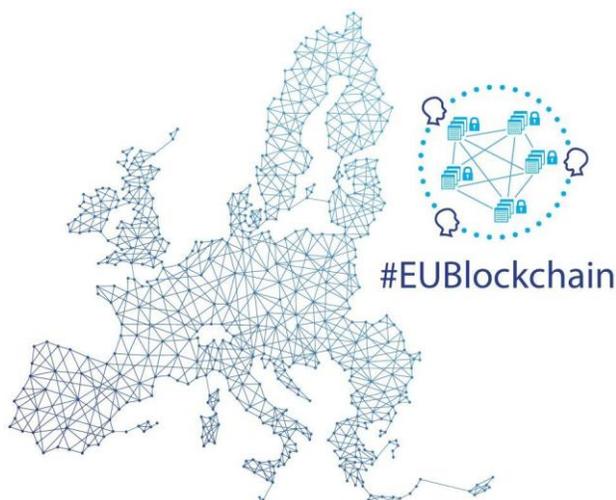


EU BLOCKCHAIN OBSERVATORY & FORUM

EUBOF 1st large event -
Blockchain: a key enabler to innovation in Europe and
the world
Brussels, Belgium
8 July 2022



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INTRODUCTION

The EU Blockchain Observatory and Forum (EUBOF) organized its first physical event since the Covid-19 pandemic started. The event titled “**Blockchain: a key enabler to innovation in Europe and the world**” was held on **July 8th in Brussels** and featured speakers across a variety of panels and keynotes on blockchain trends and innovation in Europe and beyond.

PRESENTATION ON EU BLOCKCHAIN ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENTS

Lambis Dionysopoulos, Researcher at the Institute for the Future at the University of Nicosia presented on behalf of the EUBOF consortium, the [updated detailed report on the current state of the European blockchain ecosystem](#). The first version of the report was published in 2020. The updated study adds new countries and reports on new blockchain and crypto-related developments across Europe over the last 2 years.

The report analyzes the status on both the adoption and the regulatory treatment of blockchain and crypto assets in all 27 EU member states, plus the United Kingdom (UK), Switzerland, Norway and Liechtenstein. An individual factsheet is presented for each country, culminating in an assessment of the regulatory and ecosystem maturity level for all of them.

Mr Dionysopoulos presented a chart with synthesizes the findings of the report, as it groups countries by a combination of their maturity in the regulatory and ecosystem growth to produce a map of the current state of blockchain in the EU.

According to the findings of the report, Cyprus, France, Malta, Estonia, Switzerland, and the UK, are Europe’s leaders, combining mature entrepreneurial ecosystems with clear regulatory frameworks. A total of six countries were found to improve either their ecosystem maturity levels (Belgium, Slovakia, Finland, France) or their regulatory environments (Bulgaria, UK), with the UK and France advancing to the top-tier of Europe’s leading blockchain nations, to join Cyprus, Estonia, Malta, and Switzerland.

PANEL DISCUSSION: EU BLOCKCHAIN ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENTS

Moderated by Prof. Soula Louca, University of Nicosia

- Eva Kaili, MEP (pre-recorded video)
- Nena Dokuzov, EBP – Representative of the Slovenian Government
- Mark Taverner, Bluesphere Solutions
- Joshua Ellul, University of Malta

Main outtakes from the session:

- The session started with a message from the **Vice-President of European Parliament, MEP Eva Kaili**, who highlighted that Europe has the maturity to move to the next step in finding ways to harmonize the European environment related to the blockchain technology and its

tremendous potential.

- Prof Louca initiated the discussion with a question to **Nena Dokuzov**, about the most important milestones the European Blockchain Partnership (EBP) has achieved in the past years. Ms Dukozov explained how it all started with the EU Blockchain Observatory and Forum, the first European Commission initiative on blockchain, and how after that the Commission adopted the declaration which was the foundation of the European blockchain partnership. Ms Dukozov then referred to EBSI and its three main uses.
- **Prof Joshua Ellul** explained what are the necessary skills for blockchain and what is the demand around these skills. He pointed out that undoubtedly technology skills are essential but it's a much wider spectrum of skills and disciplines, from computer science, law, business, finance, economics, management. Prof Ellul emphasized the importance of education and how we need to bridge the gap between blockchain and education.
- **Mr Taverner** briefly discussed the key characteristics of the EU business blockchain environment and referred to the member states that are leading the race and the ones that are lagging behind. In addition, Mr Taverner, discussed the main drivers for a healthy and flourishing business environment for blockchain companies and startups in Europe.

PRESENTATION ON INDUSTRY VIEWS ON SOLUTIONS FOR eID IN EUROPS, INATBA

POLICY DIALOGUE: DIGITAL IDENTITY

Moderated by Christian Hauschildt, EUBOF, White-Research

- Daniel Bachenheimer, Accenture (INATBA)
- Kai Wagner, Jolocom (INATBA)
- Paola Heudebert, Archipels (INATBA)
- Maya Madrid, DG CNECT H4

Main outtakes from the session:

Attended remotely and in-person by representatives of industry, governments and academia, the panel was introduced by a keynote presentation from **Maya Madrid (DG CNECT H4, European Commission)**, presenting on the activities across 2021–2022 regarding the eIDAS regulation and providing the public sector perspective of the EU digital identity. She explained that eIDAS deals with two pillars: 1) electronic identification and 2) trust service. *“This regulation seeks to enhance trust in electronic transactions in the market by providing a foundation to secure interaction between citizens,”* said Ms Madrid. She continued to give an overview of the eIDAS regulation development, its history and the reasons behind the regulation as well as plans for large-scale pilots, emphasising the importance of the EU digital identity needing to be *“universally usable as a way to identify users, universally available to any citizen and resident in the EU and also that it protects personal data, giving also full control to the users (...).”*

The second presentation was given by **Kai Wagner (Jolocom)**, a member of INATBA's Board of Directors and the co-chair of the Identity Working Group. On a high level, he introduced the policy position that INATBA's Identity and Privacy Working Groups created on the eIDAS regulation, welcoming in particular:

The European Digital Identity Wallet (EUDIW) as the common foundation for improved user experience and interoperability;

- The privacy-first approach that aims to protect citizens' freedoms online with digital sovereignty;
- The introduction of Qualified Electronic Attribute Attestations (QEAA) and Electronic Attribute Attestations (EAA) as a new means of digital credentials in line with the conceptual ideas of self-sovereign identity (SSI);
- The inclusion of private sector scenarios and general applicability of eIDAS trust services and IDs beyond the public sector;
- The perspective to make eIDAS-based privacy-preserving identification and authentication mandatory as an option at gatekeeper services.

Mr Wagner further focused on 7 key points relating to the eIDAS regulation, which INATBA's Identity and Privacy Working Groups emphasise, namely:

1. **Support amendment 94 to amend the proposed Article 11, by removing the requirement for a persistent, unique identifier as a requirement for the minimum set of personal identification data.** A unique identifier is not needed for enhanced data subject due diligence and should not be added to the minimum set of personal identification data. The risk of misuse outweighs the benefits.
2. **Introduce verifier safeguards into Article 6b to protect EUDIW users from fraudulent requests by relying parties.** Relying parties must qualify for requests of Personal Identifiers (PID), EAA, and QEAA data via proof of eligibility to request the data based on clear identification of the purpose and intent behind the request.
3. **Retain the proposed Article 6a(1), which authorises the Member States to allow for Digital Identity Wallets issued by the private sector.** The ability of private sector companies to issue certified Digital Identity Wallets should remain a fundamental principle in eIDAS to enable competition and improve adoption with more choice.
4. **Amend the proposed Article 45f, by removing the inclusion of qualified service providers issuing attestations while being the authentic source of the data from the list of providers.** Qualified service providers who issue attestations, and are also the authentic source of the data, should be excluded, as they are already covered by article 45a(2).
5. **Amend the proposal by introducing a requirement for lifecycle management of the EUDIW that enables citizens to maintain control over their EUDIW over time.** The EUDIW providers need to allow for secure and user-friendly approaches to back up and restore the wallet, as well as the transition of an EUDIW from one device to another when they move to a new phone.
6. **Amend the proposal, by adding empowerment to the European Commission to adopt delegated acts to further specify how permissionless public blockchains can be used within the eIDAS infrastructure.** The European Commission should be empowered to adopt delegated acts which would set out how public permissionless blockchains can be evaluated within the context of the eIDAS infrastructure – potentially under an intermediate level of assurance recognised by potential DLT Trusted Lists.

7. **Proof-of-Inherence-based User Authentication requires further clarification.** The European Commission should provide clarity on Proof of Inherence based, or biometrics-based, user authentication.

Mr Wagner further said that INATBA supports the idea of a unified toolbox for the EUDIW and its ecosystem, recommending considering the concept of SSI based on the W3C Verifiable Credential Data Model for this common toolbox. INATBA believes that:

- SSI is superior to alternatives in giving users as much control and ownership over their digital identity information as possible;
- SSI ensures privacy by design: the issuer of a particular attribute does not have visibility of where this identity attribute is subsequently used;
- The SSI approach is consent-based. This is important for this control and interaction such that only necessary credentials – and additional information – are shared with the third party requesting the ID attribute;
- It allows for credentials to be shared widely, without creating one centralised database, or multiple copies of a user's attributes;
- It is flexible since an SSI model can be implemented using either centralised technology, distributed ledger technologies (DLT) or a hybrid setup.

PANEL DISCUSSION: METAVERSE AND WEB 3.0

Moderated by Nikos Kostopoulos, EUBOF, Netcompany – Intrasoft

- Jeff Bandman, University of Nicosia, EUBOF Expert Panel
- Ingrid Vasiliou Feltes, EUBOF Expert Panel
- Dr Ioannis Revolidis, University of Malta
- Leonardo Calini, Meta

Main outtakes from the session:

Mr. Nikos Kostopoulos, Senior Blockchain Consultant at Netcompany-Intrasoft and member of the EUBOF team initiated the discussion with an introduction on what is the metaverse.

Jeff Bandman explained the term metaverse in simple terms and he touched upon the attributes of an open Metaverse as opposed to a closed Metaverse. Mr Bandman also referred to NFTs and their importance.

Dr Vasiliu-Feltes discussed how will businesses monetize the metaverse in the future. In addition, Dr. Vasiliu-Feltes touched upon the digital ethics for mass adoption of the metaverse and highlighted that before discussing the ethical issues of the metaverse, we must talk about the requirements we all have as a society to do better at digital literacy and digital fluency for users for this new environment.

Mr Calini, started his remarks with Meta's plans and how the company has committed to spending \$10 billion a year to bring to life Mark Zuckerberg's vision of a virtual reality-enabled metaverse. Furthermore, Mr Calini added that Meta plans to create 10,000 of jobs across the EU, because they believe that the EU has the potential to succeed in the metaverse

Dr Revolidis, shared his views on moderating the metaverse and who will set the rules for a metaverse. He also discussed the topic of mass adoption of the metaverse and what are the general concerns as regards the average user. Lastly Dr Revolidis, explained how current (EU) Law treats digital assets and what is the way forward in Web3.0 and the Metaverse.

PANEL DISCUSSION: BLOCKCHAIN APPLICATIONS IN THE ENERGY SECTOR

Moderated by Dr Ioannis Vlachos, EUBOF, Netcompany – Intrasoft

- Alex de Vries (Founder, Digiconomist)
- Jen Strüker (Prof. University of Bayreuth)

Main outtakes from the session:

Dr Vlachos laid out the two pillars of the discussion: a) The energy component inside the blockchain, meaning how energy consumption of blockchain technology is affecting us and b) presentation of some applications of blockchain technology in the energy sector.

Prof Struiker, talked about a project he is working on, on machine identities and how to make use of them so it's SSI sensor and identity plus blockchain and how they can bring together and use them for end-to-end digitalization. Additionally, Prof Struiker, presented his views on the sustainability of blockchain-based solutions and discussed the importance of SSI for the application of blockchain technology in the energy sector.

Alex de Vries referred to an application he is working on which is a tracker for the energy consumption of the bitcoin network with some sustainability indicators not only to energy consumption but also to carbon footprint of the network and to the electronic waste.

Both panelists discussed how the crypto winter has affected the energy consumption of the bitcoin blockchain and what are the possible long-term effects from an energy consumption perspective. Furthermore, the panelists discussed how can the blockchain technology solve the current challenges of the energy sector as a whole.

Appendix

Conference Video

The full video of the event can be found [here](#)

Event photos





Official agenda

Date / Time	Activity
10:00	Welcome by Pierre Marro, DG CNECT
10:05	Introduction to the event - a few words about EUBOF, Tonia Damvakeraki
10:10	EU Blockchain ecosystem developments , presentation by Lambis Dionysopoulos – EUBOF
10:25	Panel Discussion on EU Blockchain ecosystem developments , moderated by Prof. Soula Louca, University of Nicosia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eva Kaili, MEP (pre-recorded video) • Nena Dokuzov, EBP – Representative of the Slovenian Government • Mark Taverner, Bluesphere Solutions • Joshua Ellul, University of Malta
11:00	Coffee break
11:30	Industry views on solutions for eID in Europe, presentation by INATBA
11:45	Digital Identity panel discussion , moderated by Christian Hauschildt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daniel Bachenheimer, Accenture (INATBA) • Kai Wagner, Jolocom (INATBA) • Paola Heudebert, Archipels (INATBA) • Maya Madrid, DG CNECT H4
13:00	Lunch break & coffee
14:30	Panel Discussion on Metaverse & Web3.0 Panel , moderated by Nikos Kostopoulos, Netcompany-Intrasoft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Bandman, University of Nicosia, EUBOF Expert Panel • Ingrid Vasiliou Feltes, EUBOF Expert Panel • Dr Ioannis Revolidis, University of Malta • Leonardo Calini, Meta
15:15	Panel discussion on Blockchain in the energy sector , moderated by Dr Ioannis Vlachos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alex de Vries (Founder, Digiconomist) • Jesse Morris (CEO, Energy Web) • Jen Strüker (Prof. University of Bayreuth)
16:00	End of session - Networking event