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Today, the access to online services provided by the public and the private sector is more and more linked to e-identification and e-authentication.

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--- Posted by Gábor Bartha, DG INFSO, Policy officer: ICT for Government and Public Services, Workshop organiser at the Digital Agenda Assembly

Today, the access to online services provided by the public and the private sector is more and more linked to e-identification and e-authentication. There are already many Member States providing their citizens with national e-identification and e-authentication instruments (e.g. eID card, mobile phone ID) designed to be used for online transactions. In some Member States the use of these instruments is restricted to eGovernment services, in others they can be used generally by all business sectors.

However, all Member States are confronted now with "non nationals" equipped with e-identification and e-authentication means from other Member States which do not fit into the national solution. The low degree of interoperability of the different national solutions used makes the cross-border use of national e-IDs and e-authentication means very difficult.

What are the key challenges? How to recognise the "national" eIDs provided by other Member States which are based on national personal identifier (e.g. identification number) which guarantees the unambiguous identification of the person only in the issuing Member State? This question involves technical and legal issues.

In the context of the [Large Scale Pilot STORK](#) [3] a technical solution was developed addressing the technical barriers of cross-border interoperability. From legal point of view the mutual recognition and acceptance of eIDs from all other Member States, at least the ones used for the eGovernment sector is necessary.

What would be the main benefits? Those are clear: citizens and businesses can use their eIDs for the access of at least public online services and the completion of electronic transactions everywhere in the EU. The range of accessible online services would increase massively. Furthermore, the scalability of eIDs would increase due to the fact that the eID can be used not only in the Member State were it was issued but in all other Member States. One of the major benefits for citizens and businesses would be simplification and the reduction of administrative burdens.

The need for moving forward is more than clear. At the Digital Agenda Assembly, the [workshop n°02](#) [4] "What next for e-Identity and e-Signatures?" shall contribute to discover the scope of the planned action and help to avoid any redtapes and drawbacks.

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