

The STORK 2.0 Initiative: Secure idenTity acrOss boRders linKed 2.0

Facilitating Mobility and Digital Life Across Borders in the EU

Although it is universally acknowledged that information and communication technologies (ICTs) play a key role in overcoming the economic crisis and laying the foundation for a much desirable sustainable future, building an increasingly digital society and economy poses significant challenges, including the need to ensure trust in online environments. **Lack of trust puts citizens, companies and Administrations off when it comes to making e-transactions or hiring e-services**, and this results in untapped potential for digital technologies.

One of the key elements for trust in the digital world is the electronic identity (e-ID). Aware of the importance of e-ID to the deployment of E-Government services and the strengthening of the Digital Single Market, the EU has focused on the development of pan-European infrastructure for the e-ID of citizens and companies, making reference to it in some of its most relevant initiatives, e.g. the Digital Agenda, the European E-Government Action Plan 2011-2015, the ISA Work Programme or the Services Directive.

To boost the development of said infrastructure, within the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), the STORK project (Secure idenTity acrOss boRders linKed) was carried out between 2008 and 2011. A European e-ID interoperability platform was developed for citizens to establish e-relations across borders using their national e-IDs. **As a result, common specifications and a common code were produced, as well as a sustainable framework at a pan-European level.**

Also framed within CIP, **STORK 2.0¹ builds on successful results of STORK**, taking new measures to boost acceptance of e-ID in Europe with the purpose of **facilitating the creation and adoption of a single interoperable and sustainable platform for electronic identity and authentication in Europe**, for both persons and legal entities.

The Directorate-General of Administrative Modernisation, Procedures and E-Government Development of **the Ministry of Finance and Public Administration is part of STORK 2.0, leading the Work Package on Common Specifications & Building Blocks**, just like in the first STORK project. Other Spanish partners include Universitat Jaume I, the University of Murcia and companies Atos España and SCYTL. In total, the consortium is formed by **58 partners from 19 associated countries**.

The four key objectives of STORK 2.0 are:

- **Accelerate the deployment of e-ID for public services** by coordinating national and EC initiatives in support of a federated e-ID management architecture across Europe.
- **Maximise the take-up of its scalable solutions throughout the EU**, with a strong commitment to open specifications and longer-term sustainability around a vision of e-ID as a service offering (backed by participating European countries and industry).
- **Facilitate the convergence of private and public sectors** in a fully operational framework and infrastructure, which use e-ID for secure and coherent authentication of legal and natural persons across the EU.
- **Run four cross-border sector pilots** to test and demonstrate the capabilities and benefits of interoperable e-ID in a real-world environment.

¹ More information on the project in the official website, <http://www.eid-stork2.eu/>

Achieving these objectives **will be realised through the four pilot applications of the project (e-learning and academic qualifications, e-banking, public services for business, e-health)** offering interoperable services in real-life settings. The pilots will validate common specifications, standards and building blocks, convincingly addressing challenging legal and governance issues (across borders, application domains and sectors).

The project also envisages **addressing the representation of persons and legal entities in digital environments**, including applications to manage mandates or authorisations across the EU and to provide protection to the data handled and secure attribute transfer tools controlled by users.

STORK 2.0 will build on the collaborative efforts of existing large scale pilot projects, which include the first STORK initiative (e-ID), e-CODEX (e-justice), epSOS (e-health), PEPPOL (e-procurement) and SPOCS (e-business). It will develop communities of interest to ensure the widest possible influence of Europe's future single e-ID area.

The **initial stage** experience has already had an impact on the actual implementation of e-ID across borders. The amount of technical knowledge gained and the legal barriers to interoperability identified **have been a valuable source of information for the drafting of the e-ID rules by the EC in 2012.**

In short, STORK 2.0 **is an initiative facilitating easy and secure access to cross-border services using e-ID credentials**, thus making headway in the building of the Digital Single Market for public and commercial services, **and of a larger, more secure Europe where communications flow smoothly, connecting borders.**