



Press release:

The Municipality of Kalamarià installs LibreOffice productivity suite in all of its 170 PC's !

Much has been written about the advantages of Free Software in the Public Sector. The benefits are numerous and of critical importance, but some of them only emerge over time, whilst others, on the contrary, make an immediate impression! At times of dramatic economic crisis, that our country goes through, the single advantage that arguably emerges immediately is the significant cost savings in favour of the City's administration!

The IT Department in the Municipality of Kalamarià has already installed LibreOffice to all of its 125 PC's and is in the process of installing it to an additional 45 PC's, located in various other organizations and bodies under the City Council's supervision. GreekLUG fully supports the transition process and we already offered productive ideas and solutions on the critical issue of supporting users after the adoption of the free office productivity suite.

Up to now, a total of **125 installations** were done (110 in main Townhall + 15 more in [K.E.D.K.A](#))

A. Directorate of Administrative services: LibreOffice 3.6 in **35 PC's**

- 1) Department of Administration & Human Resources
- 2) Department of City's Affairs
- 3) Department of Wardenship and Maintenance of Comunal infrastructure
- 4) IT Department

B. Directorate of Finances: LibreOffice 3.6 in **20 PC's**

- 1) Finance Department
- 2) Special Funds Department
- 3) Comunal Cemetery Department

C. Directorate of Municipal Police: LibreOffice 3.6 in **15 PC's**

- 1) Department of Special in uniform Personnel

D. Directorate of Technical Services: LibreOffice 3.6 in **20 PC's**

- 1) Studies & Works Department
- 2) Land Registry and Comunal Assets Department

E. Directorate of Urban Planning & Urban Planning applications: LibreOffice 3.6 in **10 PC's**

- 1) Department for Urban Planning Applications
- 2) Department for studies of Urban Planning

F. Directorate of Civil Protection, Works, Maintenance & Road signalling/
Directorate of Strret Cleaning – Urban Green: LibreOffice 3.6 in **10 PC's**

- 1) Strret Cleaning Department
- 2) Urban Green Department
- 3) Department for Maintenance of Motorized Vehicles & Appliances

LibreOffice installations in Public Bodies under the City Council's supervision:

1. [K.E.D.K.A](#) (LibreOffice 3.6 installed in **15 PC's**, whilst the operational system Xubuntu Linux 12.10 in 3 PC's)

Another 45 PC's are in the procces of transition to LibreOffice:

1. [DETEK](#) A.E. OTA: there are still **4 installations** to go
2. [I.A.P.E.](#): there are still **3 installations** to go
3. [Photography Museum “Chris Kalemkeris”](#): there are still **2 installations** to go
4. [DOPA & APH](#): there are still **36 installations** to go

After completion of the project, the LibreOffice suite will be installed in a total of 170 PC's! In 70 PC's, the MS Office will also remain installed, as it is still valid the initial license of use that was purchased. In all remaining PC's, LibreOffice will replace the proprietary suite. If we consider that the current MS Office price for the public sector hovers at about 380 € /license, and considering that if the Municipality should decide to purchase new licenses to upgrade to a later MSO version, this will also entail the need for further expenditure in order to replace the old computers. Which means, that with this single move, even by the most conservative estimate, the City's Council will achieve a **total saving of approx.* 85.000 €!** Needless to emphasize the great value of saving such a sum, in the dramatic times that we live in this country. (* VAT included)

GreekLUG - Association of Greek users & friends of FLOSS

From our side, GreekLUG, as an Association of supporters and promoters of Free Software, we collaborated with the Municipality of Kalamarià, helping out with our suggestions, presenting various solutions to achieve an efficient support for the users and proposing some innovative web-based LibreOffice seminars and webinars.

Everybody can download legally LibreOffice from the Internet for free. The software features a context menu with all options in Greek, and a complete user's manual (in PDF, or as an odt file).

Its free nature means, as we saw above, that we can achieve large cost savings for the Public Sector. The LibreOffice office productivity suite includes several modules: a word processor (Writer), a spreadsheet (Calc), a presentation program (Impress), a mathematical equations module (Math), a database management module (Base), etc.

It offers performance that is equal and comparable to the corresponding closed commercial suite, which was mainly installed at the City Council's PC's up to now. Backed by a global community of dedicated users and by the local Greek community. This international network of supporters and users can provide answers to any problem, through various lists and support forums. The main coordinating body for the development of LibreOffice is The Document Foundation, a Germany-based no-profit NGO.

The LibreOffice suite is available under the well known GNU GPL copyleft licence, which ensures that the 4 freedoms are always met, so that the software can truly be considered as free. The GNU GPL license also offers guarantees to the users that the software will always remain free.

It is worth noting that LibreOffice has the ability to open and save files created with other non-free programmes (like MSO), thus ensuring seamless communication with their users.

Besides, the implementation of Open Standards in LibreOffice, means that citizens will have guaranteed access to their files (which they entrusted to the State), even after 99 years, given the backward compatibility guarantee of their documents with all previous versions of Open Standards.

This event constitutes a promising initiative, as it is going to save considerable amounts for the City's Council and for our country. After the pioneering examples of the Municipalities of [Pilea-Hortiatis](#) and [Heraklion](#), the [Municipality of Kalamaria](#) is now added to the list with Greek public bodies who adopted a switch to Free Software on a large scale, utilizing the knowledge and the contributions of a voluntary organization supporting FLOSS.

Given Greece's critical financial circumstances and taking into account that many other European countries have already begun moving, with great success, at the same direction, it now becomes imperative for Greece to adopt Free Software and Open Standards on a nation-wide scale.

To achieve this goal, actions similar to the one described above, i.e. the complete replacement of the MSO with LibreOffice, can be an excellent first step. ***It is also necessary to organize Free Software workshops and conferences, in order to highlight the major advantages of the adoption of free software in the public sector and to discuss widely the organizational and planning issues involved, so that we can achieve the best possible transition experience. It is also of critical importance to propose efficient solutions for the support of users and these should be offered by local Greek Free software companies.***

GreekLUG is determined to make a major contribution in this direction.

We propose setting up a three-parties cooperative alliance, to be formed by the local Universities, the involved Public Bodies (Municipalities, Regions, etc) ***and the various free software communities*** (GreekLUG, Ubuntu Greek community, LibreOffice Greek Community, FSFE, etc.), ***aiming to pool together all available expertise.*** In such a way, we can increase the current impetus that seems to be developing in Greece, in favour of Free Software adoption. This will lead in serious benefits for the entire public sector and will give a decisive helping hand towards developing the Greek software industry.