



Building a digital commons of Public Administration for OS software: the experience of CSI-Piemonte

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Roadmap

- The “Italian contest”: law and other stories
- Who we are and what we have to do with OS
- The first year of CSI’s Open Source Centre of Competence:
 - What we have done,
 - What we are doing
 - A new challenge: from “open by design” to “community by design”

— The Italian contest: open by law

Italian Digital Public Administration Code (D.Lgs. 82/2005)

«Public administrations acquire computer programs ..., following a comparative assessment of a technical and economic type [...] where the technical and economic comparative assessment... motivates the impossibility of accessing solutions ...free software or open source codes..., the acquisition of proprietary computer programs is allowed” (art. 68)

*“The public administrations who are holders of solutions ... have the obligation to make available the relevant source code, complete with the documentation and released in public repository **under an open license**... to other public administrations or legal entities that intend to adapt them to their needs (art. 69)*

► **Reuse becomes a *species* of the open source genus**

Before... *The public administrations who are holders of computer programs [...] **must make them available in source format**, complete with the **available** documentation, in free use **to other public administrations** [...]*

— The Italian contest: open by law /1

Piedmont Regional Law 9 / 2009 - Rules on computer pluralism, on the adoption and dissemination of free software and on the portability of IT documents in public administration.

*The Region uses **open source computer programs** and open formats for the electronic distribution of documents [...] In the event of adoption of proprietary formats, the Region motivates the reasons for its choice and also makes available a version, as close as possible to the same data, in free format [art. 4]*

*The Region uses in its activity computer programs of which it holds the source code. **The availability of the source code allows the Region to modify the computer programs so that they can be adapted to their needs.**[...] the Region, in choosing computer programs, promotes the adoption **programs belonging to the free software category** and the programs whose code can be inspected by the license holder. [...] [art. 6]*



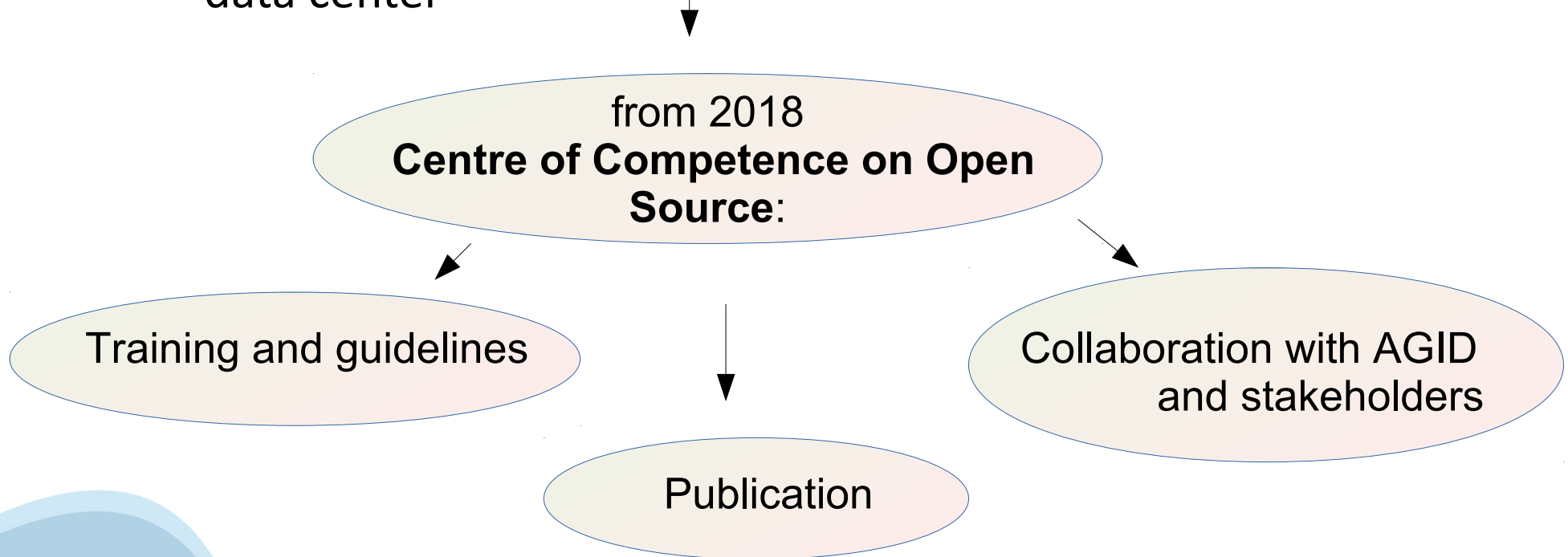
The Italian contest: the Agid guidelines

- Publication of all owned software (personalizations included) developed over the last 5 years
- Standard guidelines for repository and license choice
- Advice on how to maintain an open solution on a public repository
- **Strong endorsement for coordination and collaboration**
- A reference platform: Developers Italia

— CSI-Piemonte: who we are

A in-house **consortium** of more than 100 local Public Administration members (main members: Piedmont Region and City of Turin)

- ▶ Management of our members' IT systems , including:
 - architectural and software design and development,
 - IT infrastructure provision and management through our own data center



— CoE open source: first projects

- **Nivola**



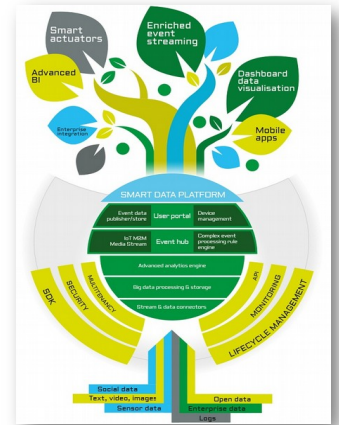
- An open source platform to provide services to PAs
- <https://github.com/Nivola> - GPL3

- **CSIAatlante**

- a QGIS Plugin to guide end users in organized access to data and geo services
- <https://github.com/SITA-RegionePiemonte/CSIAatlante> - GPL3

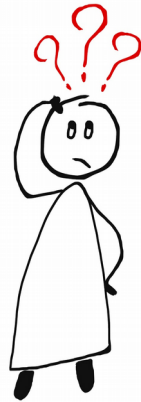
- **Yucca**

- EUPL 1.2
- 2019 Reuse award
- <https://github.com/yucca-sdp/yucca-sdp>



CoE open source: a new challenge/1

- A lot of SWs are published, but just a few of them are used...



..what to do in order to build a good project? → able to produce SW which will be actually useful and used

...consider that...

A taylor made suit is not always the best choice

Ownership does not always mean management

CoE open source: new challenge/2

- We need a plan! (also legally):
 - Share what you really own
 - Share what can be really sharable (before and after publication)
- **Adopt a strategy first**, and *then* devise the needed technical and juridical tools

— First: Regain real ownership...

- The problem of “old” reuse: legacy and lock-in



- Build a project really usable:
 - Ownership of ad hoc development
 - Compatibility of third party AND background
 - Draft a good contract (be ready to defend!) and monitor the development

— ...and only for what you really need!/1

- **When a solution works, just interact** with the community already existing:
 - You develop, I use (and test)
 - You develop, I commit
 - You develop worldwide, I release my little italian cookie...
[the “Memora” experience]
 - You develop, but look, maybe this is something useful...
[“the GIS experience”]



—...and only for what you really need! /2



a digital platform developed on behalf of Piedmont Region to manage cultural assets -based on **Collective Access (GPL3)**

- **CSI contributes to the international community**, which guarantees an high technical level and continuous updates
- it **has developed a specific solution** to interact correctly with national dataset (“dati.beniculturali.it) which **will be published on Developers Italia**

CSI got in touch with thw Qgis community in order to share its portable version – but not adjourned to v.3 – more interested in model than code – in stand by



world



- Not always a MoU is needed, but sometimes a (in)formal agreement is useful (...always with transparency and equality)
- it demands also a new “internal” approach:
 - from the HR office (I share consortium’s assets...)
 - from the marketing office (I share client’s assets...)

Second: share what is really sharable (and hopefully useful)

- Once a controlled ownership has been achieved, try to **identify** from the beginning a **collaboration model between PAs**, using open source as a tool to avoid:
 - proliferation of similar projects and
 - lost fork (and money)
- **What is worth** to be published?
 - what is inside technically and legally fine ...AND...
 - what really can make some difference (search for allies!)

New challenge:

from open by design to community by design

Community by design for “(re)new” project/1


- Build a community *before* publication:
 - Who wanna join to open the “old reuse”: ?
 - Get in touch with PAs who have already re-used
 - Adopt a new collaboration protocol to “reuse” other PAs solutions: collaborate to open the code
 - look for partnerships for publication: a survey (what are you / would you like to develop? etc)

Community by design for “(re)new” project /2

- Build a community *after* publication:
 - Use repository to propose coordination and co-development
 - Propose a membership contract with a management model (from a mere coordination to a co-development)
- common issue:
 - Ip management
 - Maintenance
 - Trust and SLA
- Search for a national endorsement



— Some ideas for a public reuse 2.0

- **Coordination** (project published by a single PA, which is also maintainer): a commitment for public reusers to commit respective “local” developments and to coordinate periodically (the property remains undivided – local personalization does not fork)
 - **Co-development** (*pre or after* publication): a commitment for public reusers to share roadmap and development together through a common repository: property is shared and a sort of steering committee is needed (increases complexity: rules for investment and responsibility? Etc.)
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Some ideas for a public reuse 2.0 /1

- **“shared-development”**: a co-development, but each PA takes responsibility of a definite block: the whole is a common project, but each block has a different (and autonomous) maintainer
- **“incremental development”**: take an existing project and create something more/different: maybe the creator can become a user

——PA open community: no lock-in

- Some points to pay attention to:
 - The public maintainer can be one or more, but if each PA is free to look for a supplier, concurrency will be preserved
 - Open source is a bazaar, but for PAs some help from the top could be welcome, in order to coordinate public investment properly

Community by design

- **Contract** to guarantee real ownership and compatibility (no lock-in, no legacy)
- **Protocol** to share knowledge, propose common project, share investment and property
- **New collaborative models** to preserve effectiveness through trustworthiness (a step-by-step approach can help)





Thanks!



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