

# **Statement on EDPB Guidelines 02/2025**

## **Processing of Personal Data through Blockchain Technologies**

The European Data Protection Board's Guidelines 02/2025 concerning the processing of personal data via blockchain technologies raise significant concerns regarding the disproportionate interference with the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals, particularly with respect to the private, non-commercial use of such technologies.

### **1. Disproportionate Restriction of Private Use**

By strongly discouraging the storage of personal data on-chain, the Guidelines substantially limit the ability of individuals to utilize blockchain technologies in a private and self-determined manner. Applications such as self-managed digital identities, timestamping, or decentralized registries often rely-by design-on verifiable, immutable storage. The outright avoidance of on-chain processing fails to consider the technical feasibility of privacy-compliant implementations, such as the use of zero-knowledge proofs or other privacy-enhancing technologies.

### **2. Interference with Informational Self-Determination**

The Guidelines appear to extend the scope of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to private individuals, even in contexts where processing is voluntary, non-commercial, and exclusively for personal use. This interpretation risks infringing upon the principle of informational self-determination and the individual's right to use emerging technologies autonomously without undue regulatory burden.

### **3. Lack of Proportionality and Legal Certainty**

While the Guidelines correctly highlight challenges in reconciling blockchain technology with the GDPR, they fail to offer practical guidance or legally certain pathways for privacy-compliant private use. Instead, responsibilities are broadly assigned to developers and operators, without accounting for the decentralized and user-driven nature of many blockchain networks. This lack of differentiation could lead to legal uncertainty and deter personal experimentation or open-source innovation.

### **4. Insufficient Recognition of Decentralized Contexts**

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The call for strict designation of data controllers and processors presupposes hierarchical structures that do not align with the decentralized architecture of public blockchains. A more nuanced legal framework is required—one that reflects the collective, non-hierarchical character of such systems and avoids imposing rigid, centralized models of accountability.

### **Conclusion**

While the objective of ensuring data protection in the context of emerging technologies is laudable, the current version of the Guidelines risks undermining core digital freedoms and innovation at the individual level. The EDPB should adopt a more proportionate and differentiated approach, one that protects personal data without impeding the lawful and self-determined use of decentralized technologies by private individuals.