



A European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability



A European approach to micro-credentials



An initiative of
European Commissioners
Mariya Gabriel and Nicolas
Schmit



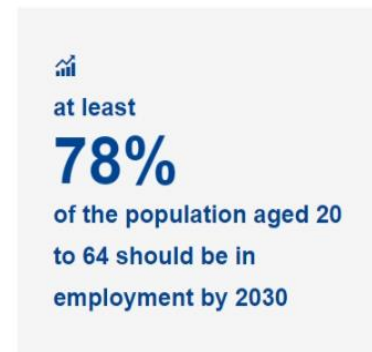
European Skills
Agenda

European
Education Area

Digital Education
Action Plan

Why a European approach for micro-credentials?

- **Policy challenge:**
Growing number of people need to update their knowledge, skills and competences (green and digital transitions, COVID-19 recovery)
- 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, transparency** and **uptake** of micro-credentials between and within countries, between sectors, from one job to another

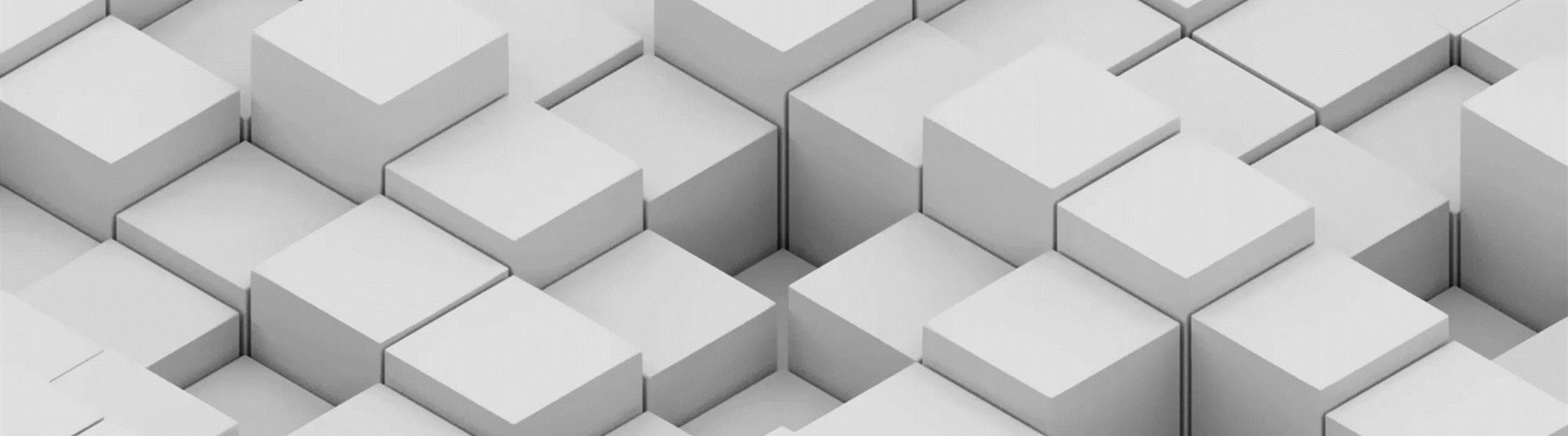


Objectives

- Enable individuals to acquire the knowledge, skills and competences they need to **thrive in a changing labour market and society** so they can benefit fully from both a socially fair recovery and just transitions to the green and digital economy and to be better equipped to deal with current and future challenges
- **Support the preparedness of providers** of micro-credentials to enhance the quality, transparency and flexibility of the learning offer in order to empower people to forge personalised learning and career pathways
- **Foster inclusiveness and equal opportunities**, contributing to the achievement of resilience, social fairness and prosperity for all, in a context of demographic change and throughout all phases of economic cycles

Scope

- Micro-credentials can be used to complement & enhance education, training, lifelong learning and employability ecosystems
- Micro-credentials are not to replace or disrupt existing systems or qualifications but to complement and enhance them
- The recommendation establishes a common European approach to the ongoing and emerging provision of micro-credentials
- The recommendation sets out a definition and guidance for the design, issuance and description of micro-credentials to facilitate their quality, transparency and uptake



The initiative establishes ‘building blocks’ to develop an EU approach to micro-credentials:

- A common **definition** of micro-credentials
- Union **standard elements** to describe a micro-credential
- Union **principles for design and issuance** of micro-credentials



Common definition for micro-credentials

Micro-credential means the **record** of the **learning outcomes** that a learner has acquired following a **small volume of learning**. These learning outcomes have been **assessed** against transparent and clearly defined criteria.

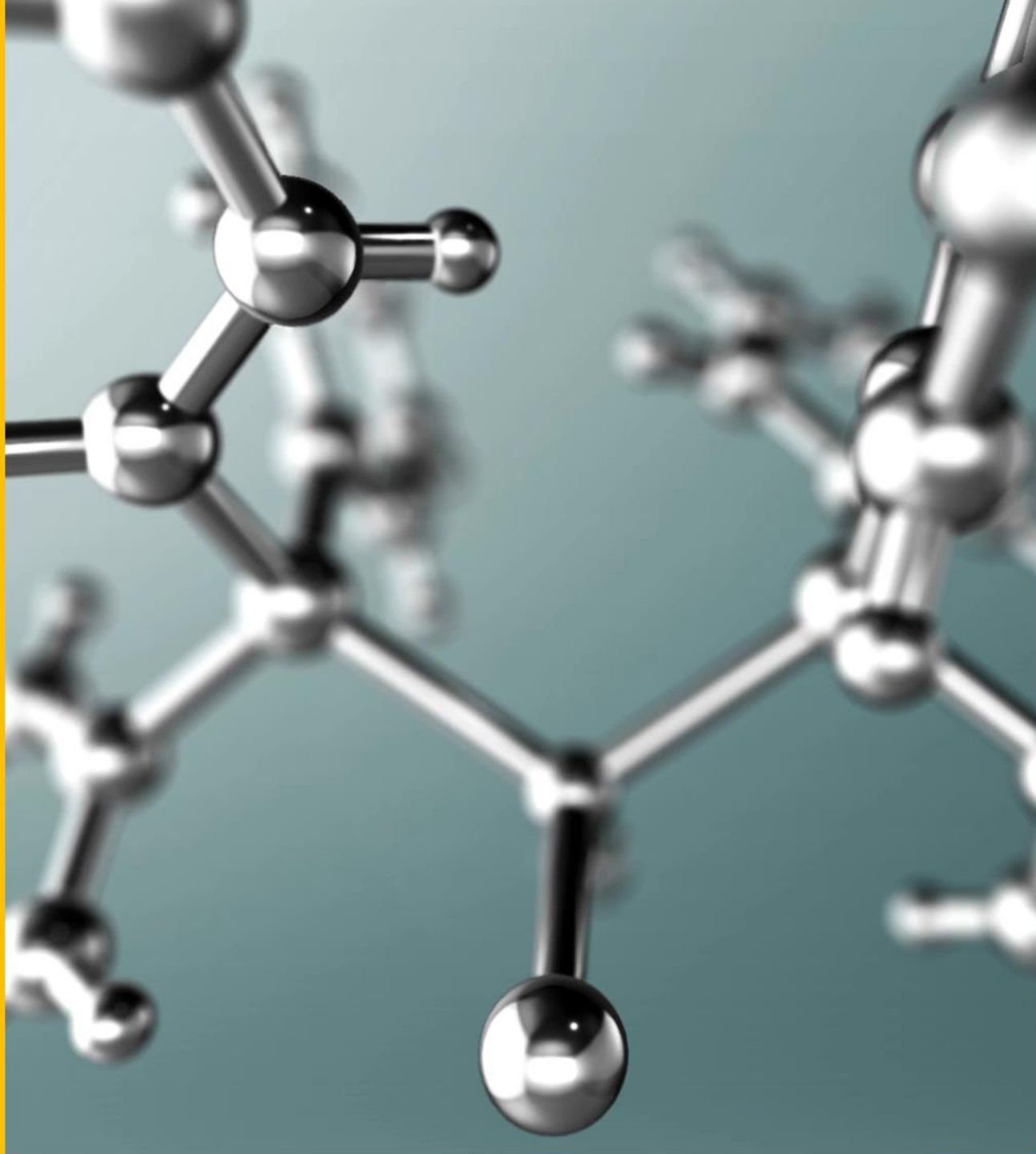
Learning experiences leading to micro-credentials are designed to provide the learner with **specific knowledge, skills and competences** that respond to societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs. Micro-credentials are **owned by the learner**, can be shared and are **portable**. They may be **standalone** or **combined into larger credentials**. They are underpinned by **quality assurance** following agreed standards in the relevant sector or area of activity.

EU Standard elements to describe a micro-credential

- Identification of the **learner**
- **Title** of the micro-credential
- **Country(ies)/Region(s) of the issuer**
- **Awarding body(ies)**
- Date of issuing
- **Learning outcomes**
- **Notional workload** needed to achieve the learning outcomes (in **ECTS**, wherever possible)
- **Level** (and cycle, if applicable) of the learning experience leading to the micro-credential (EQF, QF-EHEA), if applicable
- **Type of assessment**
- Form of participation in the learning activity
- Type of **quality assurance** used to underpin the micro-credential

Optional Information

- Prerequisites needed to enrol in the learning activity
- Supervision and identity verification during assessment
- Grade achieved
- Integration / stackability options
- Further information



Union principles for design and issuance of micro-credentials

1. Quality
2. Transparency
3. Relevance
4. Valid assessment
5. Learning Pathways
6. Recognition
7. Portable
8. Learner Centred
9. Authentic
10. Information and Guidance

Recommendations to Member States



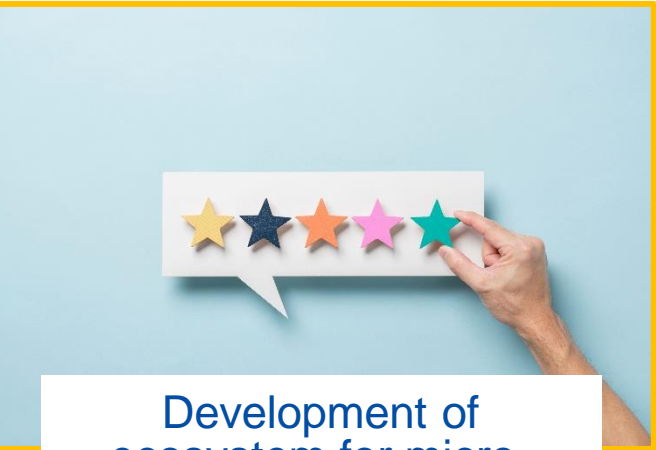
Adopt the definition



Adopt standard elements



Adopt principles for design and issuance



Development of ecosystem for micro-credentials



Delivering on potential of micro-credentials



Implementation

Quality and Transparency

Development of ecosystem for micro-credentials

- Apply, adapt and develop **quality assurance mechanisms** for micro-credentials issued by different types of providers
- Supporting the use of **'skills-intelligence' systems** to analyse of labour market needs and demographic changes so they can identify any needs to develop or update micro-credentials

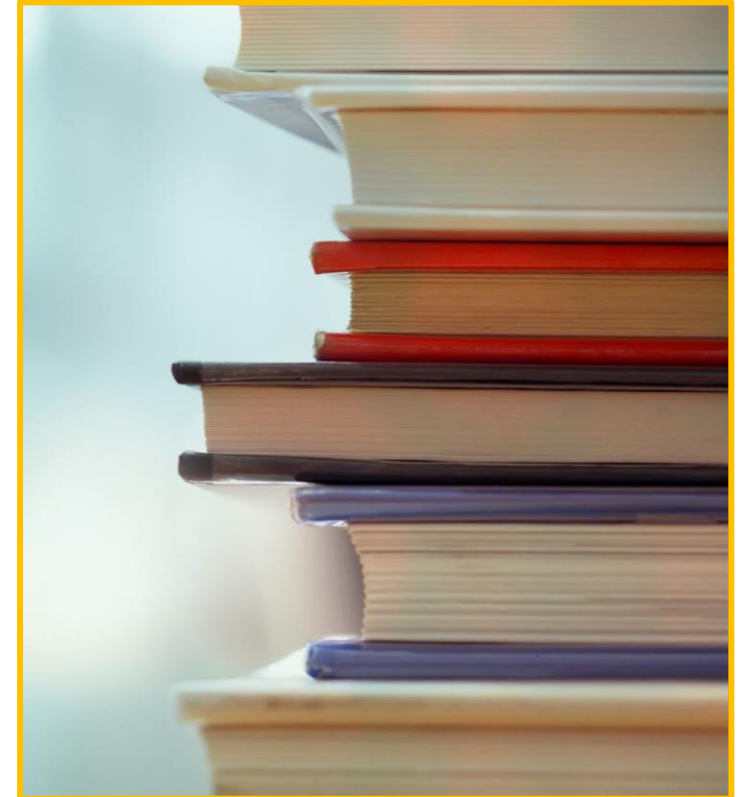


- Encouraging providers to **publish catalogues of MCs** they offer, including, where relevant, their policy on the recognition of micro-credentials issued by other providers;
- **Integrate micro-credentials in national qualifications frameworks and systems**, where relevant.

Education, training and skills policies

Delivering on the potential of micro-credentials

- Encourage inclusion of MCs in **national catalogues** of education and training courses
- Use MCs to **improve access to education and training for all learners**, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups
- Use MCs to **support the transition from upper secondary or VET to tertiary education** and the completion of degree programmes
- Use MCs to improve basic and advanced **digital skills**
- Use MCs to support the development of learning provision in **environmental sustainability**
- Promote use of MCs by education and training institutions and other providers to boost the relevance and increase the positive **impact of micro-credentials on the economy of their cities and regions**
- Promote the understanding and use of MCs through **continuing professional development for teachers and trainers as well as academics and researchers**
- Promote use of MCs for the **prompt transfer of the latest research findings into learning opportunities**
- Explore the use of MCs in the European Education Area to **challenge gender and other discriminatory stereotypes** concerning study choices and within educational practices and materials



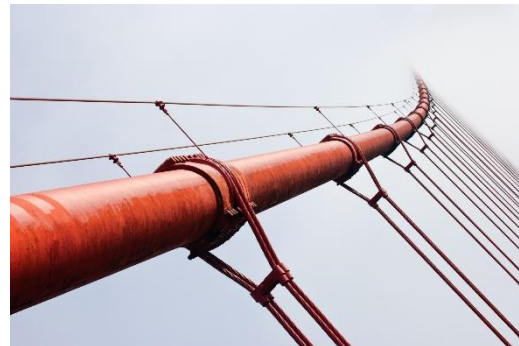
Commission support

Develop and adapt existing EU tools



Technical implementation through Europass

Support co-operation between Member States and stakeholders



Research and Data Collection

Thank you

