Declaration on Free and Open Source Software

by the Workshop on Free and Open Source Software of the „ Greening the Cities in the European Union" Conference organized by the European Greens.

As Greens we aim to work towards an "Information ecology" in the same way we do for the environment. We promote a sustainable information society with free access to information and communication technologies, an equitable sharing of knowledge and cooperative working structures, privacy and diversity of software.

Free and Open Software demonstrate every day the strength and the efficiency of the model of cooperative development – notions of exchange, knowledge sharing, democracy and diversity belong to the areas where our Green representatives can make a difference – and numerous experiences have proven so.

At the core of our understanding of green policy in this fields, we recommend the following points, specifically about the way we manage our public administrations and information systems:

We demand that governments on all levels promote the introduction and use of free and open source software within their governmental bodies and public administrations as a starting point to enforce open standards and take all necessary measures to prevent the creation of monopolies.

We want our governments to make use of free and open source software to promote the equitable participation to e-government services and public information to citizens regardless of their gender, ethnic origin and socially disadvantaged groups in order to ensure their active participation and exchange information and knowledge.

We encourage governments to adapt their public procurement procedures to ensure fair competition between open source and proprietary software and promote the use of free and open software in particular within the educational system and towards end users.

We demand that governments and the European Union to ensure that source code of software developed and financed through public funds be distributed under Free and Open Source Licences, unless there are valid reasons to the contrary.