

# A European Approach to Micro-credentials



## HEInnovate webinar

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European Commission

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# A European Approach to Micro-Credentials



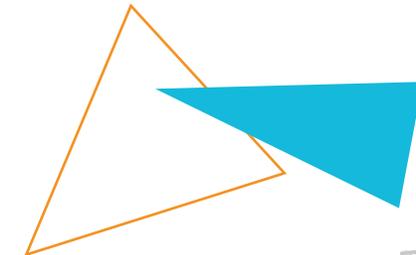
An initiative of  
European Commissioners  
Mariya Gabriel and  
Nicolas Schmit



European Skills Agenda

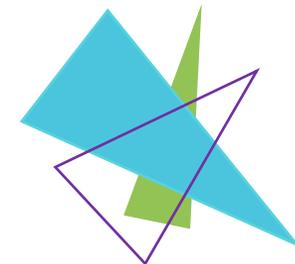
Achieving a European  
Education Area by 2025

Digital Education  
Action Plan



# 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



# Micro-credentials: action at European level

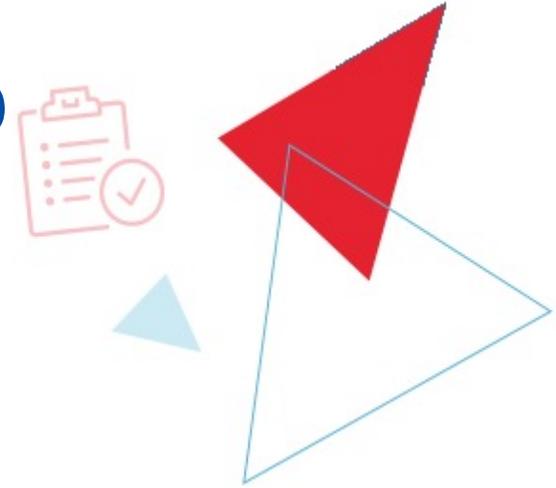
## EU SKILLS AGENDA

- ✓ 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



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

# 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

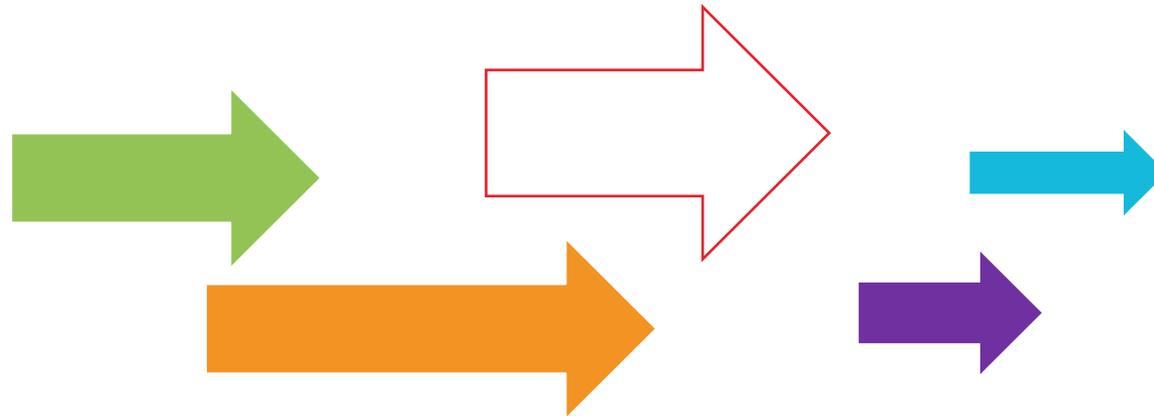
# Building blocks for take-up of micro-credentials

-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

# Way forward

Ongoing:  
Consultations  
covering  
education and  
training and  
labour market  
stakeholders



Commission  
proposal for a  
Council  
Recommendation  
in December 2021

