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Open Letter to the European Institutions

European Digital Identity for European Citizenship and Technological Autonomy

Making the European Digital Identity Wallet a Vehicle for European Citizenship through Interoperability and Data Portability

To:

- The European Commission (DG CNECT, DG JUST, DG DIGIT)
- The European Parliament (Committees on IMCO, ITRE, LIBE, AFCO)
- The Council of the European Union
- The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS)

Dear President, Commissioners, Members of the European Parliament, and Distinguished Representatives,

The **digital lives of Europeans are currently trapped in a cycle of dependency, that can be broken through the European Digital Identity Wallet (EDIW)**. Citizens, businesses, and organizations indeed access platforms and services using **Big Tech-provided accounts**, store their data on **those same platforms** (or on servers owned by the same companies), and are locked into ecosystems that **prioritize profit over agency**. This **vertical integration of identity, services, and data** creates **unprecedented lock-in**, undermining **digital autonomy, competition, and fundamental rights**.

The **European Union has a historic opportunity to break this cycle**. The upcoming **European Digital Identity Wallet** can be the cornerstone of a **truly human-centric digital ecosystem**—but only if we **decouple digital identity, digital services, and data storage**. The EDIW must not merely replicate existing models of control; it must **redefine them** in the service of **citizens, democracy, and digital sovereignty**.

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The Solution: A Wallet for Freedom, Not Lock-In

To achieve **real digital autonomy**, the European Digital Identity Wallet must serve as a **vehicle for three fundamental principles:**

1. **Interoperability Between Platforms**

The EDIW should **require all digital services**—public and private—to **accept it as a sign-on option**. The principle is simple: **one identity, one sign-in**. No citizen, business, or organization should be forced to create and manage **multiple accounts** to access essential services. This would align with **Article 12 of the Digital Services Act (DSA)**, which mandates interoperability, and **Article 6 of the eIDAS Regulation**, which ensures cross-border recognition of electronic identities.

2. **Digital Citizenship for All**

The EDIW must be the **default sign-in option** for:

- **All European digital public services** (from tax filings to healthcare access).
- **Participatory and deliberative democracy processes** (e.g., European Citizens' Initiatives, Citizens' Assemblies, local and national referendums, public consultations, etc.).
- **AI tools and solutions** developed or used by institutions all over Europe, from the European to the national, regional, and local levels. This would transform the EDIW from a **technical tool** into a **gateway to digital citizenship**, ensuring that **every European can exercise their rights seamlessly**.

3. **Enforced Data Portability**

The EDIW must **guarantee that all data created by a user's profile** - whether on social media, cloud storage, or civic platforms- is (also) **stored in European Data Spaces** (e.g., Health Data Space, Democracy Data Space, Green Deal Data Space), in accordance with the **Data Governance Act (DGA)** and the **Data Act**.

Access to this data must be **granted to the user through the EDIW**, enabling **true portability** and allowing users to **migrate between platforms without losing their data or history**. Through anonymisation, this data can also contribute to creating larger Data Spaces, to be then accessed by researchers, companies, organisations, and public administrations to deliver better services. This aligns with **Article 20 of the GDPR** (right to data portability) and the **High-Value Datasets Directive**, which mandates that **public sector data be reusable and interoperable**.

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Leveraging Existing EU Initiatives

This proposal **builds on and connects** existing European efforts:

- **European Digital Identity Wallet (eIDAS 2.0)** – The foundation for **secure, cross-border digital identity**.
- **European Data Spaces** – The infrastructure for **sovereign, sector-specific data storage**.
- **High-Value Datasets** – Ensuring **public interest data is accessible and reusable**.
- **Interoperable Europe Act** – Mandating **seamless digital public services**.
- **Civic Tech Tools** – Platforms for **participatory democracy** (e.g., ECIs, deliberative processes).
- **EU Data Governance Policies** – Principles for **fair, transparent, and secure data management**.

By **integrating these initiatives**, the EDIW can become the **backbone of a digital ecosystem where citizens are in control**.

A Call to Action

The time to act is **now**. As the **European Digital Identity Wallet** takes shape, we urge the European Institutions to:

1. **Mandate interoperability** – Require all digital services to accept the EDIW as a sign-in option.
2. **Enforce digital citizenship** – Make the EDIW the default for **public services** and **civic tech,** and an option for any digital and AI tool.
3. **Guarantee data portability** – Ensure all user data is **stored in European Data Spaces** and accessible via the EDIW.

This is not just about **technology**, it is about **freedom**. It is about giving Europeans the right to choose their services, switch between them, and access their data, regardless of the country, provider, or software they use.

We stand ready to **collaborate with EU institutions, civil society, and industry** to make this vision a reality.

Sincerely,
Marco Cappato - Founder & President, EUMANS
Francesco Vecchi - Civic AI Campaign Coordinator, EUMANS