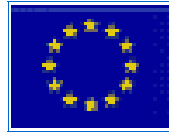


## ::: About tOSSad



The tOSSad project aims to improve the outcomes of the F/OSS communities throughout Europe by supporting the coordination and networking of these communities by means of state-of-the-art studies, national program initiations, usability cases, curriculum development and the development of collaborative information portals. Find more information about the EU-funded tOSSad project [here](#).

## ::: tOSSad partners



tOSSad is a truly European project - it has members from Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Belgium, Estonia, UK, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Malta, Norway, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine. Find out [who is who in this project](#).

The tOSSad project consists of 5 different workpackages. Get more find information about the 5 workpackages [here](#).

**It has been quite a busy quarter. tOSSad partners came together four times – Workpackage 1 (F/OSS study) and Workpackage 2 (F/OSS in national programs) meetings in Ljubljana-Slovenia, 2<sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee meeting in Badajoz-Spain, WP1 and WP2 workshops in Merida-Spain and Workpackage 4 (WP 4, F/OSS curriculum development) meeting in Heerlen-Netherlands. 2006 will be at least as busy, as even more tOSSad activities will take place.**

## ::: F/OSS in Public Administrations workshop held in Merida

On the 26th of October tOSSad [Workpackage 1](#) (WP 1, F/OSS study) organized a workshop during the Open Source Worldconference, which took place in Mérida, Spain. The aim of the workshop was to establish the barriers towards Open Source Software in Public Administrations of all levels (local, regional and national). Over 25 participants were divided into three groups, that addressed different groups of barriers. The first group addressed the administrative barriers, including technological and end-user barriers, the second group addressed the financial issues and group three was in charge of finding those barriers related to legal issues.

Using the focus group methodology, the groups headed off with a brainstorming on the barriers, with the aim of recollecting the largest number of possible barriers. After this exercise, the groups had a limited amount of time to reach consensus on which the most important barriers were. The main conclusions are being drawn up and will be published in a report, which will be made available on the [tOSSad web site](#).



This “*International Meeting about Free Knowledge*”, has shown that Free Software is a consolidated reality, and a key tool for the development of Knowledge Society, in a double role, technological role and social role, universalizing ICTs. Freedom and technological independency provided by the use of Free Software and the use of Technological Standards are fundamental aspects to bear in mind by the responsables of the development of a Society based on solidarity above all. The event has been a meeting with plenty of reflections and experiences about the evolution of the strategies and policies made worldwide in the field of Knowledge Society.

## ::: News from WP4: “F/OSS Curriculum Development”

November has been witness of crucial events relating to workpackage 4 ([WP4](#)). A paper on tOSSad project in general, and on F/OSS Curriculum Development in particular, has been accepted and presented at the “Open Source for Education in Europe Conference”, held in Herleen, NL, on November 14-15, 2005, raising interest and spreading knowledge of tOSSad project. During the same conference, WP 4 (F/OSS usability study) also held its first workshop, as planned, open to conference participants.



In the first day, WP 4 had presentations about the various curriculum plans in Europe worldwide, and about current initiatives at high school and university level. Besides WP 4 partners, the speakers included Stuart Yeates of OSS Watch, Oxford University, and Riina Vuorikari of European Schoolnet. More than 20 people attended this session.

In the second day WP 4 partners were able to summarize the work performed so far, and to thoroughly discuss WP 4 issues and planning.

In the end, the event was very successful, and laid the basis for WP 4 future activities.

## ::: Usability survey completed

In the past months the partners of [WP 3](#) (F/OSS usability study) have done quite a lot of research on the usability issue concerning F/OSS. Furthermore an interview with two usability experts was conducted. As major activity of WP 3 an [online survey](#) was developed to find out the general opinion of F/OSS users about the usability “status” of OpenOffice.org, Firefox and Linux. The survey was closed at the end of September and in October the outcome was analyzed and can now be found in the tOSSad report “[F/OSS Usability Report, Part A](#)”.

Short summary of the survey results:

The survey showed that the majority of respondents agree that all three products have sufficient number of features and are user-friendly. Among the positive peculiarities of the products' usability are user-friendly interfaces, menus with clear definitions and abbreviations, also the navigation of the main and context menus is logical. OpenOffice.org and Firefox also have a sufficient set of features and are easy to install.

On the other hand, the respondents also stated some of the gaps in the usability area of these products. For only some users one of the Linux's disadvantages is the difficulty of installation of hardware and the learning curve needed in the process of migration from the MS Windows interface. OpenOffice.org also has some issues with insufficient performance compared to MS Office, according to the respondents.

## ::: F/OSS in national programs workshop

[WP 2](#) held a workshop titled "tOSSad F/OSS in National Programs Workshop: Practices, Requirements, and Obstacles" within the "Second Free Software International Conference - International Meeting about Free Knowledge". The main conference was held in Mérida, Extremadura province, Spain on 25th and 26th of October, 2005.

The workshop aimed to determine and discuss the requirements and obstacles for national programs. While its focus was on best practices and success stories of F/OSS use in the public sector, stimulated discussions examined similarities and non-transferable of various experiences. The workshop was divided into two parts: presentations panel and discussion panel. The speakers that shared experiences and made presentations were Julio Yuste, Director of Vivernet and Rishab Aiyer Ghosh, Maastricht Economic Research Institute on Innovation and Technology.

Both presenters are with vast experience in F/OSS, as well as, its implementation at different levels. They participate in a number of major projects that treat the implementation of F/OSS in Public Administrations and research on problems and obstacles for its wider implementation.

The report of this workshop is accessible from the project website ([www.tOSSad.org](http://www.tOSSad.org)). WP 2 is about to publicize its two other studies. The first one is the revised version of the roadmap report on "F/OSS in national programs"; and the second one is a new report on "Social and Economical Benefits of F/OSS adoption in Public Bodies".

## ::: tOSSad web page updates

[WP 5](#) (dissemination and exploitation) has successfully put up the infrastructure for the tOSSad Extranet and Intranet. The Extranet is available at [www.tOSSad.org](http://www.tOSSad.org) and provides public information about the tOSSad project. It also allows for involving the visitors interactively. For example, the survey module has been in use by [WP 3](#) for the usability survey. The Intranet is the virtual space where all tOSSad partners share information. Now, WP 5 team focuses on disseminating the tOSSad results on the Extranet.

## ::: Finished and upcoming tOSSad activities

Partners of [WP 3](#) (F/OSS usability study) are working on an extensive usability test within which OpenOffice.org will be tested by students and staff from the public sector to find out how well the product would be appreciated by this group of users. The report will be available by mid April from the [tOSSad portal](#).

**Keep an eye on tOSSad activities!**

***"Your tOSSad team"***

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