



# The potential of the e-Signatures in the energy sector: Factcheck 2024



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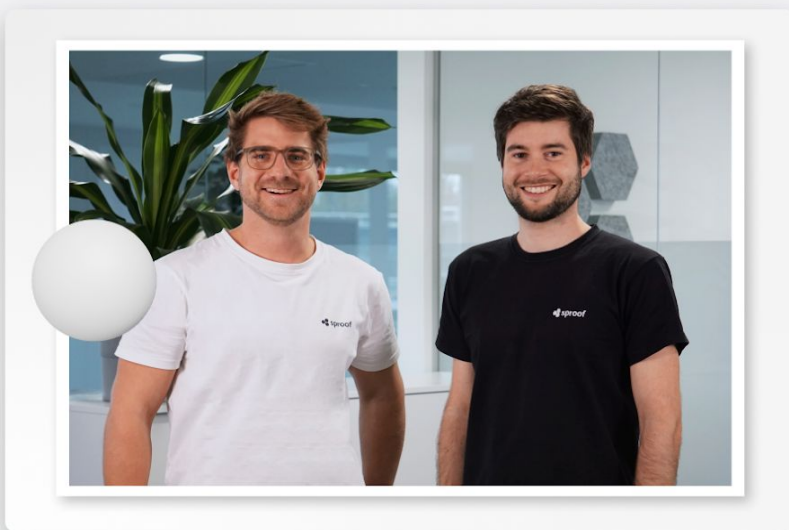


Dear Readers,

We are delighted that this guide has found its way to you. Behind every action is a motivation. Your motivation to engage with digital signatures can be diverse. You may want to become more "digital" in your company, have a mandate regarding the protection of your business data, or are basically looking for ways to make important business processes more efficient.

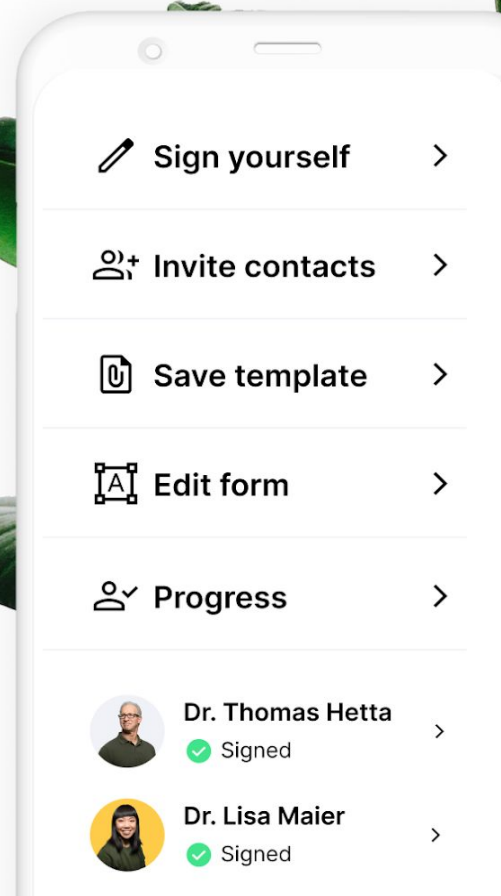
Our motivation is to provide our users with an all-in-one platform for legally valid, data-secure and efficient signature processes in the European business area.

This guide has been written with the aim of providing all readers with the essentials of digital signature workflows in the corporate context without any frills. We welcome any business person who is interested in digitalisation "Made in Europe for Europe". We hope that this guide will provide you with valuable information, food for thought or help you get started with the introduction of a signature platform.



Dr. Clemens Brunner | CEO & Co Founder of sproof

Dr. Fabian Knirsch | CEO & Co Founder of sproof



## Why sign digitally now?

There is hardly a company, regardless of size and industry, that has not benefited or would not benefit from the introduction of digital signatures. The digital alternative to handwritten signatures is regulated and recognized by law in Europe and is considered equivalent to paper signatures when used appropriately.

Digital signatures are now also used by large companies with strict IT policies or in the public sector. The advantages for companies in various sectors, but also for private individuals, are manifold.

**Accelerate your approval processes, save measurable resources.**



## Why do energy providers & grid operators benefit from the digitized signature process?

A sector of superlatives. Of great importance for the basic supply of citizens. Influential organizations. High process effort, both within the company itself and with partners, suppliers, end customers and contractual partners.

Signing documents and contracts is an essential step in almost all processes.

The dynamics on the one hand and the high demands on process security and innovation pressure in the energy industry on the other can no longer withstand the signature with a ballpoint pen. Electronic signatures are replacing handwritten signatures in more and more processes.

In addition to the measurable acceleration of contractual processes, security, data and identity protection are the key factors in choosing the right e-signature platform.

As a 100% European provider, we have focused on organizations with the highest demands on data security & compliance and offer a 100% GDPR and eIDAS\* compliant solution.

With sproof sign you digitize your entire signature processes:

This means

1. increased process speed,
2. less paper, printing and logistics,
3. simplified collaboration with external parties and customers.

*\*eIDAS regulates the handling and design of electronic signature processes throughout the EU.*



# Use cases of an all-in-one e-Signature platform

# 03

An electronic signature platform should be able to cover all possible signature processes that can occur in a corporate context. The most important use cases are described here. sproof sign has specialized in the comprehensive representation of all common use cases.

## Sign digitally yourself

The documents are located on your "digital desk" or in your digital dashboard, which gives you an overview of all your documents. You can now decide for yourself which signature standard (advanced or qualified) you want to use to sign one or more documents. No scanning, no trip to the printer, no paper.

## Obtain digital signatures externally

Obtain important signatures from multiple parties according to the desired standard and monitor the progress of your signature processes at any time. The parties receive a signature invitation via e-mail and can easily sign with legal validity.

In addition, one platform helps you to design all signature processes and workflows intelligently. sproof sign is unique in the handling of qualified electronic signature processes and has integrated all governmental and non-governmental providers (e.g. D-Trust, ID-Austria, mobile signature, etc.).

## Define and save defined signature workflows

A signature workflow is a set of terms and conditions that you will find in your typical signature processes:

- Desired signature standard
- Desired signature position
- Completion date
- Form fields

## Sign digitally in a team

You work in a team or lead a team. The digital signature creates security and conformity for all signature processes that you want to handle internally. There is an admin for each team to control the signature quota, members and special settings.

## Integrations & API

You can use sproof sign 1) as an add-on in your usual Office tools. You can find an overview of the tools in which sproof sign is integrated [here](#). 2) You can also handle your signature processes via the well-documented API interface. Moreover, you can implement sproof sign directly (e.g., as an iFrame) into your own web solution. [Learn more.](#)



### **Highly secure cloud, ready to use immediately**

sproof sign is a web-based solution for digitally signing contracts and works on all mobile devices (desktop, smartphone, tablet). sproof sign is based in Austria and all data is backed up exclusively in data centers within the EU. We guarantee GDPR compliance at all levels, both with us and with our subcontractors. We offer these guarantees to our customers in a data processing agreement (DPA), which is based on the EU standard contractual clauses, thus also offering the highest level of legal security.

### **Interfaces & existing systems**

- sproof sign can be seamlessly integrated into your existing systems.
- Sign directly in common tools such as MS Teams, Word, Google Drive etc. ([list of all integrations](#)).
- Single Sign On
- Simple API for customized use cases. ([API documentation](#))

### **Document Storage & Progress Monitoring**

Important contracts are stored in a central location in a clear, highly secure and encrypted manner. Nevertheless, documents can be accessed at any time and from any location. In addition, the progress of the signature processes can be viewed at any time and reminders can be sent if required.

### **Qualified (QES) and advanced (FES) electronic signing including identification.**

sproof sign supports all types of electronic signatures (simple, advanced, and qualified) according to the eIDAS regulation, as well as many other globally widespread signature standards (e.g., FDA Compliance).

### **Batch Signing: Sign Contracts Simultaneously**

With the batch signature, countless documents can be digitally & legally signed in a single operation. An enormous time saving.

### **Document Portfolio: Send Out Contracts Simultaneously**

Digitally compile multiple documents and send them out together for signing. This saves a lot of time for both you and the recipients.

### **Corporate Branding, Company Stamp & Signature Styles**

Whether you are a large team or a single user. In sproof sign, you can store your own company logo as a company stamp. You can also create various signature styles for different purposes.



### **eID Hub: Obtain Signatures Across Europe**

The qualified signature is legally equivalent to a handwritten signature throughout Europe. sproof sign, with its unique interface, allows the signing of contracts with various qualified signature providers. This is a significant advantage in the procurement and issuance of legally valid signatures. Click here for an overview of all integrated [trust service providers](#)

### **Verify Signatures & Download Audit Reports**

You can check the validity of the applied electronic signatures directly in sproof sign with a click of the mouse. You can also download a verification report for each signature run and see who signed with which certificate and when.

### **Team Management & Delegation Rules**

sproof sign enables straightforward user and rights management for individuals within a plan. Additionally, signature quotas can be centrally managed, and various crucial settings can be configured for the entire plan.

### **Support & Academy**

sproof sign is known for its fast and flexible support. The sproof sign Academy is a free training portal that helps you and your employees get off to a quick start.

### **Transparent pricing with no hidden costs:**

Our goal is to be the unrivaled best choice when searching for a suitable signature provider. We prioritize fairness and transparency, two values that shape our corporate culture. These values also guide the pricing of our solution in the enterprise segment.

"IMPORTANT CHANGES BEGIN WITH  
A SIGNATURE."





## Case Study

# IKB – Innsbrucker Kommunalbetriebe AG

# 05

### Digitization implemented easily and quickly

#### How the Innsbrucker Kommunalbetriebe introduce spoof digital signatures across the company in no time

The logo for IKB (Innsbrucker Kommunalbetriebe) features a stylized lowercase 'i' in red followed by the letters 'KB' in black.

Since its foundation in 1994, IKB has provided a strong foundation for the high quality of life in the region and in the Tyrolean capital city, where the IKB has its roots in the municipal utilities. Thousands of households and businesses rely on IKB's energy and infrastructure solutions to function perfectly and ensure a full life. This includes the provision of electricity and water, waste and wastewater disposal, ultra-fast fiber optic internet, and operation of the Innsbruck baths. IKB employs over 700 staff in 15 locations.

## 1994

**Founded**

#### Why spoof sign

"We really liked the way of cooperation and the flexibility. Since IKB stands for sustainability and regionalism, it was important to find a partner in the local environment. spoof sign easily competed with leading US providers. We liked spoof's solution, especially its user-friendliness and integration possibilities. We felt very well taken care of regarding data protection and compliance with European guidelines."

## 15

**Locations**

## 766

**Employees**



### The Goals

- Reducing paper documents and eliminating internal mail
- 100% legally binding and 100% GDPR-compliant signature solution
- Automation of signature processes within the company
- Saving time and paper, no printing, signing, and scanning
- Customizability and individual design of emails and signature cards

### The Solution

With the help of sproof sign, digital signatures were implemented into the corporate structures of IKB without a major IT project. The sproof product enables all employees to participate easily and securely in digital signature workflows. Through Single Sign-On and an API, sproof sign was seamlessly integrated into the existing workflow without the need for process changes. This means that permissions can be managed centrally and securely, and two-factor authentication can be optionally activated. The API also enables complete automation of signature request creation and signature acquisition.

### What was decisive for the decision for a new solution?

The IKB, like every company, faced the challenge of implementing innovative concepts of digitization to improve processes and replace paper-based

workflows with digital ones. An urgent trigger was the ongoing pandemic, which is driving the possibility of home office work, but also demanded a digital, legally valid, GDPR-compliant signature solution to reduce internal mail, signature folders, and long turnaround times.

### Implementation of the solution

- Contacting sproof
- Product presentation in a video call
- Initiated testing phase with some employees
- Brief training, then company-wide deployment

### Working with sproof

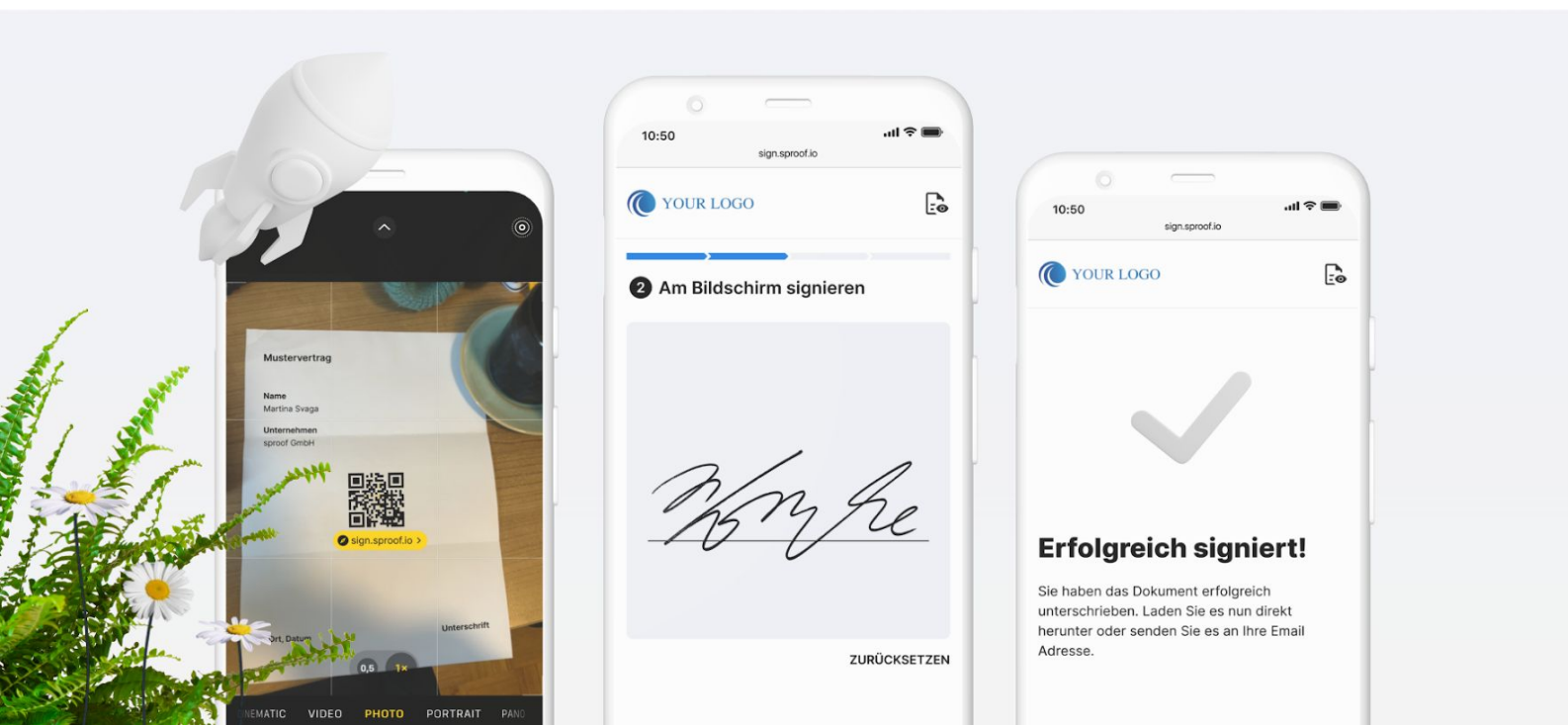
With individually customized signatures and personalized invitation emails, the identity of one's own organization can be displayed. Attachment of company seals, signatures, and the provision of own certificates for external impact is also possible. After implementation, an unlimited number of qualified signatures can be created. It is also possible to digitally sign an entire stack of documents with just one click. Obtaining external signatures is now very quick and easy. Legally binding, uncomplicated signing according to the highest standards is guaranteed here. sproof sign is used internally, among other things, for vacation requests, order approvals, and service approvals.

## Fast Lane: Fast collection of legally valid signatures.

**The Fast Lane in proof sign is a market innovation** in the field of digital contract processes. Enable a low-threshold and mobile signature process for your end customers. In your own branding, suitable for all contract types and signature standards (AES, QES).

### This is how the Fast Lane works:

- 1) You can generate any number of documents or forms to be signed directly in proof sign or directly from your CMS (via API connection to proof sign).
- 2) You define the signature standard (AES, QES), the signature position, optional form fields, etc.
- 3) You send or place the signature requests as needed: by link in an e-mail, by QR code in letter form, by QR code on site, etc.).
- 4) External or end customers receive your invitation and are guided through a reduced and minimalist signature process designed in your corporate branding. End customers receive the signed contract by e-mail. (No registration required)
- 5) You receive all signed contracts error-free in proof sign and/or returned to your CMS or database.



# Security concept

## Data Privacy, Legal Validity, & Compliance

07

### Data Privacy

Data privacy is not an add-on for us; it's our mission. We guarantee GDPR compliance on all levels, both internally and with our subcontractors. These assurances are provided to our customers through a Data Processing Agreement (DPA) based on the EU's Standard Contractual Clauses, ensuring a high level of legal certainty.

sproof is headquartered in Austria, and we exclusively store data in EU data centers, eliminating any connection to third countries during data storage, especially not in the USA. Furthermore, sproof is an IÖB-awarded solution, recognized for its suitability for deployment in public administration.

### IT Security Aspects

sproof offers the highest level of IT security. We operate our applications redundantly and fail-safe at several locations in the EU. Your data is stored securely and all connections are encrypted and authenticated. Our applications are subject to constant monitoring and regular internal and external audits and checks.



### **eIDAS Compliance**

sproof sign fully complies with national and international guidelines. Europe has the most stringent international signature law. The basis is the eIDAS regulation (Electronic Identification, Authentication, and Trust Services). This serves as a valid framework in all EU/EEA member states. All processes designed with sproof sign adhere to these high standards. Therefore, signing with sproof sign is 100% legally valid.

### **FDA Compliance**

sproof sign complies with FDA 21 CFR Part 11, making it suitable for all industries subject to this legal framework.

### **ISO 27001 Certified Servers**

Our data centers are, of course, ISO 27001 certified, meeting the highest standards of IT, data, and quality assurance requirements.



The market for digitizing signature processes is growing, and the demand is high. We have analyzed our competitors and are staying abreast of developments to provide our customers with the best offerings.

The following questions will help you choose the right solution for your use case:

### **Do you and or your company operate in Europe?**

sproof sign is a 100% European software solution and is functionally and feature-wise comparable to well-known e-Signature solutions from the USA.

Caution is advised: US tools can never guarantee the security of sensitive data. The surveillance laws in the USA contradict the fundamental rights of the EU. sproof sign is headquartered in Austria and specializes in the highest level of data protection.

Even if some US solutions are opening branches with offices in Europe, the guarantee of seamless data protection remains questionable. It is time for European companies to also rely on strong European partners for software projects.

Here, we demonstrate how sproof can assert itself through the optimal blend of highest security & compliance and unbeatable functionality.

- [sproof versus DocuSign →](#)
- [sproof versus AdobeSign →](#)
- [sproof versus skribble →](#)

### **Do you have high demands for legal validity & compliance?**

The sproof GmbH is headquartered in Austria, and all your data is exclusively stored in data centers within the EU. There is no data storage in third countries, especially not in the USA. Our data centers are, of course, ISO 27001 certified and meet the highest requirements for IT, data, and quality assurance. sproof sign is also an IÖB-certified solution suitable for deployment in public administration. We guarantee GDPR compliance on all levels, both internally and with our subcontractors. These assurances are provided to you in the form of a Data Processing Agreement (DPA) based on the EU's Standard Contractual Clauses, ensuring a high level of legal certainty.



## **Do you want to transform your signature processes comprehensively**

The broad functionality of sproof sign enables you to map even complex signature and approval processes holistically. We have specialized in the use cases of medium-sized and large companies in which several signature parties, parallel or sequential approval processes or different signature standards are involved throughout Europe.

With sproof sign, you can prepare any contracts and forms in the shortest possible time, sign them yourself, approve them for signature, check their progress and securely store signed documents.

The wide range of functions, coupled with a very high level of user-friendliness, gives sproof sign a unique market position.

## **Is a fast integration important to you?**

The IT managers of our customers are consistently surprised at how easy and, above all, quickly our solution can be integrated into their in-house IT system landscape. Thanks to the cloud!

Our cloud solution is deployed throughout the entire organization within a very short time. There are no maintenance and servicing costs for you. You always use the latest version and operate without the need for your own hardware. The software runs around the clock in our highly available and highly secure data center.

Our experts in IT security and data protection guarantee you the highest security without compromises. Necessary adjustments and changes are implemented promptly and precisely.

## **Do you prioritize training options and fast, friendly support?**

True to our company motto - 'If you confuse, you lose' - it is very important to us to provide the best possible support for our customers and users in using and starting with our tool.

One of the ways we do this is through the freely available sproof sign academy. We make great efforts to explain our application as efficiently as possible and to inform about product updates.

## **Verify Signatures & Download Audit Reports**

You can check the validity of the applied electronic signatures directly in sproof sign with a click of the mouse. You can also download a test report for each signature run and see who signed with which certificate and when.



### **Are you committed to innovation & progress?**

We are a team of IT security and legal tech experts. The basic idea was born in the course of research work in the field of privacy and security science at the Center for Secure Energy Informatics at the Salzburg University of Applied Sciences.

The founding team around Dr. Clemens Brunner, Dr. Fabian Knirsch and Erich Hoepoldseder started with the vision of providing the first comprehensive platform for legally valid, data-secure and efficient signature processes in the European Economic Area.

Since then, they have been continuously tinkering, innovating and developing to meet the challenges and dynamics of European business transactions with a constantly evolving all-in-one solution for digital signatures.

Standing still is a step backwards. We follow our mission to constantly adapt our platform for the benefit of our users. With success. Many industry leaders from different sectors already rely on sproof. Trust in security - Made in Europe.

### **Do you want transparent cost structures without hidden fees?**

We communicate our cost structure very transparently and can communicate a fixed and comprehensible price. Without any additional fees, service charges or other "on-top costs".

We have a reputation that we are proud of: We take time for our customers. We carefully analyze the signature processes of potential interested parties. We know how to assess the potential of our platform depending on the use case, corporate culture or industry and are honest if our solution does not fit your problem.

## **Number 1 in the e-Signature Category**

OMR Reviews is a reputable, independent review platform for European B2B software. As of Q1 2024, sproof sign is currently the highest-rated and most reviewed provider in the 'e-Signature' category.





## Process

# Introduction & Integration

# 09

Getting started with sproof sign only takes a few minutes for small teams and only a few hours even with deep integration into the entire IT landscape of a large company.

The reason: you don't need any hardware, sproof sign is a cloud solution that is operated around the clock in a highly available and highly secure data center.

The users designated in your company are added to your company plan in sproof sign by email and optionally provided with a qualified electronic signature.

Users are automatically sent helpful documents and links to make getting started with sproof sign as efficient and easy as possible.

The admin of the company plan has the option of making various settings for all users in order to control the signature processes according to the use cases.

"Thanks to the cloud, the onboarding process only took a few hours and was consistently supported by sproof."



## Learn more Additional Resources

We are committed to providing all our users with essential information and updates about the proof sign platform. To achieve this, we have established various channels.



### proof sign Academy:

[Helpful Guides and Videos →](#)



### E-Book:

[The Integration of e-Signatures →](#)



### Webinars:

[We regularly invite you to informative online events →](#)



### Newsletter:

[Don't miss any updates →](#)



### Blog:

[Know-How and FAQs about e-Signatures in our Blog →](#)

# 10

# proof

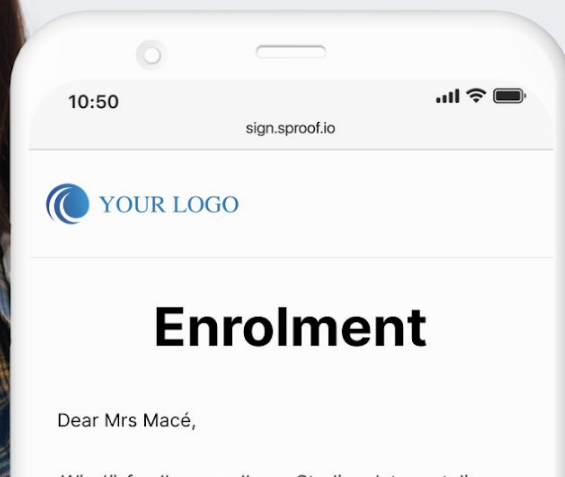
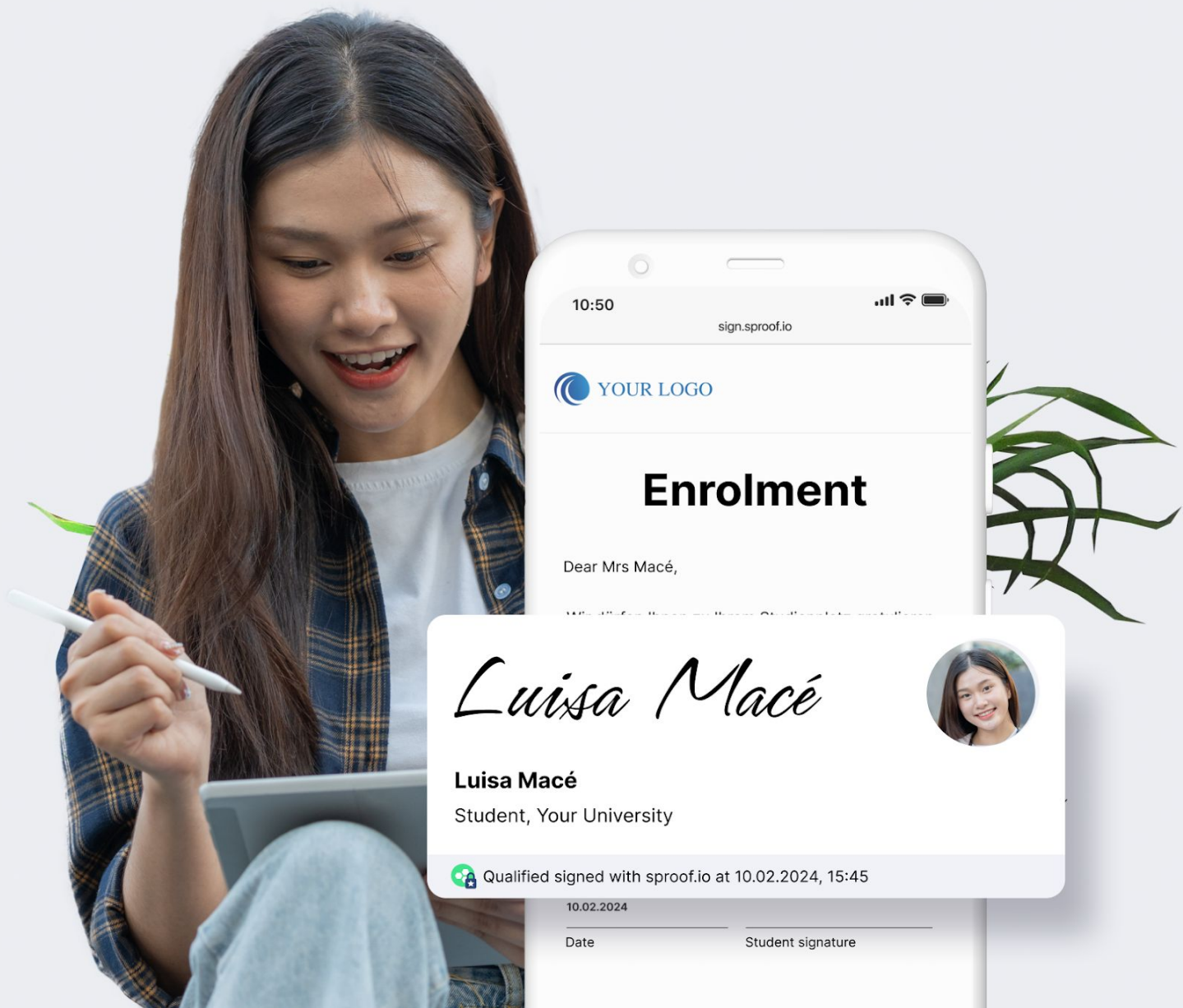




The most **secure** and **efficient** way  
to sign documents in Europe



**Find the link to the full white paper in the comment section ↴**



10.02.2024  
Date Student signature