



DG DIGIT

Unit.B2 (Interoperability Unit)

# Open Source Software Country Intelligence Report

Poland

2023

The initial research was carried out for the ISA2 Programme by Wavestone’s European Services team. This is an updated version of this report by OpenForum Europe, carried out for the Interoperable Europe under the Digital Europe Programme. The report provides an overview of open source software (OSS) in Poland as of March 2023. This report is based on publicly available information that was gathered through desk research and dedicated interviews with Polish civil society stakeholders.



The logo for Wavestone, with the word 'WAVESTONE' in a bold, purple, sans-serif font.

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*Updated in March 2023*

# Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
ACTORS	3
POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK	4
OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE INITIATIVES	5

# Poland

## Executive Summary

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While there are no governmental actors directly working to promote the use of open source software (OSS) in Poland, there are some initiatives embracing OSS in the country. With regard to policies related to OSS, the use of open standards and specifications in IT is recognised in the Information Technology Development Act (ITDA), adopted in 2005 and revised in 2019. The Ministry of Digital Affairs was reorganised in 2020 and did not issue any official documents on OSS.

Although the open source community in Poland had periods of increased activity, especially in the early 2010s, most of the public sector involvement with open source is scattered, and the government has not promoted its use in recent years. The Polish government has worked on the reuse of public sector information through the implementation of the Open Data Directive. While the government does not actively promote open source solutions, its digital infrastructure still allows for its use in certain areas.

## Actors

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This section presents the key governmental bodies responsible for setting OSS policies and the main strategic players that work together with the government at all levels to raise awareness on OSS.

### *Policy makers*

- There is no dedicated body in the public sector responsible for the regulation, development, or promotion of open source in the public sector. Until 2020, the Ministry of Digital Affairs' mandate covered the use of information technologies in the public sector. Since the reorganisation of October 2020, the Ministry of Digital Affairs has been integrated into the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister held the position of the Minister for Digital Affairs.<sup>12</sup> On 6 April 2023 a new Minister for Digital Affairs, Janusz Cieszyński, was announced but no official position on open source or similar matters has been published. The Department of State Information Architecture and four plenipotentiaries oversee public administration digitalisation on the operational level, but similarly, do not have an official position on OSS.<sup>34</sup>
- The development and implementation of IT projects in the public sector is overseen by Poland's Centre of Information Technology which operates under the mandate of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 7 października 2020 r. w sprawie zniesienia Ministerstwa Cyfryzacji](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Digital Affairs – Chancellery of the Prime Minister - Gov.pl website](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Minister's plenipotentiaries - Digital Affairs – Chancellery of the Prime Minister - Gov.pl website](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Department of State Information Architecture - Digital Affairs – Chancellery of the Prime Minister - Gov.pl website](#)

<sup>5</sup> [O nas | Portal Informacyjny Centralnego Ośrodka Informatyki](#)

### Strategic players

- Internet Society Poland Charter is a civil society organisation originally founded in 2000.<sup>6</sup> Its activities stopped in 2008, but the association was re-established in 2020.<sup>7</sup> It was created with a core mission to build and support the creation of the Internet as an open-to-all, secure and trustworthy communication network. Among its objectives are also promoting open standards, working on regulations relevant to the Internet, cybersecurity and information society and promoting an open model of decision-making.
- The Polish Free Software Advocacy Group FWIOO (Fundacja Wolnego i Otwartego Oprogramowania) was an active advocate for the uptake of OSS in Poland founded in 2007.<sup>8</sup> It was active until 2016.<sup>9</sup> The association published many reports and guidelines related to public procurement and implementation of open source software.<sup>10</sup> Among its main projects, the FWIOO conducted educational programs, monitored public tenders for IT and participated in an open innovation collaboration platform.<sup>11</sup>

## Policy and legal framework

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

- POPC Support<sup>12</sup> (Program Operacyjny Polska Cyfrowa - Operational Program Digital Poland) published a report on the use of open source software in comparison to the use of proprietary software in public administrations.<sup>13</sup> Published in 2022, the report privileges proprietary software over open source stating that sharing the source code of public administration solutions is a threat to cybersecurity. It recommends open source solutions only when they are ready to use and don't need further development or implementation.
- Law of 11 August 2021 on open data and reuse of public sector information<sup>14</sup>: This law is a transposition of the Open Data Directive, calling for the development of a national open data portal.<sup>15</sup> It also states that agencies which are part of the open data program can share or open up source code or elements of software developed with public funding.
- A working group on openness of publicly funded data and software was convened by the Ministry of Digital Affairs for the 2016–2018 term of the Digitalisation Council which provides

<sup>6</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20071211204259/http://www.isoc.org.pl/2000/zalozyciele>

<sup>7</sup> <https://internetsocietypoland.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/isoc-statute-final-1-9-2020.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [PL: Interior ministry supports open source group's procurement project](#)

<sup>9</sup> [FWIOO](#)

<sup>10</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20180108145017/https://fwioo.pl/section/publikacje/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20180108145000/https://fwioo.pl/section/nasze-projekty/>

<sup>12</sup> [Centralny Ośrodek Informatyki - POPC Wsparcie - Portal gov.pl](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Praktyczne poradniki - Centralny Ośrodek Informatyki – POPC Wsparcie - Portal Gov.pl](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Ustawa z dnia 11 sierpnia 2021 r. o otwartych danych i ponownym wykorzystywaniu informacji sektora publicznego](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Dane.gov.pl](#)

analysis and advice on digitalisation related topics.<sup>16,17</sup> This working group conducted consultations on open licences for software developed for public administrations and issued a set of recommendations on procuring and using open source software in public administrations. The outputs produced by the group were never published nor followed by the government.<sup>18</sup> This working group was not renewed in the subsequent term of the Digitalisation Council.

- In 2016, the Polish Government adopted PZIP, the National Integrated Informatisation programme (Program Zintegrowanej Informatyzacji Państwa).<sup>19</sup> With PZIP, the Ministry of Digitalisation aimed to create an efficient state information system in Poland. The programme states that Poland would create an open source electronic documentation management system. The Ministry hoped that by building the system on OSS, it would encourage private and public entities to contribute to its creation and would allow them to create a Polish eGovernment.<sup>20</sup> IT analysis was conducted, but the 2023 version of the platform is not open source.<sup>21 22</sup>

## Open source software initiatives

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

- E-Health Centre Strategy (Strategia Centrum e-Zdrowia), 2023: The e-Health Centre is a state budget unit established by the Minister of Health.<sup>23</sup> It creates and manages IT services for the healthcare sector and recently adopted the strategy for 2023-2027 which calls for the unification of solutions and a preference for open-source solutions to avoid duplication of efforts.<sup>24</sup>
- Social Insurance Institution (Zakład Ubezpieczeń Społecznych, ZUS), 2020<sup>25</sup>: The Social Insurance Institution signed an agreement with Linux Polska for the provision of an integrated server virtualisation solution with a 3-year support service. The solution would allow ZUS to develop and optimise its IT systems.
- Poland's Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture (Agencja Restrukturyzacji i Modernizacji Rolnictwa, ARMA), 2019<sup>26</sup>: The ARMA partnered with the company Red Hat and

<sup>16</sup> [Rada do Spraw Cyfryzacji - Cyfryzacja KPRM - Portal Gov.pl](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Zespół roboczy 3: Otwartość danych i oprogramowania finansowanego ze środków publicznych - Cyfryzacja KPRM](#)

<sup>18</sup> Blind, K.; Böhm, M., Grzegorzewska, P., Katz, A., Muto, S., Pätsch, S., Schubert, T. (2021). The impact of Open Source Software and Hardware on technological independence, competitiveness and innovation in the EU economy, Final Study Report. Brussels.

<sup>19</sup> [Strategia Informatyzacji Państwa | Ministerstwo Cyfryzacji](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Strategia Informatyzacji Państwa | Ministerstwo Cyfryzacji](#)

<sup>21</sup> [GitHub - Ministerstwo-Cyfryzacji/ezd-analizy-it](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Jednolity system EZD PUW](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Strategia Centrum e-Zdrowia na lata 2023-2027](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Strategia CeZ na lata 2023-2027 Page 47](#)

<sup>25</sup> [ZUS wybrał nową platformę do wirtualizacji od Linux Polska](#)

<sup>26</sup> [Polish agricultural agency builds online apps with Red Hat OpenShift](#)

Linux Polska to modernise the process for farmers to apply for EU funds. The developed solution is based on Red Hat's Kubernetes container and its Enterprise Linux.

- Open Source Day, 2020<sup>27</sup>: Open Source Day was a conference held from 2008 to 2020. It focused on the promotion of open source software in all parts of society and also featured panels and discussions of the use of open source software in public administration. The latest editions were held under the patronage of the former Ministry of Digitalisation.
- Polish National Digital Archive Hackathon, 2019<sup>28</sup>: The Polish National Digital Archive develops its Integrated Archive Information System as open source.<sup>29</sup> On 20-21 September 2019, the Archive organised a first-of-its-kind hackathon in Poland, which brought participants together to work on the digital archival resources of the National Digital Archive and the National Film Archive–Audiovisual Institute.
- Linux for Poland's Ministry of Justice, 2019<sup>30</sup>: Poland's Ministry of Justice signed a contract for the supply of the OSS SuSE Linux and training on its use, as well as a 4-year support service. More specifically, the Ministry of Justice uses the SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and SUSE Manager subscription for applications from the SAP family.
- Random Case Assignment System Request, 2017<sup>31</sup>: The case was started by the Watchdog Polska Civic Network on 30 October 2017, asking the Ministry of Justice to publicly share the source code of the Random Case Allocation System in common courts, which had been refused by the Ministry. After multiple requests the Supreme Administrative court recognised that the algorithm should be open.<sup>32</sup> In response, the Minister's plenipotentiary denied sharing the source code due to potential cybersecurity threats. The competent court overruled this argument and the case has not been solved as of 2023.<sup>33</sup>
- Central Source Code Repository, 2016<sup>34</sup>: In 2016, the Polish Government announced its intention to create a central source code repository with the aim of facilitating the sharing and reuse of ICT solutions. The development of this open source government document management system was announced as part of the above-mentioned PZIP programme but has not been implemented.
- Gdańsk Operational Programs 2023, 2016<sup>35</sup>: The city of Gdańsk published its operational programme in 2016. It lists open source as an important element of the city's strategy to become a smart city. The program calls for a preference for open source solutions where

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<sup>27</sup> [Open Source Day 2019](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Hack w Archiwum – Hackathon Archiwalny NAC!](#)

<sup>29</sup> [ZoSIA | NAC](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości wybrało rozwiązania Suse z oferty Linux Polska](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Request Random Case Assignment 2017](#)

<sup>32</sup> [III OSK 836/21 - Wyrok NSA](#)

<sup>33</sup> [Sąd uchyla decyzję ministra, który odmawia podania kodu do systemu losowego przydziału spraw](#)

<sup>34</sup> [Poland to start a central sou... | Joinup](#)

<sup>35</sup> [Gdańsk Operational Programmes 2023 - download](#)

possible. Gdańsk has been the first Polish city to include open source as a part of their digital strategy.<sup>36</sup>

- Open Source Animal Identification and Tracking System, 2015<sup>37</sup>: In 2015, Poland's Agency for the Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture (ARMA) modernised its animal identification and tracking system. The solution uses Zabbix,<sup>38</sup> an OSS solution for IT security monitoring, and JAVA,<sup>5</sup> an open source programming language.
- Open Source at Warsaw's University Hospital, 2014<sup>39</sup>: OSS has been used by Poland's University Hospital since 2014. The institution's integrated medical system is based completely on OSS. The main benefit of such an approach is that it is easier to implement, improve, build and adapt solutions given the highly customisable nature of the software.
- MOST Knowledge, or Multidisciplinary Open Knowledge Transfer System (MOST Wiedzy), 2014<sup>40</sup>: MOST Knowledge is a platform regrouping various services and data from Gdańsk University. It does so through an open API designed with Nginx.<sup>41</sup>
- Roadmap for open government in Poland, 2011<sup>42</sup>: This report produced by Centrum Cyfrowe, a civil society organisation,<sup>43</sup> explored the possibility of an open government in Poland. It addresses the question of open source and shows its importance in government transparency.
- Study on the use of free and open source software in government public administration, 2010<sup>44</sup>: The main objective of the study was a comprehensive diagnosis of the use of IT tools in government public administration as assessed by the employees of the IT departments of these offices, with particular emphasis on free and open source software. It was conducted by FWIOO and Pentor research international.

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<sup>36</sup> [Open Source Software Adoption in the Polish City of Gdańsk | Joinup](#)

<sup>37</sup> [Open source part of Poland's... | Joinup](#)

<sup>38</sup> [Zabbix](#)

<sup>39</sup> [Open source core of Warsaw ho... | Joinup](#)

<sup>40</sup> [Cele projektu | Politechnika Gdańska](#)

<sup>41</sup> [REST API MOST Wiedzy - Bridge of Knowledge](#)

<sup>42</sup> [Mapa drogowa otwartego rządu w Polsce - Centrum Cyfrowe](#)

<sup>43</sup> [Misja i cele strategiczne - Centrum Cyfrowe](#)

<sup>44</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20170707223253/https://fwioo.pl/article/56/wykorzystanie-wolnego-i-otwartego-oprogramowania>



