



MicroCredX

*Microcredentials Exchange Network*



Maja Dragan - FH Joanneum  
Hagen H. Hochrinner - FH Joanneum  
Jon Altuna - Mondragon Unibertsitatea

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# INTRODUCTION

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## OBJECTIVE:

PR4 Micro-Credential Network Model: **create the systems and processes necessary** to move beyond piloting and establish a network which is designed to grow significantly in terms of

- (a) institutions participating in the process,
- (b) micro-credentials supplied by institutions and
- (c) number of virtual mobilities supported formally establishing a network with at least three new members by the end of the project, creating and validating a set of joining criteria, onboarding processes and a sustainability plan

# Introduction to digital credentialing



# Megatrends

- Increasing cost of Higher Education
- No more jobs for life
- Employer demands for flexibility and reaction times
- Move to skills-base rather than qualification base
- Decreasing value of a degree coupled with degree inflation

# Value of a Credential

Typically the value of a credential is considered to be a function of the:

reputation of the organization issuing the credential



**Quality Assurance**

demand for and/or inherent value of the experience or skill described by the credential



**Competence Standards**

the technical quality of the credential

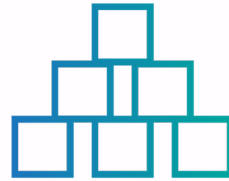


**Technology & Standards**

# Key Features of Micro Credentials



**Modular**



**Stackable**



**Portable**



**Digital**



**Universal**



# 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.



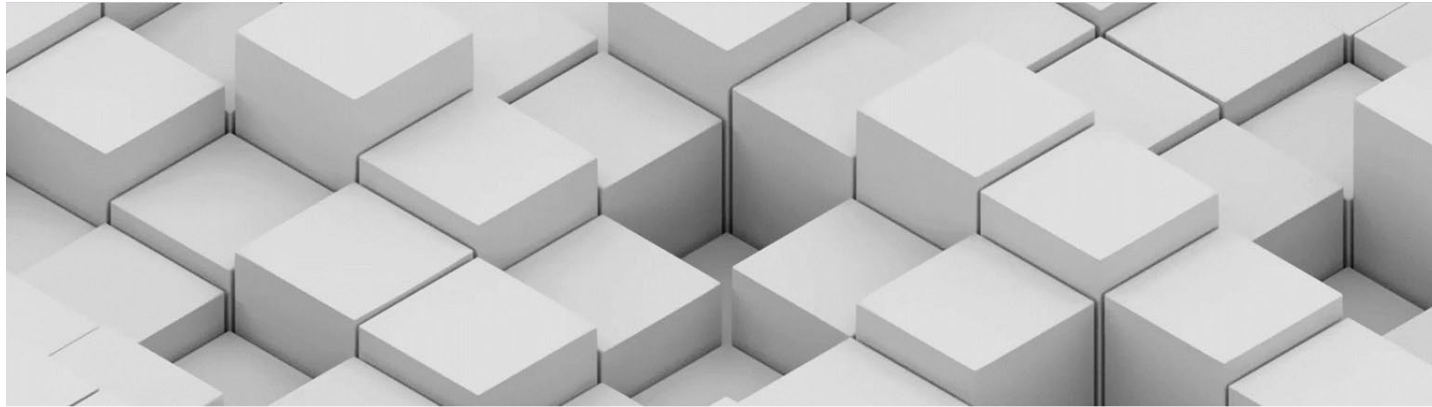
# The European approach to microcredentials





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





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

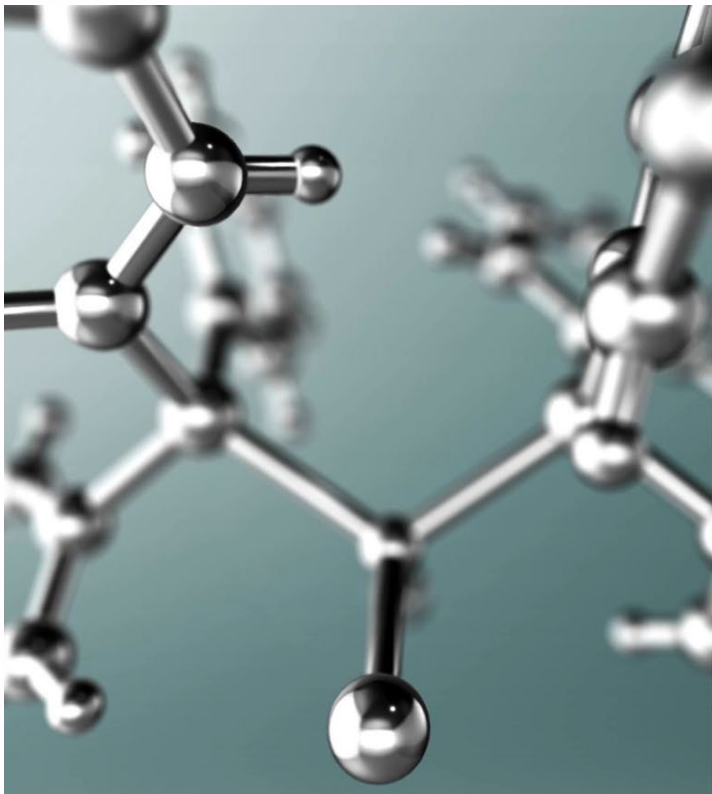
- A common **definition** of micro-credentials
- Union **standard elements** to describe a micro-credential
- Union **principles for design and issuance** of micro-credentials

# 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





## Five key points for policy discussions

1

Micro-credential initiatives need clarity about their purpose and target population if they are to be effective in achieving their goals

2

Funding support for micro-credential learners and providers should be sustainable and ensure micro-credentials remain accessible to all

3

Achieving the full potential of micro-credentials will require changes to quality assurance and academic recognition policies

4

Information provision for learners needs to go beyond the development of an online information portal to reach a wider population

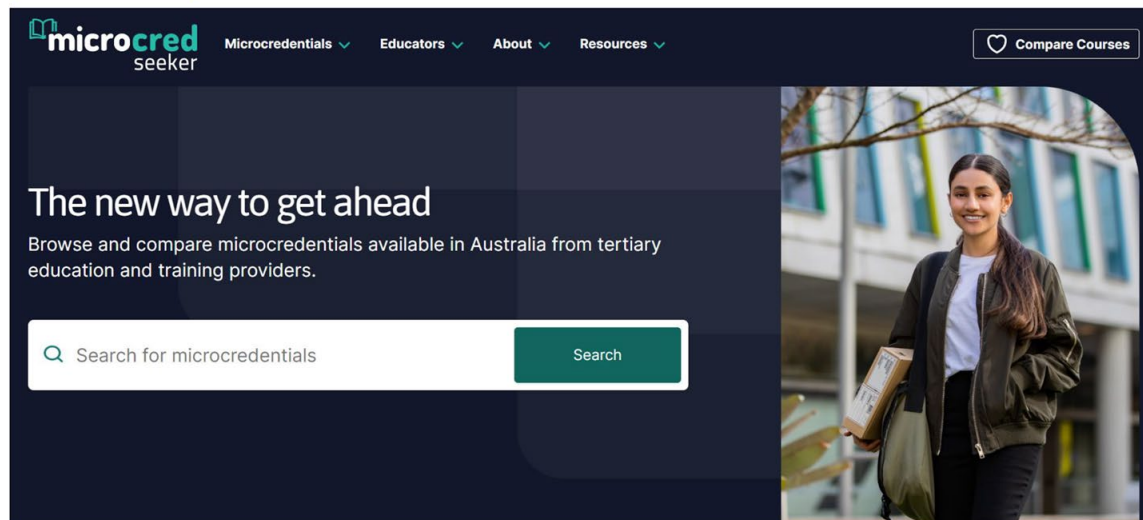
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Public policies can encourage collaborations between educational institutions and industries in micro-credential development and delivery

OECD / OCDE: Restricted Use - À usage restreint

4

Information provision for learners needs to go beyond the development of an online information portal to reach a wider population



<https://www.microcredseeker.edu.au/>

4

Information provision for learners needs to go beyond the development of an online information portal to reach a wider population

### MicroCreds: A Pathway

- 01 National Framework
- 02 Enterprise Engagement
- 03 Discovery Platform
- 04 Suite of micro-credentials across partner universities







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# MicroCredX

EU - Erasmus+ Projects 2021  
KA2- COOPERATION AMONG ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS







## Why did we apply for the project? What are the needs we address?



- Fill the gap between programmes that HEIs provide and the skills that jobs require.
- Keep up with the increasingly nuanced combinations of rapidly changing expectations posed both by our students and the workplace.
- Moving from structured degrees and courses to stacks of smaller credentials
- Enable learners to piece together a range of different competencies and areas of knowledge and skills that align with employer requirements
- Leaning on collaborations within our institutions and faculty (Study program) managers to complement and widening their offer aligned to the latest market needs, corresponding to the transition of the digital and green economy.

## The key questions were:

- How can this cooperation be strengthened in order to **cater to the skill demand of employers**, and at the same time improve the employability rate of university students and raise the profile of HEIs embracing the adoption of study programme unbundling and micro-credential recognition?
- What are the **skills and competences the industry requires the most**?
- How can **curricula adapt to current and emerging labour market needs**?
- How can we **redesign our modules to become more market-oriented**?
- How can we **develop efficiently MCs** and provide them as online courses or MOOCs, catering not only to the needs of students of one's own institution, but also to international students and employees needing professional development?

# What do we want to achieve by implementing the project?

- Work with institutional leadership in HE to identify and dismantle barriers to making course offerings more flexible via micro-credentials
- Assist our institutions to extend their educational offerings in the field by integrating modules from other national and international providers
- Launch combined course offerings made up of micro-credentials, specifically tailored to emerging industrial needs
- Enable students to engage in virtual mobilities, taking advantage of these micro-credentials to enhance their studies and integrate them into their final qualifications.
- Establish a network of institutions active in preparing students for industry 4.0 who recognise micro-credentials from within the network for access and progression
- Distil the lessons of the consortium in implementing these offerings into a set of tools which can facilitate other HEIs in following the same path

# What activities are we going to implement?

## 5 Phases are:

- **Phase 1: Making the case to gain institutional buy-in**  
working with institutional leaders to demonstrate how (a) providing and (b) recognising micro-credentials that can be beneficial to the institution, and working with them to overcome any conceptual and organizational barriers they may encounter.
- **Phase 2: Creating a strategy once buy-in was achieved**  
each consortium member will prepare micro-credentialing strategies, indicating plans for roll-out of micro-credentials, as well as a recognition model for integrating micro-credentials from other institutions into their programmes.
- **Phase 3: Launching an offer institutions will start implementing their strategies by launching 25 micro-credentials via a catalogue**  
initial launch will consist of a limited pilot which will allow us to identify and correct emerging issues with regards to the provision and recognition models

# What activities are we going to implement?

## Phase 4: Expanding our offer by collaborating with pilots and expand the network

- increasing the number of institutions participating in our recognition network
- transform the project consortium into a membership network
- extend the network and sign-up membership agreements
- establish standardised processes as well as formal work and growth plan going beyond the project.

## • Phase 5: Reporting Progress

- promoting our achievements within our institutions and faculties and external to our partner network and HE alliances
- allow us to show the strengths of the approach, and win over new department heads within our institutions

# Success indicators



Our vision of achievements in numbers is as follows:

**20 study programmes** will be analysed by HEI partners to identify courses relevant for industry specific skill and competence provision (unbundling of study programmes)

**4 study programmes** for each partner

**25 courses** for these study programmes will be carefully selected or defined for MC development and uploaded into the MicroCredX Platform

**5 MCs** for each partner

**12 micro-credentials from external** MOOC and other course platforms will be selected for recognition in our HEI partners' study programmes

# Success indicators



Our vision of achievements in numbers is as follows:

- **5 + 3 bilateral credential recognition agreements** will be signed – 5 between project partners + 3 with external HEIs
- **3000 students** will be exposed to academic credit bearing micro-credentials within their study programme
- **400 students** are expected to enroll in one or more of the 37 courses published in the MicroCredX Platform, enabled to select eligible micro-credentials both from their home universities and external HEIs
- ca. **300 from these students** will be issued data-rich digital micro-credentials on successful completion of their courses, of which - 60 are anticipated to be issued by one institution and recognised by another



## Mission Statement:

At MicroCredX project, our mission is to transform Higher Education by pioneering the adoption of micro-credentials as a flexible and dynamic means of skill acquisition. We aim **to bridge the gap** between traditional academic programs and the rapidly evolving demands of the workforce, **empowering learners** to acquire highly-demanded skills and competencies through stackable credentials obtained from diverse learning sources.



## Vision Statement:

Our vision is to **create a global network of Higher Education institutions and industry** committed to enhancing employability and addressing the evolving needs of the workforce. Through our collaborative efforts, we aspire to **facilitate seamless access** to tailored learning experiences, enabling individuals to construct personalized pathways to succeed while promoting innovation, accessibility, and inclusivity in Higher Education.





## MicroCredX Catalogue

Through the MicroCredX Course Catalogue:

- students may browse just above 40 micro-credential choices, and understand their rights and responsibilities for their home universities to recognise and transfer the awarded credits as part of the completion of their study programmes.
- university partners of the project share course information based on the European Learning Model's agreed meta-data standards.

The impact of this output will be:

- the number of students exposed to the catalogue and enrolled in its courses.
- the number of Europass digital credentials issued to students who have passed the courses.
- the number of virtual mobilities enabled through recognition and credit transfer.

[Micro-Credentials Catalogue - MicroCredX  
\(microcredentials.eu\)](https://microcredentials.eu)

## Criteria for joining the network:

1. **Accreditation:** Ensure that the institution offering microcredentials is accredited by recognized accreditation bodies or governmental agencies to ensure quality and credibility.
2. **Quality Assurance:** Ensure that the institution implements rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to guarantee that microcredentials meet defined standards for content, delivery, and assessment.
3. **Relevance:** Ensure that the institution is able to provide microcredentials aligned with current industry needs, emerging trends, and the demands of the job market to ensure their value and applicability.
4. **Accessibility:** Ensure that the institution is able to provide microcredentials that are accessible to a diverse range of learners, including those from underrepresented groups, through flexible delivery modes, affordable pricing, and support services.
5. **Transparency:** Ensure that the institution is able to maintain transparency regarding the content, learning outcomes, assessment methods, and credentialing process of microcredentials to ensure clarity for learners and stakeholders.

## Criteria for joining the network:

6. **Technology Integration:** Ensure that the institution is able to utilize compatible digital learning management and certification platforms to deliver microcredentials effectively and facilitate seamless exchange within the network.
7. **Collaboration:** Demonstrate willingness to collaborate with other network members to share best practices, resources, and expertise for continuous improvement and collective impact.
8. **Data Security and Privacy:** Ensure that the institution is able to implement robust data security and privacy measures to protect the personal information and academic records of learners participating in microcredential programs.
9. **Evaluation and Feedback:** Commit to ongoing evaluation and feedback processes to assess the effectiveness of microcredentials, address learner needs, and inform continuous improvement efforts.
10. **Sustainability:** Ensure that the institution commits to develop sustainable models for the delivery and maintenance of micro-credential programs, including financial viability, scalability, and long-term viability within the network.

## Next steps (what do we expect from partner institution)

1. Spread the word!
2. Identify which MC of the MicroCredX catalogue are interesting to be offered to your students.
3. Identify which MC developed in your own institutions can be shared.
4. Workshop to discuss with partners the terms for the collaboration agreement - October.
5. Sign the agreement.



# Contacts

Jon Altuna, Academic vice-rector  
Mondragon University  
e-mail: [jaltuna@mondragon.edu](mailto:jaltuna@mondragon.edu)  
Tel. : +(34) 943712185;  
[www.mondragon.edu](http://www.mondragon.edu)

DI Hagen H. Hochrinner, Senior lecturer  
University of Applied Sciences FH JOANNEUM  
e-mail: [hagen.hochrinner@fh-joanneum.at](mailto:hagen.hochrinner@fh-joanneum.at)  
Tel.: +43 (0) 316 / 5453-6911

Mag. Maja Dragan, Researcher  
University of Applied Sciences FH JOANNEUM  
e-mail: [maja.dragan@fh-joanneum.at](mailto:maja.dragan@fh-joanneum.at)  
Tel.: +43 (0) 316 / 5453-6925



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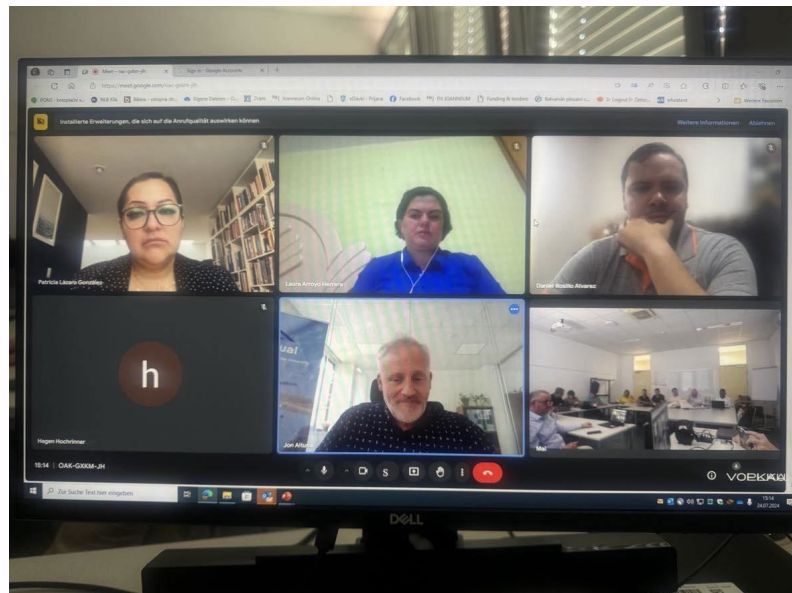
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