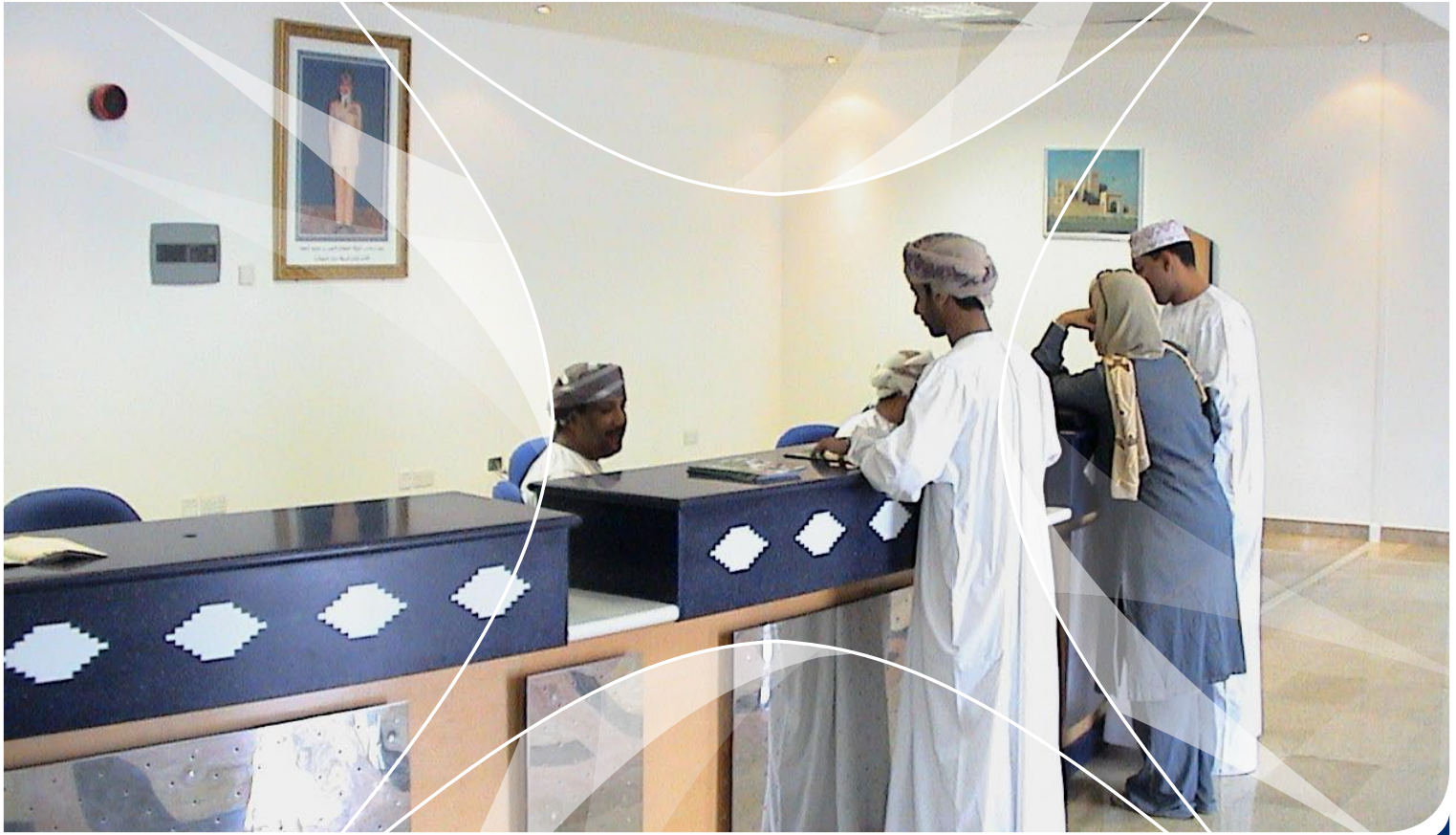


Oman's Electronic ID Card Voting System

||||| From ink to electronic fingerprints



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Ranked the world's most progressive country according to the United Nations' 2010 Human Development Report, the Sultanate of Oman has put people at the heart of economic development for more than 40 years. Marking yet another progressive stride, the Sultanate has turned its focus to ensuring free and fair elections—the cornerstone of representative democracy.

In an effort to deter electoral fraud, the Sultanate has deployed an Electronic ID Card Voting System ahead of the next elections to the SHURA Council of Oman in October 2011. Aimed at facilitating an open and fully transparent voting process, the new system will enable authenticating the participation of voters before their ballot is cast at polling places. It is ensuring the "one voter - one vote" principle.

Hosted within the National Registry System—an integrated system aggregating identification and vital records—the solution capitalizes on the highly reliable smart card-based authentication of eID cards to ensure voting rights for all eligible citizens.



The image shows a screenshot of the eOman website. At the top, there is a logo for 'e.oman' and the date 'March 29, 2011'. The website has a navigation menu with tabs for 'Home', 'Government', 'Businesses', 'Citizens', 'Media Center', and 'Contact Us'. The 'Citizens' section is active, displaying the title 'Citizens' and the subtitle 'Transforming People into e-Citizens.'. Below this, there is a paragraph about Oman's e-Governance initiative. A sidebar on the left lists 'eOman Services for Citizens' including 'National IT Training & Awareness', 'Innovation and Support Center', 'the Official eGovernment Services Portal', 'Higher Education Admission System', 'Digital Oman ICT Magazine', 'e-Legislation', 'One-Stop Shop', 'National Statistics Online', 'National Registration System (NRS)', and 'Future Projects'. On the right, there are sections for 'Tools' (Print This Page, e-mail This Page), 'Contact Us' (Contact us, Send your feedback), and 'Useful Links' (Digital Literacy, Learning Curriculum, ITA Annual Report). At the bottom, there is a footer with links for 'Webmaster', 'Disclaimer', 'Link to Us', 'Privacy Policy', and 'FAQ', and a copyright notice for 'Information Technology Authority (ITA)'.

Turning Oman into a digital nation

eOman, Oman's eGovernment initiative, stems from the Sultanate's ambition to effect a digital transformation of its economy. Launched in 2002, eOman aims to build an efficient digital infrastructure to foster meaningful dialog between government and citizens, primarily by:

- > Modernizing the National Registry System
- > Simplifying and expediting administrative processes
- > Improving the quality of public services
- > Opening the way to eGovernment services
- > Strengthening citizen identification security

Digital framework already in place

Oman's voter authentication builds on prior issuance of eID cards to the majority of the country's adult population. Since the modernization of the National Registry System, authorities can now maintain records for all citizens and residents in a single, centralized database. Data are collected in real time at 12 regional offices, where each citizen can receive their eID in less than 30 minutes.



Deployment of the Electronic ID Card Voting System marks the latest phase in Oman's eGovernment initiative. Begun in 2002, eOman aims to establish an efficient infrastructure for the delivery of public services. The first phase, which began in 2004, has enabled more than 1.2 million Omani citizens and residents to benefit from secure, convenient smart card-based identification. Launched in 2006, the second phase upgraded eID cards to enable the delivery of faster, more secure public services.

In 2009, an ePurse solution was integrated to enable eServices, such as the use of eID cards to pay for administrative fees for birth and marriage certificates, car registration, driver's licenses and visa applications. The solution enables Omani citizens and residents to benefit from the convenience of ePurse payment without the need to renew their eID card. By using a single solution for multiple purposes and programs, the Omani government benefits from significant savings.

Gemalto's solution marks and end to fraud

Oman's new Electronic ID Card Voting System will enable voters to cast votes with ease and transparency. Because the traditional ink fingerprint has been replaced with the smart card-based ID's highly secure electronic fingerprint, the risk of error has been virtually eliminated. This, in turn, will eliminate double voting anywhere in the country.

Additionally, the Electronic ID Card Voting System will encourage eligible citizens to exercise their right to vote and participate in Oman's representative democracy. The country's easily accessible registration centers will also contribute to wider participation of all population segments, especially women.



Coesys Mobile Units will cover post-issuance needs for citizens in remote areas of the Sultanate. They also facilitate eAuthentication in local governments and financial institution workplaces and contribute to enforce citizen's voting rights.

The use of smart ID cards loaded with the voting applet will pave the way for more enhancement and development enabling citizens to participate in election in effective yet convenient ways in the future.

A longstanding partnership

Gemalto's partnership with the Sultanate of Oman reaches back to 2002, from the very outset of the eOman program. The Royal Oman Police (ROP) turned to Gemalto's expertise for consulting, project management and integration services as well as software and the delivery of smart card-based identification cards.

To first build the country's National Registry System, in 2004 Gemalto supplied a full suite of Coesys Secure Solutions comprising Coesys Enrolment, Coesys eGovernment, Coesys eBorder and Coesys Issuance. In 2010, the United Nations hailed the country's National Registry System as an achievement in effective public administration, conferring the project with a Public Service Award.

In 2009—for the first time—an on-card application was activated post-deployment, enabling Gemalto to offer Omani citizens new eServices using their previously issued eID cards. Based on Gemalto's turnkey Coesys ePurse solution, the application includes an on-card ePurse, a post-issuance activation solution and a centralized transaction management system. The ePurse can be used to pay administrative fees and other retail payments.

A prestigious UN award

In June 2009, the Royal Oman Police's Civil Status System for national registrations received a major award from the United Nations in recognition of excellence in public service.

The UN's Public Service Awards acknowledge the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions that lead to a more effective and responsive public administration. The scheme spotlights and promotes public service around the globe.

Gemalto is a partner to the Civil Status project, launched in 2004. The project records birth, death, marriages and divorces in the Sultanate and also handles eID cards for all citizens and residents.