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Unit.D2 (Interoperability Unit)

Open Source Software Country Intelligence Report

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SLOVAKIA

Executive summary

The Slovak government has adopted several policies in recent years regarding the digitalisation of the Slovak public administration. Such policies include the National Concept of Public Administration Informatics Strategy in 2016, the 2030 Digital Transformation Strategy, and the Digital Transformation Strategy Action Plan for 2019-2022. While these strategies aim to increase the digitisation of the Slovak administration, they do not solely focus on open source software (OSS) solutions as such. In spite of this, the effective use and implementation of open source software is being presented as one of the most important aspects of the Slovak government's digital policy.

Slovakia does not have a specified point of contact or public administration body in charge of the development and implementation of open source policies. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investment and Informatisation (ODPMSRII)¹ appears to be the most relevant actor for the development of open source policies within the Slovak government, actively promoting the use of OSS and exploring the ways in which OSS solutions can be implemented in public administrations across the country. In early 2020, a meeting was held for public administration actors who were interested in making the switch from proprietary software to open source alternatives. Participants had the opportunity to learn about a variety of OSS solutions and gain deeper insight into the basic functions and characteristics of 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. In Slovakia, there is no governmental body that is specifically responsible for OSS policies.

Policy makers

- The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investment and Informatisation (ODPMSRII) is tasked with the development and implementation of all policies pertaining to the digitalisation of the Slovak state and society. When examining the future potential of OSS policies emanating from the ODPMSRII, the following units should be considered:

¹ Official translation of the name of the office. *Informatisation* refers to *Information society*

- The Digital Agenda Division² oversees the planning and formulation of digital policies. This division implements the 2030 Digital Transformation Strategy, which is the most significant digital policy initiative of the Slovak government to date.
- The Public Administration Information Technologies Management Department, Licenses Administration and IT Commodities Centralised Procurement Unit oversees the preparation of substantive content of legislative changes in the areas of digitisation and information technologies in public administrations. Should OSS policies be developed by the Slovak government in the future, this unit seems well-equipped for its purpose.
- The Institute of Digital and Development Policies (IDRP)³ is a specialised organisational unit for policy analyses and planning. It operates under the direct management authority of the Head of the ODPMSRII.
- The National Agency for Network and Electronic Services⁴ emphasises openness and promotes the sharing of government data as open data in conjunction with the creation of ICT services using open application programming interfaces (APIs).

Strategic players

- Slovensko.Digital⁵ is a civic association promoting transparency and efficiency in the use of public resources as well as the digitalisation of public administration. The association promotes and develops OSS solutions in cooperation with the Slovak public administration.
- The Society for Open Information Technologies (*Spoločnosť pre otvorené informačné technológie*, SOIT)⁶ is a non-profit civic association of open source enthusiasts which advocates for the use of open information technologies in diverse areas of Slovak society. The association organises events for the promotion of OSS solutions, such as the Open Source Weekend and many panel debates.
- SPy ("Slovak Python User Group")⁷ is a civic association which aims to support developers and users of the Python programming language. The association also promotes Python and other open source technologies in Slovak society.

² <https://www.vicempremier.gov.sk/sekcie/informatizacia/o-sekciach/sekcia-digitalnej-agendy/index.html>

³ <https://www.vicempremier.gov.sk/sekcie/institut-digitalnych-a-rozvojovych-politik/index.html>

⁴ <https://www.nases.gov.sk/o-nas/index.html>

⁵ <http://slovensko.digital/>

⁶ <http://www.soit.sk/sk/organizacia/info-in-english>

⁷ <https://2019.pycon.sk/en/index.html>

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 2019, the Slovak government released the 2030 Digital Transformation Strategy⁸ and the Digital Transformation Action Plan for 2019-2022⁹. As outlined in Action 3, “Innovations in the Public Administration”, the government plans to promote the use of OSS solutions and open APIs in order to “provide the expert public with the technical interface to let them further develop technical means using electronic services of the government.”
- The Law 95/2019 Coll. of 27 March 2019 on information technologies in public administration¹⁰ transposes the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/863 of 18 May 2017 updating the European Union public open source software license (EURL) into Slovak national legislation. This act aims to promote the sharing and re-use of software developed by public administrations. Under this act, vendors are obliged to hand over the source codes of the software they have created. Consequently, the software is then covered under the EURL license.¹¹
- Commitments 16, 17, 18 and 19 of Slovakia’s National Action Plan 2017-2019 for Open Government¹² outline the Slovak government’s endorsement of direct provisions for the implementation and development of OSS solutions. Additionally, they stipulate the disclosure of the source code used as well as the use of open methods for newly developed plug-ins and extensions of web browsers. These commitments call for studies to be conducted in order to document the possibilities, advantages and disadvantages of using OSS solutions and other licensing models. The draft of Slovakia’s new Action Plan 2019-2021 was submitted to the inter-governmental discussion in October 2019 and is now in the evaluation stage.¹³
- The National Concept of Public Administration Informatics¹⁴, a strategic document prepared by the ODPMSRII in 2016, deals with the principles of eGovernment-building in Slovakia. The strategic document sets a 2020 target for the use of open source ICT systems by Slovakia’s public administrations at 40%.

⁸ <https://www.vicpremier.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/SDT-English-Version-FINAL.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.vicpremier.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/AP-DT-English-Version-FINAL.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.slov-lex.sk/static/SK/ZZ/2019/95/20190501.html>

¹¹ <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/eupl/news/gov-software-slovakia>

¹² https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Slovakia_NAP_2017-2019_EN.pdf

¹³ http://www.minv.sk/?ros_oqp_spravy&sprava=akcny-plan-iniciativy-pre-otvorene-vladnutie-na-roky-2019-2021-predlozeny-do-medzirezortneho-pripomienkoveho-konania

¹⁴ http://www.informatizacia.sk/ext_dok-nkivs-sr_2016/23668c

- Following the Slovakian Finance Ministry's Decree No. 55/2014 Coll. of 4 March 2014 on standards for public administration information systems¹⁵, the Government of the Slovak Republic officially approved the guide on ICT standards as an addendum. The ICT standards guide details instructions for public sector organisations, mandating them to make future desktop software solutions, new browser plug-ins and client applications available as open source software.¹⁶

Open source software initiatives

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

- Alternatives to Microsoft Office in the Slovak public administration, 2020: On 12 February 2020, a meeting on the topic of OSS solutions took place at the ODPMSRII premises. Open source alternatives to the Microsoft Office suite were presented and participants had the opportunity to learn about the basic functions and characteristics of the alternative solutions. Additionally, potential ways in which the OSS solutions could be tested and implemented within the conditions outlined by the ODPMSRII were explored.
- Bratislava University of Technology, 2019¹⁷: The university is a partner of the annual event, OpenSlava, an open-source IT conference which focuses on trends and emerging technologies. More specifically, the Faculty of Informatics and Information Technologies and the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology are long-term partners of the event.
- Slovakian Society for Open Information Technologies, 2014¹⁸: This association of open source enthusiasts launched the "A day of open source software in school" campaign. Volunteers visited several schools across the country to raise awareness of OSS solutions among students and teachers.

¹⁵ http://www.informatizacia.sk/ext_dok-vynos_2014-55_standardy_isvs_s_prilohami/17060c

¹⁶ <http://www.informatizacia.sk/standardy-is-vs/596s>

¹⁷ <https://www.openslava.sk/2019/#/>

¹⁸ <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/open-source-observatory-osor/news/slovakia-school-open-source-c>

