A European Approach to Micro-credentials

AQU Catalunya webinar

Klara ENGELS-PERENYI
European Commission

16 June 2021

European Commission

# A European Approach to Micro-Credentials
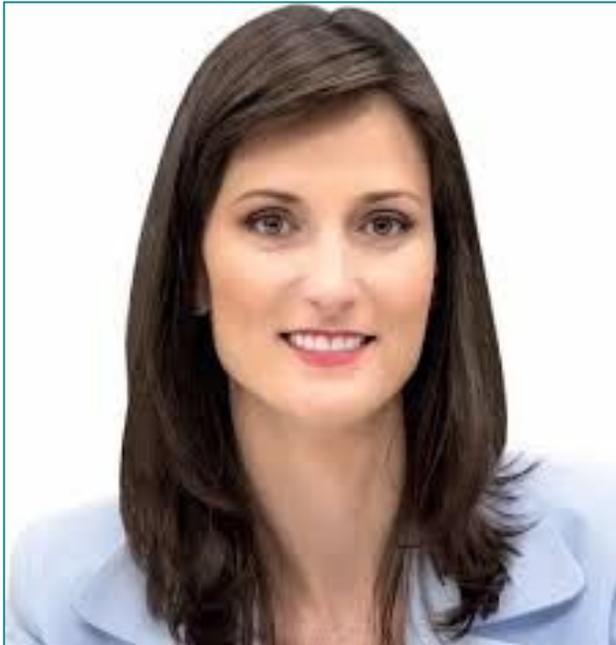
An initiative of
European Commissioners
Mariya Gabriel and Nicolas
Schmit

European Skills Agenda

Achieving a European
Education Area by 2025

Digital Education
Action Plan

European Commission
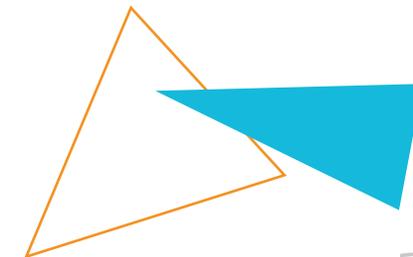
Importance of acting now

Policy challenges
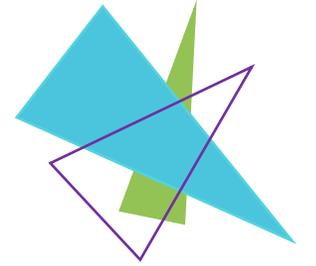
1. Growing number of people need to update their knowledge, skills and competences (green and digital transitions, COVID-19 recovery)

2. Growing need for education and training to be more learner-centred and accessible for all

3. Rising number of micro-credentials globally and in Europe, but:

- value and understanding of micro-credentials not always clear

- wide range of providers (education and training, private sector)

- questions on quality, recognition, transparency and portability of micro-credentials between and within countries, between sectors, from one job to another

European Commission

Micro-credentials: action at European level

## EU SKILLS AGENDA

✓ Develop **European standards for quality and transparency**.

✓ Explore the inclusion of **micro-credentials in qualifications frameworks**.

✓ Make it easier for individuals to **store and showcase** acquired micro-credentials through **Europass**

EUROPEAN EDUCATION AREA

✓ Common definition and common approach

✓ EU action will support **building trust** in **micro-credentials across Europe**

✓ Have all the necessary steps in place by 2025 for their wider use, **portability** and **recognition**

Higher Education Consultation Group

National Authorities

Higher Education Institutions

European Universities Alliances

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES
Erasmus+

Quality Assurance Agencies

European stakeholder organisations
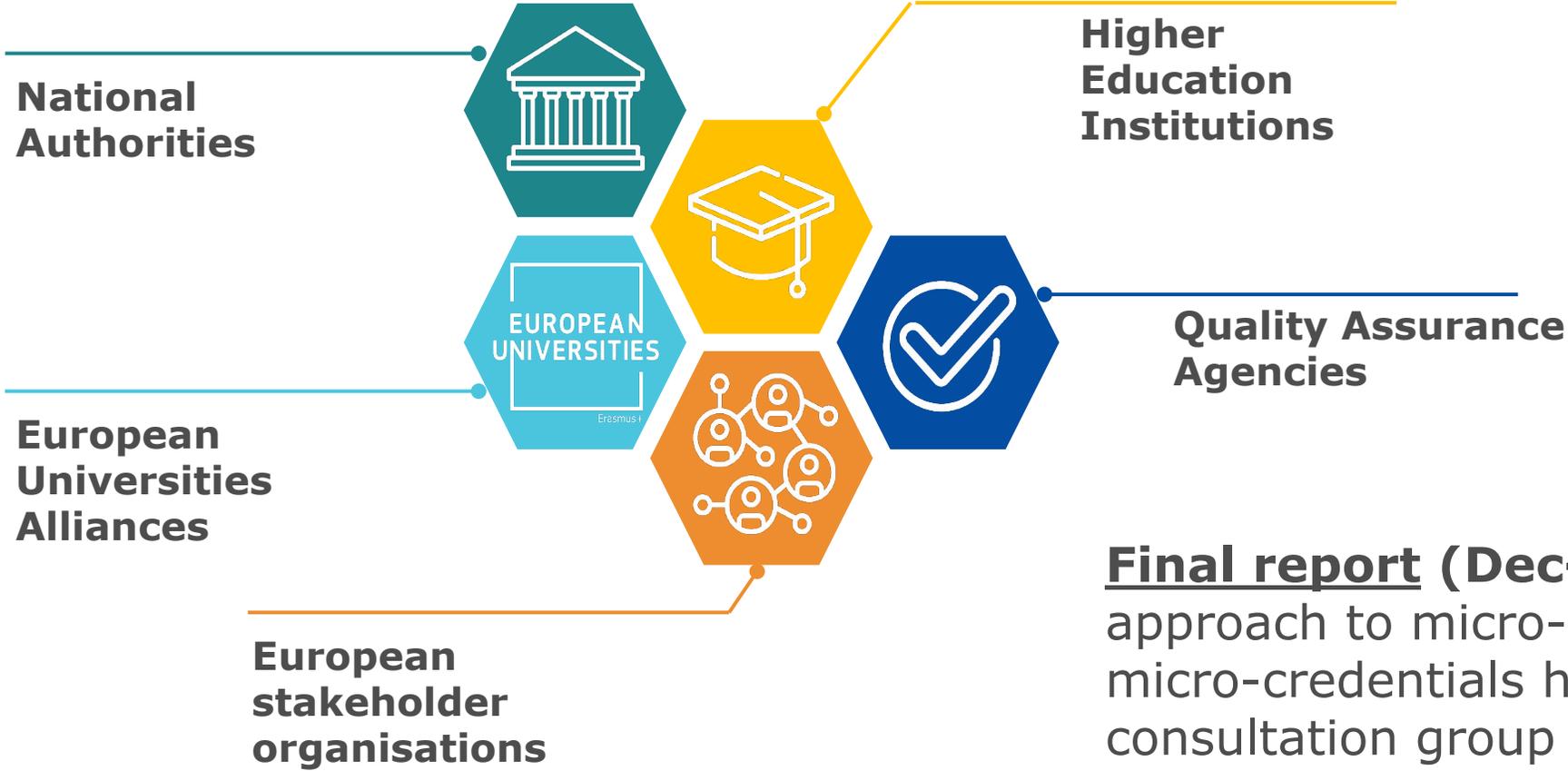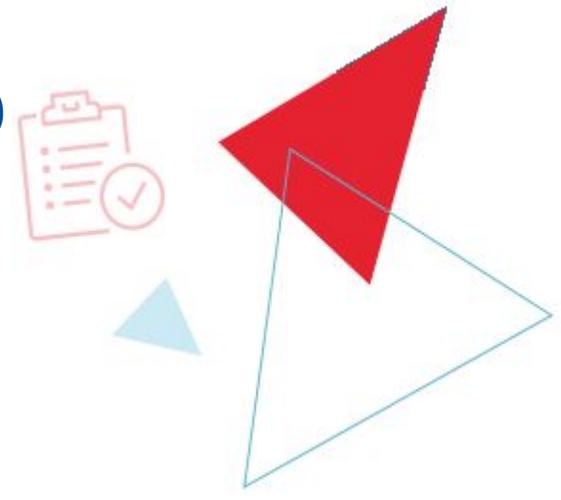
Final report (Dec-20): A European approach to micro-credentials - output of the micro-credentials higher education consultation group (and executive summary)

European Commission

Working definition
-Higher Education Consultation Group-

A micro-credential is a proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience. These learning outcomes have been assessed against transparent standards.

The proof is contained in a certified document that lists the name of the holder, the achieved learning outcomes, the assessment method, the awarding body and, where applicable, the qualifications framework level and the credits gained. Micro-credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared, are portable and may be combined into larger credentials or qualifications. They are underpinned by quality assurance following agreed standards

European Commission

The essence of an EU Standard
-Higher Education Consultation Group-

- Identification of the **learner**
- **Title** of the micro-credential
- **Country/Region of the issuer**
- **Awarding body**
- Date of issuing
- **Learning outcomes**
- **Level** (and cycle, if applicable) of the learning experience leading to the micro-credential (EQF, QF-EHEA)
- **Notional workload** needed to achieve the learning outcomes (in **ECTS**, wherever possible)
- **Type of assessment**
- **Quality assurance of the credential** and, where relevant, of the learning content

This information should offer **verifiable**, **free and secure access to data**, which is **available over time**, in order to support transparency and recognition.

- Integration / stackability options*
- Supervision and identity verification during assessment *
- Grade achieved*
- Further information*

* Optional information

European Commission

Building blocks for take-up of micro-credentials
-Higher Education Consultation Group-

- A common and **transparent definition**
- EU standard: a defined list of **critical information elements** to describe micro-credentials
- Alignment to **National Qualifications Frameworks** (NQFs) and the **European Qualifications Framework** (EQF): defined levels, standards for describing learning outcomes
- **Quality assurance** standards
- Defined credits: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), **defined learning outcomes** and notional workload
- **Recognition**: for further studies and/or employment purposes
- Portability: **issuing, storage and sharing** of micro-credentials
- Platform solutions for the **provision and promotion** of courses leading to micro-credentials
- Incentives to **stimulate the uptake** of micro-credentials

European Commission

Diversity of micro-credentials

Micro-credentials can be obtained in a **variety of settings** (e.g. in the class-room, on line, boot camps, in-company training, as a result of validation on non-formal and informal learning) …

… and are issued by a **variety of providers** (e.g. universities, VET providers, private companies, chambers of commerce, skilled crafts and industry associations, NGOs)

European Commission

Way forward

Ongoing: Consultations covering education and training and labour market stakeholders
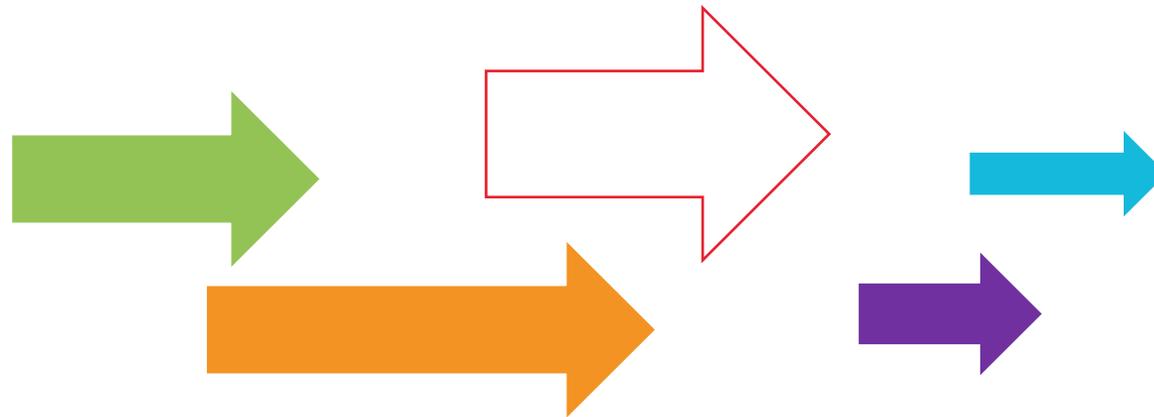
Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation in December 2021
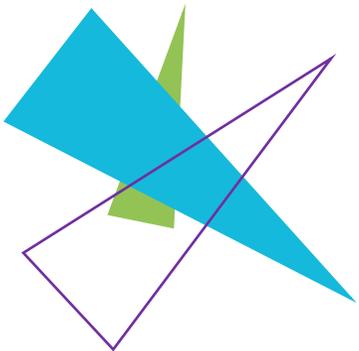
Consultations

Open Public Consultation

Empirical evidence: NESET, OECD, Cedefop, Erasmus+ projects

EU level Advisory / working groups

Social Dialogue Hearing

Education and training stakeholders

Targeted consultations

Non-formal providers

Employment stakeholders

European Parliament; Committee of Regions; European Economic and Social Committee

European Commission