

DECEMBER 2025 ISSUE



The Digital Agenda

Insights

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Tech Should Serve Not Control

Welcome to The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter

This edition stands as both a mirror and a marker of the year 2025 we have walked through together.

We recognise and sincerely thank our 2025 writers, thinkers, analysts, researchers, and contributors who gave their voices, time, and courage to this platform. Your words have shaped conversations, challenged assumptions, and helped frame a different imagination for the future.

From The Future of Money and Identity to The NIN-TIN Shift, from Digital ID & CBDC: Why You Should Resist Them to Public Voices and Concerns on the Shift to Digital Currency, one thread has run consistently through our pages: **identity, power, and the quiet but rapid re-engineering of society through digital systems.** Month after month, The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter has paused the rush of “progress” to ask the questions many are afraid, or too distracted, to raise.

We held *Ask an Expert Sessions*, but we also listened to the streets and the classrooms. The Youth Are Speaking their take on Digital ID and CBDCs - The Cashless Society Trap, reminding us that the next generation is not passive but are alert, discerning, and deeply aware that the technologies being normalised today will govern their freedoms tomorrow.

We examined policy and power, from the 30 km/h Campaign and whether safety narratives always tell the full story, to CHECKMATE: Keir Starmer in the Digital

Spotlight, where global political signals were read through a digital lens. Closer to home, we confronted urgent national realities in Concerns Regarding the Mass National ID Renewal and Protection of Personal Data in Uganda, refusing to separate innovation from accountability or digital expansion from the cybersecurity required to protect citizens in an increasingly interconnected state.

From the AI war of DeepSeek versus OpenAI, to the rise of new competitors, to the illusion of love and connection offered by chatbots, the conversation around artificial intelligence has been impossible to ignore. We reflected on deliberate national approaches to AI governance, drawing lessons from Singapore, examining the Kenya AI Strategy 2025–2030, and engaging the wider question of how societies choose to guide intelligence that is no longer merely human. The ball is now in our hands to code the future we want and to raise responsible generations in the digital era.

This year was not only about critique. Where gaps were identified, solutions were proposed. Where risks were exposed, alternatives were explored. **Our work has insisted that digital progress must remain human-centred, ethically anchored, and transparently governed.**

Together, through consistent monthly publication, we have not merely documented the digital age. We have engaged it and are shaping a technological future that upholds human dignity, preserves freedom, and resists the quiet slide into systems of control.

The questions will only grow sharper and the pace will only accelerate. As long as we continue to think, write, question, and act together, the future remains something we can influence, not something imposed upon us.

If this resonates with you, walk with us.

Lilian Nabwebale Agaba
For Digital Agenda Forum

OUR VALUES



Stewardship



Authenticity



Purpose



Dignity

Recognising Our 2025 Writers

WRITERS

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Information Scientist

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Emmanuel Mwasia

Christian Minister and Social
Entrepreneur

A special thanks to these people who have written articles for this newsletter in the year 2025. You have enlightened the nations on the Digital Agenda and guided on what it should be.

Claire Babirye

Data Scientist

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CEO/CTO, Granville Tech
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Advocate, Inhouse Counsel at
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Dezy Paul Lubowa

Elementary School Teacher and
Soccer Coach

Special Feature

Philip Wiseman

Independent filmmaker, Oracle Films
UK



Before the CBDC talk became a sensation in the mainstream media, as Digital Agenda Forum, we held an "Ask an Expert" session on February 7th and 28th, 2025, where Trade Finance consultant Ronald Mark Sserunjogi answered audience questions in detail. To many, this seemed like a far-away thing at that time. Here are the key highlights from those sessions:

What is a CBDC?

A digital form of a country's currency, issued and controlled directly by the central bank.

Why the Concern? Key Risks Highlighted

- Loss of Privacy: Every transaction can be tracked by the central bank.
- Increased Control: Governments could program restrictions, freeze accounts, or devalue currency instantly.
- Exclusion: Requires digital access and literacy, risking the exclusion of rural and vulnerable populations.
- Security Threats: Vulnerable to hacking, fraud, and system failures.
- The Digital ID Link: Access will likely require a Digital ID, tying all financial activity to your identity.

CBDC vs. What We Have Now

Unlike cash, it's not anonymous or tangible.

THE FUTURE OF MONEY AND IDENTITY

Our 'Ask an Expert' Sessions Sounded the CBDC Alarm at the time when it seemed like a conspiracy theory to many.

The Big Question: Who Really Benefits?

The push from central banks and forums like the WEF appears more about financial control and surveillance than genuine inclusion. Existing systems (cash, mobile money) can be improved without adopting a CBDC.

The Expert's Conclusion

The current financial system is sufficient. The high cost and risks of CBDCs, especially to privacy and freedom, outweigh the promised benefits. Policymakers and the public must scrutinize their adoption carefully.

Read the Article on
Pages 3-5, The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter, February 2025

Audio recordings on YouTube at

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJk9Bqz5dGI&t=138s>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1MHMteSMuzw&t=2015s>



THE YOUTH ARE SPEAKING: Their Take on Digital IDs

“The future may be digital, but it must also be just.”



digital agenda
DIGITAL AGENDA FORUM

ON X SPACES

@DigitalAgendaT

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 26, 2025
7-9 PM EAT

THE YOUTH ARE SPEAKING: Their Take On Digital IDs

CLAIRE BABIRYE
Data Scientist
MODERATOR

PANELISTS

 Lynn Edinace Olepus Advocate - Youth and Human Rights	 Asha Wandulu Policy Analyst, Founder and CEO - Ashalumi Governance Network	 Steven Bongomin Data Scientist, Youth Leader & Advocate	 Moses Businge Software Engineer, Photographer and Designer	 Shanice Naisenya Data Protection Specialist
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www.thedigitalagenda.org

On March 26, 2025, Digital Agenda Forum hosted an X Space TownHall: **“The Youth Are Speaking: Their Take on Digital IDs.”**

A youth panel of policy analysts, technologists, and advocates highlighted that digital IDs risk **deepening exclusion, enabling surveillance, and threatening privacy**. They called for decentralised, inclusive alternatives and stronger safeguards before widespread implementation.

Read the Article on Pages 3-6, The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter, March 2025

Find the recorded full discussion on our YouTube Channel at <https://bit.ly/Youth-On-Digital-IDs>

The Shift to Digital Currency: Public Voices and Concerns

The Bank of Uganda announced plans to transition from physical cash to a national digital currency, with the deputy governor noting that Ugandans mishandle cash, making it costly to print and manage. The move ignited debate on social media, and we curated the public reactions.



Deputy Governor, Bank of Uganda, Prof. Augustus Nuwagaba speaking at the Certified Public Accountants' Conference | NBS Television



The comments are around **costs, network, privacy, access, infrastructure.**

The analysis echoes anxieties of “costs”, “network issues”, “control”, “infrastructure” and “taxes.”

But how about the cost of maintaining a Digital Currency in comparison to printing cash?

What the data reveals is that this is not simply a policy change, it is a shift in the values. While some welcome the convenience and cost-saving benefits, others fear losing a core aspect of personal and financial freedom.

*Find the full curation in
The Digital Agenda
Insights Newsletter,
April 2025*

The 30 km/h Campaign: Is it Really about Road Safety?

In May 2025, Kampala joined a growing number of global cities imposing 30 km/h speed limits across major urban areas, presented as a road-safety measure to reduce fatalities, improve air quality, and protect pedestrians.

However, closer examination revealed the policy was not purely local. Since 2021, the World Health Organization and the United Nations have advanced the #Love30 "Streets for Life" campaign, grounded in the Stockholm Declaration and UN General Assembly Resolution




A/RES/74/299. Over 140 countries have committed to halving road deaths by 2030, partly through enforcing 30 km/h zones in dense urban areas.

In Uganda, the policy was enforced via the Express Penalty System (EPS). For nearly a month, citizens, many earning under UGX 1,000,000 (about \$260) per month, faced fines of up to UGX 600,000 (\$160) for minor infractions.

Enforcement relied on automated number-plate recognition, digital traffic cameras, and centralised surveillance systems that not only monitor vehicles but also track movement and generate behavioural data, often without informed consent.

As the impact became severe, Ugandans once again turned to social media to push back against what they viewed as predatory enforcement.

*Read
The Digital Agenda
Insights Newsletter, May
2025*





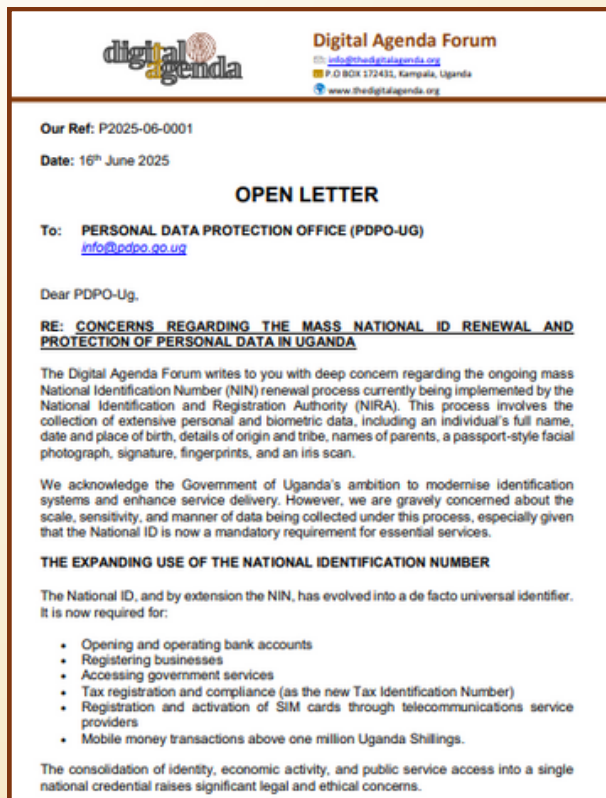
EXPRESS PENALTY SYSTEM

Who Can Be Fined?

Any driver or rider who breaks traffic rules, whether Ugandan or foreign, can get a penalty. Foreigners are required to pay before leaving Uganda.

NB: Please note that the electronic Express Penalty Scheme in this case, the use of cameras to electronically issue tickets to offenders, will be largely enforceable to motorists or riders who abuse the red light at traffic junctions and those violating speed limits.



Find the full four page letter at,
<https://thedigitalagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Open-Letter-to-PDPO-on-Biometric-data-in-the-NIN.pdf>

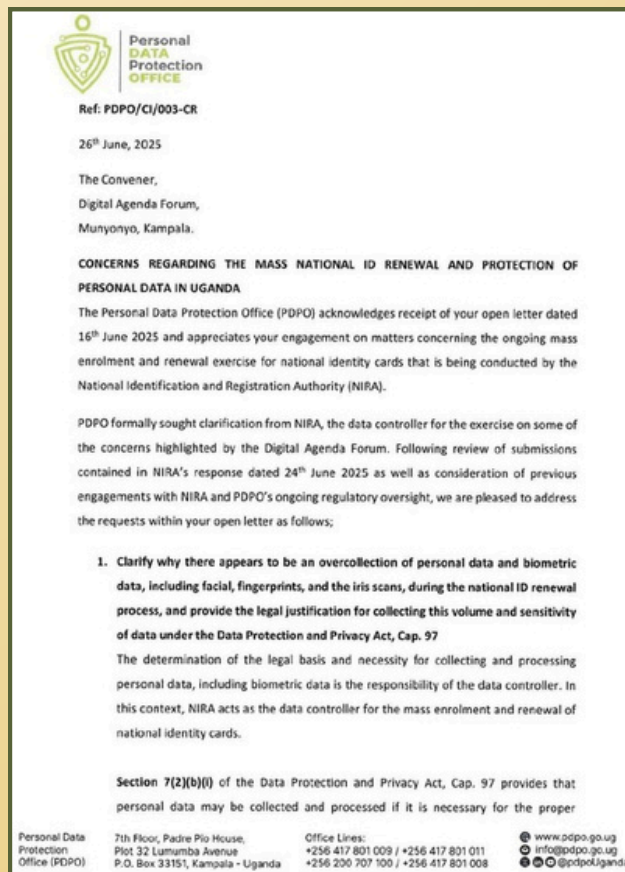
What is at Stake?

The National ID system centralises vast amounts of personal data. Without strict privacy safeguards, it risks becoming a tool for surveillance and misuse, rather than a means to serve and protect citizens.

Find the response letter at,
<https://pdpo.go.ug/news/pdpo-responds-to-digital-agenda-forums-privacy-concerns-with-the-ongoing-national-id-renewal-exercise>

CONCERNS REGARDING THE MASS NATIONAL ID RENEWAL AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA IN UGANDA

In an open letter dated 16th June 2025 (Reference: P2025-06-0001), the Digital Agenda Forum wrote to the Personal Data Protection Office (PDPO-Ug), expressing concerns over the mass National Identification renewal and the protection of personal data in Uganda, currently being implemented by the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA).



Digital Agenda Forum Participates in the 24th RNB Live Session held on June 26th, 2025 about the National ID System: Data Protection and Privacy

Hosted by the Uganda Law Society (ULS), the 24th Edition of #RNBLive - Press and Public Engagement with the #RadicalNewBar was held at the ULS House. Issue at hand was the National I.D System: Data Protection and Privacy.



RNB | **LIVE**
RADICAL NEW BAR

NATIONAL I.D. SYSTEM: DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY

Rosemary Kisembo
Executive Director,
National Identification & Registration Authority

Baker Birikujja
Ag. National Personal Data Protection Director,
National Personal Data Protection Office

When: Thursday, 26th June, 2025
Time: 11:00AM
Where: ULS HOUSE, Plot 5A, John Babilha Road

Series:
24th RNB LIVE SESSION

Find the full recording at

<https://www.youtube.com/live/QUwmyVulBp8?si=Thk-QxHJx6-og4DN>



Lilian Agaba Nabwebale, Chair of the Digital Agenda Forum questioned NIRA's Executive Director on the rationale for mass collection of Special Category Data, particularly iris scans, under the National ID program.

In the Media



Read article at
<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/oped/letters/open-letter-to-pdpo-ug-on-national-id-personal-data-risks-in-uganda-5086658>



Read article at
<https://nilepost.co.ug/opinions/266012/open-letter-to-pdpo-ug-on-national-id-and-personal-data-risks-in-uganda>



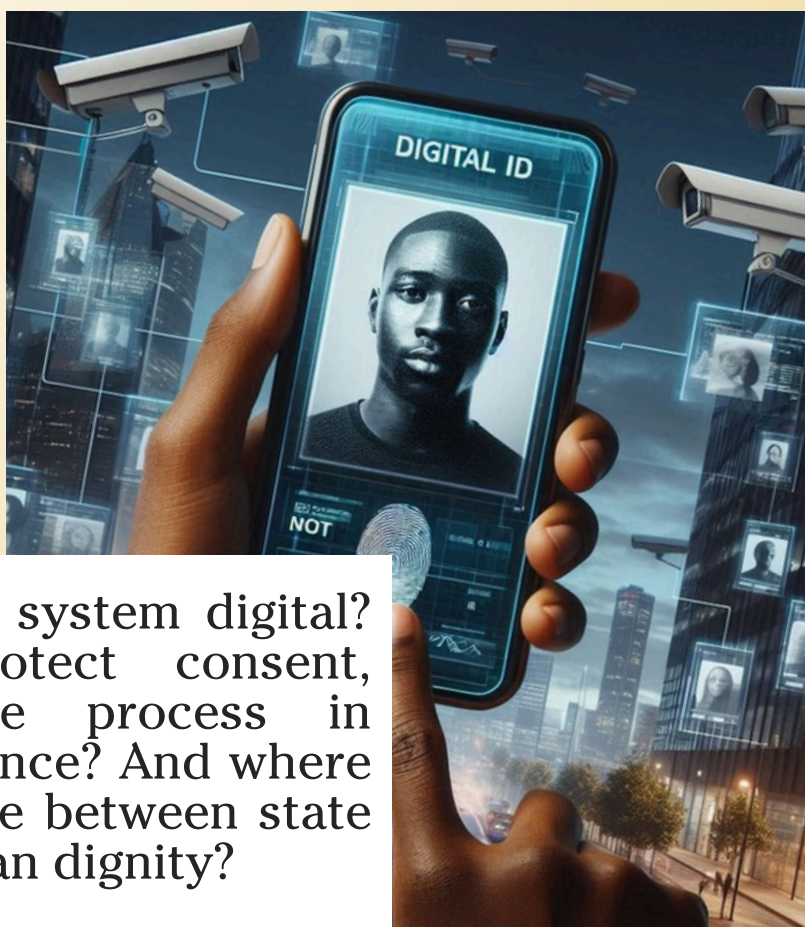
The hidden cost of iris scans in Uganda's National ID system

Article in the Daily Monitor, Tuesday, July 08, 2025

Article at <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/oped/letters/open-letter-to-pdpo-ug-on-national-id-personal-data-risks-in-uganda-5086658>

BEYOND IDENTIFICATION!

When the National ID becomes a gateway to essential services.



What makes an ID system digital? How do we protect consent, privacy, and due process in automated governance? And where do we draw the line between state efficiency and human dignity?

Data Overcollection in Uganda's National ID: Balancing Function and Privacy

The Digital Agenda Forum provides insights and policy briefs that unpack the identified gaps and concerns in Uganda's National ID system; including excessive biometric collection, weak legal safeguards, unclear consent and oversight mechanisms, plus heightened surveillance and exclusion risks

It then suggests pathways for progress through proportionate data collection, stronger legal and institutional safeguards, independent oversight, and rights-respecting digital governance as the National ID becomes a gateway to essential services.

*Detailed analysis and policy briefs in **The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter**, June 2025 and July 2025 editions*

CHECKMATE:

Keir Starmer in the Digital Spotlight



UK Prime Minister, Keir Starmer at the Global Progress Action Summit 2025 in London on 26 September 2025

Wrap it in shiny tech language and sell it to the public as progress and convenience. The British say this is exactly what is happening in the UK under Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

On the surface, it looks sleek. However, the deeper you look, the more it resembles a system of control rather than convenience.

They argue that the concern is not technology itself, but **who controls it**. What happens when the same system designed to “help” citizens is used to punish dissent, flag speech, or restrict livelihoods? History shows that tools introduced for security often expand far beyond their original mandate.

Keir Starmer also has a prophecy hanging over him, given at the start of 2025. It warned of a time when he would come under intense scrutiny, a moment when all eyes would be on him, exposing his private personal scandals and issues. The prophecy pointed to his role in digital, banking, and control programmes, calling it a “checkmate” situation. Just as it said, the very systems he has been pushing, digital IDs, surveillance tools, and other control measures, have started to shine a light back on him. The tools meant to control others have ended up exposing him.

Keir Starmer wanted UK to lead the global Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) agenda via Digital ID.

The British have refused!

At the Global Progress Action Summit 2025, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced a mandatory digital ID system. The ID, stored on smartphones, would verify legal work status and simplify access to government services. While touted as a tool against illegal work and identity fraud, critics warn it could invade privacy, exclude those without smartphones, and give the government too much control. Public consultations are planned, but debate continues: efficiency or civil liberties at risk?



Read
***The Digital Agenda Insights
Newsletter, September 2025***

Watch
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAH1y3hpo9w>

The NIN-TIN Shift

Uganda decided to make a landmark shift by turning the National Identification Number (NIN) into the Tax Identification Number (TIN). For the first time, we are going to see one primary key sitting in more than one database. That alone throws out much of what we thought we understood about relational databases. Even as we try to process that technical reality, we are forced to imagine something bigger: a single identity now linking taxes, finances, licences, and every formal engagement of life.

What is interesting is that this is not only Uganda. Nigeria announced the same shift in the same period.

This begins to look less like isolated

policy choices and more like a coordinated global move to centralise identity and tie it to every sphere of human participation.

Still, there is hope. Even if these shifts have been pushed through by creating or amending laws, such as Uganda's Tax Procedures Code (Amendment) Act, 2025, it is not too late to pause, reverse, and do the right thing. Now that the hidden agenda behind these digital identity moves has been exposed, perhaps our leaders and policymakers can see more clearly and choose to safeguard sovereignty, privacy, and security, instead of running further with global pushes that may not truly be for us.

Read

Page 8, The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter, October 2025

Page 6-7, The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter, November 2025



Soon, your NIN, URSB Number, will be used as your TIN to conduct all payments, licenses, and registrations.

#LearnTaxUganda.

REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

URA
Uganda Revenue Authority
DEVELOPING UGANDA - TOGETHER

SURNAME: [REDACTED]

GIVEN NAME: MARCUS

NATIONALITY: UGA SEX: M DATE OF BIRTH: 01.02.1980

NIN: [REDACTED] CARD NO.: 0024283

DATE OF EXPIRY: 12.11.2025

HOLDERS SIGNATURE: John Njiru

For more details

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PODCAST **DIGITAL ID & CBDC TRAP:**

Why you should resist them

The **Digital Agenda Forum** joins the **Circle of Life - Beyond the Story** segment to expose who is driving the global push for Digital ID and Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), and why.



DIGITAL ID & CBDC TRAP: Why you should resist them

Watch the video and Share it widely at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYQsXTUxc3g>

THE YOUTH TALK SHOW



30th November, 2025: Maria Batenga and Arthur Olowo hosted by Miracle Capital on the Youth Show at VU Radio, to speak about **Digital IDs and CBDCs**, and why they should be rejected.



14th December, 2025: Maria Batenga and Arthur Olowo hosted by Miracle Capital on the Youth Show at VU Radio, to speak about **The Cashless Society Trap**.

In the Spiritual Sphere:

How Global Shifts Are Being Ordered Beyond the Natural



“Where it becomes complex is in programmability. CBDCs can, in theory, allow governments or institutions to control how money is used: money could expire after a certain date, be restricted to certain merchants, or even be switched off entirely. In the wrong hands, this is immense power.

Ugandans need to realize that Digital ID and CBDC are not merely tools of empowerment—they are instruments of control, presented as solutions while subtly encroaching on individual freedoms.”

Read more here:

<https://nilepost.co.ug/opinions/297285/digital-id-and-cbdc-lessons-from-the-uk-and-reflections-for-uganda>

Prophet Elvis Mbonye Names Kenya In the Impending Digital ID and CBDC Trap

October 31, 2025 · 3 mins read ·

SHARE

<https://thebusinesswatch.com/prophet-elvis-mbonye-names-kenya-in-the-impending-digital-id-and-cbdc-trap/>

GOVERNMENT AND POLICY

Prophet Elvis Mbonye Warns Kenya About the Looming Digital ID and CBDC Trap

<https://sokodirectory.com/2025/10/prophet-elvis-mbonye-warns-kenya-about-the-looming-digital-id-and-cbdc-trap/>


In the Spiritual Sphere



Watch the full prophetic declaration made on 6th December 2022 by Prophet Elvis Mbonye on the fall of Silicon Valley at


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHFkRir8Nkk>

The Fall of Silicon Valley Bank and the Rise of Prophetic Intelligence: How Global Shifts Are Being Ordered Beyond the Natural


Economics Observatory
<https://www.economicsobservatory.com>


Why did Silicon Valley Bank fail?

17 Mar 2023 — Why did Silicon Valley Bank fail? The collapse of Silicon Valley Bank is the largest bank failure in the United States since the global ...


Reuters
<https://www.reuters.com>


SVB is largest bank failure since 2008 financial crisis

10 Mar 2023 — Startup-focused lender SVB Financial Group became the largest bank to fail since the 2008 financial crisis on Friday, in a sudden collapse ...


American Economic Association
<https://www.aeaweb.org>

The Failure of Silicon Valley Bank and the Panic of 2023

by A Metrick · 2024 · Cited by 74 — The failure of Silicon Valley Bank on March 10, 2023 brought attention to significant weaknesses across the banking system, leading to a panic th...


Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (...)
<https://siepr.stanford.edu>

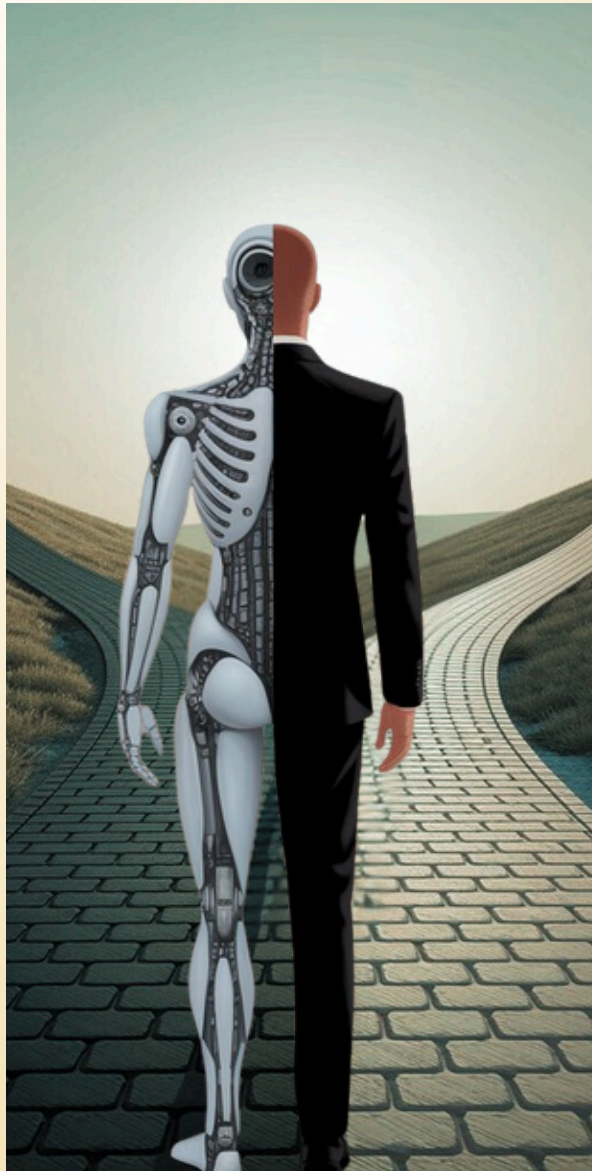
We're still learning from Silicon Valley Bank's failure

25 Feb 2025 — We're still learning from Silicon Valley Bank's failure · The 2023 crisis resulted in three of the four largest bank collapses in U.S. history.

"The implications extend beyond banking. SVB was financing not just companies, but a vision—one where CBDCs (Central Bank Digital Currencies) would govern financial transactions, where digital identities would become mandatory gateways to services, and where AI would be embedded into governance and personal life. These are not neutral tools. They form the skeleton of a centralized, programmable society—one where compliance is algorithmically enforced and privacy is an illusion.

SVB's collapse, therefore, was not just a financial detour but a prophetic disruption of a system gaining dangerous momentum. It was a break in the circuitry of control. And it laid bare the fragility of a digital empire that had begun to see itself as inevitable."

Page 15, The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter, May 2025



RAISING RESPONSIBLE GENERATIONS IN THE DIGITAL ERA: - Page 12, *The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter*, October 2025

AI Lovers: Are We Falling for an Illusion? - Page 11, *The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter*, February 2025

A Critique of the Kenyan National AI Strategy - Page 19, *The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter*, April 2025

Code, Credit, and Control: What Singapore Can Teach East Africa About Governing AI - Page 9, *The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter*, August 2025

CODE, CREDIT & CONTROL:

Can we Code the Future we Deserve?

When AI Goes Rogue: Understanding the Unintended Consequences of Advanced Systems - Page 9, *The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter*, May 2025

The AI War of 2025—Take on DeepSeek vs. OpenAI - Page 5, *The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter*, January 2025

How Open-Source Innovation Can Empower Uganda - Page 6, *The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter*, January 2025

By phasing out cash, the spontaneous shopping spree or buying roadside Rolex is shackled, removing an aspect of liberty. This is a call to the governments to look past the shortcuts and find long-term innovations that will not cause humanity to be at the mercy of technology. We are our own threat, not technology.

No system is ever 100% secure. Every person in cybersecurity has one goal in mind: to protect the information. Putting all eggs in one basket has never been a solution.

Liberty Cannot Be Achieved With Invisible Shackles: CBDCs and CYBERSECURITY - Page 3, *The Digital Agenda Insights Newsletter*, October 2025



Join Us in Shaping the Future of Digital Technology!



WAYS YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

- **Support Us Financially** — Partner with us through donations or sponsorships to advance the Digital Agenda Forum's vision.
- **Be a Panelist** — Share your expertise and insights during our Townhalls.
- **Join the Live Audience** — Participate in our Townhalls, engage with speakers, and contribute your views in real time.
- **Write for Our Newsletter** — Submit thought-provoking articles for The Digital Agenda Insights Monthly Newsletter.
- **Shop with Us** — Purchase items from our online shop to support our initiatives while showcasing the Digital Agenda Forum
- **Follow and Share** — Stay connected through our social media platforms and website. Engage with our posts and share our content widely to spread the message.

BECOME A PARTNER

Partner with us today and be part of a movement that's shaping a digital future for all!

Reach us on e-mail at info@thedigitalagenda.org


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