

Office of Dr Caroline Lucas  
Green Party MEP for SE England  
Suite 58, The Hop Exchange  
24 Southwark Street  
London SE1 1TY

*Reply received by email on 15 April 2010.*

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for your email about open source software and interoperability, which Caroline has asked me to respond to on her behalf.

Greens here in the UK and in the European Parliament have given full and continued support to the promotion of open source software. For example, we urged all MEPs to sign up to a written declaration (similar to an Early Day Motion in Westminster) that calls on the European Parliament to switch to a freeware operating system. Such a move would be economically practical in the current climate, as well as a matter of principle.

In 2005, the Green Group played an instrumental role in ensuring that the European Commission's plans to introduce software patents were thrown out, arguing that they posed an unacceptable threat to the development of open source software. You can find out more about the campaign at

[http://www.greens-efa.org/cms/default/rubrik/8/8207.save\\_our\\_software@en.htm](http://www.greens-efa.org/cms/default/rubrik/8/8207.save_our_software@en.htm)

Whilst the immediate threat to open source software had declined, Caroline remained actively involved in ensuring that other legislation did not curtail the industry. For example, proposed legislation on telecommunications contained some recommendations that might have a negative impact on open source's development. As a result, the Greens sought to amend the proposed text and send a clear signal to the Commission about Parliament's commitment to open source.

As you recognise the EU's new Digital Agenda and the Interoperability Framework for Public Services bring the issue back into prominence and despite a commitment to the open source principle pose a serious practical risk. Please be assured of Caroline and the Green Party's commitment to continuing to stand up for open source and to ensuring that any legislation protects the sector.

You might be interested in this resolution that was adopted by MEP recently on the Digital Agenda, which includes a call for greater investment in the use of open source software in the EU. See <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2010-0066&format=XML&language=EN>

Thank you for taking the time to write to Caroline and you can read more about her work at [www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk](http://www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk)

Kind regards,

*Cath Miller*  
*Constituency Coordinator and Researcher*

Tel: 020 7407 6281

Email: [carolinelucas@greenmeps.org.uk](mailto:carolinelucas@greenmeps.org.uk)  
[www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk](http://www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk)

*Since this reply was received, Dr Lucas has been elected to the UK Parliament, becoming the country's first green Member of Parliament. She has stood down as a member of the European Parliament (being succeeded by Keith Taylor) to allow her to focus on her duties as a Westminster MP.*