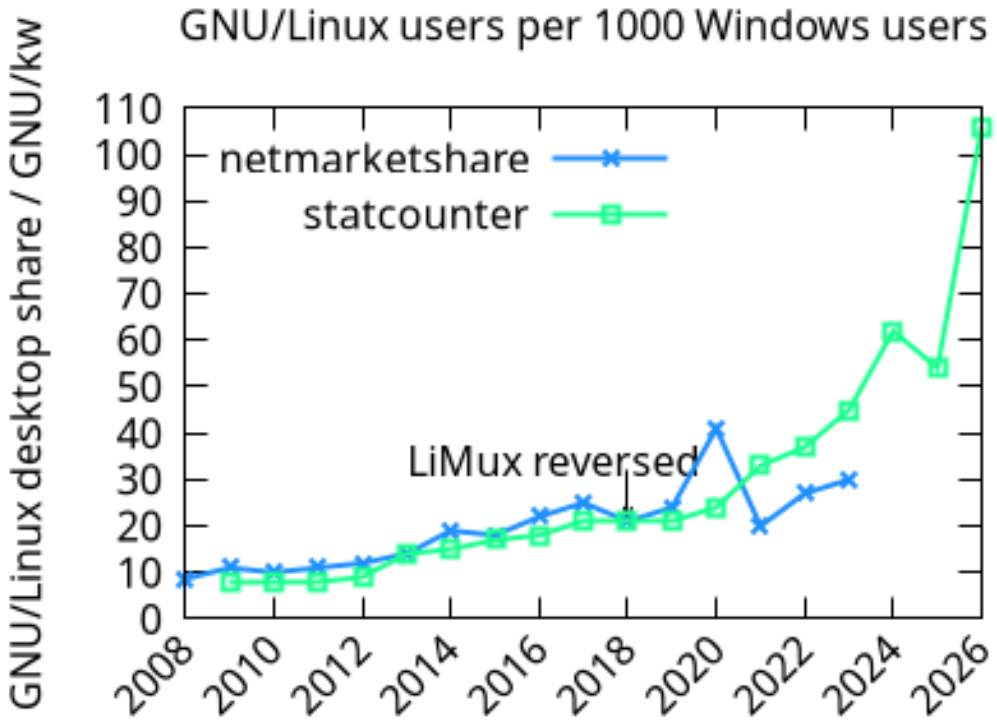
GNU/Linux users per 1000 windows users

TLDR: From 2008 to 2026, the fraction of Linux users compared to Windows users increased by factor 10.

Every year people ask “is it finally the year of the Linux Desktop?”.

In 2026 the answer is clear: since 2008 almost every year was a year of the Linux Desktop: Compared to Windows users there was reliable superlinear growth:



The source of this graph *until 2023* is data I collected over the past decade every July from OS market share. Except for the 2022 data which is from October because I missed taking the data point in time. A second datasource, still updated, is statcounter.

OS market share does browser detection, so the data is far from perfect, but at least they have data we can use:

2008	8.6	GNU/kw
2009	11	GNU/kw
2010	10	GNU/kw
2011	11	GNU/kw
2012	12	GNU/kw
2013	14	GNU/kw
2014	19	GNU/kw
2015	18	GNU/kw
2016	22	GNU/kw
2017	25	GNU/kw
2018	21	GNU/kw
2019	24	GNU/kw
2020	41	GNU/kw
2021	20	GNU/kw
2022	27	GNU/kw
2023	30	GNU/kw

The second datasource is downloaded from statcounter, postprocessed from their csv export to be GNU/kw, and filtered to just july; ignoring Chrome OS):

Thanks to gamingonlinux and The Linux Experiment (video) for referencing the statcounter data.

GNU/Linux is growing. (though there is a dip during the pandemic)

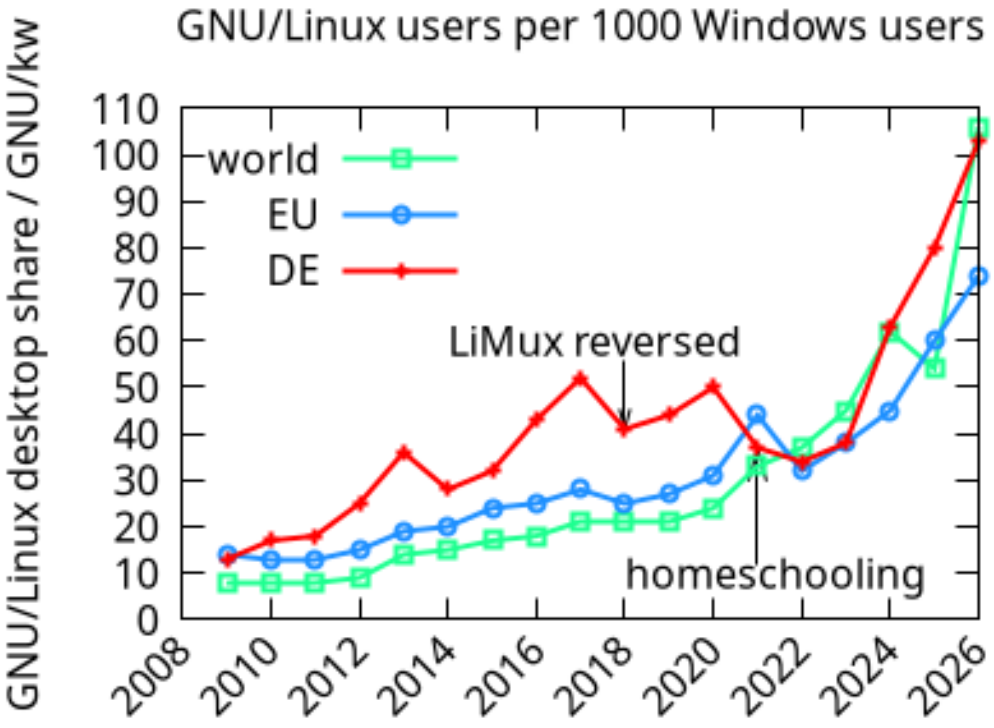
When will you migrate? Did you migrate already?

This is based on an older German article I wrote in 2010 and updated regularly: GNU/Linux gewinnt gegenüber Windows und MacOSX an Marktanteil

Germany and Europe

I'm from Germany, so that's my main interest, and Europe is trying to move towards sovereign IT, so that's important. Because of that, here's a EU+Germany plot, all from statcounter:

Date	Windows	Linux	Chrome OS	Unknown	GNU/kw
2009	94.83	0.76	0	0.13	8
2010	93.29	0.77	0	0.08	8
2011	91.87	0.76	0	0.07	8
2012	88.85	0.83	0	0.06	9
2013	90.49	1.23	0.03	0.08	14
2014	89.25	1.34	0.19	0.63	15
2015	87.7	1.52	0.26	1.9	17
2016	83.33	1.54	0.35	5.16	18
2017	84.46	1.79	0.45	1.97	21
2018	82.88	1.71	0.5	2.37	21
2019	77.61	1.65	0.54	7.03	21
2020	77.74	1.85	0.67	2.67	24
2021	73.04	2.38	1.21	7.93	33
2022	75.21	2.76	1.5	6	37
2023	69.52	3.12	3.24	3.69	45
2024	72.1	4.44	1.41	7.13	62
2025	71.88	3.88	1.02	9.63	54
2026	71.11	7.51	1.47	?	106



Germany

Date	Windows	Linux	Chrome OS	Unknown	GNU/kw
2009-07	94.84	1.19	0	0.08	13
2010-07	92.6	1.54	0	0.15	17
2011-07	91.41	1.62	0	0.2	18
2012-07	88.58	2.18	0	0.05	25
2013-07	88.77	3.2	0	0.03	36
2014-07	88.76	2.45	0.04	0.28	28
2015-07	87.18	2.77	0.07	0.82	32
2016-07	82.51	3.56	0.08	3.01	43
2017-07	80.43	4.15	0.1	1.98	52
2018-07	81.61	3.33	0.11	1.37	41
2019-07	78.16	3.44	0.08	5.01	44
2020-07	77.07	3.87	0.11	1.8	50
2021-07	74.78	2.79	0.36	3.32	37
2022-07	75.96	2.61	0.43	2.45	34
2023-07	77.79	2.94	1	2.02	38
2024-07	76.35	4.82	1.58	3.78	63
2025-07	70.50	5.67	1.74	4.81	80
2026-07	70.23	7.24	1.28	?	103

EU

FAQ

Could the increase be due to Windows users moving to mobile platforms?

Windows users did not go down enough, and MacOS did not rise along, to warrant a 100% increase of GNU/kw. It's at 87% while GNU/Linux in July was only 3.57%. If this were due to an exodus of Windows-users, I would expect MacOS to rise along.

The results are filtered for Desktop. When including mobile, Windows did not have sufficiently high losses compared to mobile to explain the Linux numbers differently than with an increase of Linux users.

Date	Windows	Linux	Chrome OS	Unknown	GNU/kw
2009-07	94.55	1.32	0	0.09	14
2010-07	93.08	1.25	0	0.07	13
2011-07	91.32	1.22	0	0.08	13
2012-07	88.41	1.33	0	0.03	15
2013-07	90.03	1.71	0.01	0.05	19
2014-07	88.88	1.75	0.13	0.6	20
2015-07	86.91	2.09	0.2	1.35	24
2016-07	83.72	2.12	0.23	3.39	25
2017-07	83.48	2.35	0.33	1.73	28
2018-07	82.98	2.1	0.37	1.91	25
2019-07	78.07	2.08	0.47	5.51	27
2020-07	77.09	2.39	0.54	2.16	31
2021-07	75.8	3.34	0.87	4.62	44
2022-07	78.71	2.54	1.66	2.84	32
2023-07	76.79	2.93	1.77	2.93	38
2024-07	76.01	3.41	1.65	4.29	45
2025-07	71.69	4.30	1.18	6.92	60
2026-07	74.08	5.49	2.07	?	74