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How to activate/deactivate two-factor authentication

The objective of this document is to describe the activation procedure for two-factor authentication at the University of Brescia.

Requirements for activating two-factor authentication (2FA)

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To use the service safely, you need to configure the generation of OTP (One-Time Password) codes.
You can do this easily from your smartphone or directly from your computer.
Using a smartphone is not necessary (if you use the plugin)

Option A: Browser Extension (Recommended)
You can install a dedicated plugin in your browser (Chrome, Firefox, Edge, etc.). This will allow you to generate login codes directly from your computer, without having to use your phone.

Option B: Smartphone App
The best and most used solutions are:

- **Google Authenticator**
- **Microsoft Authenticator**

Both are free and available in the stores for both Android and iPhone (iOS) devices.

The two options can be used together.

Important Warning & Backup

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During 2FA activation, the system will provide you with a QR Code and an alphanumeric secret code.
This data is used to link your app or plugin to your account.

Make a backup: It is crucial to immediately save the QR Code or secret code in a safe place. Once the registration is complete, this data will never be visible again. The following slides will explain how to make a backup.

In case of loss: If you change your phone or lose the app without having backed up the code, you will not be able to recover it. The only solution will be to deactivate 2FA from your account and repeat the entire activation procedure from scratch

How to backup the QR CODE

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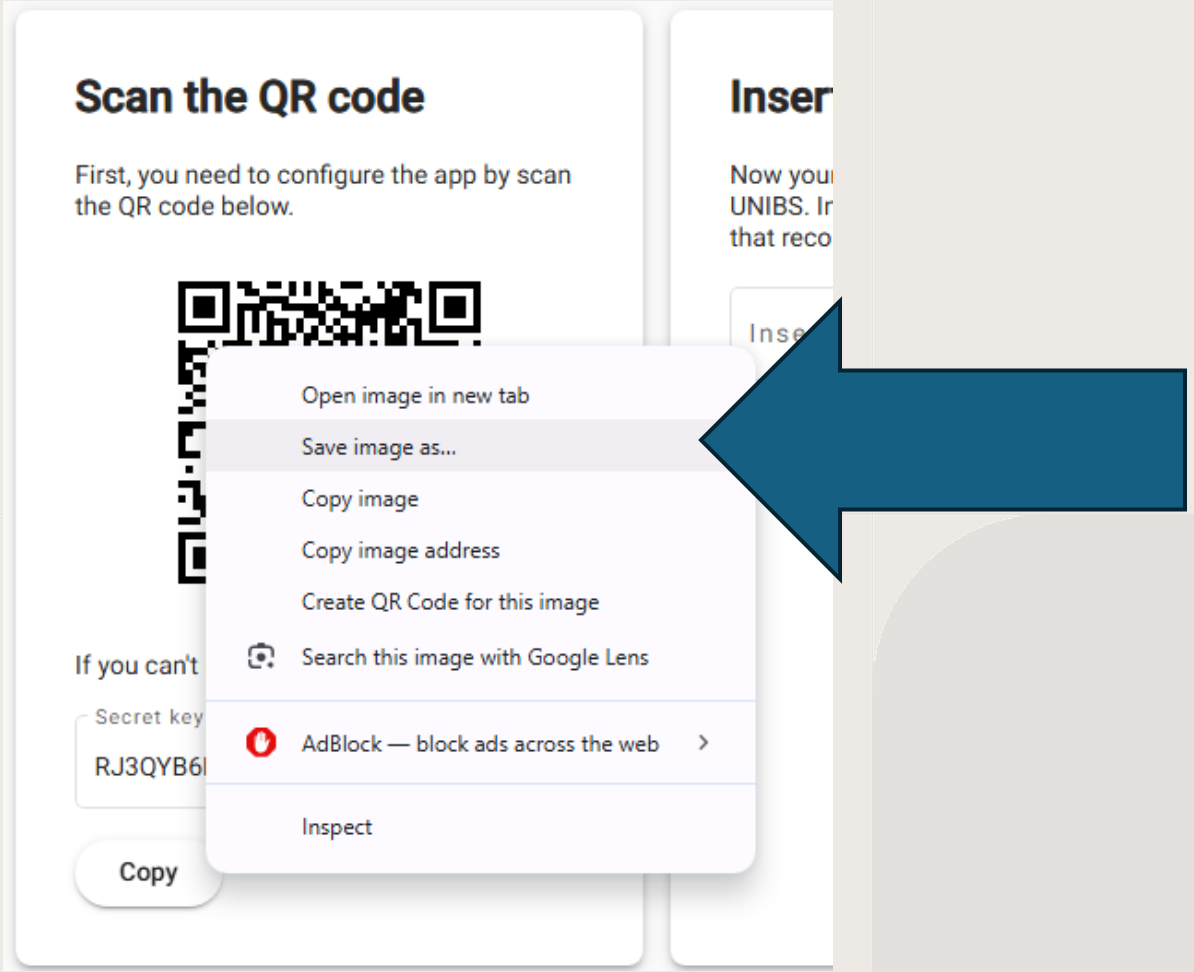
Securing the QR CODE is very important in case of any kind of problem.
The suggested method is to save the QR CODE image, and then keep this image in a safe place or print the code.

To save the QR CODE, simply right-click on the QR CODE during the initial phase and select "Save image as".

A file will be downloaded that can be saved, ideally in an easily accessible place.
Printing the code is also a good idea.



How to backup the secret key

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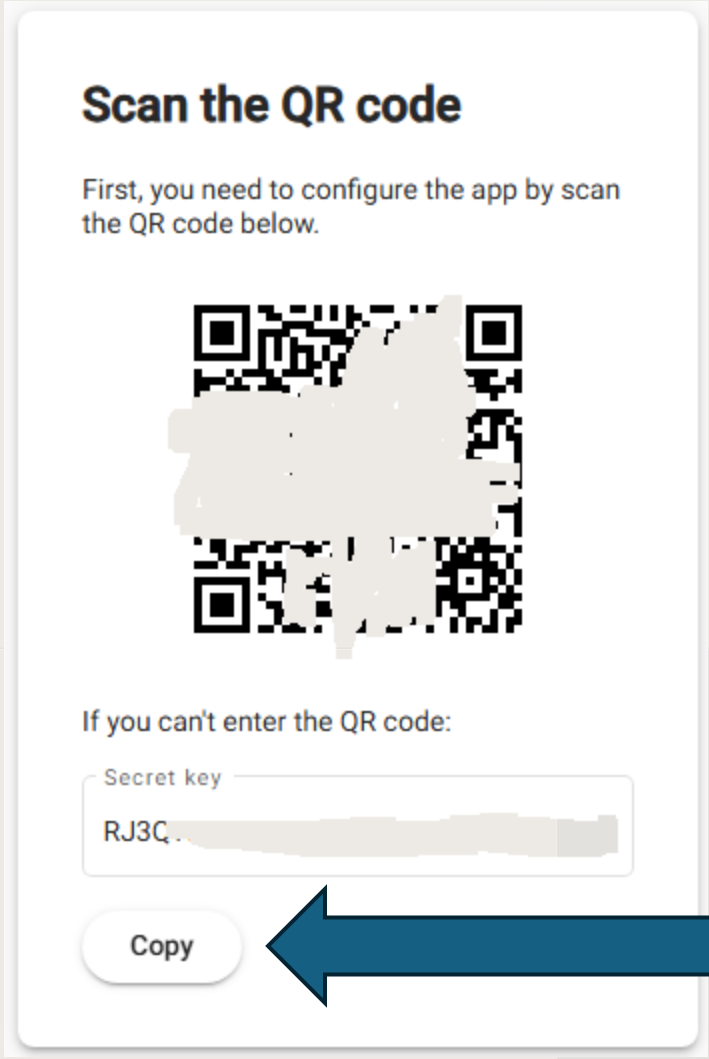
Backing up the secret key is relatively simple: just click the "COPIA" (*Copy*) button, then save the string in a document.

The alphanumeric combination must be kept in a safe place; it can also be printed.

Taking pictures of the QR CODE or the secret key is not recommended.



Setting up the Browser Extension (Option A)

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Opening your phone every time you use the computer can be annoying; you can install a plug-in in common browsers that allows you to get the 2FA code immediately. It can also be useful when your phone is not immediately accessible (forgotten).

There are several plug-ins that can be used; a very simple open-source version is *authenticator.cc*.

Attention! To use the plugin, you must save the secret key or QR code during the two-factor authentication activation phase. It is best to save the secret key during the 2FA registration phase.

The plugin can be installed in the following browsers:

- Link for Google Chrome
- Link for Firefox
- Link for Microsoft Edge

Setting up the Browser Extension, Google Chrome

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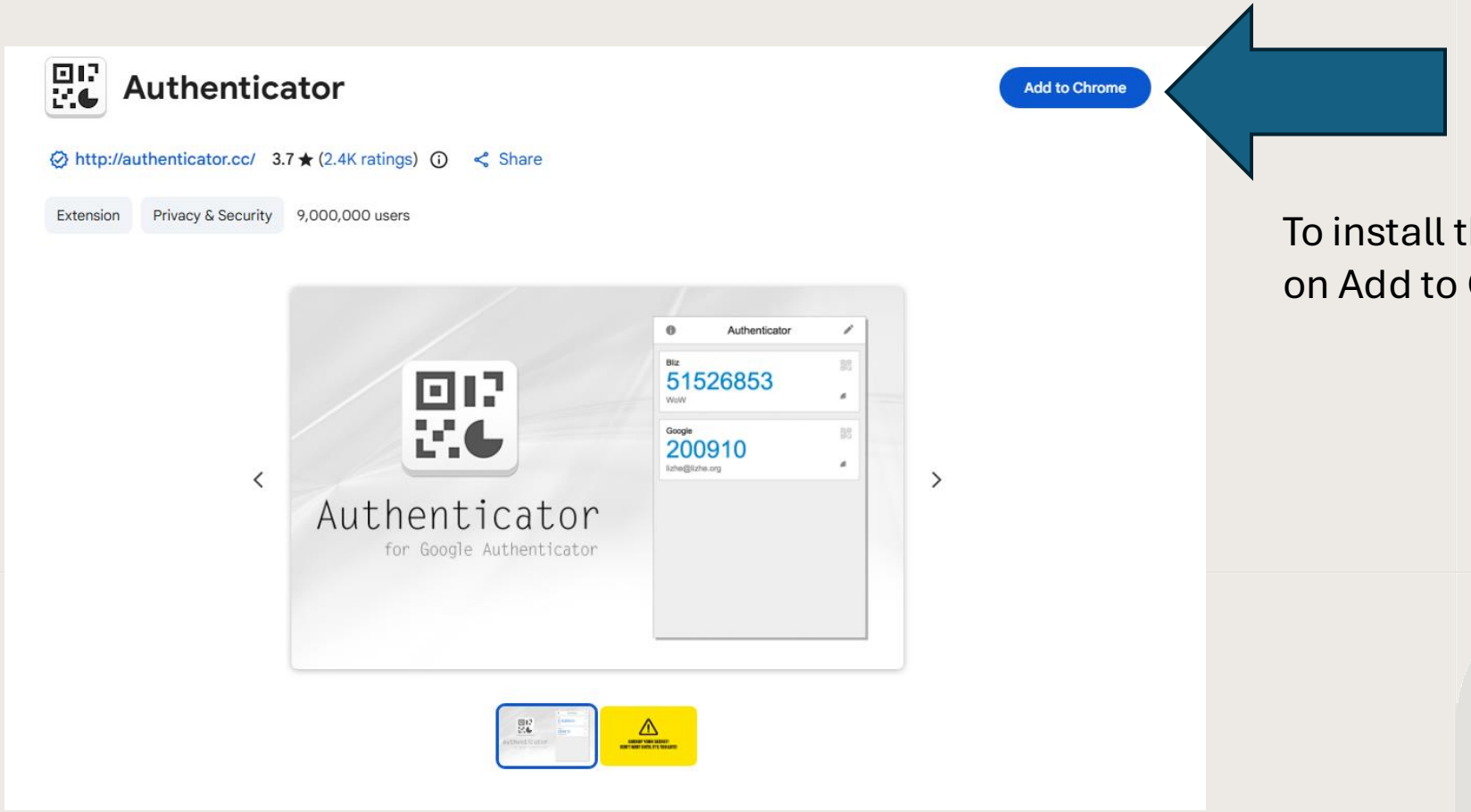

To install the plug-in, click on Add to Chrome.

Link for Google Chrome

Setting up the Browser Extension, Mozilla Firefox

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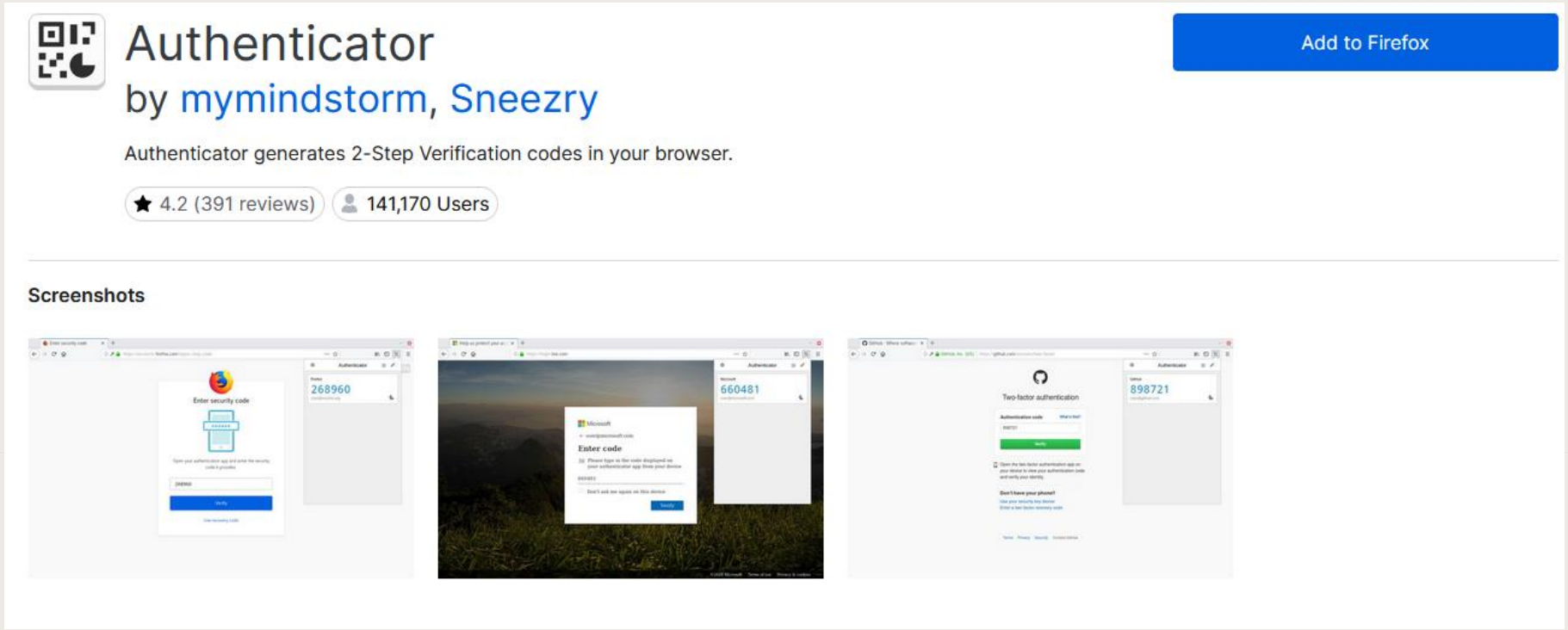

Select "Add to firefox"

Link for Firefox

Setting up the Browser Extension, Microsoft Edge

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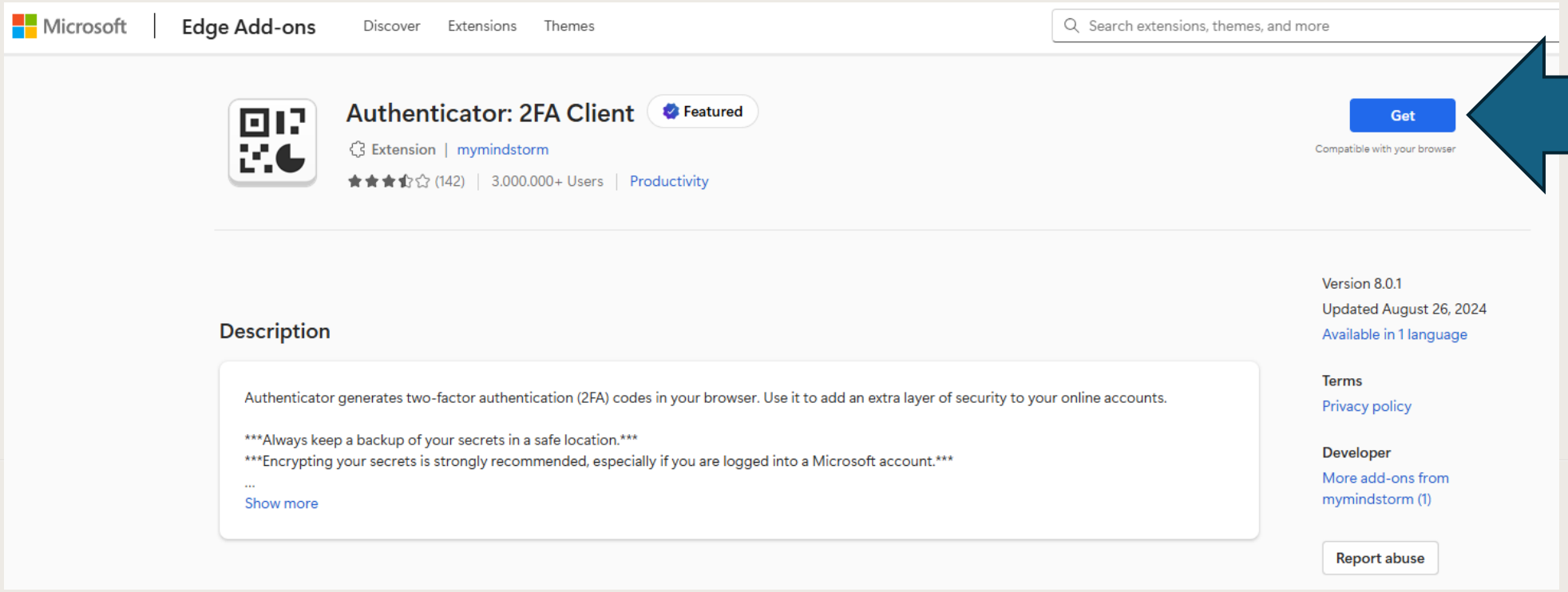

On Microsoft Edge, click on Get.

[Link for Microsoft Edge]

How to "pin" the plug-in.

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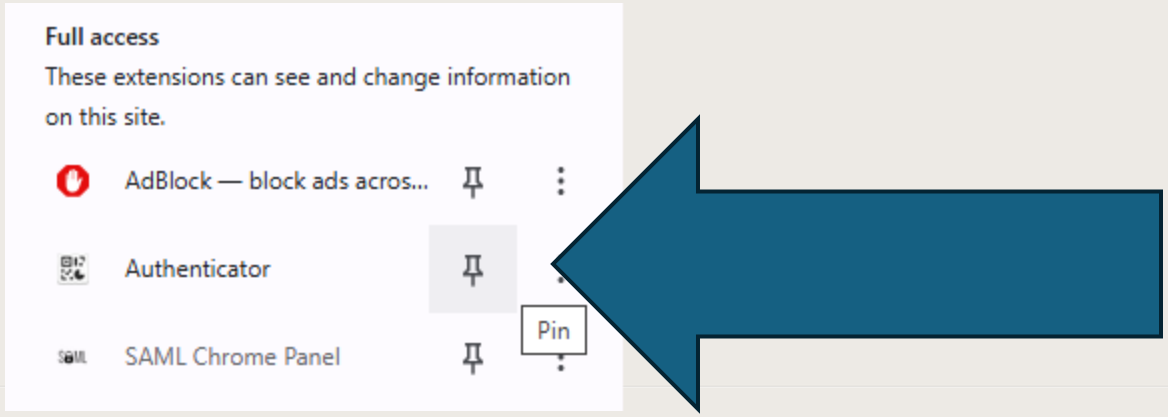
After installing the plug-in, it will be available in your browser; first, it is advisable to "pin" it so it is clearly visible in the taskbar. The "pin" will appear with a pushpin icon. After pinning it, it will appear as a small QR code icon.



After pinning it, it will appear as a small QR code icon.

Activating autocomplete

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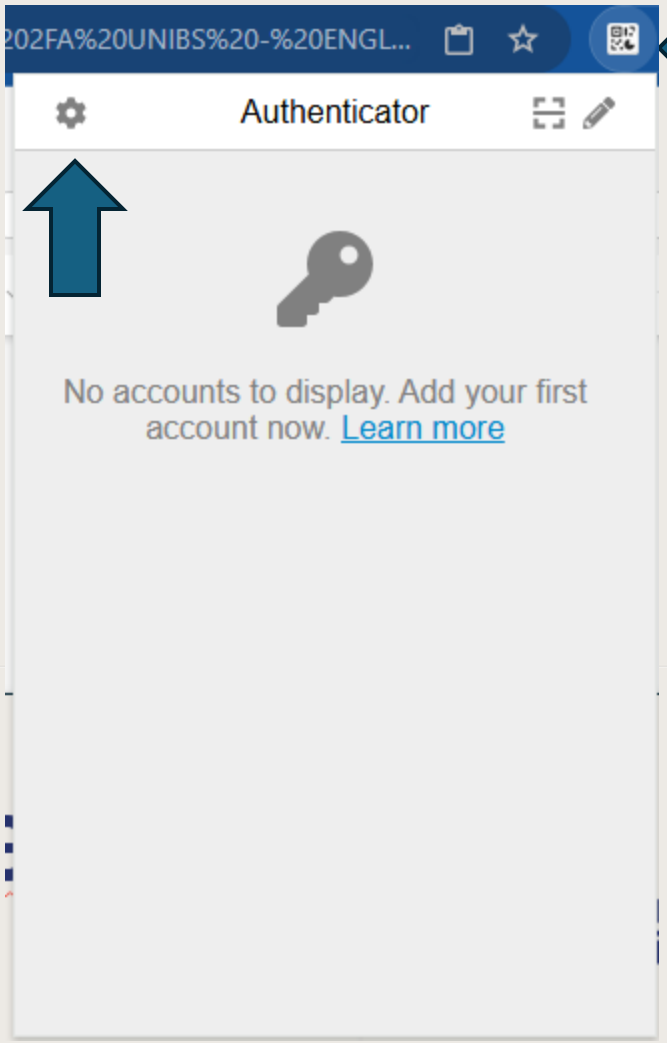
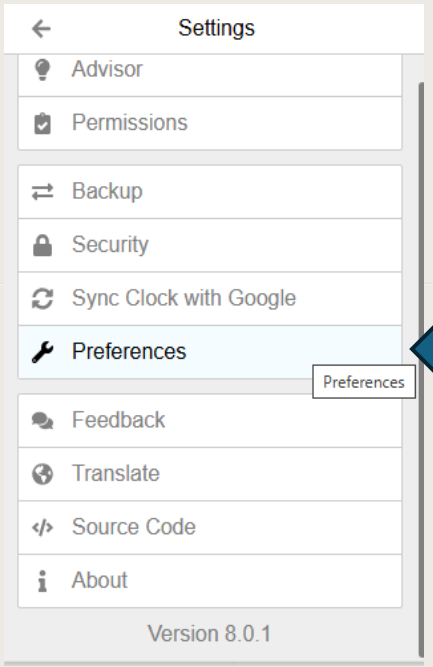
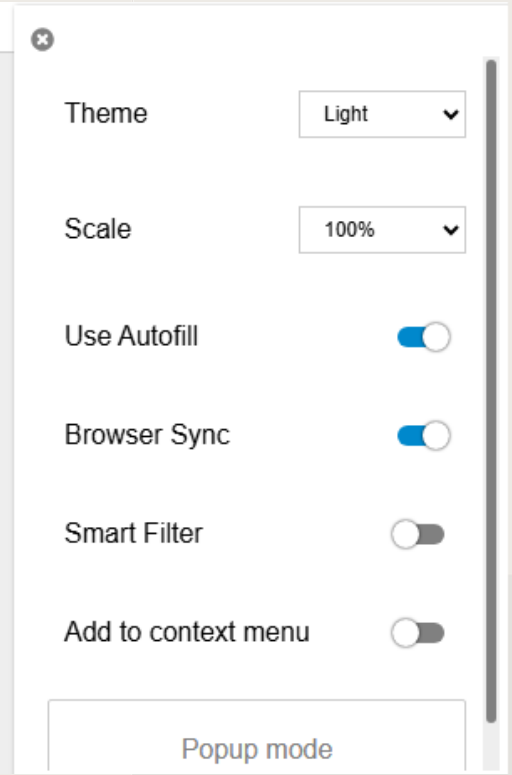


Click on the plug-in, then on the gear icon



Select "preferences"

Activate autocomplete



To use the automatic insertion of the 2FA code, you must enable the autocomplete option.

Browser plug-in: Entering the secret key

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After installing the plug-in and activating autocomplete, the application is ready to use; the next step is to enter the secret key to allow the generation of authentication codes.

The precise procedure for activating two-factor authentication will be described later.

The advantage of autocomplete is that the code will be inserted automatically after clicking on the code, avoiding copy/paste.

Alternatively, you can also use the smartphone application; the best approach is to use them together, activating 2FA on both the smartphone and the plug-in, to have a complete solution.

MacOS: safari's native solution

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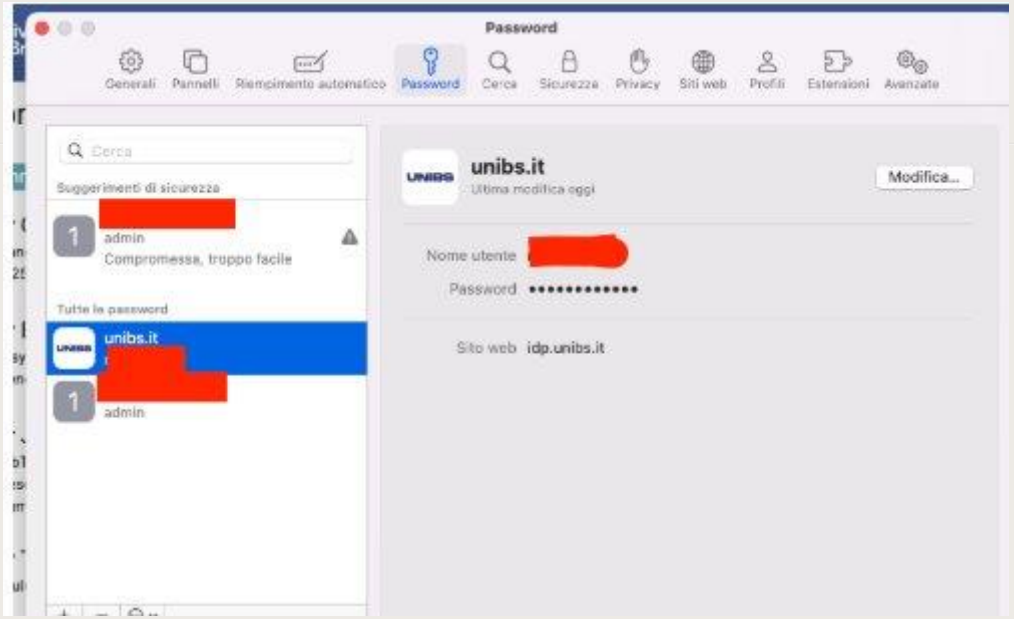
In the Apple environment, it is not necessary to install the plug-in if you are using the Safari browser.
If you use Safari's built-in password feature, when you create a profile for the unibs.it website, you can enter the secret key directly there. This serves the same function as the plug-in. The steps are as follows:

- Open the Safari browser
- Click on Safari → Preferences
- Create the unibs.it profile (if it does not exist)
- If you have previously used Safari to access the unibs.it website,
- the profile will already be present.



MacOS: safari's native solution

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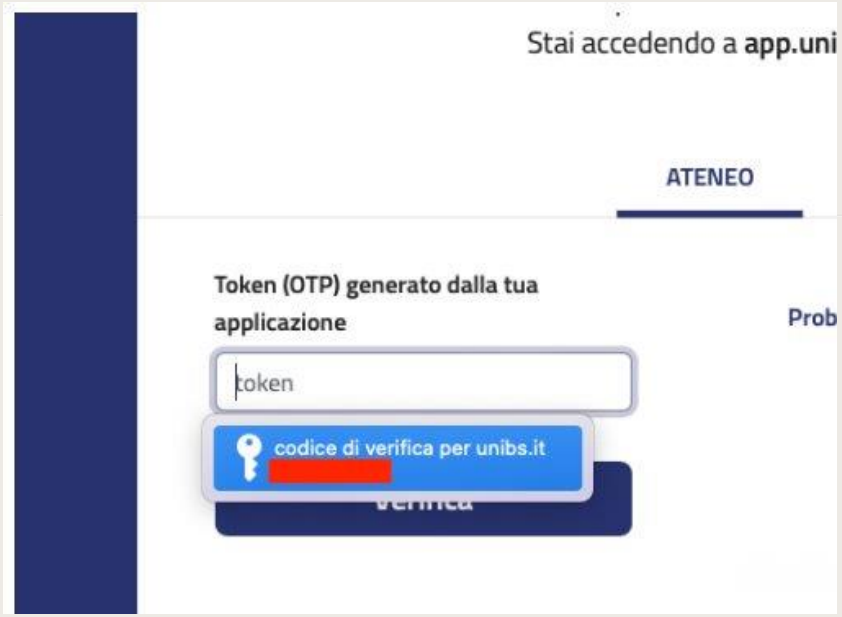
After following the previous steps and selecting unibs.it, you will be able to access the configuration screen.
You need to proceed with entering the secret key:

- Select "Enter setup key" or, in older versions, "Verification code" will appear
- Enter the key in the appropriate field and confirm
- The OTP code will be inserted automatically



Microsoft Authenticator installation guide

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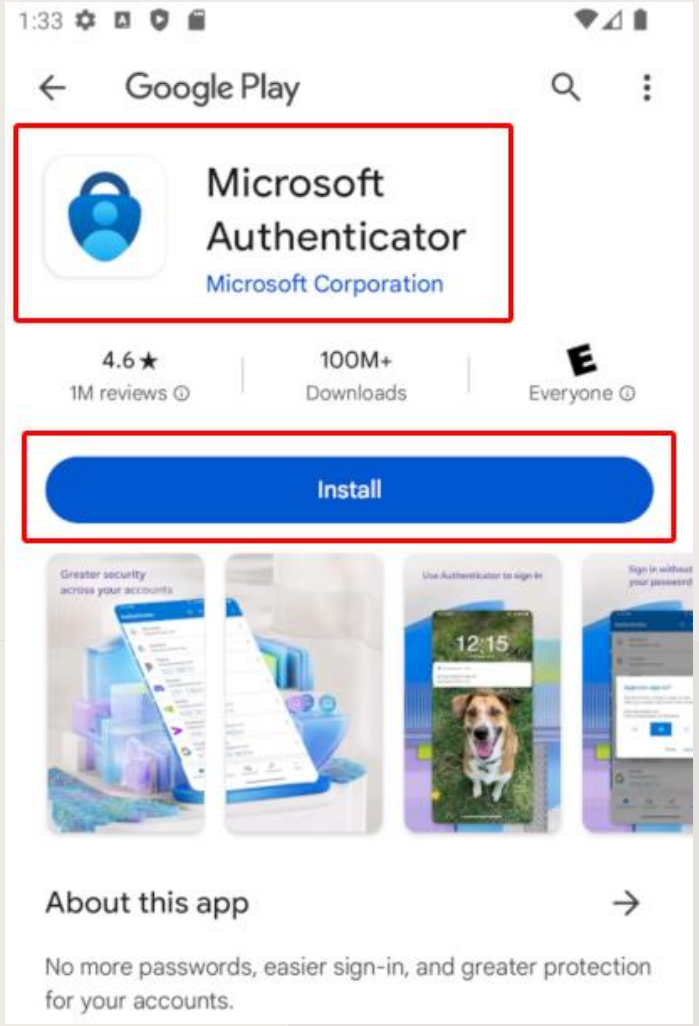
Step 1: Access your smartphone's store.
The application is completely free and safe. Open your phone's default store:

- **Play Store** (if you use an Android smartphone)
- **App Store** (if you use an iPhone or iPad).

Step 2: Search and install the official app.
Use the store's search bar and type exactly "**Microsoft Authenticator**".

Be careful not to confuse it: verify that the icon matches a blue padlock enclosed in a shield on a white background.
Press "Install" or "Get" and wait for the download.



Microsoft Authenticator installation guide

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Step 3: First launch and initial settings
Once you open the app, you will see a welcome screen.

Access with a Microsoft account:
You will be prompted to log in with your personal Microsoft email address. This step is optional, but highly recommended because it allows cloud backup of your codes if you ever change or lose your phone.
How to skip this step:
If you prefer to complete this step later you can skip this step, touch the "Skip" button or the "X" at the top right.

Check device's camera permission:
During the first steps, the app will ask for permission to access the device's camera. Be sure to click "Allow", as it will be essential to scan the QR Code and link your account.

Google Authenticator installation guide

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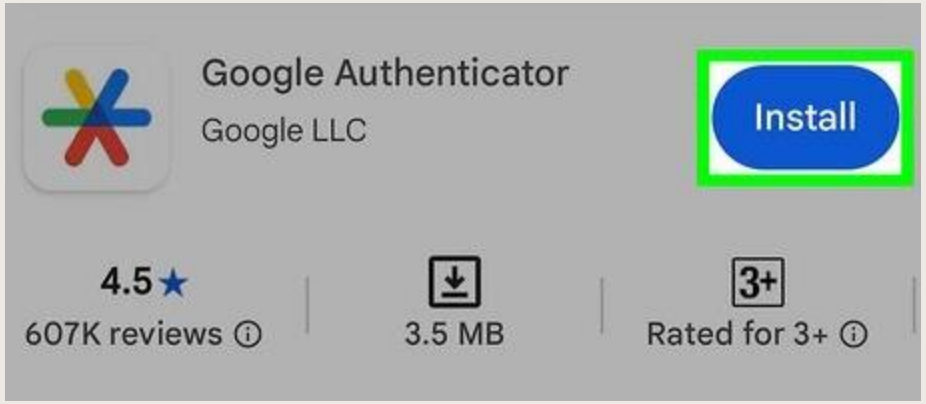
Step 1: Access your smartphone's store
The application is safe and completely free.
To download it, open your phone's official store:

- **Play Store** (if you use an Android device).
- **App Store** (if you use an iPhone).

Step 2: Search and install the official app.
In the store's search bar, type exactly "Google Authenticator".
Attention to the icon: to be sure to download the correct application created by Google, verify that the icon features a multicolored asterisk. Press "Install" or "Get" and wait for the download to complete.



How to install Google Authenticator

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Step 3: First launch and Backup activation
Once the application is open, just press the "Get started" button to proceed

Cloud saving: The app will suggest linking your personal Google account (e.g., Gmail address). I highly recommend accepting: this will enable the synchronization of codes in the cloud. It means that, in case of theft, loss, or change of the device, you will be able to immediately recover all your logins simply by logging in on the new phone!

Offline use: If you prefer, you can still decide to use the app without linking the account, but in this case, the codes will only remain saved in the physical memory of that phone (at your own risk in case of failure).

A detail not to forget: When you are ready to add your first account, the app will ask for permission to use the camera. Be sure to press "Allow", as you will need it immediately after to scan the QR Code and activate two-factor security!

Activating 2FA

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Step 1: Access the dedicated portal

For convenience, we recommend doing this using a computer, so you will have the screen free to scan with your phone.

Connect to this address: https://unibs.2fa.cineca.it/

Step 2: Generate and scan the QR Code

Once logged into the portal, follow the on-screen instructions until a QR Code (the classic black and white checkered square) appears on the screen.

Take your smartphone and open the app (Google Authenticator or Microsoft Authenticator) you just configured. Look for the "+" button or the "Add account" option and select "Scan barcode / QR Code". Point the phone's camera at the computer screen to scan the code.

Step 3: Confirm activation

As soon as you have scanned the QR Code, your app will automatically start generating 6-digit codes (which change every 30 seconds). The portal will ask you to enter one of these codes to verify that everything works correctly and confirm the activation.

IMPORTANT! Save the QR code image and the secret code that will be shown to you.

In the next slides, all the necessary steps will be illustrated.

Step 1: Enter the website

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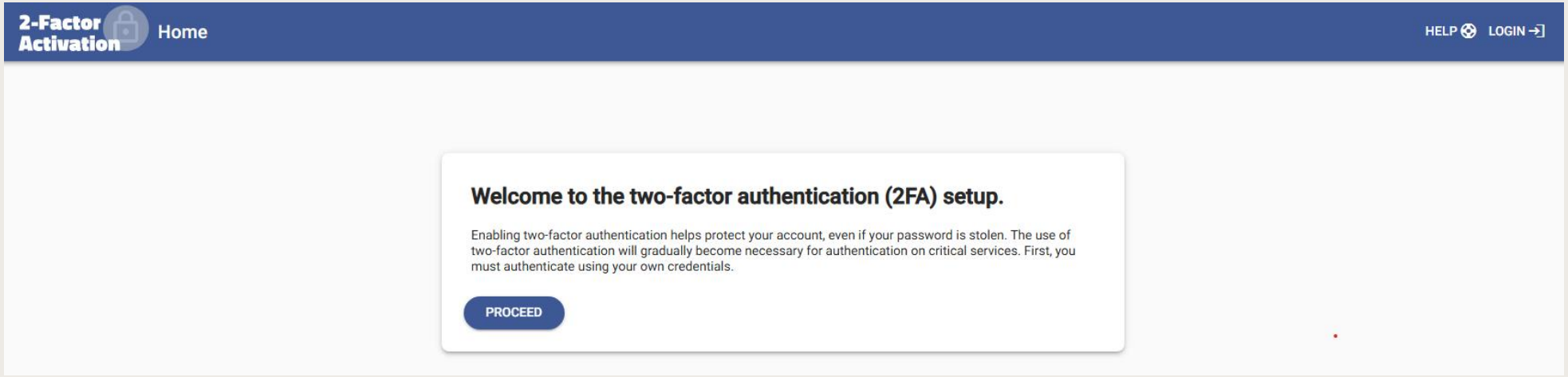
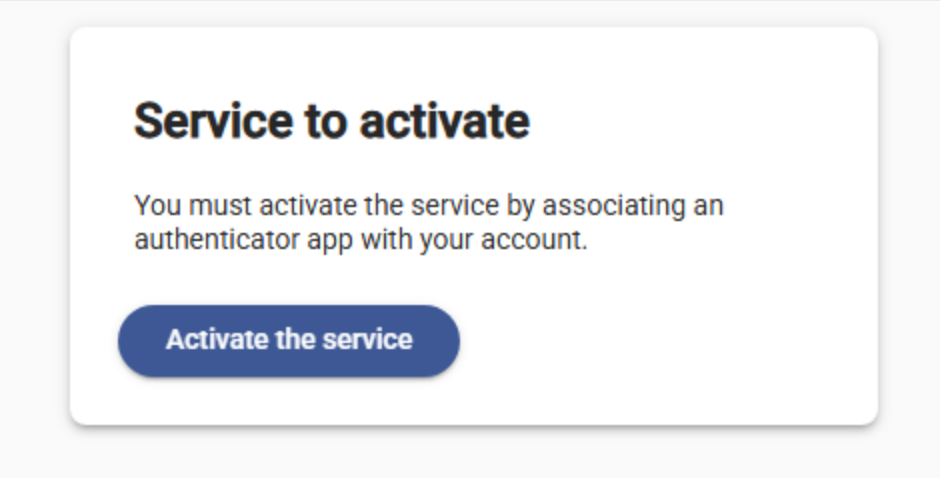
After connecting to the website https://unibs.2fa.cineca.it/, a screen will appear:



To proceed, click on "PROCED". Standard login credentials will be requested.

Step 1: Enter the website

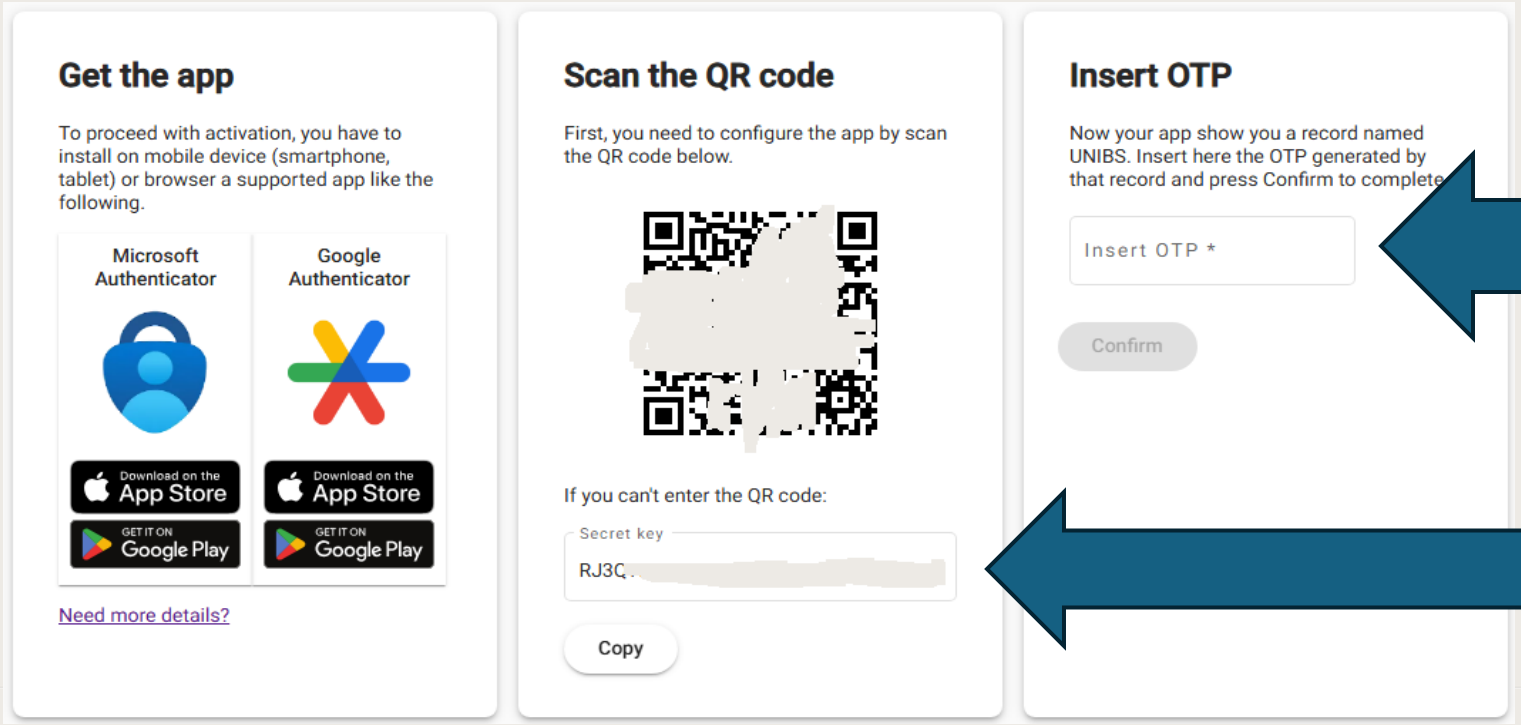
When activating the service for the first time, a specific screen will appear:



To proceed with the activation, you must click on "Attiva il servizio".

Step 2: Scan the QR Code

The following will be shown to you:



Enter the generated code here to confirm activation

Save the key in a safe place

Since we have already installed the authenticator previously, the next phase is to open the app and scan the QR code (smartphone app).
After registering the QR code, the app will start generating codes, finally, you must insert the app's code in the "inserisci OTP" section and click confirm.
For the plug-in, you need to save the secret key, which can be done by clicking the "copia" button.
IMPORTANT! Save the QR code **image** and the code that will be shown to you.

Step 2: Scan the QR Code

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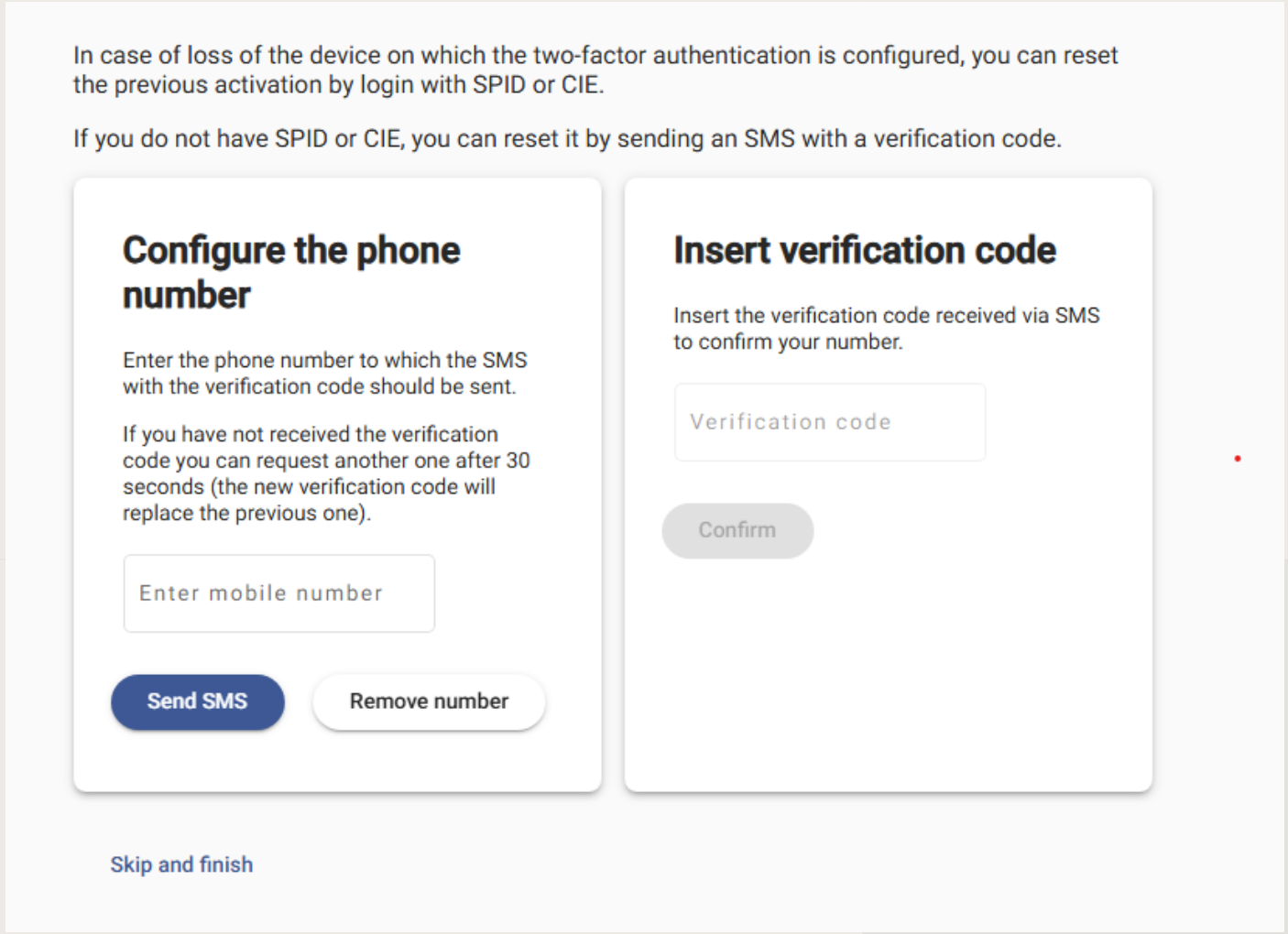
Finally, you will be asked to enter a phone number as a recovery procedure.
This procedure is not mandatory **but is highly recommended.**
After entering the phone number, you can click on "**invia SMS**" (send SMS), enter the corresponding code in the section on the right, and confirm with the confirm button.



Step 3: Verify activation

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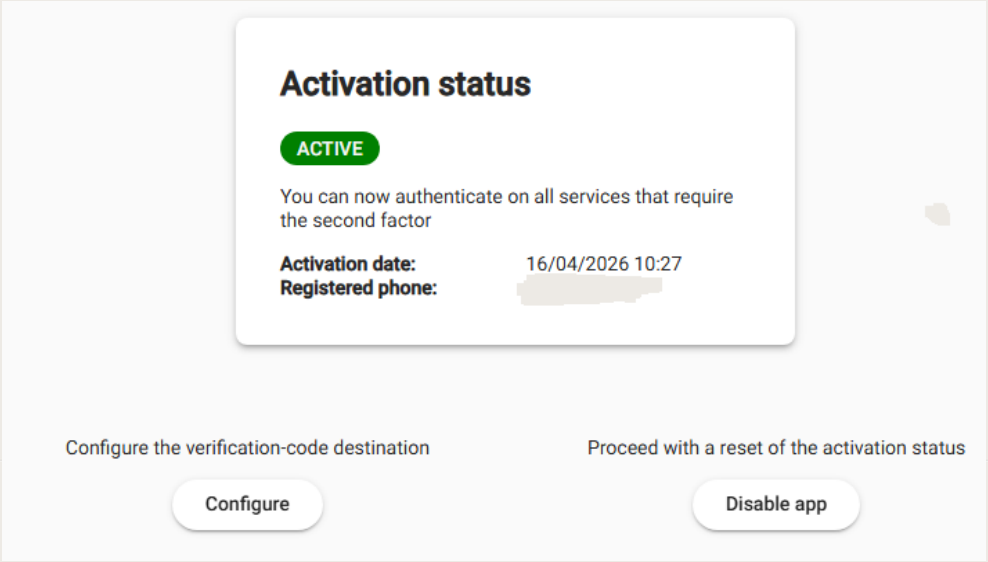
If the service has been activated correctly, the following will appear:



You can disable 2FA by clicking on the "Disattiva app" button or make changes by clicking "Configura". For example, if you want to modify the registered telephone number.
The service is correctly working in this case.

How to add the secret key in the browser's plug-in

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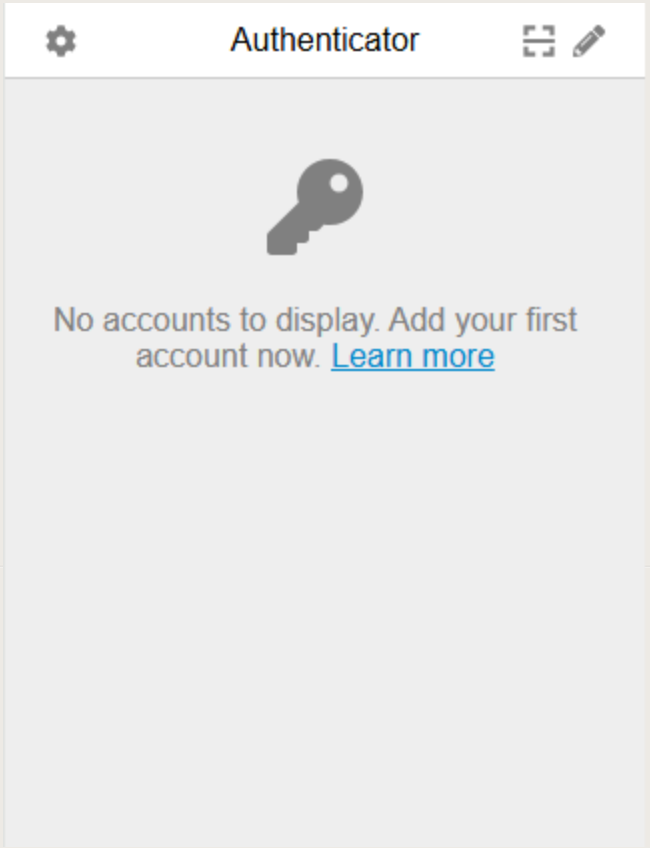
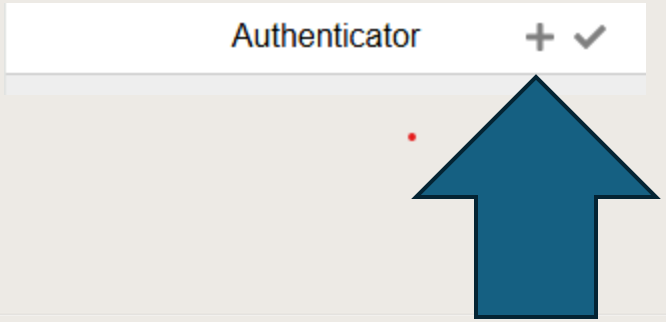
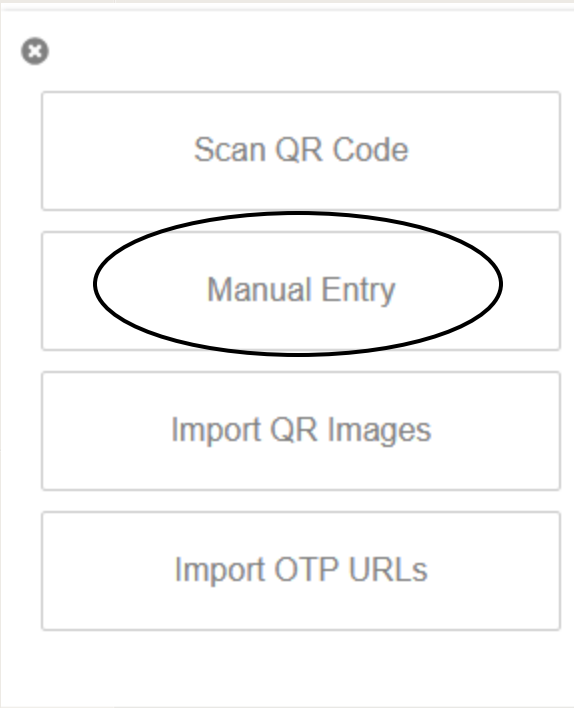


To start the process, click on the pencil icon



Click on "+" to add the key

Select "Manual Entry"



How to add the secret key

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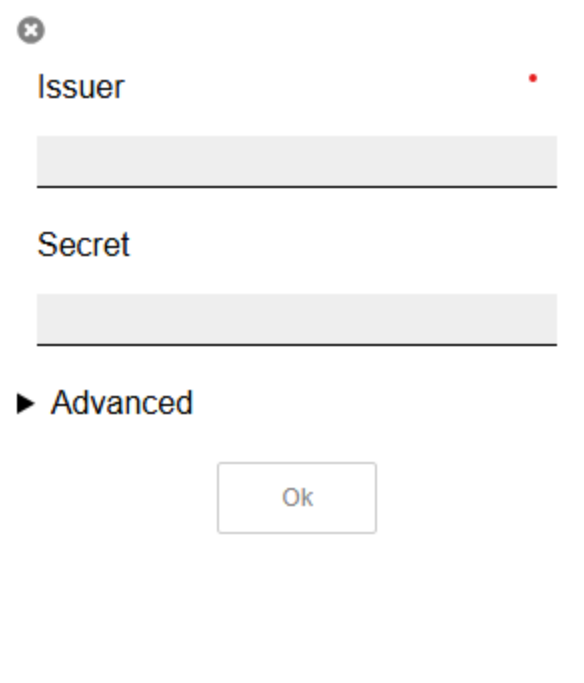

We have reached the final step. In the 'Emittente del codice' (Issuer) field, you need to enter an identifying name, such as '2FA UNIBS' or any other name to clearly identify what it is for. In the secret key section, you must enter the secret word we saw previously.

Once this operation is complete, the system will start generating codes. If all the steps have been performed correctly, thanks to the autocomplete feature, you will just need to click the numerical combination to automatically insert it.

How to disable 2FA

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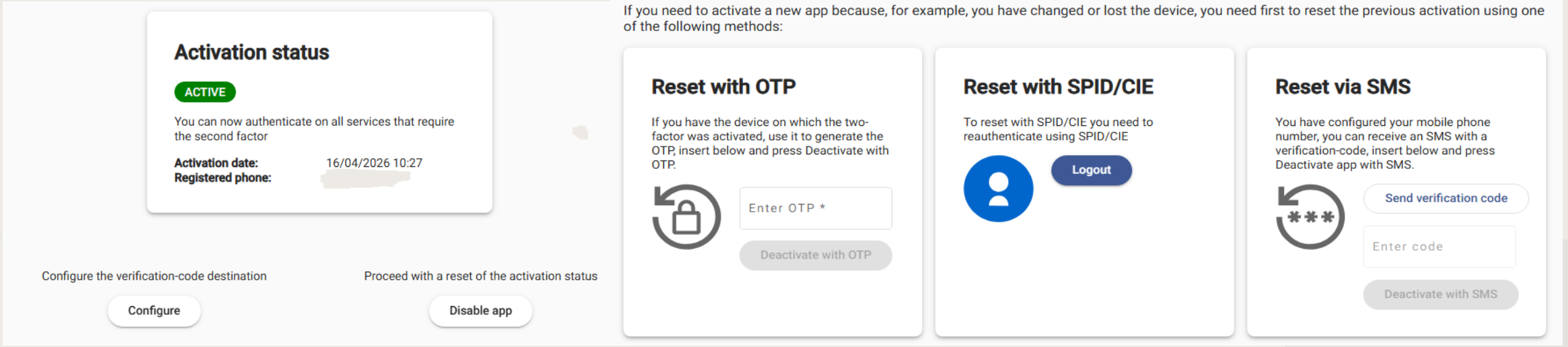
To disable the service, after logging into https://unibs.2fa.cineca.it/enrollment-status, you must select "**disattiva app**" *(disable app)*. From here, you can disable 2FA in three ways:

- Using an OTP
- Using SPID
- Using an SMS



*After choosing the deactivation method (for example, via OTP), you must enter the code and click '**Disattiva con OTP**'. This will successfully disable the service. You can also deactivate the service via SMS or SPID. However, please note that using SPID/CIE requires you to log in again with your digital identity.*

Where can I find help?

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If you need assistance, you can always open a ticket on the ***servicedesk.unibs.it*** *website. When submitting your request, please provide all the details regarding the issue you are experiencing. The following pages will outline some of the main scenarios where problems might occur.*

Problem: The app does not scan the QR Code.

- **Cause:** The app does not have permission to use the camera.
- **Solution:** Go to your phone settings and allow the app (Google or Microsoft Authenticator) access to the camera.

Problem: The camera is broken or will not read the code anyway.

- **Solution:** Below the QR Code on the screen, there is a text string called "**Chiave segreta**" *(Secret key)*. In the app, choose the option to enter the code manually and type that key.

Phone loss, theft, or replacement

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Situation A: The user saved the QR Code or the secret key during registration.

- **Solution:** Simply download the app on the new phone, scan the previously saved QR Code (or enter the text key), and the app will start generating codes again.

Situation B: The user did NOT save the backup codes.

- **Solution:** The user must deactivate their current 2FA and restart the procedure from scratch.
- **How to do it:** They must connect to https://unibs.2fa.cineca.it/enrollment-status and click "**Disattiva app**" *(Disable app)*.
- **They can force the deactivation in two alternative ways without needing the app:**
  - **Reset with SPID/CIE:** By logging in again using their digital identity.
  - **Reset with SMS:** If they provided their phone number during registration, they can request a verification code via SMS to unlock the account.

Issues with telephone number and SMS

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Problem: The confirmation or reset SMS does not arrive.

- **Solution:** Tell the user to wait at least 30 seconds. Afterwards, the system will allow them to request a new code (please note that the new code will invalidate the previous one).

Problem: The user has changed their phone number.

- **Solution:** They must access the status page, click "**Configura**" *(Configure)*, and update the destination for the verification code by entering the new number.

The hassle of using a smartphone

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Problem: The user works at their PC all day and finds it frustrating to use their phone for every login.

- **Solution:** Recommend installing the browser plugin (such as authenticator.cc for Chrome, Firefox, or Edge).
- **Requirement:** To configure it, they will need to enter the issuer (*unibs.it*) and the "**Chiave segreta**" *(Secret key)*, which they must have saved during the initial activation.