

**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

from: Presidency
to: Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum
Subject: Minimum common standards for national identity cards

Introduction

1. The Presidency wishes to thank the Commission for the excellent paper it has produced. In the Hague Programme the European Council invited the Council, the Commission and the Member States to prepare, inter alia, minimum standards for national ID cards, taking into account ICAO standards.

Article 6 Committee

2. The Article 6 Committee should be invited to draft common security standards for national identity cards taking into account the achievements in relation to the EU passport and in the ICAO framework. In particular it should be focused on the following areas:
 - Use of biometrics;
 - Common standards for the card interface;
 - Measures (including Enhanced Access Control and PKI) which may be used to ensure that data stored on Identity Cards is appropriately protected but can be read by other Member States.

It would be helpful if a first draft of their conclusions could be available as soon as possible and at the latest by the end of March 2006, in order to allow swift implementation by Member States.

Next Steps

3. In parallel the Presidency proposes that discussions should be started in other areas where the introduction of common minimum standards would seem important:
 - the security of enrolment processes;
 - the security of issuing processes;
 - how best to progress work on digital signatures (where an EU standard already exists);
 - how best to allow for exchange of information on issues of common interest, including anti-fraud measures taken in different Member States and any significant changes in the format of national Identity Cards.

Member States are invited to add any other issues they think should be considered in further discussions.
