

Blockchain and Cryptocurrencies

What Policymakers Should Know

Blockchain & Crypto Basics

The definition of the terms blockchain and cryptocurrency are fluid and actively debated.

Blockchain



Generally, a blockchain refers to a digital record keeping system designed to be sequential, tamper resistant, and distributed across a network, with debates around other characteristics.

Cryptocurrencies



Cryptocurrencies refer to a type of digital asset that can be sent and stored using a blockchain.

Applications

Organizations and people are experimenting with various applications of blockchain and cryptocurrencies:

Payments

Cryptocurrencies, such as Bitcoin, are being used for digital purchases and are beginning to be accepted at physical stores as well.

Supply Chain

Walmart Canada uses blockchain to manage logistics and help resolve data discrepancies and disputes with third-party freight carriers.

Real Estate

Towns like Burlington, VT are testing blockchain technology to securely record and track real estate transactions.

Issues

Regulatory Architecture

What is the appropriate regulatory framework for crypto assets, and how should regulatory agencies coordinate? How should regulatory agencies classify different crypto assets?

Financial Security & Inclusion

How can cryptocurrencies and blockchain encourage financial security and increase access to affordable financial services?

U.S. Competitiveness & National Security

How can we promote innovation and leverage blockchain to boost U.S. competitiveness and national security? How can we counter the use of cryptocurrencies for illicit activity?

Energy & Environment

What are the environmental impacts of cryptocurrencies? Can blockchain be used to help counter the climate and energy challenges we face?

Consumer & Investor Protection

What consumer and investor protections are necessary for cryptocurrencies? What existing laws apply and are there any gaps?

Financial Stability

What financial stability risks do cryptocurrencies pose, and how can policymakers and regulators manage them?