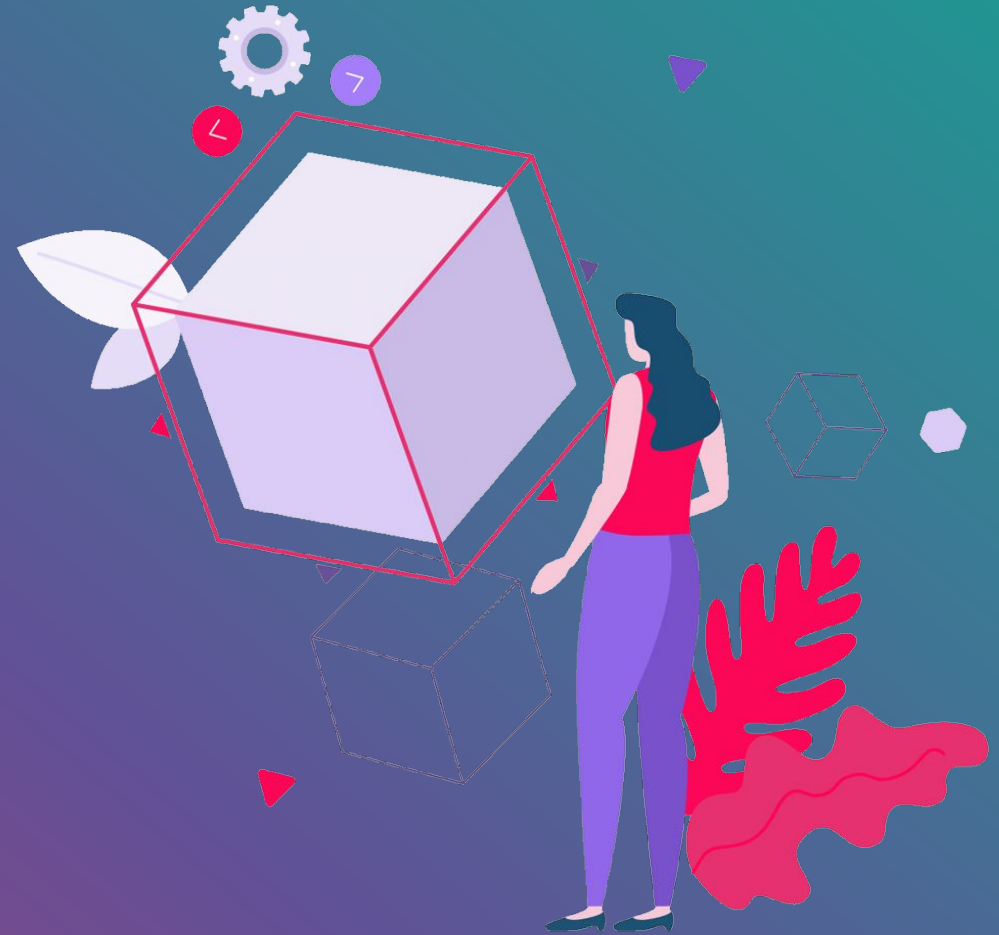




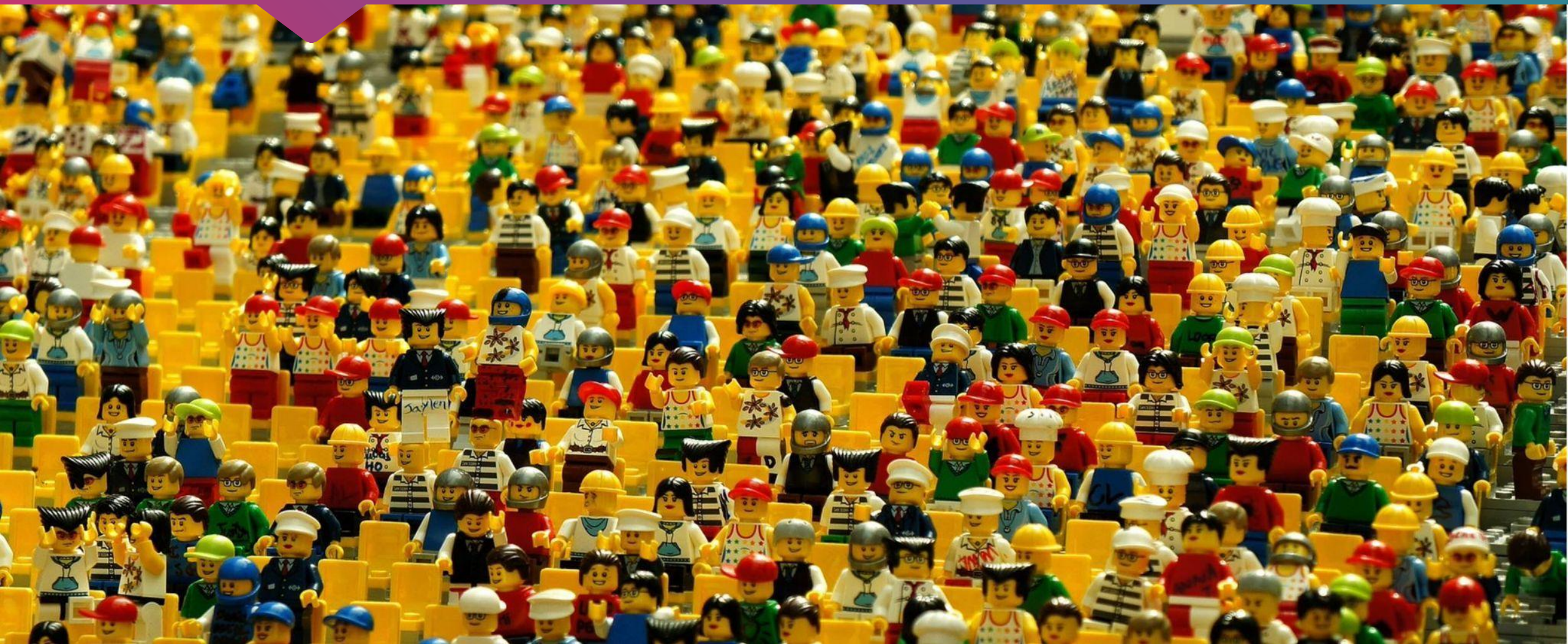
Webinar Series
**PUBLIC POLICIES
FOR DIGITAL COMMONS**



05 March 2025 | Online



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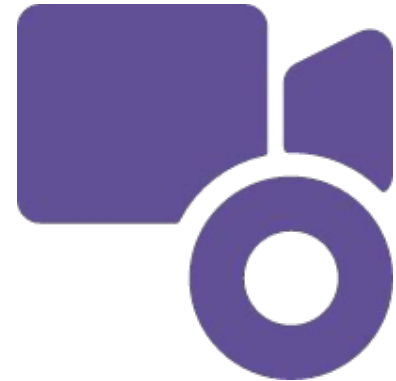
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A few tips for today

SOME USEFUL INFORMATIONS

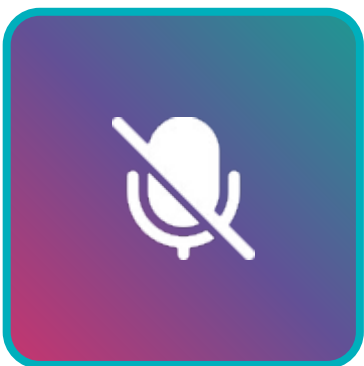
THE EVENT WILL BE RECORDED!

A recording of the workshop
will be made available on our website
and on our peertube channel
(https://video.ngi.eu/c/ngicommons_channel/videos).



Netiquette

FOR THE ONES PARTICIPATING ONLINE



**Mute your
microphone**



**Turn off your
camera**



**Use the
public chat**



**Raise your
hand**

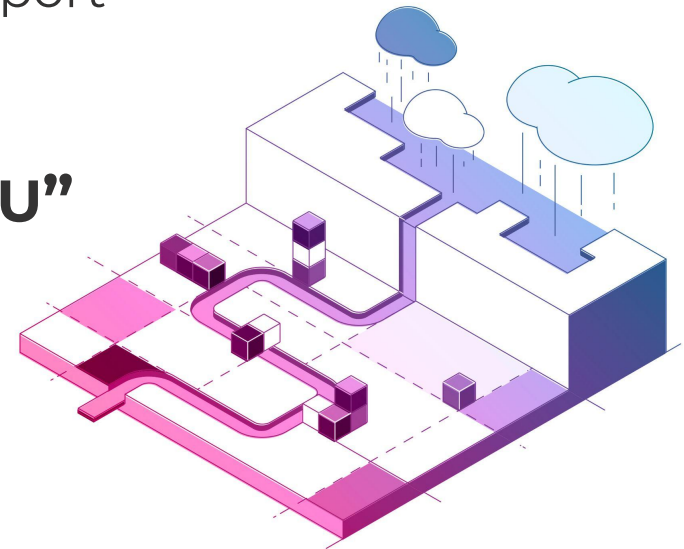
Welcome and introduction

13:30-13:40



Introducing the latest Policy Mapping Report
**“From Open Access to Collective
Governance: Two Decades of
Digital Commons Policies in the EU”**

Jan Krewer
Open Future Foundation



What are Digital Commons?

What are Digital Commons?

1. A digital resource

from data to software

2. A governance system

a governance system with established rules for access and sharing to ensure the long term maintenance of the resource (Ostrom)

3. A community

coordinated not through pricing or subordination but through voluntary peer production (Benkler)

What are Digital Commons?

From communities to global infrastructures

- Digital commons like Wikipedia and Apache have evolved into essential global infrastructures with millions of daily users.
- 96% of commercial code incorporates OSS, and 76% of all code is open source (OSSRA). OSS forms the backbone of digital systems.

The economic value of digital commons

- OSS contributes €65–€95 billion annually to the EU's GDP (DG Connect)
- Globally, OSS's market value is estimated at \$8.8 trillion (Nagle)
- Beyond software, Wikimedia Commons' images alone are valued at \$28.9 billion (Erickson et al.).

The Stack: An Accidental Megastructure (Bratton)

- Digital commons have formed a complex, intertwined stack of technologies—a shared foundation for tech companies, governments, industries, and societies (Berlinguer).

Reviewing past policies to support Digital Commons

From Open Access to Collective Governance: Two Decades of Digital Commons Policies in the European Union

From Open Access to Collective Governance

*Two Decades of Digital Commons Policies
in the European Union*



 OPEN FUTURE  NGI COMMONS
January 2025

Unlike previous studies that have examined subsets of Digital Commons, such as open source software (OSS) or Open Data, this report offers a holistic perspective.

It integrates various resources and initiatives under the broader framework of Digital Commons, presenting a comprehensive view of how these policies have evolved.

- Policies Promoting the Adoption of Open Source Software (OSS);
- Policies Promoting Open Access to Knowledge ;
- Policies Promoting Open Data ;
- Policies Promoting Open Source Hardware.

From Open Access to Collective Governance: Two Decades of Digital Commons Policies in the European Union

Initially, efforts centered on open access, emphasizing **transparency and the free circulation of knowledge, data, and software** to drive economic and societal benefits. Notorious examples include:

- 2003 Directive on Public Sector Information reuse ;
- 2012 European Commission's recommendation for open access to publicly funded research.

EU pioneered the adoption of OSS for the modernization of its administrations: **14 countries in the EU have adopted legally binding documents to support public sector adoption of OSS tools** to avoid vendor lock-ins and for increased transparency, interoperability, and cost-efficiency.

From Open Access to Collective Governance: Two Decades of Digital Commons Policies in the European Union

In the past decade, policy priorities have evolved to **address the governance and collective management of digital infrastructures**, driven by concerns over digital sovereignty, following the Snowden revelations, but also the rise of a few dominant platforms, and global tensions around digital value chains.

- Policies Promoting Interoperability and Open Standards ;
- Policies Mobilizing Digital Commons for Industrial Strategies and Economic Development ;
- Policies Supporting the Distributed Ownership of Critical Digital Resources.

Policies Promoting Interoperability and Open Standards

Policies evolved to not only support open resources but also to invest in the infrastructures and institutions that facilitate their sharing. **Interoperability has become a central strategy** for both private and public sectors. Corporations leverage it to integrate internal systems and control external access via APIs.

A growing focus on mutualized infrastructures for publishing and data sharing is exemplified by initiatives like :

- **Nordic Institute for Interoperability Solutions** - managing the X-Road solution for data-sharing ;
- **Europeana** - a meta-aggregator and platform for digitised European cultural heritage collections ;
- **European Open Science Cloud** - data infrastructure and services for research.

Policies Mobilizing Digital Commons for Industrial Strategies and Economic Development

EU countries also began broadening their OSS policies to address goals beyond cost-efficiency and administrative modernization. This shift aligned the EU with regions like Asia, where countries such as South Korea and China had already **incorporated OSS into industrial strategies to strengthen local ICT industries and achieve technological independence.**

In the EU, similar approaches have been adopted in key areas like chips, cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), and the automotive industry. For example:

- The EU has invested **€270 million in high-performance processors based on RISC-V**, an open source architecture for chip designs ;
- The EU supported the development of open source middleware for cloud computing as part of the **Important Project of Common European Interest (IPCEI) on Cloud Infrastructure and Services.**

Policies Supporting the Distributed Ownership of Critical Digital Resources

Some policy initiatives aim to **empower societies through distributed ownership of critical digital resources**. Such frameworks that prioritize "public-civic-private cooperation", emphasizing collective governance, resilience, respect for digital rights, and interoperability.

- The **Next Generation Internet (NGI)** fosters trust and decentralization by funding projects that promote interoperability and user control.
- Initiatives like the **Sovereign Tech Agency** map dependencies and support Digital Commons while preserving their own autonomy.
- **Platform cooperatives** are supported in several European cities to ensure fair conditions for workers and greater control over intermediation services.
- In the field of open data, EU-supported projects like **Citizen Observatories** and partnerships such as the French IGN-OpenStreetMap integrate citizen-generated data into policymaking and public resources.

Conclusion

Recommendations on Current Gaps and Challenges

Challenges : fragmented funding, a lack of long-term support, and insufficient public sector capacities.

- **Mainstreaming Digital Commons into European policies:** Embedding the culture and practices of Digital Commons across member states and aligning them with existing policy frameworks and indicators.
- **Investing in technologies and the institutions that sustain them:** Supporting both the technological foundations and the governance structures necessary for the long-term sustainability of Digital Commons.
- **Scaling impact by increasing financial support and pooling resources:** Addressing fragmentation through resource integration and fostering collaboration across member states and stakeholders.
- **Mobilizing Digital Commons to achieve the green transition:** Strategically aligning Digital Commons with environmental policies to foster innovation in sustainable technologies and systems.

Tensions Between Openness and Digital Sovereignty

Longstanding EU support for open internet principles and public infrastructures like Galileo (public standards, transparency, demilitarization). Openness indeed empowers users with:

- Control over technology (no vendor lock-in)
- Security (possibility to check for vulnerabilities)

But support for open principles is being challenged by:

- Rising global tensions, cybersecurity threats, and market competition.
- Politicization of OSS governance: RISC-V move to Switzerland (amid US-China tensions), launch of the OpenAtom Foundation (China), etc.

The EU needs to find a way to **balancing openness vs. strategic autonomy**: Gaia-X – an example of the EU struggling to support local ecosystems within open frameworks.

Keynote speech

13:40-14:00



“The case for a European Sovereign Tech Fund.”

Felix Reda

*Open Knowledge Foundation Germany,
GitHub*

Public Policies for Digital Commons: panel discussion and Q&A

14:00-14:50



Paul Keller

Open Future Foundation,

Moderator



Emma Ghariani

*Open Source and Digital Commons
Division - French Prime Minister
Services*



Diego Naranjo

*Independent human rights expert
specialised on digital rights*

Wrap-Up and Conclusion

14:50-15:00



Robbert Van Kranenburg
Martel Innovate



FORUM
2025

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Loading event...

Building an Open Internet Stack for European Digital Sovereignty



Albert Borschette Congress Center
Brussels, Belgium



19 June 2025 | 9:30 - 18:10
20 June 2025 | 9:00 - 16:30

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