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eEurope Smart Card Charter supports Netc@rds, a DG Information Society E-TEN Market Validation Project (Phase A) on the roll-out of Trans-European Health Care Access Facilities for Mobile Citizens

- European Commission gives Netc@rds full 'go-ahead' with euro funding
- Partners from Austria, France, Germany and Greece on behalf of national healthcare & insurance authorities
- Main Health Insurance (RAMQ) from Québec (CA) as cooperation partner
- Support from BCSS (Banque Carrefour de la Sécurité Sociale - Social Security Central Agency), Belgium.

13 September, Brussels, Belgium; The e-Europe Smart Card Charter has today (13 September 2002) officially announced its support for Netc@rds Project Phase A - the consortium that will trial to pave the way for deployment of the world's first secure health-care cross-border proof of entitlement using smart cards combined with large scale on-line services. Netc@rds follows the trails blazed during the R&D phase by the NETLINK and TRANSCARDS euro funded projects. The programme, meets head-on the objective to encourage greater mobility of citizens across all EU countries.

Designed as a smart card to be carried by citizens of the above listed Member-States the Project Phase A target population are tourists, students and workers whilst traveling or temporarily posted abroad. The card guarantees access to health care by storing or receiving the cardholders' relevant E-111 or E-128 certificate - common pan-European forms that certify an individual's right to health-care inside the E.U.

With funding now officially announced by the European Commission, Netc@rds, as a project within the scope of the E-TEN programme objectives is recognised as an important part of the Commission's overall drive to make health care services widely accessible in future to the citizens of all European Union countries via smart cards combined with IT applications.

"We know that smart cards have a huge role to play in helping the European citizens to become 'even more European'. This project not only makes their lives and traveling easier and healthier, it also demonstrates the validity of the Smart Card Charter goals of cross border usage of smart card based services. We still have a long way to go but this gateway to common European health forms is a step in the right direction." said Jan van Arkel, Co-Chairman of the e-Europe Smart Card Charter.

"The initiative is a perfect fit with our own e-Europe Smart Card Charter objectives: to contribute to pan-European smart card interoperability in the four domains the Charter covers: eGovernment, e-Payment, Healthcare and Transport, all of which are underpinned by work in the required technical

support mechanisms and will be evident in the Common Specifications, early drafts of which are available for review from eeurope-smartcards.org".

The Netc@rds programme will be managed by the Netc@rds consortium, led on a day-to-day basis by the Project Coordinator, France based Sesam-Vitale EIG. The first phase (2002-2003) is a market validation. The project aims to digitalize the E.U. paper forms (E111 & E128) either from administrative data already stored on existing national Health smart cards or through secure network downloads.

In a further Phase of the scheme, the Netc@rds Consortium could be extended to all E.U. Member States and would possibly steer the implementation, roll-out and results evaluation of large scale cross-border demonstrators.

Editorial Note

The scope of the project is focused on six elements:

- Replacement of the actual paper forms E-111 (for tourists) and E-128 (students and migrant workers) by electronic e-forms
- Implementation of network structures in selected pilot sites through which health care providers can download the necessary forms
- Implementation of systems and procedures to ensure that the services and facilities will be based on existing or on-going telecom network infrastructures combined with smart cards
- An attempt to gain consensus from the European partners on the functionality of the new procedure for the day-to-day operations in the model regions
- An attempt to gain consensus by the different actors (sickness fund organisations, health care providers and public health organisations).
- The reaching of an agreement between all involved health care system providers that stipulates the conditions for access to the utilisation of health care services in other EU-countries.

On behalf of the Ministry of Health and the national Health Fund Institutions from the participating countries, the consortium will steer the:

- Market validation
- Pilot deployment
- Socio-economical impact evaluation of large scale cross-border demonstrators

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