



# **Digitising the European system for university accreditation.**

How EQAR and walt.id used Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) to digitise university accreditations and build a trust infrastructure for the emerging European digital identity ecosystem.

## About EQAR

The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) is the official register of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Educational Area, listing those that work in line with an agreed common framework (the European Standards and Guidelines, ESG), to ensure the quality of higher education institutions and study programmes.

Since 2018, EQAR has managed the [Database of External Quality Assurance Results \(DEQAR\)](#). DEQAR enables direct access to the reports and decisions of EQAR-registered agencies on higher education institutions in EHEA.

## The Challenge

When EQAR learned about European Commission's plan to establish a new digital identity ecosystem (EBSI) and its initial focus on the education sector (e.g. university diplomas, micro credentials, student IDs), they understood that Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) is a great opportunity to make their existing centralised registries and databases easily accessible to stakeholders in the education field in another way.

EBSI is based on contemporary standards for decentralised identification ([W3C DIDs](#)) and digital credentials ([W3C Verifiable Credentials](#)). Education diplomas are a specific type of verifiable credential (VC) in EBSI. Likewise, external quality assurance or accreditation are also represented as a digitally-signed VC that authorise specific higher education institutions to issue education diplomas.

EQAR thus wanted to ensure that quality assurance results recorded in DEQAR can be made available as EBSI and W3C-compatible Verifiable Credentials.

# The Solution

EQAR quickly discovered that they needed help to adopt Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) due its technical complexity and fast-changing environment (e.g. standards, regulations). At the same time, its use case is fairly simple and straight-forward: issue a single type of VC, without any storage or verification implemented at EQAR's side.

EQAR chose walt.id as a partner because their SSIkit fulfills the following criteria:

- *open-source, Apache 2.0 License, no lock-in effects*
- *eIDAS, ESSIF and GDPR-compliance*
- *solution that can be deployed on EQAR's own cloud infrastructure*
- *ease of deployment and no excessive overhead*
- *access to an experienced developer team and high quality documentation*

# The Results

EQAR set up their identity and credentialing infrastructure based on walt.id's open source products (SSI Kit), which proved to be an easy task. Also, walt.id's experts offered support throughout the project implementation: from planning to data modelling and the definition of credential templates to the actual implementation and integration.

All of this allowed *EQAR* to automatically issue EBSI-compliant Verifiable Accreditations based on its comprehensive DEQAR dataset. .

Apart from the fact that, walt.id's experts coached *EQAR*'s team and helped them understand SSI's impact on their organisation and goals, *EQAR*'s main benefit was the ability to deploy a solution very swiftly and economically under the DEQAR CONNECT project, creating an important bridge between EQAR and SSI. EQAR now has a scalable solution, ready for future wide adoption of EBSI by European higher education institutions as well as for linking DEQAR data to other SSI ecosystems.

Most importantly, the project turned into a partnership in which *EQAR* is contributing to walt.id's open source development.

*"The SSI Kit was very easy to deploy. With the clear REST API we could swiftly integrate it with our system. The walt.id team was always eager to share their expertise and help us figure out the details."*

**Colin Tück**

Director  
EQAR

**Ready to get started?**

[Contact us](#)

... or [get in touch](#) with EQAR experts [Aleksandra Zhivkovikj](#) or [Colin Tück](#).



[walt.id](https://www.walt.id) develops Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) solutions for businesses and governments across industries.

Developers and organisations rely on our open source products as an easy and fast way to use Self-Sovereign Identity - including Europe's new digital identity ecosystem based on the EU Blockchain and the EU SSI Framework (ESSIF).

To ensure client's success, our industry-leading experts provide holistic services including from conception over the implementation of pilots and production system to enterprise support and managed cloud services.

For more information visit [www.walt.id](https://www.walt.id) or get in touch via [mail](mailto:info@walt.id).



EQAR's mission is to further the development of the European Higher Education Area by increasing the transparency of quality assurance provision in Europe through providing clear and reliable information. It aims to enhance trust among quality assurance agencies, higher education institutions, students and other stakeholders and thus maintain the trust and confidence in the European higher education.

Visit us at <https://www.eqar.eu> or contact us via mail at [colin.tueck@eqar.eu](mailto:colin.tueck@eqar.eu) and [aleksandra.zhivkovikj@eqar.eu](mailto:aleksandra.zhivkovikj@eqar.eu)