



DIGITIZATION



The implementation of the electronic certificate gives a new impetus in the digital transformation of

We speak with the member of the Government's Digital Transformation Department, Marta Osuna

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More and more times we turn to the Internet to be able to make any type of transaction, whether it's accessing our bank account, making an online purchase, validating a series of data, etc. A digital transformation in every sense, in which the era of papers and administrative procedures is left behind to give way to one of the most popular tools in recent years: the electronic certificate. To find out more about this and learn about the impacts it has had and is having on Andorran society, we are talking today with Marta Osuna, member of the Government's Digital Transformation Department.

Driven by the Secretary General of Jordi Casadevall, together with the help of Michael Molné, the electronic certificate was born in 2014 with the philosophy of «a single user and a single password to be able to authenticate on web

pages or in applications», so we can make the fact of having 50 different users and passwords go away. As Osuna herself relates, this certificate promoted in Andorra is «very different» from the one launched in other countries such as Spain, since it is hosted in the cloud: «This means that from any device and place we can accredit ourselves, in addition to guaranteeing full security and protection», explains the interviewee, assuring that «if you download the certificate in a software you are the only owner of your public and private key, while if it is hosted in the cloud the keys are protected on a secure server».

Subscriber, entity and sender. These are the three factors that come into play when issuing an electronic certificate and that guarantee its «indissoluble commitment». While the first refers to the person who will make use of this tool, the entity goes through the Certification Body of the Public Administration of Andorra (ECAPA), which in

turn responds to the Office of Electronic Trust Services (OSCEPA). Finally, the figure of the sender is essential, the person who knows that any document that comes electronically signed or any authentication that is done with a certificate issued by ECAPA «is synonymous with trusting that the person who wants to enter it is really him». If the entity of this user is not verified, it will not be possible to issue the qualified certificate, which differs from an advanced one precisely because of this aforementioned authentication.

The possibilities offered by the electronic certificate are very varied, as mentioned by Osuna. From entering the Health or Mobility appli-

Some 35,000 people already have their electronic certificate in the Principality

cations, or the websites of the CASS or any other banking entity; until carrying out the declaration of personal income tax. «There are many platforms that are integrating Government authentication in their companies», she says, giving the example that many of them even ask for the integration manuals to make their workers sign the payrolls with the electronic certificate. In addition, it is important to emphasize that «once you sign a document electronically, if someone modifies it, you are immediately notified of the place from which the change was made». This is a casuistry that occurs due to its unfalsifiable component and which guarantees «the integrity of the document», as well as its legal validity, which is given whenever and wherever it is in electronic format. «A manual contract you have to sign page by page, while in the electronic one with just one signature you are already signing all the content», says Osuna. This also highlights the non-repudiation featu-

re, which assures you «that the signatory will not be able to say that the signature is not his», a fact that gives «a lot of confidence to the people involved in the contract».

Getting here, a complicated path

About 35,000 people, both residents and non-residents, already have their electronic certificate in Andorra. This is how the interviewee shows it, who assures that it is «brutal penetration», especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, when «the need to interact online because the face-to-face method disappears» is created. Osuna also remembers when, at the time this country project was conceived, the sponsors were FEDA, Andorra Telecom, Crèdit Andorrà, SAAS and CASS, while now even the municipalities are starting to have their own electronic headquarters. «Right now there is no other entity apart from the Government that issues qualified certificates», she emphasizes.

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To be able to reach this handful of people, the department's team focused especially on the elderly group, possibly the most vulnerable in relation to this whole digital wave. «**The way to convey to them the need to have an electronic certificate was through talks**», explains Osuna, who contacted the Crèdit Andorrà Foundation to organize different workshops to highlight the four things essentials that might be necessary: enter the Health APP to have access to your medical history, access the pri-

vate CASS, enter the citizen's portal to see if there is any pending procedure to verify and sign documents. «**They all had a real interest in learning, knowing and feeling useful when seeing how the electronic certificate worked**», says Osuna, emphasizing that the most important thing to highlight for all of them was remembering what your ID and password were.

And what about young people? Have they received this change well? According to the member of the department, it seems so: «**It is usually more difficult for young people to travel to create their certificate, so now we have also launched a platform through which you can make the request remotely**». However, this remote identification tool is also a must for companies from outside the country who want to bid here, as this way «**they will not have to travel to Andorra to request the electronic certificate**».

Now, the next step is clear: get the certificate to the rest of the people in the Principality. «**With the reform of the Administrative Code, a period of three years has been given for companies and municipal administrations to adapt all their procedures and for communication between the two to be all digital**», mentions Osuna. However, the deadline has already passed «**because there was obviously no time**», but as more applications require the use of certificate authentication, «**people will have no choice but to join this transformation**», evidences the interviewee. In addition, she assures that the objective «**is for all administrative transactions on paper to disappear, but this cannot happen overnight, because there is a sensitive population that does not understand the certificate process**».

However, the most vertebral complication that has had to be faced are the complaints about the cyberattacks that have happened in recent months to several citizens of the country. According to Osuna, the Department of Digital Transformation

came up with an approach to avoid endangering the identity of the people who use the certificate, at which point a «**second security factor was implemented when accessing there**». A measure that has no other intention than to «**limit the danger of cyber attacks and reduce them to the maximum**» and that, as the interviewee states, «**guarantees to 99.9% that there cannot be a direct attack against the accreditation of a person on a platform**».

Government's firm commitment

Osuna makes it very clear: the current Executive's commitment to digital transformation is firm. A bet that goes through the creation of the Secretary of State for Digital Transformation and Telecommunications, headed by Marc Rossell, and from which the department in which Osuna works, the Cybersecurity Agency and OSCEPA arise. «**OSCEPA is the cornerstone of all this digital transformation change, but it cannot work alone and needs the help of other sectors**», says the interviewee.

The big question comes, however, when we ask ourselves why if the electronic certificate arrived in 2014 it has not been until now when

The Government launched a series of workshops to raise awareness among the elderly

Cyber attacks are one of the biggest problems we have had to deal with



► The member of the Department of Digital Transformation, Marta Osuna.

it has started to be rolled out. Again, Osuna has the answer: «**We needed a Digital Transformation Department that would give it impetus and change the procedures towards an electronic administration**». However, she is clear that everything is a matter of time, since these types of processes «**are never easy**», highlighting «**the need for more resources to continue growing this transformation**».

The possible entry of Andorra into the European Union is another of the issues to be taken into account in this circuit of digital transformation. «**Since we are not part of the EU, we are not part of the European Union Trusted Lists (EUTL), but we are working so that we can be recogni-**

zed in some way», she explains.

Looking to the future

Two of the next projects that contemplate the implementation of the electronic certificate are the creation of an interoperability bus and a digital wallet. While in the first the aim is to maximize the «**communication between companies and organizations when it comes to managing according to which procedures**», in the second the aim is to ensure that we can have all our credentials on our mobile phones. «**Through a QR code you will be able to digitally have everything from your DNI to your driver's license**», says Marta Osuna. ≡

The digital transformation is an increasingly palpable evidence within our society and proof of this is everything mentioned throughout these two pages. I must confess that I have always been quite suspicious of all these changes, perhaps due to complete inexperience despite being born on the threshold of the 2000s, and I have never gotten used to this social abyss that seems to trap us every day a little more and which, depending on which cases, also renders us useless. Or is this not precisely the goal of the arrival of artificial intelligence?

You can already imagine that when I had the opportunity to confront this issue and talk carefully with Marta, everything seemed to me like words from another galaxy. The electronic certificate had always been a tool that seemed very distant to me, despite being fully aware that more and more companies and government institutions were making use of it. This is the usual thing, un-

Viewpoint

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JOURNALIST

We welcome digitization

til things touch you very closely you don't give them the importance and magnitude they really deserve. Yes, I was also aware that this was a tool that would save me a lot of administrative procedures and headaches, but what do you want me to tell you... we human beings like to complicate our lives by nature and there is no transformation digital that denies it.

After a pleasant, fluent conversation in which Marta resolved many more uncertainties than I had at the beginning, it was inevitable to take the next step: issue my own electronic certificate and let myself be carried by the digital maelstrom of that I disowned at first. And surprisingly, or maybe not so much, everything was much easier and faster than I could have imagined. Perhaps it was also influenced by the predisposition of a person devoted to his work, with the illusion of bringing to everyone a project in which she believed from the beginning and in which she continues to believe to-



► File image.

day. And what do you want me to tell you, Marta is well equipped and capable.

And voilà, in a matter of minutes and a couple of validations in my email, I already had my electronic certificate ready to face any type of administrative procedure. Alt-

though I haven't been able to get it up and running yet, I'm already thinking about the first gap I'll drop into with it. A query in some application, a personal income tax return that never hurts to do it... there are so many possibilities and they were all so well sold by Marta, that now I even doubt it. And I who had always remained in a position of total hater regarding these issues...

I think that these two pages are a more than sufficient sample to encourage the citizens of the country to take the step of throwing themselves into the electronic certificate. It took me a while to see it, but yes, indeed the comfort it brings is so great that it would be a big mistake not to do it. And if you happen to meet people like Marta, I can tell you that the experience will be much more satisfying. ≡