



Open Source Policy THE UNITED KINGDOM



1

General Information

The UK government has a strong history of promoting the use of open source software (OSS), first establishing relevant policies about 10 years ago. The Government Digital Service (GDS), a part of the UK Government's Cabinet Office, maintains open standards chosen for use in government and requires equal consideration to be given to OSS and proprietary software in procurement.

2

Actors



The **Government Digital Service** is part of the Cabinet Office of the Government. It is the central team in control of the overall user experience across all digital channels. They have published various guiding documents on OSS and its use.



OpenUK advocates for the use of open technologies including OSS, open source hardware, and open data. Its vision includes establishing open technology as the norm for public services, education and academia, businesses, and individuals in the UK.

3

Policy and Legal Framework

2010

Open Source Strategy

The former Labour government published an open source strategy for government. The strategy detailed the actions taken by the government in order to provide a level playing field between open source and proprietary software.

2012

Open Standards Principles Policy

The Open Standards Principle policy document published by the UK Government aims to boost the use of open standards by the country's public administrations.

2017

Transformation Strategy 2017-2020

As part of the Transformation Strategy 2017-2020 and the Local Digital Declaration, public administrations are required to demonstrate that they have considered the use of OSS solutions and the open publication of their code.

4

Open Source Software Initiatives



NELSON programme:

The UK's naval force, the Royal Navy, launched the NELSON programme as part of its digital transformation strategy. The programme uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data science to build a component to enable better decision-making procedures. The toolkit, published on GitHub, features numerous OSS components.

Migration to Open Document Formats:

The government established a policy to use Open Document Format (ODF) in various organisations.

NHS's Code4Health project:

The project is bringing together healthcare providers, developers and supporters to build OSS solutions. The project has 30 communities, covering many aspects of healthcare.

HMRC Developer Hub:

The tax agency of the UK, HMRC, has started to switch to OSS solutions to improve their IT and reduce costs.

Healthwatch organisations:

England's Healthwatch organisation uses CiCRM, an open source solution for Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

GOV.UK: The UK Government's central services and information website was unveiled in 2012. It is built completely using open source technologies and partially on OSS.

Open source mailing system in Welsh schools:

Schools in Wales have opted for an open source email system since 2007.