European Approach to Micro-credentials

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MICROBOL conference, 31 August 2020

European Commission

A joint initiative:
European Commissioners Gabriel and Schmit

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The importance of acting now

Changing nature of work

A rapidly changing society undergoing environmental, technological, and social transformations

People increasingly need flexible training to meet the changing skills demands

Impact of COVID-19

Demand for various online learning opportunities has accelerated

Demand for alternative credentials, their recognition and validation
becomes urgent

Need for a common Understanding

Massive increase in different forms of alternative credentials

Need for a transparent common definition and boost of take-up, validation, recognition and portability

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New EU Policy Agenda

►Skills Agenda, June 2020

►Achieving the European Education Area, Sept. 2020

►Updated Digital Education Action Plan, Sept. 2020

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Micro-credentials: action at European level

A EUROPEAN APPROACH FOR MICRO-CREDENTIALS WILL:

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

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

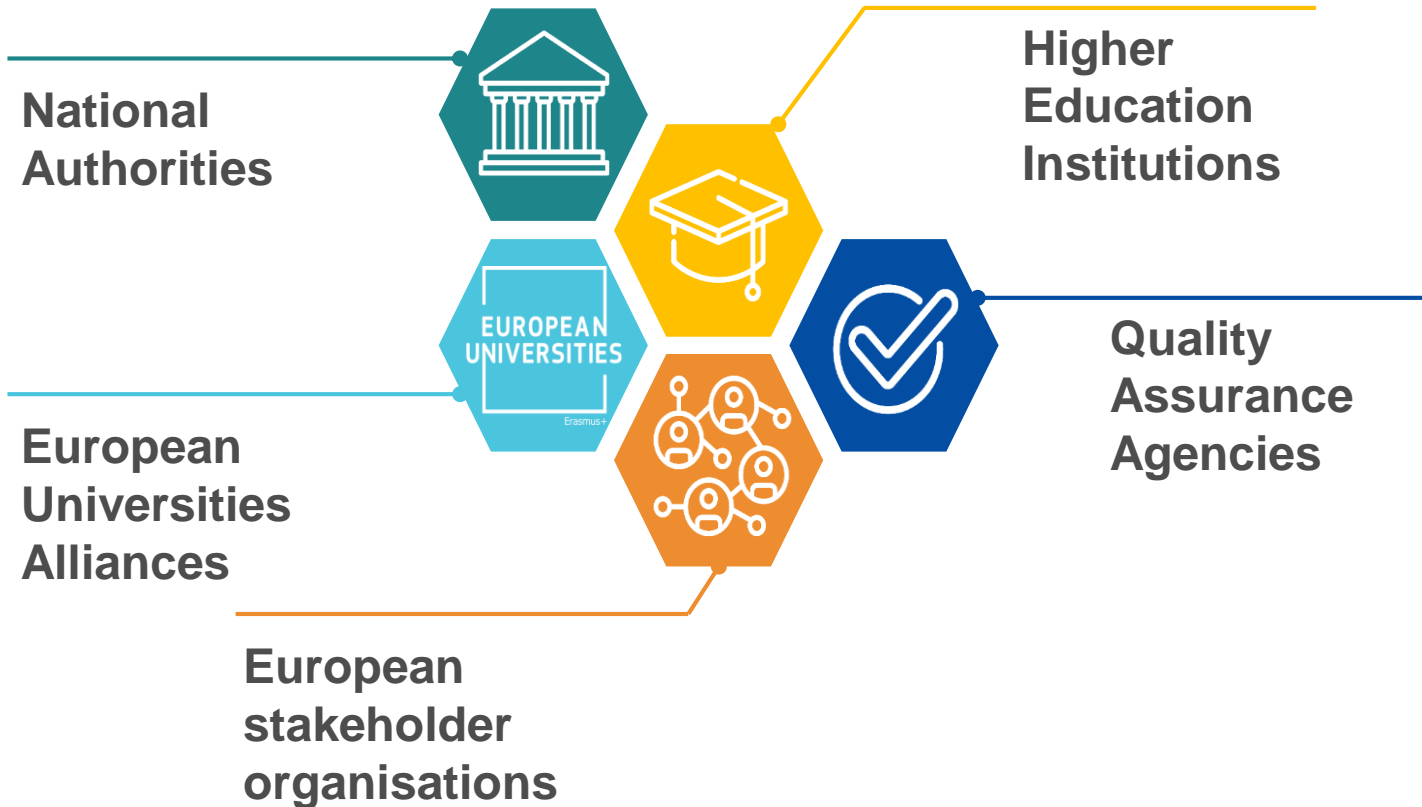✓ Make it easier for individuals to **store and showcase** acquired micro-credentials through **Europass**

* together with all relevant stakeholders

OBJECTIVES
Higher Education

- Further shape its **lifelong learning dimension**

- Improve access

- Support modularisation and flexible curricula

- Support quality, transparency and portability of micro-credentials across the EU.

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Higher Education Consultation Group

National Authorities

Higher Education Institutions

European Universities Alliances

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES
Erasmus+

Quality Assurance Agencies

European stakeholder organisations

3 online meetings
26 May, 30 June, 16 September

Final report autumn 2020:
Common definition
& roadmap of actions

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General expectations

A European Approach for Micro-credentials should:

➢ Be flexible and holistic, applicable to the different educational sectors

➢ Present a widely accepted definition

➢ Reflect on quality & trust, transparency and portability

➢ Enable stackability of micro-credentials (but not replacing full degrees)
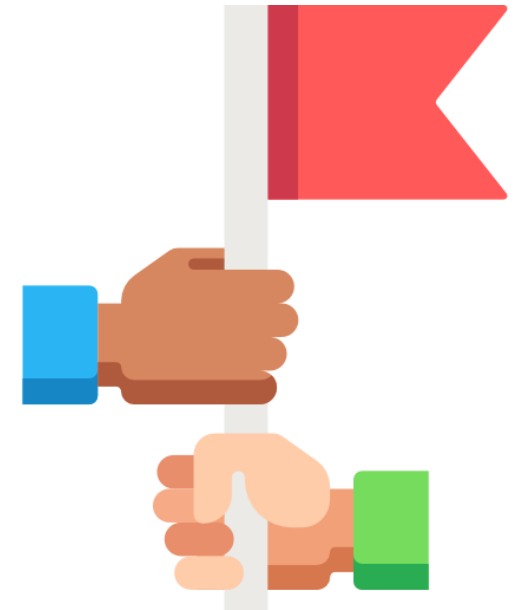
Definition - Interim draft

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"A micro-credential is a recognised proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has achieved following a short learning experience, according to transparent standards and requirements and upon assessment.

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, are shareable, portable and may be combined into larger credentials or qualifications."

Roadmap of actions: consultations

- Expert group on micro-credentials in **higher education** (May to September 2020)
- Consultation with the **Advisory Committee for Vocational Training**
- Consultation with the **European Qualifications Framework Advisory Group**
- **Microbol** conference and working groups (August-1st half 2021)
- Webinars with **experts** (2nd half 2020)
- Consultations with **Public Employment Services** representatives (September)
- Consultations with **VET and adult education sectors** (Autumn)
- Consultations with **recognition authorities** (Autumn)

Way forward

EU Policy development

- Council recommendation on micro-credentials in 2nd half 2021
- Transformation agenda higher education
- Council recommendation on VET

European Instruments & Structures

- Europass with Digitally signed credentials
- European Student Card initiative
- Bologna tools
- ENIC-NARICs
- EQAR

EU Support for uptake
- *Current & future* -

- European Universities initiative
- Erasmus+ projects
- European Structural and Investment Funds

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Building on Erasmus+ projects

- Microbol: Micro-credentials linked to the Bologna Process key commitments
- MicroHE: micro-credentialing in European Higher Education
- CORSHIP: « Corporate EduPreneurship »
- Projects in the area of recognition: e-Valuate and PARADIGMS
- MOOC Consortium & European Short Learning Programmes for continuous professional development and lifelong learning
- European Consortium of Innovative Universities: Competence passport and micro-credentials
- Open Education Passport – creation of a digital standard format for documenting open education credentials based on ECTS
- ECCOE: European Credit Clearinghouse for Opening up Education
- Open Badge Network: supporting the development of an Open Badge ecosystem