

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

Micro-credentials as means to promote innovation and mobility

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What are micro-credentials



- Short/small learning experiences leading to a credential and the credential itself
- The existing definitions describe the following characteristics of micro-credentials:
 - Size
 - Purpose
 - Categorisation
 - Types of short courses they may encompass
 - Linked to “digital”
- > no consensus on a definition
- > lack of clarity leading to confusion?

Stakeholders perspective

Policymakers' perspective

- increasing need for upskilling and reskilling
- need for flexible and inclusive learning paths

Higher education institutions' perspective

- a way to provide targeted and specialised training
- increase their visibility and reputation
- increase their responsiveness to students' and labour markets' demands
- experiment with new pedagogies and technologies

Learners' perspective

- an entry mechanism to a degree programme
- a way to acquire interdisciplinary knowledge and skills
- a way to more flexibility in planning their studies

Employers' perspective

- micro-credentials may help them to better understand specific skills of a prospective employee
- may serve as on-job training

Status in Europe

- Part of a degree programme or stand-alone offer
- Credit bearing or non-credit bearing
- Engagement of higher education institutions varies

Survey to European institutions

- 50 % offer short online courses (non-degree) leading to certificates, micro-credentials or badges
- 49%: One of the main motivations for offering MOOCs is to reach out to new learner groups
- 55%: Short courses mainly serve lifelong learners

DIGI HE

European University Initiative – a new driver?

- Many European University Alliances have identified offering micro-credentials as one of their key activities
 - Easier than setting up a full joint degree programme?
 - Online – useful in particular in times of Covid-19
 - A clear module with certification for student
 - Facilitates recognition?

Concluding remarks

- Diversity is a strength
- European framework for micro-credentials should increase the clarity and transparency, which currently seem to be lacking, while leaving room for diversity and creativity
- Micro-credentials present an opportunity for higher education institutions
 - Respond more rapidly & flexibly
 - Innovate
 - Reach out to new audiences
- But will they revolutionise higher education?

Thank you for your attention

