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Project aims to devise Euro e-ID platform

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A project to devise a platform for European e-identity services has been launched by 11 firms, including chip companies Infineon and NXP.

The project, called '[Biopass](#)', aims to provide chips, operating systems and software that conform to European national identity document standards, the partners said in a joint statement on Wednesday.

[Infineon](#) and [NXP](#) will develop chip encryption, and aim to improve data transfer rates between chip and reader. [No European identity cards use encryption](#), according to a February study by the

European Network and Security Agency (Enisa).

Identity cards in Europe are meant to enable citizens to interact with governments more efficiently. For example, the Biopass platform is intended to meet requirements for the European Citizen Card, an identity card that allows citizens to perform such actions as filing tax returns online.

The chip operating system will be developed by smartcard company Giesecke & Devrient. The OS will use conventional internet protocols such as TCP/IP, HTTP, TLS and SOAP to transfer information.





The other companies involved in the Biopass project are Gemalto, Precise Biometrics, OKsystem, Compuwork, [STMicroelectronics](#), [CEA](#), id3 Semiconductors and Esterel.

Half of the €13m (£11.8m) funding for the project will come from the participating companies. The other half will be provided by [Catrene](#), a public-private effort to promote nanoelectronics research and development in Europe.

The project joins other European e-identity projects such as [Project Stork](#) (Secure idenTity acrOss boRders linKed), a European Union pilot project to develop interoperability for pan-European ID card use.

Privacy campaigner Guy Herbert told ZDNet UK on Thursday that the new group may be positioning its technology as a platform for the pan-European project. "I suspect this is part of a pitch for Project Stork, and that they are trying to punt their platform as the standard everyone will adopt," said Herbert.

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