

From Open Source to Open Spaces

The Fediverse and the
Future of Public Digital Infrastructure

Sandra Barthel

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Future of Public Digital Infrastructure

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ABOUT ME



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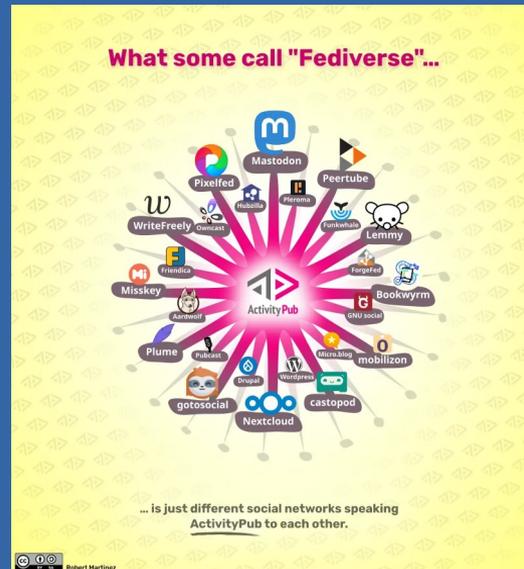
Vienna & Berlin

POLL

1. Who is engaged with Free Software?

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2. Who uses any of these already?



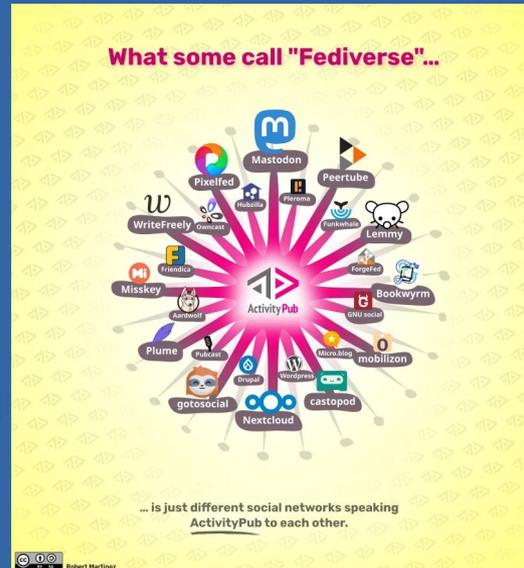
Robert Martinez, CC BY-SA

POLL

1. Who is engaged with Free Software?
2. Who uses any of these already?

Free = user rights (control),
social good (collaboration).

SFSCON promotes the use of
Free Software in digital
infrastructures as a tool to
**achieve greater innovation and
competitiveness.**



Robert Martinez, CC BY-SA

The Fediverse is a social
movement that promotes digital
autonomy.

It has aspects of both. 'Free' as in
'having choices', while 'open' refers
to the fact that it is based on open
protocol ActivityPub which enables
interoperability and is the opposite
of locked-in platforms with no users
rights.

Quiz

What do they have in common?



The premises of the International
Criminal Court in The Hague,

Thomas Wolf, CC BY-SA 3.0 de

Quiz

What do they have in common?

Dänemark goes Open Source

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TECH

International Criminal Court to ditch Microsoft Office for European open source alternative

The court will move its internal work environment to Open Desk, a German-developed open source software

<https://www.euractiv.com/news/international-criminal-court-to-ditch-microsoft-office-for-european-open-source-alternative/>

Technology & politics

In today's world, technology has become increasingly intertwined with politics.

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BBC

Arrest warrants issued for Netanyahu, Gallant and Hamas commander over alleged war crimes

21 November 2024

Share Save

David Gritten
BBC News

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cly2exvx944o>

BBC

ICC 'deplores' new US sanctions on judges and prosecutors

21 August 2025

Share Save

Yang Tian
BBC News

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c620l3y7ydro>

Microsoft denies having suspended any services to ICC

<https://www.techzine.eu/news/privacy-compliance/131996/microsoft-denies-having-suspended-any-services-to-icc/>

Technology & politics

International law – Tariffs – Rare earths – Digital Service Act – Digital Markets Act – GDPR

TL:DR;

technology providers are pressured from politicians

technology oligopolies use political donations to exert their influence on governments

“Digital Sovereignty”



“Deregulation”



Solution for Sovereignty? EuroStacks

EuroStack The White Paper Buy European The Letter Who We Are European Catalogue Project

Building Europe's digital future

EuroStack™ is our original idea for a European Industrial Policy initiative bringing together tech, governance and funding for Europe-focused investment to build and adopt a suite of digital infrastructures: from connectivity to cloud computing, AI and digital platforms.

The EuroStack Industry Initiative
 Euro-stack.eu
 Buy European, Sell European, and
 Fund European

The EuroStack Directory: Trusted Tools for Digital Sovereignty

Discover sovereign European services and innovative open source technologies that champion interoperability and put you in control of your digital stack.

Featured Categories

- Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)**
 Virtualized computing resources available on demand.
 → 36 solutions
- Edge Computing**
 Software and hardware systems enabling local data processing.
 → 2 solutions
- Container Management**
 Tools for automating and managing the deployment, operation, and monitoring of containerized applications.
 → 16 solutions

The EuroStack Directory Project
 Euro-stack.com
 Stefane Fermigier

The EuroStack
 Euro-stack.info
 Bertelsmann Stiftung
 and Mercator



Quiz

The EU Commission claims that we need to reduce our common dependence on non-European tech companies and therefore strengthen European stacks.

Why ?

A: So that EU Commission can better enforce its existing legislation, including GDPR, DSA and DMA for all European customers, voters and inhabitants ?

B: So that the EC can trade digital legislation and the protection interests of the European resident population for low tariffs on the automotive and automotive supply industries in the name of deregulation ?

C: To redistribute European taxpayers' money for the private profit of European industrial players and call it digital sovereignty ?



SUMMIT ON EUROPEAN DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY

Who sits at the table ?



29.08.2025, Pressemitteilung

Europäischer Gipfel zur digitalen Souveränität 2025

Unsere digitale Souveränität gemeinsam gestalten

Pressemittteilung 10/2025

Bundesminister für Digitales und Staatsmodernisierung, Dr. Karsten Wildberger, hat auf dem deutsch-französischen Ministerrat in Toulon den Digital-Gipfel 2025 mit einem Fokus auf europäischer digitaler Souveränität angekündigt, der am 18.11.2025 in Berlin auf Einladung des deutschen und des französischen Digitalministeriums stattfinden wird. Gemeinsam mit der französischen Digitalministerin Clara Chappaz und weiteren hochrangigen europäischen Politikerinnen und Politikern soll auf dem Gipfel ein starker Impuls für ein digital souveränes Europa gegeben werden.

11.30

Morning Sessions

- Start-ups and Solutions
- Cloud and Data Sovereignty
- AI-State of Europe

Afternoon Sessions

- EUDI Wallet
- Digital Commons as a Pillar of Digital Sovereignty - EDIC
- DMA - Fairer Markets in Support of Digital Sovereignty

<https://bmds.bund.de/aktuelles/eu-summit/programm/programm>

17 November

High Level Forum on Public Procurement (BMDs Side Event)

Future Builders Forum

International Workshop on Open Source Foundation Models

eco Warm-up to the European Summit on Digital Sovereignty

Announcement of the European Network for Technological Resilience and Sovereignty (ETRS)

A technologically resilient Europe: The EuroStack - Roundtable on EuroStack industry initiative

Scaling Sovereignty: VC & Startups Powering Europe's Tech Future

Digital Sovereignty as a Democratic Endeavour

POLITICO Sovereign Night

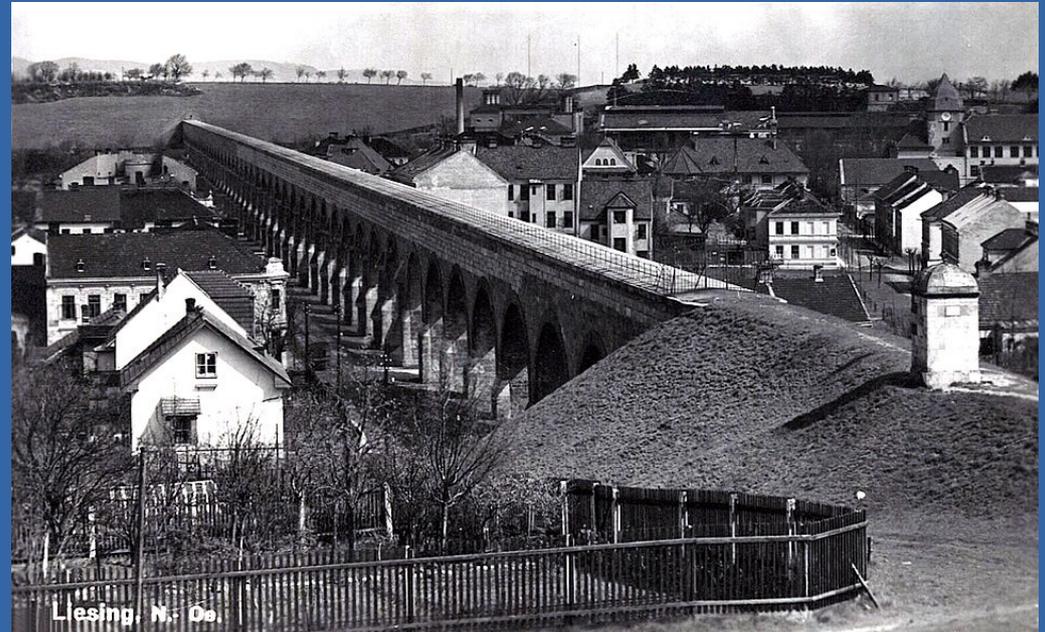
Reception on the Occasion of the European Summit on Digital Sovereignty

<https://bmds.bund.de/aktuelles/eu-summit/side-events-overview>

Public interest infrastructure



London, Public transport, 1863



Vienna, Water infrastructure, 1873

Public interest digital infrastructure



In the 21st century:
Digital space is part of our shared infrastructure!



If public money will be spend, public interest digital infrastructure needs to be funded – as well!



Digital Commons in the EU

Digital commons refers to

- shared digital resources - such as software, knowledge, data, and cultural content -
- that are collectively produced and governed by a community and intended for public use.

These commons are distinguished by

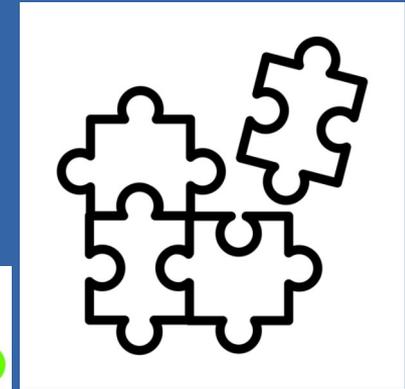
- open access, participatory management, and licensing practices
- that preserve reuse and redistribution.

Digital commons play a vital role in areas such as education, research, software development, and civic engagement.

DC-EDIC: Digital Commons European Digital Infrastructure Consortium

Building blocks of public interest digital infrastructure

- Hardware
- Operating system
- Free and Open Software
- Means of communication
- Knowledge infrastructure
- Interoperable social networks
-



We need more people and voices!

- I. get engaged
- II. exchange ideas and demands for free software & free digital social spaces
- III. repeat them as often as possible

Then we will have a chance to be heard!



Fediverse Advocats, European parliament

Fediverse and political demands

digitalrechte.de

zentrum für digitalrechte und demokratie

Konzept zur Förderung des fediverse (FöFed)



The "Save Social" logo features a purple background with a grid of small, square portraits of various people. Overlaid on the grid is a dark purple rectangular box containing the text "Save Social" in white, with "DAS INTERNET ZURÜCKEROBERN" in a smaller white font below it.

The "DIGITALE GESELLSCHAFT" logo consists of a white background with a central graphic of a grid of colored squares. The grid is composed of 10 squares: a blue square at the top, a row of four squares (green, red, blue, green) in the middle, a row of four squares (red, blue, green, red) below that, and a blue square at the bottom. To the right of this graphic, the words "DIGITALE" and "GESELLSCHAFT" are written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, stacked vertically.

#FediFund: We need Money €

National levels and European Union (MFF)

Following the example of the German Sovereign Tech Agency, the Fediverse in Germany should be funded with a

Fediverse Fund of 30 million euros per year

from the national budget.



Establish legal certainty in the area of non-profit status



FOSS is largely supported by volunteers and has not yet received sufficient social, legal and funding recognition even though it develops and operates a widely used digital commons (digital sovereignty, security, reusability, cost efficiency for the state, schools, civil society and the economy).

These activities must therefore be reliably recognised as charitable.

<https://fedidb.com/>

+1 Principle (Ralf Stockmann, 2024)

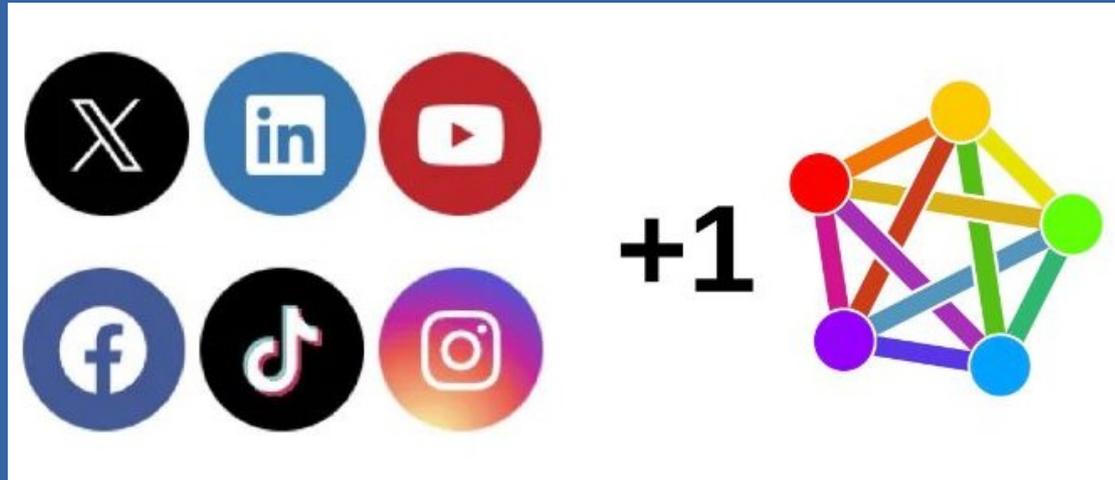


Public (funded) institutions, like political bodies, authorities and administrations, universities, libraries, public broadcasting and others

shall be obliged to

invest at least the same amount of financial and structural resources in the production and distribution of content for these open digital platforms.

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Decentralised, interoperable cross-sector, multilingual European media platform

The screenshot shows the Display Europe website interface. At the top left is the logo "Display Europe" with the tagline "ONE EUROPE, ENDLESS STORIES". To the right is a search bar with the text "Cerca...", a magnifying glass icon, a dropdown arrow, and a menu icon. Below the search bar is a sidebar with a "Fonti" (Sources) section containing a list of media outlets: Denik Alarm, Eurozine, Kapitál Noviny, Krytyka Polityczna, New Eastern Europe, Reset! Network, The Schuman Show, Transitions Online, and Voxeurop. The main content area displays an article from "krytyka polityczna" with the headline "Bambini costretti a partorire bambini. Nuova politica di Putin" and a date of "7 ott 2025". The article text reads: "La Russia affronta un drammatico calo demografico, e la politica statale che cerca di promuovere la maternità precoce e di limitare l'accesso all'aborto si rivela inefficace. Quali sono le conseguenze di queste azioni per il futuro del paese e dei suoi cittadini?". At the bottom of the article are three interaction buttons: "Mi piace" (Like), "Commenta" (Comment), and "Altro" (More).

TL:DR;

To realize the vision of a truly digital commons in the European Union

– one built on openness, participation, and resilience –

we need the active support of public institutions, civil society, and developers

for the Fediverse.

We can win this together! ✨

Let us

- talk & get to know each other, 
- make the most of this window of opportunity,
- exchange ideas and be strong together,
- and have fun doing it. 