APELL welcomes the European Commission's new Open Source Software Strategy 2020-2023
Promising progress at the European level should lead to similar efforts in the Member States.

Brussels, Belgium — Europe's Open Source Business Association APELL welcomes the European Commission's new Open Source Software Strategy for 2020-2023. With this much anticipated Communication, the Commission positions itself at the forefront of Digital Government by clearly emphasising openness as a driver of innovation, digital autonomy and a focus on citizens and users. It shows that the Commission understands that the power of Open Source goes beyond code, as it enables an open paradigm, through which entire organisations can be transformed to "connect seamlessly across organisational silos and borders".

The Commission is taking a bold approach to open source under the theme of "Think Open". As such, it "sets out a vision for encouraging and leveraging the transformative, innovative and collaborative power of open source, its principles and development practices." The commitments made in the strategy clearly indicate that thinking around open source has matured beyond cost savings in IT, to understand it as a strategic catalyst.

APELL looks forward to being an active contributor to the deepening of knowledge and understanding of Open Source within the European Commission and beyond.

APELL has high hopes for the initiative of the Commission, as it offers an excellent opportunity to set an example for the Member States. The key areas for Member States to look to are:

- That "Open-source solutions will be preferred when equivalent in functionalities, total cost and cybersecurity"
- On digital sovereignty, the Commission text notes that "Open source impacts the digital autonomy of Europe". It holds the potential to give Europe a chance to create and maintain its own digital approach and allow it to maintain control of its processes, information and technology.
- The Commission's commitment to starting an Open Source Programme Office to "guide, encourage and nudge change across the organisation." This organisational construct is fundamental in shifting the working culture toward 'Open' internally but should come with an external, networked component, connecting to other OSPOs, the private sector, Open Source foundations and NGOs focused on writing code for the public sector.

About APELL:
APELL (Association Professionnelle Européenne du Logiciel Libre) is Europe's Open Source Business Association. Founded in 2020 to bring national Open Source Software organisations together into a European network to provide them with peer support and collective marketing, as well as capacity building and policy support for public affairs, both nationally and on the EU-level.