



THE FUTURE OF IDENTITY

How is the digital age changing our identities?

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Representation of the Free State of Bavaria to the EU

digital identity / data protection regulation
ethics in ICT / identity management
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PRESS RELEASE

Quo vadis identity – Experts debate the changing nature of identity in the digital age

Brussels, Nov.28, 2013 –The digital age leads to a transformation of our identity containing challenges for the key issues of privacy and security. In order to debate implications for society, Giesecke & Devrient has invited more than 40 experts including lawyers, social scientists, IT and communications specialists, and regulators from at least 10 different nations to take part in the initiative **IDENTITY | Talk in the Tower**. Two working groups have focused on specific identity related topics since May 2012. First results – including two publications – were discussed today with a broader audience at the event “**The Future of Identity: how is the digital age changing our identities?**”. The report **Role of Machines** projects two possible scenarios of what life will be like in 10 years’ time, depending on the technological solutions adopted by society. **Control of Identity** looks at the implications of pioneering identity management schemes, e.g. The Program of the Unique ID Authority of India (UIDAI) and Mobile eVoting.

At the event, which was supported by the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA), taking place at the Representation of the Free State of Bavaria to the EU in Brussels, high-ranking global representatives from government, business, and the academic community shared their viewpoints on identity:

Walter Schlebusch, Chairman of the Management Board and CEO, Giesecke & Devrient, said that the growing dominance of the digital world in connection with the popularity of mobile devices has led to new requirements for secure identity verification and authentication solutions. “This is why Giesecke & Devrient has initiated this debate”, he points out. “We cannot focus solely on technological challenges but need also to consider people’s expectations on future ID solutions as well as take into account norms and values that shape the identity debate.”

Jamie Shea, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, NATO, raised the question of how individual empowerment via technology is changing international governance. “Group identity, in particular the aspirations of certain ethnic, social class or national communities to assert their identities vis-à-vis others” - he explained – “dominated the 20th century. As we progress through the 21st century, individual identity - fostered by our globalised, networked world - has become the new driving force of political change.” However, he asked, “Will this empowerment of the individual asserting his or her sense of identity against traditional authority or old taboos lead to a more peaceful or turbulent world?”

ENISA's **Udo Helmreich** said that at the heart of his agency, which is the 'pace-setter' for information security in Europe, is the mission to ensure a secure environment for the electronic identities that we use in our social lives, in work and in everyday activities like shopping. These identities include for example passwords, personal data and online images. "Protecting them is vital not just for personal security, but also to safeguard our fundamental human right to privacy."

Paul Nemitz, Director, Fundamental Rights and Union Citizenship, DG Justice, European Commission, stressed the importance of the protection of privacy and personal data. "Identity means determining yourself what of you is seen by others," he said. "Strengthening this freedom of self-determination, and harvesting the economic power of this freedom for growth – that's what the reform of data protection in Europe is about," he added.

Juliet Lodge, Professor Emerita at the University of Leeds and member of the Privacy Expert Group at the Biometrics Institute, commenting on the work of the Role of Machines reports said that both scenarios simply a de-personalisation of the individual where identity as we know seems to be replaced by the concept of a machine-recognizable code. "Identity has become a snippet of an algorithm that can be associated with another code", said Prof. Lodge, pointing out that this has wider implications over who has access to personal data, and of how much of it, on taxation and record keeping, jobs, access to services and social inclusion. Both scenarios "raise critical ethical questions about the society created", she said.

Speakers at the conference included among others, Hans Wolfgang Kunz, Member of the Management Board, Giesecke & Devrient, Zhong Chen, Professor at Peking University, Pramod Varma, Chief architect, Unique Identification Authority of India.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

1. **IDENTITY | Talk in the Tower** is a platform for an open, creative and cross-border discussions on the future of identity launched in Berlin in May 2012 to highlight issues relevant to personal identity. It is an initiative of **Giesecke & Devrient**
2. **Giesecke & Devrient**, the technology group leader in solutions for payments, secure communications and identity management, applies its many years of experience to the context of system solutions for security technologies.
3. The Brussels conference was initiated by **Giesecke & Devrient** and organised with the support of the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) and Forum Europe. For information and agenda, please visit: <http://www.future-identity.eu> **Twitter #futureID**
4. To view and download conference documentation and proceedings, as well as a copy of the reports focusing respectively on the **Role of Machines** and **Control of Identity**, please visit www.identity-tower.com
5. For further information, please contact:
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