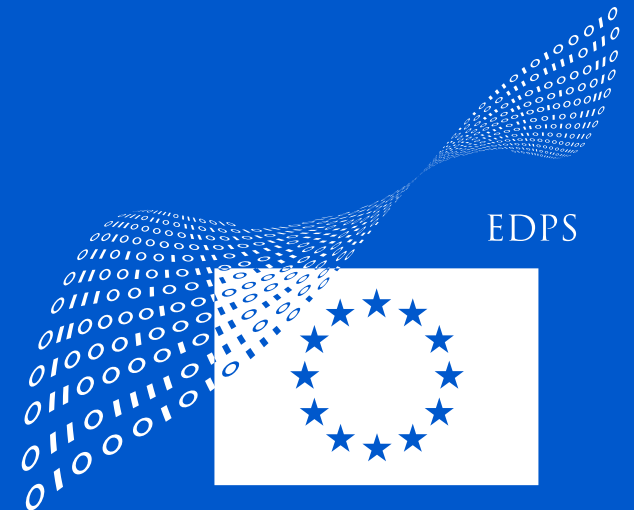# EUI-owned Social Media Channels to Mitigate Privacy Risks of other Channels

EDPS proposal to pilot Mastodon and Peertube

ActivityPub for Administrations: Webinars and Workshop
 April 26th, 2021

Robert RIEMANN, EDPS Technology and Privacy
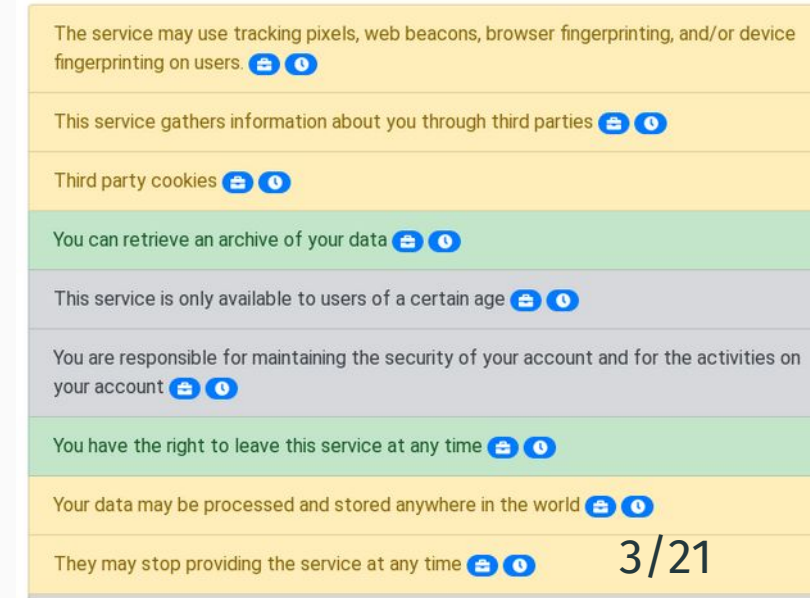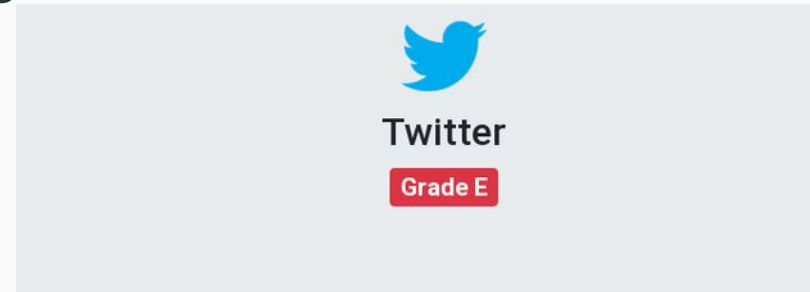
robert.riemann@edps.europa.eu

EDPS

Social Media Today 💬

Terms of Service: Didn't Read (ToS;DR)

- Best practice: collaborate on compliance and mitigation work! 😄

- Check out: https://tosdr.org

- Principle Problems 😬

  - **Pervasive Tracking and Profiling**

    - Third-party cookies 🍪

    - User profile is combined across various products �

    - Service tracks users on other websites

  - **Reuse and Sharing of Data**

    - Service collects many different data types

    - Service processes data anywhere in the world 🌐

Twitter
Grade E

The service may use tracking pixels, web beacons, browser fingerprinting, and/or device fingerprinting on users.

This service gathers information about you through third parties

Third party cookies

You can retrieve an archive of your data

This service is only available to users of a certain age

You are responsible for maintaining the security of your account and for the activities on your account

You have the right to leave this service at any time

Your data may be processed and stored anywhere in the world

They may stop providing the service at any time

EDPS briefed EU institutions about Alternatives in May 2020
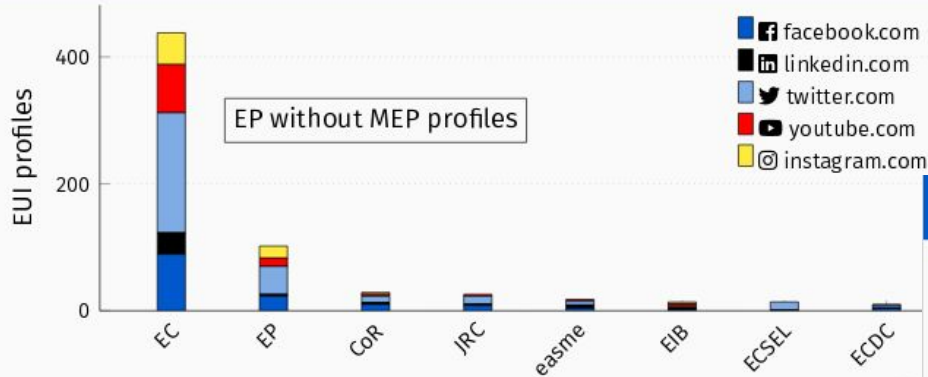
Social Media Platforms per EUI

Figure 4: Top 8 EUI by their total social network profiles.

Free Software Alternatives

Free Software can help to offer data protection-friendly alternatives:

Examples
- Video Portal PeerTube
- Short Message Blogs @ Mastodon

Early Adopters
- MEP Patrick Breyer on @ echo_pbreyer
- Gouvernement of Baden-Württemberg on @ RegierungBW
- @ Mastodon test server of French administration

25

https://edps.europa.eu/sites/edp/files/publication/20-05-08_slides-social-media-use_en.pdf

"We have asked **EU institutions and bodies to analyse the legality of data transfers to the US** and to act in accordance with the accountability principle. We will be providing them with some guidance on how conducting transfer impact assessments soon but it is clear that **the decision of whether or not a transfer should be continued, suspended or discontinued correspond to them**. To the extent that this would help, data controllers can **renegotiate their contracts** with their service providers or to find new ones that can ensure compliance with the law."

From the conference

CPDP 2021

Leonardo CERVERA NAVAS, EDPS Director

Social Media Tomorrow 💬
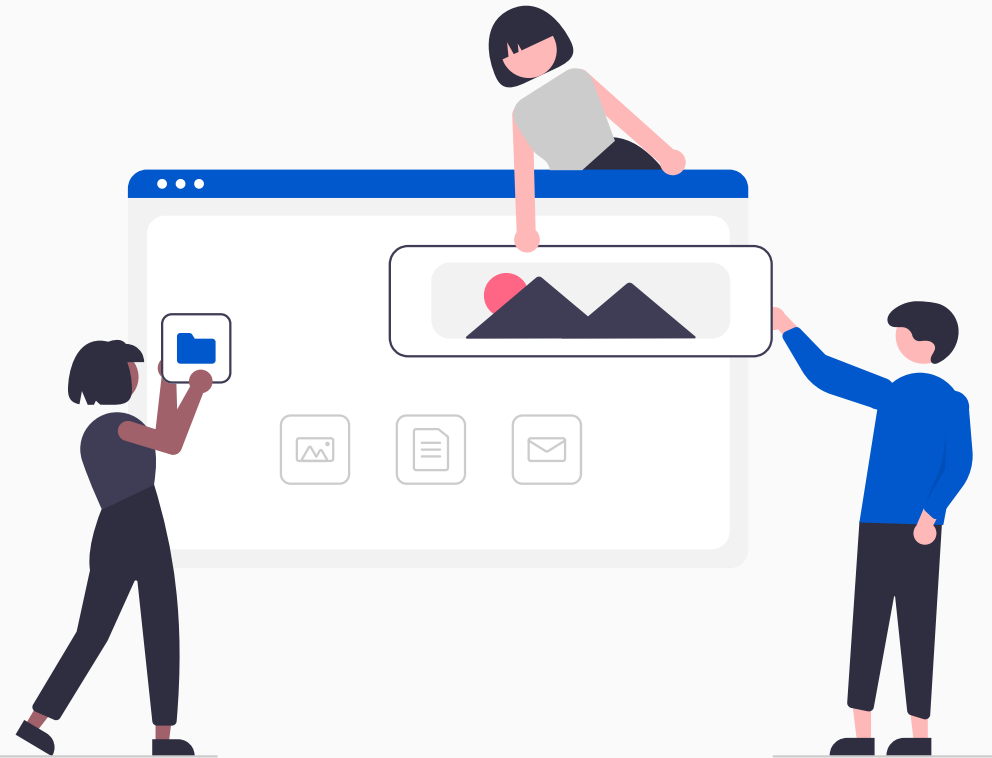
- transparency, access to privacy policy and DPO contact

- avoid nudging people to use privacy-invasive EUI social media channels

- offer **data protection-friendly alternatives** that include

  - same content at the same time 🕐

  - same level of interactivity (sharing, rating, commenting 💬)

  - same level of usability (across devices 📱 🖥)

- same chance to win prizes! 🎲

Alternative Social Media

- Offer citizen full access to public service in a full GDPR-compliant way 👤🛡.

- Use **federated networks** (think of email network) and **APIs** (think of RSS).

- EDPS set to explore in public pilot test two alternative channels:

Mastodon 🐘 (Twitter/Instagram)

- https://joinmastodon.org
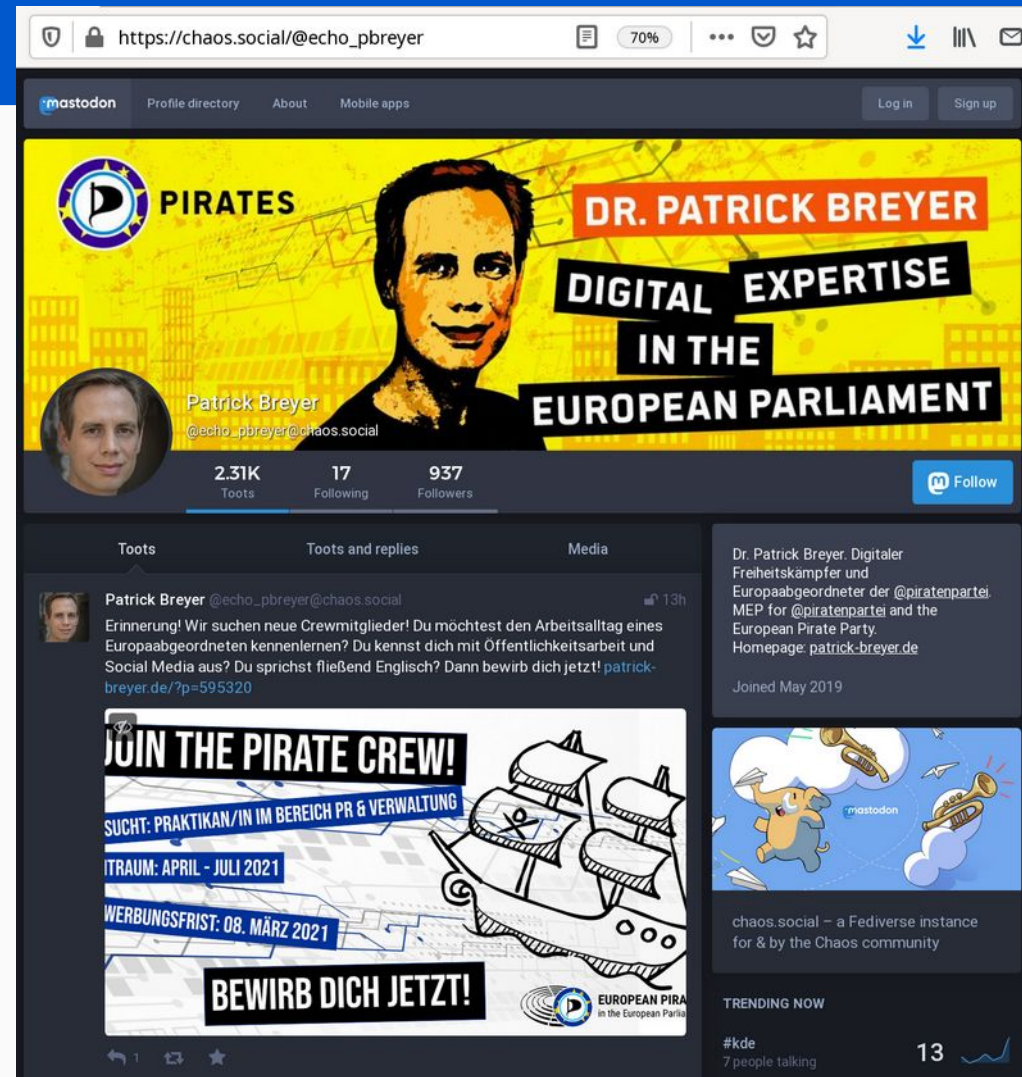
- Examples:
  https://social.bund.de/@bfdi,
  https://chaos.social/@echo_pbreyer,
  https://mastodon.social/@RegierungBW

Peertube (Youtube)

- https://joinpeertube.org

- Example: NGO PrivacyInternational
  https://media.privacyinternational.org,
  https://peertube.european-pirates.eu

Quick glimpse into Mastodon 🐘
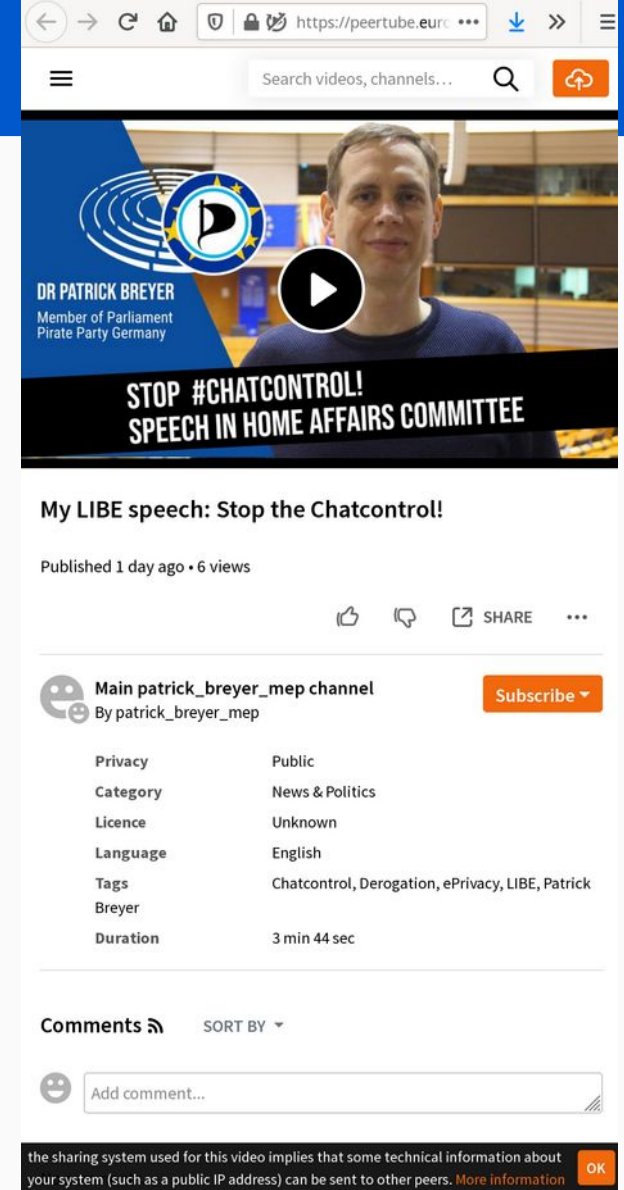
- Stream of *toots* with a upper limit of usually 500 characters and images

- User access toots via website or their own Mastodon account on a (different) Mastodon website

- Open source, customisable and interoperable (ActivityPub)

- Bring your own privacy policy

- Bring your own moderation policy

- EU server without citizen accounts: less personal data processing

Quick glimpse into Peertube

- In few words: Youtube clone with accounts and channels

- User access videos via website or video embeds on other websites or e.g. Mastodon

- Open source, customisable and interoperable (ActivityPub)

- Bring your own privacy policy

- Bring your own moderation policy

- Optional: WebTorrent P2P support (not recommended for pilot test)

- Optional: live broadcasting support (P2P?)

Pilot Testing in Practice ⚙️
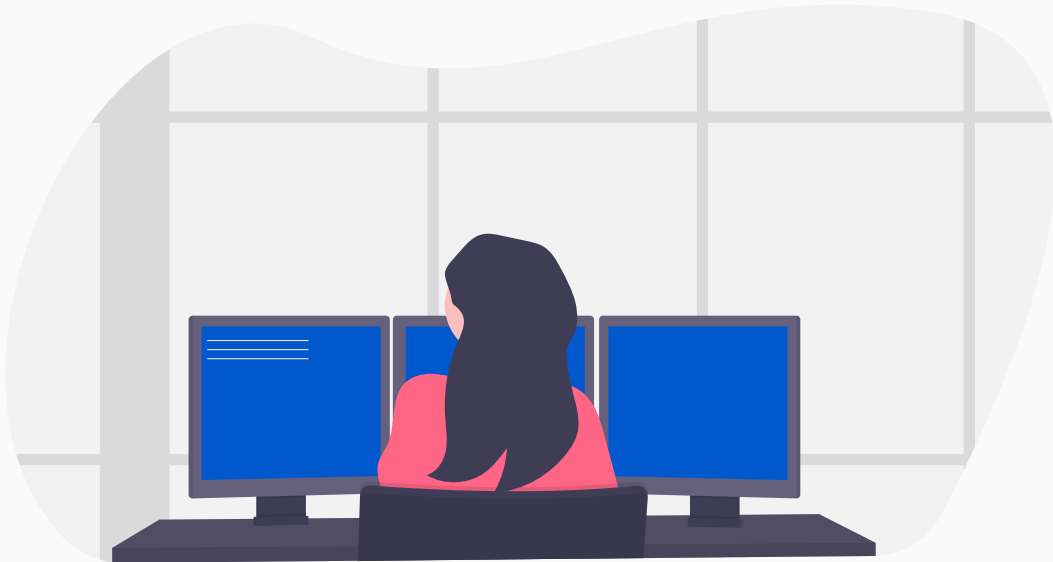
Public Pilot Test (6 months, a year?)

- Hosting with commercial IaaS within EU ▤

- Prospective launch date: Q2 2021 🚀

- EDPS(/EC) server open for pilot testing of other EU institutions and bodies (likely for free 🎁)

- Hands-on, best-practices, staff trainings, cross-posting tools/integration, determine server requirements

After successful Pilot: Adoption for Production

- Transfer hosting from the EDPS to e.g. DG Digit/EU Publications Office (tbd)

Pilot Test Server Name (Domain)

Server Name Requirements

- Server name is part of account name (@user@<u>server.tld</u> or <u>server.tld</u>/@user)

- To not loose followers from pilot, rather have pilot with production-ready server name

- snappy/sexy/short/descriptive name to help marketing and uptake

- Linked to europa.eu to proof authenticity and fight fake accounts

- Independent of the software name in case of later software changes

Server Name Proposals (not final!)

- social.europa.eu, video.europa.eu

- mastodon.lab.europa.eu

- fediverse.europa.eu

- dialogue.europa.eu

- mastodon.net.europa.eu

- **social.network.europa.eu** and **tube.network.europa.eu**

bundle ActivityPub APIs under **network**.europa.eu

Thank you! Questions? 💬

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EDPS

Used Images

- Illustrations from https://undraw.co (custom open source license): 'social ideas', 'building websites', 'programmer'

- Pictures from https://unsplash.com (custom open source license)
  - Crowd https://unsplash.com/photos/nPz8akkUmDI
  - Files https://unsplash.com/photos/snNHKZ-mGfE
  - Helmet https://unsplash.com/photos/Aifb5-daBPs

- Fonts and Emojis
  - Fira Sans using the Open Font License (OFL)
  - FontAwesome 5 (Free) using the Open Font License (OFL)

Backup Slides 🗃
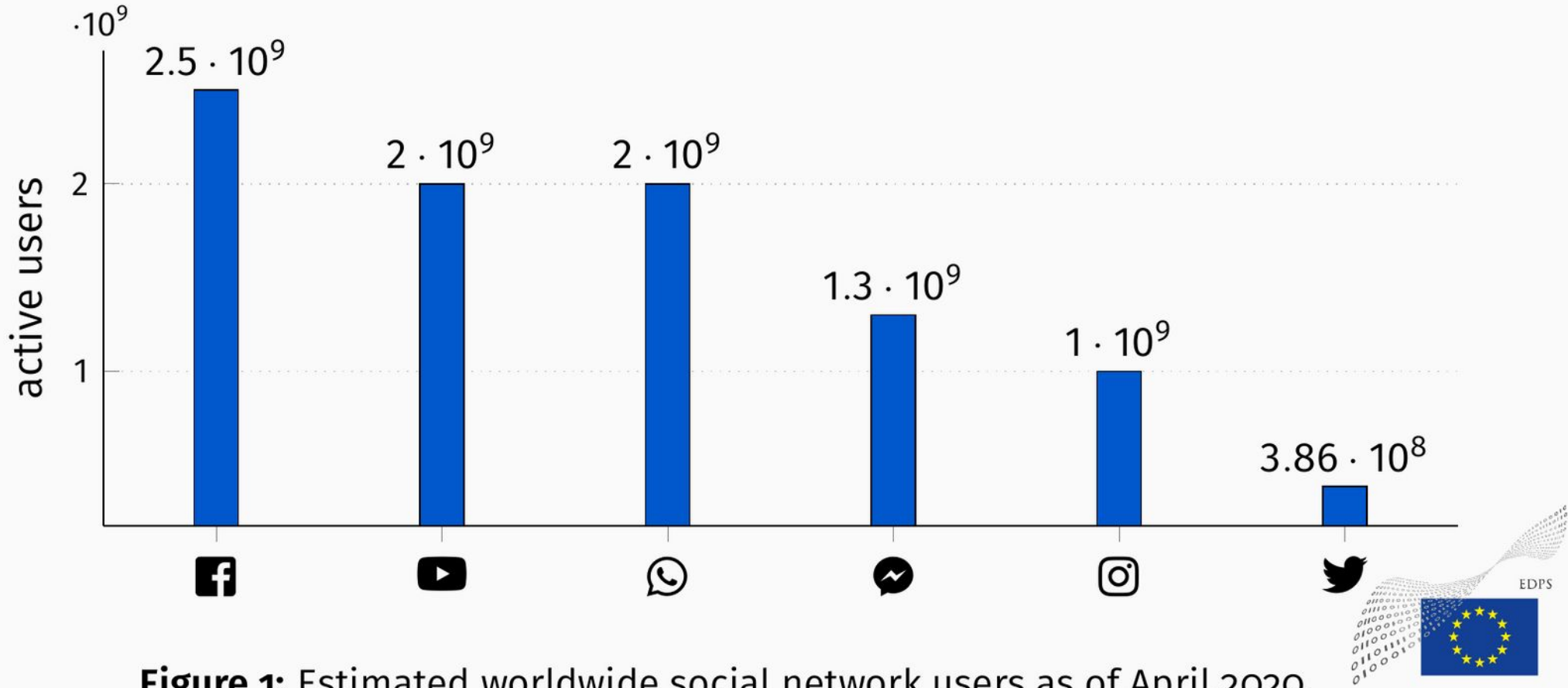
Figure 1: Estimated worldwide social network users as of April 2020.
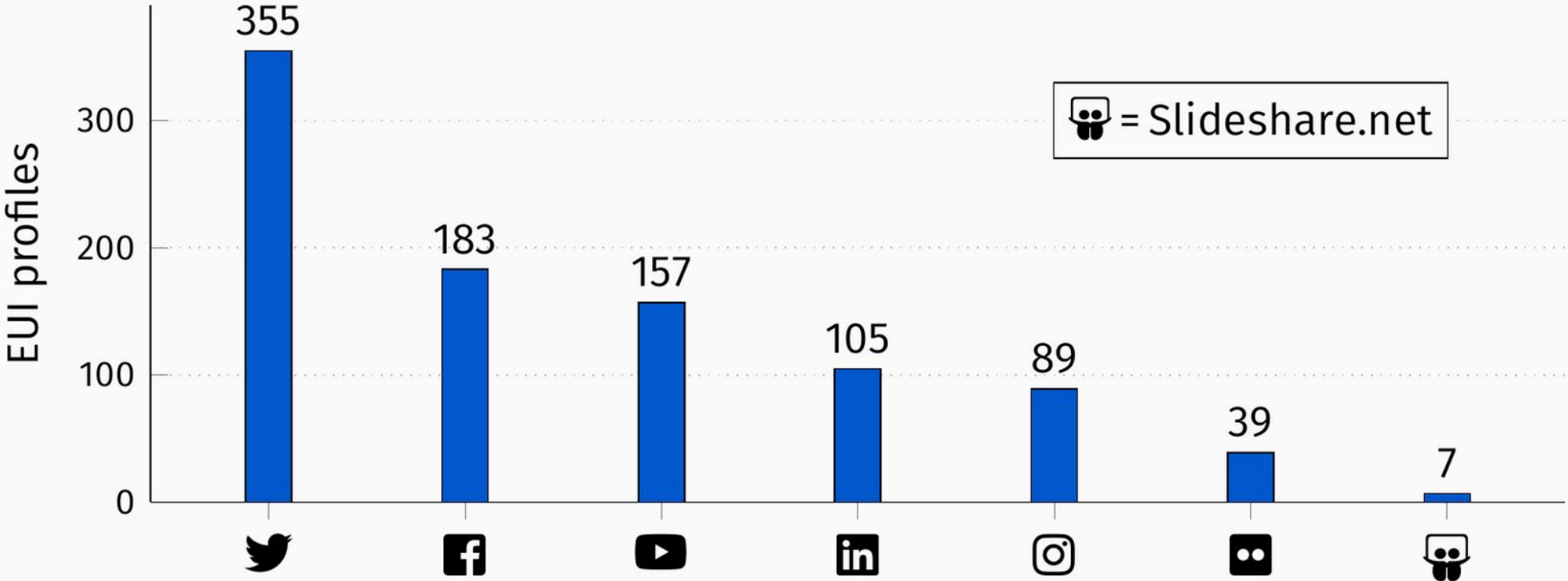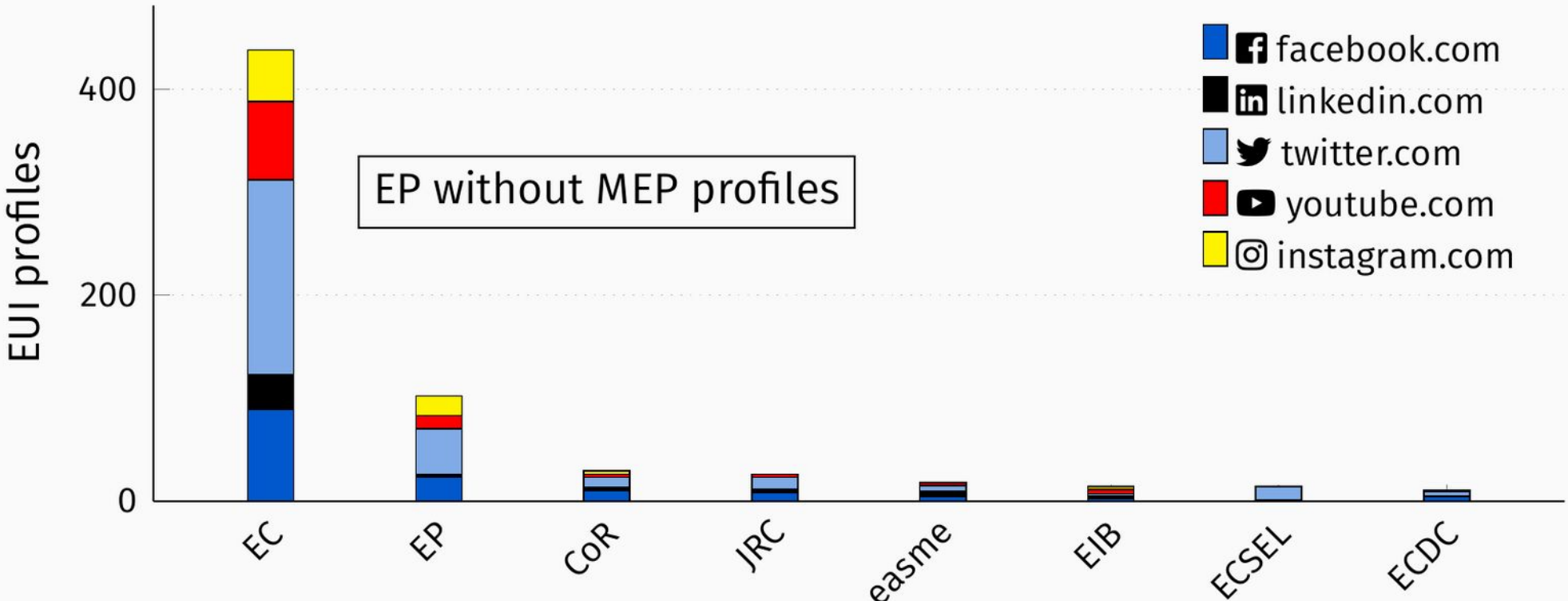
Figure 3: Top 7 social networks by EUI profile numbers.
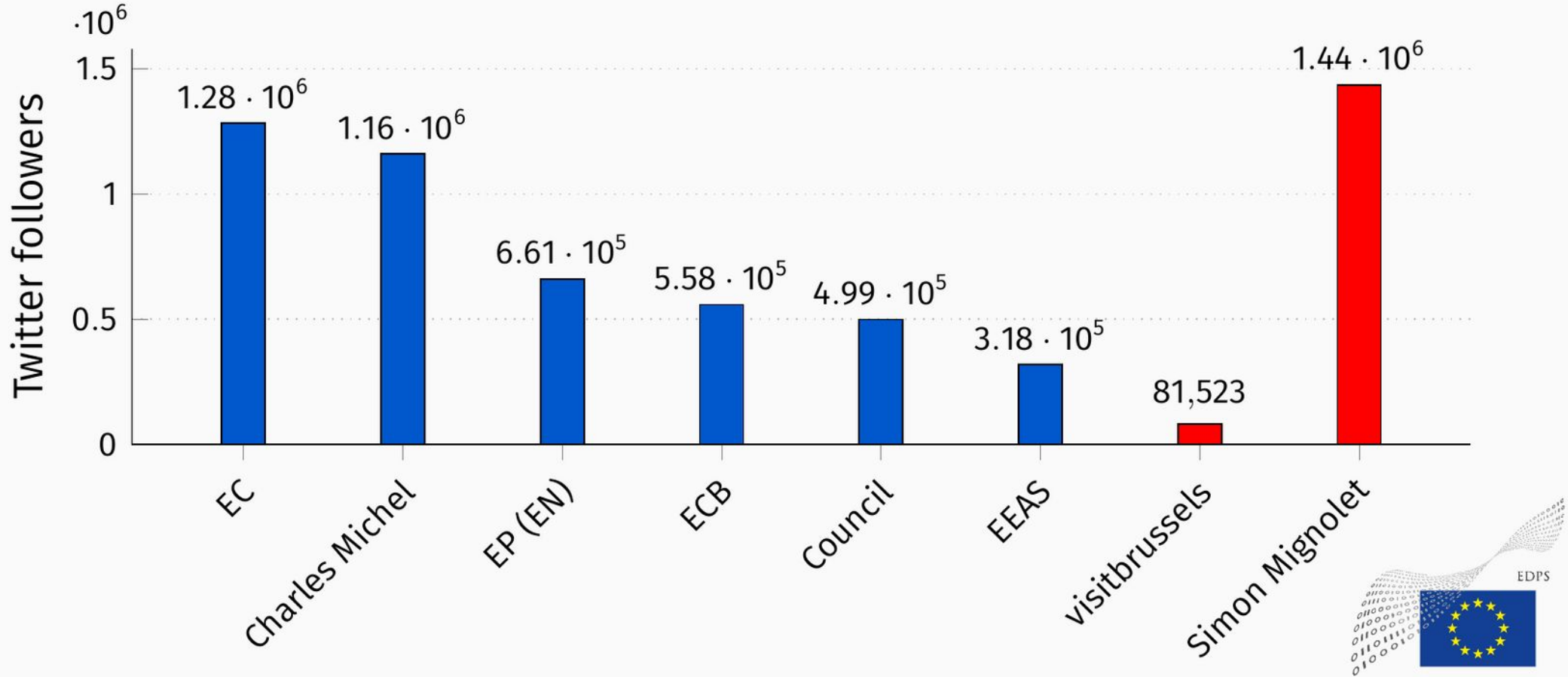
Figure 4: Top 8 EUI by their total social network profiles.

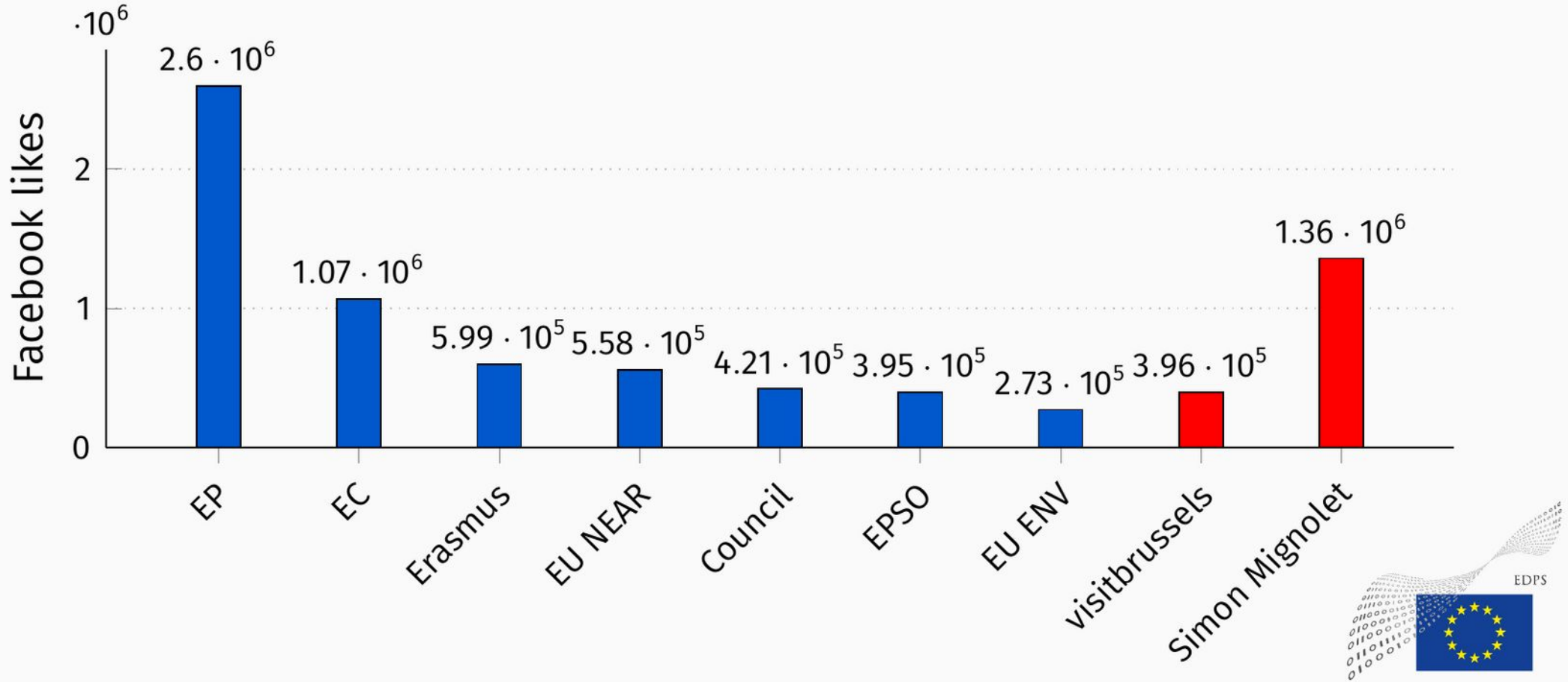**Figure 6:** Top 6 EUI Twitter profiles by their followers (without MEPs).

Figure 7: Top 7 EUI Facebook profiles by their likes (without MEPs).