

What's free software?

Free software is software that can be freely used, modified, and redistributed. When users have all these freedoms, the result is that the software is under the control of the users and not the other way around.

The complete definition, written in the 80s by FSF, consists of 4 freedoms:

0. To run the software for any purpose
1. To study the software's source code and modify it to do as you wish
2. To redistribute copies
3. To distribute your modified versions

"Everybody needs a hacker"

Enough free software already exists to replace most, if not all, of the EP's software, and it's an obvious match for the EU's values. We just need to use it in the EP, spread knowledge about it and build awareness. EPFSUG has been set up to make this happen!

How to help

The best way to know about specific needs is to join our mailing list. There you can:

- Help organise events
- Give technical advice and tips
- Write promotional texts and design graphics, websites and flyers

"Edge the Hedgehog"

Our mascot (and logo) is Edge the Hedgehog. The name comes from an Estonian legend: the hero Kalevide was losing a battle because the planks of wood he was using as weapons kept breaking. A small, smooth-skinned creature saved the day by telling him to **use the edge** of the planks instead of the flat. The hero went on to win the battle and he gave the little creature a rough piece of material torn from his coat to keep warm, which is why hedgehogs have spikes.

EPFSUG

Estd. 2011

EPFSUG is a
Free Software User Group
inside the **European Parliament.**

Wanna help?

Upcoming meetings and events are listed on <http://epfsug.eu>



<http://epfsug.eu>

What we'll do



EPFSUG was launched in February 2011 and has grown to having 5 MEPs as **Patrons**, 14 people working in the EP have joined as **Members**, and we have 50 **Supporters**.

As MEPs are elected every 5 years we now need to make sure we will have Patrons also in 2014 and throughout the 8th legislature. The success of tmail and parltrack, and the many events EPFSUG has organised in the Parliament, is a legacy that should be possible to develop further.

For example, EPFSUG is involved in a Debian project to develop and use **Free Software for Parliaments**. You can find more info about the DebianParl project here:

<https://wiki.debian.org/DebianParl>

We have had a Director-General, a Head of Unit, and many other high-level staffers at our meetings. The discussion about free software use inside the EP has finally begun!

Get involved

EPFSUG is run by volunteers like you. The more help we get, the more free software there'll be in the EP.

Meetings

As well as EP events, we frequently meet outside the EP. Usually it's for **carrot cake** at a café close by. Meetings and events are open and announced on the website and the mailing list, and everyone's welcome.

Contact us

If you want to read more about us, become a member or supporter of EPFSUG, or just join our discussions, go to these websites:

- **Main site:** epfsug.eu
- **Etherpad:** pad.epfsug.eu
- **Mailinglist:** epfsug.eu/wws/lists

Free software and the EP need each other

Free software can help the EP to ensure that all its activities are conducted with the utmost transparency. With free software, the EP can examine what the software does, perform independent security audits, and make sure all documents, procedures and multimedia files are available in formats that can be supported by any software anywhere.

Free software would also free the EP from vendor lock-in. The EP's software could be supported, modified and developed internally. It could also be maintained and improved by any external company, including Europe's small- and medium-sized businesses. And by publishing its software as free software, the money EP spends on it becomes an investment for everyone.

Using free software inside the EP would probably also help when it comes to understanding laws about copyright, patents, IT procurement, open standards, and other topics touching computing and the internet.