

# UAE Population Register and ID card program

||||| A secure foundation for e-Government capabilities



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## ■ New milestone in UAE history

Progressive and pioneering, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has undergone profound transformations since the establishment of the federation in 1971. Now, as one of the earliest adopters of smart card-based national ID cards in the Gulf Region, UAE stands at the forefront of the global e-government trend.

Launched in 2000, the Population Register and ID Card Program (PRIDC) aims to ensure continued development of a prosperous society through provision of secure e-Government services. Federal Decree No. 2 of 2004 established the independent Emirates Identity Authority (EIDA) responsible for overseeing all phases of the program.

### ||||| EIDA goal

**To establish an accurate, secure population registry for 5 million UAE nationals and legal residents by the end of 2010.**

## ■ Core e-Government infrastructure

At the heart of this ambitious program is a Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) and centralized database for e-Government and e-Commerce initiatives. A national e-ID card is to be issued to all citizens and legal residents, enabling reliable authentication of each individual using a secure vault of data right on the card.

By adopting state-of-the-art technology, EIDA seeks to simplify administrative procedures and collect valuable data to support decision-making, strategic planning and the allocation of resources in all vital sectors of the country.

These advanced measures will enable EIDA to:

- Eliminate fraud and forgery with highly secure biometric e-ID cards

### ||||| Who must enroll?

Registration in Population Register and in the Identity Program is mandatory for all nationals and legal residents including children below 15 but issuing ID card is optional for children below 15. UAE law requires bearers to present the card to all government, semi-government and private authorities to prevent denial of services.

The law stipulates that a specific time window is given to obtain the new ID card. After this period, no service, be it electronic or non electronic, will be provided to those who do not have the card.

- Facilitate positive online and offline identification and authentication
- Maximize ROI for government investments in IT infrastructure
- Offer a single, interoperable card for multiple applications

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy & Planning, Ministry of Interior, as well as the Central Bank of the UAE.

## ■ PRIDC centralized database

Gemalto was designated sub-contractor in April 2003 for provision of the national eID card with its Sealys eID and personalization solution with Gemalto's Coesys Issuance solution. Each personalized card comprises a personal ID number, biometric data and a PIN number. More information is stored in the Population Register database: all data related to the card holder as well as 10 digital fingerprint and palm prints.

Manufactured with built-in capabilities, the credit card-size ID card will, over time, facilitate access to a broad range of e-Government services. Enriched with data collected upon registration, the PRIDC centralized database will be linked directly through Citizen Hub with ministries and other organizations. These include the Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education,

### ||||| Quick facts on PRIDC

- Budget of \$55 million
- 7,000 enrollments expected to be handled daily
- 7,000 cards to be personalized and issued per day
- 15 million documents archived

> Reaching out to the public

To make registration quick and uncomplicated, EIDA has set up online appointment system to provide the functionality for the customers to make their own appointments through EIDA website, call center or kiosk machines. It also allows the customers to select the appointment date, time and registration center most appropriate for them.





Communication is not neglected in the UAE (part of EIDA brochure—courtesy of EIDA 2009). It is considered as an important aspect, as a major transformation of the relationship between citizens and the authorities is taking place. The effort to convince citizens and develop usage will continue for several years.

### Increasingly high rate of adoption

Following a limited pilot program conducted in 2005, rollout for all registered individuals began in 2007. As of April 2009, over **1 million e-ID cards** had been issued. The number of registration centers is to increase to over 22 throughout UAE.

The swift rate of adoption has been fostered by government mandates. In September 2007, a UAE resolution prohibited recruitment or hire of any UAE national or resident not in possession of the e-ID card.

At the same time, this unified and highly secure form of identification is now recognized as a valid travel document in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. In addition, citizens traveling in the region no longer need to stand in long queues at the immigration counter upon arrival or departure. By using their ID and their finger prints, they can now go through the newly installed fully automated “e-Gate”, an advanced passenger clearance system. Incorporation of an “e-Dirham” electronic purse has already been undertaken by the UAE Ministry of Finance for payment of administrative fees.

In the future, EIDA plans to significantly expand e-government services, transforming the national e-ID card into a truly interoperable card to hold the data for the existing:

- Work permit • Health services card • Driver license • Passport & Family Book

### Key events and dates for UAE

#### April 2009

- 98% of Emiratis completed ID card registration.

#### March 2008

- Emirates NBD partners with EIDA to provide ID-integrated banking.

#### February 2008

- National Human Resources Development and Employment Authority (TANMIA) opens registration center in Dubai.
- Ras Al Khaiman and Umn Al Quwain registration centers open.

#### January 2008

- Al Dhaid registration center opens in Sharjah.
- Al Hayr registration center opens in Al Ain.
- EIDA acquires ISO 27001 certification.
- Registration centers open on-site at Dubai Naturalization and Residency Department.

#### December 2007

- EIDA launches mobile registration service.



#### November 2007

- PRIDC is conferred the Information Security Award.

#### October 2007

- EIDA signs agreement with ESNAAD for registration of personnel and family members.

#### August 2007

- Al Barsha registration center opens in Dubai.

#### July 2007

- EIDA unveils 2007-2010 strategy, with plans to increase the number of registration centers.
- Empost ID Card Delivery service is launched, enabling courier delivery to home or office.

#### April 2007

- EIDA integrates ‘e-Dirham’ feature into e-ID card for payment of fees at all government departments.

#### 2007

- Mass rollout begins.

#### May 2006

- Federal Law No. 9 is issued to empower EIDA with broader authority.
- UAE and Saudi Arabia sign agreement to facilitate cross-border travel.

#### June 2005

- Pilot e-ID program is conducted on a limited scale.

*“We want to create a new way of life and help our people fulfill their ambitions and dreams. It is all about giving people the tools to succeed, fostering enterprise and ensuring a higher quality of life. The Population Register Program can be seen as an infrastructure and plays a major role in this vision. It is now triggering numerous e-governmental projects.”*



His Excellency Mohamed Al Mazrouei, Executive

Director, Population Register of the Emirates Identity Authority, Abu Dhabi

#### 2004

- Federal Decree No. 2 vests EIDA with ultimate powers for implementation of PRIDC.

#### April 2003

- Gemalto awarded contract to deliver smart cards for nationwide e-ID program.

#### July 2003

- Design and development phase begins, followed by integration and deployment.

### Efficient infrastructures and equipment

Chief components of PRIDC include:

- Enrolment and Renewal sub-system
- Population Register and document scanning sub-system
- Biometric sub- system (electronic fingerprinting system)
- System automation and management programs
- Security sub- system
- Card Production sub-system and Smart cards and digital coding PKI to issue two certificates (authentication and digital signing).

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