Mobile App, redesign, new dev, promotion... let’s build a bright future for PeerTube!

Developing an ethical and emancipating alternative to YouTube, Twitch or Vimeo without Surveillance Capitalism’s means is a huge undertaking. Especially for a small French not-for-profit that already manages several projects to promote digital commons.

VS: Let’s take back some ground from the tech giants!

Thanks to your donations to our not-for-profit, Framasoft is taking action to advance the ethical, user-friendly web. Find a summary of our progress in 2023 on our Support Framasoft page.

➡️ Read the series of articles from this campaign (Nov. – Dec. 2023)

We (Bonjour ! We are Framasoft !) have been developing PeerTube for six years. Two weeks after releasing the sixth version of the software, let’s take a step back on six years of work, examine the huge opportunity that the present times hold for PeerTube, and look towards what we plan to do next year to prepare for its success... if you give us the means to get there!

Click to support Framasoft and
Not a rival, just an alternative

The realization that led us to develop PeerTube is that no one can rival YouTube or Twitch. You would need Google’s money, Amazon servers’ farms... Above all, **you would need the greed to exploit millions of creators** and videomakers, groom them into formatting their content to your needs, and feed them the crumbs of **the wealth you gain by farming their audience into data livestock**.

Monopolistic centralized video platforms can only be sustained by surveillance capitalism.

We wanted small groups such as institutions, educators, communities, artists, citizens, etc. to be able to afford to emancipate themselves from Big Tech’s platforms, without getting lost in the world wide web. We needed to develop a tool to democratize videohosting, so it had to be designed with radically different values in mind.

> And that is what we did. We build PeerTube to empower people, not databases or shareholders.

Today, PeerTube is:

- a **Free-Libre software** (transparency, protection against monopoly)
- you can host **on your server** (self-hosting, autonomy, empowerment)
- to create your video and livestream platform, **with your own rules** (community building, self-management)
- that lets you **federate** (or not!) to other PeerTube platforms through ActivityPub protocol (federation, network, outreach)
- that adds (optional) **peer-to-peer streaming** to classic streaming so it can withstand affluence (resilience, sharing, decentralization)
- where more powerful servers can help less fortunate ones with **redundancy** (solidarity, resilience)
- that can **store videos externally** with S3 storage (adaptability, cost-
efficiency) that can deport CPU-hungry tasks such as video or live transcoding to a dedicated server (efficiency, resilience, sustainability)

So no: PeerTube is not, and will not be a rival to YouTube or Twitch. **PeerTube is powered by other values that those coded into Google’s and Amazon’s ecosystems.** PeerTube is an alternative, and that’s exactly why this is so exciting.

PeerTube is a software: 6 years of developments

In the last six years, with more than 275 000 lines of code, we got:

- From a POC to a fully operative federated video platform with p2p broadcasting, complete with subtitles, redundancy, video import, search tools and localization (PeerTube v1, oct. 2018)
- Notifications, playlists, a plugin system, moderation tools, federation tools, a better video player, a presentation website and an instances index (PeerTube v2, nov. 2019)
- Federated research tool (and a search engine https://sepiasearch.org), more moderation tools, lots of code improvement, UX revamping, and last but not least: p2p livestream (PeerTube v3, Jan. 2021)
- Improved transcoding, channels and instances homepage customization, improved search, an even better video player, filtering videos on pages, advanced administration and moderation tools, new video management tool, and a big code cleaning session (PeerTube v4, Dec. 2021)
- A video editing tool, improved video statistics and metrics display, replay feature for permanent livestreams, latency settings for lives, an improved video player (for mobile displays), a more powerful plugin system, more customization options, more video filtering options, a new and user friendly feedback tool and a renewed presentation website (PeerTube v5, Dec. 2022)
- Account request moderation, « back to live » button, remote transcoding (to deport CPU hungry task on a dedicated server), storyboard (previews in the progress bar), video chapters, improved accessibility, upload a new version of a video, and password-protected videos. (PeerTube v6, Nov. 2023)

And that is just when you only consider the software development part of PeerTube. In order to support and promote this software, we had to build a whole ecosystem.

**PeerTube is also an ecosystem**

PeerTube, nowadays, is also a coding community. On the project forge (online space to contribute on developments), we’ve had more than 400 contributors, 4,300 issues (features and support requests) closed over 6 years and 500 still open, and 12,400 contributions integrated upstream.

As not anyone can familiarize themselves with more than 275 000 lines of code, an easy way to contribute to PeerTube is by developing plugins: there are hundreds of them! Among them, there are the live chat (to get a chat during livestreams), plugins to authenticate against external authentication platforms, annotations to add in the video player, a transcription plugin to automatically create subtitles for your videos or plugins to add monetization to PeerTube videos.

Contributors have also helped by translating PeerTube into more than 36 languages (join them here), by providing answers on our forum, by updating our
official documentation, or by sharing ideas on our Let’s Improve PeerTube feedback tool.

There are now more than a thousand PeerTube platforms all over the world (that we know of ^^), hosting almost a million videos. We have created an instances index that feeds content to SepiaSearch, our search engine for PeerTube videos, channels and playlists. We moderate it according to our terms and conditions, but anyone is free to use the code we develop to create their own index and search engine.

Fortunately, others are working towards promoting and moderating PeerTube content, by creating directories [FR], recommendations threads, moderation tools, Firefox extensions, and all kinds of amazing content.

We promote PeerTube with an official website Joinpeertube.org, where the latest news are shared on the blog and the newsletter. There is also a mastodon account (and an -almost abandoned- account on Twitter). We also spend lots of hours talking to medias, researchers, innovators, communities, contributors, etc.

Fighting dragons with toothpicks

So, how can we estimate the cost of those 6 years of work? Should we just consider development time and the management of the development community (issues, code review, support)?

Should we also count the work done on blogposts, illustrations and promotion material, establishing roadmaps, working with designers, exchanging experience with researchers, videomakers, and amazing projects, some of which we have supported with funds? What about the time for moderating our search engine or cleaning after spammers on our feedback tool?

Even though we cannot pinpoint the exact budget Framasoft spent on PeerTube since 2017, our conservative estimate would be around 500 000 €. Over six years. As we got two grants from the European commission (through the NGI0 Search & Discovery and Entrust programs) totaling 132 000 €, it means that 73,6 % of PeerTube budget came from donations.

Now let’s overestimate the cost of PeerTube to 600 000 € over 6 years, to
make sure we have covered every expense.

*Even then, PeerTube total cost would represent 22 millionth (0.0022 %) of YouTube’s ad revenues last year. Yes, we did the math.*

*(source – 29.243 B USD // 632 853 USD)*

We are - figuratively - fighting dragons with toothpicks. That’s why we think that PeerTube cannot and will not rival YouTube nor Twitch (and even less TikTok that presents a whole other experience).

But, as an alternative, PeerTube is already successful.

Click to support Sepia against the Videoraptor – illustration David Revoy – Licence : CC-By 4.0

**A success in our eyes**

Today, we know of more than 1000 instances (servers on which PeerTube is installed and running), sharing almost a million videos.

As it is not limited by the captology mechanics of an ad-and-attention-based model, **PeerTube offers features not available from tech giants:**
- **compatibility with other social tools** via ActivityPub (Imagine you could tweet a comment to a YouTube video: with Mastodon and PeerTube, you can.)
- **share a video** from a start timecode to a stop timecode (YouTube has caught up with us, since)
- **untempered chronological access to your susscriptions** feed (no need to « click the bell » in addition to subscribing)
- **password-protected videos** (unavailable in YouTube, paid in Vimeo)
- **replace a video** by an updated version

We intended to make PeerTube specifically for people that need (and want) to **share their videos outside of the surveillance capitalism model**. Obviously we all know (and like) some YouTubers and Twitch-streamers, but they are the visible part of the iceberg of online video sharing.

Institutions, Educators, Independent medias, Citizens, and even creators should have the freedom to share videos online without contributing to a company’s monopoly, having to accept forced advertisement, or sacrificing on their audience’s data and privacy. The great news is, some of them have already found such freedom, and it makes us proud:

- **Institutions**
  - European commission
  - Netherlands Institute for sound and vision
- **Educators**
  - French Ministry of Education FOSS-based platform
  - University of Philippines Diliman’s digital learning programs
- **Independent medias**
  - Blast (French independent left-wing online media)
  - Howlround (Theater Commons media based in the Emerson College, Boston)
- **Citizens**
  - Urbanists.video (videos about walkable, livable places)
  - S2S (safe space for deaf and hearing impaired people, videos about/in French Sign Language)
  - Live it live (live music concerts)
- **Creators**
  - Skeptikon (French collective, videos about critical thinking and
scepticism)
- TILvids (Til = Today I Learned, edutainment videos in English, with authorized and official YouTube mirroring)
- Bunseed (French initiative, FOSS-based alternative to Patreon, by and for creators, built upon PeerTube)

We want to build on the recognition PeerTube is getting, that’s why we have planned a lot of work for 2024!

**PeerTube’s roadmap for v7, in 2024**

The features we have planned for the next year of development on PeerTube all have the same goal: facilitate adoption by improving ease-of-use in several ways. As for version 6, most of those features has been chosen from the ideas you shared and voted for on our feedback tool.

We plan to:

- **Add a data export/import system** (with or without video files), so users can easily change their instance.
- Get a full accessibility audit, to facilitate use for people with specific needs, and complete the work done this year (see version 6 release). If we have time left on integrating the report’s recommandations, we will see if and how we could add speech-to-text transcription
- **Add a comment moderation tool** usable for both instance administrators and video uploaders.
- Create a **new moderation tool** to sort content according to preset keywords lists (« far-right dogwhistling words in German », « queerphobic idioms in English », etc). This tool will present corresponding content to instance administrators and moderators, that will then determine if it fits their moderation policy.
- (Technical) **separation of audio and video streams.** Such improvement will unlock the possibility, in the future, to develop and get multi-audio track videos (e.g. multiple languages), or multi-videos track with the same audio stream (e.g. multiple angles)
- **Add a new « audio-only » resolution** (in the « 720p », « 1080p », etc. menu) for our HLS player. It will enable users to only get the audio track
streamed to them, improving sustainability when they only want to listen to a video and look at other tabs.

- Rethink the **sensitive content characterization**. At the moment, you can only tag videos as « Safe For Work » / « Not Safe For Work ». But « sensitive content » can imply lots of cases: violence, nudity, strong language, etc. We will work with designers to think about the appropriate way to characterize and treat such cases.

- **Revamp the video management space.** We have added lots of new features along the years (live and replay, studio editor, etc.)... it’s great, but tabs and menus accumulated. We will work with designers to rethink it from the ground up and make it easy-to-use.

- Get a complete review and implement a **redesign of the experience and interface of PeerTube**. Even though we’ve had lots of help along the way, PeerTube has not benefited of guidance in design from the get-go. We want to think this work as a reboot, where everything (even the orange?) is on the table, if it helps with adoption and ease of use.

![Hep us push back against the Videoraptor- Illustration CC-By David Revoy](image)

**Doubling the dev team for resilience...**

OK, when you go from one to two developers, « doubling » is easier... but it was still a big deal to us.
First, because **Framasoft is a not-for-profit funded mainly by donations.** So far, we’ve had the honor and privilege to get enough support to fund our expenses, the main being our 10 employees. But donation-based economics models are, by definition, highly unpredictable. That is especially true in an economy where inflation, energy costs, etc. make most of our supporters rethink their budget.

Another reason lies within our core values: **we believe in decentralization and networks of small actors** (over growing into giants and monopolies). We also believe that prioritizing humans and care implies to **stay in a small team configuration**, where we truly know each other.

And we think that the way we have applied those values into our not-for-profit is key to the efficiency, the creativity and the talents expressed by our members (both volunteers and employees). That’s why we have worked on limiting Framasoft’s growth, and have set the symbolic limit of « ten employees tops ».

During 2022 and 2023, there were lots of discussions on this topic within Framasoft. On one hand, we can’t keep on developing PeerTube with only one developer (even though someone as talented as Chocobozzz), who could win the lottery, leave, or just change careers. On the other hand, if we hired a new developer, what would be their profile? How can we make sure they would fit in? Can we secure a long lasting job for them?

**In late 2022, Chocobozzz asked us to post an internship offer.** It was both to test if, after 5 years coding solo on PeerTube, teamwork came back easily (it did); but also to train someone on PeerTube’s code core, see how it can be apprehended by newcomers, and how to improve its documentation.

Wicklow joined us for an internship between February and August 2023, and produced the « password protected video features » released in version 6 of PeerTube. **We hadn’t plan to hire him:** we had, then, other profiles in mind, and thought we wouldn’t be able to start a hiring process before 2024. We specifically told him so, as not to give him false hope... But as we benefited from a grant extension from NGI0 program, we also realized that he was a perfect fit in the project, for the team and in our not-for-profit.

**Long story short: we hired Wicklow in September 2023**, just as he graduated, on a one-year contract (that we hope to secure with your help!).
...and to create an iOS/Android mobile app!

This new hire has two goals. First and foremost, we want another developer to become familiar with PeerTube’s core code, and lessen the « bus factor ». Wicklow should also become gradually able to help Chocobozzz in managing the code community.

As the community grows (and we are very thankful), so does the managing workload: answering to issues and support requests on our forum, reviewing code contributions, etc. Even though being present for the community is important, it’s taking up to half of Chocobozzz’s time, and that means even less time to develop new features.

The second and main goal for Wicklow in 2024 would be, with the help of designers, to create and publish an official PeerTube mobile app. Mobile viewing has become the main way to watch videos. Even though there are already mobile apps that can play videos on PeerTube, we feel that an official app could help with PeerTube’s adoption and attractiveness.

For 2024, the app would be limited to finding and watching videos. We want users to be able to use a federated search engine, watch videos and livestreams, log in to their account on their PeerTube instance, access their notifications, subscriptions, playlists, etc. If successful, this first version of the app could be extended to other use-cases and features in the future.

Our plan is to publish this app both on iOS (pending Apple’s review, that can be tricky) and Android... and, as an extended goal (so « if all goes well »), on Android TV as well.
Promoting the PeerTube Ecosystem

PeerTube is more than code, and we want to shed a light on the incredible community that is thriving around this project.

We often see amazing plugins, interesting instances and channels, new initiatives and experiments... that we would like to share. But we seldom have and take time to do so.

In the meantime, we also witness many people wondering if PeerTube allows livestream (it does!) if there is a chat for lives (yes: it’s a great plugin!), or if there are websites to find content on PeerTube (yes again!)

We plan to work on promoting PeerTube’s ecosystem, through the blog and newsletter on our website Joinpeertube, our Mastodon account, and by working on a showcase Peer.tube instance.

To kick off this work, we will go live and answer all your questions about PeerTube during a livestream hosted by Laurens from the Fediverse Report blog and newsletter, on our Peer.Tube channel! You can already go on Mastodon and
ask your questions with the #PeerTubeAMA hashtag.

This AMA (« Ask Me Anything ») will take place tomorrow, Dec 13th, from 6 to 8pm (CET), on this link.

Funded by you... and Europa!

As we stated sooner in this (long) blogpost, we were fortunate enough to get grants from the European Commission program NGI, through the NLnet foundation (many thanks to them!). The previous grants helped us fund a quarter of our six years of work on PeerTube. We are glad to announce that we got another grant for 2024, that will cover planned development costs.

It means that, as it was for 75 % of the work until now, funding the rest of our
plans relies on donations. Communicating about PeerTube and its ecosystem, sharing experience with diverse actors, design costs, community support and management, etc. All those costs will be, as usual, funded by... some of you!

**Our current donation campaign will determine Framasoft budget for 2024**, and from its success we will know if we can secure a stable job for our second developer, while keep on all the other projects and actions that we take on.

Once again this year we need you, your support, your sharing, to help us regain ground on the toxic GAFAM web and multiply ethical digital spaces.

So we’ve asked David Revoy to help us present this on our « Support Framasoft » page, which we invite you to visit (because it’s beautiful) and above all to share as widely as possible:

![Image](image.jpg)

**If we are to balance our budget for 2024, we have three weeks to raise €138,659 : we can’t do it without your help !**

Support Framasoft
Mobilizon V4 : the maturity stage

5 years after its announcement, Mobilizon, our free, federated alternative to Facebook groups and events, is reaching maturity. We take this opportunity to look back on its history and future.

VS ❧: Let’s take back some ground from the tech giants!

Thanks to your donations to our not-for-profit, Framasoft is taking action to advance the ethical, user-friendly web. Find a summary of our progress in 2023 on our Support Framasoft page.

➡️ Read the series of articles from this campaign (Nov. – Dec. 2023)

Five years of Mobilizon

As this is the last major version of Mobilizon to be ported by Framasoft (yes, we’re teasing you a bit ❧ ), we’d like to start with a reminder of the various stages that led us to this v4.

2018: an intention and attentions

Remember: in December 2018 (5 years ago already!), we announced (in French) our intention to develop Mobilizon. Our aim was to offer an alternative to Facebook groups and events, which had become the de facto dominant tool as a platform for mobilisation, whether it was organising a birthday party, a free software conference or a climate protest.

To do this, we decided to do things in the right order, starting by asking different audiences about their real needs and expectations (not those we assumed). The aim was to create a tool that was not only practical and welcoming, but also empowering. For example, we decided to reject any form of social gamification (in Mobilizon you follow groups rather than individuals, we banned infinite scrolling in favour of simple pagination, etc.).
2019: Crowdfunding and first beta version

In May 2019, we launched an appeal for donations to fund the development of a first version. Thanks to the mobilisation and generosity of over 1,000 donors, it was a success, with almost €60,000 raised. Less than 6 months later, we announced a beta version of the software.

This version provided a good foundation for creating and publishing events. However, it still lacked « core » functionalities, such as the ability to register anonymously for an event, or federation (i.e. the ability of a Mobilizon instance (in French) to easily exchange data with other Mobilizon instances, or even Mastodon instances).

2020: a pandemic and a V1

In October 2020, after a few months delay due to a worldwide pandemic, the first stable version (« v1 ») of Mobilizon was released!

This v1 already offered what was to become the core of the software: groups (the central element of Mobilizon), articles, resources linked to a group, the possibility of having several profiles for the same account, the possibility of participating in an event without registering, and... the federation.
2021: notifications and an app

At the end of 2021, we announced version 2 of Mobilizon. One of the main new features was the eagerly awaited integration of a notification system. But also on the menu: time zone management, « RTL » management (for languages written from right to left, such as Arabic or Hebrew), provision of RSS feeds, the addition of sorting filters, the ability to define an event as « online » (without geographical location), public group tracking, etc. There was even the release of a smartphone application developed by Tom79 (thanks again to him!).

2022: Engines and search

The third major version of Mobilizon was released with the regularity of a Swiss watch, one year after v2.

Its main focus was search. It introduced the possibility of federated searches: a search from the « SOMETHING » instance could return results from events hosted on the Mobilizon « ELSE » instance. As with PeerTube’s SepiaSearch metasearch engine, we designed and implemented a Mobilizon-specific engine that allows searches across multiple instances: https://search.joinmobilizon.org

With this release, we have also redesigned the front page of the software. Our aim is to give you more opportunities to discover events and groups you may not have known existed, and to make the diversity of content published on Mobilizon more
2023: waiting for v4...

During 2023 we also quietly released two minor versions. These added anti-spam tools, the ability to manage arbitrary addresses (because an address database can never be perfectly up to date), the ability to use external authentication systems, and the ability to define an external website for people who want to manage registrations outside Mobilizon.

They were also the occasion for bug hunting and improvements to the Mobilizon API, paving the way for one of the most eagerly awaited features of v4 (yes, the teasing is unsustainable 😂).
What’s new in Mobilizon v4?

We’ve done it! Version 4 is finally here! And we’re very proud of the new features it brings!

Private Announcements and Conversations

Event organisers can now send private announcements to attendees. This has been a long awaited feature!

Group or event administrators or moderators can now contact people registered in a group or event directly. You can then write to all these people, or select sub-groups, for example only those who have confirmed their attendance, or conversely those who have not confirmed (or declined). It’s even possible to contact people who have registered without creating a Mobilizon account. This opens up some very interesting possibilities, such as the possibility of communicating important information: a change of location or date, for example.

Please note that this is an announcement system and registrants cannot reply (although moderators can add messages). This is not a forum, but a channel for sharing important information in a more top-down way.
As well as this announcement mechanism, we’ve added a conversation system.

This allows you to contact a group or specific people and chat with them live.

For example, an outsider to an event can contact the group administrator from the event page and exchange messages with them. Think of this conversation system as the « DM » (direct message) or « MP » (private message) system you know from other social platforms.

For those who have a Mastodon account (or equivalent), the magic of Fédivers means that you can even use this conversation feature to send private messages from Mastodon, while the person you are contacting can reply from Mobilizon!
Import and synchronise events from other platforms (Facebook, Meetup, etc.)

Once again, this was one of the most eagerly awaited features of Mobilizon.

But it was also one of the most complicated for us to implement in the software. Because these external platforms (yes, Facebook, we’re looking at you!) are the despots of kingdoms of which you are merely the vassal. If they want to raise the drawbridge over which your data passes, they can do so with the snap of a finger, and there is nothing you or we can do about it.

That’s why we’re announcing this feature as present, BUT with a great deal of reserve and caution.

Nevertheless, we’re excited to introduce this new Mobilizon feature to you!

How does it work?

First of all, please understand that everything that follows takes place... outside of Mobilizon. In an external tool modestly called « Mobilizon Import System » (note that we’ve kept it simple[]).

From this tool, you’ll be able to connect to your Mobilizon account and define your profiles or groups on which you authorise external platforms (such as Meetup or EventBrite) to post. These profiles and groups then become « Destinations ».

Then, simply go to the page of the event you want to synchronise (e.g. https://www.eventbrite.fr/e/billets-street-art-feminisme-743545834607), copy and paste this address into Mobilizon’s import system, and the event will be imported.

In addition to the classic import, it is also possible (depending on the platform) to set up the synchronisation of one or more events. Once synchronised, the new events will be published on your selected Mobilizon profile/group. Event updates on the source (for example, if you change the description on Meetup) will automatically update the event republished on Mobilizon (note that deletions are not currently handled).

Important note: iCal (.ics) event feeds are supported! This means you can have events in Framagenda (or Google Calendar, we won’t judge you (too much)) and
synchronise them in Mobilizon! Nice, isn’t it?

In addition to the iCal format, the platforms currently supported are Eventbrite, Meetup...

Yes, we can see you now, screaming in your head:

« What about Facebook? » «

So Facebook, « It’s complicated » ©

We did all the work on our end and... it works (Yaaaaaaaaaay! []... but only with our « App Developer » account (Oooooooohhh! [])).

We still have to go through several validation steps, and... we have absolutely no hand in it. It’s Facebook’s kingdom, so Facebook decides. Maybe it’ll work for 5 years, 5 months, 5 days. Maybe it won’t work at all. []

Technically, another feature - reserved for developers - that we’ve added is the ability to add « webhooks », which are internal calls that can also act as « destinations » for sources. Events can then be sent to these webhooks, which will do... well, whatever you want them to do! This might be useful for our friends at Transiscope, for example, so that their tool can also import events from other platforms.
The « Mobilizon Import System » was deliberately developed outside the Mobilizon core. It is therefore a separate piece of software. In fact, we think that this software is likely to need a lot of modifications (for example, to correct bugs or to add new platforms such as Démosphère or Agenda Militant) and that there might be an interest in hosting this application outside Mobilizon instances (for example, to share functionality between several instances, or to manage the legal risks imposed on us by third party platforms). So we’ve made it a separate software project, but of course free and self-hosting.

**Other Mobilizon v4 improvements**

Don’t go away! We’ve got more great features to share with you!

First of all, we’ve improved compatibility for tracking other federated event instances (one of the most interesting projects is « Event Federation for WordPress » , which would eventually allow the famous WordPress website/blog engine to be used as an event platform. We talked to the people coordinating this project to share our experiences and incorporated their requests in the form of developments in Mobilizon (which they confirmed in their latest blog post).

Secondly, we have improved the formatting of event descriptions when exporting events and in ICS feeds (which now take into account the status « tentative »,
« confirmed » or « cancelled »).

Also, we changed email registration confirmations for attendees without an account to now include an unsubscribe link.

Finally, Mobilizon is now available on more operating systems and architectures (Debian, Ubuntu, Fedora, arm64, etc.).

**Mission accomplished, Framasoft is ready to pass the baton!**

Framasoft had announced in March 2023 in the Mobilizon roadmap that this v4 would be the last we would develop.

We still strongly believe in the future of this project.

But we’ve reached our goal: we announced an intention and a vision in 2018 and... we’ve fulfilled our mission!

Of course, software is far from bug-free. But anyone involved in software development knows that there will always be things to fix, features to add... It’s never-ending. And we sincerely believe that it’s also important to be able to step back, say to yourself that you’ve kept your commitment, and hand over a project.

The Framasoft team is small: Mobilizon is a salaried developer (yes, only one!), and not even full-time... He is certainly supported by the rest of the association in terms of communication, project management, fundraising, etc. But after five
years, we consider the project a success. But after 5 years, we feel that Mobilizon is stable enough for him to redirect his energy and skills to other projects and missions.

We’re not putting Mobilizon on the shelf!

First of all, Framasoft is committed to maintain this v4 for the next few months (and as long as we can), especially in case of security updates or blocking bugs. We’ll also maintain our public, French-language forum https://mobilizon.fr.

But we won’t be developing any new features.

Secondly, another team (the Kaihuri association, well known to the Mobilizon community as the maintainers of the Keskonfai instance) already has a take-over and contribution project to improve Mobilizon’s handling. They present their project and their ambitions on our forum dedicated to Mobilizon: don’t hesitate to give them your feedback and encouragement (or disagreement, for that matter), but also your desire and ability to contribute.

So, if the community doesn’t mind, in the next few weeks we’ll be handing over all the Mobilizon « keys » to this community (they already have maintainer access to the source code repository, but this also applies to the joinmobilizon.org, mobilizon.org, search.joinmobilizon.org websites, tools, social media accounts, etc.).

Mobilizon seems to have a bright future ahead!
For five years, thanks to your donations, Rose has been training to fight Faceghoul – Illustration by David Revoy – Licence: CC-By 4.0

**Five years of Mobilizon, thanks to you (and your donations)!**

Although we’ll be handing over the keys to the project in a few weeks time, all the work done throughout 2023 has come at a significant cost.

If you like this version 4, and it’s possible for you to do so, we encourage you to support Framasoft as a token of our gratitude for all the work we’ve done this year, but also for honouring our original moral contract: to provide you with a free, federated alternative to Facebook groups and events.

Once again this year we need you, your support, your sharing, to help us regain ground on the toxic GAFAM web and multiply ethical digital spaces.

So we’ve asked David Revoy to help us present this on our « Support Framasoft » page, which we invite you to visit (because it’s beautiful) and above all to share as widely as possible:
If we are to balance our budget for 2024, we have five weeks to raise €162,716: we can’t do it without your help!

Support Framasoft

PeerTube v6 is out, and powered by your ideas!

It’s #givingtuesday, so we’re giving you PeerTube v6 today! PeerTube is the software we develop for creators, media, institutions, educators... to manage their own video platform, as an alternative to YouTube and Twitch.

VS 🔬: Let’s take back some ground from the tech giants!

Thanks to your donations to our not-for-profit, Framasoft is taking action to advance the ethical, user-friendly web. Find a summary of our progress in 2023 on our Support Framasoft page.
The sixth major version is being released today and we are very proud! It is the most ambitious one since we added peer-to-peer livestreaming. There is a good reason for that: we packed this v6 with features inspired by your ideas!

We are so eager to present all the work we achieved that we’ll get right into it. But stay tuned: in two weeks, we’ll take more time to talk about PeerTube’s history, the state of this project and the great plans we have for its future!

Click to support us and help push back Videoraptor - Illustration CC-By David Revoy

**This year: two minor updates and a major achievement**

In 2023, and before preparing this major update, we released only two minor versions... but one of them brought to the table a major technical feature that will help democratize video hosting even more.

**March 2023: PeerTube v5.1**

You’ll get more details in the news dedicated to the 5.1 release, so to keep it short, this version brought:
- an « asking for an account » feature, where instance moderators can manage and moderate news account requests;
- a back-to-live button, so in case you lag behind during a livestream, you can go back to the direct
- Improvements on the authentication plugin, to facilitate signing on with external credentials

June 2023: PeerTube 5.2...

As you’ll find out in our 5.2 release blogpost, there were some smaller but important new features such as:

- Adapting RSS feeds to podcast standards, so any podcast client could be able to read a PeerTube channel, for example
- The option to set the privacy of a livestream replay, that way streamers can choose beforehand if the replay of their live will be Public, Unlisted, Private or Internal
- Improved mouse-free navigation: for those who prefer or need to navigate using their keyboard
- And upgrades in our documentation (it’s quite thorough: check it out!)

...with a major feature: Remote Transcoding

But the game changer in this 5.2 release was the new remote transcoding feature.

When a creator uploads a video (or when they are streaming live), PeerTube needs to transform their video file into an efficient format. This task is called video transcoding, and it consumes lots of CPU power. PeerTube admins used to need (costly) big-CPU servers for a task that wasn’t permanent... until remote transcoding.

Remote transcoding allows PeerTube admins to deport some or all of their transcoding tasks to another, more powerful server, one that can be shared with other admins, for example.

It makes the whole PeerTube administration cheaper, more resilient, more power-efficient... and opens a way of sharing resources between communities!
We want, once again to thank the NGI Entrust program and the NLnet foundation for the grant that helped us achieve such a technical improvement!

PeerTube v6 is Based... (on your ideas)

Enough with the past, let’s detail the features of this new major version. Note that, for this whole 2023 roadmap, we developed features suggested and upvoted by... you! Or at least by those of you who shared your ideas on our feedback website.

Protect your videos with passwords!

That was a very awaited feature. Password-protected videos can be used in lots of situations: to create exclusive content, mark a step in an educational plan, share videos with people trusted by the ones you trust...

On their PeerTube account, creators can now set a single password when they upload, import or update the settings of their videos.

But with our REST API, admins and developers can take it a step further. They can set and store as many passwords as they want, thus easily give and revoke access to videos.
This feature was the work of Wicklow, during his internship with us.

**Video storyboard: preview what’s coming!**

If you like to peruse your videos online, you might be used to hover the progress bar with your mouse or finger. Usually, a preview of the frame appears as a thumbnail: that’s called a storyboard feature, and that’s now available in PeerTube!

Please note that as Storyboards are only generated when uploading (or importing) a video, they will only be available for new videos of instances that upgraded to v6...

Or you can ask, very kindly, to your admin(s) that they use the magical `npm run create-generate-storyboard-job` command (warning: this task might need some CPU power), and generate storyboards for older videos.

**Upload a new version of your video!**

Sometimes, video creators want to update a video, to correct a mistake, offer new information... or just to propose a better cut of their work!

Now, with PeerTube, they can upload and replace an older version of their video. Though the older video file will be permanently erased (no backsies!), creators will keep the same URL, title and infos, comments, stats, etc.

Obviously, such a feature requires trust between videomakers and admins, who don’t want to be responsible for a cute kitten video being « updated » into an awful advertisement for cat-hating groups.

That’s why such a feature will only be available if admins choose to enable it on their PeerTube platforms, and will display a « Video re-upload » tag on updated videos.

**Get chapters in your videos!**

Creators can now add chapters to their videos on PeerTube. In a video settings page, they’ll get a new « chapters » tab where they’ll only need to specify the timecode and title of each chapter for PeerTube to add it.
If they import their video from another platform (cough YouTube cough), PeerTube should automatically recognize and import chapters set on this distant video.

When chapters are set, markers will appear and segment the progress bar. Chapter titles will be displayed when you hover or touch one of those chapters segments.

**Stress tests, performance and config recommendaions**

Last year, thanks to French indie journalist David Dufresne’s Au Poste! livestream show and his hoster Octopuce, we got a livestream stress test with more than 400 simultaneous viewers: see the report here on Octopuce’s blog[FR].

Such tests are really helpful to understand where we can improve PeerTube to reduce bottlenecks, improve performance, and give advice on the best configuration for a PeerTube server if an admin plans on getting a lot of traffic.

That’s why this year, we have decided to realize more tests, with a thousand simultaneous users simulated both in livestream and classic video streaming conditions. Lots of thanks and datalove to Octopuce for helping us deploy our test infrastructure.

We will soon publish a report with our conclusions and recommended server configurations depending on usecases (late 2023, early 2024). In the meantime, early tests motivated us to **add many performances improvements** into this v6, such as (brace yourselves for the technical terms):

- Process unicast HTTP job in worker threads
- Sign ActivityPub requests in worker threads
- Optimize recommended videos HTTP request
- Optimize videos SQL queries when filtering on lives or tags
- Optimize /videos/{id}/views endpoint with many viewers
- Add ability to disable PeerTube HTTP logs
...and there’s always more!

A new major version always comes with its lot of changes, improvements, bugfixes, etc. You can read the complete log here, but here are the highlights:

- We needed to settle a technical debt: **v6 removes support for WebTorrent to focus on HLS (with WebRTC P2P)**. Both are technical bricks used to get peer-to-peer streaming in web browsers, but HLS is more fitted to what we are doing (and plan to do) with PeerTube
- The **video player is more efficient**
  - It is not being rebuilt anymore every time the video changes
  - It keeps your watching settings (speed, fullscreen, etc.) when the video changes
  - It automatically adjust its size to match the video ratio
- We have **improved SEO**, to help videos hosted on a PeerTube platform appear higher in the search results of search engines
- We worked a lot on **improving PeerTube’s accessibility** on many levels, to streamline the experience of people with disabilities.

What about PeerTube’s future?

With YouTube waging war against adblockers, Twitch increasingly exploiting
streamers, and everyone becoming more and more aware of the toxicity of this system... PeerTube is getting traction, recognition and a growing community.

We have so many announcements to make about the future we plan for PeerTube, that we will publish a separate news, in two weeks. We are also planning on hosting an « Ask Us Anything » livestream, to answer the questions you’d have about PeerTube.

Please stay tuned by subscribing to PeerTube’s Newsletter, following PeerTube’s Mastodon account or keeping an eye on the Framablog.

Thank you for supporting PeerTube and Framasoft

In the meantime, we want to remind you that all these developments were achieved by only one full-time payed developer, an intern, and a fabulous community (lots of datalove to Chocobozzz, Wicklow, and the many, many contributors: y’all are amazing!)

Framasoft being a French not-for-profit mainly funded by grassroots donations
(75% of our yearly income comes from people like you and us), PeerTube development has been funded by two main sources:

- French-speaking FOSS enthusiasts
- Grants from the NGI initiative, through NLnet (in 2021 & 2023)

If you are a non-French-speaking PeerTube aficionado, please consider **supporting our work by making a donation to Framasoft**. It will greatly help us fund our many, many projects, and balance our 2024 budget.

Once again this year we need you, your support, your sharing to help us regain ground on the toxic GAFAM web and multiply the number of ethical digital spaces. So we’ve asked David Revoy to help us present this on our support Framasoft page, which we invite you to visit (because it’s beautiful) and above all to share as widely as possible:

If we are to balance our budget for 2024, we have five weeks to raise €176,425: we can’t do it without your help!

**Support Framasoft**

Thanks again for supporting PeerTube,
Framasoft’s team.
700 organisations already up in the (free) clouds: Framaspace’s first year in review

The aim of this long article is to take stock of the Framaspace project (an associative cloud based on Nextcloud) a little over a year after its announcement.

VS: Let’s take back some ground from the tech giants!

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➡️ Read the series of articles from this campaign (Nov. - Dec. 2023)

Once upon a time there was Frama.space

Remember, a year ago we announced (in French, sorry!) one of Framasoft’s most ambitious projects: Frama.space.

For those of you who weren’t there, or who don’t remember, the desire to set up Frama.space was based on three things.

The first is that things are fucked. Politically, socially, geopolitically, ecologically and so on. Of course, you may think otherwise, but we don’t think the world is going very well...

The second observation is that civil society, caricatured here as associations and trade unions, is under attack from all sides. The pressure to depoliticise associations, the reduction of their funding in favour of « impact companies » or the start-up nation, the attacks on freedom of association... All this is eroding the
Finally, closer to Framasoft, digital technology has become a tool for organising people, but also for taking action. However, this rather positive observation is
countered by two more negative observations. Firstly, digital technology is a tool for surveillance and alienation. And secondly, associations are lagging behind both in terms of use and consistency (The report in the link is in French, sorry!). Associations working for an ecological transition, for example, will use the tools and services of GAFAM, which play a large part in the problem they are trying to solve.

**Frama.space: (Next)cloud for non-profit organisations**

A year ago we announced a new Framasoft service: Frama.space.

Its mission? To equip the ‘contributing society’. In other words, to digitally equip « off-market » associations and groups. Whether it’s the AMAP in FarFarAway-town, the community café in Bernache-sur-Yvette or the queer theatre collective in Cygne-lès-Lavaur.

We believe that these associations and collectives need (and even want) to rediscover the coherence between their values, their actions and their tools. It seems contradictory to us, for example, to be an association committed to « zero waste » and still use Google or Microsoft tools.

Please note that this is not a value judgement on our part. We fully understand that there may be contradictions and legitimate objections (it is perfectly possible to be concerned about the fate of the planet and still drive your children to a weekly sports activity 20km away).

However, we believe it is important that these structures have the choice to have easy access to tools that are not based on the mechanisms of surveillance capitalism.
Framaspace includes the collaborative online office suites Collabora Online and OnlyOffice. Here is a screenshot of a spreadsheet being edited directly in the browser.

The software has a lot of room for improvement (in terms of UX, technical debt, performance, etc.), but... it’s still the best horse in the stable.
What’s more, its community is large (over 60 million users worldwide) and quite active, which gives us hope for the future.

We have therefore decided to base our Framaspace offering on this software, proposing a technically ambitious offering capable of eventually hosting up to 10,000 Framaspace spaces (and therefore as many instances of the Nextcloud software). To achieve this, we have built a substantial technical infrastructure (the video link is in French, sorry!) and developed homemade software tools (free of charge, of course) to validate registration requests and automatically provision new spaces very quickly, with just a few clicks.

![Commented interface for CHARON, the software developed by Framasoft that allows us to manage Framaspace applications. (Commentary in French, but if you want more information on this point, ask us in the comments section bellow!)](image)

But enough of reminiscing: if you want to know more about the ambitions behind Framaspace, you can watch two videos:

- The political presentation of the project (in French), by Pierre-Yves Gosset, project coordinator, at the Capitole du Libre (November 2022);
- The technical presentation of the project (in French), by Luc Didry and Thomas Citharel, technical managers of the project, at the ESUP
Taking stock, calmly

Frama.space becomes Framaspace.org

First of all, we already had to change the name because the .space extension increased the likelihood that emails containing frama.space addresses would be considered spam. This was obviously the fault of the email giants (article in French, sorry!), but we couldn’t accept a solution that would interfere with the normal use of the platform. So we decided to use a domain name with a more traditional but longer extension: framaspace.org. The transition is underway and will take place in stages as there is no rush. We also announced that we have four objectives:

1. Facilitate access to Nextcloud/Framaspace
2. Raise awareness of Nextcloud/Framaspace
3. Contribute to the creation of a French-speaking Nextcloud/Framaspace community
4. Use Nextcloud/Framaspace as an empowerment tool

This first anniversary is therefore a good time to take stock of each of these objectives.

Functional assessment: does it work or not?

Yes, it does!

While you are reading these lines, more than 700 spaces are active. This means that Framasoft provides tools to 700 associations and groups. And the feedback is very positive!

We have been able to carry out complex operations without too much difficulty. For example, we’ve carried out major upgrades of Nextcloud (from version 25 to version 26) with very limited downtime (less than 2 minutes per space).

As far as the technical infrastructure is concerned, there are occasional potholes, but the infrastructure is holding up!
For example, at the end of 2022 we noticed that there was a problem with our office suite management system. With the year-end holidays just around the corner, followed by intense preparations for the Framasoft AGM, we decided to suspend registration and take the time needed to develop a long-term solution. We reopened the registration in March 2023. So, in case you missed the news: it’s perfectly possible to register your association or collective on https://framaspace.org!

The fact that it’s Framasoft that manages the technical aspects can have certain disadvantages (we limit the number of accounts, disk space or Nextcloud plugins you can use). However, this outsourcing makes life much easier for the users (who, in most cases, would find it very difficult to maintain over time an instance of Nextcloud software that they would have installed ‘manually’).

In one year, we have gone from 0 to more than 700 spaces managed by Framasoft. We therefore consider this functional assessment to be more than satisfactory.

Public awareness

One of Framaspace’s objectives is also to raise awareness of Nextcloud and the Framaspace offer (or similar offers elsewhere, in particular at CHATONS).
To this end, in 2023 we will:

- **3 conferences**: Capitole du Libre 2022, Capitole du Libre 2023, OSXP;
- **2 interviews**: NextINpact, Techologie;
- published **3 articles** about Framaspace: Association Mode d’Emploi, NextINpact, ZDNet;
- participated in **1 workshop/webinar**: « Collaborate effectively with Nextcloud », at Solidatech, in partnership with Arawa;
- **1 newsletter** distributed: Lettre d’information Framaspace #1.

On a report card, we could write: « Not bad, but can do better ».

**« Community » review**

This concerns our desire to build a **community of French-speaking Nextcloud users in the long term**.

To this end, we have:

- Opened a community-based help forum: 148 accounts created and 542 messages exchanged
- published a series of tutorials on the forum
- carried out a survey on satisfaction and expectations about Framaspace (presented at the CHATONS camp and results to be published soon).

This part of the project got off to a rather slow start, but that’s quite logical, because for various reasons we were not able to devote as much time to this part of the project in 2023 as we would have liked.

**Empowerment assessment**

This **part of the project is planned for 2025**. There were no plans to work on it in 2023. So it’s logical that we haven’t made any progress on it.
The 5 key points of this « empowerment » slide:
- Disseminating information
- Working together to identify needs
- Transforming uses
- Federation
- Pooling funding for certain functionalities

Project stats
Here are some numbers to give you a more objective view of the first year. If you’re not interested, you can skip to the « Review of the review » section.

Typology of the structures

Breakdown by type of structure
Description:

- 72% associations under the law of 1901 (yellow);
- 22% informal groups (pink);
- 5% trade unions (green);
- 1% associations under the 1907 law (mixed/cultural associations) (blue).

Breakdown by activity
Description (note: organisations could choose more than one topic):

- A first « block » of more than 250 organisations in the following sectors or themes Education/training, environment, culture, social affairs;
- a second « block » of more than 100 organisations claiming to be active in the following sectors or themes: Friendship/Mutual Aid, Leisure, Defence of Fundamental Rights, Political Activities, Economy and Social Affairs: Amicale / Entraide, Loisirs, Défense des droits fondamentaux, Activités politiques, Économie ;
- a final « block » of less than 100 organisations claiming to be active in the following sectors or themes: Sport, Health, Research, Justice, Spiritual or philosophical activities, Tourism.

Breakdown by year in which the structure was created
Description: 50% of the 700 spaces correspond to structures created in 2017 or later. Even if a dozen structures existed before 1950, we can deduce that the Framaspace public as a whole represents rather recent structures.

Breakdown by number of persons employed

Description and comments: 500 of the spaces (71% of the total) are structures with no employees. There are a few structures with more than 20 employees, but
these are often « anomalies » (for example, the space is created for a local trade union group, which indicates the number of employees of the national trade union).

**Breakdown by number of members**

![Graph showing breakdown by number of members](image)

**Description:** Half of the spaces represent organisations with less than 30 members. 75% say they have 100 members or less.

**Breakdown by number of beneficiaries**

![Graph showing breakdown by number of beneficiaries](image)
**Description:** Half of the spaces represent organisations claiming to reach 100 people or more. There are a few organisations claiming to reach more than 25,000 people, but these are often « anomalies » (for example, the space is created for a local trade union group, which indicates the number of beneficiaries of the national trade union).

**Breakdown by annual budget**

![Budget Chart]

**Description:** 150 organisations did not wish to answer this question. Of the remaining 550 organisations, half said they had an annual budget of less than €4,000 (around a hundred organisations even said they had a budget of €0). About 25% of the organisations reported having a budget between €4,000 and €50,000 (which can be correlated with organisations having at least one employee). A handful of organisations report a budget of more than €50,000/year, but again these are mostly ‘statistical anomalies’.

**Examples of structures**

*NB: These associations have presented themselves publicly on the Framaspace forum, so we have no problem with their identity or purpose being made public.*

For example:

« Hello. We’re the « *Les petits pois sont verts* » association in Clamart. Our aim
is to imagine and build a way of life based on solidarity and respect for the environment by ..:

- Bringing together people in Clamart who share the same motivations,
- encouraging local dynamism
- supporting projects,
- gathering and disseminating information.

We are only a few years old and we advocate the use of free and sober digital technology.

We use the following Framasoft tools Framapad, Framadate and recently Frama.space. »

Or again:

« The Association des Cavaliers Au Long Cours (CALC) is a French-speaking association with about 200 members from all over the world (our most distant member is in Kyrgyzstan!), but mainly from Western European countries. Our aim is to develop long-distance travel with a mounted and/or covered animal (horse, donkey, mule, etc.). We also help would-be travellers with their organisation and provide assistance to travellers in difficulty ».

Other examples:

- Plan B - Breton Pop Education Association (Rennes)
- AMAP of St Vallier de Thiey (Alpes Maritimes)
- La Gonette - local currency for citizens (Lyon)
- Les amis du Portique - Journal of Philosophy and Human Sciences
- Les Pieds à Terre - environmental education (Haute-Loire)
- Family planning in the Aude
- ...

Use of structures

Office suites used
Distribution of Framaspaces between Collabora Online and OnlyOffice

NB: The overrepresentation of Collabora Online is due to the fact that it is the office suite offered by default. The administrator of the instance can switch to OnlyOffice if they wish, but very few do.

**Usage stats**

- **Number of active**
  - Active: 700
  - Rejected: 14
  - Deactivated (by their administrators) 10

- **Accounts** (admins + users): 3,356
  - Average: 4.8 accounts; Median: 2 accounts

- **Hosted user files**: 760,939 for 860 GB (excluding revisions and recycle bin)
  - 131 GB in recycle bin
  - 99% of spaces have created at least one file
• **Connections:**
  - 198 rooms connected in the last 3 days
  - 390 rooms connected in the last 15 days

**Number of accounts**

**Description:** **almost 300 rooms have only one account** (necessarily the «admin» account). This means that 40% of the spaces have no collaborative use with other users. However, we did find cases where the space admin did have collaborative uses with other people in his or her association (for example, by using shared folders, with or without passwords). This means – all the same – that 60% of the spaces have several users. 42% even have 5 or more users.

**Used disk space**
Description: almost all spaces have used their file space (only 2% have never created a file). It is interesting to note that less than 20% of the spaces use more than 1 GB (out of a maximum of 40 GB per space).

Number of files

Description: 50% of the rooms have more than 250 user files. This is a good « surprise » in our opinion: it means that Framaspace is quite useful (either for storing or sharing files).
Balance sheet

Expenses

At present, the technical infrastructure (computer servers) of Framaspace costs us about 1,200 € per month (i.e. about 15,000 € per year). The cost of the work, estimated by the very inaccurate LaLouche Institute, is around €20,000 of investment before the launch of the project. Since the start of the project, we’ve been able to estimate this figure at around €2,000 per month (3 people involved, working very, very part-time on this project). So, roughly speaking, Framaspace has cost Framasoft around €60,000.

Income

The income side is a bit more complex.

Framaspace is a project reserved for small associations and solidarity groups, and it is deliberately free. We don’t want the price to be a barrier to access. And we don’t want to set a « free price », because a price means a service sold, a service provided, an invoice and obligations (contractual, accounting and fiscal). We voluntarily choose to donate without expecting any financial compensation (which does not mean that we cannot hope for it ).

It is likely that some members of the associations we host have made a donation to Framasoft. However, we do not want to earmark donations for Framasoft projects. For accounting purposes, a donation earmarked for a project must go into a dedicated fund that must be used for that project. However, we would like donations to Framasoft to be able to finance « loss-making » projects, which is exactly what Framaspace is doing in this first year.

For the sake of simplicity we can say that the income is... €0!

Cost per space

From the above data, we can deduce that the cost of a space (so far) is €86
per year (or €7 per month, of which €1.8 per month is infrastructure costs).

However, the infrastructure costs are not expected to change too much and the labour costs are expected to increase slightly by 2024, while the number of spaces could triple or quadruple. Let us assume a total cost of €60,000 (for 2023) + €15,000 for the servers in 2024 + €36,000 in labour costs. This gives a total of €111,000 by the end of 2024. Assuming 2,500 active spaces at the end of 2024, the total cost would be €45 per space per year (i.e. €3.7 per month, including €1/month for infrastructure costs). These costs could fall further in 2025.

It’s a significant cost, and few associations can afford this type of project, which does not aim to be profitable or even break even.

However, we believe that the political importance of this project means that we have to take this risk. We hope (more from experience than naivety) that the associations that can afford it will support Framasoft (and indirectly Framaspace) financially.

**Review of the review**

The news is pretty good!
First of all, Framaspace works
Managing 700 Nextcloud instances in one year isn’t bad, is it? Especially since outsourcing is going pretty well (for now!).

Secondly, we’ve managed to reach the audience we wanted to reach: associations (registered or de facto) that are fairly small, with small budgets. Most of them focus on education, the environment, social or cultural issues. Which is hardly surprising given Framasoft’s target audience.

Finally, Framaspace is used. More than half the spaces have regular connections. And people handle quite a lot of files (rather small files, which explains why very few spaces use more than one GB of the maximum 40 GB allowed).

We feel that our 2023 goals have been more than adequately met in terms of actions. We could even say that it’s a success given the resources we’ve invested.

Offering « locked » spaces (for example, you can’t install the Nextcloud plugins of your choice on Framaspace, and only small associations or collectives can open a Framaspace) has had the expected frustrating effect. In fact, we have regularly referred people frustrated by these limitations to friendly structures such as Zacly, IndieHosters, Cloud Girofle, Paquerette, Arawa, etc. This shows that we’re not taking a « slice of the cake », but helping to make it bigger.
Framaspace in 2024 (and 2025)

As you may have read in our ‘assessment of the assessment’, Framaspace is meeting a need, and Framasoft believes the response is pretty good. It’s far from perfect, of course, but for a small association that wants to get out of the box and align its values with its digital tools, Framaspace could be the answer.

But we’re not going to stop there! Framaspace is still in beta testing (and will probably be until the end of 2025!) and many improvements are still to come.

Support

First of all, we’re going to keep hosting spaces. Now that Framaspace is more stable, we think we can pick up the pace and host 2,500 spaces by the end of 2024 (i.e. more than triple the current number. Don’t worry!).

Next, we’ll continue our outsourcing initiatives. For example, by moving from Nextcloud 26 to Nextcloud 27 in late 2023 or early 2024. Each version brings a host of new features (see our friends at Arawa who give a summary presentation
On the support side, we want to **produce a bit of a special tutorial**. In fact, many tutorials already exist (we highlight the Coopaname one, produced by La Dérivation). But this type of tutorial doesn’t meet everyone’s needs. That’s why we want to produce a more narrative and immersive tutorial. A « tutorial in which you are the hero » (or « tricks in which you are the heroine », if you prefer). Inspired by « Books in which you are the hero », the user⋅ice will embody a character who has to carry out various missions with his or her Framaspace room. The special feature is that certain « quests » can either be bypassed (for example, if the user⋅ice already knows how to create a user⋅ice account) or explored in more depth (for example, on file sharing).

Scenario under construction for a « tutorial in which you are the hero ». Sorry, the translator didn’t have the courage to translate every box!

We also want to provide documentation (and facilitation tools) to **facilitate migration from OneDrive, Dropbox or GoogleDrive**, and to **simplify import/export between Nextcloud instances**. For example, an association that has reached the 50 account limit on its Framaspace space and wants to migrate to
a more powerful Nextcloud with our friends at IndieHosters would be able to transfer its data – files, calendars, contacts, etc. – in a more automated way.

Finally, we are aware that one of the major weaknesses of Nextcloud (and by extension Framaspace) is the difficulty of « onboarding » novices to a (too?) rich and sometimes (very?) confusing interface. That’s why we want to integrate the free IntroJS tool into Nextcloud to highlight certain parts of the software and make it easier to learn. See the video below.

*Video demonstration of how IntroJS has been integrated into Nextcloud to make it easier to learn.*

Still on the subject of getting started, we’re working with designer Marie-Cécile Godwin, who teaches at the Strate design school, to get her students thinking about how Nextcloud could be improved from a UX and UI perspective.

### Raising awareness of Nextcloud

In 2024, we will of course continue our efforts to make Nextcloud better known in the French-speaking world.

For example, we have already subtitled a number of Nextcloud presentation videos in French. But we’d like to go further. For example, we’d like to redo the voice-overs or translate the documentation (flyers, brochures, etc.).

*Video of a Nextcloud promotional video, originally in English only and subtitled by Framasoft.*

Framasoft will also continue to promote Nextcloud and Framaspace through conferences, webinars, interviews, etc.

We will also continue to share our experience and feedback with the CHATONS community, many of whose members offer services based on Nextcloud. We think we’ve acquired a certain amount of knowledge and know-
how around Nextcloud, but above all we know that we still have a lot to learn.

Finally, we’re going to start **getting in touch with the heads of associative networks** (Collectif Associations Citoyennes, Mouvement Associatif, popular education networks, but also networks such as Associations Mode d’Emploi, Solidatech, Associathèque, etc.) to present Framaspace, and highlight what Nextcloud can do (or can’t do!) in terms of collaborative ethical digital technology. The ultimate aim is to **assess its relevance as a « digital commons of general interest » for associations.**

### Framaspace & Nextcloud user community

In 2024, we will continue our work to **promote, animate and coordinate a community of Nextcloud software users** on the Framaspace forum.

We will also publish a **website for the OPEN-L Observatory** (« Observatory of Free Digital Practices and Experiences »), which will publicly host the various surveys (and their results!) that Framasoft will have conducted among its audiences. This site will be open to other organisations wishing to share their feedback. The aim is not to reinvent the wheel, but to make it easier to objectify the needs (and frustrations) of users.

Of course, we will continue to improve both Framaspace and Nextcloud. We’re lucky (and happy) to have Thomas, **one of the world’s leading contributors** from outside Nextcloud GmbH, on our staff.

- His contributions **to the heart** of Nextcloud
- Its contributions to the Nextcloud **calendar app**
- The applications that Framasoft maintains for the Nextcloud community:
  - https://github.com/nextcloud/registration/
  - https://framagit.org/framasoft/nextcloud/csp_editor
  - https://framagit.org/framasoft/nextcloud/login-notes
  - https://framagit.org/framasoft/nextcloud/drop_account
  - https://framagit.org/framasoft/nextcloud/holiday_calendars (now abandoned as it has been integrated into the calendar app)

This means that Framasoft (through Framadrive, Framagenda and now Framaspace) **is taking a very active part in this digital commons that is the**
Nextcloud software.

On a more ‘internal’ note, in the coming months we should be increasing our capacity to work on the Framaspace project within Framasoft: Thomas, currently the lead developer on Mobilizon, will shift up to 50% of his time to Framaspace, and Pierre-Yves, currently co-director of Framasoft, will leave this role to concentrate on the association’s digital services (including Framaspace, of course).

Empowering ‘off-market’ structures

We have many policy ambitions for the Framaspace project (see our launch article - only in French, sorry!).

To achieve this, we will use surveys to gather information about the needs (both functional and more political) of the structures we host. Depending on the results, and if resources allow, we will be able to adapt Framaspace to the needs of its users.

We have noticed that in the associations we support, the issue of digital tools often lies with one or two volunteers, who sometimes struggle to implement a change management policy or convince their board. So we also want to produce « practical information sheets » to make life easier for these key people. « For example, we’ll look at how to carry out a digital diagnosis of my association, or how to convince my board to switch from Gdrive or Dropbox to Framaspace.

Finally, and we are aware of the high demand for this item, we would like to pool funding for new features in Framaspace.

We will focus on:

- The possibility of managing your members in Framaspace (members, categories, identity card, subscriptions, membership reminders, etc.) using the (fabulous) free association management software Paheko;
- The possibility of managing your association’s accounts (data entry, balance sheet, profit and loss, choice of chart of accounts, etc.), again thanks to Paheko;
- the possibility of quickly creating visual communication tools using
the Aktivisda software (see the example of the Alternatiba association);
- allow associations that wish to do so to publish pages presenting their structure and activities. To do this, we want to make it possible to **publish a mini-website presenting the organisation** (written in Framaspace’s « Collectives » application).

Help Li, Framaspace’s unicorn mascot, Push back Demondrive by supporting Framasoft ! - Illustration CC-By David Revoy

### Moulaga needed!

As you can see, the Framaspace 2024 roadmap is already very full!

Please note: none of the items below are firm commitments on our part. They’re just our wishes, what we want to implement in the coming year. It’s all very ambitious. And like any ambition, we need to know what resources we can devote to it.

As we said, Framaspace is a project with a large deficit. **That’s a good thing: it’s not intended to be profitable, much less to make a profit.** However, it is the resources you entrust to us (i.e. your donations) that enable us to act. Therefore, we sincerely believe that €1 (or €100 or €1,000, eh! []) donated to Framasoft **really** does help to change things and have a positive impact on the
digital world ‘outside the market’. That’s why we invite you, if you can, to support Framasoft with a donation, so that we can continue our work, and especially to maintain and develop the Framaspace project. Once again this year we need you, your support, your sharing to help us regain ground on the toxic GAFAM web and multiply the number of ethical digital spaces. So we’ve asked David Revoy to help us present this on our « Support Framasoft » page, which we invite you to visit (because it’s beautiful) and above all to share as widely as possible:

Click to support us - Illustration CC-By David Revoy

If we are to balance our budget for 2024, we have six weeks to raise €183,478: we can’t do it without your help!

Support Framasoft
Let’s regain ground on the toxic web! - Framasoft’s 2023 report

A year ago, we launched our 2022-2025 roadmap, «Collectivising the Internet, Convivialising the Internet». The aim: to encourage the adoption of user-friendly web tools by groups that share the values of Free/Libre culture.

[::-]: Let’s take back some ground from the tech giants!

Thanks to your donations to our not-for-profit, Framasoft is taking action to advance the ethical, user-friendly web. Find a summary of our progress in 2023 on our Support Framasoft page.

➡️ Read the series of articles from this campaign (Nov. – Dec. 2023)

One year on, we are proud and delighted to present this first full update on our activities, funded (as always) by your donations.

Click on Coin-Coin to support Framasoft - Illustration CC-By David Revoy
Changing the world, one web corner at a time

The actions of Collectivise / Convivialise Internet (« Collectivisons Internet / Convivialisons Internet » aka « Coin-coin » (qwack qwack, in French), hence the mascot) complement and add to the maintenance of our historical actions: online services and software tools, sharing experience, various contributions and collaborations.

As we wrote last year on this blog, the goal remains the same: to ensure that there are more and more bubbles of ethical web, in order to regain ground on the toxic digital world occupied by the tech giants.

This blogpost is a very quick summary of our end-of-year campaign. It aims to give you a general idea of what your donations are going towards. If you’re interested, we’ll be posting details of the key actions in this report on this blog every Tuesday (if everything goes well©) until the end of the year.

Support Framasoft
Framaspace, solidarity collectives get to grips with this convivial cloud

We said it back in 2022: Framaspace is our most ambitious project in this new roadmap. By the end of 2025, we aim to provide up to 10,000 collaborative cloud spaces based on Nextcloud software for small groups of people to work together.

We’ll be covering Framaspace news in detail during the week of Nov. 21st:

- **The first year of Framaspace**
  - A high demand, already almost 700 Framaspaces open;
  - ...and even more if you ask here for one for your *(French-speaking only)* collective;
  - Lessons learned from this beta release;
  - the first needs expressed by the beneficiaries;
  - technical improvements, updates, maintenance, etc.

- **In the pipeline for next year(s)**
  - Preparation of tools to make it easier for newcomers to use the system;
  - Ideas for « tutorials where you are the hero » (or « schemes where you are the heroine »)?
future explorations: the possibility of publishing websites, or even managing members and accounts?

Support Framasoft

PeerTube: a v6 based on your ideas

We’ve been developing this software for six years, and once it’s installed on a server, it can be used to create an ethical alternative to YouTube, Twitch, Vimeo and so on.

The technical possibilities offered by PeerTube all serve the same purpose: to allow you to host and distribute your videos and live streams, even (and especially) if you don’t have the money of Google or the server farms of Amazon.

The features that we will describe in detail during the week of Nov. 28th have been selected from your ideas:

Click to support us and push Videoraptor away – Illustration
CC-By David Revoy
- **Version 5.1** (March 2023)
  - Moderation of account requests;
  - Back to live.

- **Version 5.2** (June 2023)
  - Major work on transcoding that can be offloaded to a remote server;
  - Replay visibility;
  - RSS feed adapted for podcasts.

- **Version 6** (end of November 2023)
  - Improved accessibility;
  - Image preview in progress bar;
  - Videos chapters;
  - Uploading a new version of a video;
  - Password protection for videos;
  - Live load & stress tests (report to be published later).

**Support Framasoft**

**Mobilizon, the final countdown of the battle...**

...for Framasoft!

After 4 years of development, we feel we’ve completed our vision for Mobilizon. Once this v4 is released, we hope that your groups will have the features they need to organise themselves around their events, and emancipate themselves from Facebook or Meetup.

**That’s why during the week of Dec. 5th, we’ll be talking in detail about:**
• Version 3.1 (March 2023)
  • Ability to enter an unlisted address;
  • Anti-spam tools.
• Version 4 (December 2023)
  • Import events from other platforms (MeetUp, Facebook, etc.);
  • Message from organisers to participants.

• The future
  • We will provide security updates;
  • We will maintain the French-speaking instance Mobilizon.fr;
  • Other groups already have plans to develop Mobilizon with new ambitions...
  • ...and there is always room for your own vision!

Support Framasoft

PeerTube (yes, again! but...) in 2024:
we’re betting big on its success

The toxicity of YouTube, Twitch and the like is becoming increasingly visible... More and more groups, institutions and content creators discover and use PeerTube. In 2023, we’ve been working hard internally to better support this burgeoning success and give PeerTube every chance to succeed.

That’s why, during the week of Dec. 12th, we’ll be talking specifically about:

- The roadmap to PeerTube v7 (end 2024)
  - Export and import tool for your account;
  - Accessibility audit and recommendations integration;
  - Comment moderation tool (for admins and video-makers);
  - Keyword list moderation tool;
  - Separation of audio and video streams (opens up future possibilities);
  - Addition of « zero pixel » resolution (receive audio only);
  - Recategorisation of sensitive content (more detailed than SFW/NSFW);
  - Redesign of the video management area;
  - Redesigning the interface following a user experience (UX) audit.
• **Investing even more in PeerTube** to give it a better chance of growing its audience, starting in 2024
  • Promote the PeerTube ecosystem (newsletter, social media, etc.);
  • Work on a « showcase » instance of PeerTube;
  • Hire a second developer (from September 2023);
    • Threefold goal: master 270,000 lines of code, encourage contributions, but above all...
• **...Official PeerTube mobile application** (end of 2024)
  • Based on design work (survey, mock-ups, etc.);
  • For Android, iOS ([...)] and ideally AndroidTV;
  • First version: discover and watch videos (search, playlists, subscriptions, notifications).

**Support Framasoft**

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**Émancip’Asso: professional training, MOOC, website...**

Conceived in partnership with Animafac, the Émancip’Asso project aims to train service providers to understand and support associations in their transition to ethical web tools.

A **lot of work has already been done this year and we’ll be talking about it during the week of Dec. 19th:**
- Organisation of face-to-face professional training (January 2023)
- **Publication of the MOOC** « Developing a range of services to support associations in their ethical digital transition », the extended version of the face-to-face professional training course, aimed at anyone wishing to start or improve their support skills.
  - MOOC with free and independent participation;
  - Understand the non-profit sector and its digital applications;
  - To master the support methods used by non-profit organisations;
  - Design and promote a range of services tailored to this ecosystem;
  - Not forgetting networking in order to work together more effectively.
- Design and publication of the **Émancip’Asso website**
  - A list of service providers who can support associations in their transition process;
  - A space for associations to help each other;
  - Access to additional resources;
- **What’s next for 2024**
  - To increase the number of support services listed;
  - A campaign to promote the system to associations;
  - Active community management.
Digital empowerment with practical tools

To end the year on a high note, we’d like to talk about the hard work we’re doing on the practical, concrete tools we offer.

Whether it’s our « De-google-ify internet » services or our historical directory of free software, these tools enable more than 1.5 million people every month to break free from the tech giants and their toxic tools.

During the week of Dec. 26th, if you’ve been good (or naughty), we’ll announce:

- **Framalibre, the free software directory**
  - Complete overhaul of the directory following design surveys;
  - Still collaborative, with a priori moderation (to fight spam);
  - (under the hood) New static engine, easy to use entries;
  - Fluid and simplified interface, adapted to mobile phones;
  - Simple search (search bar, tags);
  - Software recommendations;
  - « Small sites » tool: create your own pages to recommend your favorite FOSSes.
Click to support us and push Hydroffice away - Illustration CC-
By David Revoy

- « De-google-ify internet » services
  - Almost 10 years of existence!
  - Our annual usage statistics;
  - Maintenance, backups, updates;
  - Huge work to fight spam;
  - The success of Framagroupes…
  - ...and the campaign to renew the services (we have lots of ideas!)

Support Framasoft

All the work we can’t describe in 7 weeks...

If you’ve read through the 94 pages of our 2022 Activity Report (FR), you’ve already guessed: it’s very difficult to summarize everything our small association is doing.

But just because we won’t be devoting a week to each of the following projects doesn’t mean that nothing has happened...
So here’s what we won’t have time to go into until the end of the year:

- CHATONS Collective (ethical web service providers)
  - Framasoft has been dedicating paid time to the collective for 6 years now;
  - Organisation of the CHATONS camp (August 2023);
  - This is our last year of coordinating the collective;
  - Major transmission and support work, allowing it to become autonomous;
  - Self-managed internal debates have already taken place;
  - Framasoft remains a member of the collective, we just stop coordinating it.

- ECHO Network (European exchange project on ethical digital support for citizens)
  - Co-organisation of the inaugural seminar in Paris (January 2023);
  - Study visit to Berlin (March 2023);
  - Brussels study visit (June 2023);
  - Rome study visit (September 2023);
  - Zagreb study visit planned for early December 2023;
  - In 2024, pooling shared experiences into practical tools.

- Peer.Tube (showcase of quality content broadcast on PeerTube)
  - Prioritized the development of PeerTube in 2023;
  - Work planned for 2024 (content promotion, showcase, community of curators, etc.).

Support Framasoft
Seven weeks to balance our budget for 2024

If Framasoft is able to employ not 10 but 11 people, to rent nearly 57 servers, to travel all over France (and beyond), and to finance everything it does in the digital commons... It is all thanks to your donations.

Your donations are and will remain our main source of funding, allowing us to act freely and in complete independence.

This year again, we need you, your support, your sharing, to help us regain ground on the toxic GAFAM web, and multiply ethical digital spaces.

So we’ve asked David Revoy to help us present this off on our « Support Framasoft » page, which we invite you to visit (because it’s beautiful) and above all to share as widely as possible:
If we want to complete our budget for 2024, we have seven weeks left to raise 200 000 €: we won’t make it without your help!

Support Framasoft

We sincerely hope that this report and outlook will inspire you and (if you can) make you proud to support Framasoft.
Brussels, June 2023: Diary of the second ECHO Network study visit

As a reminder, the participants in the ECHO Network exchange come from 7 different organisations in 5 European countries: Ceméa France, Ceméa Federazione Italia, Ceméa Belgium, Willi Eichler Academy (Germany), Solidar Foundation (European network), Centar Za Mirovne Studije (Croatia), Framasoft (France).

Report on the week in Brussels.

Cliquez ici pour lire l’article en français.
Brussels’ Grand Place under the sun

TLDR (too long, I didn’t read it): It was just too much fun! You can feel that the bonds between participants are getting stronger, and that the methods of popular/permanent/active/new education (place the term of your choice before education) are bearing fruit!

That week, from June 12 to 17, 2023, Brussels was bathed in sunshine.

A crosswalk in LGBT+ colors leading to parliament.
We were two Framasoft members: Fred and Booteille.

In ECHO Network meetings, Mondays and Fridays are dedicated to travel, since the various people are more or less far from the meeting place.

But our Belgian pals had planned a debate evening for Monday evening, so we had to arrive not too late.

Luckily, we both had trains that allowed us to arrive around noon, so we met up at the Gare du... Midi and set off together to explore the city center of the European capital in search of our hotel.

*Smurf ceiling in Brussels. Comics are everywhere.*
Once we’d packed up, we took a quick stroll to find a place to eat.

Brussels is a great city, where you can go from an upmarket district to a working-class one just by crossing the street. I’m sure that’s true elsewhere, but it struck us. Fred’s tip: if you want to be offered something to smoke, walk around with a guy who looks like Bob Marley.

After that, Fred wandered off while Booteille recuperated from his three nights of 3-4h in a row (he’d just come from another association’s AGM and a few parties).

So we met up directly at the DK workshop, a very nice association bar, where we were going to discuss what Framasoft is with a few dozen members of the public. The invitation had been extended by Tactic (which supports and hosts ethical digital services) and Neutrinet (a Belgian non-profit ISP); Tactic being one of the Belgian partners who co-organized some of the activities during our stay in Brussels.

The time, the people and the place were really nice. We were made to feel very welcome, and it was a pleasure to be with so many allies we didn’t know.

A journalist was at the party for a documentary he’s preparing on privacy. He wants to sell it to RTBF. He took video captures of the discussion.

Gerben, who works for NLnet, was there. NLNet is a foundation that funds a lot of digital projects that contribute to improving our society. PeerTube is one of these projects.

On the first evening, we had a meal downtown with the ECHO partners. For Booteille, who was bursting with fatigue, it was particularly difficult to start exchanging in English that evening.

On Tuesday, we kicked off the first day of activities at Maxima, a very nice third-party association.

Everyone had arrived, despite a few people’s transport problems. There were members of Solidar Foundation, CÉMÉA Italy, CÉMÉA France, Willi Eichler
Akademy, La Ligue des Familles in Belgium, Tactic, Framasoft...

It's important to note that the theme of the week was « active education practices to raise awareness of ethical tools ».

So we started by doing some activities to get us into the spirit of the week, to start building links between participants, based – as will be the case for almost all activities – on active/permanent/popular/new education methods; choose your favorite term among these. While not everyone agreed on the name (and some didn’t necessarily mean the same thing as others), everyone validated their interest, and that’s the important thing!

Next, we got into groups to discuss what we thought active education and popular education were and were not. We had to draw our interpretations on panels. In a few years’ time, our work may be found again, and the world may mistake it for a painting by Leonardo da Vinci. Expect the foundations of what we call « art » to change after that. There will have been a before and an after. ☠

After the small-group discussions, we watched a video on Joseph Jacotot, « Peut-on enseigner sans savoir? » (Can we teach without knowing?).

We then presented our panels and had a large-group discussion.

In the afternoon, we did an activity based on key digital figures: money, quantity of data, pollution, place the figures given opposite the right question. Not an easy task, even for geeks. Quite a few people made corrections to the figures given after the activity, as the cards were three or four years old. This highlighted the speed at which digital technology is evolving, which is quite staggering.

Then we had a meeting with people from Code du Numérique. An ultra-cool project. They are working to build coherent legislative proposals to put to elected representatives – particularly on issues of inclusion. These proposals are developed through workshops with a wide range of people, both those who are comfortable with digital technology and those who are not. You don’t like legal issues: go and talk to these people!

There are some great videos on their website, which we recommend!
We also suggested that they be interviewed on the Framablog, because we were so enthusiastic about it.

The day ended with a review of the activities carried out. As always with popular education, you get the impression that the hours have just flown by and that you haven’t made any effort, but when you look back you realise how rich the exchanges have been and how much work has been done.

We then went for a drink and a bite to eat with some of the group. And to answer the question on your lips, yes, some people had chips!

The next day, we had a date at another venue, the PianoFabriek, in Saint-Gilles.

We had a beautiful (dance) hall with an outdoor area.

In the morning, Cécile and Annie, from the Ligue des Familles, suggested « the hidden side of clicking » as a theme, where we would discuss the attention economy.

But before that, we played a little presentation game, where each pair had to find something in common that the others didn’t have. Contrary to what you might think, many people have been on roadtrips to Spain and would like to listen to opera.

Annie and Cécile then asked us to answer 12 yes or no questions. These 12 statements are designed to help identify an addiction (see an example here) and have been adapted for use with smartphones. For example: « I feel nervous or anxious if I’ve left my smartphone at home ».

Several people in the group were a little « shocked » by the results of their answers.

Answering two (2!) of the statements with « yes » underlines addictive behaviour. Suffice it to say that the geeks have hit the roof.
In Belgium, Fred’s addiction to Speculoos is reawakening.

We then watched the Dopamine episode on Facebook, which many people were just discovering, and discussed it with our respective small groups.

The next activity was cognitive bias bingo. The names of several biases and their descriptions were posted around the room, and a randomly selected pair of us were asked to write down the name of the bias for each description on an index card.

After this activity, we discovered Ardoino’s grid in which we had to place, first on our own and then with our groups, solutions to the problems raised by digital technology.
Were these solutions of an individual, interpersonal, group, organizational or institutional nature? Let’s think about it!

The aim was to highlight the fact that many impactful actions are not just individual matters (you know, peeing, showering, etc.).

We ended our activities at PianoFabriek with a moving debate.

Individually, we wrote answers to « For me, active pedagogy is... » and « For me, active pedagogy is not... » on sticky notes.

After which, Alain, from CÊMÉA Belgium (who co-hosted most of the week with Sarah, also from CÊMÉA Belgium), chose a few answers and had us move around the space to indicate « I agree » or « I disagree ».

Once positioned, we were able to speak up and discuss the reasons for our position. At any moment, we could change our position, physically showing the evolution of our thinking.

We really enjoyed this form of debate.

Incidentally, we haven’t noted it yet, but it’s important to know that we mainly exchanged ideas in English, and translated into English what people who spoke in French were saying. Most people seemed to understand enough English not to translate systematically from English into French, and would indicate when there was a need for translation in that direction.

The translation work was a considerable effort, but for the people in charge of the animation, it was even more exhausting. At the ECHO Network session in Paris, those able to express themselves in English had formed a group which spent the whole week exchanging in that language. In Brussels, this was not possible. European project, European constraints!

After the PianoFabriek, we joined members of EDRI and Technopolice Brussels for an exploratory walk in public spaces (notably the Gare du Midi) in search of CCTV cameras.
These two people helped us to better understand the thinking behind the installation of cameras: « Which locations with which lenses? » In the Gare du Midi, for example, each door is necessarily equipped with a dedicated camera. There’s also a camera in front of every staircase leading up to the platforms, so that faces can be clearly identified. Not to mention the store, where a camera is also pointed... at the cashier’s hands!

We noticed that there are far more cameras in the poorer neighborhoods (including Molenbeek-Saint-Jean) than in the richer ones. One fact that impressed us: a camera was located in front of a subway station in a working-class neighborhood. Residents didn’t like it, and it was damaged. Another camera was placed much further down the street, but it monitored the same subway exit. These cameras have an impressive zoom capability.

The cost of installing a camera is estimated at €20,000, and cities are installing hundreds of them, although their effectiveness in combating crime has not been proven in the slightest.
The premises of the Belgian Cyber Security Center are packed with surveillance cameras. No, nothing. All is well.

Ha, I think it’s time to ask this but... HOW IS IT THAT IN BRUSSELS YOU HAVE TO PAY FOR BOTTLED WATER IN ALL RESTAURANTS! NO FREE TAP WATER! JUST WATER! RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH! LET’S BURN CAPITALISM!
A poster « Are you a communist? Join us! » we came across while wandering around Brussels.

Sorry for the outburst, it’s okay now.

For the last day, we were back at Maxima, where a number of digital, image (video) and radio players presented their projects to us, including RadioPanik, a free radio station (which makes fascinating impossible programs) and ZinTV, an organization close to social movements.

After the presentation of their projects, we had a large-group discussion on the difficulties of migrating to open-source solutions for certain structures.
During the day, we had to join either ZinTV to learn how to make video recordings, or RadioPanik to learn how to make radio.

We learned how an ultra-light portable radio transmitter works, or how to use OBS to broadcast live TV.

At the end of the day, there was a PeerTube presentation from someone who learned a little late that she had to do it, poor thing. Luckily, Booteille was on hand to answer any questions.

After that, the ECHO Network core group and I took stock of the week.

The results were really positive. The partners who didn’t really see the value of popular education methods during the first session in Paris are now convinced. The links between the different members and structures were further strengthened.

We had the feeling that we were really starting to form a body, a real group, and that we were all really moving in the same direction, which for a pan-European project like this is really motivating.

In the evening, before dinner, we attended a conference on Tyler Reigeluth’s book, « The Intelligence of Cities, Critique of Endless Transparency ».

Before the conference, Booteille spoke on behalf of Framasoft alongside Morgane (co-organizer of the ECHO project, member of CÉMÉA France), Sarah (who was co-organizing the trip to Belgium) and Célo (member of Tactic and Neutrinet, who played an important part in organizing the activities), into the microphone of RadioPanik, which was broadcasting live.

We gave a brief presentation of our structures and the ECHO Network project.

The conference then got under way, and to be honest, we weren’t very good at it. Our ECHO Network accomplices, who had learned how to make radio and TV that very afternoon, were broadcasting the conference over the airwaves, and we couldn’t help but give them a helping hand. The PeerTube streaming of the rebroadcast had a problem, and Booteille had to get his hands dirty (Booteille’s note: In truth, they managed just fine without me, haha!).

Right after the conference, we went out to eat, drink and chat until late.
Antonio, our Croatian colleague (from Center for Peace Studies), hosted the evening. He’ll be part of the host team in Zagreb, and he’s quite a character!

Ce graffiti « Montrez-moi le budget » près de la Gare du Midi est la preuve indiscutable que pyg est passé à Bruxelles.

This « Show Me The Budget » graffiti near the Gare du Midi is indisputable proof that pyg has been to Brussels.
Berlin, March 2023 : Diary of the first ECHO Network study visit

From 27 to 31 March 2023, the first study visit of the European project ECHO Network took place in Berlin. This report looks back on this week of exchange on the theme of « Young people, social networks and political education », organised by the Willi Eichler Academy.

As a reminder, the participants in the ECHO Network exchange come from 7 different organisations in 5 European countries: Ceméa France, Ceméa Federzione Italia, Ceméa Belgium, Willi Eichler Academy (Germany), Solidar Foundation (European network), Centar Za Mirovne Studije (Croatia), Framasoft (France). Around twenty people took part in the study visit.

It’s a chilly spring in Berlin!
It’s a long way to Berlin!

In order to promote the values of the Ethical, Commons, Humans, Open-Source Network project, the Framasoft participants wanted to travel to Berlin by train. So Monday and Friday of this exchange week were dedicated to transport.

The day of departure was a national strike day in Germany (where a rail strike = no trains running!). As a result, only 3 of the 4 Framasoft members who had planned to take part in the project were able to make it.

When you think of trains, you think of time, where transport is an integral part of the journey. In fact, it takes 9 hours by train from Paris, or even 13 hours from Nantes... And you should add 1 or 2 hours (or even half a day) for « contingency management » (delays, cancellations, changes of train). Travelling to Germany by train was an adventure in itself (and the feeling seems to be shared!).
Tuesday 28 March: Discoveries and visits off the beaten track

After a brief meeting with the first participants the day before, Tuesday will continue with the aim of getting to know each other (arrivals will continue throughout the day due to changes in the itinerary caused by the strike the day before).

Tuesday morning will begin with a visit to the Jewish Cemetery of Berlin-Weißensee, the largest Jewish cemetery in Europe. Nature takes over in this historic place.
In the afternoon we visit a former Stasi prison, Berlin-Hohenschönhausen. This visit made a particularly strong impression on us: the site was created by former prisoners, the prison wasn’t closed until 1990, and many of the people who tortured prisoners were never brought to justice. In short, a dark page of history, but one that needs to be shared (we recommend the visit!)…

The day will end with a convivial meal in a traditional restaurant.

**Wednesday 29 March: young, old and social networks**

From Wednesday, we were welcomed at the Brillat-Savarin cookery school for our exchanges, workshops and talks.

The chandelier in the entrance hall of the cookery school is just right!
Discussion: What do we think about social networks in our organisations?

The first workshop was a round-table discussion in which each participant shared his or her use of and views on social networks, and in particular TikTok, the medium that will be used in the following workshop.

To summarise:

- There is little use of social media from a personal point of view in the group.

- On the other hand, the majority of the group use social media to promote their organisation’s activities (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Mastodon).

- No one in the group uses TikTok, which poses a problem for understanding this social media.

- As part of their organisation’s activities, the majority of the group would like to reach out more to young people and it seems interesting to find them where they are, i.e. on social media.

- The group fully agreed that social media are not neutral tools and try to monopolise the attention of their users.

This time of exchange therefore allowed us to see that we share the same values, difficulties and desires when it comes to social media. However, we felt that the ‘one at a time’ format lacked some dynamism in the exchanges and the opportunity for several people to discuss.

Feedback from a student workshop: raising awareness of social issues in a TikTok video

Alongside our morning discussions on social media, 2 groups of students from the Brillat-Savarin school worked on a video project. They had to produce a TikTok
video (one per group) to show the impact of the European Union (1st group) and climate change (2nd group) on their work as chefs. The videos were shown to us (incredible quality in 2 hours of work!) and then we exchanged views on the topic.

**What we took away from this workshop:**

- The students were between 18 and 22 years old and did not use TikTok. According to the students, this social network is aimed at people younger than them (« young » is too broad a term!). However, they had mastered the codes of the platform as they were regularly exposed to TikTok content on other platforms such as Instagram and YouTube.

- In any case, they wouldn’t necessarily want to use a social network to watch political content, preferring a more recreational use of the network (like watching videos of kittens!), even if they claim to be political.

- They found it particularly interesting to get a message across in videos and to question themselves on issues that directly affect them.

It was an interesting experiment, even if the plenary discussions did not allow everyone to participate.
Reflect EU&US: the Willi Eichler Academy project

Funded to the tune of €500,000 by Marshall Plan leftovers, Reflect EU&US is a 2-year project (2022-2024) by the Willi Eichler Academy. Its aim? To organise discussions between students outside the university environment, remotely and anonymously.
Points to remember:

- The project involves 60 students (30 from the United States and 30 from Germany), with a physical meeting planned at the very end of the project to lift the masks.

- Topics covered include justice, racism, gender and politics.

- Following the discussions, a library of documents will be created, which will allow the various sources (texts, articles, videos, podcasts, etc.) to be validated (or not).

- Anonymity makes it easier to accept contradictory opinions.

- The management of the groups can be complicated by anonymity, but it is an integral part of the project.

From a technical point of view, the platform is based on the OpenTalk tool and was chosen to provide this space for free exchange, with the creation of coloured cards as avatars, making it possible to guarantee the anonymity of the participants. The choice of open source technologies was made specifically with the aim of reassuring participants so that they could exchange in complete peace of mind. This was followed by a live test of the platform with the students (in German, which didn’t allow us to understand everything!).
Open source meets politics

The afternoon continued with a talk by Peer Heinlein, director of OpenTalk, on « True digital independence and sovereignty are impossible without open source ». You can imagine that we at Framasoft have an opinion on this, even if we don’t feel strongly about it... Discussions with the audience followed on open source software, privacy and data encryption.

The next speaker was Maik Außendorf, representative of the Green Party in the European Parliament. Among other things, we discussed how digital technology can help the ecological transition. We learnt that German parliamentarians do not have a choice when it comes to using digital tools, and that national coherence is difficult to achieve with the decentralised organisation of Germany into Länder.

The study visit ended in a restaurant, where we had the opportunity to talk with a SeaWatch activist, highlighting the common values and reflections of the different organisations (precariousness of associations, the need to propose alternatives to the capitalist world, the need for free and emancipatory digital technologies).
This chandelier will have inspired·es (can you see the artistic side too?).

An intense week!

We were particularly surprised and excited by the common visions shared by the participants and organisations, whether it be about emancipatory digital, the desire to move towards a world that is more like us, where cooperation and contribution move forward, and the question of how to share our messages while remaining coherent with what we defend.

Although the majority of the week was built around plenary workshops, which did not always encourage exchange between participants or spontaneous speaking, the informal times (meals, coffee breaks, walks) made it possible to create these essential moments.

What next for the ECHO network? The second study visit took place in Brussels from 12 to 16 June. A summary article will follow on the Framablog (but as always, we’ll take our time!).
We couldn’t go to Berlin without visiting the murals on the Berlin Wall: here’s a photo of the trip to round off this article.

For further information:

- CEMÉA report on the exchange
- Framablog post « Feedback on the ECHO Network opening seminar, January 2023, Paris »
Feedback on the ECHO Network opening seminar, January 2023, Paris

From January 14 to 16, 2023, the Ceméa France and Framasoft held the opening seminar of the ECHO Network project. Here is a report of this weekend of international exchanges and discoveries.

A two-year European project

Presented on the Framablog last October, ECHO Network is one of the four flagship projects of our roadmap Collectivissons Internet, Convivialissons Internet.

*Ethical, Commons, Humans, Open-Source Network* is a project, but also an associative network on a European scale. Led by the new education association Ceméa France, this network is composed of 7 structures from 5 European countries:

- Ceméa France
- Ceméa Federzione Italia
- Ceméa Belgique (Belgium)
- Willi Eichler Academy (Germany)
- Solidar Foundation (European network)
- Centar Za Mirovne Studije (Croatia)
- Framasoft (France)

These structures share an intent to accompany citizens (via popular education, news, activism, etc.), and to exchange on the digital uses specific to their country, their culture, their language.

Study trips are therefore planned in 2023 in each of the countries to facilitate these exchanges and the understanding of the context of each one, so that in 2024 we can produce commons that can be used by other associations in Europe.
The opening seminar in Paris

The first meeting with all the actors took place from Saturday 13 to Monday 16 January in Saint Ouen, north of Paris, France.

This opening seminar was co-organized by Ceméa France and Framasoft. While we didn’t hesitate to get involved and contribute as much as we could, we have to admit that members of the Ceméa have a precious experience in setting up these events, and that they did a great job overall on organizing this seminar.

In addition to the thirty or so participants representing the partners of the ECHO Network project, we were able to invite more than twenty people from networks interested in new education, digital mediation, the commons and free software to contribute to these first discussions on ethical digital support for citizens.

Thus, this opening seminar was designed to find out how to talk about the same thing when we don’t speak the same languages, even though our contexts are different and our digital cultures varied.

Imagine a large room, about twenty people are sitting on chairs in tight rows. In
front of them, a person seems to give them instructions. That’s what it looked like.

**Understanding each other through « new education »**

These three days were conceived beforehand using the methods of « new education » dear to the Ceméa.

The 55 people were divided into 3 reference groups, in order to share knowledge together. The concept was simple: rather than having poor interactions with 55 people, spend more quality time with a smaller group of 15 of them.

These groups were led by a team of three people (2 members of Ceméa, 1 member of Framasoft). Some periods were also reserved to be spent in micro groups (of 2-4 people) and to realize « mini projects ». Of course, all the participants gathered for the meals and conviviality times in the canteen.

Let’s take a moment to greet and thank the team managing the place, Mains d’œuvres, in Saint-Ouen, for their wonderful welcome and their delicious food. This space dedicated to culture and integrated into the life of the neighborhood was ideal to discover the flavor of Paris that’s lived by the locals. https://www.mainsdoeuvres.org/

The three days were divided into six half-days: the first one to meet each other, then 4 half-days dedicated to exchange on the notion of Ethics, Commons, Humanization and Openness in the digital world (yes, these are the words of the ECHO acronym ;)).

The last half-day of Monday afternoon allowed each group to present to the others a report of the exchanges, to put all this together and to say goodbye.
- Comment définirais-tu... ?
  How would you define... ?

- Que vois-tu de bénéfique avec... ?
  What do you see as beneficial with... ?

- Que vois-tu de toxique, problématique... ?
  What do you see as toxic, problematic... ?

- Dans un monde idéal, comment penses-tu que ça devrait fonctionner ?
  In an ideal world, how do you think it would work?
Conviviality as a political tool

The objective was to meet and to understand what brings us together in our political actions (which aim at organizing the society in a different way), and for that, the Ceméa and Framasoft relied on conviviality and exchange.

The participants had different sensitivities about digital uses. Most of them knew Mastodon but not all of them. Most of them had an idea of what free software is but not all of them. The activities allowed them to share their knowledge of the different themes.

The workshops took several very imaginative formats, such as:

- inventing one’s own social network (with its codes, terms of use, and functioning), and imagining how one would moderate the posts of other communities
- imagining what would be acceptable or unthinkable to put or remove in a « lifephone », a low-tech phone that everyone would keep all their life
- Use the Métacartes Numérique Éthique to explore one to three topics in a small group and then present these topics to the rest of the group and facilitate the discussion
- a moving debate where you position yourself in the room (near the « agree » wall or on the other side near the « disagree » wall) around assertions concerning ethics and digital technology
- and many other animations, which are documented in the article written by the Ceméa
The « Life Phone » workshop.

During the time devoted to these mini-projects, we were able to observe some beautiful initiatives:
- Imagining an adaptation of the « Métacartes Numérique Éthique » to make them more accessible to a young audience
- A writing workshop on what a desirable digital world could look like. You can read the results on Chosto’s blog (FR), from the Picasoft association
- Digging into the question of digital support for associations with a turnkey kit
- Laying down the principles that would help to create an ethical and collaborative video game
- Chatting about how to introduce the societal issues of digital technology in higher technical education.

In short, collective intelligence has shown again, during these three days, its wonderful power.
Recipe cards, a tool idea that makes you drool!
Study visits to follow

If we already know that these will not necessarily resemble this seminar (where we have chosen new education methods as a tool for meeting and exchange), the next study visits have already been scheduled. In fact, as we finish writing these lines, all the partners are in Berlin for another meeting.

The main themes for those visits are, in our opinion, quite attractive:

- **Germany (March 2023)** – Centralized social networks among young people, a tool for emancipation or alienation?
- **Belgium (June 2023)** – New Education practices to raise awareness on ethical tools
- **Italy (September 2023)** – Between face-to-face and distance learning, which use of digital technology?
- **Croatia (December 2023)** – Inclusivity and accessibility in the Digital world

Of course, we will continue to report here about our experiences within these meetings and this project. All the articles can be found in the ECHO Network category on the Framablog... To be continued, then!
The picture is blurry, but you can see the main thing: the « Star Trek » room we used during the plenary sessions.