

# Open Source Policy AUSTRIA



## 1 General Information

Over the last decade, several political initiatives have been implemented at the federal level regarding the use of open source software solutions in the public sector in Austria. Additionally, a new government was formed in January 2020. As part of the new government programme, a master plan for open source software is set to be developed. However, in light of the COVID-19 crisis, the government programme will be reviewed and the effect on this plan remains to be seen.

## 2 Actors



The **Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs** is responsible for all digitisation issues, including eGovernment services, the coordination of IT matters, and policies pertaining to OSS solutions.



The **Open Source Software Business Innovation Group (OSSBIG)** is a non-profit organisation which helps to foster the use of OSS solutions in Austria. The group is responsible for disseminating the open source model both in companies and in public administrations.

## 3 Policy and Legal Framework

2005

**Digital Austria Platform**

As part of this initiative, an open source platform was launched with modules for the simplification of electronic signatures, implementation of a Citizen Card Environment, electronic delivery services, and validation of PDF document signatures.

2009

**GNU/Linux Initiative**

The Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture approved a policy initiative supporting a special edition of a GNU/Linux distribution designed specifically for use in schools, titled desktop4education and server4education.

2019

**Digital Austria in 2050**

This strategy is intended to harmonise and replace the existing eGovernment policies. Open source software to improve and promote interoperability is being examined as a potential approach.

## 4 Open Source Software Initiatives



**Open Atlas:** OpenAtlas is an Austrian open source, web-based database system which maps complex archaeological, historical and geospatial data. The source code is available on GitHub, and it uses OSS such as Apache, PostgreSQL, PostGIS, Python 3, Flask, and Leaflet.

**Open Source Software Funding:** In 2016, the Austrian government announced a prize fund of EUR 200,000 to be awarded to open source projects on eGovernment, eHealth, eLearning, eInclusion, and other services. Funding could be used to cover the cost of launching a product or service, testing, or improving an existing software application.

**Bregenz telephone system:** Since the 2011, the city of Bregenz has been using an open source and IP-based telephone solution within their telephone infrastructure. The solution has massively reduced licencing costs, reduced maintenance costs, and it was designed to meet the specific needs of the municipality.

**POCO C++ Libraries:** The POCO C++ Libraries is an Austrian open source project created by Günter Obiltschnig, and it is now one of the most popular C++ class libraries in the world. The project was established to increase the popularity of C++ by creating a comprehensive set of libraries to cover all modern-day programming needs.