

New government to scrap ID cards

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In a [previous post](#), we said that ID cards were a key point of difference between the main parties. Both the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives pledged to scrap them, while Labour would have continued with their plans to introduce them.

The Coalition Agreement between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats published today states that:

The parties agree to implement a full programme of measures to reverse the substantial erosion of civil liberties under the Labour Government and roll back state intrusion. This will include: -

- *The scrapping of ID card scheme, the National Identity register, the next generation of biometric passports and the Contact Point Database (we discussed what was meant by “the next generation of biometric passports” in an [earlier posting](#)).*

Two of our experts, who are part of the [LSE Identity Project](#) have warmly endorsed the decision to finally scrap this “ineffective, misinformed and expensive folly”:

Dr Gus Hosein says, “It has taken a while, but politicians have finally appreciated that these proposals for identity cards were not going to provide an effective solution to issues of identity and identification in the UK. This new consensus over identity cards was hard won and was never inevitable. Some within Government went after us in ways that threatened our jobs and reputations and yet, despite these attacks, they failed to convince ordinary citizens that their approach to identity management was a good idea”.



Dr Edgar A. Whitley adds, “It has taken many people many years to convince policy-makers of what we hope will be a new and accepted wisdom: identity policy is hard, technology policy is challenging, and berating experts who disagree with you is not a good idea. The challenges for an effective identity policy, especially for online interactions, have not gone away and the LSE Identity Project looks forward to working with the new government in this important area, contributing its international expertise in identity policy to the development of effective, citizen-centric identity assurance”.



Edgar and Gus have recently published the book “Global challenges for identity policies” where they analyse the UK’s Identity Scheme in a global context, see <http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?PID=281176> for more details