

News Release:

A-Trust initiates its second European Signature Dialog (ESD): European signature providers unite to start a remarkable future-oriented collaboration.

Feb 15th 2018, Vienna (AT). Europe First! A-Trust invites CEOs and decision-makers of leading European signature- and trust service providers to gather at the second ESD event. The "Association of the European Signature Dialog" was founded to enhance networking, facilitate the exchange of information and to develop a common plan to improve the regulatory framework for Electronic Signatures and Digital Trust in Europe.

The first ESD event, which was held last year in the presence of Mr. Andrus Ansip, Vice-President of the European Commission, indicated a common lack of expertise with already approved EU Trust regulations. EU authorities expressed great interest in strengthening the cooperation with Signature Providers and asked A-Trust to develop specific industry viewpoints on focus topics. Consequently, **Michael Butz, CEO of A-Trust**, was invited to Brussels and started a Trust Awareness campaign – the Digital Trust Movement: "The annual 'European Signature Dialog' (ESD) Conference shall constitute a steady think-tank of the major European trust service providers. Together we can achieve harmonized policies on fair conditions for digital signatures and take the next important step in Europe's digital signature history."

Closely collaborating with EU authorities, ESD is building a bridge between eIDAS regulation and its cohere implementation on national levels - thereby driving an efficient cross-European eIDAS implementation framework. In view of Austria taking the chair of EU Council Presidency on July 1st 2018, A-Trust, which is based in Vienna, and the ESD aim to make the EU a world leader in Cybersecurity, Digital Trust and Electronic Signature.

Another remarkable step was yesterday's ESD conference, which united Europe's leading signature providers by rendering a future-oriented collaboration. The document includes the following guidelines:

- Enable harmonized cross-border transactions
- Increase awareness about eIDAS (electronic Identification, Authentication and Trust Services) to foster and accelerate the digital transformation of the European economy
- Promote personal data protection
- Empower European solutions for guaranteed data-security
- Develop a European Cloud Infrastructure, based on local infrastructure and European law

The importance of the ESD initiative on Feb 15th in Vienna was demonstrated by the participation of the leading European signature- and trust service providers – e.g. Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Finland – and the presence of Prof. Reinhard Posch, CIO of the Austrian Federal Government. One of the collaboration's focus will be to increase awareness about eIDAS and harmonized standards for European trust center infrastructure. 2016 eIDAS came into effect in all 28 EU member states. Thus, it is indispensable to draw special attention to regulations, which have to be harmonized in order to allow truly interoperable eID and Trust Services across Europe.

Prof. Reinhard Posch, CIO Austrian Federal Government, Austria:

“With the eIDAS regulation we all expect an important increase in use and interoperability of proactive security methods for the internet both in the public and in the private sector. Austria was ambitious to contribute to this piece of legislation to make remote signatures and eID even more visible and the signature has shown the great potential in comparison to physical cards. As mobile devices will soon be the primary access channel to information and services we see the need to further develop and push such concepts so as to actively contribute to security by design. The qualified website authentication certificates add a further security element. Even if provision is behind need, QWACs are essential for the payment as well as they already are now for the social security areas, it seems obvious that for the mobile services and APPs this offers additional trust as well as opportunities especially for European services and providers.”

Michael Butz, CEO A-Trust, Austria:

“The annual ‘European Signature Dialog’ shall constitute a steady think-tank of the major European trust service providers. Together we can achieve fair conditions and harmonized policies for digital signatures and take the next important step in Europe’s digital signature history. Europe needs clear answers to the future challenges of digitization, and we are very pleased to have this powerful joint voice. Together we want to make Europe a strong player in authentication and cybersecurity.”

Kim Nguyen, CEO D-Trust, Germany:

“The eIDAS regulation offers the unique chance of establishing a common digital trust space in Europe. The “European Signature Dialog” will be a unique opportunity to shape and promote this trust space by means of open discussion between the main European trust service providers and thus help to secure citizens and business or government services alike. D-Trust, celebrating it’s 20th anniversary in 2018 is honoured to be part of this important EU wide exchange of ideas and visions.”

Moudrick Dadashov, CEO SSC, Lithuania:

“As the reliability of eIDAS regulation is ensured by a number of 'bodies' and 'trust service providers', we know every chain is as weak as its weakest link. The synergy that the “European Signature Dialog” creates, along with existing schemes like Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, Decision No 768/2008/ of the European Parliament and of the

Council, leads us to a harmonized system of requirements to all involved 'bodies' and the level of market surveillance of products never available before."

Alfonso Carcasona, CEO Camerfirma, Spain:

"The successful implementation of the eIDAS regulation will be greatly enhanced through the setup of the "European Signature Dialog" platform. The ESD forum will become the

channel to clarify, exchange and share the different solutions and interpretation of the operational aspects of this regulation. The importance of ESD will go well beyond the initial stage of this regulatory harmonization and into the future, significantly contributing to the real existence of a unified European digital market for the trust service providers."

Pascal Rogiest, CEO LuxTrust, Luxembourg:

"European Commission's strategy for digital economy requires a seamless compatibility and user's experience of digital processes throughout Europe. Such favorable environment cannot be achieved without a genuine cooperation between the main European Trust Services Providers and the European regulatory bodies. I strongly believe that the ESD will be beneficial for the digital economy as a whole and for each of its stakeholders, because it's just about enabling a digital Europe in a win-win initiative, and it will result in stimulating digital demands. LuxTrust is proud to be part of the ESD as the eIDAS Luxembourg Qualified TSP".

Danilo Cattaneo, CEO InfoCert, Italy:

"We believe that EU has in place the most advanced regulation for digital identity and digital trust services. As of today, the common regulatory environment, together with investments in R&D, have enabled innovative Trust Service Providers like InfoCert to grow and to expand our footprint to more than 10 countries that enjoy the common regulatory basis.

In spite of this, many member states are not taking the full advantage of this favourable environment and are not consistently driving further digital signature adoption by the private sector. The 'European Signature Dialog' think tank represents a great opportunity to drive adoption by sharing best practices, technical guidelines and success stories. It is my hope that the EDS can help the EU Parliament, as well as EU member states, to successfully and rapidly achieve all objectives stated in the EU digital agenda."

Jere Vento, COO Avaintec Oy, Finland:

"ESD is an important and unique forum to influence the development of a thriving market for digital services. The legal framework for trust services and eSigning is still confusing for many companies and consumers. The purpose of eIDAS legislation is not to complicate things but rather to boost digitalisation throughout Europe. The users of these services don't care about the framework, they only care about delightful experiences and meaningful services. The EU has a chance to boost the growth of digital services or it can complicate things for European companies; but it can't change the fact that in the end, user experience always trumps everything."

A-Trust

A-Trust is an Austrian company offering services related to secure communication in the digital and mobile world. The main focus of the variety of services are confidentiality, integrity and comfort as well as the creation of secure digital signatures. The company is a qualified trust service provider conformable to eIDAS regulation. A-Trust, a company for security systems in electronic data traffic, is subject to regular controls by the Austrian Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting and Telecommunications.

<https://www.a-trust.at/>

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