

Use Case Library

Secure Digital Identification System for Global Travelers

Executive Summary written by GBBC

According to the [UN World Tourism Organization](#), cross-border travel will increase by 50 percent in the next decade. As the global population grows and more people are able to travel, it will become more difficult to securely verify traveler identities with existing systems. As it currently stands, cross-border travel can be complex and time-consuming depending on the countries of origin and destination. Further, research conducted by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) determined that existing trusted-traveler and registered-traveler programs do not provide a way forward to a radically streamlined digital identity system, in part due to lack of trust between countries. Blockchain technology can provide a solution to this complex problem.

The World Economic Forum and Accenture, along with other partners, collaborated to propose a paradigm shift to a Known Traveler Digital Identity system that uses blockchain technology and biometrics to create digital identities. Blockchain is perfectly suited for this application, as its distributed nature ensures no central authority has control over the network while cryptography ensures personal information remains secure. Using biometrics, mobile devices will be able to link physical and digital information to verify the legitimacy of a digital identity. The researchers recommend that governments commit to pre-vetting individual travelers to save time and effort. Researchers are currently carrying out pilot tests in real-world environments.

As cross-border travel continues to increase, innovative solutions will become necessary to securely and quickly verify the identity of travelers. Blockchain technology provides unique advantages in this instance: no central authority can control the network, it provides advanced security, and it gives travelers the ability to control access to their personal data. This application must be improved through numerous pilot projects by a range of stakeholders; demonstrations of its efficacy through pilot projects will help convince governments, companies, and organizations to adopt the technology.