European Commission

PHP authentication bundles

for Symfony

DIGIT PHP Support - Pol Dellaiera
European Commission
December 2022

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Introduction

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Who we are

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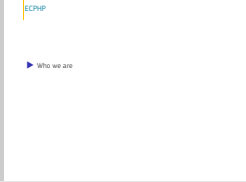
└ Introduction
└ ECPHP



How about starting with an introduction of the ECPHP team?

- Who we are
  - Patrick

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PHP authentication bundles
└ Introduction
└ ECPHP

Patrick is managing the team and prioritizing the tasks to do

- Who we are
  - Patrick
  - Manos

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Emmanuel, the Patrick's backup

ECPHP
Who we are
Patrick
Manos

- Who we are
  - Patrick
  - Manos
  - Pol

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And then myself, I'm the developer of the team, while I'm mostly assisting developers with their app developments and corporate libraries development. I'm also experiment open source tools to ease the job of the developers, such tools as Nix, LaTeX, Pandoc.

ECPHP

- Who we are
  - Patrick
  - Manos
  - Pol
- What we do

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Repositories

code.europa.eu

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└ Introduction

└ Repositories

We have the brand new code.europa.eu which is the main repository

Repositories

- code.europa.eu
- github.com

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└ Introduction
└ Repositories

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Repositories

- code.europa.eu
- github.com

And we use Github as a backup repository

Authentication

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Authentication

> Authentication is the act of proving an assertion, such as the identity of a computer system user. In contrast with identification, the act of indicating a person or thing's identity, authentication is the process of verifying that identity.

Let's first start with a definition to make sure that everyone is on the same wavelength.

CAS

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PHP authentication bundles
└ Authentication
└ Protocols

When we think about authentication, we think about security, protocols, single sign on. Protocols like...

- CAS for Central Authentication System which are redirection based protocols. They are using URL and redirections in your browser to authenticate users. CAS is used to authorize users to access an application, no users details are usually retrieved through it. - JWT for Json Web Token protocols like OAuth, OpenID Connect, etc etc , used for authorization but also for exchanging information since using JWT is a good way to securely transmitting information between parties

Protocols

- CAS
- JWT

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PHP authentication bundles
└ Authentication
└ Protocols

Protocols

- CAS
- JWT

These protocols can be used to secure web applications, and rest APIs.

- CAS
- JWT

PHP authentication bundles
└ Authentication
└ Protocols

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Protocols

- CAS
- JWT

Implementing the security in an application is something that might quickly become cumbersome and time consuming, especially if the libraries to implement the protocols are not available.

Protocols

- CAS
- JWT

Luckily for you, those libraries are already existing in the PHP world and we published some of them in our team, in open-source.

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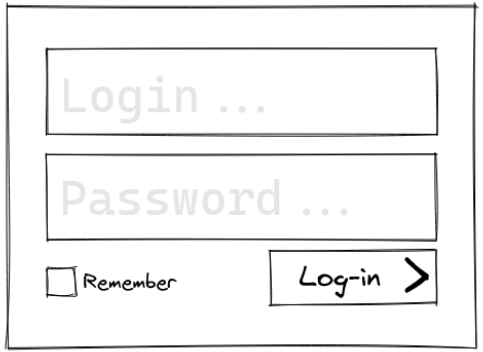

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PHP authentication bundles

└ Authentication

└ Authentication at European Commission

Authentication at European Commission

I guess you all know this when it comes to authentication.

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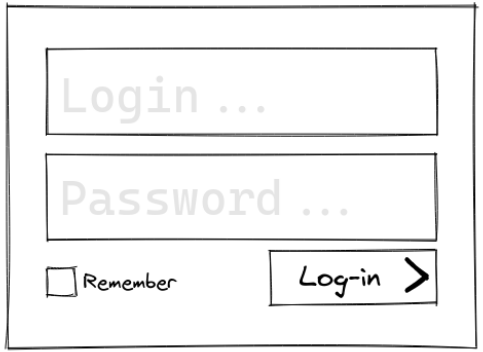

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└ Authentication

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In the EC context, when it comes to authentication, we often think to EU Login, the unique portal providing authentication for so many users, consultants and employees at EC.

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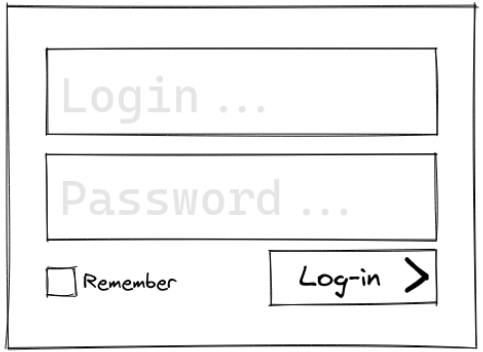
Authentication at European Commission



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└ Authentication

└ Authentication at European Commission

Authentication at European Commission

But have you ever think about the mechanism in-between your own application hosted on your own domain and EU Login, hosted on another domain.

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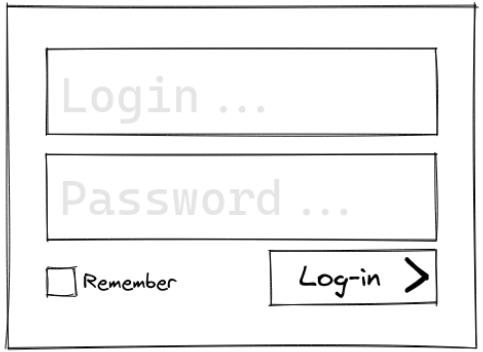

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└ Authentication

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Authentication at European Commission

There are many ways to achieve that and today we are going to focus on the CAS protocol. The EU Login platform implements multiple authentication protocols and CAS is one of them.

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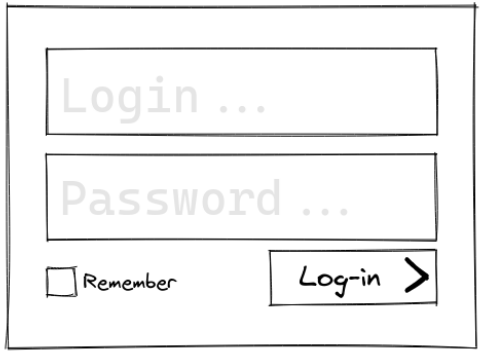

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PHP authentication bundles

└ Authentication

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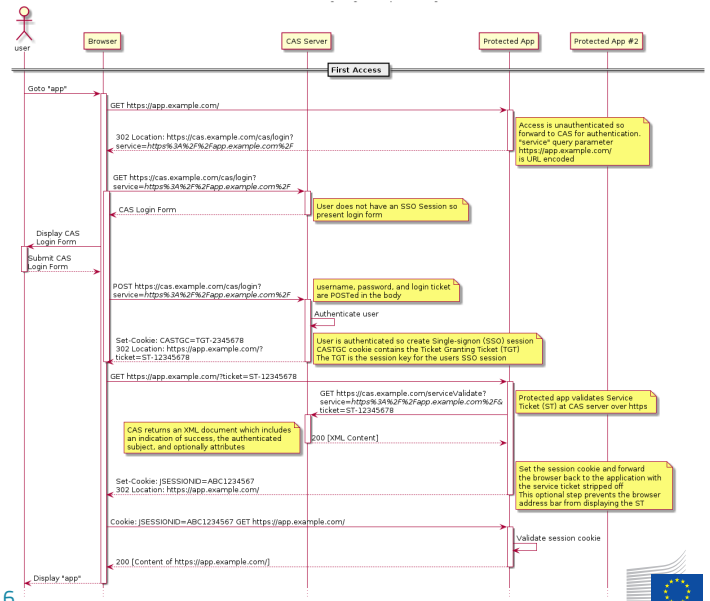
Authentication at European Commission

Let's unravel the mysteries of the CAS protocol... don't be afraid!

CAS at European Commission



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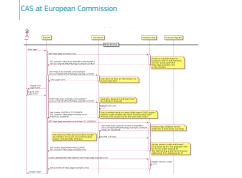
PHP authentication bundles

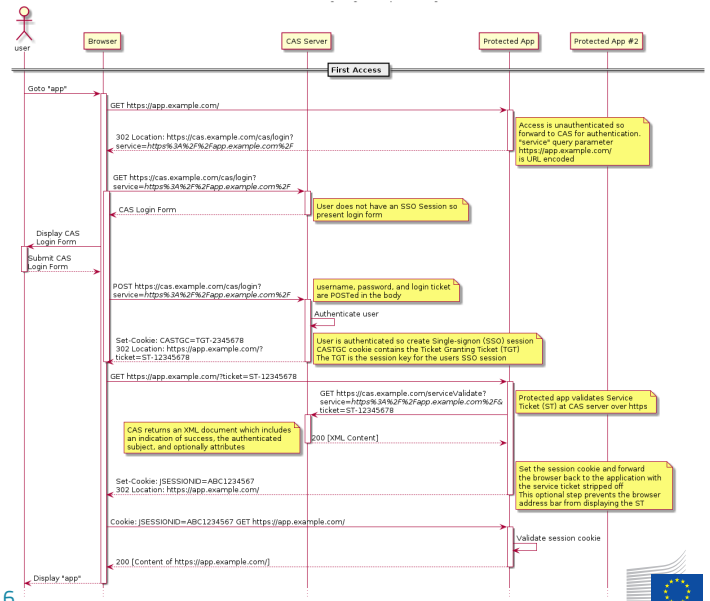
└ Authentication

└ CAS at European Commission



Oops! Ok I guess you're afraid already! Sorry about that!

CAS at European Commission



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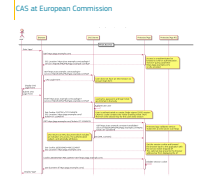
PHP authentication bundles

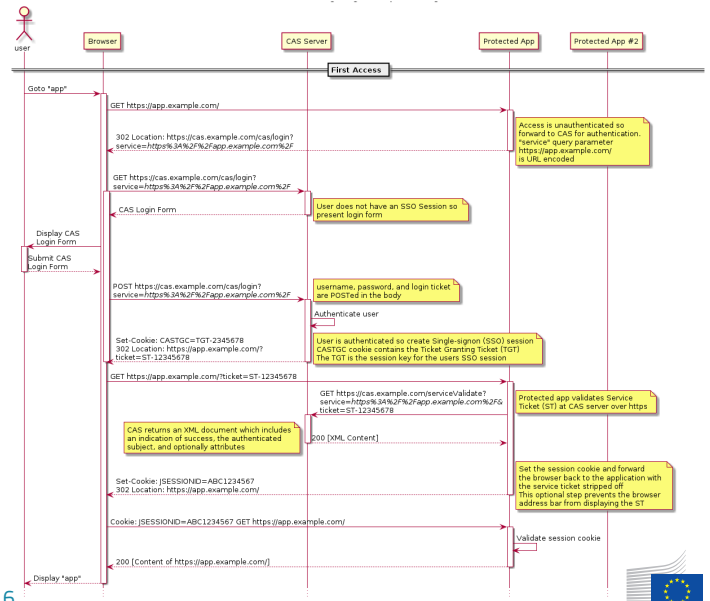
└ Authentication

└ CAS at European Commission



Here's the sequence diagram when you login through Eu Login using the CAS Protocol.

CAS at European Commission



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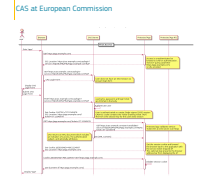
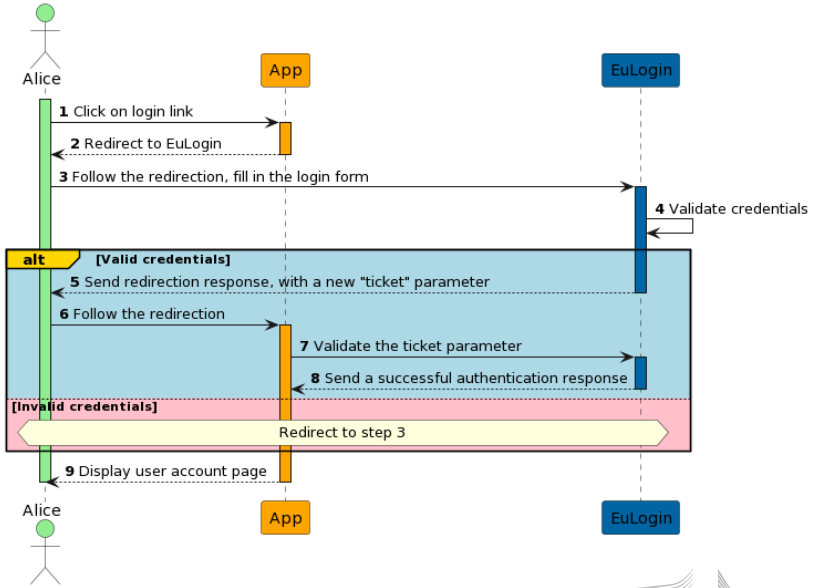
└ Authentication

└ CAS at European Commission



But no worries, I made a simplified version of it...

CAS at European Commission



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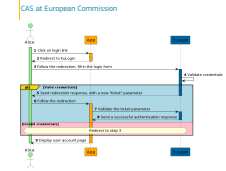
PHP authentication bundles

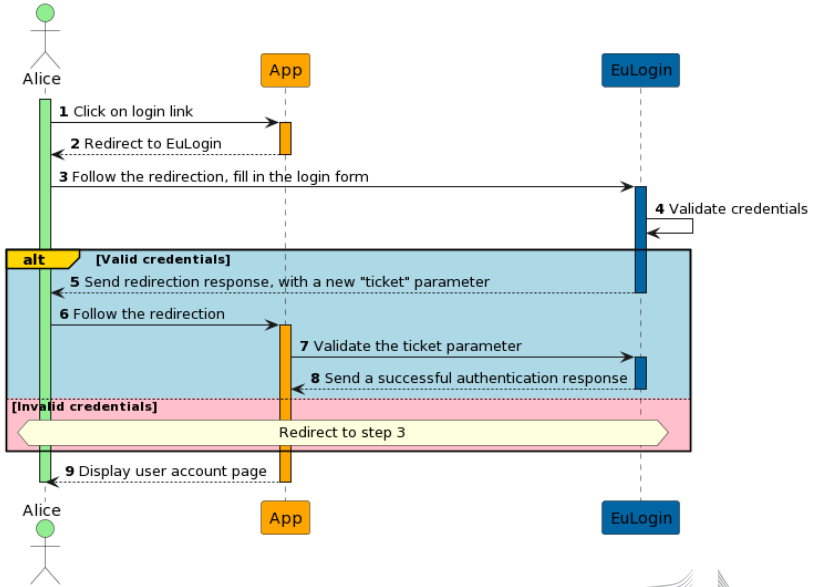
Authentication

CAS at European Commission



In this sequence diagram, a user is trying to login onto a web app

CAS at European Commission



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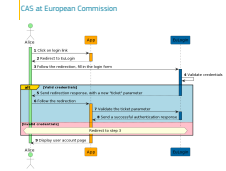
PHP authentication bundles

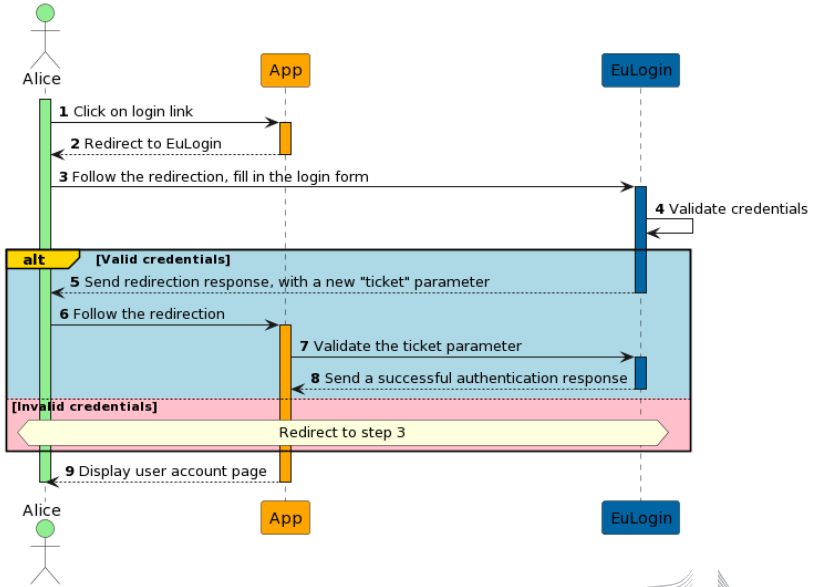
Authentication

CAS at European Commission



At first the user open its browser, goes on the App and click the login button or link

CAS at European Commission



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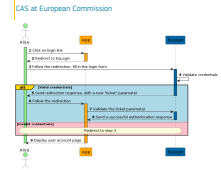
PHP authentication bundles

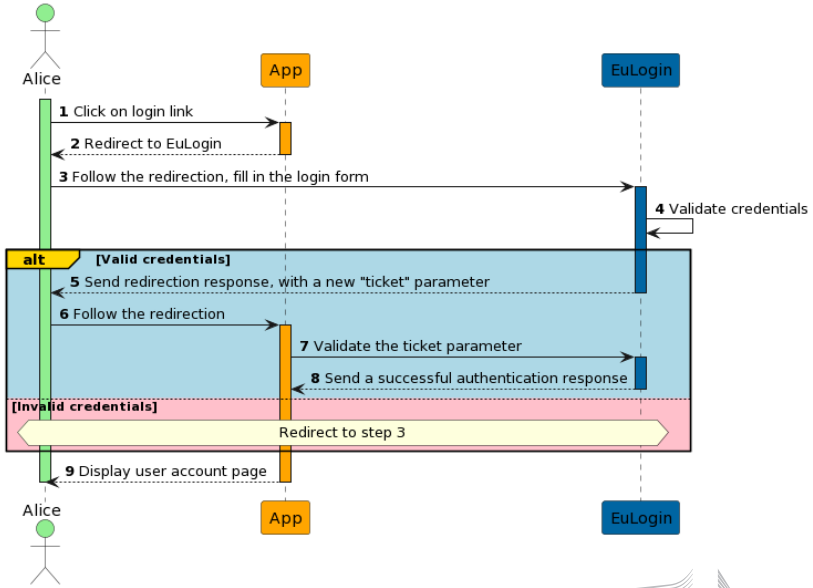
Authentication

CAS at European Commission



Somehow, the App detects that the user is not authenticated and redirect the user to EU Login if so

CAS at European Commission



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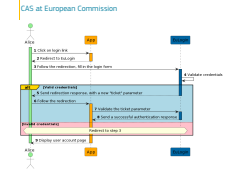
PHP authentication bundles

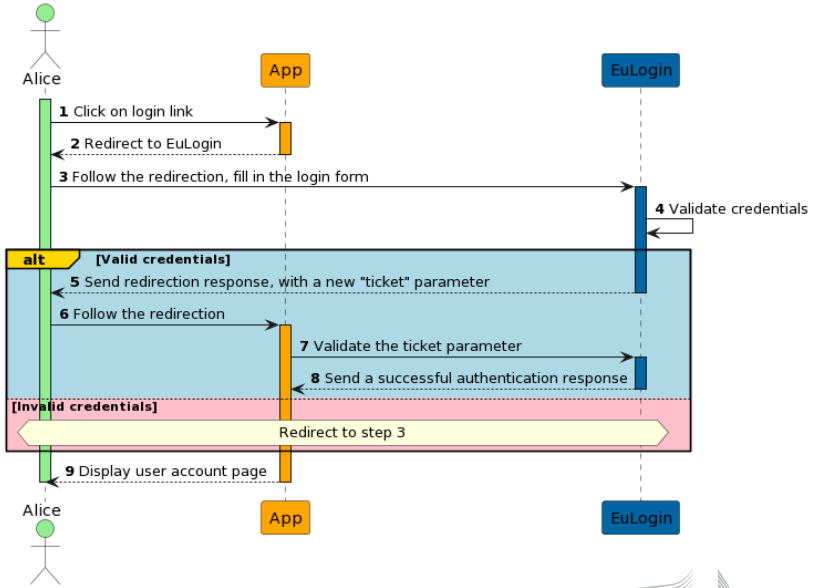
Authentication

CAS at European Commission



Eu Login display the login form and the user submit its credentials

CAS at European Commission



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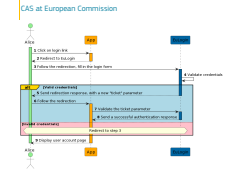
PHP authentication bundles

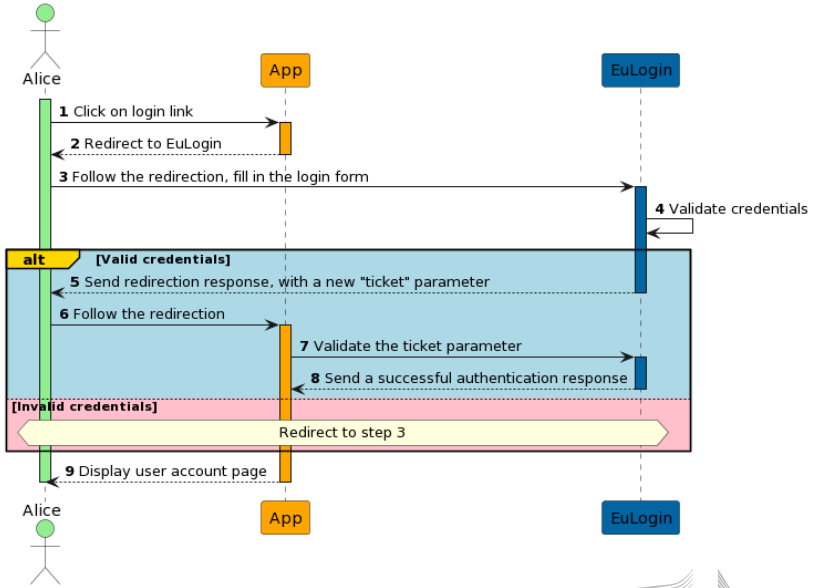
└ Authentication

└ CAS at European Commission



Eu Login redirects the user back to the application, appending a special ticket parameter in the url, depending on the validity of its credentials

CAS at European Commission



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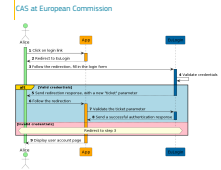
PHP authentication bundles

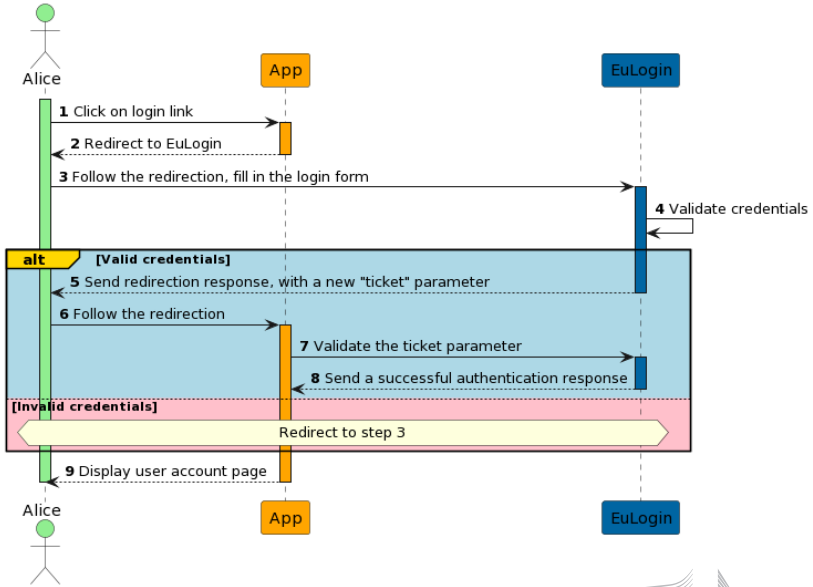
Authentication

CAS at European Commission



The application validate the ticket parameter in the URL, if any

CAS at European Commission



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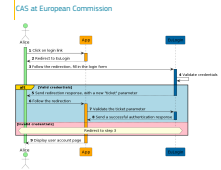
PHP authentication bundles

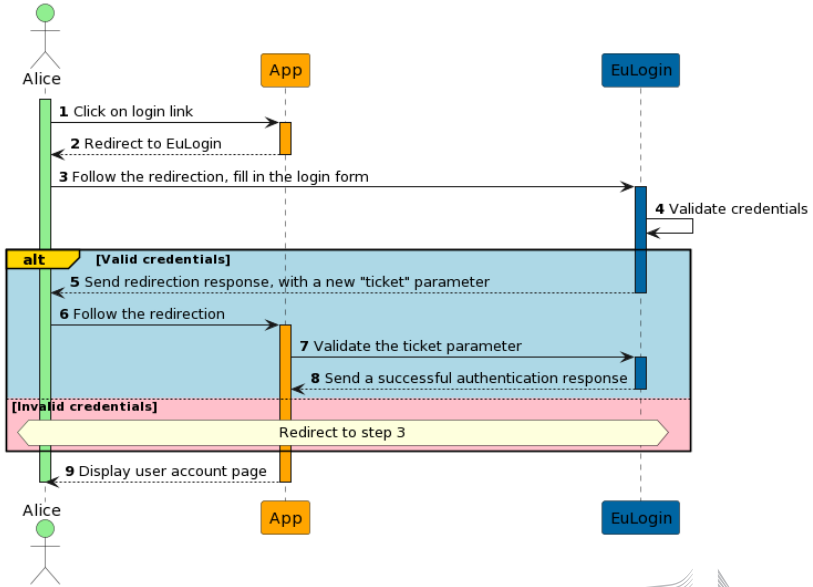
Authentication

CAS at European Commission



In case of valid credentials, the user is logged in or an error message is displayed

CAS at European Commission



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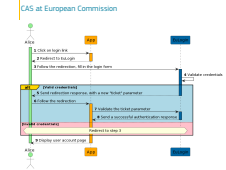
PHP authentication bundles

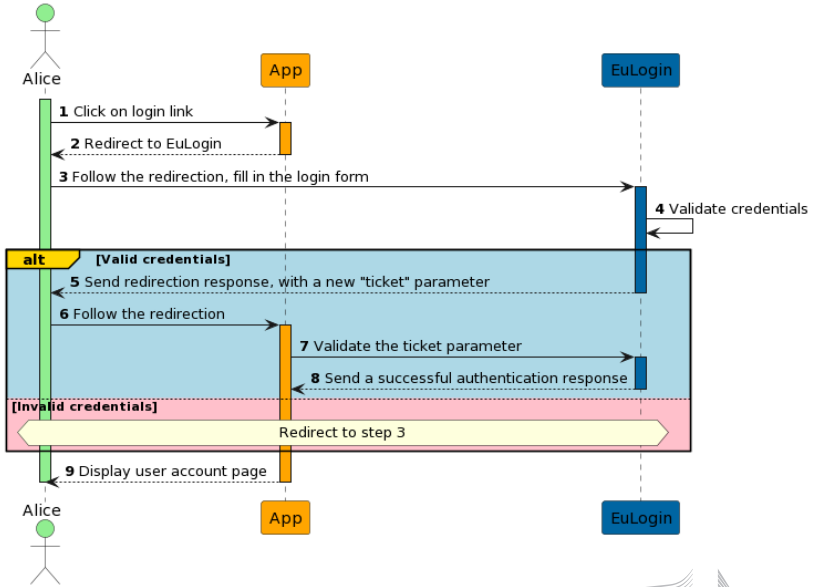
└ Authentication

└ CAS at European Commission



As I said, this is an extremely simplified diagram and there are more things that are done, but this is to give you an idea of what is going on when you login onto an app.

CAS at European Commission



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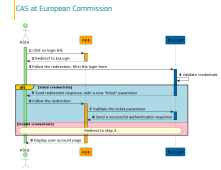
PHP authentication bundles

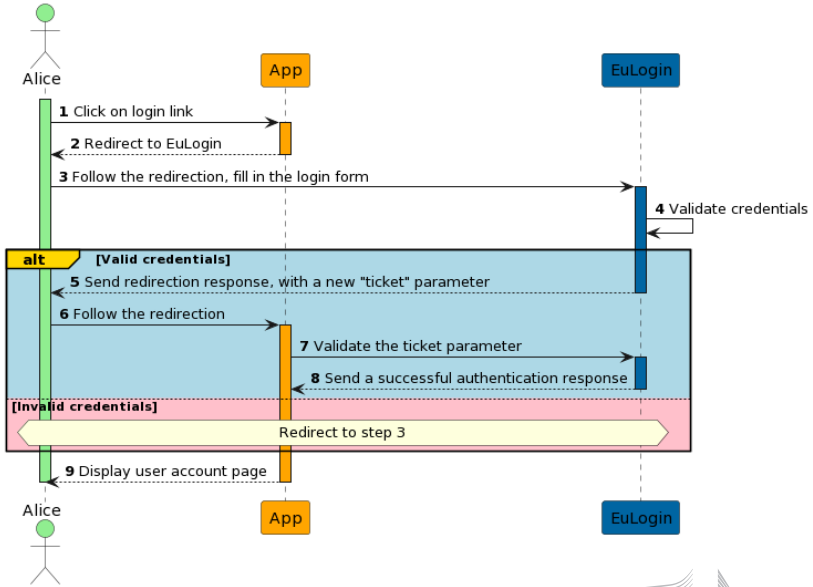
Authentication

CAS at European Commission



We notice the interactions between the user and the App, the user and EuLogin and the App with EuLogin.

CAS at European Commission



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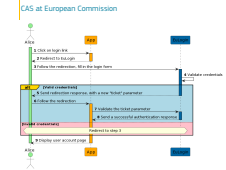
PHP authentication bundles

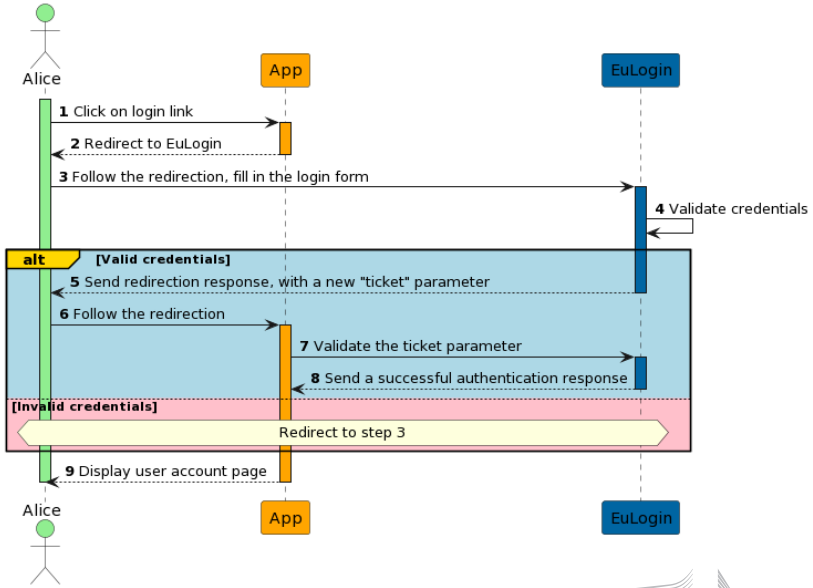
Authentication

CAS at European Commission



If we only limit ourself to the CAS protocol for now, there are not a lot of options for the developers... CAS Lib can be used with or without a framework, DG Sante for example uses CAS Lib on a bare PHP app.

CAS at European Commission



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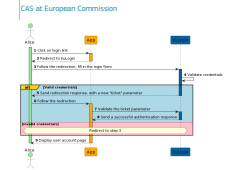
PHP authentication bundles

Authentication

CAS at European Commission



This is how CAS-Lib was born... but before going on to that subject, let's have a look at what we have in store...

PHP

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PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP

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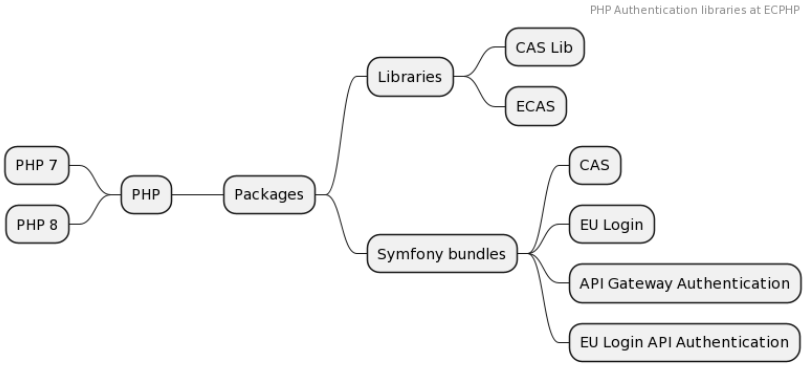
PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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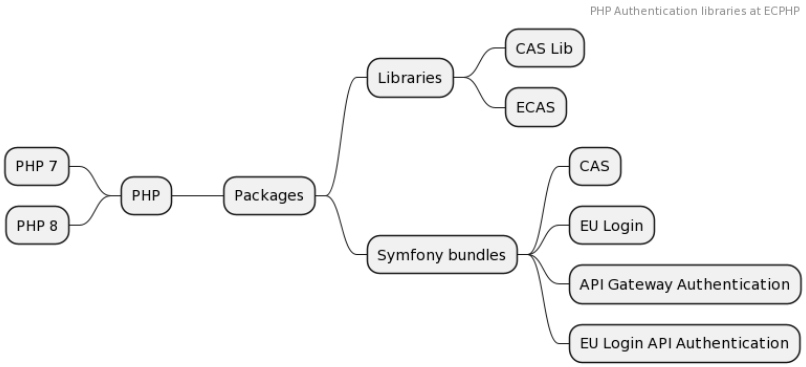
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP libraries / bundles / packages

In this mindmap, you have a quick and global overview of the authentication packages that we provides at ECPHP.

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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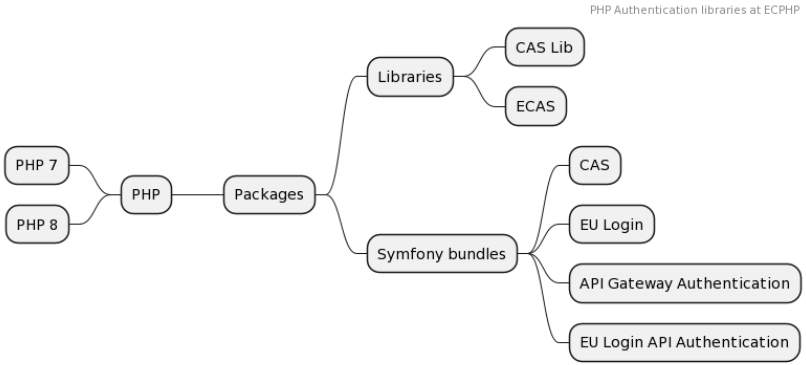
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
  └ PHP libraries / bundles / packages

These packages are available from PHP 7 to 8 and we are slowly going to deprecate support for PHP 7

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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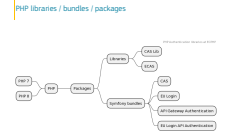
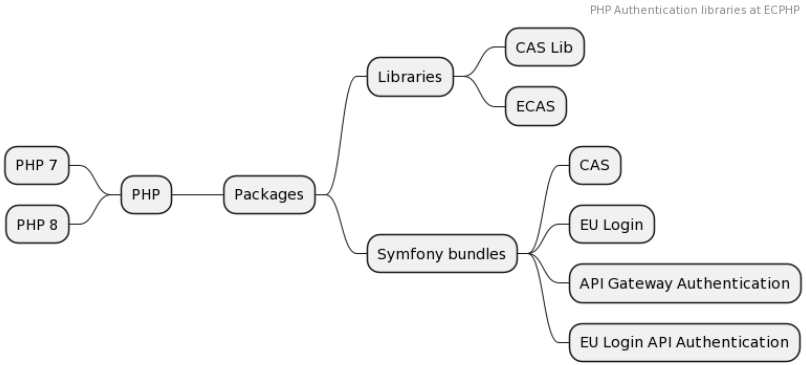
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP libraries / bundles / packages



The first one we did was CAS Lib. A library to facilitate the communication with a standard CAS server. This is a library that I made on my own and moved to ECPHP. The work on this library started around November 2019. Initially called "PCAS", then renamed to "PSRCAS" and finally to "CAS Lib".
That package is a standard PHP library that can be used by any PHP application, with or without a framework behind. It provides ways to authenticate a user session using the CAS protocol.
The CAS Protocol is not complex, it just boils down to sending HTTP responses, making requests, altering URLs, parsing JSON and XML, managing configuration... But just that in PHP can be a problem... <sarcasm>anyway, what is not a problem in PHP?</sarcasm>
- Sending HTTP redirections? Ok, but depending on where it is used, there might be plenty of different ways to send them.
- Altering URL? Seems to be the easiest part... erm wait, are we sure?
- Parsing JSON? Oh thatś actually the easiest, there are core functions in PHP to encode and decode json... but bummer, 'json_decode' returns null for an invalid input... even though null is also a perfectly valid object for JSON to decode to! At the time of writing, it has been somehow fixed since PHP 7.3. Indeed, we can now throw an exception in case of issue while encoding or decoding a JSON string, but we have to add an optional flag while it should be the default behavior... Trust me, you're going to love PHP if you don't already.
- Parsing XML? Erm... Let me lol.
- Managing configuration? Seems easy at first sight.
In order to make it as standard as possible, it exclusively uses PSR interfaces, hence the name PSR-CAS ! Don't worry, there's a slide about PSR. Therefore, CAS Lib can be used in a Symfony project, Laravel project or any other framework.

A lot of effort into this library to make it consistent and well tested.

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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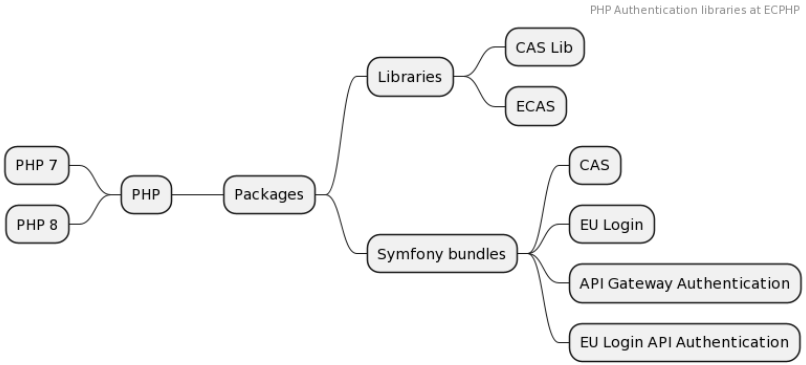
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP libraries / bundles / packages

Then there is eCAS, a library decorating the CAS library and adding compatibility with the customizations made by European Commission to the CAS protocol.

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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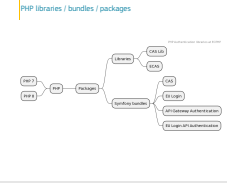
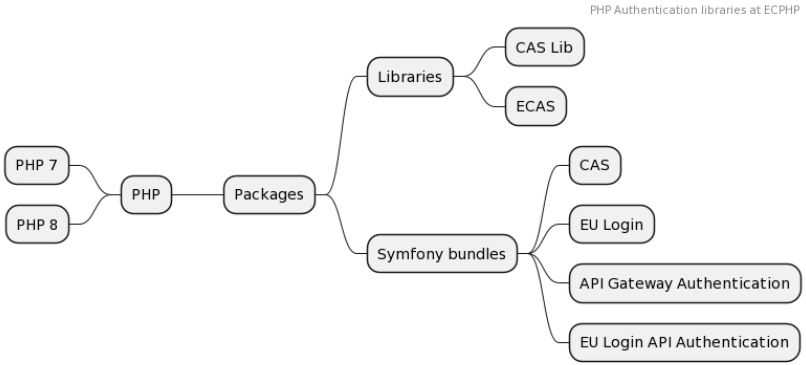
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP libraries / bundles / packages



There are only 2 libraries in ECPHP, the rest are Symfony bundle, let's check them out...

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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PHP authentication bundles

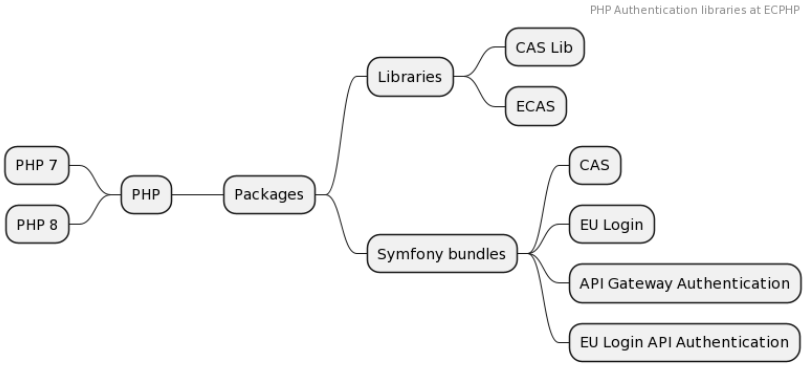
PHP

PHP libraries / bundles / packages

CAS-Bundle which is a bundle letting any Symfony application authenticate their users through the standard CAS protocol.

Basically, this is the glue code between Symfony and CAS-Lib.

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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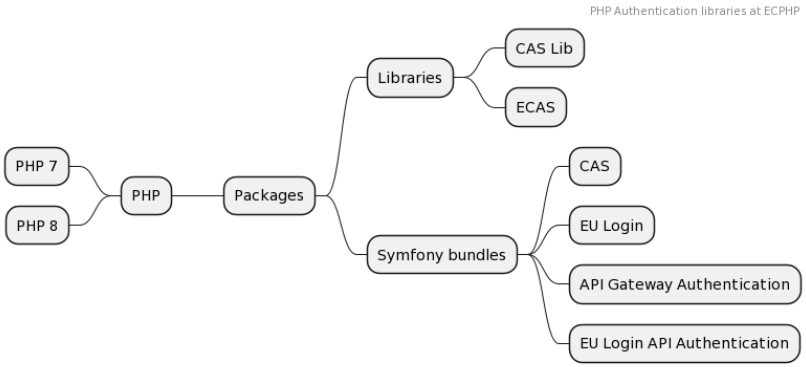
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP libraries / bundles / packages

Then there is the EU-Login-Bundle counterpart, which is the same as CAS-Bundle, but for eCAS.

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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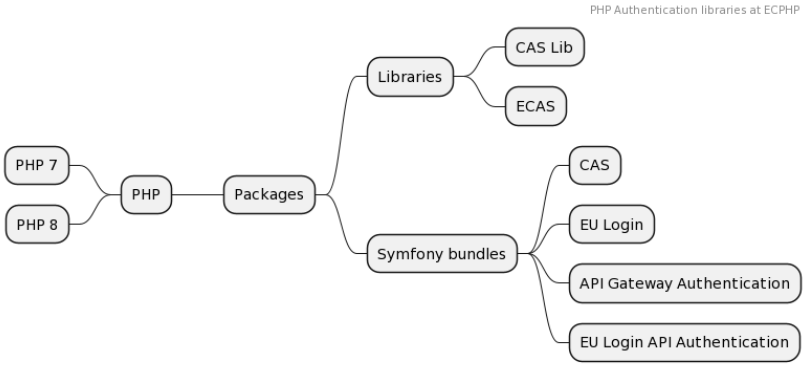
PHP authentication bundles
PHP
PHP libraries / bundles / packages

Then, API-GW-Authentication, which is basically a JWT authentication with a mechanism to dynamically retrieve the JWKS keys from API Gateway.

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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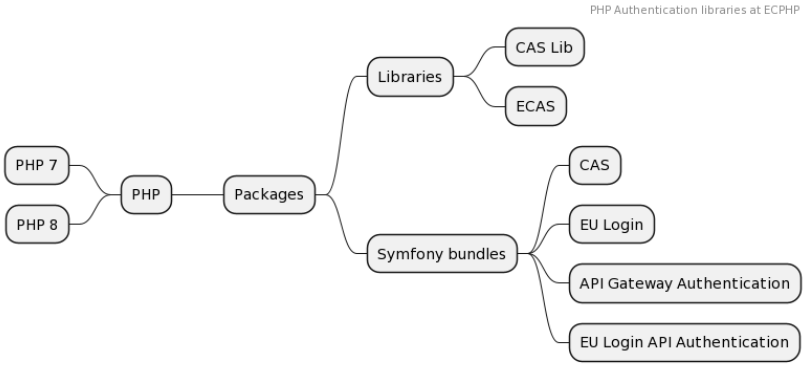
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP libraries / bundles / packages

And the last bundle, which was the most complicated to do: EU Login API authentication which uses OpenID Connect protocol to authenticate users.

PHP libraries / bundles / packages



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PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP libraries / bundles / packages

We made other bundles, but they are not relevant in the context of authentication.

PHP Framework Interoperability Group

PHP FIG stands for PHP Framework Interoperability Group

PHP FIG

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

While PSR stands for PSR Standard Recommendation
The idea behind the FIG group is for project representatives to talk about the commonalities between our projects and find ways we can work together. If other folks want to adopt what they're doing they are welcome to do so, but that is not the aim. Nobody in the group wants to tell you, as a programmer, how to build your application.

They are responsible for the creation of the following PSRs

PHP FIG

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation
- PSR-0

In 2010, PSR-0, followed by PSR-4 in 2013 for providing the autoloading... this is thanks to those PSR that we have composer!

And without Composer... we would be nowhere.

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation
- PSR-0
- PSR-3

PSR-3 for providing a logger mechanism interface

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4

In 2013, PSR-0 has been deprecated in favor of PSR-4

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4
- PSR-6

PSR-6 for providing Caching interfaces

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4
- PSR-6
- PSR-7

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PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP FIG

PSR-7 for providing the Response and Request messages interface

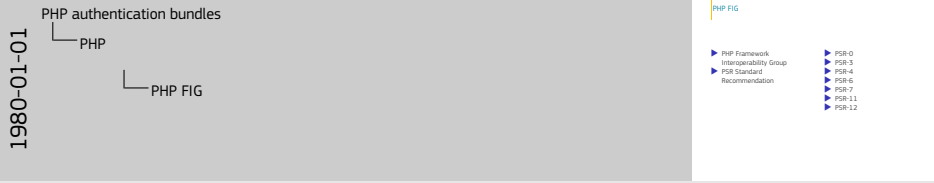
- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4
- PSR-6
- PSR-7
- PSR-11

PSR-11 for providing the container interface

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4
- PSR-6
- PSR-7
- PSR-11
- PSR-12



PSR-12 for providing the coding standard rules

PHP FIG

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4
- PSR-6
- PSR-7
- PSR-11
- PSR-12
- PSR-18

PSR 18 for providing the HTTP client interface

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4
- PSR-6
- PSR-7
- PSR-11
- PSR-12
- PSR-18
- PSR-20

PSR-20 for providing a Clock interface... work in ongoing...

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4
- PSR-6
- PSR-7
- PSR-11
- PSR-12
- PSR-18
- PSR-20

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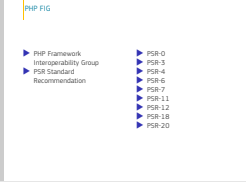
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP FIG



There are many other PSRs, I invite you to check them out by yourself

- PHP Framework Interoperability Group
- PSR Standard Recommendation

- PSR-0
- PSR-3
- PSR-4
- PSR-6
- PSR-7
- PSR-11
- PSR-12
- PSR-18
- PSR-20

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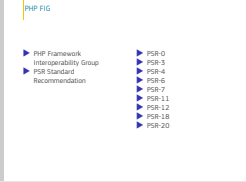
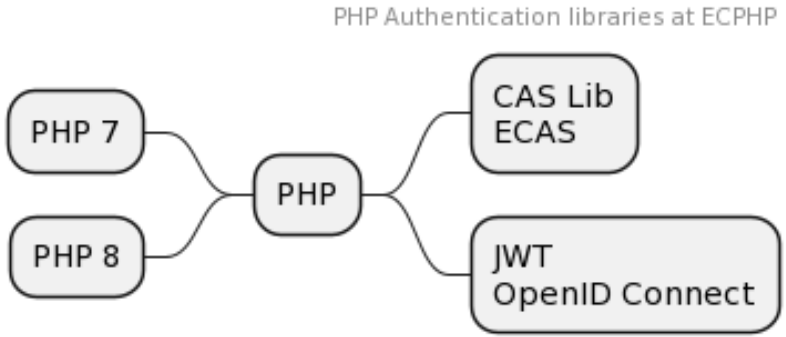
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ PHP FIG



All these PSRs are mostly providing interfaces (except PSR12) and you can use them anywhere. Thanks to the Liskov principle (1988) you are free to use any contrib implementations as long as they are implementing the proper required interface, you're good to go.



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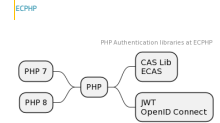
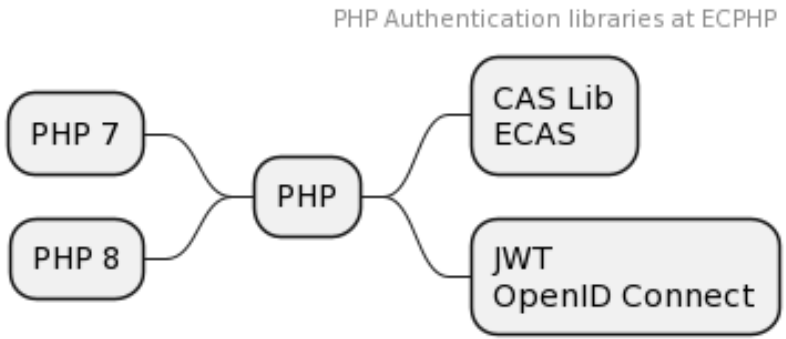
PHP authentication bundles
- PHP
  - ECPHP



Let's come back to the main subject of this talk, authentication and summarize the protocols we made and which corresponding PHP library package can be used. We have on the left the different authentication protocols that clients are using and...



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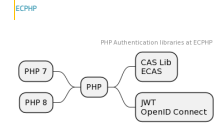
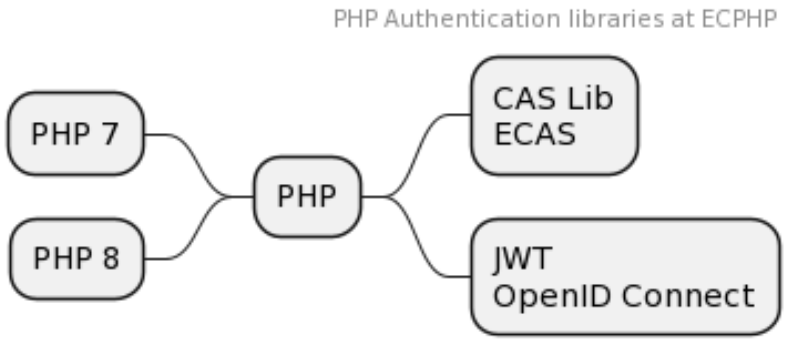
PHP authentication bundles
- PHP
  - ECPHP



On the right, we have the corresponding packages in PHP



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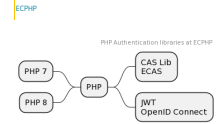
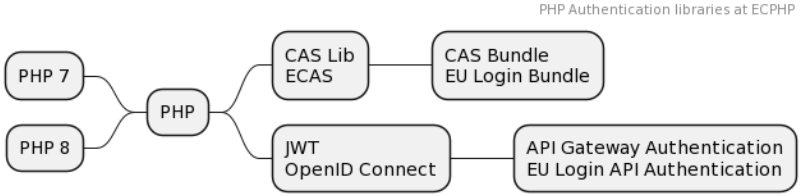
PHP authentication bundles
- PHP
  - ECPHP



The CAS protocol in CAS-Lib and CAS-Bundle



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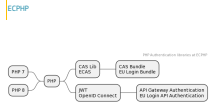
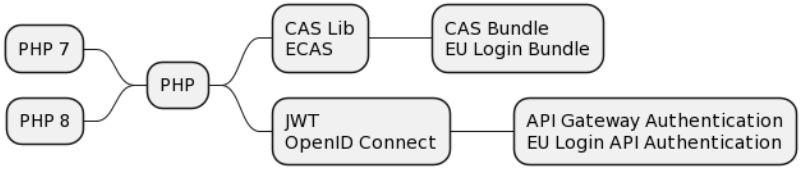
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ ECPHP



The ECAS protocol in ECAS and EU-Login-Bundle

PHP Authentication libraries at ECPHP



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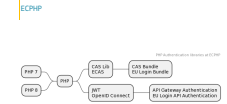
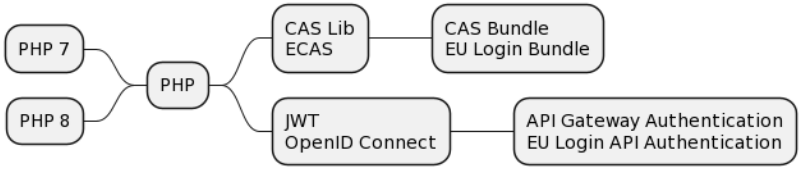
PHP authentication bundles
- PHP
  - ECPHP



The Token authentication in API GW Authentication bundle, based on a popular existing contrib bundle

PHP Authentication libraries at ECPHP



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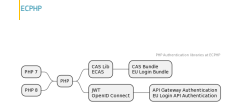
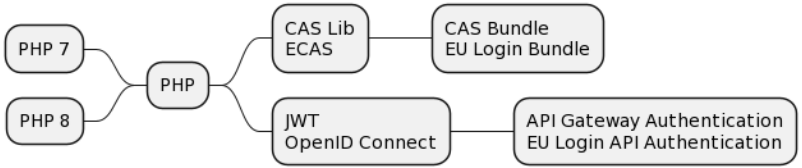
PHP authentication bundles
- PHP
  - ECPHP



And the last one, The OpenID Connect authentication in EU Login API Authentication bundle, based on an existing OpenID Connect contrib library.

PHP Authentication libraries at ECPHP



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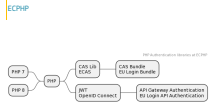
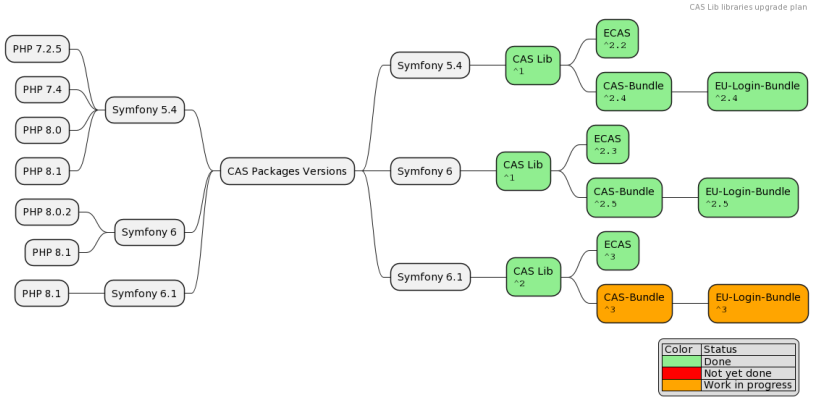
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ ECPHP



Now you may wonder, is there a package for my own version of Symfony?

Supported versions



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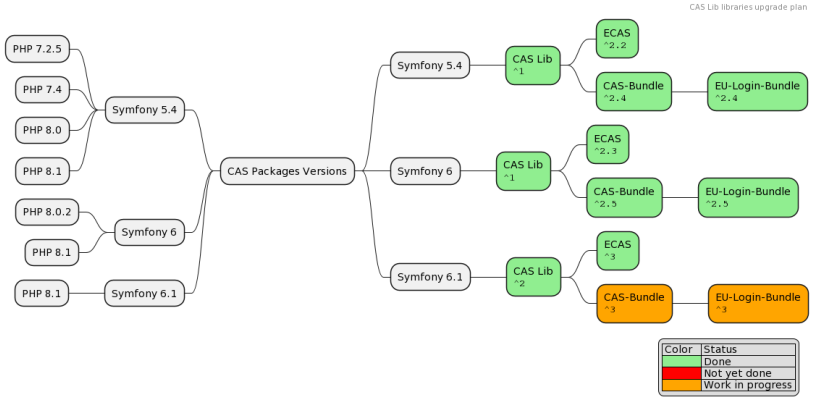
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ Supported versions

In this graphic, where only the CAS related packages are displayed, you have some kind of matrix of supported versions we are maintaining.

Supported versions



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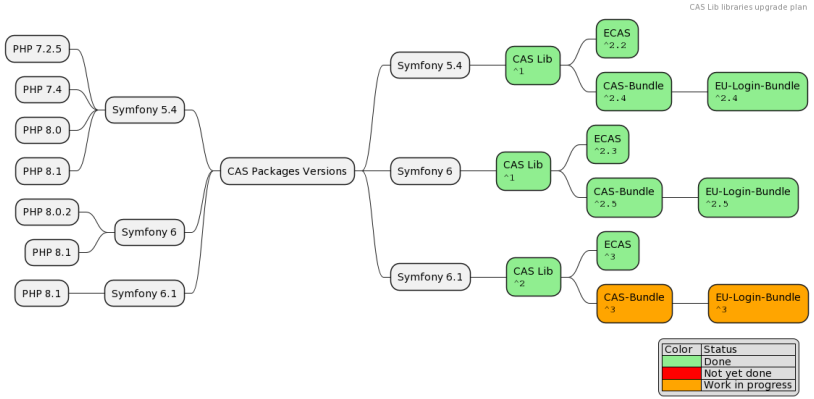
PHP authentication bundles
PHP
Supported versions

Almost all the Symfony versions are covered, from 4.4 to 6.2 which are not on this map. Symfony 6.2 has been released last week, on the 29 of November by the way. If you're late to the party, it's still time to upgrade your app :)

Supported versions



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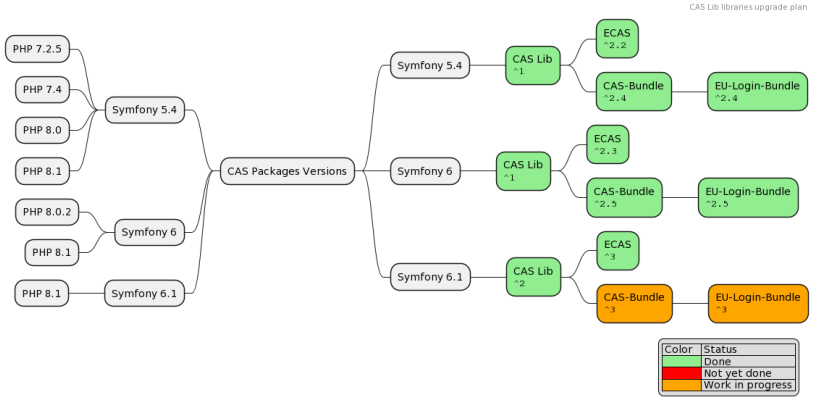
PHP authentication bundles

└─PHP

└─Supported versions

There are still two bundles in orange because I'm currently having multiple issues with one of them, and I'm unable to make an short reproducer.

Supported versions



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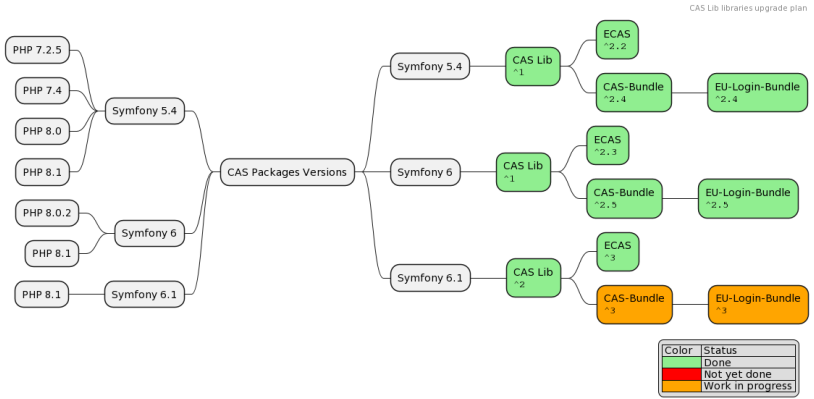
PHP authentication bundles

└ PHP

└ Supported versions

One of the issue has been reported and fixed in Symfony (https://github.com/symfony/symfony/pull/47808) but the other one is still open. If you want to help, let me know!

Supported versions



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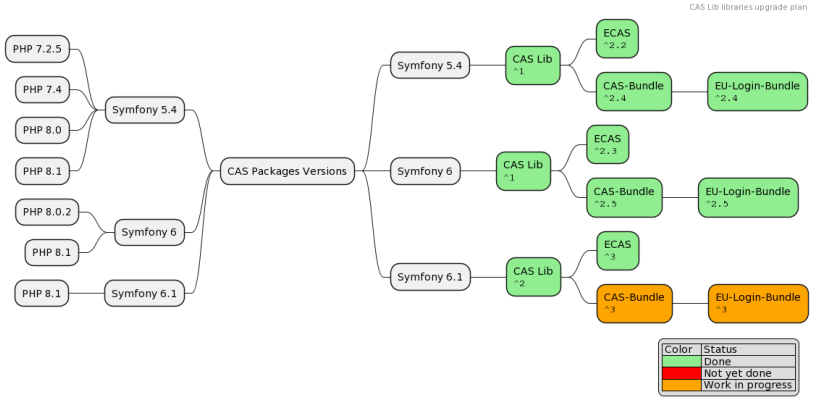
PHP authentication bundles

└ PHP

└ Supported versions

You may also notice that there is a major version jump for CAS Lib between Symfony 6 and 6.1.

Supported versions



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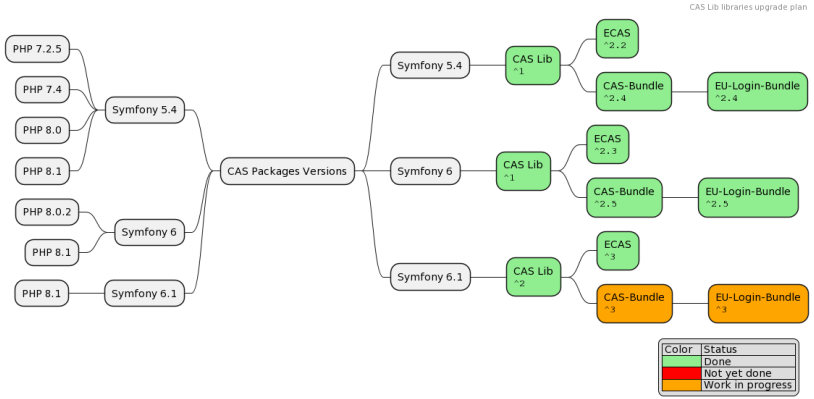
PHP authentication bundles

└ PHP

└ Supported versions

The reason is simple, CAS Lib has been completely rewritten recently, getting rid of the ghosts from the past...

Supported versions



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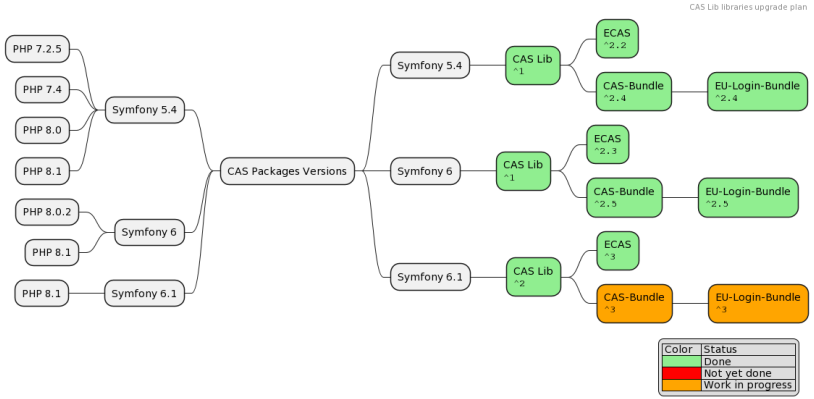
PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP
└ Supported versions

In ECPHP, we love the SOLID principles, do you know them?
The SOLID ideas are:
- The Single-responsibility principle: "There should never be more than one reason for a class to change.". In other words, every class should have only one responsibility.
- The Open–closed principle: "Software entities should be open for extension, but closed for modification."
- The Liskov substitution principle: "Functions that use pointers or references to base classes must be able to use objects of derived classes without knowing it.". In other words, use interfaces!
- The Interface segregation principle: "Clients should not be forced to depend upon interfaces that they do not use."
- The Dependency inversion principle: "Depend upon abstractions and not concretions."
If you really are interested, we can do a small session about it... but only if you really are interested! :)

Supported versions



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PHP authentication bundles

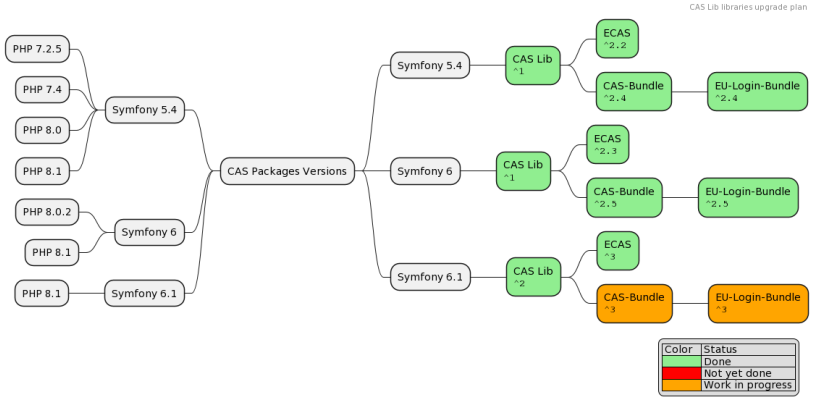
└ PHP

└ Supported versions

CAS Lib has been completely rewritten for many reasons:
- The main CAS service was stateful. The CAS service was holding input data in some class properties. Basically the Symfony request was injected in the constructor. This forced us to tweak the Symfony container to do so and it reduce the flexibility of the library and introduces bugs at some point, see (https://github.com/ecphp/cas-bundle/issues/63)

- The CAS service was mutable, because of the aforementioned reason

Supported versions



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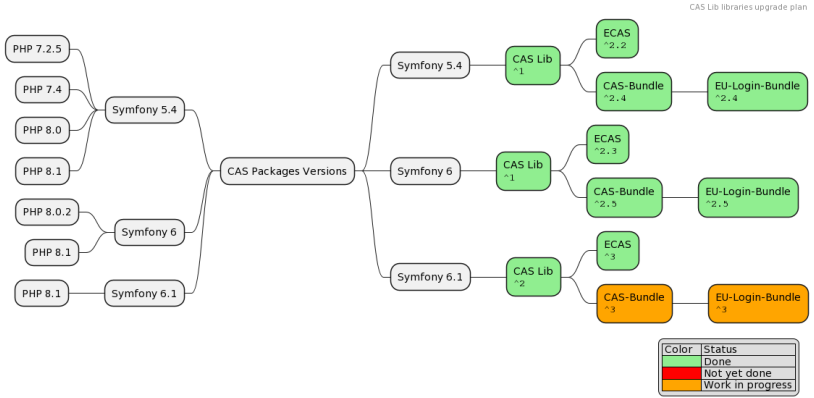
PHP authentication bundles

PHP

Supported versions

There are still work to do in CAS Lib, like rewriting the tests using PHPUnit. Indeed, currently we use PHPSpec, but we would like to get rid of it everywhere for some reasons. It hasn't been done in version 2 because the amount of tests is actually greater than the library itself and it would have been too much at once. Also, rewriting the tests do not require a major version bump, so it can be done at anytime. Willing to help? Contact me!

Supported versions



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PHP authentication bundles

└ PHP

└ Supported versions

Right, I think we've said enough on the CAS protocol. What about the rest?

Other protocols

- API GW Authentication > lexik/LexikJWTAuthenticationBundle
- EU Login API Authentication > facile-it/php-openid-client

It is true that there won't be so much details about other bundles because they basically rely on existing popular libraries that are working well since years.

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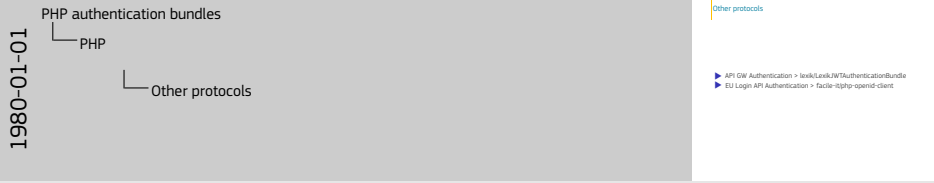
Other protocols

- API GW Authentication > lexik/LexikJWTAuthenticationBundle
- EU Login API Authentication > facile-it/php-openid-client



For API GW Authentication, it relies on LexikJWTAuthenticationBundle, the only added value of the bundle is a custom KeyLoader which automatically retrieve the JWKS keys automatically with a failsafe mechanism.

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Other protocols

- API GW Authentication > lexik/LexikJWTAuthenticationBundle
- EU Login API Authentication > facile-it/php-openid-client

For EU Login API Authentication, we rely on facile-it/php-openid-client which does the heavy lifting job for us. Nevertheless, that bundle was the most complicated one to build.

Other protocols

- API GW Authentication > lexik/LexikJWTAuthenticationBundle
- EU Login API Authentication > facile-it/php-openid-client

One of the challenge we had during its creation was the ability to generate fake valid token for the user so the application can be tested without relying on the internet.

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Thank you

PHP authentication bundles
└ PHP

1980-01-01

Thank you

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