

Julia REDA



Member of the European Parliament

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Dear Vice-President Ansip,
Dear Commissioner Gabriel,
Dear Director-General Ingestad,
Dear Director-General Viola,
Dear Director Gageik,

We are writing to you as the three Members of the European Parliament sponsoring the ongoing Free and Open Source Software Audit (FOSSA) preparatory action.

After the successful conclusion of the FOSSA pilot project in 2016, we proposed to renew FOSSA into a preparatory action with the aim of establishing it as a permanent budget item.

The FOSSA project was conceived as a consequence of the discovery of severe security vulnerabilities in Free and Open Source Software (FOSS). FOSS is used as a shared resource in the industry, and for essential infrastructure components of the Internet. The quality and reliability of such software components is crucial to the industry and the general public.

By means of comprehensive software inventories, the FOSSA project could demonstrate the important role of FOSS within the European Commission and other EU institutions. It helped create a budgetary and contractual framework for the EC to perform actions (e.g. software audits, bug bounties, hackathons, and further supporting actions) that contribute to the security and reliability of FOSS components, and has established important relations with the IT security community and FOSS practitioners. Further, FOSSA has contributed to the EC's Open Source Strategy and facilitated its renewal.

The European Parliament is committed to continuing the actions and intents of FOSSA, as evidenced by its first reading position on the *Regulation establishing the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and the Network of National Coordination Centres*, adopted on 17 April 2019, that explicitly references FOSSA as an example for experiences the Centre should make use of (Amendment 39, Recital 28a (new)).

The FOSSA project, throughout the five years since it was started, has contributed to the resilience and the security not only of the software projects. It has led to positive public attention with an audience that is generally difficult to reach for the EU institutions ("*...the EU protected almost everybody from that [vulnerability].*" [1]). It has illustrated that the EU has an interest in establishing FOSSA, its actions, intents and lessons learnt, as a permanent item in the Union budget.

We are convinced that actions such as the permanent investment into the disclosure and remedy of software vulnerabilities in shared resource and infrastructure FOSS projects are in the interest of the European Union. Therefore, we urge the European Commission to make a concrete proposal for the continuation and permanent financing of FOSSA.

Sincerely,

MEP Julia Reda MEP Marietje Schaake MEP Max Andersson

[1] "PuTTY in your hands: SSH client gets patched after RSA key exchange memory vuln spotted" (The Register, 19 March 2019) https://www.theregister.co.uk/2019/03/19/putty_patched_rsa_key_exchange_vuln/