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## 1 EUPsID - Manifest for Self-Governance

### 1.1 Preamble

This manifesto outlines EUPsID's understanding of **self-governance** as an organisational principle.

It is not a critique of the market, the state, or existing institutions. Rather, it explains **why EUPsID has chosen a different structure** and what experiences have informed this decision.

EUPsID has been established as a European, self-governing initiative because certain types of digital infrastructure require a governance model that is neither market-driven nor administration-driven, but **purpose-driven**.

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### 1.2 1. Self-Governance as a Third Way

In modern societies, two governance models dominate:

- **Market governance**, where success is measured by growth, efficiency, and economic returns
- **Administrative governance**, where success is measured by control, accountability, and political legitimacy

Both models are necessary and functional in their respective contexts.

EUPsID deliberately adopts a different approach:

#### **Self-governance as a purpose-driven institution**

Here, decisions are not guided by ownership, profit, or political considerations—but by a defined, legally anchored purpose.

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### **1.3 2. Experiences from Market-Driven Initiatives**

Many open and idealistic initiatives have begun without owners or profit motives.

Over time, some have undergone:

- gradual professionalisation
- capital infusion or strategic partnerships
- increased focus on scalability and efficiency

These developments are often rational and well-intentioned.

However, experience shows that when economic considerations become the primary governance mechanism, the original purpose can gradually shift.

EUPsID's choice of self-governance aims to ensure that the purpose remains central—even as the organisation grows and professionalises.

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### **1.4 3. Experiences from Administration-Driven Institutions**

States, municipalities, and supranational bodies rightly prioritise:

- democratic legitimacy
- accountability
- uniformity and legal certainty

When applied to self-governing institutions, however, these models can create tensions.

In practice, self-governing initiatives may end up functioning as:

- administrative units
- boards in disguise
- temporary programmes rather than enduring institutions

EUPsID's self-governance is not a rejection of public regulation but a means of preserving the organisational autonomy necessary for long-term infrastructure.

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### **1.5 4. The Purpose as Supreme Authority**

In a self-governing institution, the defined purpose holds supreme authority.

This means:

- no owners

- no political right to issue directives
- no possibility of takeover through capital or administration

The board and management are bound by the purpose—not by external interests.

Self-governance is therefore not about freedom from responsibility but about **responsibility towards the purpose**.

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## 1.6 5. Collaboration Without Subordination

EUPsID acknowledges and respects:

- the expertise of market actors
- the legitimacy of public institutions
- the importance of international collaboration

Self-governance does not preclude collaboration.

It simply ensures that collaboration occurs:

- without ownership
- without control
- without commitments that alter the institution's character

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## 1.7 6. Self-Governance as Protection – Not Control

Self-governance is not an expression of mistrust.

It is a structural safeguard against well-known mechanisms that, over time, can alter an institution's purpose.

EUPsID chooses self-governance to:

- ensure long-term stability
- protect citizens' trust
- create an institution that can exist independently of political and economic cycles

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## 1.8 7. An Open, but Locked Foundation

EUPsID is open to:

- participation
- criticism
- revision
- democratic dialogue

At the same time, the foundation is locked:

- the purpose cannot be changed arbitrarily
- self-governance cannot be abolished
- governance cannot be taken over

This combination is not a paradox but a prerequisite for trust.

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## 1.9 Conclusion

This manifesto is an invitation to understanding—not a rejection.

EUPsID believes that certain shared digital infrastructures require institutions that cannot be bought, politically controlled, or reshaped by short-term considerations.

Self-governance is not an end in itself.

It is a means to ensure that the purpose outlives the people who founded it.

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