

## Digital keyring congestion

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**Robert Garskamp**

*Identity Next*

While I was cueing during my latest visit to the borough office (to renew my passport), my thoughts wandered off to a topical issue. An issue that stirs emotions within (semi) government and the business sector.

This issue concerns the development of the so-called eID (electronic identity) system in the Netherlands. As you may well know, the Netherlands aims to introduce a system including a DigiD card by mid 2017 – following in the footsteps of other European countries (among others, Estonia, Belgium and Austria). Our current Minister for the Interior, Ronald Plasterk, has committed himself to this. And if the minister commits himself, he will abide by it.

If we are to 'believe' our politicians, every Dutch citizen – over the age of 14, from 2017 onwards, in phases – is to receive a DigiD card. What does this mean, exactly, I was pondering – in this case, what does it mean for municipalities? What frameworks does this DigiD card provide to these authorities? At any rate, things will not become easier. The digital keyring for citizens and businesses is congesting. Especially, since the DigiD card will probably not become a legal identity document and will need to build up its legitimacy next to already existing and legal Dutch identity documents. Not to mention its use within an increasingly globalising Europe. Moreover, pressure on municipalities is steadily increasing. The enforced digitisation initiated by the government – on shrinking budgets – and aimed at citizens is a major worry for municipalities. But also, more duties and responsibilities (including youth care, for which municipalities will be wholly accountable from 2015) do not make things any easier.

Over the past years, the failure of DigiNotar has caused headaches for municipalities and has cost them huge effort. And due to downsizing (to a more effective semi government) entailing shrinking budgets the municipalities are in proverbial deep water. These municipalities are the government's antennae as well. Currently, the citizen has very little confidence in the government. And there is no confidence that our digital identity can be protected and safeguarded either. The municipalities will need all the help they can get and provide any help they can to restore this confidence. By the way...

Before I knew, my ruminations were rudely interrupted by the buzzer and my number came up. I walked to the desk of the blissfully unaware civil servant. He really has no idea of what changes are in the pipeline for him and his colleagues.