as well as a space for meetings and seminars free of charge.
- The Korea Open Software Activation Forum (KOPF)<sup>6</sup> was founded in 2007 as a follow-up to the cooperation agreement of the Korea-China-Japan IT ministerial talks. It is an expert forum staffed with experts from all three countries.<sup>7</sup> KOPF aims to promote domestic open software policy by operating as a forum for private experts from industry, academia, and research institutes for information exchange.
- The Korea Open Source Software Association (KOSSA)<sup>8</sup> is a foundation established in 2006 to help Korean companies engage in open source-related activities. The association has about 100 member companies and promotes OSS in education.

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nipa.kr/eng/contents.do?key=239>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.oss.kr/>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.oss.kr/kopf\\_background](https://www.oss.kr/kopf_background)

<sup>7</sup> <http://english.cctv.com/20090924/103373.shtml>

<sup>8</sup> <http://kossa.kr/>

## Policy and legal framework

---

This section summarises the main open source software related policies and legal acts of the last ten years, including the first known milestone in this domain. The list is presented in a chronological order, starting from the most recent milestone.

- In 2020, the South Korean government amended the Software Promotion Act<sup>9</sup> to make efforts to distribute OSS. Article 25 of the Act states that when conducting national research and development projects in the field of software, the source code as well as the final results of the projects (software) should be disclosed openly.
- The Open Source Software Invigoration Plan of 2014<sup>10</sup> is South Korea's overarching OSS promotion policy. The South Korean government intends to increase its use of OSS in order to decrease its dependence on proprietary software solutions. The plan involves switching to open standards such as HTML5, which replaces a ubiquitous proprietary web content framework and thus helps rid e-government services of lock-in by its IT vendors. The plan also foresees a gradual increase in alternative operating systems, web browsers, and other software solutions. South Korea intends to increase its participation in global projects and to grow its domestic communities of OSS developers.

## Open source software initiatives

---

This section presents an overview of the main open source software related initiatives in South Korea. The list is presented in a chronological order, starting with the most recent initiative.

- The below initiatives stem from the Open Source Software Promotion Team, led by NIPA<sup>11</sup>:
  - OSS R&D, 2019: Develop and distribute open source R&D results in which major research institutes and companies participate.
  - OSS Conference, 2018: The OSS Conference is held every year to share and present the activities of OSS developers, companies, and communities in Korea. It is a representative OSS conference in Korea along with the OSS conference held by Samsung Electronics.
  - OSS Contributor Support, 2017: Education and activities are supported so that Korean developers can participate and contribute to OSS.

---

<sup>9</sup>

<https://www.law.go.kr/%EB%B2%95%EB%A0%B9/%EC%86%8C%ED%94%84%ED%8A%B8%EC%9B%A8%EC%96%B4%EC%82%B0%EC%97%85%EC%A7%84%ED%9D%A5%EB%B2%95>

<sup>10</sup> <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/open-source-observatory-osor/news/south-korean-government-sw>

<https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/open-source-observatory-osor/news/open-source-crucial-cut>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nipa.kr/eng/contents.do?key=239>

- OSS Compliance support, 2015: OSS licence verification and consulting support are provided so that Korean companies and developers can use open source properly.
- Korea-China-Japan Innovation Steering Board (Innovation Committee), 2010<sup>12</sup>: Aims to promote new businesses through the discovery of a new Northeast Asian (Korea-China-Japan) cooperation agenda, strengthen commercialisation, and expand the venue for business exchanges.
- OSS World Challenge, 2006<sup>13</sup>: South Korea's largest OSS competition, organised by NIPA. The competition is aimed at students and the general public in two separate sections. The goals are to share basic concepts and understanding of OSS. Lectures on essential elements for development such as GitHub are given to competitors. Competitors also experience the entire process of OSS development through development experiences such as project planning, development, implementation, and collaboration, functional tests, and licence verification.

---

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.oss.kr/kopf\\_background](https://www.oss.kr/kopf_background)

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.oss.kr/dev\\_competition](https://www.oss.kr/dev_competition)

