

MyCred4Home Newsletter

Developing micro-credentials for the home care sector



“Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market.” - European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience 2021



About MyCred4Home project

The MyCred4Home project intends to promote social and professional inclusion for low qualified profiles by combining two EU tools: micro-credentials and the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Their common aim is to help individuals to get their skills recognised and valued more easily and quickly, and transform them into better employment opportunities, and therefore into inclusion.



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What have we done in the first phase of the project?

Collaboration and small steps to the achievement of first result

Marta Tybura, STEPS, leader of the Result 1

The first activities were coordinated by **STEPS** (Italian training and research centre from Bologna), all partners were actively involved. STEPS delivered the research architecture (guidelines, templates), take care of updating partnership about recent EU policies and studies on micro-credentials.

Project partners carried out **5 baseline studies on national level in France, Italy, Spain, Cyprus, Belgium**, collecting in total **10 practices on validation of non-formal and informal learning** and reaching through interviews 6 experts in the field of validation. All data has been collected in the overall report, first result of the MyCred4Home Strategic partnership.

What we have learnt?

- We found out that the official validation of non-formal and informal learning can play an important role for the PHS sector and low skilled profiles . Why? Example from French country report shows that with only 30,000 certified workers (with a formal certification of the sector) for 1.4 million employees, the sector has a very high potential for Validation of Acquired Experience (VAE). IPERIA's initiative "VAE by blocks" presents an innovative way of recognition of a small number of competences, corresponding to the needs of the candidate. It can be of interest for the future developments of the MyCred4Home project.
- We tried to identify examples on existing initiatives on micro-credentials, especially for low qualified profiles on national level. Do they exist and what is their role? We did not find a simple answer to this question. Several examples of micro-credentials assigned after a short training activity (not as a result of validation process) have been collected e.g. an interesting practice from Italy, which includes the use of micro-credentials (in digital format) inside the EduOpen platform financially supported by the Italian Ministry of Education. Generally speaking the use micro-credentials is much more visible in the sector of Higher education (confirmed also by the Cyprus University national report).
- Centre Familial de Bruxelles (Belgian partner of the consortium) with a huge expertise in the topic of validation of skills in PHS sector highlighted that **the official validation of non-formal and informal learning help job seekers find a job, it reinforces the employability of low qualified profiles, improves self-confidence and self-esteem of the disadvantaged background' groups** (such as migrants, jobseekers, single mothers or battered women, etc.).
- **Even if, the full potential of micro-credentials has yet to be fully unlocked, micro-credentials are seen as flexible way for personalised, tailored, quick and accessible skills (re)development.**

Micro-credentials - a short overview of the topic & EU context

The growing use of micro-credentials is an outcome of the **changing nature of the labour market** and of growing uncertainty as to what work will look like in the future. Fewer “jobs for life” now exist, and employers demand flexibility and quick reactions to changing circumstances. The lockdown measures introduced across the EU in the light of COVID-19 had a substantial impact on the EU labour market, with millions of workers losing their jobs or being placed under short-term work schemes. Micro-credentials are particularly useful in this situation, as they allow for personalised, tailored, quick and accessible skills (re)development. **“With growing consensus on the need for more responsive education, training and learning systems that allow individuals to upskill and retrain in quicker and more flexible ways, alternative credentials have come under the spotlight.”**(CEDEFOP)

In the foreword to the “European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning” Detlef Eckert Director for Skills, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion highlighted that **“we are presented with opportunities to learn every day**. Beyond the formal classroom setting, we can acquire the most valuable of knowledge, skills and competences in our daily lives, be it at work, at home or during leisure time. Learning throughout life is a key route to personal development and acknowledging such learning can give greater value to citizen’s achievements and their potential contributions to society. Despite this, the influence of traditional forms of education remains strong, with non-formal and informal learning often ignored and undervalued. **The 2012 Council recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning** recognises this conflict and seeks to promote a more systematic approach to validation, to increase the visibility and value of learning taking place outside formal education and training systems. Validation arrangements can be of benefit to all citizens and help combat unemployment by improving skills matching and social cohesion. CEDEFOP study “Microcredentials for labour market education and training”, 2021- 2023 resulted in the common definition of the “micro-credentials” (see the image).

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 **stand-alone or combined into larger credentials**. They are **underpinned by quality assurance** following agreed standards in the relevant sector or area of activity.

Record
Learning Outcomes
Small volume of learning
Assessed
Owned by the learner
Shared and portable
Combined into larger credentials
Underpinned by quality assurance



(source: Presentation “Proposal for a Council Recommendation on a European approach to Micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability”, 11.05.2022)¹⁴

EUROPEAN RESEARCH - WORK IN PROGRESS – OBSERVING THE CHANGE

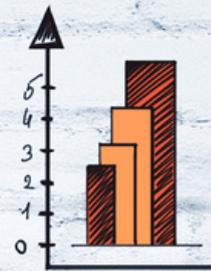
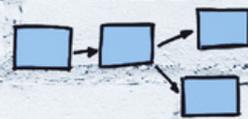
Group of experts working on micro-credentials worked out the European approach to micro-credentials consisting of a number of key building blocks. 2 of the blocks are available (as a result of EU policies, researches, analysis): we can say we have reached a consent on a common definition of the term “micro-credentials” and a defined list of critical information elements to describe micro-credentials.

The process of the implementation of micro-credentials on EU level and links with national context are still to be defined. Other aspects which are under construction are: Alignment to National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF); Quality assurance standards; Portability: issuing, storage and sharing of microcredentials.

General approach to micro-credentials in EU countries represents “institutional wait-and-see attitude” according to what will come from the European Commission – mainly in terms of definition and scope – decisions will be made to buy into it, or not. There is the need of more transparency coming first from the EU level and take-up of micro-credentials at national levels. MyCred4Home will keep monitored the forthcoming EU policies and studies about micro-credentials and try to make the best use of the new knowledge for the project and for the PHS service in general.

$$\tilde{G}^2(\varepsilon) = \tilde{S}^2(\varepsilon) = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n e_i^2}{n-2n}$$

$$\varepsilon_{ex} = \frac{dQ_{ex}}{de} \cdot e; \varepsilon_{in} = \frac{dQ_{in}}{de} \cdot e$$
$$NE(e) = Q_{ex}(e) - e Q_{in}(e)$$



$$\frac{\bar{X} - u}{\frac{\sigma}{\sqrt{n}}} = \sqrt{n} \frac{\sqrt{\frac{S^2}{\sigma^2}}}{\sigma}$$

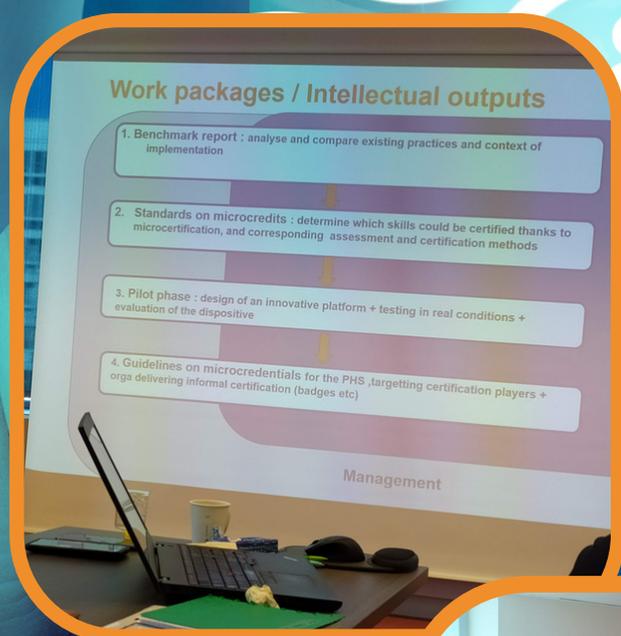
$$\sqrt{\frac{9}{3}} \quad \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^N \nabla^2 x_f \cdot \sum_{i=1}^N \nabla^2 y_f}$$



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PARTNERS MEETING IN PARIS, 11-12 APRIL 2022, IPERIA PROMISES

On the agenda of the meeting: management of the project; workshop dedicated to the research activity (resulted in national reports preparation); brainstorming on dissemination activities, co-creation session on evaluation and impact.



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MyCred4Home Partnership

- IPERIA, Coordinator <https://www.iperia.eu/>
- Strategies and Tools to Enhance People's Skills (STePS), <https://www.stepseurope.it>
- The Software Engineering and Internet Technologies (SEIT) Laboratory of the University of Cyprus: www.ucy.ac.cy
- Centre Familial de Bruxelles: www.centrefamilial.be
- G12 Grupo Empresarial de Servicios, s.l. www.gdoce.es

