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## **A new passport for Belgium in 2021: Zetes remains in charge**

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**Brussels, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – Seven years on from winning the contract to personalise Belgian passports, Zetes has been asked to continue in its role as a key partner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The company has been chosen to produce the next-generation passports, whose official launch is planned for 2021. This is a Build, Operate & Transfer (BOT) contract, meaning that Zetes is responsible for the initial investments, and is then paid according to the number of documents issued. The term of the contract is seven years, renewable up to three times for a one-year period.**

### **A fully revised passport**

In addition to a completely revamped design, the new Belgian passport will also have its share of technological innovations. The information page will be made of polycarbonate and will include several features providing even more effective protection against counterfeiting. Amongst other things, this page will have a transparent window with a dual decoding lens, and will include a contactless chip containing the biometric data (picture and fingerprints), amongst other things. Image Perf technology will be another additional security feature. Some data will also be encoded in a Datamatrix code.

### **Extension of Zetes' assignments: PKI ICAO and N-PKD**

Having extended its expertise and its portfolio of solutions in recent years, Zetes is now also able to execute herself part 2 and part 3 of the tender for the production of the Belgian electronic passport. These parts involve setting up the public key infrastructure (PKI) in accordance with the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the National Public Key Directory (N-PKD). The N-PKD contains the certificates of passports issued by countries other than Belgium, allowing them to be read by the Belgian border authorities when travellers from those countries cross the Belgian border. The ICAO PKI will be used to issue digital certificates for Belgian electronic passports, and will be handled by the company's ZetesConfidens division.

### **Extremely urgent applications: four-hour delivery**

The booklets personalised by Zetes will be produced by [Thales](#). The contract also covers the supply of temporary passports to Belgian embassies. These have also been redesigned to enhance security despite the personalisation that must be done locally.

The delivery of passports to municipalities is handled by the ZetesExpress department, which also delivers the eID cards and driving licences. If the delivery time is five days for normal applications, it can be reduced to four hours for extremely urgent applications.

### **A benchmark document**

Alain Wirtz, CEO of Zetes, says: *"The ambition of the Belgian authorities, which we share, is to provide Belgian citizens with one of the most secure passports in the world, incorporating cutting-edge technologies. We are convinced that this new document will become an international benchmark. We are very proud of the close working relationship we have developed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the years, and we can't wait to work with them on the launch of this project."*

In 2019, around 550,000 Belgian electronic passports were issued.

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### **For more information**

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### **About Zetes**

Zetes is a technology company specialising in supply chain optimisation and citizen identification solutions. Our [Supply Chain Solutions](#) help companies achieve agility, visibility and traceability across their connected supply chain. Our [People Identification division](#) provides public authorities and supranational institutions with solutions to enable authentication of citizens in view of the issuing of secure ID and travel documents and the creation of national registers or voters' lists.

Zetes is headquartered in Brussels and has more than 1,300 employees in 22 countries across EMEA with a revenue of €270.2 million in 2019. In 2017, Zetes became a subsidiary of the Panasonic

Corporation. For more information visit [www.zetes.com](http://www.zetes.com) or subscribe to our newsletter. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

### **About Zetes' government solutions**

The People ID division of Zetes provides secure solutions that allow governments to accurately identify their populations and satisfy the strictest international requirements concerning the issuing of documents and the organising of democratic elections. Zetes has more than 15 years' experience in the implementation of sensitive projects for governments and supranational organisations. Zetes' government solutions are characterised by reliability, combined with flexibility and operational capability. Through this approach, citizens are secure in their ability to prove their identity and exercise democratic rights.