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Introduction to Micro-Credentials

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Presentation Outline

Initial questions to answer about the term of micro-credential (MC):

What?

Why?

How?

How long?

Where?

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WHAT?
MC Definition

"A micro-credential is 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 standards.
Courses 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."

Source: A European Approach to Micro-Credentials

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WHAT?
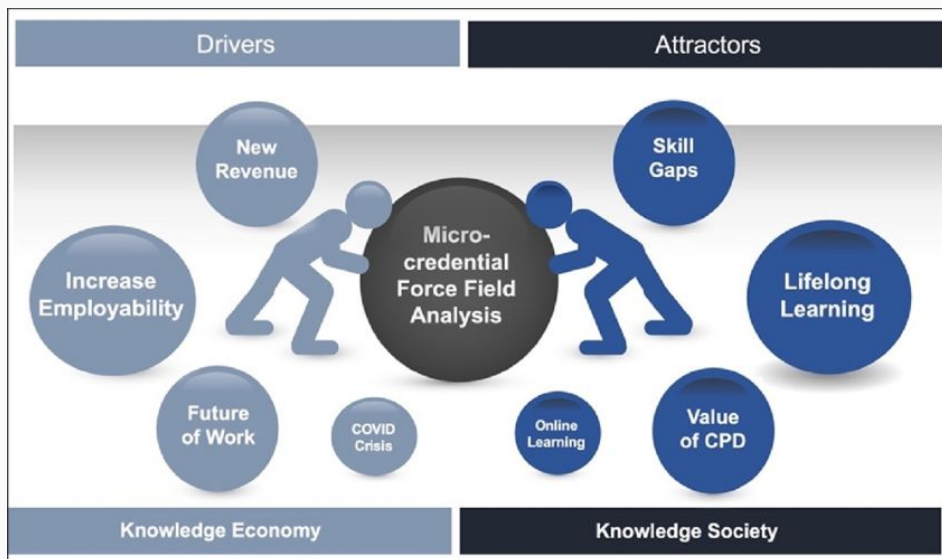## MCs Popular Explanations

- Short, stackable, and skills-based non-degree credentials (qualifications)

- Mini qualifications helping individuals learn new skills, progress in their careers (upskilling), or change careers entirely (reskilling)

- Short courses focusing on a particular skill

- Also knows as microdegrees, nanodegrees

- …

WHY?
MCs Relevance and Topicality

Source: Driver and attractors for the growth of micro-credentials (Brown 2022b)

WHY?
MCs: Green, Digital, Inclusive

- European Skills Agenda

- Digital Education Action Plan

- Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability

- A European Approach to Micro-Credentials

HOW?
Principles for Design and Issuance of MCs

- Quality
- Transparency
- Relevance
- Valid assessment
- Learning pathways (stackability and recognition of non-formal and formal learning)
- Recognition
- Portable
- Learner centered
- Authentic

Source: Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability

HOW?
MCs Minimum Standards

- Focused on learning outcomes (outcome-based)

- Transparent and recognised

- Responsive to societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs

- Owned by the learner

- Shareable and portable

- Stand-alone or combined into larger credentials (stackable)

- Underpinned by quality assurance.

Source: Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability

HOW?
The Process of Design and Issuance of MCs

Step 1: Analyse ☐ Step 2: Select ☐ Step 3: Describe ☐ Step 4: [Re-]Design ☐

Step 5: Arrange ☐ Step 6: Create ☐ Step 7: Combine ☐ Step 8: Describe

Assessment ☐ Step 9: Pilot ☐ Step 10: Collect feedback ☐ Step 11: [Iterate] ☐

Step 12: Celebrate ☐ Step 13: Complete

Micro-Credentials Exchange Network. Implementation Framework

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HOW?
Standard Elements to Describe an MC

Mandatory Elements
Title of the micro-credential
Awarding body, Date of issuing
Learning outcomes
Notional workload needed to achieve the learning outcomes (in ECTS credits, wherever possible)
Level (and cycle, if applicable) of the learning experience leading to the micro-credential (EQF, QF-EHEA)
Type of assessment
Form of participation in the learning activity
Type of quality assurance used to underpin the micro-credential

Source: Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability

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HOW?
Standard Elements to Describe an MC

Option Elements (non-exhaustive list)
Prerequisites needed to enrol in the learning activity
Supervision and identity verification during assessment
Grade achieved
Integration/stackability options (standalone, independent micro-credential/integrated, stackable towards another credential)
Any further relevant information, incl. indicative content and recommended literature

Source: Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability

HOW Long? Where?

"Opinions in the consultation group have differed regarding the range of ECTS credits in defining the workload of micro-credentials… The Common Micro-credential Framework suggests that micro-credentials should be based on a notional workload of 100-150 hours (including revision for, and completion of, the summative assessment). This equals 4-6 ECTS credits. Others argued that even 1 ECTS credit could be accepted for the workload of micro-credentials. On the other end of the possible scale, 60 or 90 ECTS credits were mentioned, the latter of which would already be very close to the size of the short-cycle qualification."

Source: A European Approach to Micro-Credentials

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Thank you for your attention!
Questions?

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