



13 JUNE 2023

Policy & Strategy Aspects of OSS in Public Administration

Second of three OSOR webinars

interoperable
europe



OSOR's tools to promote Open Source and inform its users:



Open Source News

Weekly updated articles on the latest developments in the use of Open Source in public administration. OSOR also publishes a **monthly newsletter**.



Knowledge Centre

Reports, guidelines, research papers, case studies and repositories useful for public administration—and for all users of Open Source.



Interactive Map

Find the latest legal developments and initiatives around Open Source from all EU Member States and beyond.



Workshops, webinars, networking

Today's webinar is part of a series of events to document the needs of the public sector, to share solutions, and to discuss how to make progress.



Country Intelligence Reports and Factsheets

01

Reports on the Open Source situation in 45 countries

Covering all EU Member States as well as third countries.

02

Legal aspects and initiatives

Reports on legal frameworks, Open Source actors and initiatives.

03

Concise option

Each report is also available as simplified factsheet, gathering the most important information.





Open Source Strategies: Mapping the Public Sector's Needs

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Open Source
Observatory

Public and Private Sector Expert Workshop 22 May



Discussion angles:

- 0 EU & International
- 0 General (unique advantages)
- 0 Local
- 0 Project

01

Participating in communities

02

Reuse and releasing of solutions

03

Selecting FOSS & user acceptance

04

Finding FOSS



EU & International

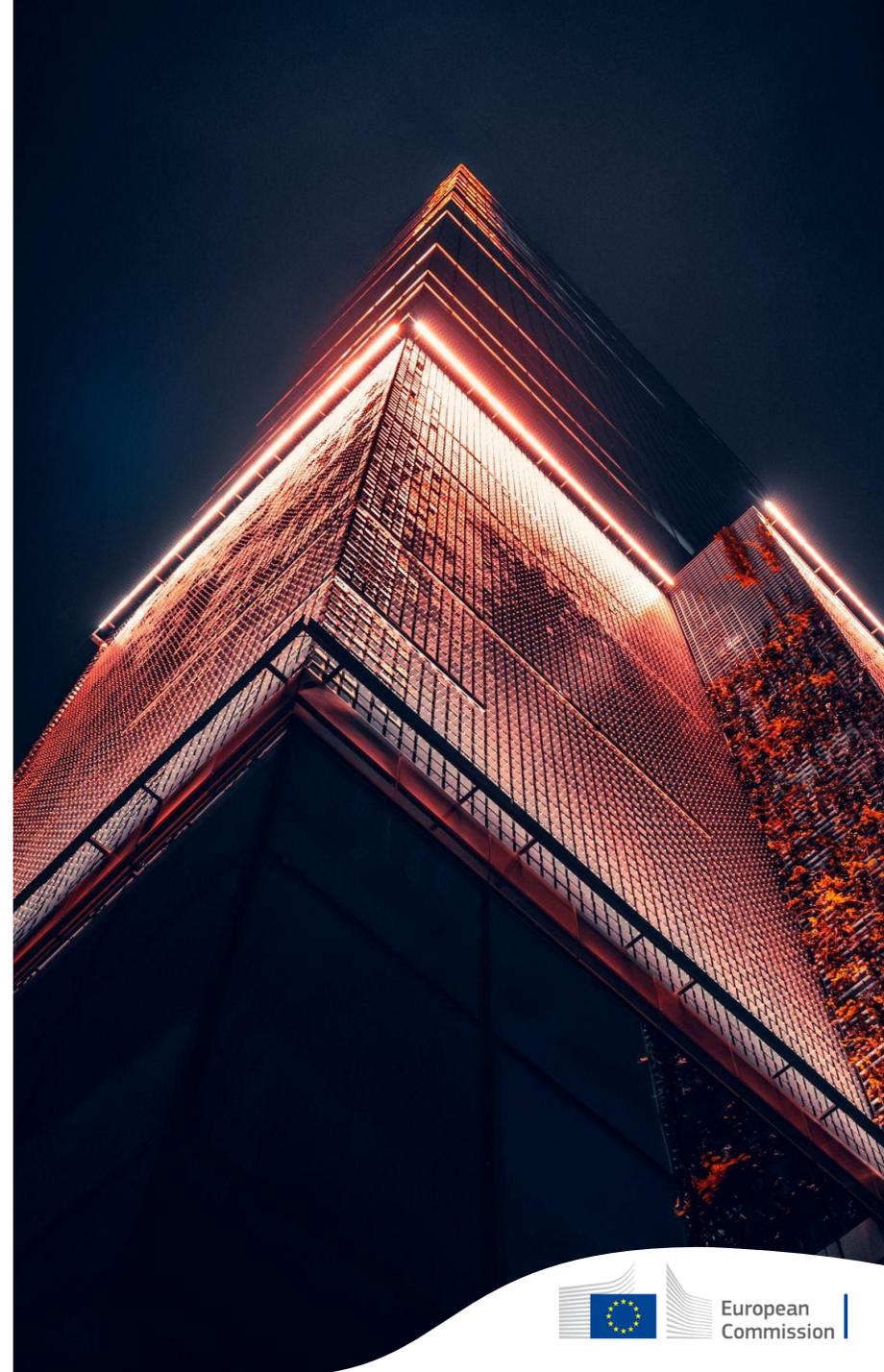
- List of core FOSS packages, to encourage standardising
 - Could be a form of certification
 - Ensure long-term support exists
- List of core digital services:
 - Ensure there's FOSS for these
 - Document the FOSS that exists for these
- Organising conferences for information sharing

Information sharing

- In-person meetings
- More discussion forums, and a European one (single, for scale)
- Coordinate on which events to go to
- Use the same code repositories
- When using FOSS, announce it somewhere. Give some way for people to know which packages you're using
- Make managers know what FOSS you're using, so the the importance isn't hidden

Catalogues

- Who's using it - geographic spread
- Project health
 - Backing / funding
 - Activity levels
- Community health
 - Number of contributors
 - Do key contributors have financial backing?
- Coding standards
- Licences (using [tools](#) such as ClearlyDefined)
- Service providers
- Long term support possibilities
- Software Dependencies, useful skills
- Compatibility with existing software



Catalogues 2/3

Particular contribution of the public sector:

- Testimonials
- Who can be contacted about their experience with the software
- Share legal analyses
- Information gathered during procurement - coordinating what's needed

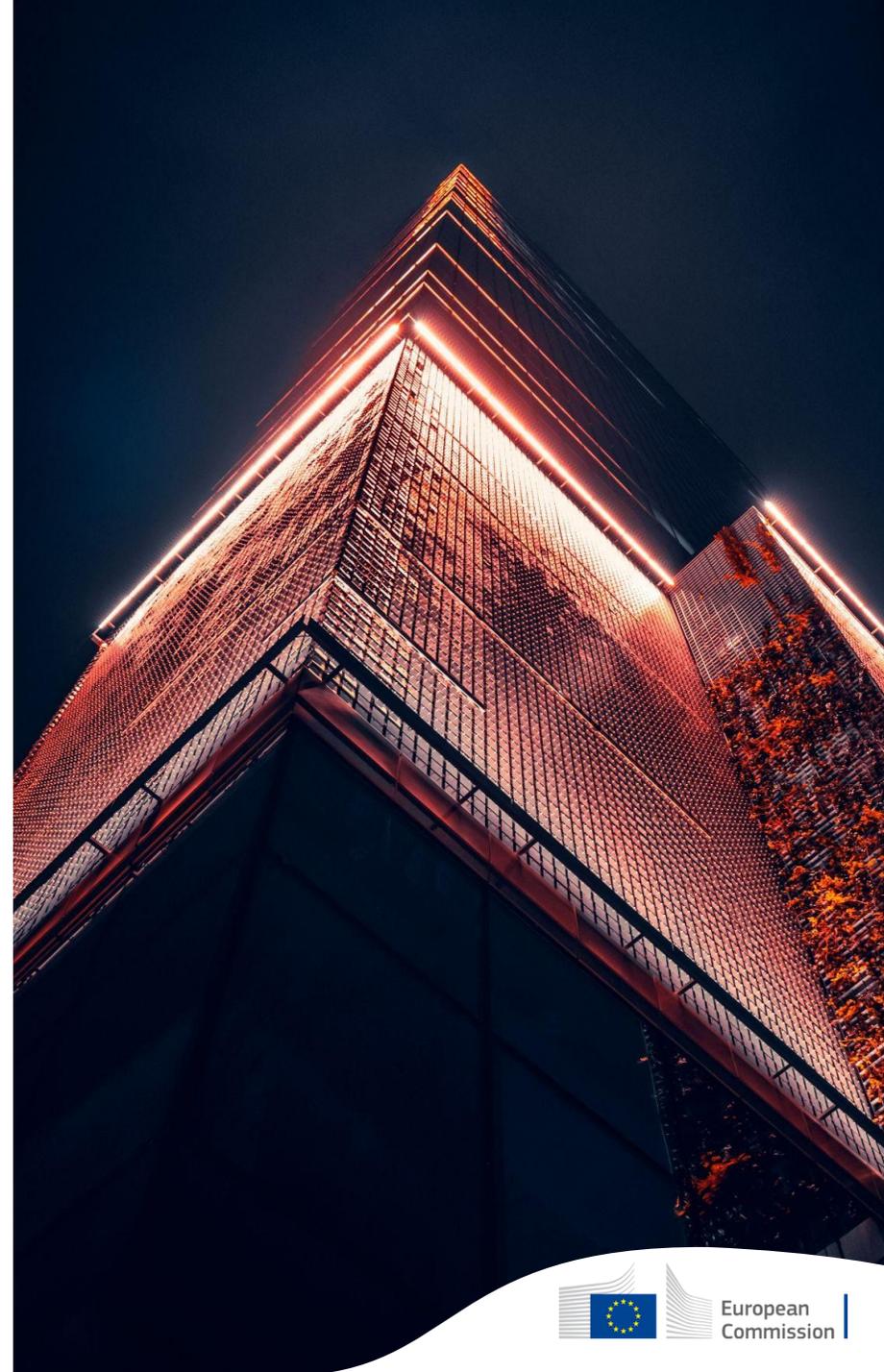
Catalogues 3/3

Alternative forms

- "Catalogue of needs" - pointing to solutions and providers
- Business directory
- Business certification - which forms a kind of directory

No immediate merge

- Different catalogues currently cater for different audiences or use cases
- People building or maintaining them may have a mandate that is specific to that catalogue
- If a catalogue is already in use, the maintainers presumably have to keep it working
- Agreeing a maintenance policy and system takes work

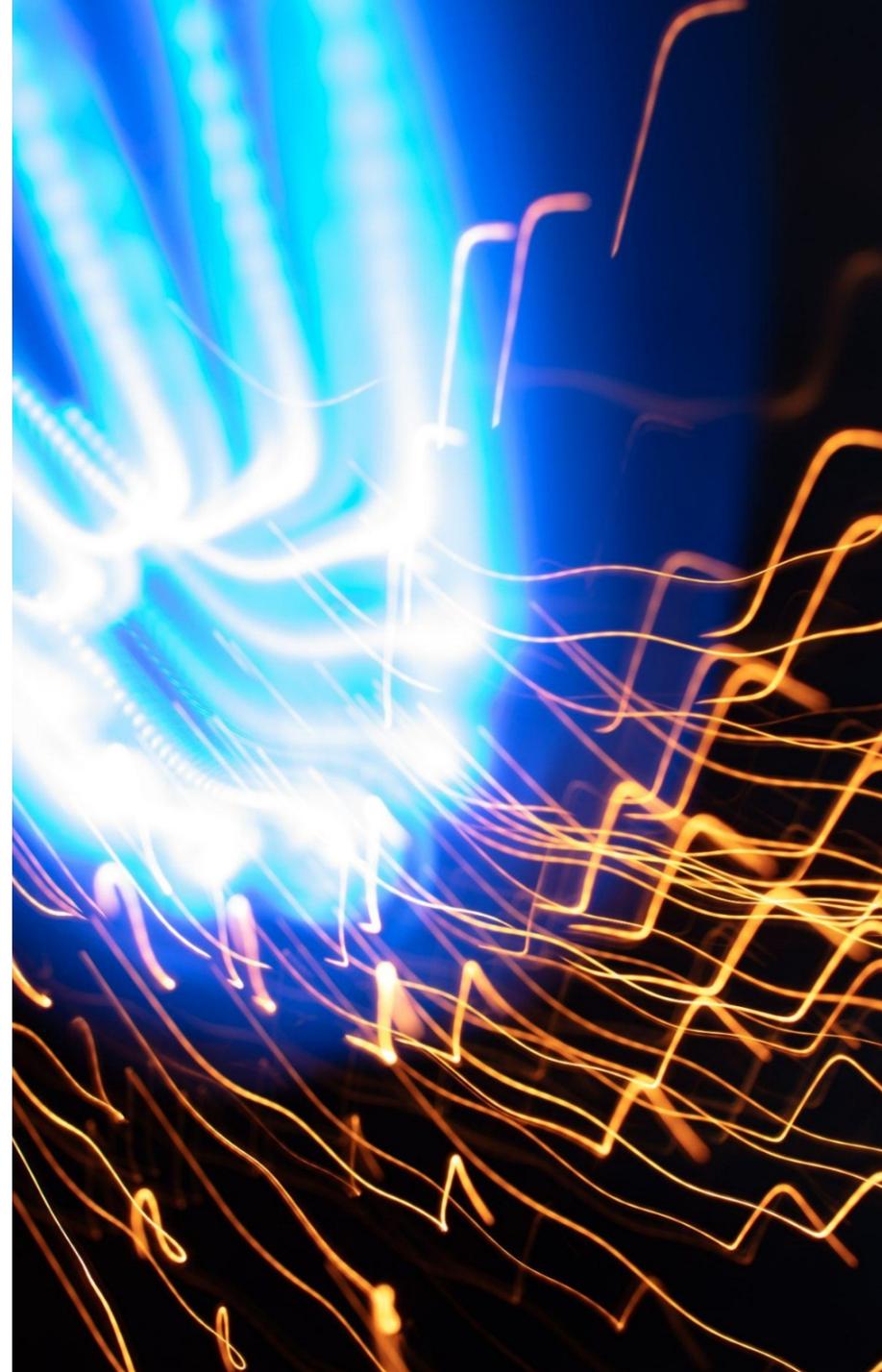


Unique advantages

- Transparency & security audits
 - Include the national security bodies in this work
- Ability to gain know-how
- Protection against lock-in
 - Vendor lock-in needs to be seen as a security issue:
losing access to sensitive or essential data
 - Lack of FOSS skills also creates lock-in; need training and certification
- Resilience - if geopolitics or regulation blocks trade with current provider
- Digital sovereignty
- Control your data
- You can choose to support local business
- Modify - from simple translation to complex additions
- Be part of the software's community. Input to roadmaps.

Local level: Tools and communities

- Software development
 - Do tools for “credential leaks” protection work?
 - Software design: separation of software and configuration
 - There are many repositories now. Do people know what can go there. Any good for international work?
- Community interaction
 - Join existing projects
 - Use the same code repositories



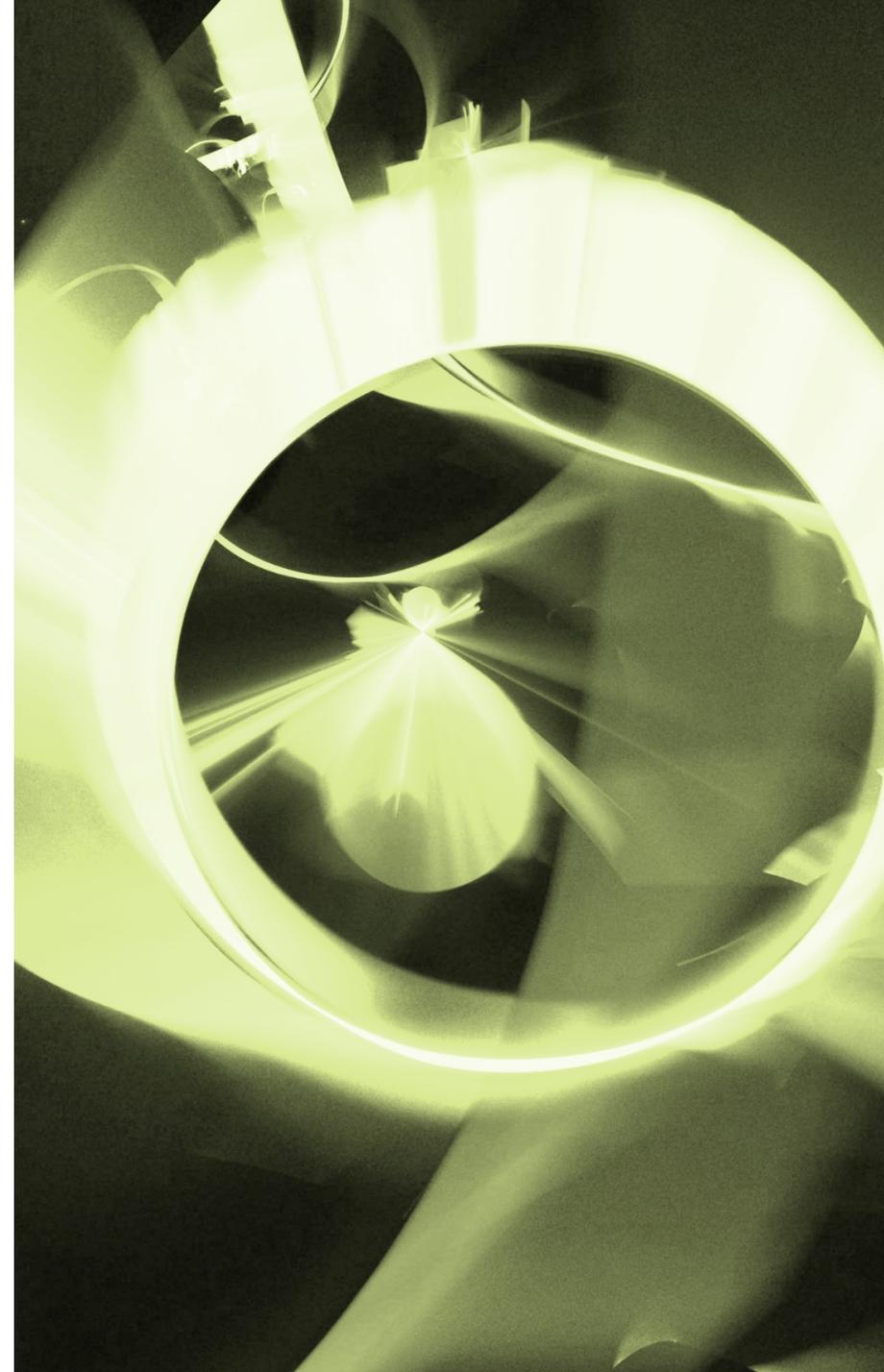
Local level: Licences

- Licence choice
- A licence hub that documents interesting aspects of each licence (Joinup's [Licence Wizard](#) or [licensing assistant](#))
- Use of copyleft to prevent freeriders and foster public sector collaboration. Others suggested avoiding copyleft if licences were not compatible. But this situation has improved. EUPL, GPLv3, and MPL are all compatible nowadays.

...These can be helped by an OSPO.

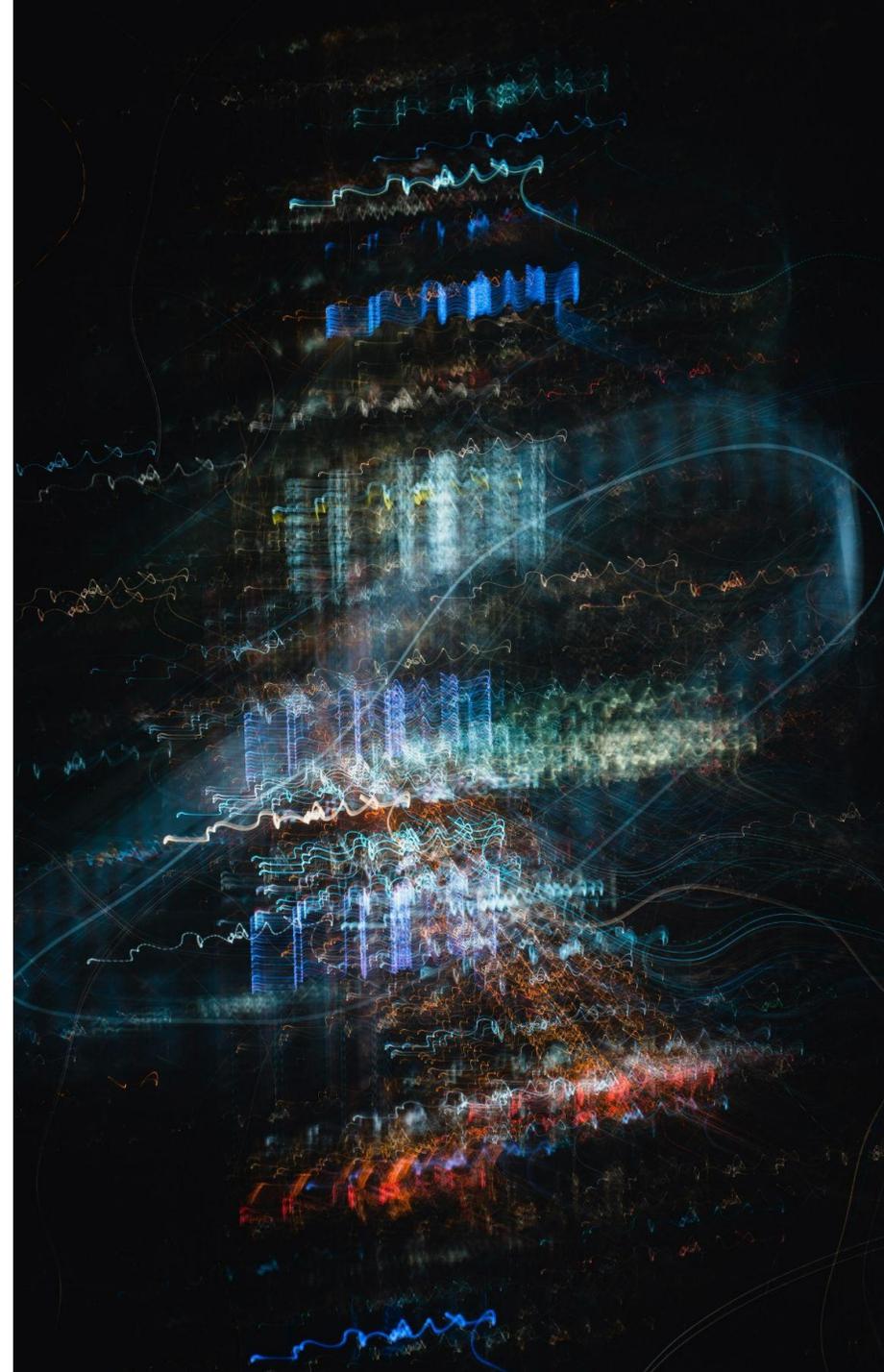
Local level: Financing

- Pay per hour or unit of work, move away from licence fees
- Need a way to pay for missing features, including documentation
- FOSS projects need more ways to accept money, including end of budget year “use-it-or-lose-it” spending
- Need documents to explain to ministries the various ways to fund FOSS
- Public sector bodies need a method to pool their resources to have sufficient budgets to do what they want



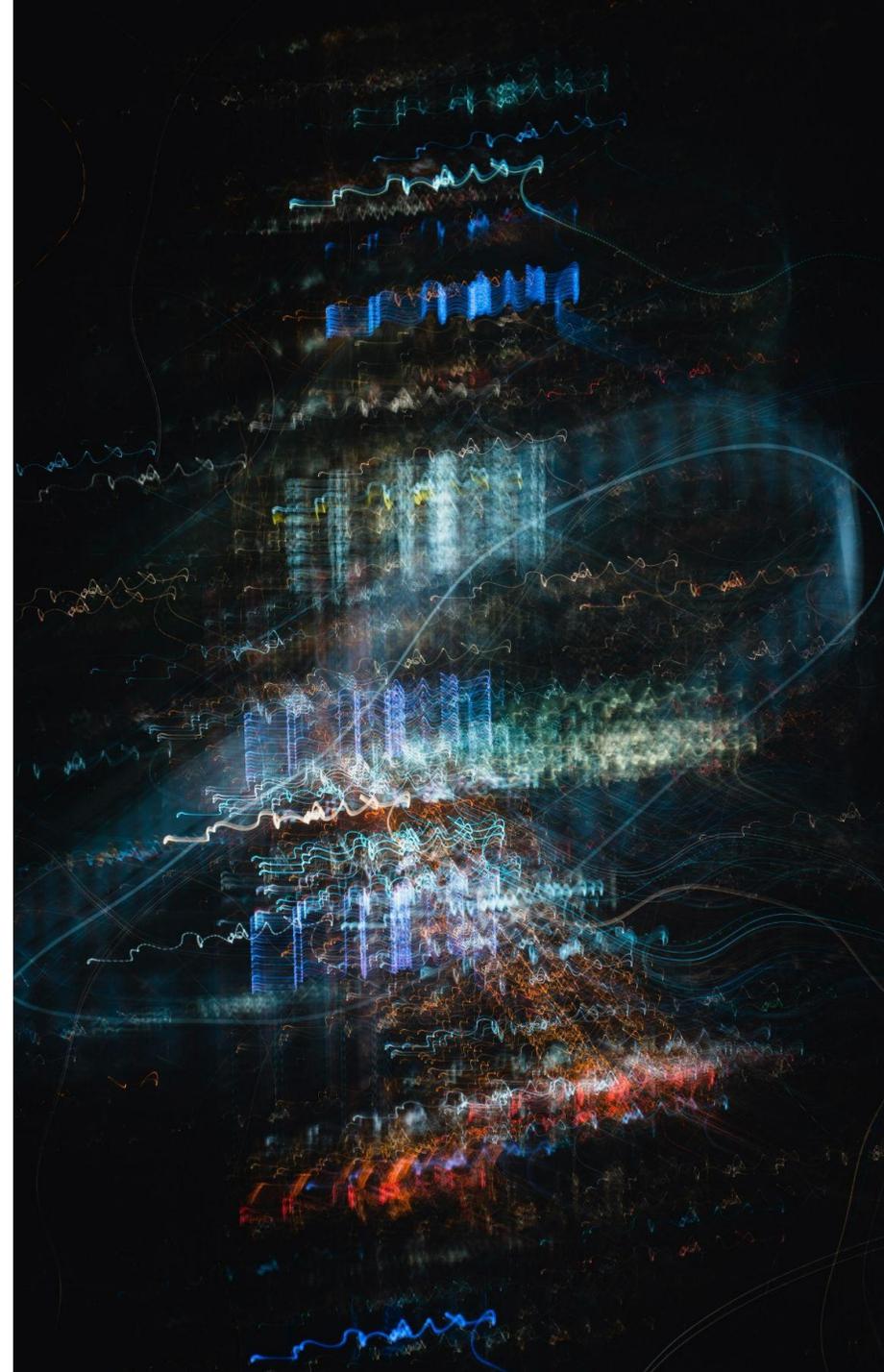
Policy: Procurement

- FOSS preference laws - mixed results
 - Procurement: give a value to the unique values of FOSS
 - Skills: training for procurement officers, including “category managers for IT” (i.e. IT buyers)
 - Need testimonials about the "why"! Case studies on motivation.
- Acknowledge that IT procurement has more consequences than some other forms of procurement. Lock-in, controlling your data.
- Align procurement procedures with other regions so that data sharing can help



Policy: Own Code

- Public money, public code - or open-by-default. Same issue of mixed results, but "public money, public code" has gained some buy-in
- Contribute bug fixes upstream
- Contribute features
- Contact person for anyone who wants to reuse, then the collaboration can be defined (fork with periodic merges, host+contributor, co-maintenance)
- Send people to events to talk about software ripe for reuse



Technical aspects

- Make it translatable
- Use a collaborative tool (Crowdlin)
- Use the EU's translation infrastructure? Could we? Is it suitable?
- Make it modular - not everyone can reuse everything
- Discuss what other things make reuse happen
- Annual conference? award?
- Data standards (addresses, phone numbers, names, car registration plates, national ID numbers, ...)
- IT standards
- API's, documented and maintained (for public services, to that private can be compatible)

Project level

- Organise events, including ones to explain to managers why they should value safety from lock-in, ability to modify the software, etc. Make the events and they'll be able to come.
- Cities can financially support these events
- Improve the documentation. (But, from the public sector side, it would be nice to know which packages they would be interested in if documentation was improved)
- Make it clear how public admin can finance this - talk to someone
- Be available to speak to governments about how to pay for or finance FOSS

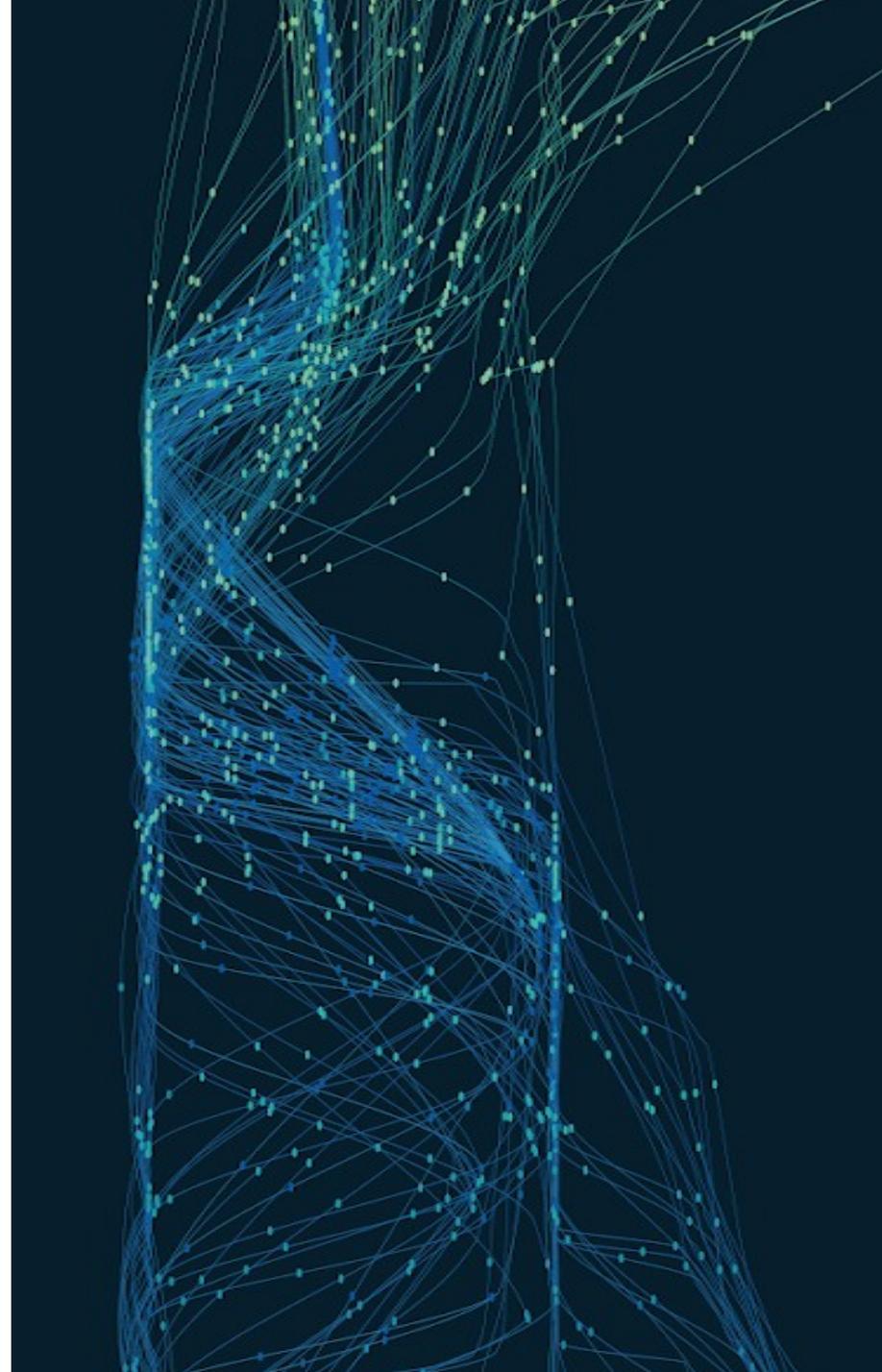


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It is reasonably clear what is needed

Thank you to all the workshop participants who discussed these topics with The OSOR Team.

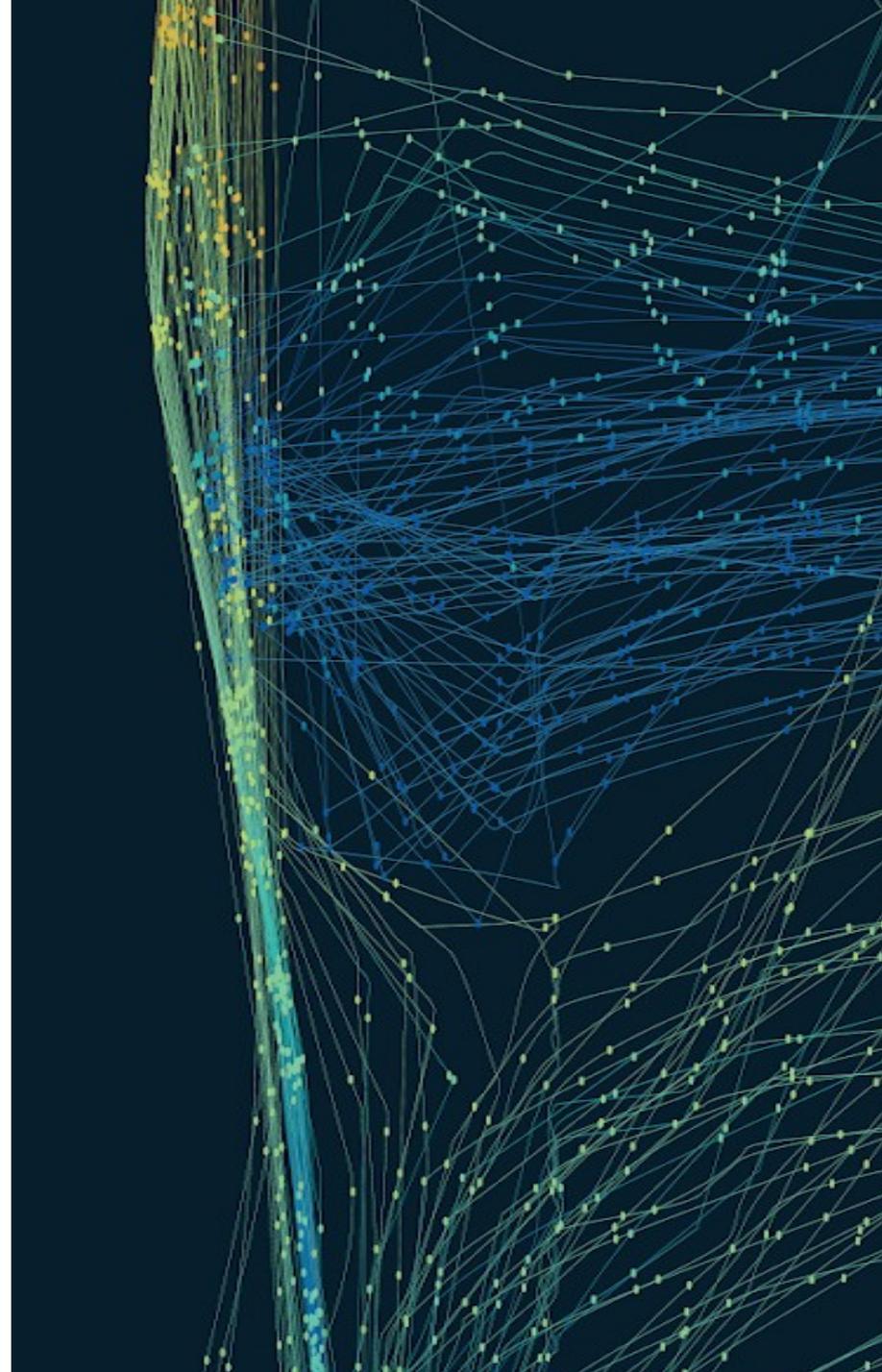
This slide deck will be available on OSOR.



2

Webinar 3: Solutions that exist or in progress

The next step is to find countries and cities that are solving these problems and share their work with the widest audience possible.





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innovation ∞ govtech ∞ community

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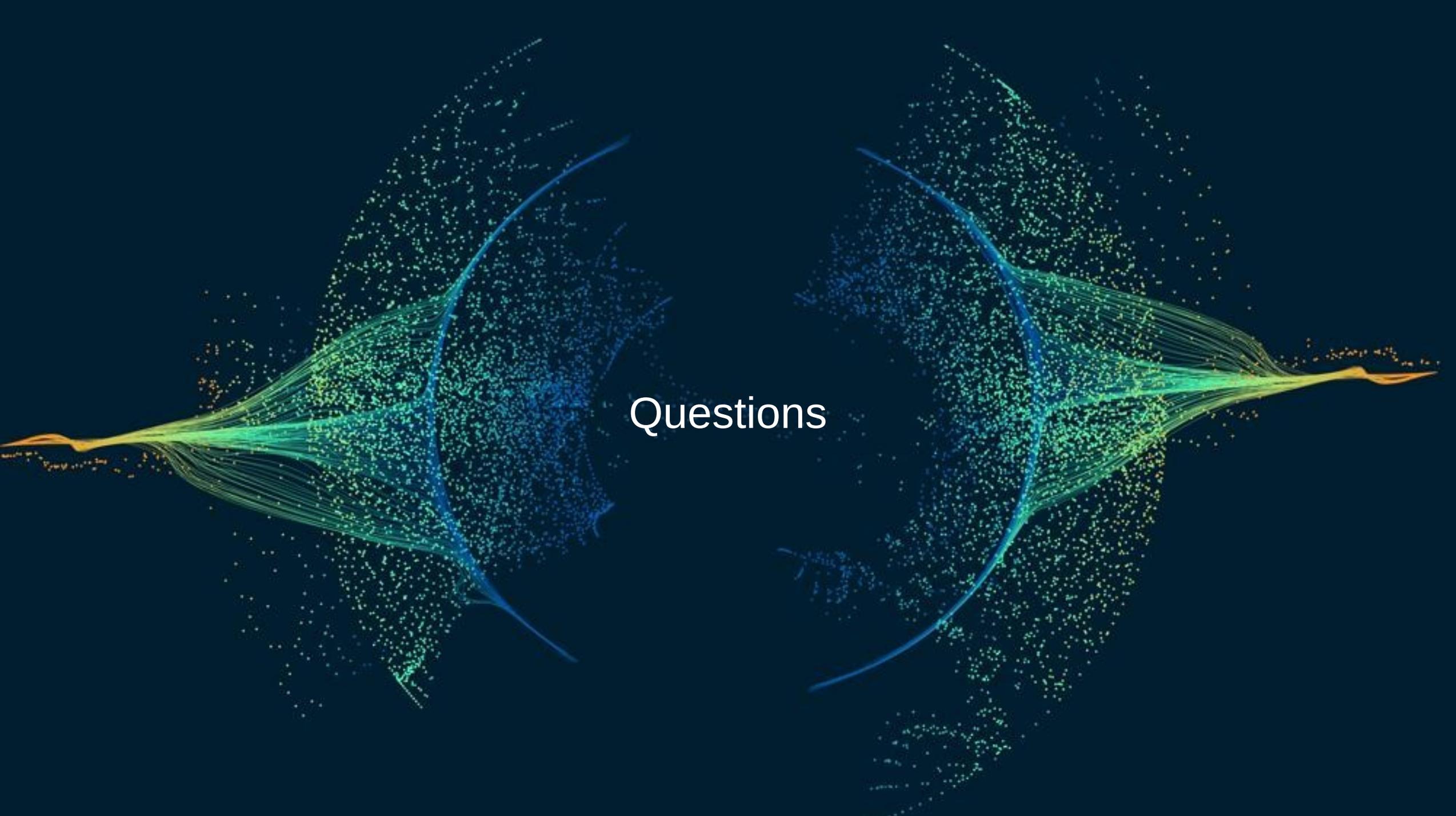


[https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/
collection/open-source-observatory-](https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/open-source-observatory-osor)

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The image features a central white text label "Questions" on a dark blue background. Surrounding the text is a complex, symmetrical network visualization. This visualization consists of numerous small, glowing nodes in shades of cyan and green, which are interconnected by a dense web of thin, light-colored lines. The overall structure is reminiscent of a butterfly or a pair of wings, with a central hub and two large, curved lobes extending outwards. The nodes are more densely packed in the central area and become sparser towards the edges. The lighting is soft, with a slight glow around the nodes and lines, creating a sense of depth and complexity. The overall aesthetic is futuristic and data-driven.

Questions