

News release

Swiss startup Procivis launches blockchain-backed e-government platform

Bern, 25 January 2017

Procivis, a new venture founded by Swiss blockchain entrepreneur Daniel Gasteiger, has come out of stealth mode to present its proof of concept for a blockchain-backed e-government platform at today's Microsoft public sector digitization practice day in Bern. To design its services, the company will collaborate closely with Estonian e-government experts.

Procivis was launched with the aim to develop and offer an “e-government as a service” solution that draws on Estonia's leading experience in the field, combines it with the strengths of emerging blockchain technology and builds on Switzerland's trusted values. At today's event in Bern, company founder Daniel Gasteiger is presenting the proof of concept for a mobile phone-based e-voting application running on the Procivis platform that allows tamper-proof voting for citizens.

E-government services are a promising example how blockchain technology can be applied to areas beyond crypto currencies. While e-voting is being presented at today's event as one possible application to make use of Procivis' secure digital identity management, the platform will be designed to run a government-curated app store that can offer the full range of public administration services, including tax filings, land registry or commercial registry.

Company founder Daniel Gasteiger said about the motivation to start Procivis: “Learning about the level of digitization of the public sector in Estonia left me deeply impressed, especially when looking at the state of digitization in Western Europe, including Switzerland. By bringing Estonia's leading e-government experts on board and adding our blockchain experience, our aim is to create a platform that can serve as the future electronic backbone of democracies across the globe.”

Kaspar Korjus, strategic advisor to Procivis and Managing Director of Estonia's “e-Residency” program said: “I've visited most of the emerging digital societies around the globe, and they all experience similar struggles. Procivis has a unique opportunity to build a solution that will help overcome these hurdles, boost the digitization of entire countries and empower its citizens. It's a bold ambition, and I'm excited to be part of it.”

Along with its proof of concept, Procivis is presenting a study coordinated by Prof. Dr. Alexander Trechsel of Zurich-based consulting firm Xupery, which draws a comparison between the evolution of Switzerland and Estonia as digital societies over the past twenty years. The report is co-authored by political scientists Dr. Maarit Ströbele and Nele Leosk.

The study highlights the necessary elements for a successful implementation of e-government applications and addresses issues often associated with low user adoption rates. According to the report, the successful delivery of digital public services begins with full political support for enabling technologies, relies on the fostering of strong public-private partnerships to develop efficient and user centered services in an iterative manner and, finally, requires a clear strategy and timeline to introduce digital identities for every citizen.

Prof. Alexander Trechsel said about the outcome of the study: “The study has revealed the particular strengths of Estonia’s approach, which made the country a poster child for e-government. Our research also shows that, despite having the reputation of being one of the most innovative countries, Switzerland so far hasn’t sufficiently seized the opportunities of digitization in the public sector.”

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About Procivis

Procivis is a Swiss venture founded in autumn 2016 by blockchain entrepreneur Daniel Gasteiger. The company is developing an “e-government as a service” platform to enable the digitization of societies and the provision of online public services across the globe. Procivis has presented its proof of concept for the secure delivery of public services using blockchain technology in January 2017 and is currently raising seed funding.

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