



The Citizen Card Concept

The Austrian Citizen Card is your Swiss Army knife for security in electronic communication with authorities and companies.

The Citizen Card offers a set of tools to communicate with authorities and companies via the Internet at least as secure as in a non-digital world.

The Citizen Card is:

- a device for the creation of electronic signatures,
- an electronic means of identification.



Electronic signatures and secrecy

If a service that requires written form (i.e., a signature) is offered via the Internet, you can use your **Citizen Card to sign electronically**.

The Citizen Card is your personal signature on the Internet.

The Citizen Card has two key pairs:

- **a key pair for the secure electronic signature** e.g., used to file an application in e-government
- **a key pair for a simple electronic signature** if no written form (personal signature) is needed or for encryption of data.

Therefore two different PINs (personal identification numbers) are needed:

- for the secure signature: **secure signature PIN**
- for the simple signature: **secrecy PIN**

Make sure to use the right PIN.

The application selects what kind of signature will be used.

Repeatedly entering a wrong PIN locks the signature card.



Security and data protection

The components used for the secure electronic signature (i.e., the signature creation device) are constantly examined against the state of the art.

The E-Government Quality Mark can be awarded for the implementation of a Citizen Card and its environment: <http://www.guetesiegel.gv.at/>.

The sector-specific personal identification number (ssPIN) guarantees a high level of data protection and rules out the risk of people shorn off all privacy.



What is the Austrian Citizen Card

The Citizen Card can be a signature card or be implemented by other technologies, such as the mobile phone signature.

A signature card integrates a processor as well as a small data memory, it is a small computer:

- In the signature card the cryptographic keys for the electronic signature are stored
- and the electronic signature is calculated.

For server-based Citizen Cards (e.g., mobile phone signature) the keys and the algorithms are implemented on a secure server.

To allow for assigning an electronic signature to a person, electronic identification is needed. This consists of:

- The **certificate** of the electronic signature
- The **identity link**

The certificate assigns the cryptographic keys to the person.

The identity link contains a so-called source personal identification number (sourcePIN). This is a permanent unique identifier to e.g. avoid confusion with equal names. Using the identity link concept unique identification is possible beyond the validity period of a certificate.

The identity link and the certificates are stored on your Citizen Card!



What do I need to use the Citizen Card

For chip card based Citizen Cards you need:

- a chip card reader
- a software "Citizen Card Environment"

To use the Citizen Card functions on your computer, you need a card reader, which connects your Citizen Card to the PC.

Suitable card readers for your Citizen Card are recommended by your certification service provider.

A software, which communicates via the card reader with the Citizen Card, is needed for your PC. This software (Citizen Card Environment) is licensed by the Republic of Austria for all citizens and is available to the citizens free of charge.

Certification service providers offer further Citizen Card Environments.



For a free licence of the Citizen Card Environment see:

<http://www.cio.gv.at/identity/>

Moreover you need a Web-Browser. The Web-Browser is the connecting link between an Internet application and the Citizen Card Environment.



To use the Citizen Card functions start the Citizen Card Environment.



The Citizen Card Environment for server-based Citizen Cards (e.g., mobile phone signature) runs on a secure server. Your PC needs only a Web-Browser.



What can I use the Citizen Card for

The Citizen Card is your key for secure electronic communication with public authorities and companies.

The following three examples stand for numerous existing and future applications:

- Login to Web-applications:
Login to FinanzOnline (online tax declarations)
Access to online banking systems
- Electronic signature on applications or contracts:
e.g., applying for a certificate of enrolment in the Central Residents Register
- Pick up of electronic notifications
e.g., electronic delivery service

For a list of e-government applications see:

<http://www.cio.gv.at/identity/>



Further questions

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The Austrian Citizen Card

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