Digitalisation creates opportunities and aims to simplify our lives. SwissID shares this vision. A single sign-on is all you need to log in to an expanding number of online portals – while still maintaining complete control over your data. Using the SwissID App as a two-factor authentication tool adds another layer of protection.

Data security and the protection of personal data are major discussion points, today. Many citizens are worried – and rightly so. Because the multitude of opportunities comes with associated risks. That’s why a Swiss digital identity solution is absolutely essential: when it comes to the security of your data, compromises are out of the question.

This SwissID booklet sheds light on electronic identity.

Have an enjoyable read.

Kind regards,
Markus Naef, CEO of the SwissSign Group
What is SwissID?

SwissID is your personal digital key to your online services.

With a single login, you have secure and easy access to an expanding number of online applications. You are always in control of your data.

- With SwissID, total transparency is guaranteed. You can decide for yourself which online services you want to share your data with.
- In your online customer portal, you can manage your data with just a few clicks and add new functionalities. Wherever and whenever you want.
- Two-factor authentication adds another layer of protection.
- Use the SwissID App to easily and securely verify your identity with your mobile phone when completing online transactions.

SwissID is free to use and is becoming more and more popular everyday – more than one million people use it today.

No SwissID yet?
At swissid.ch you can create your SwissID free of charge in just a few steps.
What do I need SwissID for?

As a user

Have you ever been tired of the large number of logins and passwords? With a single login, SwissID gives you easy and secure access to more and more online services.

- Do you want to know which data are transferred to an online service and prevent your data from being evaluated and used without your permission? With SwissID you are always on the safe side.

- Thanks to the verified identity, you can clearly identify yourself in online transactions. In the future, you will be able to sign contracts and documents electronically online.

Do you want to stay up to date?
Subscribe to the SwissID newsletter here: swissid.ch/newsletter

As an online service

Whether insurance, public authority or online shop: with SwissID, you can give your customers easy and secure access to your online services.

SwissID takes care of the identification process so you can concentrate on the important things. Your benefits are clear: consistently digital and therefore cost-effective processes.

- You know the digital identity of your counterpart
- You create trust thanks to secure identification
- Improved conversion rate thanks to simple and practical SwissID customer login
- Secure two-factor authentication as part of SwissID

Visit our website at swissid.ch and learn more about the advantages of SwissID.
How secure is SwissID?

The security of your data cannot be compromised. That’s why a Swiss solution is needed for digital identity. And this is where SwissID comes in.

Highest protection
Your personal data are given the best possible protection. They are encrypted, stored exclusively in Switzerland and are not used for commercial purposes.

Full transparency
Data sovereignty always lies with you: you decide whether you want to share data with an online service or not. You can see at any time which data you have shared, and you can withdraw your consent whenever you want.

Separate storage of data
Your personal data and transaction data are stored separately. For even greater data protection.

Data economy
Data economy is a top priority for SwissID. Only customer data necessary for the login process will be shared with an online service.

Two-factor authentication – for even more security
The uncomplicated activation of two-factor authentication via the SwissID App ensures even more security when logging in.

Who is behind SwissID?

We love to keep you safe! SwissSign Group is the issuer of SwissID and a joint venture of 20 Swiss companies with the common goal of establishing a secure digital identity in Switzerland. By 2022, more than four million citizens will be using SwissID. As a trust service provider, SwissSign also offers electronic certificates for secure data exchange.

Over two million SwissSign certificates protect websites worldwide and secure e-mail data against unwanted access. The data are stored exclusively in Switzerland and according to the highest security standards. swisssign-group.com

twitter.com/swisssign
linkedin.com/company/swisssign
The history of digital identity

445 BC
Nehemiah travels to Judea
“Let letters be given me to the governors ... that they may let me pass through,” Nehemiah the cup-bearer asked the Persian king Artaxerxes when he wanted to travel to Judea, as the Bible says. This is the first reference to ancient travel documents. Until the end of the Ancien Régime, travellers often spent a lot of money to obtain letters of protection from rulers.

1464
Passport at king’s behest
Not everyone was allowed to be a messenger of the French king Louis XI. That is why his messengers needed personal identification documents that they had to carry on them – called passports. It means “go through the door”. Soon other people also wanted such papers to prove their legal status. Historic documents from France, Northern Italy and the Swiss Confederation have been found.

1239
The registers thrive
At the southern Italian court of Emperor Frederick II, civil servants meticulously work on the oldest official register. Among other things, they certify identities for numerous subjects. A pity for historians that the 116-page paper book was burnt in 1943.

1650
Parish priests as registrars
People know each other – that was true for centuries in the municipalities of Zurich. The local rulers saved themselves the effort of requiring people to have more precise identification. The only ones who dutifully kept baptism, marriage and death registers were the reformed parish priests.

1854
Emigration to America
If a citizen of Zurich wanted to travel abroad, he/she could apply for a passport at the State Chancellery – a piece of paper that served to confirm his/her identity. Sugar-coated “fake news” from overseas and bitter poverty enticed many Zurich people to seek their fortune in the USA. The emigration wave reached a peak in 1854, as the passport lists in the Zurich State Archives show.

1861–1876
Gottfried Keller signs passports
As the first state secretary of the Canton of Zurich, Gottfried Keller’s duties included identifying citizens and issuing passports. On average, he signed about one per day, around 360 per year. The vast majority of Zurich citizens did not have a passport. However, journeymen could apply for a “traveling book”. How many people moved around without any papers remains unknown.
Europe calls for passports
In Europe there was freedom of movement until the First World War. Only for the Russian Tsarist Empire and the Ottoman Empire as well as for overseas travel did travellers take IDs with them for security reasons. Following complaints from abroad, the Swiss Confederation reluctantly launched a green passport in 1915 to replace the previous cantonal forms. It also described the shape of the face and mouth as well as the profession.

1914

1928

Passports confer rights
The pioneering idea of the biometric passport first emerged in Switzerland back in the 1920s: fingerprints could identify people beyond any doubt. But the project failed because of reservations among the population. In 1928 the Passport Ordinance came into force. From this date, the national identity card defined who was entitled to state benefits.

First red passport
The Swiss passport has only been red with a Swiss cross for 60 years. At that time, detailed information on eye colour and occupation was still given — and children were entered in their parents’ passports.

1959

2009

YES to the biometric passport
It could hardly have been closer: with 50.14 percent voting yes, the Swiss electorate approved the biometric passport. It was a mere 5,504 votes that tipped the balance. Only ten cantons said yes, including Zurich. The biometric passport has been available since 2010.

2017

SwissID begins as a joint idea
Instead of countless passwords, there will be a single secure login procedure to provide access to public and private service providers on the internet: SwissID. Swiss Post and SBB form a joint venture in May 2017 to issue it. Further companies are added too. On 28 February 2018, a consortium of 17 companies founds SwissSign Group AG, which has since been joined by three further companies.

2019

Idea of a state-approved eID
The Federal Council pushes for the creation of a state-approved, national electronic identity, or eID for short. The Federal Act on Electronic Identification Services, which is intended to create the legal framework for the eID, is approved by the National Council and the Council of States.
SwissID App

Your digital pocket knife: the SwissID App enables simple and secure two-factor authentication and an identity check via your mobile phone.

Your benefits at a glance:

Greater security thanks to two-factor authentication
In addition to the password, the SwissID App increases the security of your SwissID account. Simply confirm the login request on your mobile phone and you are logged in.

Simple and secure identity check
With the SwissID App, you can identify yourself quickly, easily and securely via your mobile phone anytime, anywhere. Simply scan your valid identity document and record a video of your face.

You can find out more about the SwissID App at swissid.ch/app

Download now for free: swissid.ch/app
What is the difference between SwissID and eID?

SwissID is already a reality. In addition, the Federal Council is pushing ahead with the establishment of a national and state-approved electronic identity, or eID for short. SwissSign Group is also making preparations for this. It is creating the conditions to ensure that users will also be able to use their SwissID as an eID in the future.

The four biggest misconceptions about the eID:

“The eID is a digital passport”

No, the eID does not entitle you to travel or cross borders. However, it offers the possibility to identify yourself securely on the internet.

“The eID is issued by the private sector”

No. The data are issued by the state – and therefore also the eID. Key stakeholders in the private sector merely provide the technological basis and enable simple and secure use of the eID in everyday life.

“The data are collected, evaluated and monetised by private individuals”

That is not true. As with SwissID, data protection is also the top priority for the eID. The collection, evaluation or monetisation of data is prohibited under the eID Act.

“Anonymous use of online services will no longer be possible”

Anonymous use will continue to be possible. This is because the principle of data economy applies: eID data are not shared every time SwissID is used. Only data necessary for the login process are shared.

Want to know more about this topic? Take a look at the new Digital Day magazine.

mag.digitaltag.swiss
Did you know?

4.4 billion ...
... According to the Global Digital Report 2019, this is the number of people who were online at the beginning of 2019. On average for 6 hours and 42 minutes a day.

123456 ...
“123456” was the most commonly used password in North America and Western Europe in 2018. This is the exact opposite of a secure password.

Even identical twins ...
... don’t have identical fingerprints. They can also be clearly and unmistakably identified biometrically using fingerprints.

6 to 10 logins ...
... is the average number for users. Some have more than 20. It is easy to lose track.

Online time ...
Every 60 seconds, 16 million text messages are sent, 46,200 images are posted on Instagram and people swipe to the right or left almost 1 million times on Tinder. In 1917, there were 1.7 billion people in the world. Today, almost 1.34 billion are active on Facebook.

How do you recognise a secure website?
When surfing, make sure that the URL is called up correctly and that “https” is visible in the browser line.
If a padlock is also displayed in the navigation bar, the page is trustworthy – the connection is protected, and your personal data cannot be intercepted.
“I have one – because data protection is important to me”