Hi There,

We just closed our 9th year of operation and are entering a very important and exciting decade of existence of our platform. The world is changing rapidly (and looks like this time not in a good sense) and we need to keep up with it and face the challenges ahead.

Recent developments in Large Language Models (aka AI) has brought quite some buzz and interest. Although this new technology is very helpful and an interesting new field to explore, it has been struggling with ethics and heavy resource requirements. With today's polarized landscape and global conflicts it is hard to predict where it will all lead to.

One thing is becoming clearer. If we want any future together on this planet, we must shift away from corporate ideas of competition and domination and build a reality of cooperation and freedom instead. Instead of being used for profit and power, it is time we take the reigns back.

This is the biggest strength Disroot and other federated decentralized networks bring to the table. Every service provider or self-hosted in this system can set their own set of rules while still allowing interoperability between the different platforms. While corporate internet giants fight for domination, for profit and to use their platforms as propaganda channels, we stand in exact opposition. Platforms created for people by people! So, support decentralized, federated providers just like you support your local farmers and move away from the corporate greed before it's too late. The war on your mind is about to end, and we ain't winning it.

As every year, we would like to share with you what we've been busy with in the past year, in a form of short highlights.

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Lacre

First and foremost an update about the Lacre project, our GPG email-at-rest encryption (aka mailbox encryption). We have made quite some progress this year and decided we are ready to roll it out on Disroot's mail server. As it is in an early stage still, and to protect those who aren't familiar with encryption from loosing access to their emails, we have not provided option to self enable encryption.

How does it work in practice?

In short, Lacre utilizes good old GnuPG. That means user generates a key pair: a public key to share with others and a private key to keep on the device. Lacre requires only the public key to be uploaded to the server. Every clear-text email entering the server is checked by Lacre. If Lacre detects a public key assigned to an email address present, it will automatically encrypt incoming email and store it in the mailbox. This solution ensures that once email has been encrypted it is impossible to get it decrypted without private key which is saved on your device and which you do not and should not upload anywhere. Simple and yet very effective.

Currently you can submit your public key, assuming you know what you're doing to this address: lacre_keys@disroot.org. Since the encryption prevents us from decrypting such emails, if you loose the private key (lost the device, wiped data, etc.), we can't help you. With great power comes great responsibility and so you are responsible for your encrypted mailbox. Be safe but also smart.

For the next year we hope to improve on-boarding process so that setup and maintenance of your encryption becomes easier, and we will enable the feature for anyone who wants to make use of it. Our end goal is to make it as simple as it can get while not sacrificing the security of the system. It's a tough challenge but we like those the most. Stay tuned for more info.

Goals

Setting goals and milestones is something natural in projects driven by constant improvement. It is not easy, especially in a setting where we need to juggle between day-jobs, Disroot, family, hobbies, and other activities in life. However, we thought bringing some of the structure and focus points will help us get things done in more organized way. And so, we have decided to specify few goals. We knew it will be hard to deliver them in such short time span, given that every day life always gets in the way and unlike what we tend to think time is not made of rubber and cannot be stretched. But, we decided to give it a go.

Next is a summary of our work on previous year's goals:

Staging / Test Server

One of the most crucial aspects when running a platform such as ours is software updates. Whether it is the operating system, or the code, it is important to prepare and test it before it gets pushed to the platform. The days when we tested directly in production are long behind us, and we keep on trying to improve our prep-work so that less last-minutes mistakes, bugs, issues or simple human errors slip into the production setup. For some years now, we have been using Ansible automation scripts and testing them on our small testing servers. This process has improved our flow greatly, however, apart from **Meaz** and **Muppeth**, who are doing the prep work and are responsible for running updates on the production servers, no one else was able to properly participate in the testing phase.

This year we decided to change that by providing a test server. We used one of those small HP thin clients you might have seen around offices, installed all needed software on it and now, using Ansible, we roll future updates to that server machine. Since it acts as a small version of Disroot, it can be double tested by the rest of the team.

Having such setup in place, we have also decided to treat that staging server as if it were a remote Disroot-like node run by a third party organization which we just oversee and take care of maintenance. And so we decided to keep it as much automated as possible meaning we would only manually intervene if critical and no other way could be applied. So, apart from improving the testing phase of updates - by adding another stage before the updates land on Disroot's servers - we have created the first off-shoot of Disroot.

This brings us closer to idea of providing solution for other organizations or individuals to setup similar platforms to Disroot, which could be totally self-managed or maintained by us for you. We are only at the beginning but we see the progress we have made in the way we approach the testing phase already. In 2025 we want to invite more volunteers to the testing flow of the update cycle.

Website Refresh

Our website is due for some face-lift. Since we are around the corner from celebrating our 10th anniversary of Disroot in 2025, we thought it would be a good idea to update the looks of our visit card. **Antilopa** took on the task of creating a new looks and we are on the track to make it happen before the 4th of August.

Here is a small peek, but you need to wait for the complete make-over for a bit longer.

New Authentication System

Probably the most important and time consuming project of 2024.

For quite a while we've been wanting to replace the registration process as well as the authentication and self service center. The lack of additional security for your account such as global two factor authentication, and an unappealing process for onbording to Disroot is quite frustrating.

This year we have decided to get to work and start preparing for this massive undertaking. Deciding on technology stack, testing and migrating an entire production to a new authentication system is not something you can easily do in a week time. In 2024 we wanted to focus on the preparation aspect. We first needed to choose the tech. We have settled for **Keycloak**. There are few reasons for that decision. **Keycloak** provides several authentication protocols and flows. Starting from providing backwards compatibility with **LDAP** which is what we use currently. **Keycloak** also provides authentication using **OpenID**, **oAuth** and **SAML**, which gives us bigger

variety plus allows us easy transition from the "old" system in the long run. Additionally, being a completely free-software, security focused and backed by organizations such as **Red Hat** and **Linux Foundation** gives solid ground and stability for the future of the project.

During the testing phase, our experience has been mixed though. For some services, integration to new system was a breeze, some of the services however proved to be nearly impossible to move to. Especially email and XMPP, where for some time we will be forced to provide legacy authentication.

With some current roadblocks, caused by some Keycloak features still being in the process of development, the entire switch, as we see it, will take some time.

But overall we are happy with the progress so far and are entering 2025 aiming at implementation of the new system on Disroot!

Failed Goals and Some Critical thoughts

Of course there are things we have not properly started working on to our great dismay. We are not so much disappointed by the fact that we have not finalized them, which we did not count on in the first place, but rather the fact that we were not able to properly allocate time for those.

Sure, we like to aim high. Thinking big motivates us to achieve great stuff.

However, over-promising, especially to ourselves, adds a layer of stress and a frustration of under-delivering. That in turn can impact our well being.

We would like Disroot to be always pushing forward, to be delivering the best possible experience for everyone involved - if for our own thrills at maintaining a platform that is leaving a print on the road to better internet future or you enjoying using the platform - but we are coming to the realization that we must find a way to continue carefully so no one gets burned out on the way.

Muppeth's Wages

We are very happy and proud to announce that this year, we have managed to secure some funds to compensate **Muppeth** for his long hours. We have agreed to pay out 1000 euro a month as a financial fee for his contributions. We know it is nowhere near the full time income Muppeth deserves but it is a start and we hope to make it happen one day.

We decided to only use funds we have secured the previous year. This way we do not endanger current operations as the money allocated for paying out are already on our account.

Thanks to all your support in 2024, we are happy to say, we will manage to increase Muppeth's monthly wages to € 1300 in 2025.

If we meet the goal set for 2025, we hopefully will make it possible to increase that again.

We can't stretch this enough, how grateful we are for all your donations. This platform's well being is all thanks to you. We hope in years to come more Disrooters will decide to follow suit.

Remember, it's never too little to donate. Buying a coffee a month for your admins who keep your service running 24/7 is not a big expense, while all donations combined, it supports the project greatly.
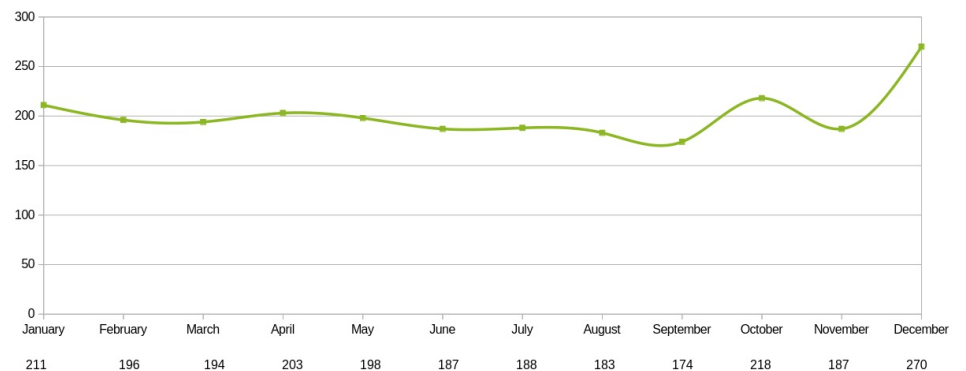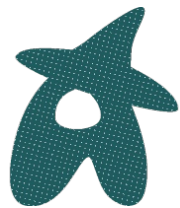
Transparency Report

In 2024 we had encountered 4 official data requests from Dutch authorities. Due to the nature of our platform and the fact we do not collect any personal data about Disrooters (addresses, phone numbers, real names, etc.) none of the requests could be fulfilled.
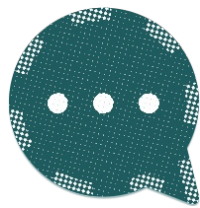
Financial Overview

In 2024, we received a total of € 31,743.94 from an average of 201 Disrooters each month. After spending € 23,827.24, VAT return of € 2301,00 and Interest on savings of € 263,36 we were able to add € 7,252.80 to our general funds.

Our costs in 2024 went towards
infrastructure - € 4078.61
payment fees - € 915.92
office and team supplies - € 313.71
volunteers fees and wages - € 20,820.00
and our donation to FLOSS projects - € 927,00

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Donations	€ 2,380.07	€ 2,336.64	€ 2,243.91	€ 1,984.61	€ 1,997.13	€ 2,099.90	€ 1,842.87	€ 1,786.54	€ 1,960.67	€ 2,466.68	€ 1,856.54	€ 5,488.38	
Crypto donations													€ 3,300.00
Costs	€ 2,372.07	€ 2,106.96	€ 1,739.73	€ 2,180.80	€ 2,108.12	€ 1,486.13	€ 2,152.73	€ 2,100.41	€ 1,440.01	€ 2,286.22	€ 2,227.44	€ 1,363.26	
Subtotal	€ 8.00	€ 229.68	€ 504.18	€ 196.19-	€ 110.99-	€ 613.77	€ 309.86-	€ 313.87-	€ 520.66	€ 180.46	€ 370.90-	€ 4,125.12	
15% Donated to FOSS	€ 1.20	€ 34.45	€ 75.63			€ 92.07			€ 78.10	€ 27.07		€ 618.77	
Total Expenses	€ 2.373,27	€ 2.141,41	€ 1.815,36	€ 2,180,80	€ 2.108,12	€ 1.578,20	€ 2.152,73	€ 2.100,41	€ 1.518,11	€ 2.313,29	€ 2.227,44	€ 1.982,03	
Monthly Income	€ 6.80	€ 195.23	€ 428.55	€ 196.19-	€ 110.99-	€ 521.70	€ 309.86-	€ 313.87-	€ 442.56	€ 153.39	€ 370.90-	€ 3,506.35	

Net income in 2024:   € 7,252.8

Balance:	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	€ 5.274,35	€ 6.525,11	€ 14.299,74	€ 19.713,00	€ 26.216,97	€ 15.399,48	€ 24.782,69	€ 32.035,47

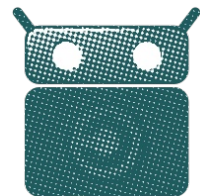| January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
211	196	194	203	198	187	188	183	174	218	187	270

Akkoma

Conversations

Cryptpad

DavX5

F-droid

Mumble

FLOSS Donations

This year, we were able to donate to 6 projects.

Each of the following projects received € 141. The remiaining € 81, from later calculation will remain in our FOSS fund and will be distributed next year.

We are very grateful for the work done by the developers of these and other projects.

Budget 2025

In the next year we aim to add € 1800 to our following funds:

Hardware upgrade	€ 1500.00
Legal fees fund	€ 300.00

Our estimated expenses will add up to a total of € 31,776.00 :

Monthly fees	€ 5,400.00
Wages, including VAT	€ 18,876.00
Volunteer fees	€ 6,300.00
Team supplies / training	€ 500.00
Fundraising expenses	€ 200.00
Accountant fees	€ 500.00

As an Additional goal we want to add another € 300 to wages in the following year (2026).

Save for extra wages:	€ 6,300.00

The total required income for Disroot in 2025 is € 37,176.00

New Services

This year we have brought two extra services to Disroot:

LibreTranslate

This was a no-brainer. Someone on our **issue board**[1] has requested for open-source replacement for google translate/deepl, suggesting LibreTranslate project. Next thing we knew, **Meaz** was already pushing test instance to our staging server. And so, you can translate things using our instance at: **https://translate.disroot.org**

[1] https://git.disroot.org

Lemmy

When redditgate blew up we just couldn't help ourselves and jump on the bandwagon. Due to change in policy at Reddit (mainly the fact app developers have been charged for using Reddit's API rendering their apps too expensive to offer), many users have been seeking new home, a service replacement.

In the federated, decentralized realm we have seen it many many times now. Whenever any of the big corporations screw the bolt tighter on their users, there is a noticeable wave of users moving to alternative services. Whether it's Meta's change of policy or some douche-bag billionaire buying of a social network, many people decide it's time to switch to something new. That issue with Reddit was no different.

The Fediverse (federated service software operating on ActivityPub protocol) does offer such Reddit replacement. In fact it does not only one but at least two such software solutions. **Lemmy** and **Kbin**. As Disroot, we thought we would like to provide such service. Especially that we always wanted to host some form of internet forum solution. It did take us some time to set things up, mainly due to the fact that we weren't sure about which software solution to choose, but at the end we decided to just follow the majority on the network and settle for **Lemmy**.

Lemmy is very similar to Reddit. It's a link aggregator with Discussion forum glued to it. You can create or join communities, post links to websites, articles, images, movies and have a place to discuss topics with others. Unlike walled gardens such as Reddit, thanks to the Fediverse, communities are hosted all over the world, on thousands of independently run servers. Just like with email, XMPP chat, Nextcloud or Akkoma, you can interact with any of them without the need to create thousands of accounts.

We think having such discussion forum on Disroot is a neat way to find your peers on the internet and so we have launched it under **https://scribe.disroot.org** - you are welcome to create account, and join discussion with people from all over the world.

Coexistence Guide

It seems that the more and better communication tools become, the worse and more polarized people become. Which is super frustrating when it comes to the spaces in which we pretend not to reproduce the bonds that corporations and an important part of global politics try to impose.

The exercise of **freedom** and **respect** for other people implies committing ourselves and being consistent with these ideas. This is the main reason why we always seek to guarantee our users the greatest possible autonomy to express their particularities, opinions, ideas and feelings. We are reluctant to tell them what to do or how to do it because we are honestly committed to those principles and we trust that people are intelligent enough to make their own decisions and manage their own bonds. Of course, reality often (too very often) contradicts us.

The internet (well, and life in general) has always harbored people or groups with serious difficulties to socialize and coexist with others. That is nothing new.

But the current political and cultural circumstances have generated a growing abuse of the possibilities offered by the network to spew their differences and hatred towards other life choices and ideas in increasingly violent ways. The right to be able to express ourselves does not imply insulting, verbally attacking, harassing and being violent with other people. We cannot tolerate or naturalize this. Nor can we remain passive in the face of this, much less when we intend our platform to be a space that guarantees the right of anyone to express themselves in an environment of community respect.

That is why we decided to update our **Terms of Use** by making explicit a set of basic (and common sense) guidelines for coexistence so that any member of the community knows what behaviors and attitudes will not be tolerated, what tools are available to exercise and defend their autonomy, how and when to use them and in which cases we suggest requesting the intervention of the administrators.

We trust that they are sufficiently clear and general so that we can all understand them and not unnecessarily increase the workload of the admins.

You can read them **here**[2]

Let us exercise our differences with respect.

[2] https://disroot.org/tos#community-guidelines