

IP masking:
Why we need it
and
Why it's not really a problem

(in my PERSONAL opinion as a Wikipedian
and lawyer specialising in online privacy)

BIG RED DISCLAIMER:
THIS IS MY PERSONAL OPINION
AS A WIKIPEDIAN AND LAWYER
SPECIALISING IN ONLINE
PRIVACY

= this is NOT what the WMF thinks

= this is NOT what WMDE thinks

IP masking: Why I think we need it

- IP addresses are 'online identifiers', meaning personal data (art. 4(1) GDPR)
= disclosing IP addresses in the revision history falls under privacy law
- we are only allowed to disclose IP addresses insofar as it is 'necessary' for our purposes (fighting abuse, POV-pushing, etc.) (arts. 5(1)(c), 6(1)(f) GDPR)
= we are *not* allowed to disclose IP addresses where it is *not* necessary
- even though I have been a Wikipedian for over 15 years, I *never* used an IP address for *my* work – I only used the information *behind* the IP address
= we *are* allowed to disclose the information *behind* the IP addresses
= we *are* allowed to disclose the IP addresses *to those who need them*

IP masking: What I think the solution could look like

- (cur | prev) 14:31, 4 August 2021 SnapSnap (talk | contribs)
- (cur | prev) 03:22, 12 July 2021 50.64.157.120 (talk) .. (17,1
- (cur | prev) 03:22, 12 July 2021 50.64.157.120 (talk) .. (17,1
- (cur | prev) 23:43, 24 June 2021 Beardo (talk | contribs) .. (
- (cur | prev) 06:55, 13 May 2021 73.222.148.218 (talk) .. (17

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- (cur | prev) 14:31, 4 August 2021 SnapSnap (talk | contribs)
- (cur | prev) 03:22, 12 July 2021 anonymous user 12345 (talk | contribs)
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- (cur | prev) 23:43, 24 June 2021 Beardo (talk | contribs) .. (
- (cur | prev) 06:55, 13 May 2021 anonymous user 67890 (talk | contribs)

IP masking: What I think the solution could look like

- Instead of an IP address, we would see some other form of pseudonymous ID.
- Multiple edits by the same user (even on different pages) would be assigned the *same* ID.
- Clicking on the IP address would disclose the usual information (country of origin, whether it is a static IP address belonging to an institution, etc.).
- Users with a legitimate interest (anyone involved in vandal fighting, POV hunting, etc.) would be granted a special user right to still see the IP addresses.
- In my opinion, this should work fine.