

Comparison of Approaches Taken by the Private Sector and Nonprofit Projects in the Context of the EUD-S Constitution (July 2026)



"Trusted WEB 4.0 is the Integration of all resources available via the Web into an overall system.

Machines, devices and people are globally accessible, organized in decentralized, anonymous structures.

Trusted WEB 4.0 maps pre-digital social structures.

*The value chains are being reorganised."
(Olaf Berberich, 2007)*

Promoting a Digital Democratic Society: A Comparison of Business and Non-Profit Approaches in the Context of the EU-D-S Constitution

- The EU-D-S Constitution emphasizes the central role of economic diversity and market mechanisms in achieving a sustainable digital democracy.
- Offene Netzwerke e.V. (Open Networks Association), the Alliance for Open Networks and Democratic Public Spheres, and Offene Netze (Open Networks) rely primarily on non-profit, decentralized structures and statutory regulation.
- Economic actors are barely included in the initiatives, whereas the EU-D-S Constitution regards their integration as essential.
- All approaches aspire to a democratic, transparent, and participatory digital society, but they differ considerably in financing, diversity of actors, and long-term strategy.
- A combination of economic diversity and non-profit projects could increase the sustainability and impact of digital democracy promotion.

Introduction

Promoting a digital democratic society is a complex undertaking that encompasses technical, social, and economic dimensions. The EU-D-S Constitution articulates a vision that highlights in particular the role of the economy as a load-bearing pillar of a sustainable digital democracy. In contrast, many civil society initiatives—such as Offene Netzwerke e.V., the Alliance for Open Networks and Democratic Public Spheres, and Offene Netze—rely primarily on non-profit structures and statutory regulation to promote digital democracy. This paper analyzes and compares these approaches in order to highlight differences and commonalities, particularly with regard to financing, the involvement of economic actors, and long-term sustainability. The aim is to contrast the demands of the EU-D-S Constitution with the positions and activities of the named initiatives, and to produce a comparative table and policy recommendations.

Comparison of the Approaches: Philosophical Foundations and Practical Implementation

EU-D-S Constitution: Economic Diversity as the Key

The EU-D-S Constitution places economic diversity and the integration of economic actors at the center of promoting a digital democratic society. It emphasizes the necessity of securing digital property rights, anonymity, and decentralization in order to guarantee democratic participation and economic sustainability. The constitution provides for the establishment of a Council of Disciplines and various category organizations to manage digital content and data, with a broad range of actors—including economic ones—to be involved. The use of WAN anonymity technology is regarded as essential for secure and anonymous communication. These approaches aim to create a sustainable economic foundation for digital democracy that goes beyond pure non-profit activity and harnesses the dynamics of the market.

Offene Netzwerke e.V. and the Alliance for Open Networks: Non-Profit Status and Decentralization

Offene Netzwerke e.V. focuses on promoting decentralized and sovereign digital infrastructures that enable democratic participation. The initiative advocates the establishment of a Fediverse Fund with an annual budget of 30 million euros for user-centered development and the implementation of the +1 principle for the work of

the federal government and public institutions. Its financing is non-profit and aims to create digital infrastructures that serve the public good and strengthen democratic processes.

The Alliance for Open Networks and Democratic Public Spheres is a coalition of various organizations advocating open, decentralized digital infrastructures. It emphasizes the need for robust legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure that digital services operate transparently and responsibly. Its financing is likewise non-profit, with the involvement of a wide range of actors, including economic ones, being pursued in order to shape digital technologies democratically.

Offene Netze: Regulatory Frameworks and Diversity of Actors

Offene Netze is closely tied to the legal and regulatory frameworks that support digital democracy. The initiative highlights the importance of transparency, accountability, and the involvement of various actors in the digital ecosystem, including economic actors. It is funded through public and non-profit resources, with the focus on creating a legal framework that promotes democratic values and economic sustainability.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Approaches

EU-D-S Constitution

Strengths:

- Emphasis on economic diversity and market mechanisms, which can foster a sustainable digital democracy.
- Integration of economic actors as a driving force for innovation and scalability.
- Focus on digital property rights and anonymity, which are essential for democratic participation.
- Long-term strategy of economic sustainability and independence.

Weaknesses:

- Economic approaches could lead to inequalities without adequate regulation.
- Risk of economic interests dominating over democratic values.
- Complexity of coordinating between different actors and interests.

Offene Netzwerke e.V.

Strengths:

- Clear focus on decentralized, user-centered digital infrastructures.
- Promotion of non-profit status and democratic participation.
- Establishment of a Fediverse Fund to support user-centered development.

Weaknesses:

- Limited financial resources and scalability.
- Scarcely any involvement of economic actors, which could impair long-term sustainability.
- Dependence on public and non-profit funds, which may prove insufficient.

Alliance for Open Networks and Democratic Public Spheres

Strengths:

- Broad coalition of various actors for digital democracy.
- Emphasis on transparency and legal frameworks.
- Involvement of economic actors, albeit to a lesser extent.

Weaknesses:

- High coordination effort among many actors.
- Limited financial resources and dependence on non-profit sources.
- Potential overlaps and conflicts between the various initiatives.

Offene Netze

Strengths:

- Focus on regulatory frameworks that promote transparency and accountability.
- Involvement of various actors, including economic ones.
- Promotion of a legal framework for digital democracy.

Weaknesses:

- Limited financial and human resources.
- Dependence on public funds and statutory provisions.
- Potential challenges in enforcing and overseeing the regulation.

Recommendations

The analysis shows that promoting a digital democratic society requires both economically and non-profit oriented approaches. The EU-D-S Constitution rightly emphasizes the importance of economic diversity and the involvement of economic actors in creating a sustainable and scalable digital democracy. The initiatives Offene Netzwerke e.V., the Alliance for Open Networks and Democratic Public Spheres, and Offene Netze make important contributions through their focus on decentralized, transparent, and non-profit structures, but they are constrained in their financing and long-term sustainability.

To achieve the goals of the EU-D-S Constitution, economic actors should be more strongly involved in promoting digital democracy, without endangering independence or non-profit objectives. This could be achieved through the following measures:

- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Cooperation between companies, non-profit organizations, and government agencies to jointly develop and finance digital infrastructures.
- **Diversified Financing Models:** A combination of public funding, non-profit donations, and economic investment to secure long-term sustainability.
- **Regulatory Frameworks:** Creation of clear statutory provisions that include both economic and non-profit actors and guarantee transparency and accountability.
- **Promotion of Innovation and Scalability:** Support for start-ups and small enterprises developing innovative digital solutions for democratic participation.

Sources and References

- EU-D-S Constitution: <https://finders.de/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/EU-D-S-Verfassung-en-US.pdf>
- Offene Netzwerke e.V.: <https://offene-netzwerke.eu/>
- Alliance for Open Networks and Democratic Public Spheres: <https://digitalegesellschaft.de/2025/11/buendnis-offene-netzwerke-und-demokratische-oeffentlichkeiten/>
- Offene Netze: <https://www.offenenetze.de/>
- EU Digital Services Act (DSA): <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-services-act-package>

Comparative Table

Criterion	EU-D-S Constitution	Offene Netzwerke e.V.	Alliance for Open Networks and Democratic Public Spheres	Offene Netze
Objective	Promoting a digital democratic society through economic diversity and market mechanisms	Promoting decentralized, user-centered digital infrastructures	Promoting digital democracy through open, decentralized digital infrastructures	Promoting digital democracy through regulatory frameworks
Financing Model	Economic, diversified, market-based	Non-profit, donations, public funds	Non-profit, public funds, economic actors to a lesser extent	Public, non-profit
Actors	Economic actors, NGOs, the state, civil society	NGOs, non-profit organizations, individuals	Coalition of NGOs, digital initiatives, economic actors	NGOs, government agencies, economic actors
Focus on Diversity	Economic diversity, technical and social diversity	Decentralization, user-centered development	Decentralization, transparency, diverse actors	Regulatory transparency, diverse actors
Long-Term Strategy	Sustainability through economic diversity, scalability, independence	Sustainability through non-profit status, limited scalability	Sustainability through cooperation, regulatory frameworks	Sustainability through regulation, coordination, and oversight

This analysis shows that promoting a digital democratic society requires both economic and non-profit approaches. The EU-D-S Constitution offers a comprehensive vision that sees economic diversity and market mechanisms as central elements, while the initiatives Offene Netzwerke e.V., the Alliance for Open Networks and Democratic Public Spheres, and Offene Netze make important contributions through their focus on decentralized, transparent, and non-profit structures. A combination of these approaches could significantly increase the sustainability and impact of digital democracy promotion.

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-2 BvR 907/24 -, -1 BvR 1426/25 -, -2 BvR 1668/25-
-1 BvR 91/26 -

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