



PRESS RELEASE
27 May 2009

To the media

15th conference of the international Porvoo Group in Austria 27–28 May 2009: INTEROPERABLE EUROPEAN ELECTRONIC IDENTITIES NEEDED

Interoperable electronic identities and the safety of electronic services are a current topic in Europe and elsewhere in the world. The horizontal objective set by the EU is to achieve the interoperability of electronic identities in pan-European government services. This is promoted by projects including STORK, a Large Scale Pilot on electronic identity under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) of the European Commission.

On 27–28 May 2009 the international Porvoo Group will convene in Vienna, Austria, to discuss electronic identity, interoperability and development of e-services in Europe, with delegates from several European countries as well the United States and Japan attending the conference. The main organisers of Porvoo 15 are the Support Unit ZMR of the Austrian Ministry of the Interior, Digital Austria, Secure Information Technology Center - Austria (A-SIT) and the Population Register Centre of Finland.

Issues addressed by the conference include identity management and the population registers required for identification, interoperable electronic signatures, pan-European public e-procurement system, preparation underway in the EU, barriers to development and methods of overcoming them, and standardisation and biometrics, including the integration of biometric identification in ID cards, passports and banking cards.

As well as by Austria, national electronic identity development projects will be presented by Belgium, France, Germany, Sweden and the UK, and a global perspective will be brought by the USA and Japan.

The conference will also address the STORK pilot project with the aim of ensuring cross-border recognition of national electronic identity systems, thereby enabling easy trans-border access to e-services utilising national existing systems. The aim is to enable businesses, citizens and government employees to use their national electronic identity in various EU countries.

Electronic identity developed around the world

In addition to Europe, systematic work in the field of electronic identity takes place around the world. Countries such as the USA have developed standardisation in international cooperation and addressed issues such as identity management and biometrics.

Japan has recently developed a social security card. The aim is also to deploy electronic mailbox for citizens: the aim is to open a personal internet account for all Japanese citizens, and offer social security and health services as well as all e-government services through a single portal.

The Porvoo Group supports the deployment of electronic identity in Europe

The Porvoo Group is an international cooperation network coordinated by the Population Register Centre of Finland and established in the Finnish city of Porvoo, as the name suggests, in spring 2002 in connection with the eEurope 2002 programme. The primary goal of the Group is to promote a trans-national, interoperable electronic identity based on PKI technology (Public Key Infrastructure) and smart cards and chip ID cards as well as secure e-services in Europe.

The Porvoo Group is widely recognised as a significant actor and relevant contributor to informed public dialogue in this area. The Group has seen constant expansion. The majority of its members represent their respective national authorities but representatives of the business community as well as the European Commission and the UN have also contributed to its work. The US and Japan are closely involved in the Group alongside some thirty European nations. Porvoo Group conferences have been attended by as many as approximately one hundred delegates.

The Porvoo Group's conferences have been held every six months in different European countries. The next conference will be held in France in autumn 2009.

Further information: **Ms Katja Häkkinen**, Chairman of the Porvoo Group and Certification Manager, Finnish Population Register Centre, tel. +358 9 2291 6737 or +358 50 591 7517, email katja.hakkinen@vrk.fi or **Ms Helga Spacek-Stangl**, Communications Management, A-SIT Secure Information Technology Center - Austria, tel. +43 1 503 19 63 – 30, email helga.spacek-stangl@a-sit.at or **Ms Irene Rissanen**, Communications Coordinator, Finnish Population Register Centre, tel. +358 9 2291 6717 or +358 50 573 7210, email irene.rissanen@vrk.fi

Conference agenda and other materials on the internet: <http://porvoo15.a-sit.at/index.php> and www.fineid.fi/en -> What's going on around the world -> Porvoo Group