Workshop on Decentralized Identity

World Summit on the Information Society, WSIS, August 20, 2020, 12noon-1pm, Online

Digital identification and credentials are a central element to a digital and inclusive society. In 2018, the World Bank estimated that 1.1 billion people do neither have an analogue nor a digital ID. Many of them remain invisible and are unable to open a bank account, access healthcare, receive education and are at higher risk to be exploited or trafficked. Therefore, electronic identification is at the heart of sustainable development seeking for inclusion.

At the same time, digital records that are all linked to a unique ID pose a big risk to privacy and data protection. Identity theft as well as arbitrary government control over digital identity are additional threats connected to a central digital ID. Decentralized identity (DID) is a concept that has been created to counter those risks. Privacy-enhancing technology as well as decentralized ledger technology (DLT) provide a framework that creates a self-sovereign identity, where control is given to the people that are identified by decentralized identifiers and connected credentials. Where do we stand and where are we heading to?

Planned Program of this 60 min online workshop:

- **Introduction to the concept of decentralized identity (DID)**
  A short presentation will present the concept of decentralized identity and will explain the difference to centralized identifications systems.
- **Expert Input on different aspects of DID implementation**
  - **Discussion of current and possible future use-cases**
    Two use-cases will be presented to illustrate how decentralized identity can be used. The speakers will be asked to introduce their case with a central statement.
  - **Interoperability and standardization of DID-systems**
    In order to achieve widespread acceptance, interoperability and standardization are key issues. There are already some existing standards by the W3C but many more are currently in development by Standards Developing Organizations (SDOs).
  - **Role of governments**
    Government-certified credentials are important for a decentralized identification ecosystem. Some governments, like the EU-Commission, also participate in providing a basis for this ecosystem with the European Blockchain Services Infrastructure (EBSI).
  - **Regulations**
    DID can provide superior privacy protection. This is achieved by decentralization, which differs from the conventional architecture of hierarchical control. Current regulation for data protection (e.g. GDPR) and electronic identification (e.g. eIDAS) are not designed for decentralized systems and generate friction points.
- **Discussion with the audience and conclusion**
  The workshop will be concluded by answering questions from the audience.

The workshop is organized by the University of Geneva and Geneva Macro Labs and will be moderated by Jörn Erbguth and Marianne Schörling. Among confirmed speakers there are

- Virginia S. Cram-Martos (Triangularity SàRL)
- Ismael Arribas (Co-chair of Interoperability WG, INATBA)
- Nacho Aamillo (, Alastria)
- Peteris Zilgalvis (Head of Unit, Digital Innovation and Blockchain, EU Commission)