



# Cognitive Liberty Institute

*Protecting Cognitive Sovereignty in a Digital World*

## THE INTERNATIONAL ACCORD ON COGNITIVE SOVEREIGNTY

### PREAMBLE

RECOGNIZING that in an era of accelerating technological advancement, the autonomy of human cognition faces unprecedented challenges;

ACKNOWLEDGING that algorithmic systems, artificial intelligence, persuasive technologies, and neural interfaces increasingly mediate human experience and decision-making;

CONCERNED that without appropriate safeguards, these technologies may undermine individual autonomy, manipulate behavior, and compromise the foundations of human dignity and democratic societies;

AFFIRMING that cognitive sovereignty—the right of individuals to maintain authority over their own thought processes, attention, and decision-making—constitutes a fundamental human right;

The signatories to this Accord hereby establish the following principles and commitments to protect and promote cognitive sovereignty globally.

### ARTICLE 1: FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

**1.1 Right to Cognitive Sovereignty:** Every person possesses an inalienable right to maintain autonomy over their own cognitive processes, including perception, attention, reasoning, memory, and decision-making.

**1.2 Informed Cognitive Engagement:** Individuals have the right to engage with technologies with full awareness of how these technologies may influence their cognition.

**1.3 Protection from Manipulation:** People deserve protection from technologies designed primarily to circumvent rational decision-making or exploit cognitive vulnerabilities.

**1.4 Cognitive Diversity:** The diversity of human cognition represents a collective strength to be preserved and protected from homogenizing technological influences.

**1.5 Special Protections for Vulnerable Populations:** Children, the elderly, and individuals with cognitive vulnerabilities require enhanced protections against technological manipulation.

## **ARTICLE 2: TRANSPARENCY OBLIGATIONS**

**2.1 Algorithmic Transparency:** Entities deploying algorithmic systems that influence human behavior must provide clear, accessible information about:

- The existence and nature of algorithmic mediation
- The primary objectives and optimization targets of such systems
- The methods through which these systems influence user behavior
- The data collected and utilized to personalize content

**2.2 Influence Disclosure:** Technologies employing psychological or neurological influence techniques must explicitly disclose these mechanisms to users in understandable terms.

**2.3 Documentation Requirements:** Entities must maintain comprehensive documentation of their systems' design choices, risk assessments, and mitigation strategies regarding cognitive influence.

## **ARTICLE 3: DESIGN REQUIREMENTS**

**3.1 Cognitive Respect by Design:** Technologies with potential to influence cognition must be designed with respect for user autonomy as a core principle.

**3.2 Opt-Out Provisions:** Users must have straightforward options to:

- Disable personalization algorithms
- Access chronological rather than algorithmically-curated content
- Use services without behavioral prediction systems

**3.3 Attention Protection:** Technologies must incorporate features that:

- Respect users' time and attention
- Avoid exploiting psychological vulnerabilities to maximize engagement

- Support intentional rather than compulsive usage patterns

**3.4 Prohibition of Dark Patterns:** User interfaces designed to manipulate, deceive, or coerce users into actions contrary to their interests or intentions are prohibited.

## **ARTICLE 4: NEURAL INTERFACE GOVERNANCE**

**4.1 Cognitive Boundary Preservation:** Neural interface technologies must preserve clear boundaries between:

- Human and machine cognition
- Individual and collective thought
- Private and shared cognitive experiences

**4.2 Cognitive Data Rights:** Information derived directly from neural activity shall be classified as the highest tier of protected personal data, with:

- Absolute ownership retained by the individual
- Stringent consent requirements for any use
- Continuous control over collection, storage, and processing
- Right to complete erasure

**4.3 Cognitive Integrity:** Neural interfaces must:

- Preserve the authenticity of thought processes
- Prevent unauthorized modification of cognitive content
- Maintain user awareness of technological mediation
- Support rather than supplant natural cognitive functions

## **ARTICLE 5: IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT**

**5.1 National Implementation:** Signatories commit to incorporating these principles into domestic legislation within two years of ratification.

**5.2 Independent Oversight Bodies:** Signatories shall establish independent authorities empowered to:

- Monitor compliance with cognitive sovereignty protections
- Investigate potential violations
- Issue binding remedial orders
- Impose meaningful penalties for violations

**5.3 Technical Standards Development:** Signatories will collaborate to develop technical standards for:

- Measuring algorithmic influence
- Assessing cognitive impact
- Evaluating transparency compliance
- Testing for manipulative design patterns

**5.4 International Cooperation:** Signatories commit to:

- Regular conferences to address emerging challenges
- Information sharing on best practices and threats
- Coordinated enforcement against cross-border violations
- Technological assistance for developing nations

## **ARTICLE 6: RESEARCH AND EDUCATION**

**6.1 Research Promotion:** Signatories will fund independent research into:

- Effects of algorithmic systems on cognition
- Methods to detect and measure cognitive manipulation
- Tools to enhance cognitive resilience
- Techniques for enhancing algorithmic transparency

**6.2 Educational Initiatives:** Signatories commit to implementing:

- School curricula on cognitive sovereignty and digital literacy
- Public awareness campaigns about algorithmic influence
- Professional training for designers and developers
- Resources for understanding cognitive rights

## **ARTICLE 7: PERIODIC REVIEW AND ADAPTATION**

**7.1 Technological Evolution:** Recognizing the rapid pace of technological change, this Accord shall undergo formal review every three years to address emerging threats and opportunities.

**7.2 Continuous Improvement:** A standing committee shall collect evidence on implementation effectiveness and recommend improvements to the Accord's provisions.

## **ARTICLE 8: FINAL PROVISIONS**

**8.1 Ratification Process:** This Accord shall enter into force upon ratification by 30 states representing all major geographical regions.

**8.2 Reservation Limitations:** No reservations undermining the fundamental protections of cognitive sovereignty shall be permitted.

**8.3 Resolution of Disputes:** Disputes regarding interpretation or implementation shall be resolved through consultation, mediation, and if necessary, binding arbitration.

Adopted at [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] on [ \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ]

Entered into force on [ \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ]