



Open Source Observatory Policy Factsheet Netherlands

OSOR

1 General Information

The Netherlands has made significant strides in promoting the adoption of open source software (OSS) within its government and public administration. Led by the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK), together with several regional efforts, the government has actively pursued a wider use of open source across its institutions. The BZK has conducted thorough studies and reports to assess the viability of implementing an “open unless” policy, which mandates information sharing with citizens and consequently necessitates the sharing of source code.

2 Actors

POLICY MAKERS

Within the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations, the newly created Open Source Programme Office (OSPO) will collaborate with various policy and staff departments in the field of purchasing ICT solutions, disclosure of government information and the development of the European Digital Identity wallet.

STRATEGIC PLAYER

The Dutch OSPO Knowledge Network, is an initiative of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Tax and Customs Administration, Kadaster, Alliander, the Municipality of Amsterdam, the Province of South Holland, and VNG Realisatie. It is designed to share knowledge and experiences of open working, open standards, and open source among public organisations.

3 Policy and Legal Framework

Report on “Considerations for Open Unless and Open Source Approach” and adjoined letter to Parliament about releasing source code for government software (2020)

Issued by the Ministry of the Interior in 2020, the letter called for the “open unless” policy. The report defines action points for the Ministry to apply this policy.

Report on “Open source works, Beyond non-commitment” (2022)

Published by the BZK, it provides an analysis and assessment on how to properly implement the “open unless” policy. This report also set the pillars for creating the BZK OSPO.



4 Open Source Software Initiatives

DigiD release of source code

Following a Woo (Open Government Act) request, Logius, a BZK agency, decided to disclose a snapshot of the source code of DigiD. This app serves as a trusted identifier for Dutch citizens. While the first release was limited, Logius is changing its work method to allow them to update this snapshot as needed.

Government’s software developer portal

Developer.overheid.nl is an initiative from the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and Association of Netherlands Municipalities. It displays APIs and Open Source repositories published under the responsibility of government organisations. Its source code is on GitLab.

Online course on open source (OMOOC)

Developed by the Association for Government Management, these “Massive Online Open Courses” are aimed at public administration professionals with the objective of sharing best practices. The series has been developed in collaboration with the BZK and develops different subjects related to the use of open source in public administration.

Open Web concept

Started on a small scale, the initiative involves utilising a handful of Open Source components that enable municipalities to swiftly establish their own web portals. With 29 members now, the Open Web concept does not focus on realising a large all-encompassing solution, but rather on developing reusable building blocks between municipalities.