FREE SOFTWARE MACEDONIA

GENERAL INFORMATION

Free Software Macedonia is a non-profit organization that works with Free Software (as in freedom, not price) in the Republic of Macedonia. Free Software Macedonia is dedicated to promotion of Free Software, creating awareness of both the economic and socio-ethical context of Free software especially for a developing country such as Macedonia.

Free Software Macedonia (Слободен софтвер Македонија, Sloboden softver Makedonija) was established in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia in 2002. It is the only NGO in the country that deals with the issues of Free Software. In addition, Free Software Macedonia works on issues related to Open Standards and Free Culture. The work of the organization is governed by its statute that is based on the template statute provided by the European Free Software Foundation.

WORK

The activities of the NGO are divided into two different areas. The first area is covering Free Software on a technical, technological and logistic level, and the other is dealing with the policy, social and ethical issues concerning Free Software.

Since its conception Free Software Macedonia has been the principal organization responsible for localization of Free Software into Macedonian, including OpenOffice.org, Mozilla products as well as the GNOME and KDE desktop environments and other desktop applications. Also the GNU/Linux operating system has been adapted to be able to use the Macedonian Cyrillic alphabet, dates, calendars and currency. Several GNU/Linux distributions such as Ubuntu, Fedora, Red Hat, Madriva have also been localized into Macedonian.

Most of the work that is being carried out on the translation and localization marathons is publicly promoted on events such as Software freedom day and annual installation festivals. Translation marathons are events where a lot of people are working on the localization of a single Free software application. Installation festival are events where new users usually bring their PCs to get help in installing GNU/Linux from experienced users. Some of the installation festivals that the NGO organized were accompanied by workshops and lectures about usage of Free software and its social benefits. Free Software Macedonia participates in activities organized by other entities for which we have received an invitation.

THE COMMUNITY

The whole community counts more than 200 mostly young people - university and high school students, IT professionals, social activists and enthusiasts. They dedicate their time and energy with great enthusiasm, doing most of the work pro bono.
The community can be reached on the mailing list [ossm-members] (http://slobodensoftver.org.mk/postenska_lista) and on the IRC channel #lugola on irc.freenode.net.

PROJECTS

2012/2011

The LED Cube
YouTube link - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RG5nNpQVYlo
GitHub link - https://github.com/gdamjan/arduino-led-cube

Outreach presentations for Google Summer Of Code and Gnome Women Outreach internship programs
Presentations were held at the Faculty for Computer Science and Electrical Engineering in Skopje. Six students have enrolled in the programs, worked on projects such as Orange, Open Street Map, GNOME and Nmap and successfully completed the internship.

Providing radio streaming and radio on demand for the underground Kanal 103 radio station, https://radio.spodeli.org/

Hosting a weekly radio talk show covering free software and free culture topics

Organising programming courses
Basic C programming courses
Basic Arduino programming – "Internet of things 101"
Basic Python programmingв

Regional NSND in Struga (2012) and in Ohrid (2011) (Nothing will happen in English).
NSNDs are hackers unconferences, organized by hackerspaces and free software organisations or communities in the Balkan countries. Its broad interests are new open technologies and draws geek culture enthusiasts as its participants. The regional NSND events are held in different cities in the Balkans - Belgrade (Serbia), Split (Croatia) and Pristine (Kosovo).

2011/2010

Developing the National Policy for Free Software
Free Software Macedonia has worked together with the "Metamorphosis" Foundation and the Macedonian Ministry for Information Society and Administration on the development of National Policy on Free Software. The process of development included various stakeholders from the civic sector, academia, public institutions and businesses.

2009

Founding the KIKA Hacklab in Skopje
Regular weekly activities since 2009:
Monday - GNU/Linux First Aid
Wednesday - Mobile app development / Art of Computer programming
Thursday - Ruby / Python programming
Saturday - Spodeli Znaenje (Knowledge Exchange)

Organizing movie evenings "Share Cinema" (Spodeli Kino)
Held every second Wednesday of the month in collaboration with NGO Compressor

2007

OLPC Project with UNDP Macedonia (https://www.undp.org.mk)
Free Software Macedonia has worked together with UNDP Macedonia on their OLPC Project and was responsible for upgrading the software on all of the XO laptops used in the selected primary schools

Software Freedom Day
An event marked as notable by Software Freedom International

Work on "Support to e-Governance initiatives based on Free/Open Source Software at the local level in FYR Macedonia" (2006/2007) project, implemented by UNDP Macedonia

2006

International workshop on FLOSS usage in Government and Education in Macedonia, organized by Free Software Macedonia
(https://slobodensoftver.org.mk/workshop/)

Work on the National Strategy for Information Society
Free Software Macedonia has collaborated with the task force that prepared the e-Citizens pillar of the National Strategy for Information Society, a document later adopted by the Macedonian Parliament

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES

Collaboration with State Universities in Skopje and Bitola
The collaboration has been established in the form of lectures for the students of these public academic institutions. The students from the department of Journalism and E-business in Skopje and students from the Technical Faculty in Bitola attend these annual lectures. The work in Bitola is done by a local GNU/Linux Users Group - Lugola (https://www.lugola.net/).

Public awareness initiatives
The public awareness initiatives are also a big part of the work of the NGO. Free Software Macedonia has been carrying out public initiatives concerning the possible negative implications of the strategic partnership agreement that the Government of R. of Macedonia signed with the Microsoft corporation. Free Software Macedonia also monitors government activities in implementing e-government solutions by releasing software that is for obligatory use. The latest example was a software application from the Pension and Disabilities Insurance Fund that was against the recommendations made in the National Strategy for Information Society.

Free Software Flood (2004) (https://www.slobodensoftver.org.mk/freesoftwareflood/)
A "flood-event" through which Free Software Macedonia achieved world fame.