

WHITE PAPER

Basic facts about Civil Registry II

Registration in the « Civil Registry » is the result of a declarative process carried out before a **duly appointed person** holding the qualification of Civil Registry Officer (CRO). This declarative process **is likely** to be subject to administrative constraints, such as:

- the declarant may be required to provide the CRO with an identity document (passport, identity card)
- a birth certificate issued by a doctor may be required.

Nevertheless, **no** obligation should prevent a CRO from recording and registering the declaration of a birth. **The CRO** should, if necessary, visit the place of delivery or the dwelling of the newborn in order to be fully convinced that the birth has taken place.

There are virtually 3 means of making a registration in the Civil Registry:

1

=> The traditional situation is when the registration and issuance of the certificate are carried out **simultaneously**, under the supervision of a Civil Registry officer.¹

2

=> However, the registration and issuance of the certificate do not always take place at the same time under the supervision of a Civil Registry officer. Let's assume that the issuance of the certificate is not physically possible upon registration, either because that feature is not available to the Officer or because the system is temporarily out of order.

3

Therefore, the declarant has to come back to the CRO, who will hand him over the document directly or later on by means of a channel to be determined. This obviously raises problems with the identification the declarant and with the channel's reliability. It can also trigger a legal problem, since a Civil Registry certificate can only be issued by a Civil Registry officer.

=> Finally, a good policy meant to facilitate the declarative process could be that of creating a transitional stage involving trusted third parties; such third parties are considerably more numerous than CROs and are closer to citizens (village leader, teachers, health workers). Such leaders would collect the declarations and send them to a CRO who, trusting the quality of the leader's work, performs the registration and issues the certificate.²

There are several reasons why the procedure of declaring a birth and the certification thereof has been susceptible to fraud:

Either it was not possible to give the declaration on time and making a false statement or forging a third-party's document is less expensive for the citizen than going through the process of obtaining a duplicate of the birth certificate.

Or the declarer's parents wish to make the child seem older in order to send him/her to school or for any other reason...

¹ As far as the CRO's equipment is concerned, there are various factors involved: electronic means or paper registers, the existence or lack of a telecom connection etc.;

² This case is similar to the second one: the issuance of the birth certificate is made separately from the declaration.

The means that would reduce the structural vulnerability of the procedure are:

Computerisation is obviously a key focus. Unless one's goal is to become a legend among intelligence agencies, the reason one would create an identity for a child is unclear; criminals don't have such a capacity of anticipation. Computerisation can restrict registration to the legal deadline for making the declaration.

Duplicates of birth certificates, court hearings, have been evidently established to impose certain limits and exert control over the process; the existence of such procedures eliminates a great deal of the advantages of computerisation.

The **traceability** of declarants and of the persons performing the registration is desirable: in case an offence is committed, it is possible to trace back the people involved and this serves as a deterrent when accompanied by criminal sanctions.

The **certificate/receipt** must be protected; 2 approaches are possible:

- An approach in which the sites managing the process are interconnected: these sites perform a direct exchange of civil registry information, which eliminates the weak link of routing the document.³
- A 2D-DOC approach that secures the document and eliminates documentary forgery, but does not handle identity thefts. It is still possible to obtain an extract of a third party's birth certificate if its identity is stolen.

³ *Method contemplated among the Member States of the International Commission on Civil Status*



EveLiN is a range of products developed by Digitech to meet the demand for records management software and vital statistics (Civil Registry and Vital Statistics) of its international customers.

A renowned software publisher and leader in French civil registry software, Digitech has been adapting its products to the international market for the past 10 years. A regular subcontractor of brand integrators who resorted to its expertise, Digitech made in 2015 the decision to edit a software suite fully dedicated to the worldwide market of software labelled "Civil Registry and Vital Statistics."

ZAC Saumaty Séon - BP 173
21, avenue Fernand SARDOU
13 322 MARSEILLE cedex 16

+33 (0)4 95 06 94 00

 info@digitech.fr