

South-East Europe regional workshop

Presented by:

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CARNet



multimedijalniinstitut





Location & participants

- Sofia, Bulgaria (<http://foss.bg/conf>)
- within Linux for Bulgarians (linux-bg.org) conferences

Participants

- - 4 countries from the SEE region - Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Turkey

Location & participants





Location & participants

- Contribution from the 6FP-IST-3 **TOSSAD** project (www.tossad.org) - participation & info from deliverables
- **Bulgaria:** ISOC BG, Interspace, OpenIntegra, gov.organizations, community,& others
- **Croatia:** MI2, CARNET
- **Macedonia:** Foundation Metamorphosis
- **Turkey:** Istanbul Bilgi University, TUBITAK/UEKAE

Workshop results

Track 1: Human capacity building

Presence of FLOSS in the universities:

- existence of informal communities in the universities that are promoting or implementing FLOSS
- **Bulgaria**: unofficial courses on FLOSS which are hard to be officially recognized.
- *Focus*: Linux for beginners.
- *Target*: Students in HEI – majority rarely know what is FLOSS.



Workshop results

Track 1: Human capacity building

- **Turkey:** official courses exist, forthcoming master programs on FLOSS.
- *Focus:* not only technical perspective but also licensing and copyright law, FOSS business models, socio-political reasoning for FOSS, information systems management.
- *Target:* experts in FLOSS who lack some components.

Workshop results

Track 1: Human capacity building

- **Croatia**: FLOSS is being taught at the Computer Engineering Schools alongside the dominant proprietary environments. Informal skills exchange is dominant.
- **Macedonia** - informal skills exchange

Workshop results

Track 1: Human capacity building

- **Specifics:** students graduate in certain specialty in a University but after that start working in a completely different area and abandon everything they have studied before.
Result: big number of people with high educational degree but with no practical experience, or the opposite – good experts without formal degree in certain aspect. -> the universities have to respond better to the students needs.
- Business demands: For management positions formal qualification is better/required while for developers or other it is not obligatory.



Workshop results

Track 1: Human capacity building

Interaction between SMEs and the community:

- The model of cooperation is explicitly based on personal relationships between the involved participants.
- Benefits for SMEs include significant decrease in the expenses and possibility to work with the best experts
- The company does not mind if the people involved in a project work on their own projects. Ideas for collaborative business are also accepted, although they are not considered as obligatory.

Workshop results

Track 1: Human capacity building

- Problem: lack of corporate culture and the existence of big gap between the managers and the FLOSS participants
- Possible solution: seminars for know-how exchange – from the company to the community and backwards
- Curious finding: Companies usually allow that a system developed under a project is released as free and open source software. They do this because for them FLOSS means stability – possibility to make something quickly at a very low price.

Workshop results

Track 2: Software development

Local projects:

- - mainly projects for localization of FLOSS (GNOME, KDE, Firefox, Thunderbird. The localization is made usually by teams of volunteers which in the different countries are organized and work in different manner, but in the majority of cases, on volunteer basis.)
- - distributions

Workshop results

Track 2: Software development

Differences in projects:

- Bulgaria - NGOs or groups of developers create distributions (ISLD, Tilix) and manage the localization projects – mostly self funded and self-sustainable.
- Turkey - governmentally funded distribution Pardus; localization
- Croatia – HRID distribution , Croatian UBUNTU localization
- Macedonia – localization; the migration of 5000 desktops in public schools to Ubuntu.



Workshop results

Track 2: Software development

Communities & specifics:

Croatian phenomena: second generation of FLOSS community. The early adopters, which were primarily driven by the technological excellence in hacking, mostly went on to work on development in business and thus are no longer active in the community. The second generation has a wider context of social relevance of hacking and increasing presence of free culture that it works from.



Workshop results

Track 2: Software development

Bulgaria: the community is relatively big and continues growing. Increasing presence of open culture, open content and wider than only FLOSS focus (annual OSS conf. collects >1000 people).

Specifics: Turkey - the majority of FLOSS developers have a university degree but do not know English.

For Bulgaria, Macedonia and Croatia this is not valid and most of the developers are either students, or self-educated on FLOSS with basic English knowledge.



Workshop results

Track 2: Software development

Motivation: FLOSS is chosen for the issue behind it and not for the technical idea.

- wish to exchange knowledge and skills
- wish to help somebody else - e.g. localization projects.
- easy way to develop something new and innovative
- *Finding:* most of the people working in new media, arts and CreativeCommons have IT skills and are working with FLOSS.

Workshop results

Track 2: Software development

Global projects:

- Croatia: Hrvoje Nikšić, who developed and long time maintained the **wget** tool.
- Bulgaria: Aleksander Keremidarski, a.k.a Salle works for **MySQL** as Manager EMEA Support Group
- Turkey: 5 **KDE** developers (among 600+) and 3 **GNOME** developers
- Macedonia - no info.

Workshop results

Track 3: Governments policy

- The government is one of the major employers and IT services customers in the country.
- Big contracts with Microsoft for the administrations
- Companies prefer to supply , provide & support proprietary software as long as it is official policy
- The official policy is the proprietary software dominated policy

Workshop results

Track 3: Governments policy

- However, there are many efforts for FLOSS usage that are result of a personal initiative of the IT staff in many administrations.
- Difference between official policy & real state of the art:
 - open standards - attempts for law adoption for open standards – different opinions from the gov structures – still pending
 - FLOSS usage - not stimulated and not official policy but it is present in almost all administrations.

Workshop results

Track 3: Governments policy

- The FLOSS awareness is important, and governments have to evaluate the possibilities for multiplatform usage.
- Problem: lack of knowledge on open standards - representatives from the state administration often confuse open standards with access to confidential information.



Workshop results

Track 3: Governments policy

- The ICT strategies include recommendations on open standards which are rarely & occasionally used in practice.
- Accession to the EU process - the EU experience or directives would significantly help in the adoption of open standards and FLOSS



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Thank you!