The Czech Republic’s National eID card

New secure document and electronic identity
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A prosperous economy in Central Europe

The Czech Republic is a stable and prosperous market economy in central Europe with 10.5 million inhabitants. After its independence in 1993, the country harmonized its laws and regulations with those of the European Union and joined the Union in 2004.

To provide secure and reliable electronic communication

The core principles of eGovernment in the country were published in March 2008. This key policy document sets out a vision for the Czech Republic to become one of the top five EU countries in terms of eGovernment development. The Government’s task is to reform the Public Administration and the services provided by the State and the public authorities, aiming towards an effective service for the Information Society. For citizens, the aim of the strategy is to provide comfortable, secure and reliable electronic communication across all levels of Government, for as many life events as possible. (source: eGovernment in Czech Republic EU report, November 2011 on www.epractice.eu)

The strategic goals include:
> consolidated databases, used for building content and applications;
> a consistent set of laws in order to provide both a legal basis and support to eGovernment;
> a robust, secure and efficient infrastructure allowing access to data sources, with potential for further development;
> a set of key applications to handle businesses’ normal life events and their communication with State Administration;

> a 20% reduction in administrative costs by 2013, as a result of eGovernment development.

In that context, the new Czech National eID card will contribute to facilitate secure access to citizen services.

Launch in January 2012

National rollout of the new eID card began on January 2, 2012. Gemalto is providing its Sealys secure digital identity solution from its European manufacturing and competency center. The new credit-card size eID card embeds the IAS ECC application, enabling digital signature as well as user identification and authentication.

With the card serving as a strong authentication token, usage of eGovernment services will progressively become more widespread, thereby reducing administrative burden.

To select a multi-application eID

Mandatory for citizens 15 years and older and available for all citizens with no age limit, the Czech National eID card will be recognized as an acceptable travel document within the EU’s Schengen Area. In order to accommodate additional eGovernment applications loaded post-issuance, Czech National eID specifications called for a multi-application architecture. A personal code of four to 10 digits is incorporated. This security code is not public and serves as a unique identifier of the citizen in central registers. To produce a fully interoperable eID card meeting all of these requirements, the Czech State Printing Works of Securities turned to the expertise of Gemalto.
Now that issuance is underway, the Czech National eID card is delivering on the country’s promise of secure and reliable ICT across all levels of government for as many life events as possible. The card’s personal security code can be customized at will at any of the Czech POINT locations facilitating access to public administration. These centers make it quick and easy for citizens to acquire certified public records from four different governmental registers. Czech POINT centers are located primarily at post offices, municipal authority offices, registry offices and Czech embassies. In the future, Czech National eID will also enable cardholders to remotely acquire electronic public records with the same legal status as stamped hardcopies.

Chief features of the Czech National eID card

> Polycarbonate card body
> 10-year life
> Multiple physical security features
> Laser-engraved visual personalization technology
> Personalization using text data, MRZ data, photo and 2D barcode containing document number

Secure documents and electronic identities: Gemalto’s key expertises

Gemalto is the world leader in digital security with 2011 annual revenues of €2 billion and 10,000 employees. In the public sector, Gemalto provides secure documents, robust identity solutions and services for governments, national printers and integrators in the service of citizens.

Its products and solutions are deployed in more than 80 government programs worldwide.

Gemalto provided technical services, products and applications during the implementation of 15 national eID programs currently in operation.

Contribution to these projects provides the company with an excellent overview of the technology involved, its applications and the quality of information systems, as well as the social context of its use.

Furthermore, Gemalto’s experts have provided support for national debates on how to improve systems, in particular to fight fraud and increase citizen’s trust and usability.

Finally, Gemalto is an active collaborator in European and global standardization organizations.