

FediVariety.org

Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration - A Fantastic Fediverse Circus

FOSDEM talk

31 januari 2026, 15:40-16:00

Social Web track - Room H.2215 (Ferrer)

Track: Social Web
Room: H.2215 (Ferrer)
Day: Saturday
Start: 15:40
End: 16:00
Video only: h2215
Chat: Join the conversation!



FediVariety, a research initiative supported by the NLnet and SABOA foundations, has analyzed the European Data Protection Supervisor's pilot project, "EU Voice/Video".

Our findings report, "Integrating the Fediverse into public administrations", highlights the potential of integrating the Fediverse into public administrations. This report aims to spark open dialogue among diverse practitioners, encouraging experience sharing and fostering new collaborations.

At FOSDEM, we will present preliminary insights from our research and invite participation in an unconference in Amsterdam on March 19-20, 2026.

Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration - A Fantastic Fediverse Circus -

<https://fosdem.org/2026/schedule/event/PGB9VZ-a-fantastic-fediversity-circus/>

Speakers



Peter Mechels

vishnee

—presentation slides with transcript—

- FediVariety mastodon account
- FediVariety website
- FediVariety / NOAW unconference INFO
- FediVariety / NOAW unconference CfP



Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration - A Fantastic FediVariety Circus



Fedivariety
—juggling the fediverse

FediVariety, a research initiative supported by the NLnet and SABOA foundations, has analyzed the European Data Protection Supervisor's pilot project, "EU Voice/Video".

Our upcoming report, scheduled for publication in early 2026, will offer key insights and recommendations for integrating the Fediverse into public administrations. This report aims to spark open dialogue among diverse practitioners, encouraging experience sharing and fostering new collaborations.

At FOSDEM, we will present preliminary insights from our research and invite participation in an unconference in Amsterdam on March 19-20, 2026.

Building on our findings, we aim to explore how the Fediverse can effectively support public institutions in the long term, addressing critical questions about its future and strategies for developing and adopting decentralized social media. We seek to create a broad coalition and welcome developers, administrators, content managers, moderators, coders, digital activists, and open-source enthusiasts committed to fostering sustainable alternative social media and promoting an open social web.

— "Nodes On A Web (NOAW): The Fediverse in/for Public Institutions", is supported by the Chief Information Office (CIO-Rijk) (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations) of the Netherlands, the Digitalisation & Innovation Department of the City of Amsterdam, NLnet foundation, and SABOA foundation.

More information on the NOAW unconference, the format and registration can be found here: <https://fedivariety.org/unconference>

Questions? Feedback? Contact us: <https://mastodon.social/@FediVariety> noaw@fedivariety.org

FediVariety.org is a European collective of digital activists and researchers dedicated to promoting Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) for public administration, with an emphasis on the Fediverse.

Speakers



Peter Mechels

vishnee

Links

- [FediVariety mastodon account](#)
- [FediVariety website](#)
- [FediVariety / NOAW unconference INFO](#)

FediVariety / NOAW unconference INFO

—presentation slides with transcript—



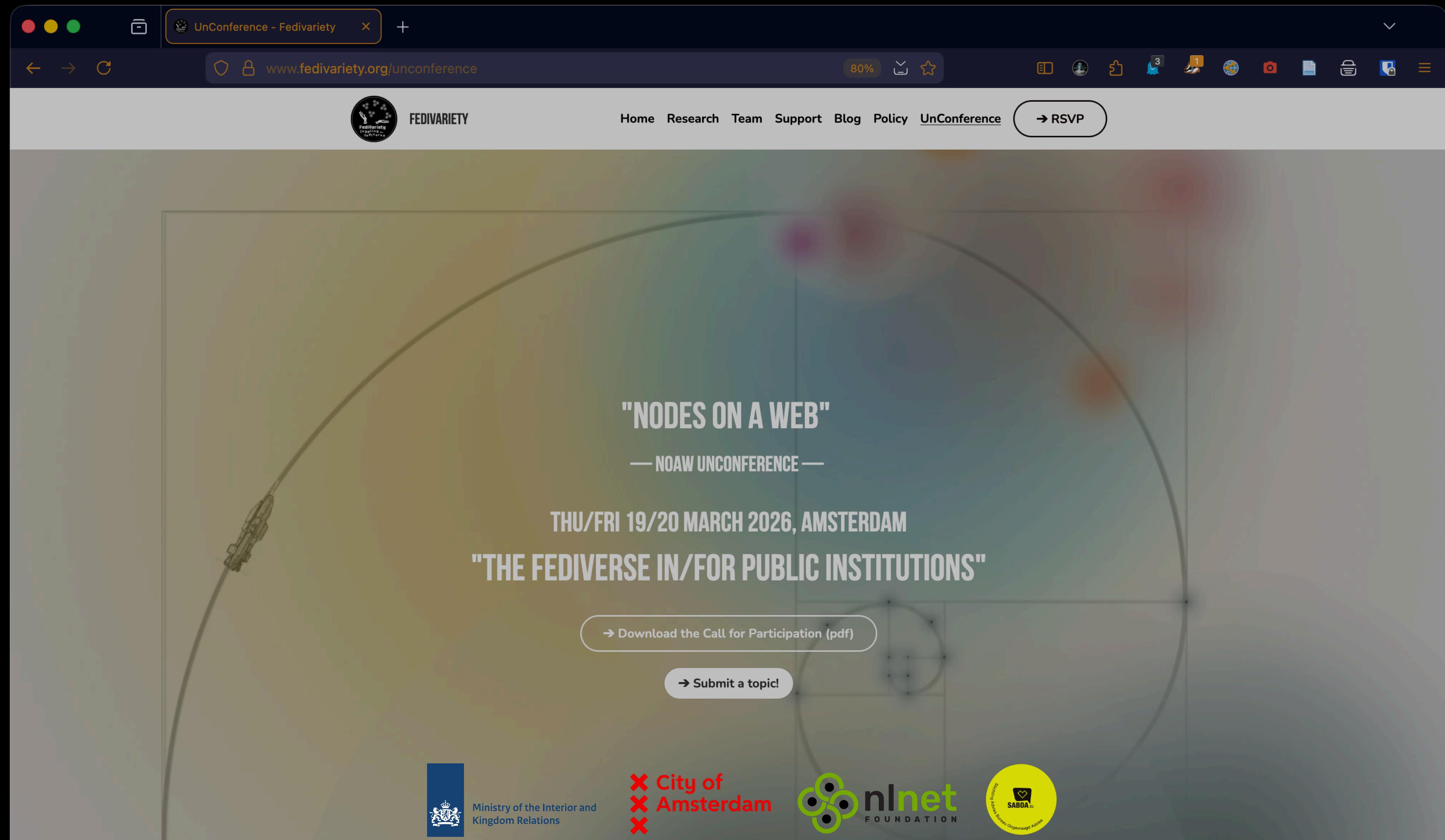
Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration

—A Fantastic FediVariety Circus—



Peter Mechels [cpt. zzepposs]
Victoria Neumann [vishnee]

We study fediverse integration in public administration. We are part of “FediVariety”. And we’re “Juggling the Fediverse”. Thank you, Nlnet —for funding us!



The screenshot shows a web browser window for the 'UnConference - Fediversity' page on the Fediversity website. The URL is www.fediversity.org/unconference. The page features a large, semi-transparent background image of a globe with a network of lines and dots, symbolizing a web. Overlaid on this are the event details:

"NODES ON A WEB"
— NOAW UNCONFERENCE —

THU/FRI 19/20 MARCH 2026, AMSTERDAM

"THE FEDIVERSE IN/FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS"

Below the event details are two buttons:

- [→ Download the Call for Participation \(pdf\)](#)
- [→ Submit a topic!](#)

At the bottom of the page, there are logos for:

- Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (Dutch government)
- City of Amsterdam
- nlnet FOUNDATION
- SABOA (Stichting Advies Bureau Ongewenst Advies)

And thanks as well go to the Dutch CIO-government and the City of Amsterdam... For supporting our UNconference, in March. In Amsterdam.

The screenshot shows a dark-themed web browser window with the title bar "UnConference - Fediversity" and the URL "www.fediversity.org/unconference". The page content is a promotional landing for an "UnConference".

Header: FEDIVERSITY logo, Home, Research, Team, Support, Blog, Policy, UnConference, → RSVP.

QR Codes: Two QR codes are displayed: one on the left labeled "drop topic" and one on the right labeled "more info".

Section 1: "NODES ON A WEB" — NOAW UNCONFERENCE —

Section 2: THU/FRI 19/20 MARCH 2026, AMSTERDAM

Section 3: "THE FEDIVERSE IN/FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS"

Call to Action Buttons: → Download the Call for Participation (pdf) and → Submit a topic!

Sponsors: Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, City of Amsterdam, nlnet FOUNDATION, and SABOA.

— An UNconference, based on findings from our research report, and fuelled with stories from all of us! Let's try to open up new chapters of history!



Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration

—A Fantastic FediVariety Circus—

Sneak peek!



**Cause
Case
Consequences**

So, this is a very short sneak peek about our research journey! We'll gonna to picture you the cause and the case of our study... as well as the consequences.



Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration

—A Fantastic FediVariety Circus—



Plus—if enough time is left.... We'll share a story with you from our famous logbook.



Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration

—A Fantastic Fediversity Circus—



*But before we dive into the CASE.... What was the actual CAUSE for this study?!
—We went to a keynote titled: “Fediverse integration - Why We Try and Why We Fail !”*

EDPS
failure



Wojciech Wiewiórowski

European Data Protection Supervisor

At the FreedomNotFear UNconference in 2023, in a dazzling keynote speech, the European Data Protection Supervisor pointed us to their failure...

EDPS
failure



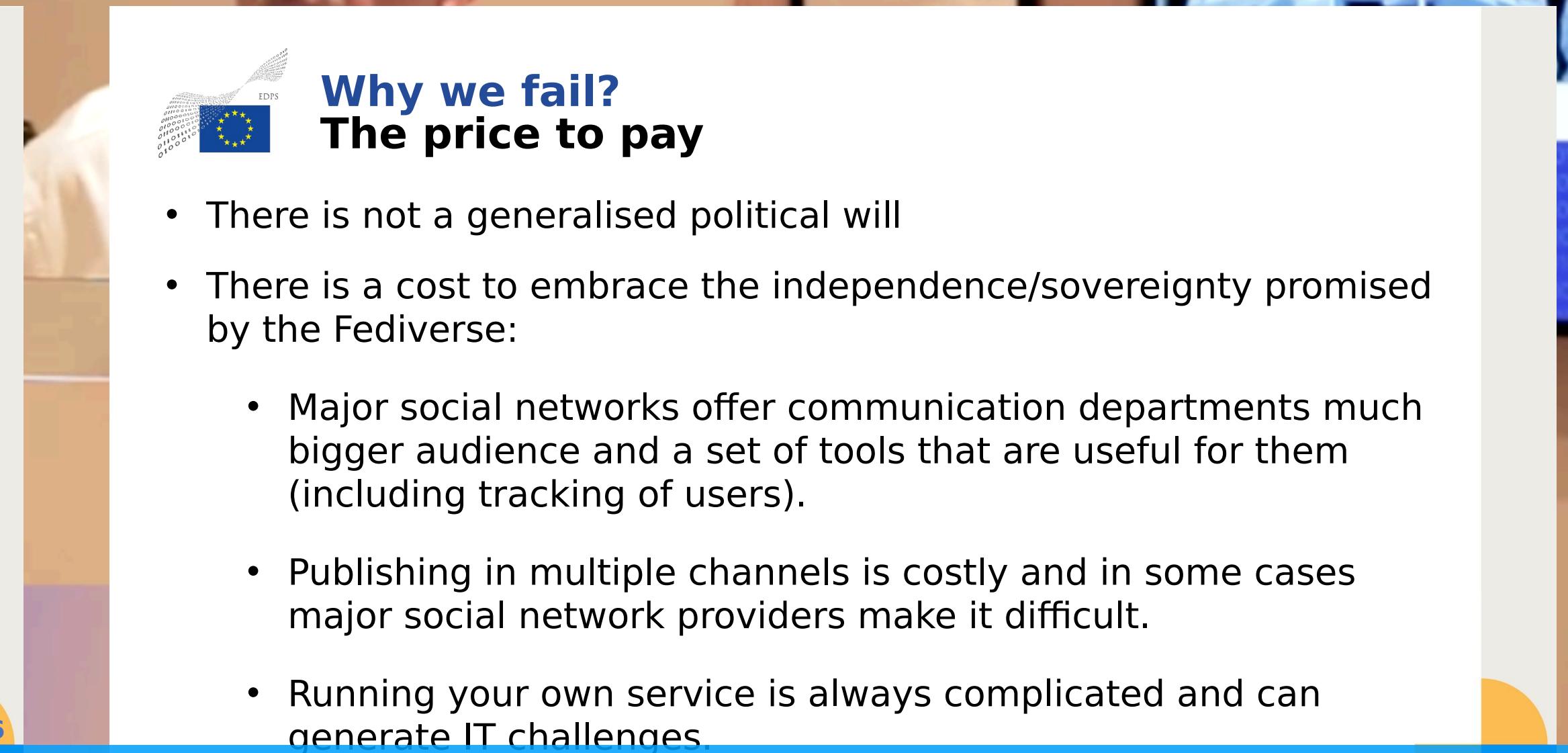
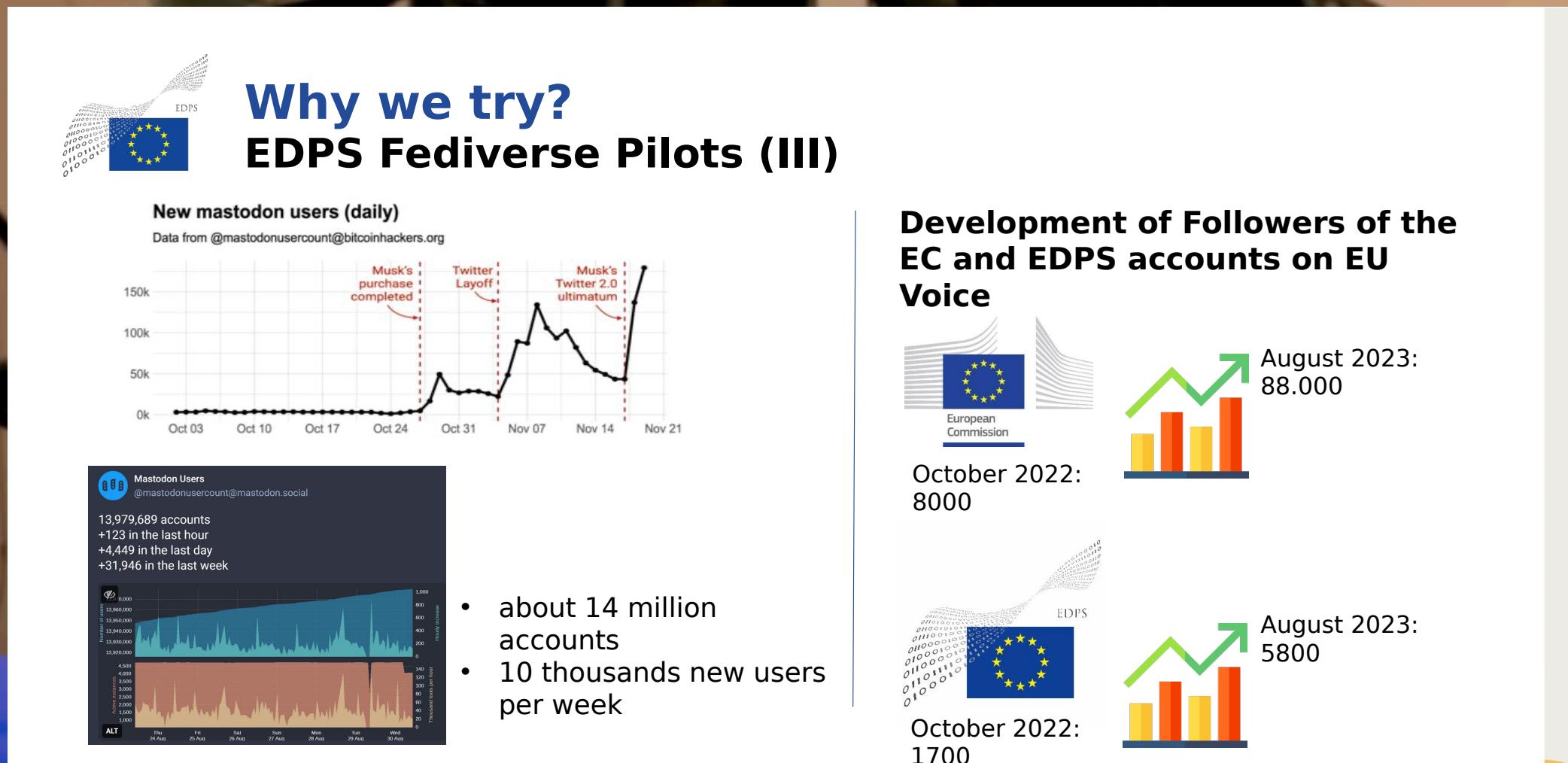
Wojciech Wiewiórowski

European Data Protection Supervisor

“To integrate the fediverse into public admin.” – And he called out to us... To reach out! To the politicians! To the parliament!

EDPS failure

Why We Try



EU
DATA
PROT
SUPER

The EU's
protection

Immediately following his appeal –as he stepped off the stage— We approached 'da professa'... We challenged him that this wasn't a failure...

EDPS
failure

Development of Followers of the EC and EDPS accounts on EU Voice



October 2022:
8000



October 2022:



Especially not regarding the numbers for their fediverse accounts.
— So we invited him to come back the very next day...

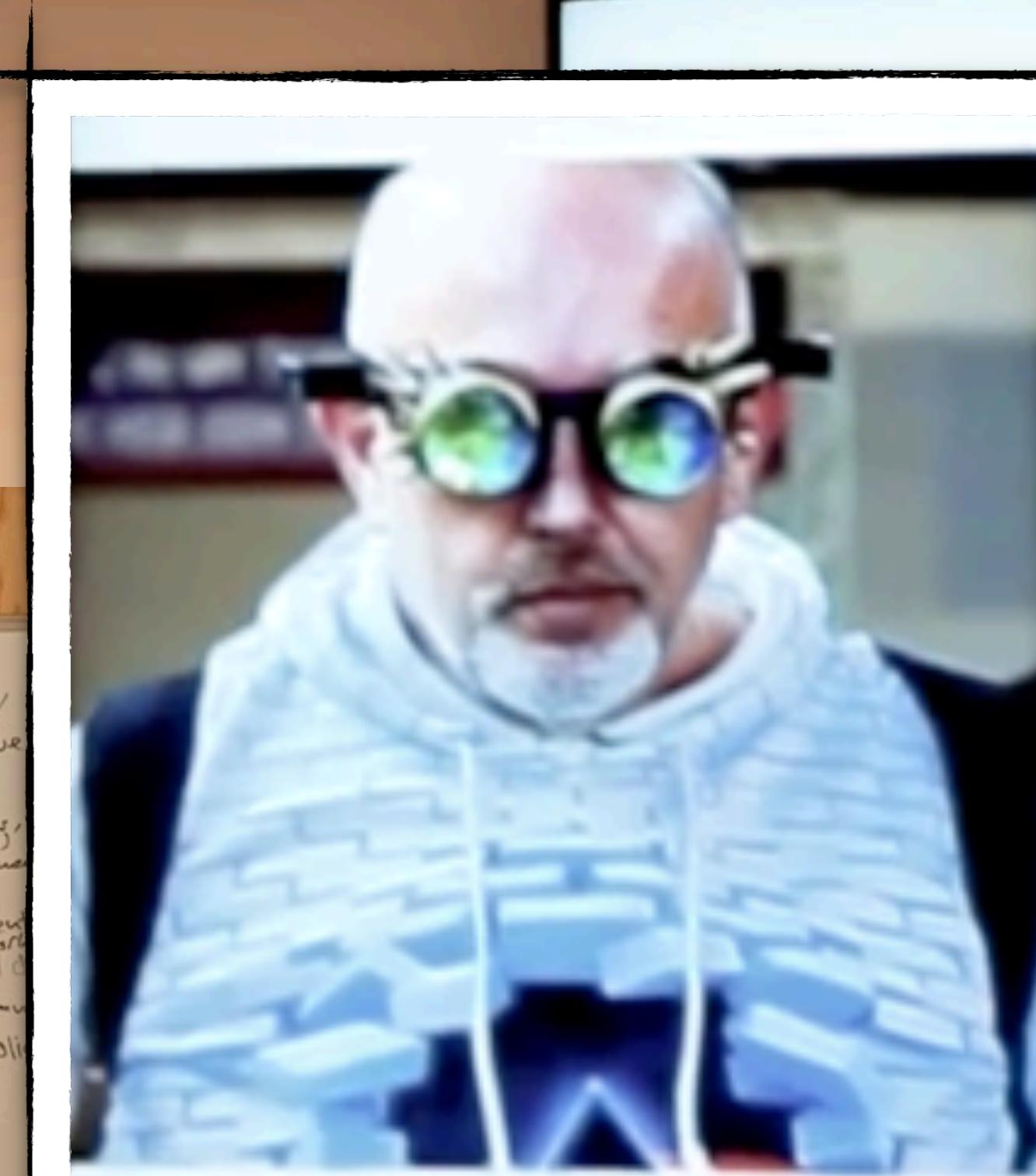
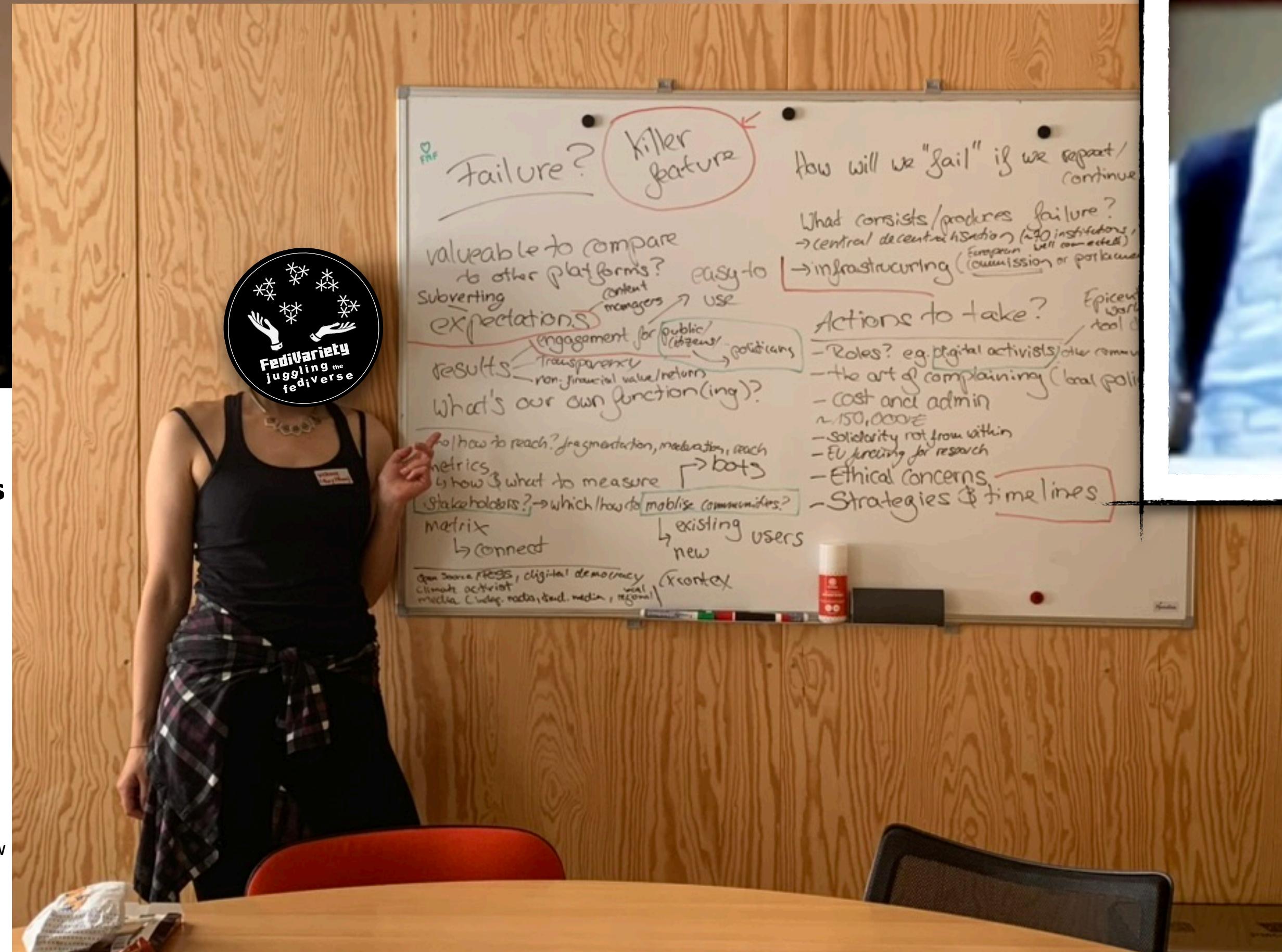
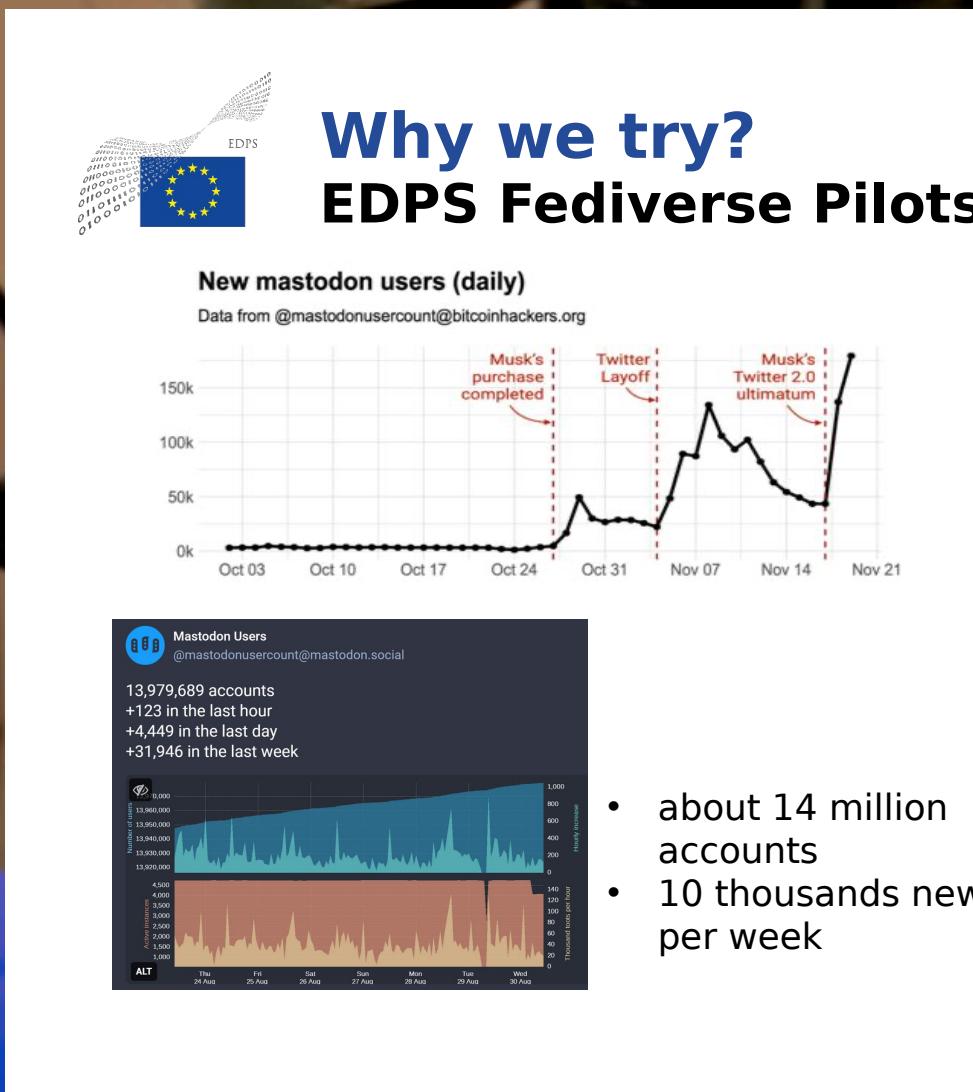


EURO
DATA
PROT
SUPER

The EU's
protection

mised
much
n
es

EDPS failure



dependence/sovereignty promised

inication departments much
that are useful for them

costly and in some cases
make it difficult.

s complicated and can

*...To have a workshop on their “failing” EU Voice/Video pilot
—Here our circus took off!*

EDPS
failure



The first result—after some braining—we came up with was a pitch for an advertisement campaign on PornHub... —To promote alternative social media to politicians, during the European elections.



...Unfortunately no funding for this case (yet).. But these European elections... they dragged us in — right into the European maze!



Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration

—A Fantastic FediVariety Circus—



SO TO OUR CASE.

The subject of our study! ‘EU Voice/Video’!

FediVariety trajectory

FediVariety

Hacker
spheres

Fosdem

FreedomNotFear

Offdem

NGI

Digital Rights
Activists

PrivacyCamp

EDPS

EU institutions

In order to do our research, we made a FANTASTIC trip. To get a grip on this we proposed a research study about the "EU Voice/Video" case!

FediVariety's EU Voice/Video case study

The EDPS pilot project, "EU Voice/Video," was one of the first to integrate self-hosted Fediverse instances into cross-institutional public administration.



drop topic

For this research, Fedivariety examined data on the creation, usage, and experience of the 40 institutional EU Voice—'Mastodon'— and 6 EU Video—'Peertube'— accounts.

Fedivariety made Freedom of Information requests to 21 institutions, resulting in documents like reports, correspondence, presentations, manuals, and evaluation reports. They also conducted 10 interviews with individuals involved in the pilot and beyond, such as the Dutch Government pilot, and the wider open source community pushing for the Fediverse.

Therefor Fedivariety attended various events, including lobby events, policy meetings, advocacy parties, tech conferences, hack gatherings... to observe, and to have intimate conversations about the complex interplay of power and seduction in the European maze.

By the way, this study uses a blend of qualitative research method based on and document analysis and Grounded Theory.

Fedivariety's overall aim is to provide policy recommendations and comprehensive guides for public administrations interested in self-hosting alternatives of decentralised and federated social media.

The insights and recommendations from this study will be discussed at the 'Nodes On A Web unconference'.

So? Darlings?! Why not open some new chapters of history...?



more info

Now if you close your eyes, take a deep breath.

[recorded voice]

The EDPS pilot project, "EU Voice/Video," was one of the first to integrate self-hosted Fediverse instances into cross-institutional public administration.

The EDPS pilot project, "EU Voice/Video," was one of the first to integrate self-hosted Fediverse instances into cross-institutional public administration.
For this research, FediVariety examined data on the creation, usage, and experience of the 40 institutional EU Voice—'Mastodon'— and 6 EU Video—'Peertube'— accounts.

FediVariety made Freedom of Information requests to 21 institutions, resulting in documents like reports, correspondence, presentations, manuals, and evaluation reports. They also conducted 10 interviews with individuals involved in the pilot and beyond, such as the Dutch Overheid pilot, and the wider open source community pushing for the Fediverse.

drop topic
Therefor FediVariety attended various events, including lobby events, policy meetings, advocacy parties, tech conferences, hack gatherings, etcetera... to observe, and to have intimate conversations about the complex interplay of power and seduction in the European maze.

more info
By the way, this study uses a blend of qualitative research method based on and document analysis and Grounded Theory.

FediVariety's overall aim is to provide policy recommendations and comprehensive guides for public administrations interested in self-hosting alternatives of decentralised and federated social media.

The insights and recommendations from this study will be discussed at the 'Nodes On A Web unconference'.

So? Darlings?! Why not open some new chapters of history...?

The insights and recommendations from this study will be discussed at the 'Nodes On A Web unconference'.
So? Darlings?! Why not open some new chapters of history...?



Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration

—A Fantastic FedVariety Circus—



Consequences!
Success!

*So what have we learned from fediverse adoption in public administration..? It's a success!
IT'S TOTALLY DOABLE!*



cheap

CHEAP! 1. It doesn't cost much to deploy. 2. Governments already have the infrastructure and the people able to do it. 3. Finding the right budget is key here.



EASY! 1. We found that admin and moderation wasn't much of an issue, thanks to many pilots like this one from EDPS. 2. There is a lot of resources out there, like GDPR compliant terms and conditions. 3. Governance is still work, and that is a responsibility.



But most importantly: it's FUN! 1. Interviewees loved the interaction and engagement they had on the fediverse. 2. They enjoyed experimenting with how it and what works. 3. And participants liked the collaboration it created (doing it cross institutionally and bridging communities). – So why isn't there a more wide-spread adoption and experimentation?



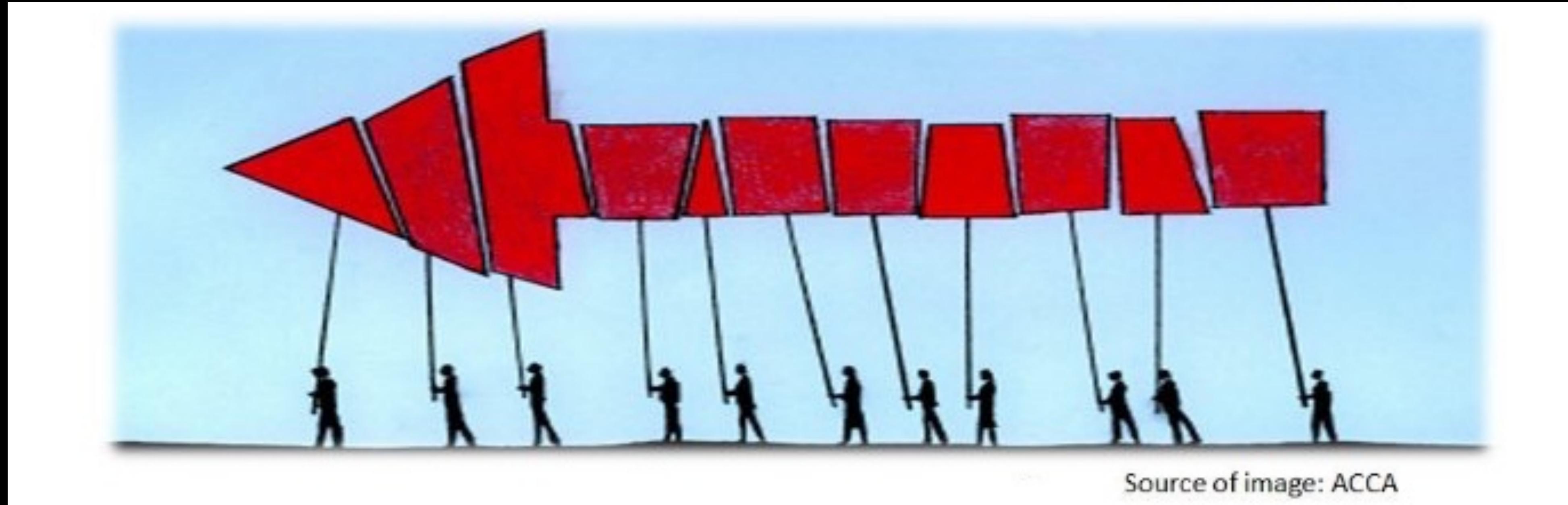
What we found was a very European story. There may be a little bit of funding and budget here and there, for a pilot, some prototypes, some features. While sometimes labelled as failure, it is actually a great success, IF NOT a learning experience. But then it stops. #RipNGI with all it's shortcomings.



It was also very common open source story. It is not as convenient to use, and many aspects not quite fit for purpose. YET. But we believe we can get there, if we dare to think more long-term and are willing to take responsibility.

—But we also need to take care of our communities when doing it.

“[...] work together on a digital common”



Source of image: ACCA

To quote one of our participants: “The fediverse is an easy vehicle [...] to work together on a digital common”. Let's step together into an era of collective sense-making. Even if we fail sometimes. Discuss what values to see reflected (beyond data protection)... What we would like to see developed and a road map on how to get there.

UnConference - Fediversity

www.fediversity.org/unconference

80%

Home Research Team Support Blog Policy UnConference → RSVP

FEDIVARIETY

drop topic

more info

"NODES ON A WEB"
— NOAW UNCONFERENCE —

THU/FRI 19/20 MARCH 2026, AMSTERDAM

"THE FEDIVERSE IN/FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS"

→ Download the Call for Participation (pdf)

→ Submit a topic!

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

City of Amsterdam

nlnet FOUNDATION

SABOA

We can only bring our stories to you. But what we need are yours.



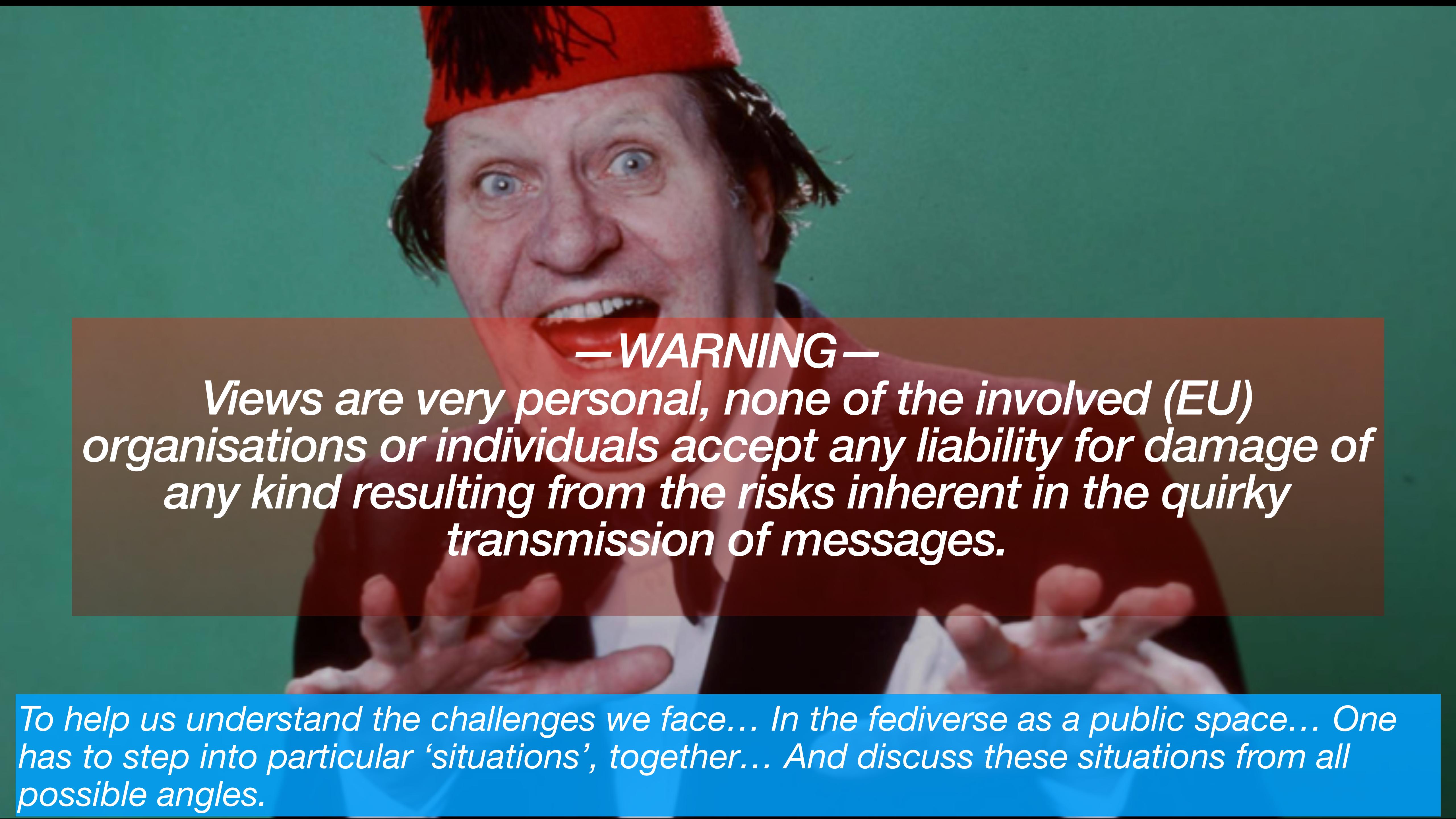
Fediverse Integration into (EU) Public Administration

—A Fantastic FediVariety Circus—



-Logbook-

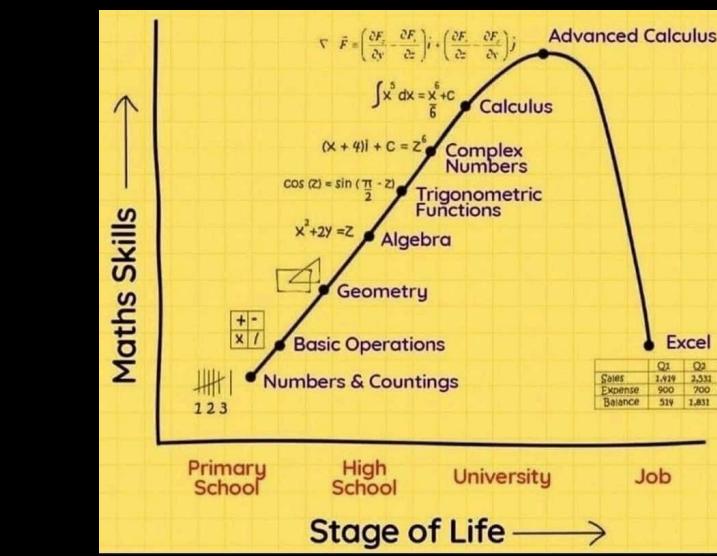
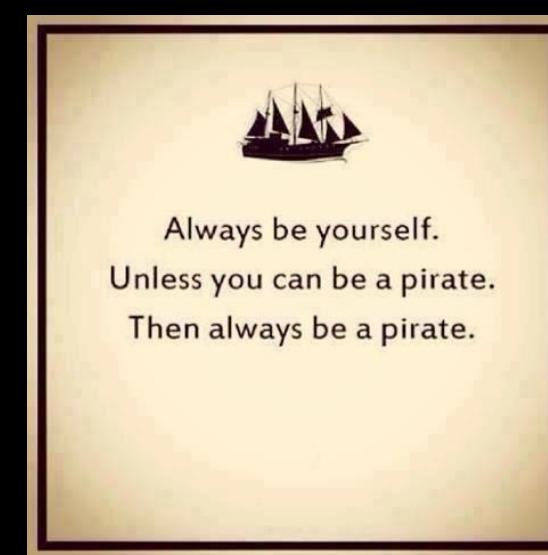
*The Logbook then! It's a logbook with stories, based on genuine quotes from real people, regarding actual events.... all related to 'Fediverse Integration into Public Administration'.
—Stories with a little FediVariety twist, of course.*

A man with dark hair and a mustache is wearing a red fez hat. He has a wide-eyed, shocked expression with his mouth wide open. His hands are raised in front of him, fingers spread, as if gesturing or reacting to something. The background is a solid green.

—WARNING—

Views are very personal, none of the involved (EU) organisations or individuals accept any liability for damage of any kind resulting from the risks inherent in the quirky transmission of messages.

To help us understand the challenges we face... In the fediverse as a public space... One has to step into particular 'situations', together... And discuss these situations from all possible angles.



*This is our Logbook Menu. And we just pick one story out...
— Mind these personal logbooks recorded the experiences, doubts, excitements, challenges, opportunities, loves and hopes of some of the people we met on our journey.*

May, 11th, 2024 - Letter to Myself. Before Hitting The Button.

Shaping a Rock into a Ball



May, 11th, 2024 - Letter to Myself. Before Hitting The Button.
Shaping a Rock into a Ball

...

May, 11th, 2024 - Letter to Myself. Before Hitting The Button.

Shaping a Rock into a Ball

May, 11th, 2024 - Letter to Myself. Before Hitting The Button.

Shaping a Rock into a Ball

Navigating the European Union resembles an intimate dance — difficult yet thrilling.

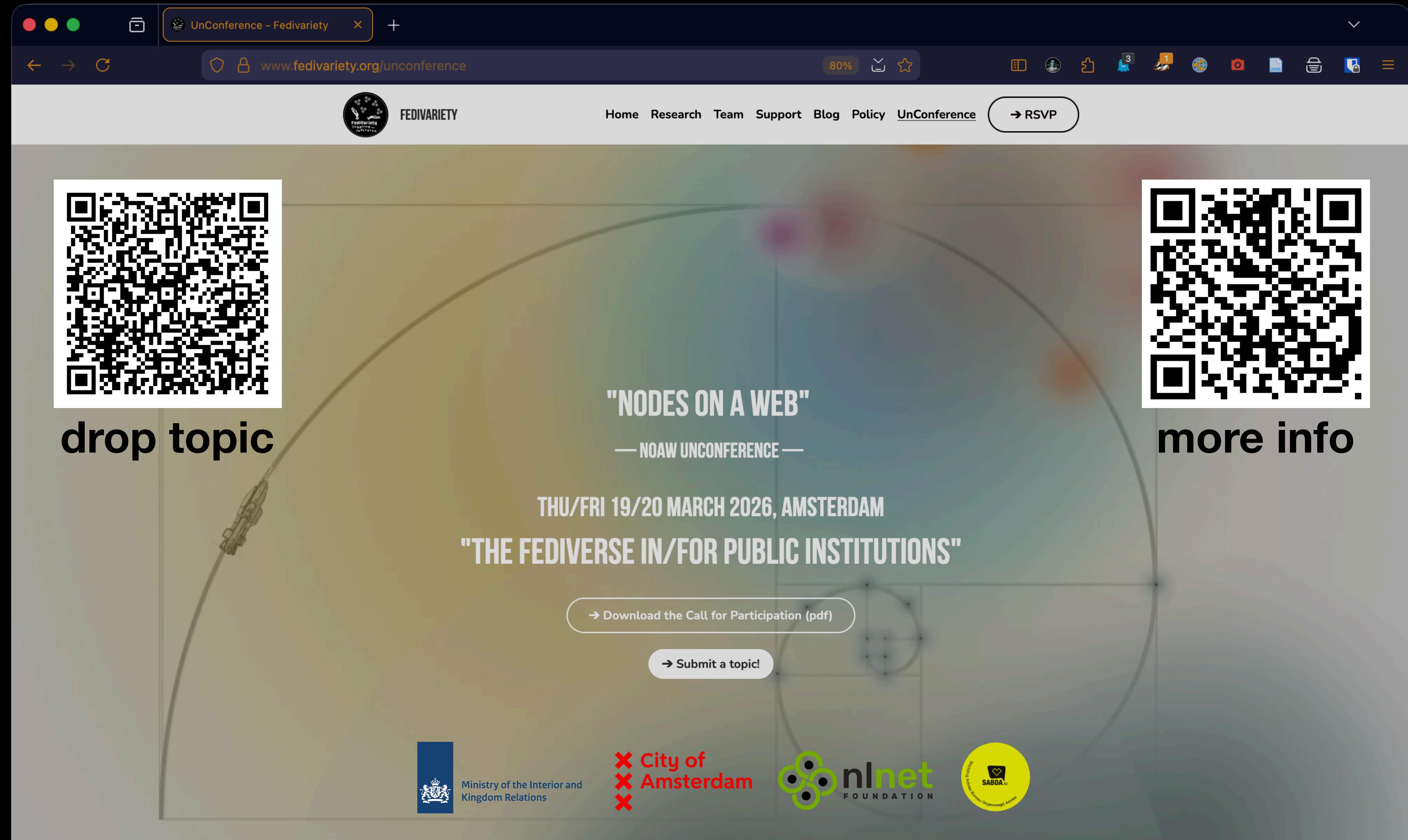
Hidden in the shadows of public institutions are the resistances we encounter, emerging only when we attempt to breach tricky communication barriers.

In high-stakes environments like the EU, trust and courage are crucial yet often held close, like sweet secrets. The stakes are high, and willingness to engage can feel enticingly limited.

One interviewee likened our quest for “fediverse integration” to the challenging art of shaping a stubborn rock into a smooth ball. Just as that requires passion and dedication, we aim to innovate public administration with new technologies.

The journey is fraught with resistance, complex regulations, and historical burdens, yet the rewards—enhanced transparency and deeper citizen engagement—shine brightly.

Ultimately, “shaping a rock into a ball” reminds us that meaningful change demands patience and resilience as we strive for responsive and inclusive public administration in this captivating digital age.



A screenshot of a web browser showing the 'UnConference - Fediversity' page. The browser has a dark theme with a tab bar at the top. The main content area features a large QR code on the left labeled 'drop topic' and another on the right labeled 'more info'. The central text reads: "NODES ON A WEB", "— NOAW UNCONFERENCE —", "THU/FRI 19/20 MARCH 2026, AMSTERDAM", and "THE FEDIVERSE IN/FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS". Below this are buttons for 'Download the Call for Participation (pdf)' and 'Submit a topic!'. At the bottom, logos for the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the City of Amsterdam, nlnet FOUNDATION, and SABOA are displayed. The browser's address bar shows 'www.fediversity.org/unconference'.

So.. Let's keep juggling the fediverse! Get involved!