The European Decentralisation Institute

Towards a thriving and equitable digital society and economy

The greatest challenges of our century are fundamentally problems of coordination. Climate change, biodiversity loss, sustainable supply chains, trustworthy AI, digital sovereignty – complex issues that cannot be solved through top-down directives or central control and command structures. They require unprecedented global-scale coordination between citizens, organisations, and technologies and they require that such coordination is grounded in Europe's intellectual traditions.

Decentralised technologies are key to unlocking coordination at scale.

These technologies enable people, organisations and even AI agents to coordinate directly, peer-to-peer, and to make decisions that serve both *their* specific needs and *our* broader societal, economic, and ecological imperatives. At the same time these technologies allow us to design a decentralised digital infrastructure that is rooted in European values and the balancing of liberty, equality, and solidarity, embedding markets within rules and institutions.. These traditions provide the foundation for Europe's digital future.

*This represents a historic opportunity for Europe to enable large-scale coordination **and** embed its democratic principles directly into the architecture of our digital future.*

In the digital age, sovereignty can no longer be proclaimed on paper. It must be embedded in protocols, infrastructures, and code. Decentralisation is therefore not only an opportunity but a structural necessity: it is the architecture of resilience that safeguards citizens, organisations, and machines from monopolistic capture while enshrining European values in the very fabric of our digital future.

Through its work, the European Decentralisation Institute aims to make decentralisation a core consideration in policy development and strategic planning for all forms of large-scale digital coordination.

This represents a historic opportunity and an urgent necessity for Europe to enable large-scale coordination and embed its democratic principles directly into the architecture of our digital future. This is why we are establishing the European Decentralisation Institute: an independent, non-profit think tank dedicated to researching, analysing, and advocating for decentralisation as the foundational principle of a thriving, equitable, and sovereign European digital society and economy.

Through its work, the European Decentralisation Institute aims to make decentralisation a core consideration in policy development and strategic planning. This shift will spark much-needed innovation built on truly open and decentralised digital systems, like public blockchains, while also advancing new technologies that improve speed, privacy, security, and trust.

These decentralised technologies include tools such as roll-ups and zero-knowledge proofs for scalability and privacy, stable digital currencies (stablecoins), privacy-preserving methods for shared computing, and secure, user-controlled digital identities. Together these technologies form the foundations of a democratic and truly European digital society.

This is an opportunity for Europe to lead this important next development in digital technology.

Operating principles of the European Decentralisation Institute

Strategy First: Before addressing specific use cases, we will lay out strategy and policy, examining decentralisation at European, national, and industry levels. This ensures that specific use cases serve broader strategic goals. Our primary audience includes policymakers and executive leadership across sectors.

Interdisciplinary Excellence: Our work transcends silos, bringing together experts from disciplines like. computer science, law, economics, sociology. We prioritise interdisciplinary teams that include experienced practitioners from both public and private sectors.

European Centric and Sovereign-by-Design: Our focus is distinctly European, encompassing all countries of the European Council. We are committed to strengthening Europe's digital independence and resilience while preserving and promoting our shared values. We answer the call for a more competitive Europe that maintains its unique identity in the digital age.

Building a Digital Civil Society: We believe liberty, equality, and solidarity must be designed into the very architecture of digital infrastructures, standards, and protocols. We advocate for digital public goods such as identity, data, and communication infrastructures that are stewarded as commons rather than controlled by monopolies.

Institutional Setup and Engagement

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EUROPEAN
DECENTRALISATION INSTITUTE

2025 - 2026 Research Agenda

Q3/Q4 2025 - Decentralisation as a **Strategic Imperative** for Digital Sovereignty

Q4 2025 - Compliant Decentralised Infrastructure for **Financial Sovereignty**

Q1 2026 - Identity without Intermediaries: A Next Step Towards True Sovereignty for European Citizens

Q2 2026 - Resilient Energy Systems: Matching Decentralised Supply and Demand in the Electricity Market

Q3 2026 - Artificial Intelligence with Confidence: Decentralised Systems

We aim to establish the European Decentralisation Institute with a launch event in October 2025. Our first policy brief will be published soon thereafter. The themes we are interested in are broad, but our short-term focus will be on **Decentralised AI, Decentralised Finance, Digital Identity and Resilient Energy Systems.** We are open to suggestions from participating organisations, and to commissioned reports by (supra)national governments and industry organisations.

The organisational setup of the Institute reflects our principles in which interdisciplinary project teams work together on research and analysis resulting in policy briefs and roundtable discussions with policymakers, elected officials and decision makers from related industries. The projects teams are supported by a lean executive team dedicated to matching research and policy areas with relevant organisations, individuals and funding.

Join the European Decentralisation Institute.

We are independent, but we cannot do this alone. We are backed by the Lisbon Council, the European Commission, EY and the Ethereum Foundation. We welcome you and your organisation to support us as partner of the European Decentralisation Institute.

We invite policymakers, elected officials, strategists, and executive leaders to participate in this transformative initiative. Together, we can harness the power of decentralisation to create a digital Europe that is sovereign, democratic, and aligned with our highest values.

To join us in this crucial work, please contact Arno Laeven or Roman Beck, founders of the European Decentralisation Institute, or reach out to representatives at any of our participating organisations.