



EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

EUROSYSTEM

ECB-PUBLIC

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Executive Board Member

Ms Andrea Jelinek  
Chair of the European Data Protection Board  
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Frankfurt am Main, 21 July 2021

L/FP/21/46

**Re: EDPB letter to the European institutions on the privacy and data protection aspects of a possible digital euro** (Your ref.: OUT2021-0111)

Dear Chair of the European Data Protection Board, dear Ms Jelinek,

Thank you for your letter dated 18 June 2021 in which you offer your perspectives on privacy and data protection aspects of a digital euro. A digital euro can only be successful if it meets the needs and expectations of European citizens. Indeed, a large part of our initial analysis has been based on consultations with different stakeholders, including European authorities and institutions, citizens, market participants and academia. By the same token, the thoughts of the European Data Protection Board (EDPB) on the matter are also an important input.

As you have pointed out in your letter, in the latest ECB public consultation, privacy emerged as the most important feature of a digital euro. When discussing the findings of our consultation with the Members of the European Parliament, I made it clear that protecting users' personal data and ensuring a high level of confidentiality will be a priority in the Eurosystem's work, so that a digital euro can help maintain trust in payments in the digital age. At the ECB we started to explore privacy and data protection in digital payments early in our work on a central bank digital currency, and we will continue to do so through further analyses.

On 14 July the Governing Council of the ECB decided to launch the investigation phase of a digital euro project. The investigation phase will last 24 months and aims to address key issues regarding design and distribution. A digital euro must be able to meet the needs of Europeans while, at the same time, helping to prevent illicit activities and avoiding any undesirable impact on financial stability and monetary policy. This will not lead to a prejudgement concerning a future decision on the possible issuance of a digital euro, which will come only later. In any event, a digital euro would complement cash, not replace it.

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The ECB will continue to engage with the European Parliament and other European policymakers throughout the project's investigation phase. I would thus like to take this opportunity to reiterate the commitment I expressed before the Members of the European Parliament: the ECB is ready to enter into a constructive dialogue with those legislators and institutions that contribute to the consistent application of data protection rules throughout the European Union, including the EDPB. In this regard, we welcome an exchange of views on privacy and data protection in the context of the digital euro. The ECB's Data Protection Officer, Maarten G.A. Daman ([dpo@ecb.europa.eu](mailto:dpo@ecb.europa.eu)), also stands ready to provide you with further information and facilitate the dialogue between the EDPB, the European Data Protection Supervisor and the ECB, in particular in relation to high-level privacy issues and the data protection impact assessment during the investigation phase.

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Fabio Panetta

c.c.:

Ms Mairead McGuinness, European Commissioner for Financial services, financial stability and Capital Markets Union

Mr Didier Reynders, European Commissioner for Justice

Ms Irene Tinagli, Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) of the European Parliament

Mr Adrián Vázquez Lázara, Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) of the European Parliament

Mr Andrej Šircelj, President of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) of the EU and Minister of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia

Mr Wojciech Wiewiórowski, European Data Protection Supervisor

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