

Public announcement:

The Municipality of Pilea-Hortiatis installs LibreOffice.

Much has been written and said about the advantages of Free Software programmes in the Public sector. The benefits are numerous and of critical importance, but while some of them only become obvious after a certain period of time, some others can immediately make the difference. In the difficult times of economic crisis that our country is going through, the one benefit that, unquestionably, gets immediate publicity, is the important savings of public money that can be achieved, in favour of the local Municipality!

The IT Department of the [Municipality of Pilea-Hortiatis](#), after a fruitful discussion with [GreekLUG](#) (NGO/NPO for the adoption of Open Standards and promotion of Free Software), proceeded to the installation of [LibreOffice](#) in all its premises.

Up to now, 91 installations have successfully been completed:

- At the Municipality's head offices, in Panorama: LibreOffice 3.4 was installed in 75 work stations.
- At the Pilea local Municipal Offices: LibreOffice 3.4 in 15 work stations,
- At the Asvestohori Municipal Offices: LibreOffice 3.4 in (1) work station.

Remain to be completed: 45 work stations in Pilea, 10 work stations in Asvestohori and one (1) work station at the locality of Filyro.

At the completion of this work, there will be a total of 147 LibreOffice installations!

Considering that the current market price of MS Office for the Public sector is around 380€ per licence, this means that this move will have achieved ***savings* in the order of 70000€!*** (*IVA incl.)

From its side, GreekLUG, as an Association supporting and promoting Free Software, but also cooperating with the Municipality of Pilea-Hortiatis, helped out by suggesting solutions for the implementation of the automatic Greek language spelling-

check files and offering advice regarding the latest LibreOffice extensions and plugins.

Everyone can legally download LibreOffice [from the Web](#), completely for free. The programme offers an interface with all its options and menus entirely in Greek, as well as a Users' manual (either as a [PDF](#) file, or as an [.odt](#) document).

As we saw earlier, its free nature means that it can help the Public sector achieve great savings, not only due to its free distribution model, but it also prevents the Public services from paying out further money, in order to renew the proprietary Licences for the non-free office programmes already existing.

The LibreOffice suite includes [several productivity programmes](#): the word processor Writer, the spreadsheet Calc, the Impress programme for the creation of multimedia presentations, a mathematical equation editor called Math, the database managing programme Base and the diagram-builder programme Draw.

It offers a comparable performance to its commercial proprietary counterparts, with which the Municipality was equipped up to now. It receives support from an international community of dedicated users and from the corresponding Greek community. This international network of volunteer supporters and users [offers a solution](#) to every conceivable problem, through the various forums and lists of discussion. The whole project is supervised by a self-governed, meritocratic and independent coordinating organism [The Document Foundation](#), a non-for-profit Foundation, based in Germany.

The LibreOffice suite is distributed under the well known [GNU GPL Licence](#), which guarantees entirely the [4 freedoms](#) that must be respected, if a software is to be called Free Software. The GNU GPL licence offers a guarantee to the users that this programme will remain Free Software forever.

Implementation of Open Standards in LibreOffice, means that the citizens will also have a guarantee of accessibility to their personal data (the management of which they entrusted to the Public authorities), even after many years to come, in the distant

future, as every new version of LibreOffice offers a guaranteed backwards compatibility with all the past versions.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that LibreOffice can open and save files that were, originally, made with other non-free programmes, therefore ensuring an uninterrupted interoperability with the programmes that other users are employing.

This present project constitutes a promising initiative, not only because it allows substantial savings for the Municipality and for our country, in general, but also because it is one of the few cases in the Greek Public administration where a visionary adoption of Free Software is implemented in the context of a major urban Municipality, on a substantial scale, utilizing the knowledge and the contribution of a volunteer Free Software supporting organisation.

We hope that this process will play a role of case model to be followed on a more nationwide scale, that will be applied in other Municipalities and other public services.